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The Journal

Lorton & Derwent Fells Local History Society

Brackenthwaite Buttermere Embleton Loweswater Mockerkin Pardshaw Wythop

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The Routenbeck: built for the Davidson Shipping Line in 1875

The Journal

In this issue we return to the question of the location of Loweswater's corn mill, helped by a copy of an old plan, showing it, in papers left by the late Alex Ames. Apologies are due to Roger Asquith that this plan was not noticed, recognised and supplied for his previous article. After a thorough examination of the records, the relationship of the lord's mill to the local farm tenements has been established.

I also welcome an article on vagrancy in the Cocker mouth Poor Law Union area, from Allan Sharman, a former member of the Society who has completed an MA dissertation on the subject. It provides a valuable insight into the development of local government in the nineteenth century, to cope with the social problems arising from increasing mobility.

As a consequence we find that most of the space of this issue is taken by two large and perhaps complex articles. I would like to balance this in future Journals and would welcome short pieces of general interest from members, for members. Please let me know if there is something you would like to see covered or something you would like to contribute – especially if any help or material can be provided.

Derek Denman

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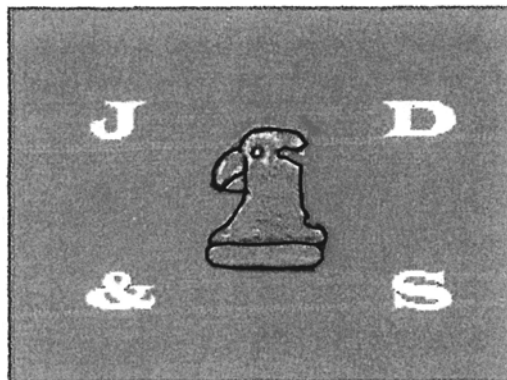
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The Wythop Connection with Shipping

by Walter Head



The flag of the Davidson line

Joseph Davidson was born in 1818 at Branthwaite in the parish of Dean. He went to sea at an early age and had a Masters Certificate by the age of 22. In early 1844 he married a Harrington girl, Isabella Bell, at Harrington St Mary's church. Joseph Davidson founded the Davidson Shipping Line sailing out of Harrington near Workington and was joined in the business by his son William. William was born in 1851 at Harrington in the home of his father Joseph and his mother Isabella. The second child and first son of William and his wife Mary was named Joseph and was born at Routenbeck, in Wythop, in 1877. He later also joined the shipping line.

In the mid 1800s the Davidson family owned Orchard House at Routenbeck, but because of the need to be near to their shipping operations they also owned a house at Harrington. The house at Harrington was named Lingfell House, after the field near to their house at Routenbeck. Their connection to Routenbeck was so strong that four of the seven ships making up the Davidson Shipping Line were named after locations near to their country home. The Davidson Shipping Line operated during the heyday of Harrington Harbour, which in 1899 saw 755 ships discharge and load 270,000 tons of cargo. The house flag and cap badge of the shipping line depicted a falcon's head on a bright red background. The motif of a falcon's head was etched on the glass of the family home in Harrington and was only removed sometime in the 1940s. The Davidsons operated seven



The Wythop

sailing ships but their reluctance to change from sail to steam led to their decision in the early 1900s to cease trading.

The first ship purchased by Joseph Davidson was The ARGUS, a 164 ton sailing brig built at Workington by William Wallace and launched on 16th February 1805. She was sold in 1837.

The second ship purchased was The ASSENTH, a 189 ton wooden brigantine built by Thomas Williamson of Harrington and launched in March 1866. She was 100.4ft long, 22.6ft broad and 13ft depth.

The third ship bought was The EMBLETON, a 193 ton wooden brig built by Thomas Williamson at Harrington and launched in April 1867. The dimensions were 100ft long, 22.9ft broad and 12.9ft depth. In 1873 she was registered at Whitehaven as her home port. The ship traded between Harrington and Spain.

The fourth ship purchased was a 260 ton wooden barque 103.6ft long, 24.7ft broad and 16.1ft depth. The ship was originally built by Thomas Williamson at Harrington and launched in April 1860 for Nelson Ismay and Co. and named Castleton. The Nelson Ismay partnership was dissolved in 1863 and it was then owned by Thomas Ismay. He sold it to Captain Davidson in 1872 who renamed it CASTLEHOW. This ship was sold by the Davidson Shipping Line to Hugh McDowell of Belfast in 1889. It is possible that this ship was originally named Williamson

when built but not registered, and that Castleton was a misprint. The highest Lloyd's classification for a wooden ship is 'A1. 14 years special survey' and the Castlehow had this classification. She was registered at Liverpool, with signal letters QBGK. Her Lloyd's registration number was 28611. The Castlehow traded between Liverpool and China and when sailing between Trinidad and Rotterdam she was lost off Trinidad on 6th September 1892. Some of her crew survived.

Ship number five was the ROUTENBECK, a 930 ton vessel built for the Davidson Shipping Line by The Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co. This ship was 208.5ft long, 32.4ft broad and 19.6ft depth and launched on the 19th April 1875. She was registered at Whitehaven and her registration Number was 69717 and signal letters RKVB. The Routenbeck sailed from Liverpool for Sydney in November 1875 and in addition to the Captain, Thomas Carr, there were 17 crew. The mate age 42 was from London, the second mate age 20 was from Harrington, the carpenter age 46 was from Sweden, the boatswain age 42 was from Dundee, the steward age 21 was from Cork and the cook age 26 was from Edinburgh. Of the able seamen 1 was from Harrington, 2 were from Scotland, 1 was from Ireland, 1 was from Wales, 3 were from Finland, 2 were from Norway and 1



The unfortunate Stoddart

was from Germany. There was also one passenger on board en-route to Australia. On the 1st October 1883 the Routenbeck left Victoria, British Columbia but was delayed at sea for so long by storms and unfavourable weather that she was reported missing. She eventually made port at Liverpool in April 1894. The third largest of the Shipping Lines vessels, she traded for the Davidson line for 20 years. She was sold to Liverpool ship owner G.M Bushby in 1897. He then sold her to J Wimmers & Co and she was renamed Bellas. She was then owned by John Stewart and then sold again in 1921 to Danish owners who renamed her Suzanne, and was eventually broken up at Savannah in 1924.

The sixth vessel built for the Davidson Shipping Line was The MORESBY. This iron ship was built by The Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co and launched in July 1882. It was a full rigged ship of 1270 tons with three masts, 223.5ft long, 36.1ft broad and 21.25ft depth. She carried a crew of 23. Her Lloyds registration Number was 86208 and her signal letters WMGV. During the South African War she carried horses and food from South America across the South Atlantic to the war zone. On the 24th December 1895 she was en-route from Cardiff to Pisagua in Chile, South America, with a cargo of

Welsh coal when she was lost along with 20 crew members when she ran aground at Whitehouse Bank in Dungarvan Bay during a storm. Amongst those lost were Captain Coomber, his wife, and their two year old daughter. The remains of the Moresby were blown up in 1906 and sold for scrap.

The last ship built for The Davidson Shipping Line, and the largest, was the 1352 ton WYTHOP. Built by Ritsons of Maryport and launched in July 1892 she was 230ft long, 36.6 ft broad and 21.7ft depth. Her Lloyd's registration number was 94039 and her signal letters MQND. The Wythop was a three masted steel barque with single top gallants capable of carrying approximately 2,100 tons of cargo. She was registered at Whitehaven. A seventeen year old apprentice, called Stoddart, was killed on the Wythop during his first voyage when he fell from the mast. An Australian newspaper dated 7th October 1893 described the Wythop as having 'exceedingly pretty lines and presents the cut of a genuine clipper. On board she is equipped with all the latest improvements in modern naval architecture. The accommodation for the officers and men is all to be desired and in that direction no expense has been spared so that the seamen may have a fair share of comfort'. By 1900 the Wythop was owned by Robert Ferguson of Dundee. He sold it in 1901 to Guiseppe D'Ali of Trapani in Sicily and renamed Rosalina D'Ali. Later she was sold to the U.S.A. and renamed Garry Mount before being finally broken up in 1934/35.

The Pheasant Hotel, in Wythop by Bassenthwaite Lake, has an oil painting of The Wythop by Maryport artist William Mitchell and also a photograph of The Castleton or Castlehow. There is a photograph of the Moresby in Waterford Museum, Ireland.

Many years of British shipbuilding meant that by this time the amount of good quality mature English oak was in short supply. So timber was imported from Europe and Canada. Oak was preferred for construction as it was hard and rot resistant. Planks were often held in place by the use of long oak pegs called treenails or trunnels although iron bolts and nails were used above water level as were copper nails. Masts were usually made from resinous wood such as fir pine which was not as heavy as oak so did not make

the ship top heavy. Spruce was strong with a low resistance to decay with moderate shrinkage. The resinous wood was also flexible which was useful in stormy weather. The wood for use as masts was usually stored under water until required.

Hemp was imported from Russia and used to make ropes in rope works at Harrington, Whitehaven and Workington such as the Harrington Ropery Co of Harrington and Messers Peile and Wood. Hemp rope was a soft rope to handle and reduced the incidents of friction burns. It was also rot resistant, resistant to salt air, floated and was the strongest of all natural fibre ropes. Although not known at this time hemp ropes are also resistant to ultra violet rays.

