

Staveley & District History Society

Journal Winter 2013-14

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The views expressed in articles in this Journal are those of the individual authors and not necessarily those of the Society.

Cover photo: Horse drawn fire engine c1900 in Staveley Wood Turning Co. yard (Wilf's on right)

The next issue of the *Journal* (No 30, the Spring 2014 issue) will be published about the 12th April 2014. All contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor no later than early March.

From the President

A stalwart member of your Committee has left us in the past year. John Berry has moved to Cheshire to be near family which is a sadness for our Society. He worked indefatigably as our Hon Secretary, as well as digitising photographs, organising, producing and doing every conceivable job, including preparing occasional papers, putting on exhibitions and doing all this with great efficiency. He leaves behind a wonderful legacy of files, electronic and paper, and a new website, a rich resource for all who want to find out about Staveley and District's history. We shall miss his expertise in all matters historical to do with Staveley.



The 28th July 2014 brings the 100th Anniversary of the outbreak of the First World War. We plan to mark that Anniversary by holding a Members' evening which will be based on the First World War and its effect on our area. Very recently, we had an excellent talk by David Shackleton on War Memorials which we hope will have sent people scurrying to their boxes in the loft to find details of their families. I have done just that and it is both interesting and edifying. The Members' evening is on April 8th 2014 so do let us know then of your finds, not only about the soldiers but the effect it had on those struggling on without their breadwinners.

On a brighter note have a Happy Christmas and a more prosperous New Year.

Clare Brockbank

Six Nomads in Normandy - 1912

In an Arnside junkshop, the battered album had drifted to the top of a pile - *Six Nomads in Normandy*. The map was instantly recognisable: the south coast of England, the north coast of France, every mile and kilometre marked, by sea and on foot. A D-day memoir? As a student, I spent one summer working near Arromanches and knew the Normandy war graves. Flicking through the album, I found photos: young men in straw boaters; wasp-waisted girls in long skirts – in the First of Cerisy? The D-Day battlegrounds? Yes, but this was an older story, spelled out on the title page: "*SIX NOMADS IN NORMANDY*" - *Being a true and authentic account of their Adventures and Mis-Adventures - By THEMSELVES - MCMXII (1912)*

This book was important. Studying photos, I'd barely noticed the interleaved typescript. Six young people had a story to tell, adventures to remember. They couldn't know their world was about to end. Beyond the Edwardian fashions, the faces were young, twenty-somethings, enjoying the holiday of a lifetime. It was enterprising to make a book, organise the maps, the photos, the binding. This was



English and Germans exchanging ideas

desktop publishing, vintage 1912. The year the Titanic sank, Britain was beleaguered by strikes, including the miners, rail and dock workers. As usual, there was trouble in the Balkans, and, far nearer home, in Ireland too. One line cried out from the faded page: *'Poppies made the fields of corn and barley very gay.* At the end of the last chapter, one of the girls proposed a toast, in

sparkling *cidre de Normandie*: *' To friendship, long life and happy, happy days.'*

At the record office in Kendal, the archivist asked if I realised what I'd found. This was, of course, 'a letter from a lost generation'.

Intrigued by the backpackers' adventures, I contacted history societies in Brittany and Normandy. Dr Jacques Gury of Rennes rejected the 'lost generation' cliché, but suggested, instead, that the Nomads' story offers *'a glimpse of the twentieth century as it might have been'*...young internationalists, backpacking across what would become the 1914 battlegrounds. The friends weren't lost. They had maps. When they took the wrong path, they could ask the way and, always the tricky part, understand the reply. Using French public transport, arranging all their accommodation, backpacking with partners, they could be in the wrong century. Two years later, did the four young men return to France, to die there, on the Western Front?

In 1912, how could they hope for happier days? The 'Morocco crisis' of 1911 which had nearly brought Europe to the brink of war had passed. Diplomacy had succeeded. Britain and the U.S. had agreed that in future, all disputes between them would be settled by arbitration. For these young people and all their generation, 1912 could be their 1963, the year after the Cuba crisis, by which time a nuclear holocaust had been averted. Then, Captain Josceline Bagot, the MP for Kendal expressed his hopes for the future: *'The twentieth century might go down in history as the period when the heavy yoke of great armaments was taken from the shoulders of the world.'*

Dead soldiers are the easiest to trace. Setting off for France, they were 'Mr Pulford's party'. Faster than any War Office telegram, www.cwgc.com led to Fred Pulford's name, high on the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme at Thiepval. Like the Menin Gate, Thiepval commemorates a *'litany of nameless names'*, young men

who ‘*vanished into the mud and lost the light*’. Fred Pulford’s story is the familiar tragedy. He’s still missing. King’s Liverpool Regiment and HSBC archives confirm that he enlisted at once. In 1914, his friends made very different choices. Newly married to his backpacking girlfriend, Alec Westmore joined the RAMC, serving in a Field Ambulance as a stretcher bearer from February 1915 until he was seriously injured in the Spring Offensive of 1918. After the Armistice, Alec’s articles about the work of the RAMC were published in the Liverpool Courier. In 1928, he was the principal author of *The Story of the 63rd Field Ambulance*. The Ambulance cared for desperately injured men, whatever their nationality. Alec’s



chapters are distinctive, often painful, occasionally anarchic and even comic. Passchendaele is unbearable, the Somme Swimming Gala could be a lost episode of *Blackadder Goes Forth*.