Sails were traditionally made from flax and were manufactured locally, although cotton was also used in sail making.

Anchors were also manufactured locally by anchor smith E Harrison.

Thomas Williamson of Harrington built ships at Harrington from 1839 and at their yard in Workington from 1880 until the yard closed in 1938.

Wm Wallace started shipbuilding at Workington in 1803. Ritson's of Maryport built ships from the 1820's and started to build iron ships in 1855. They built their last ship in 1902.

Whitehaven Shipbuilder's built over 1,000 ships.

The only surviving wooden ship is the 'Vicar of Bray'. Lloyd's registration No 25349 with signal letters PFNV. The 225 ton ship was built by Robert Hardy and launched on 22nd April 1841. Robert Hardy only built 18 vessels. The Vicar of Bray was built from English Oak and West African Hardwoods. She was bought by the Falkland Island Co in 1873 and is now incorporated into a jetty at Goose Green in the Falkland Islands.

The only surviving iron ship is the Dunboyne launched in February 1888, Lloyd's registration No 95311 with signal letters KRDP. This 1425 ton ship with three masts was built by the Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co. Her name was change to G.D. Kennedy in 1915 and again to Chapman in 1934. She was used as a floating barracks for the Swedish navy and since 1949 she has been used as a floating

Youth Hostel in Stockholm harbour. She is the third oldest ship known to exist.

Other local names

Other ships with local names but not related to the Davidson shipping line include:-

BUTTERMERE, a 1031 ton ship with three masts built by Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co and launched in January 1877. Lloyd's registration No 76414 with signal letters QMDP.

CRUMMOCK WATER built by the Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co and launched in 1878. Lloyd's registration No 78777. She was declared missing with all crew at sea in 1914. There are two paintings of the Crummock Water in the Beacon Museum at Whitehaven.

LORTON, a 519 ton barque built by Thomas Williamson at Harrington and launched in November 1862. In 1873 she was registered at Liverpool.

LOWESWATER, an iron clipper barque built by the Whitehaven Shipbuilding Co and launched in March 1877. Lloyd's registration No 76389 with signal letters WVBN. She was lost along with 15 crew members in the Irish Sea on 12th December 1894.

MELBREAK, an 870 ton snow type of ship built by Jonathan Fell at Workington and launched in January 1863. Her hull was yellow metalled in 1875. Her Lloyd's registration number was 28815 and her signal letters QCBW.

SCALE FORCE, an 89 ton steam ship built by R Williamson and launched at Workington in July 1883.

WHINFELL, an 834 ton wooden ship built at Workington by Charles Lamport and launched in October 1861. She had 3 masts and carried a crew of 27. She was converted to a barge in 1878. Her signal letters were TRWP and Lloyd's registration number 44157.

In the 1770's William Sumpton of Cornhow, Brackenthwaite held a 1/28th share in John Ellwood & Co timber merchants and ship builders at Workington.

Acknowledgement

My thanks go to the Harrington History Group for their permission to use some details from their research and to John Whitwell for his help.

Vagrancy in West Cumberland in the late nineteenth century

by Allan Sharman¹

Vagrancy came to be seen as a problem which needed greater attention from the local authorities during the late nineteenth century. This article discusses the perceived problems, the development and management of local systems, and changing attitudes at the end of the century.

The New Poor Law, 1834, and the Workhouse

The most important landmark for the destitute in the nineteenth century was the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, or New Poor Law. It was aimed specifically at seriously reducing, if not eliminating, outdoor relief, or payments to individuals who were not in a workhouse, in order to bring as many as possible of these claimants under the control of overseers in the workhouse. The workhouse, funded by the rate payers, was intended to provide the least pleasant option for those who had the means to avoid it.

Under the New Poor Law, the parishes and townships responsible for the poor were to form unions, each of which would build a large centralized workhouse. The Cocker mouth Poor Law Union, was formed on 1 December 1838 and consisted of forty seven parishes and townships represented by fifty eight men sitting as a Board of Guardians. They operated in a predominantly rural area which included the towns of Cocker mouth, Keswick, and Workington, and the major port of Maryport. The workhouse to serve this area was built in Cocker mouth, and was primarily intended to house the paupers settled in its area. The poor of course included that group of individuals at the bottom of the heap in society referred to as vagrants, the down and out, the tramps, the beggars and the destitute.

*Figure 1 Cumberland Poor Law Union
Boundaries (approximate) 1834*

The Board of Guardians was the all-powerful body of Poor Law administration and control in the local area. As elected members they determined who was and who was not eligible for poor relief. The Cocker mouth Union's basic tenets with regard to vagrancy were to confine and control both those inmates on 'in-door relief' and vagrants seeking overnight and occasional shelter. Later in the century the Union's serious concern was the ever rising numbers of vagrants, the need to meet the rate payers' demands to react to the problem, and the need to do everything necessary to deal with the perceived threat of a public nuisance. In Cumberland, as elsewhere, local civic leaders were open to severe criticism by the public and press alike if they failed to manage the provision of facilities to contain the vagrant problem.

The main workhouse in Cocker mouth was not well placed to provide short term relief for the casual poor over the whole of the Union's area. And its regime, which included unpaid work the following day, was unpopular with vagrants who sought a convenient bed and a meal. Through the rest of the nineteenth century, facilities were developed and used to provide more geographically diffused services for the relief of vagrants. These were principally police stations, casual wards operated by the Union, and common lodging houses.

Police Stations

The creation of the Cumberland and Westmorland Constabulary, followed by the establishment of police stations in the towns in the 1850s, provided another means of dealing with and relieving vagrants. In 1868, a local approach had been developed in Cumberland and Westmorland which became known as 'The Cumberland and Westmorland System'. It was designed to enable the police to apprehend all professional tramps and vagrants found wandering the country without visible means of support, and making a maximum punishment compulsory in all such cases. This had the full support of John Dunne, Chief Constable of Cumberland and Westmorland, who, as an outspoken critic of the system at local and national level was an important contributor to the debate. The role of police stations in relieving vagrants therefore grew significantly. Making a random check in the summer of 1877 over a twelve week

¹ Based on Allan Sharman's MA dissertation, which contains full references for all the material used (contact: allshar@hotmail.com).

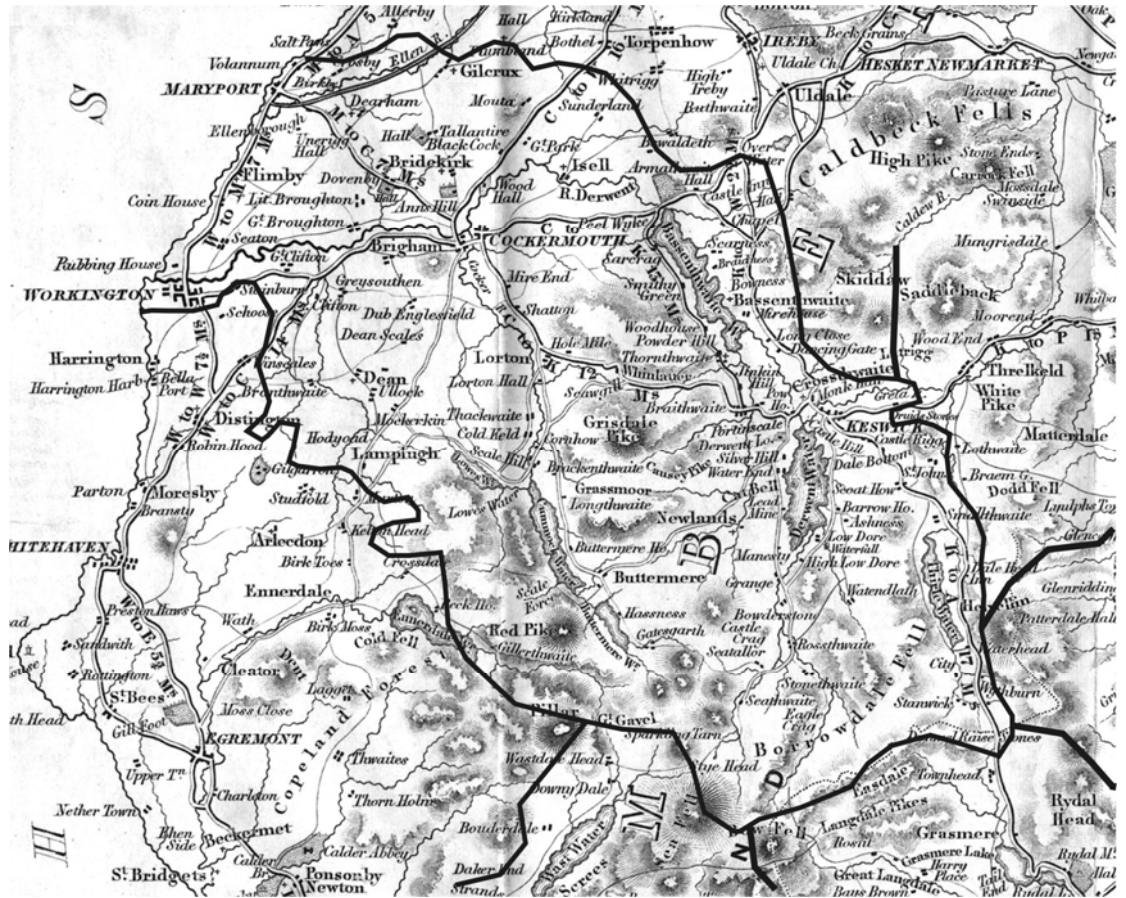


Figure 1. Cockerthwaite Poor Law Union, approximate area.

period in the Maryport Police Vagrant Record Book provides a glimpse into the numbers, gender, age and description of the characters who figured in them and listed a total of 276 males aged 19-59, and 12 females aged 21-64, overall about 24 per week. Females numbered on average around five per cent of the total.

Maryport Police Vagrant Record Book, 1877²

Month	Male	Female	Total
June	43	5	48
July	139	6	145
August	94	1	95
Totals	276	12	288

² Source: Cumbria Archive Service, SCONS/4/70, 15 June to 2 Aug 1877.

The lack of repetition of names in the records indicates they were a transient group passing through to perhaps revisit but not staying for more than a maximum of a day or two.

However, the relief of vagrants in the police station, or the provision of 'tickets' for a night's lodging, was not work the constabulary wished to continue to provide. When the Cockerthwaite Board of Guardians met on 10 Feb 1881 the police gave notice that they, 'would discontinue relieving vagrants at the police station' which so far they had accepted as a responsibility which the Guardians considered they were well qualified to carry out. It was suggested that this proposal to discontinue this arrangement had been provoked by one of the Guardians as he lived close to the police station and the proximity of tramps was obviously causing him a problem.

The casual wards for Vagrants

The 1864 Vagrancy Act made it a legal requirement to provide separate wards in the workhouse for casual and occasional



Figure 2. The Poor Law Union workhouse school and casual wards (unseen to the left) at Flimby

accommodation by vagrants and itinerants searching for work. This would enable the authorities to separate the 'distasteful element' to the satisfaction of the public and fulfil the Local Government Board's firm belief that:

all who have a practical experience of the class of persons relieved in the casual wards [know] that but a very small proportion of the number are really travelling for the purpose of obtaining work, or other adequate reason. The great majority of them are professional tramps.

This separation also stimulated the creation of casual wards in other parts of the Union's area, to meet the need more locally. The Cockermouth Union, took some time to fulfil the Act's requirement, but by 1884-5 two casual wards were in use, one at Cockermouth and one at Flimby, south of Maryport. The *Whitehaven Times* reported the opening of Flimby with some satisfaction by saying, 'five men were relieved on its first day'. By this time the Union was faced with what appears to be a consistently high level of vagrancy albeit with a slightly discernible downward trend. The workhouse Admissions and Discharges registers for 1886-1890 show vagrants representing by far the largest category of persons whom the Guardians had to manage.

It was in 1881 that the Union began to think about the possible closure of the

casual ward in Cockermouth, just ten years after it was opened. However, for the next decade or so, Cockermouth continued to provide for vagrants in the workhouse wards at Cockermouth and Flimby until, in 1890, a letter from the

Guardians to the Local Government Board refers to the proposals for the construction of a new casual ward at Keswick. Another letter, on the same day, refers to an omission by the clerk to say that, 'the Cockermouth ward would be closed six months after the Keswick ward was opened', presumably as a means of determining whether the decision to divert the vagrants from Cockermouth had been effective. Yet a further letter confirms the final decision to close the Cockermouth casual ward in view of the fact that it was considered that there is ample provision now at Flimby and Keswick without the accommodation provided at Cockermouth. The implications of the casual ward closure at Cockermouth for the vagrant travelling east in search of work would have been serious, particularly if the twenty five mile tramp from Flimby to Keswick had to be undertaken in winter. On the other hand, there was some logic in providing additional accommodation to meet the needs of the growing ports of Workington and Maryport with a facility at Flimby, located between the two towns.

With no provision at Cockermouth there was now considerable discouragement to make the long journey to Keswick from the commercial zone on the west coast by concentrating the casual ward facility at Flimby, well outside the towns. It appears that the Guardians felt that they had dealt with the vagrancy problem at Cockermouth by providing facilities at Flimby and Keswick and kept the tone of the town's growing 'middle class sensibility' intact. There was, however, another way to deal with

vagrants which could prove to be less costly than accommodation in casual wards. It could be cheaper to provide tickets for common lodging houses in the form of a few pounds a week to finance the lodging house keeper on a more regular basis than at present.

Common Lodging Houses

Common lodging houses, like the casual ward in the workhouse, were a major concern for the 'respectable classes' at the end of the nineteenth century. They were seen to be exceedingly undesirable places to spend a night as 'common lodging houses foster these seed-plots of mendacity and vagabondage'. This perception led to some difficulty in defining their use, and inevitably their control, which depended to a large extent upon the local agencies and how they saw the buildings and their occupants. Initially the Guardians attempted to manage the problem by ensuring that accommodation in common lodging houses was controlled with the assistance of the police authority. As in the casual ward, there was the tacit attempt to differentiate between the 'deserving' and the 'undeserving' using the 'experienced eye' of the police officer who attempted to separate the genuine guests from the 'pestilent majority'. This may have had some basis in the perception of the Victorian middle classes, as the lodging houses were often used as refuges for prostitutes. But the view of the authorities as well as the public in general who 'seemed slow to grasp the reality of the change of use, were still stereotyping the houses as largely populated by vagrants, in line with the commissioners of the 1840s'.

The desire to be outside of the authoritarianism of the workhouse regime was as true for Cockermouth PLU as it was for the metropolis and was one of the



Figure 3 Vagrants waiting to be let into a common lodging house, 1901.³

reasons why vagrants, given the opportunity, frequented common lodging houses rather than the casual ward. Being forced to strip and bathe and to complete labour tasks such as stone breaking and oakum picking before being allowed to leave was too much for many. The editor of *The Times* was likely to have been informed by Ribton Turner's major study of the vagrancy problem when he wrote :

Vagrants frequent the casual wards as a matter of economy. Whenever they are flush with funds they frequent the lodging house. As they oscillate between the tramp ward and the lodging house no real distinction can be made between the occupants of either

³ Source http://www.gerald-massey.org.uk/bezer/b_autobiography.htm

By 1892 feelings had changed a little as delegates to a Poor Law Conference in Chester demonstrated when they said, 'The stringency of the new regulations in the 1882 Act have driven the professional vagrant from the casual wards of the workhouses into the common lodging houses where those genuinely requiring and deserving relief were treated as the evil doers'. The monitoring of common lodging houses by the police may not have been systematic but it did provide them with a relatively easy way to dispose of the vagrants, rather than have them in the police station all night. Dealing with the causes of their predicament was not police work; all that was required was straightforward piece of paperwork to satisfy the Guardians that the Landlord had undertaken to accommodate them.

Attitudes and numbers

Shaping the world of the vagrant were the attitudes which pervaded the middle classes in their various professions and roles. These can be characterised as a general distaste for 'the other', measured to some effect by the approach taken by those with responsibilities in local communities and central government. These attitudes were constructs of the time, varying in their zeal according to the fluctuating sensibility of the Guardians, religious bodies, law makers and enforcers. Attitudes were also shaped by number, or the perception of numbers, and whether they were increasing or decreasing.

There were also national and local interests and perspectives which were not always aligned and harmonious. It was the Poor Law Board Inspectors' responsibility to make annual inspections of the 644 Poor Law Unions in England and Wales and from these it is possible to identify criticisms or problems the Inspectors encountered. These inspections focussed on the day to day running of the workhouses in Cockermonth, Flimby and Keswick, rather than attend to any problems in the casual wards. Year after year, inspectors briefly mentioned the casual wards as being 'overcrowded to a slight extent and in none of the

workhouses was there any overcrowding'.⁴ From three Annual Reports over a twenty year period statistics present a snapshot of workhouse vagrant relief across the country. Males are consistently higher than the number of females but the tendency is to lump indoor and outdoor relief together when making comparisons of year on year figures which always show females as a higher proportion. There is a further category of vagrants identified as 'out-door vagrants' who were probably those vagrants provided with a 'meal and bed ticket' by the relieving officer for accommodation at common lodging houses. This allowed the man or woman on the road a nights rest before continuing on their journey.

Most alarmingly for the Board of Guardians was the increasing trend upwards of the numbers of vagrants both locally and nationally, a 41% increase between 1879 and 1900 of paupers but a more than 100% increase in the number of vagrants in the same period.⁵ In fact, the number of vagrants, as a percentage of the total number of adults in the workhouse, only increased from 4.4% to 6.7%. But the doubling of vagrant numbers allowed the press, and others to make political capital out of the vagrancy problem. Mr Geoffrey Drage, M.P. reports on Poor Law Reform in *The Times* that, 'The detention and work of vagrants seemed to require strengthening to check the *'vast increase'* in vagrancy'

In 1886 Joseph Chamberlain, President of The Local Government Board (the government authority responsible for central government control of the Poor Law Unions), urged all authorities to schedule work for the unemployed and ensure that vagrants met their perceived obligation to 'pay for their keep'. Cockermonth reacted to this by tacitly complying. In a series of letters to Westminster the Guardians reported that, 'There are a large number of able bodied men out of work who are put to work stone-breaking in the stone yard

⁴ *Nineteenth Annual Report*, PP. 1889-90, p.63; *Twenty-ninth Annual Report*, PP. 1899-1900, p. lxiv.

⁵ *Ninth Annual Report of the Local Government Board: Returns of Pauperism*, PP. 1879-80, pp.336, 346-7; *Nineteenth Annual Report*, PP. 1889-90, pp335,354,368; *Twenty-ninth Annual Report*, PP. 1899-1900, pp.323, 340.



**Figure 4: Cockermouth Board of Guardians
1895⁶
(Note the four women seated, second row)**

8.00am til noon and 1pm til 4.30pm according to their strength and capacity'; followed by, 'They also collect stones from the sea shore and break them to an amount of two hundred weight per week'. 'Out of work' would of course include those classified as vagrants. Whilst appearing to have some sympathy with the men in their task, the Guardians were arguably most concerned to maintain the approval of Westminster, in an attempt to satisfy the authority of the law, by showing that they were managing the situation efficiently. But vagrants were not welcome in West Cumberland. A letter to *The Whitehaven News* in 1891 demanded that relief payments should not be made to stone yard workers. 'These men should be made to leave Workington and find work elsewhere'. The priority was to be rid of these undesirables and certainly not to understand their problems and find employment for them.

An 1881 census record to check for common lodging houses in Maryport, Whitehaven, Cockermouth, Egremont and Cleator revealed that all towns had lodging houses although Cockermouth classified their residents as 'boarders'. The majority of Cockermouth residents in the four boarding houses registered claimed to

have occupations other than labourer which suggests they were not vagrants on a ticket. The majority of guests from all other towns were classified as labourers - 106 out of 125. The other nineteen included hawkers, a civil engineer (an earth digger perhaps) and a 74 year old Italian organ-grinder! The term 'labourers' could have been a euphemism for 'vagrants' as there was no means of telling the purpose of their stay apart from seeking shelter. Neither was it possible to say with certainty that specific lodgers were vagrants. Twenty years later at a Vagrancy Committee Meeting convened in 1905, Mr Preston Thomas, remarked that, 'A great number in common lodging houses are pedlars, itinerant musicians [*the Italian organ-grinder comes to mind*], people of that kind, and it is very difficult to say how many are vagrants', a very similar situation to that which prevailed twenty five years earlier in 1881.⁷

⁶ Source: <http://www.workhouses.org/cockermouth>

⁷ *Committee for Vagrancy*, PP, 1906, p.12.

Changing Perceptions – or not?

The idea that the pauper was the perpetrator of his own distress continued to colour the thinking of the public and legislators. It was the condemnatory tone, picked up almost in unison by members of the Howard Association Committee in 1882, which Government officials, Bishops, Chief Constables and Guardians adopted with the idea that enterprise and mobility was the panacea for the workless itinerant. Only one voice on the Committee opposed this stance and that came from E. Hereford, a Manchester Coroner who saw the causes of vagrancy within the society that condemned it. A visionary statement in 1882 which, as the last decade of the nineteenth century wore on, was to gain credence in the shift of emphasis from the lack of morality of the poor in their 'fecklessness and idleness' to a more pragmatic analysis of the economic climate that could be partially responsible for the ebb and flow of employment prospects for the labouring class.

The old ideas lingered on as women struggled to get themselves on to Boards of Guardians and men continued to be convinced that their ideas were the only ideas that mattered. The Cockermouth Board was comprised of only men until the late nineteenth century when a few women began to filter into its ranks. In the Cockermouth Union sixty two members were elected in 1895 comprising fifty eight men, of which three were clergymen, and four women. This is the first indication of a female presence in Cockermouth, more than twenty years after women were active in Unions further south and an indication of the conservative nature of the attitudes to a female presence on the Board.

Female guardians might provide a counter-opinion to earlier attitudes concerning the character of the male and particularly the female vagrant. The Guardian Rev. G. Edmunds at a Poor Law Conference in 1875 gave his opinion on the subject which set out some important criteria and was highly suspicious of women who claim desertion when he comments, 'the wife says her husband has abandoned her in order to claim relief'. Even if this was genuine, Edmunds suggests that in all probability the desertion of the husband was due to the

unsatisfactory behaviour of his wife, 'her fault, her mismanagement of his home and provoking temper making her home a disagreeable place for him to be which a good and prudent woman should endeavour to provide'. A woman abandoned by her husband or forced to leave home was very likely to suffer catastrophic consequences as a result of this attitude and find herself on the vagrant track.

Mary Higgs, the investigative social reformer, points out that, 'the number of female vagrants was comparatively small at around nine per cent'. The returns for pauperism in 1889-90 would put this number at around one thousand which the Departmental Committee for Vagrancy concluded was 'comparatively unimportant and, if the men are removed the women and children will soon disappear from the roads'. This comment comes from a team of nine men, including three retired army and navy officers, trying to get to the heart of a matter concerning women, which in the context of the late Victorian period was not atypical. When interviewed by the Committee Mary Higgs told of her experiences when staying in common lodging houses. Her observations were viewed with disbelief by the all-male Committee and regarded as those of, 'an over sensitive comfortable middle class lady who could have been unduly impressed by her experiences'.

Booth and Rowntree's social surveys fed the debate around a living wage and the difference between voluntary state of poverty and the misfortunes of unemployment, old age, sickness and disability. Alongside this the Charity Organisation Society's (COS) efforts to distribute income raised for the poor supplemented the centralised efforts of the government and the local authorities. Their strategy was considered to be of some considerable benefit to the Unions by taking these individuals 'off the pay roll'. However, the problem for clergymen was in their redemptive zeal, especially men like Rev. Canon Samuel Barnet who comments, 'the idea of providing superior conditions for the vagrant to waste his time in, rather than having to spend it in the workhouse casual ward. This free and easy life style was not to be encouraged but deterred'. He obviously had never

been in a common lodging house in west Cumberland. He took it for granted that people had a choice between a life of work or a life of ease, oblivious to the fact that for many men and particularly single women, the reality was a painful lurch from temporary casual work to unemployment, financial insecurity and a total lack of societal support, leaving only three options: the workhouse, the common lodging house or starvation.

So a slow change of perception by the public was becoming evident but there was still a distaste and social disdain for tramps and vagrants who needed to be fed and kept in quarters far enough away from the immediate surroundings of the middle class and the deserving poor. Alongside this the Common Lodging House was still synonymous with the feckless way of life and was to remain so in the public's understanding of this facility. It was, however, a thriving business for many landlords. The guaranteed income from the 'vagrant ticket' issued by the relieving officer appointed by the Guardians or by the police officers, provided accommodation for a night or two, sometimes longer, on a low rate but a regular basis. This was recognised by an unnamed contributor to the Whitehaven Times who paints a colourful story of, 'the ways and means that vagrants enjoyed the facilities at their disposal in the lodging houses at the expense of the ratepayer'

Conclusion

To deal with the problem of Vagrancy the approach adopted by the Cockermouth Union was to interpret and administer the law as they considered fit. Since the Local Government Board provided no real direction with regard to understanding reasons for vagrancy or assistance in helping to create some form of profile for identity reference, the Cockermouth Guardians moved from one meeting to the next with some help from the Police and little from elsewhere. They strove to create the impression that they were in control but were continually beset by the problem of separating the deserving from the undeserving which the law makers had failed to address with any determination or success.

The identity of the vagrant remained as elusive as ever and was hampered at

every turn by the history of moral condemnation and the analogy with disease and caricatures which reached its zenith in the second half of the nineteenth century. Their lack of access to any form of representation and empowerment meant they were entirely at the mercy of elite men, whose voices prevailed and were heard and listened to at both local and national level. By 1900 newspaper editors had made use of almost every pejorative adjective in the dictionary to describe the state of this misconceived group of individuals.

The common lodging houses were crucial in the management of vagrants and provided some idea of numbers making use of them, but it was difficult to make any assessment of the exact numbers and, like the number of vagrants sleeping rough, it was impossible to quantify with any degree of accuracy. By taking an ostensibly practical decision to close the Cockermouth casual ward the union were able to locate the vagrants out of town and hence minimise the nuisance factor whilst serving the localised growing industrial west coastal region of Cumberland.

Women as paupers were viewed with some sympathy at times but continued to be condemned in their poverty and destitution, particularly as vagrants, by church men, police and government advisors alike. Eventually they were allowed to sit on the Cockermouth Board of Guardians in 1895 and the influence they were to bring to the meetings is perhaps material for a further study.

Main sources

Newspapers:

Whitehaven News

The Times

Manchester Guardian

Parliamentary Papers

Cumbria Archive Service: Poor Law Union Records

The Paddle School Roll of Honour

by Walter Head

Reading the article on Paddle School Roll of Honour by Sandra Shaw in the *Journal 57*, I was intrigued by the fact that there appeared to be little or no information regarding two of the men listed, William Routledge and Frederick William Storr. I took it as a challenge to find out more about these men who lost their lives, and with the help of Janet Thompson and Elaine McDonald I report the following.

WILLIAM ROUTLEDGE

William was the son of James and Isabella Routledge of Jackson Street, Seaton. William was born in 1874 and baptised at Camerton.

In the 1891 census William is listed as a farm servant working at Calva Hall Seaton.

In the 1911 census his mother Isabella, now a widow as James had died in 1909, was living at Eaglesfield, hence the connection to the Paddle School Roll of Honour.

In 1913 William boarded the passenger ship Osterley at London bound for Australia and landed at Fremantle on 28th October 1913.

By 1915 William was to be found working as a miner in the gold fields at Kurnalpi Western Australia. Kurnalpi was the site of a major alluvial gold rush in the late 1890's.

On 12th January 1916 William, age 42 years and 3 months, enlisted in the 28th battalion Australian Infantry at Blackboy Hill Western Australia as private 4287. He had had a medical on the 14th December 1915 and signed his attestation papers on the 15th December. He recorded his next of kin as his mother Isabella Routledge of Eaglesfield, Cumberland.

The Australian Infantry gained a reputation as a well trained and highly effective military force. They also had a reputation for indifference to military authority, and the Australians appear to be over represented amongst British Empire personnel convicted by court marshal of various disciplinary offences.

William was killed in the Somme region of France on 1st June 1918 age 44. He is buried in Franvillers Communal Cemetery Extension grave ref 1.D.18.

He was awarded the 14/15 Star, the British Medal and the Victory Medal. His name is recorded on the War Memorials at Seaton, Camerton, St Philips Church Mosser and Eaglesfield John Dalton Church Memorial, and also of course on the Paddle School Roll of Honour.

FREDERICK WILLIAM STORR

Frederick was the son of George Martin Storr and his wife Hannah.

Frederick was born on the 27th March 1892 and baptised at Mosser.

In the 1901 census Frederick is living with his family at High Hollins Brackenthwaite.

In the 1911 census Frederick was to be found working as a farm servant for William Allason at Whinfall Hall.

On the 23rd May 1913 aged 22 Frederick sailed from Liverpool aboard the Empress of Ireland for the 6 day crossing to Quebec Canada. The Empress of Ireland was a passenger liner built specifically for the emigrant trade from Liverpool to Canada. On a return trip from Quebec to Liverpool in the early hours of the 29th May 1914 she was involved in a collision in thick fog on the river Lawrence and sank with the loss of 1012 lives. This was a greater loss of life than the sinking of either the Titanic or the Lusitania.

Frederick who was described as a labour settled in the small town of Elston in Saskatchewan.

On the 22nd February 1916 he enlisted in the Canadian Overseas Expeditionary Force, Canadian Infantry at Saskatoon as private 474055. He registered his next of kin as George Martin Storr of Cockermouth Cumberland.

Frederick was killed in action on the 13th February 1917 during the battle of Arras. His name is listed on the Vimy Memorial in France which is situated in a 250 acre portion of the former battleground.

His name is on the War Memorials at Elstow Saskatchewan Canada and at St Philips Church Mosser. He is also on the Paddle School Roll of Honour

***An old plan of Mill Hill estate:–
Loweswater's corn mill
portrayed.***

by Derek Denman & Roger Asquith

The location of the lord's corn mill in Loweswater has long been a puzzle, because it went out of use in the eighteenth century and appears on no maps or previously known plans. It had been thought to be located at Mill Hill farmstead. Mike Davies-Shiel even speculated that it might have been a rare wind mill, because Mill Hill farmstead was on a dry hillside. In *Journal 46* Roger Asquith reported a leat from the Bargate dam running to Steel Bank and then on to Mill Hill, which, in the absence of evidence for alternatives, he considered could have powered a corn mill at Mill Hill farmstead.

More recently a twentieth century copy of an incomplete estate plan, untitled and undated, has been found in papers in the Society's archive, and has been identified as a plan of the Mill Hill estate. The original is unknown. The plan included a disused mill, closer to Mosedale Beck with a separate leat, which, it will be shown, was formerly the lord's mill.

Because of the previous difficulties in drawing conclusions, some time has been spent in a thorough assessment of both historical records and available landscape evidence, back to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. So that a clear understanding could be gained of the history of the lord's mill and of Mill Hill tenement, or farm, which has been included as an annex to this paper. This has involved work by Derek Denman, Roger Asquith and Walter Head, who are all associated with this article. Additionally we wish to thank Chris Todd, who farms the land involved, for enabling a confirmation that the current landscape features and the remains of the built environment are consistent with the old plan and this interpretation of it. There is no need for further evidence from surveying the land, and members are reminded and asked to respect the that there is no public access to the estate. Satellite imaging is available online.

The old plan of Mill Hill estate.

About ten years ago the Society received a small folder of historical items which had

belonged to the late Alex Ames, once the vicar of Loweswater.¹ This contained a photocopy of an estate plan, on four sheets glued together, measuring overall 670mm by 480mm. It is redrawn as Figure 1, and reproduced on the Society's website at www.derwentfells.com/features/lowesmill. The general area is shown in Figure 2.

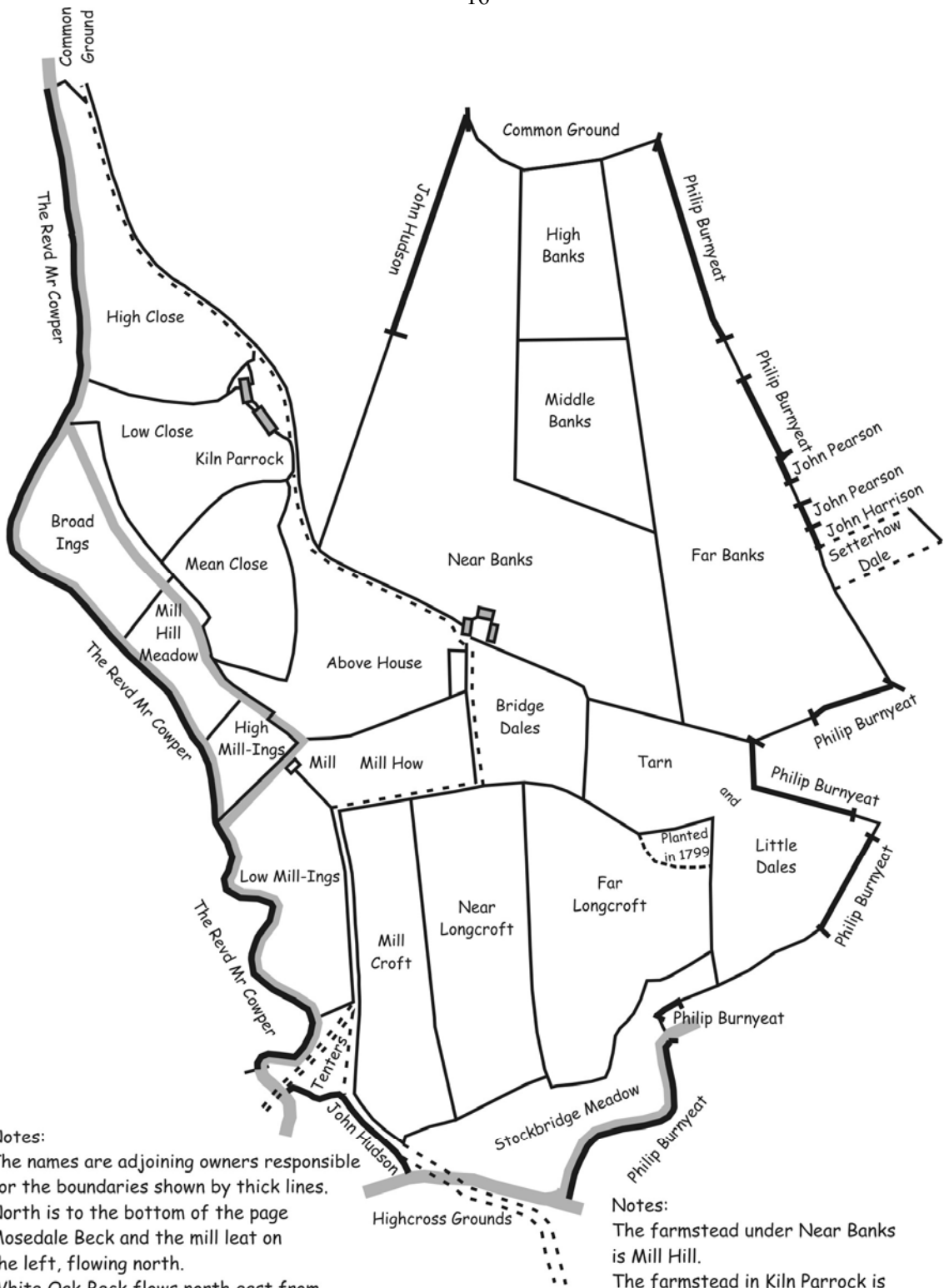
It is a plan of named closes in an estate, including the names of the owners of adjoining properties. The size of each close has been added in script, together with a summation in the top right. The plan is annotated 'Loweswater'. The name of the estate, the owner, the surveyor, the date, and the names of the farmsteads are not given. The two farmsteads shown are clearly the old Mill Hill and Steel Bank. There is another building simply labelled 'mill' with its own leat taken from well below the Bargate dam. This mill building is unshaded, which means, by convention, that it has no roof and is disused, while the farmsteads have roofed buildings.

The latest date of this survey is defined by the adjacent owners. Philip Burnyeat, of Mosser, was the owner of High Nook from 1765, aged 2, and died on 16th May 1792. The Revd Mr Cooper was Thomas Cowper, curate of Loweswater, who held Bargate from 1770 or before, and died 3 June 1795. Establishing the latest survey date as 1792 immediately identifies the text in a corner of Far Longcroft, 'planted in 1799' as a later annotation.

The earliest date of the survey is more difficult to establish, but it is clear from the 'Highcross Grounds' at the bottom of the plan that Mill Hill and High Cross estates were in the same ownership, which was the case from 1759. However, the fact that the mill building is part of the estate suggests that the survey was done in 1789 or later, giving a tight range of 1789-1792 for the survey, though an earliest date of 1784 is not impossible. The relationship between the mill and Mill Hill is discussed later.

While the surveyor of the incomplete plan was not named, an overlay of the plan onto the Google satellite image of the area confirms that the survey was very accurate and professional. At this period Thomas Donald, the surveyor of the first one-inch map of Cumberland, was undertaking

¹ L&DFLHS Archive, Alex Ames Papers.



Notes:

The names are adjoining owners responsible for the boundaries shown by thick lines.
 North is to the bottom of the page
 Mosedale Beck and the mill leat on the left, flowing north.
 White Oak Beck flows north east from Philip Burnyeat's High Nook.
 Dub Beck from Loweswater flows east from the right.
 Bargate dam was at the top of High Close.

Notes:

The farmstead under Near Banks is Mill Hill.
 The farmstead in Kiln Parrock is Steel Bank.
 The areas of closes and location of wood have not been reproduced.

Figure 1. Redrawn plan, untitled, of Mill Hill Estate, Loweswater. Dated to 1789-92.

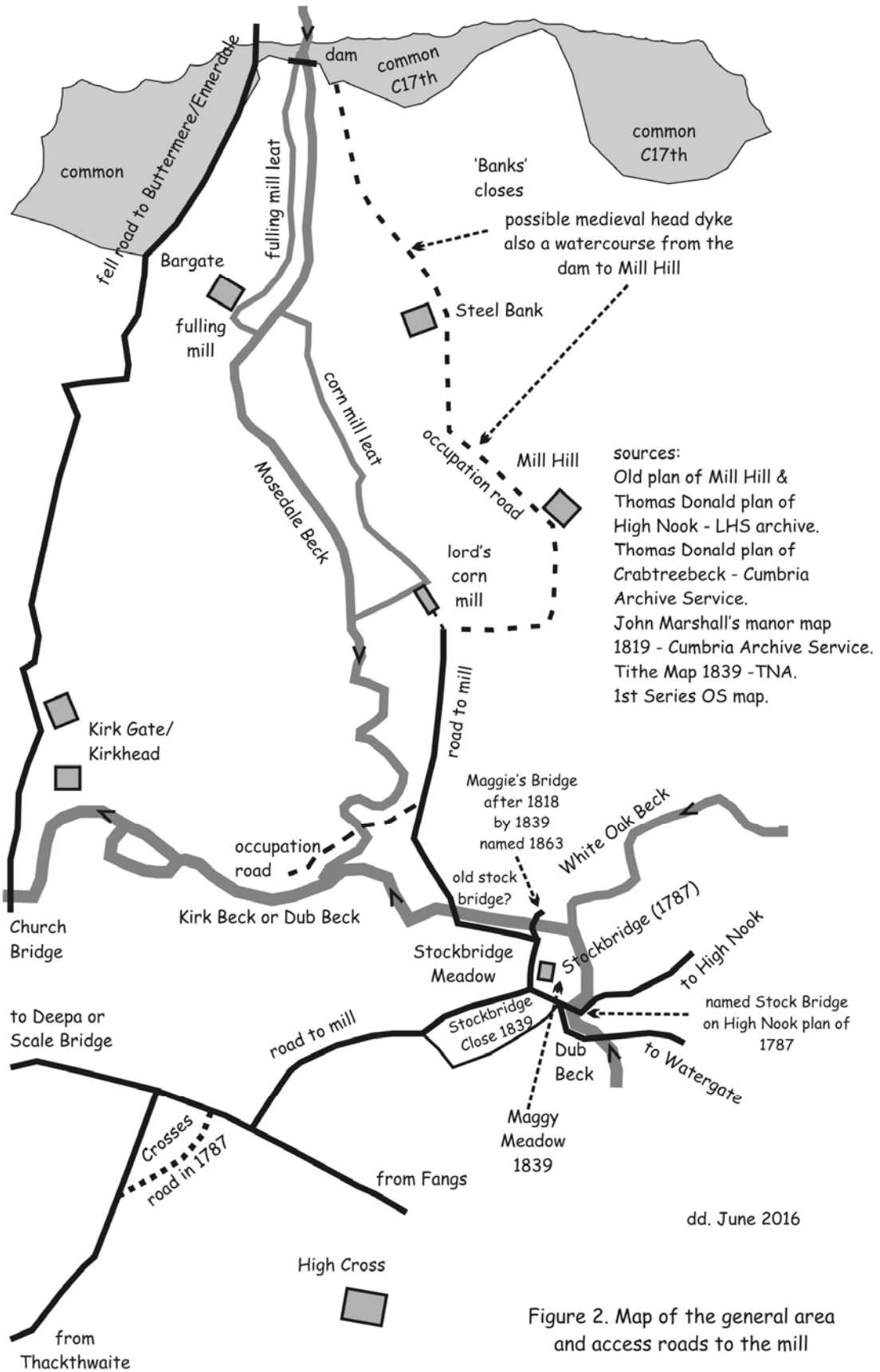


Figure 2. Map of the general area and access roads to the mill

surveys and drawing estate plans for estate owners in Loweswater and Brackenthwaite. He had married Anne Skelton of Foulsyke in 1775, had surveyed Foulsyke in 1782 and was buried in Loweswater in 1801. After 1789 he was surveying and drawing a plan of the environs of Keswick. Thomas Donald is the most likely surveyor of this estate.

The plan also shows the roads within the estate. It can be seen that the old highway to the mill, passing through Stockbridge Meadow, took a course which led directly to the mill and then the Mill Hill, whereas the present private road leads directly to Mill Hill. The history of the roads is discussed in a later section.

The corn mill and its descent

This part relies heavily on the history of the Heads of Brackenthwaite, provided by Walter Head and others – see figure 3.

It is clear that the mill shown on the plan was the lord's corn mill, from manor court records concerning maintenance of the highway to it. The leat shows it to be a water mill, and it is most likely that the lord's mill has been in that position, and served by that leat, from at least the sixteenth century. Whether it was once set in a small amount of land is unknown, but it did not include a house for the miller.

When Loweswater and Thackthwaite manors were acquired by Richard Robinson in 1545, the grant included corn mills in both manors, though by the time of the dispute adjudicated by Sir Thomas Egerton in 1597, it is clear that the customary tenants in Loweswater and Thackthwaite manors were obliged to use Loweswater mill. Mockerkin and Sosgill were in a different manor. Within that dispute the tenants had claimed that the mill was their joint customary property, for which they had been paying a rent, but the judgement of 1597 returned the mill to the lord and enabled him to let it on a lease. The tenants were obliged to have their corn ground there, and to pay multure to the miller of one twenty-fourth of their corn, or the value in coin. Their joint customary rent was reduced by thirty shilling in compensation. The mill was now a distinct property, separate from the farm

tenements, and in 1688 the annual rental of the miller's lease was £9 for the mill.²

In 1614 the lord of the manor successfully appealed the judgement of 1597 as it affected customary fines, which were paid on changes of lord or tenant. A new arbitrary fine level was imposed on the tenants, of one and a half years' full current economic rent. Consequently, in 1619, most of the tenants entered into an agreement with the lord, by an indenture through which they purchased the right to pay a fine certain at a much lower rate of two years customary rent. These tenants by indenture, or fine certain tenants, also acquired the freedom to have their corn ground at other mills. They owned the wood on their lands. All of Thackthwaite and most of Loweswater land was no longer tied to Loweswater mill, with the obligation now limited to the remaining fine arbitrary tenanted tenements. These were, approximately, Kirkstile (which had belonged to St Bees) the Parks (whose high rents made the indenture less advantageous), Gillerthwaite, and the old tenement of High Iredale (below High Nook).

We do not know whether fine certain tenants used other mills, but at least they now had regained some influence over the Loweswater miller, both regarding lower rates (multure) and prompt service. Both factors were contentious generally regarding the service of tied tenants at their mill. The 1597 judgement had required the corn to be ground in 24 hours. Tenants would use the mill every few weeks to provide a supply of oatmeal for their own use; un-threshed oats stored better than oatmeal. This staple foodstuff would typically be kept in the dome-lidded meal arks and needed regular replenishment. The mill was a busy place and the road to it had to be maintained, as did the water supply.

When did the Loweswater mill cease to be used? By 1790 we know it was disused, from the plan, and in 1752 we know it was in use, when William Longmire, the miller, baptised his second child, John. The Longmires lived in the cottage at Stockbridge, and William Longmire died there in 1782 as a labourer, the last known

² Cumbria Archive Service DLaw2/4, manor of Loweswater 1688.

inhabitant of Stockbridge. His son, John, was a cooper when he married in 1773.

In approximately 1766, according to the manor court book, the Loweswater mill freehold was sold to John Head, 1709-1772, of Turner Howe, who also held the mill at Brackenthwaite. Presumably the mill was still in use in 1766, at least for those who were obliged to use it, and we know from John Head's will that it had a drying kiln when he bought it. We do not know if John Head took the opportunity to consolidate the trade of both mills at Brackenthwaite. The bulk of the arable land which had to use the lord's mill was the greatest part of the old open arable land near to Crummock, convenient for Brackenthwaite.

We do not know if Loweswater mill was in use when the property of two mills and kilns was inherited by John Head's unmarried daughter Ann in 1772. Ann died in 1774, and the mills passed first to her mother, who died in 1775, and then to uncle Richard Head, 1713-1789, of Hope. In 1784 Richard Head wrote his will leaving both mills and kilns to his son John, but John predeceased him in 1789. So that both mills, if still held, would have come in 1789 to Richard's grandson, John Head, 1774-1808, of Turner Howe. John was 15. By that time the Loweswater mill would have been disused, and it would have made sense around that time for the mill property to be sold to Jane Head of High Cross, who owned Mill Hill tenement, surrounding the mill.

The road to the mill

The 1619 agreement was signed at the mill, which at that time was a place where all farmers had to go frequently. It was important that routes to the mill from all of Loweswater and Thackthwaite were convenient and highways maintained – see Figure 2. Problems with the road to the mill were predominant in the presentments to the manor court. Most Loweswater and Thackthwaite farmers used the road from High Cross, now the road to Maggie's Bridge and the lake, and then the road across Stockbridge meadow, shown on the old plan, which went directly to the mill.

The name of the area and the old tenement there, Stockbridge, will derive from a bridge or bridges made of logs,

after *stocc* from old English, and not a bridge for stock to cross. Stockbridge meadow was/is a flood plain for the water of Dub Beck from the lake and White Oak Beck from the fells, which would explain the need for frequent maintenance of road and bridge(s). The present private road to Mill Hill takes a direct route using a single arched stone bridge, identified as Maggie's Bridge on the first OS map, and built between 1818 and 1839. The older crossing to the mill was further east, and was the site of the recovery of the two Clarke children drowned in 1806.³ Stockbridge was also a small farm tenement, which by the mid seventeenth century had been reduced to a house and garth, rent 4d, which by 1839 had been named Maggy meadow. It is now a hard standing on private land. For some time John Borrowscale, curate of Loweswater in the seventeenth century, held Stockbridge and lived there with his family.

Stock Bridge may have been the heavily used bridge to the mill in Stockbridge Meadow. However, it is not named on any plan but just implied in 1756 in the quotation below. However, on Thomas Donald's plan of High Nook in 1787, when he was producing plans for Philip Burnyeat's properties, the bridge over Dub Beck to High Nook, and once also to High Iredale, is named Stock Bridge and is very close to Stockbridge, the house.

High Cross was a farm tenement, named from the cross roads where the road from Thackthwaite to the mill crossed the road to the west coast. The un-named low cross would have been where the other road to Thackthwaite crossed and went on to an old farmstead which became Muncaster House. After the mill went out of use it became convenient to move the high cross junction to Thackthwaite lower down the hill. A plan of Crabtree Beck and Thrusbank estate in 1787, by Thomas Donald, shows the road from Thackthwaite joining much closer to the road to the mill.

Some indication of the latest use of the mill can be gained from the last presentment on 12 May 1756: -

And we further present that the high way on the south side of Stock bridge leading from the lord's mill is out of

³ See Ray Greenhow's blog: - <http://scafellhike.blogspot.co.uk/2015/08/a-pair-of-clogs-pair-of-stockings-and.html>

repair and Jo Skelton ought to repair the same on account of his being present owner of Millhill tenement. And we order the said highway to be repaired by sd. Jo Skelton before the 10th of June next under penalty of forfeiting 13s 4d.

The mill was clearly still in use, with William Longmire, of Stockbridge as leasehold miller, but ten years after this report it was sold to John Head.

Conclusion

The emergence of an old plan of Mill Hill dating to around 1790, together with thorough research based on parish and manorial records from 1619, has provided a clear understanding of Loweswater's corn mill. The lord's mill was not within the Mill Hill farmstead, but closer to Mosedale Beck, probably surrounded by the Mill Hill farm tenement. It was a water corn mill, not a wind mill, with a leat fed from Mosedale beck well downstream of the Bargate dam.

The history of the mill has been established from 1597, through to a sale to John Head of Turner Howe around 1766, when it had a drying kiln, and to its later closure with its business consolidated with the Heads' mill at Brackenthwaite. William Longmire, living at Stockbridge, appears to have been the last miller with a lease from the lord, working in the 1750s and probably up to 1766. We do not know when the mill finally ceased working, but it had no roof in around 1790. The property was acquired by Jane Head of High Cross, incorporated into the Mill Hill Estate by 1792, and probably not before 1789.

In the Annex which follows the parallel history of the Mill Hill tenement and the relevant families has been presented since 1619. Full detail on the family descents can be found at www.derwentfells.com/features/lowesmill Mill Hill grew from being a small and declining farm tenement in the first half of the seventeenth century, to become, through the efforts of the Wood family of High Cross, a large estate which incorporated Steel Bank, a part of Bargate and Stockbridge.

There remains the question of the leat observed running from the Bargate dam alongside the roadway to Steel Bank and Mill Hill farmsteads, and its possible uses.

Although the lord's mill has now been located with a separate leat, this does not deny the possible use of that water supply for other purposes at either Steel Bank or Mill Hill farmsteads, for a whole range of possible agricultural or rural industrial activities. Further work will be required to examine such options.

It has previously been noted that the line of the road, from the Bargate dam, which should be fifteenth century, to Steel Bank, and Mill Hill, and the boundary straight on past Tarn close, has the appearance of an early head dyke. This would separate enclosed land and commons, with the later enclosures as intakes outside of it. From the Annex, this study has suggested a slightly different hypothesis; that the land outside the line, the Banks closes, may have been in whole or part the ancient sheep heaf at Mosedale belonging to St Bees, and incorporated into existing or new customary tenements in Loweswater manor after 1549. Such a sheep heaf, or pasture, would be outside of the head dyke, the primary function of which was to separate the stock from the crops. But additionally the head dyke had a function in managing water, often by means of a ditch, either to protect the enclosed land from water from the bank, or to channel that water for useful purposes. A watercourse which allowed a flow from the Bargate dam to Steel Bank and Mill Hill farmsteads could provide both functions. There is clearly further research to be done.

Annex

The Mill Hill tenement and estate.

In 1457, John Jackson of Millhill was fined 4d for 'fishing with a net', which indicates that the farm tenement of Mill Hill existed as a landholding with a farmstead at that time.⁴ This was safely before the incorporation of ex-monastic land into the customary tenements after 1550, and before the disputes between lord and tenants of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In 1619 William Burnyeat was tenant of Mill Hill, customary rent 6s 8d, and he purchased his right to future fines at two years customary rent, or 13s 4d, as an indenture or fine certain customary tenant. While there may have been changes to the tenement before 1619, in

⁴ Roz Southey, Life in old Loweswater, p.33.

effect this 1619 resolution defined or redefined the tenements going forward. This would be necessary because the holdings at 1619 were now either fine certain or fine arbitrary, and the land and rights held retained that status well past the end of this study. From this time, with customary rights established, there was a trade in tenements or part tenements, and whether each element was fine certain or fine arbitrary was fixed by the name of the holding tenement in 1619. Corn grown on fine arbitrary land had to be ground at the lord's mill, whoever owned the land.

In the area around Mill Hill all the relevant customary tenements, Steel Bank Bargate, Stockbridge, High Nook and Kirkgate/Kirkhead were also indenture, or fine certain, and therefore there are no relevant fine arbitrary closes, which have been mapped, to help delineate Mill Hill in 1619. Nor are the court books sufficiently complete or detailed to allow a full reconstruction. However, the enfranchisement of the land in the old plan, which happened in 1805, confirms that it contained the old Mill Hill, and in whole or part, Steel Bank, Stockbridge, and Bargate – which therefore had land on both sides of Mosedale Beck in 1619. The estate in the plan discovered is much larger than Mill Hill in 1619.

The story of Mill Hill after 1619, under William Burnyeat, is of a small old tenement in decline. The 6s 8d rent in 1619 became 5s 2d by 1650 as individual closes and buildings were sold off. A particularly relevant surrender and admittance of 8 June 1647 was to William Wilkinson, likely to be one of the Steel Bank family, though not the Steel Bank tenement owner.

8 June 1647 Willm Burneyate of the milne hele Doth surrender one house cald the littele nue house & fourteen yards of ground in leneth & four in breth lying at the est end of the sayed nue house & halfe a roud of the arable of the hemp land lying at the est end of the sayed 14 yardes & one close called the littele dayles & the ould dunge hele sted lying upon the how
the house & the above sayed parseles being of the yearly rent of xij d ... for the use of Willm Wilkinson ... fine ii s

A new house had been built, which seems to be the one on the east of the farmstead, and purchased with a small amount of arable land by William Wilkinson, who would probably live there. Henry Wilkinson, no doubt of the same family, would almost certainly have been living there at the time of his death in 1679. His will and inventory survive showing that he was a miller, living at Mill Hill and owing, at the time, £4 6s in mill rent. His possessions indicate a basic level of agricultural activity consistent with the land acquired by William Wilkinson in 1647. Henry's tenure as miller lasted for at least 12 years, William Burnyeat's inventory listing Henry Wilkinson, miller, as a debtor in 1667.

In 1650 a moiety, or a half interest, in the remainder of Mill Hill was transferred to Anthony Steel of Thrushbank, probably following a mortgage. In 1653 both moieties were sold to John Wood of High Cross. He was the son of Thomas Wood, who almost certainly held High Cross in 1619, was also brother to William Wood, and heir to them both by 1699. John Wood was married in 1652 and became the bailiff of Loweswater manor until his death in 1703.

William Burnyeat lost his equity in Mill Hill in 1653 but seems to have lived there for the rest of his natural life, as was often negotiated in such equity release deals. In 1665 William Iredell, who became the Wood's tenant farmer, presented 'Ellene the wife of William Burnyeate of Mill Hill for slandering him ... saying ... he stole her goose'.

Having purchased the rump of Mill Hill in 1653, the Wood family then took opportunities as they arose to increase the holding to the west of Mosedale Beck. By 1703, when John Wood of High Cross was buried, he had owned both High Cross and a substantial Mill Hill estate, though not the full area on the plan, not all of Steel Bank. And the corn mill was still owned by the lord.

The history of Steel Bank, otherwise Steal or Steele, as a separate tenement has not been sought before 1619, when it was a holding of rent 10s 11d of John Wilkinson. The farmstead location on Kiln Parrock appears to closely associate that site with potash kilns which took bracken from the banks and supplied the fulling mill at Bargate. As the name implies, Steel

Bank held much of the pasture land called banks above the road, and these banks may well have been part of the monastic sheep heath at Mosedale which came to the manor in 1549 – a hypothesis which requires further research.

John Wilkinson's family lived at Steel Bank (see Figure 2) in 1580, and Peter Wilkinson of Steel Bank married Elizabeth Pearson in 1626. Agnes Wilkinson inherited Steel Bank in 1652, aged 20, as the eldest surviving child, her brothers all dead. She married John Hudson, of the Kirkhead/Kirkgate family, but by the customs of the manor she remained the customary tenant of Steel Bank. Her mother received the customary dower of a residence plus half the rents and profits of Steel Bank until 1687. However, the failure of the male line signalled the break-up of Steel Bank as a tenement, as parts were sold off by John and Agnes Hudson, allowing the Wood family to grow the Mill Hill Estate. John Hudson surrendered his residual part of Steel Bank, rent 2s 6d, to Robert Walker in 1682, which the Walkers retained through much of the eighteenth century.

Bargate, the property on the east of the beck and shown on the plan as the property of the Revd Mr Cowper, can probably be associated with the setting aside of land for a second fulling mill recorded in 1437.⁵ The location of an earlier mill might well be indicated by the close called Tenters at the bottom left of the plan. That first fulling mill might have been in Low Mill Ings, served by a continuation of the leat from the corn mill along the bank which forms the western boundary of Low Mill Ings.

In 1619 Bargate, or Baryeat, was a tenement of 12s 2d rent, held by Peter Walker. The surname Walker derives from fulling or walking cloth, possibly indicating that this family had been at Bargate for generations, but by 1619 fulling had almost certainly ceased. It has formerly been assumed that Bargate fulling mill was in business through to the late 18C, competing with the corn mill for water. A

detailed study of Loweswater wills/inventories, manorial and parish records, however, has given no indication of fulling as a local Loweswater industry after the Tudor period. Cloth was only being produced in small amounts, sufficient to meet home needs. Tenters at Lorton survived as a fulling mill and Loweswater weavers product was being fullled there by 1800.⁶ The reasons for the decline of the wool trade have been discussed elsewhere.⁷

Between 1653 and 1658, a series of admittances involving John Hudson and Anthony Steele of Thrushbank, indicate that John Walker's tenement of Bargate was sold in parts, leaving John Hudson presumably with the parts he wanted, and Henry Allason holding a tenement of 6s rent at Bargate. It appears that this 6s tenement was fully on the East side of Mosedale Beck, and that John Hudson retained at least all that of Bargate on the west side. In 1770 the Bargate tenement of Thomas Cowper and of his daughter Faith Towerson from 1795, was east of the beck and of the same rent of 6s.

On his death in 1703, John Wood (see Figure 3.) of High Cross held High Cross and the Mill Hill estate, which included purchases from Steel Bank. He had two daughters living. Jane Wood had married John Head of Turner Howe in 1684 and died in 1723. She provides the link with the Heads who purchased the lord's mill. John Wood's elder daughter was Anne, who married Joseph Pearson in 1679. However, Joseph Pearson had died by 1690, and Ann remarried to Richard Skelton. He was not of Loweswater, and most likely a merchant of the Whitehaven area. The lack of parish records suggest that Ann left Loweswater and that her Skelton family were born elsewhere. John Wood had no sons who survived or had heirs, which meant that Anne, as eldest daughter, was the customary heir in her own right. She and her Skelton family returned to High Cross after 1703, with Ann taking charge of her property – she was one of the two constables in 1710.

⁶ John Bolton's lecture, 1891.

⁷ G. Elliott, 'The decline of the woollen trade in Cumberland, Westmorland and Northumberland in the late 16th century', *TCWAAS* 1961.

⁵ See Angus Winchester, *Landscape and society in medieval Cumbria*, p.118.

The incoming Skeltons became the principal gentry family in Loweswater in the late eighteenth century, but not without some tensions with the older farming families. In 1736, in the context of the deaths of her son John Pearson and her second husband, Richard Skelton, Anne was persuaded to make provision for her second Skelton son, Joseph, died 1749 aged 57. The first Skelton son, Richard, would inherit the Whitehaven assets from his father. Ann gave the Mill Hill estate, now grown to a large estate of 19s 3d rent, to her son Joseph. But only for a period of twenty years, after which it would revert to her customary heir, her grandson John Pearson, 1729-1761, of High Cross, seven years old at the time. John Pearson was also heir to freehold estates in Branthwaite and other property, while his uncle, Joseph Skelton, had otherwise to be content with his marriage to Anne Iredale, of Redhow.

When Joseph Skelton died, Mill Hill went to his heir, his son Joseph Skelton, 1730-1806, later of Foulsyke, who was admitted in 1751. When the twenty years were up Joseph Skelton refused to surrender the property to his cousin, disputing both the intent of their grandmother and the validity of the process under the customs of the manor. The dispute went to the Court of the Exchequer, and the inquisitions made for the case showed that the arrangement was well known. The signed papers had been lodged with Isaac Fearon, the Quaker man of business at Armaside, Lorton. Joseph Skelton had deliberately stripped Mill Hill of all its timber, devaluing the property by an estimated £200, a sale refused by local wood merchants, but undertaken by Spedding and company of Whitehaven. Local sympathies were clearly with the Pearson, not the Skelton, and John Pearson won his case in 1758. A special out of court session was arranged on 1 Mar 1759, before Sir Wilfrid Lawson in person, at which Mill Hill was surrendered and admitted between the

two gentlemen. Joseph became a customs officer.

John Pearson of High Cross was now by far the wealthier, with High Cross, Mill Hill, Stockbridge, and property in Branthwaite. In 1760 he married Margaret Tyson of Lamplugh. But in less than a year, John Pearson, gentleman, was dead, without issue. John Pearson's customary heir to High Cross and Mill Hill was his sister Jane, who had married John Jackson, a mariner of Whitehaven. John Pearson's young widow Margaret, however, was entitled to her dower, and enjoyed it for sixteen years before Joseph's brother, Richard Skelton of Godferhead, married a Pearson widow, as had his grandfather.

Jane Jackson, 1731-1801, was admitted in 1761 but was soon a widow. She married Jeremiah Head of Branthwaite Hall in 1763, but after his death in 1787, Jane Head returned to the High Cross/Mill Hill estate. With the purchase of the ex-Robert Walker holding at Steel Bank, and with the acquisition of Loweswater mill and kiln from the Heads of Brackenthwaite, the Mill Hill estate, as shown in the old plan, was complete. When Jane Head, born a Pearson at High Cross, died there in 1801, her son John Head MD, 1765-1807, took ownership and purchased the freehold in 1805.

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The Journal

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L&DFLHS – Programme for 2016

Date	Event
8 th September	'Emergency' – life in the Lake District before '999' - Judith Shingler
10 th November	'Happy Days? Educating the masses – elementary schooling 1818-1918 in Cumbria' – Dr Michael Winstanley.
Talks are held at the Yew Tree Hall in Lorton at 7.30pm. Visitors £3.00 with refreshments.	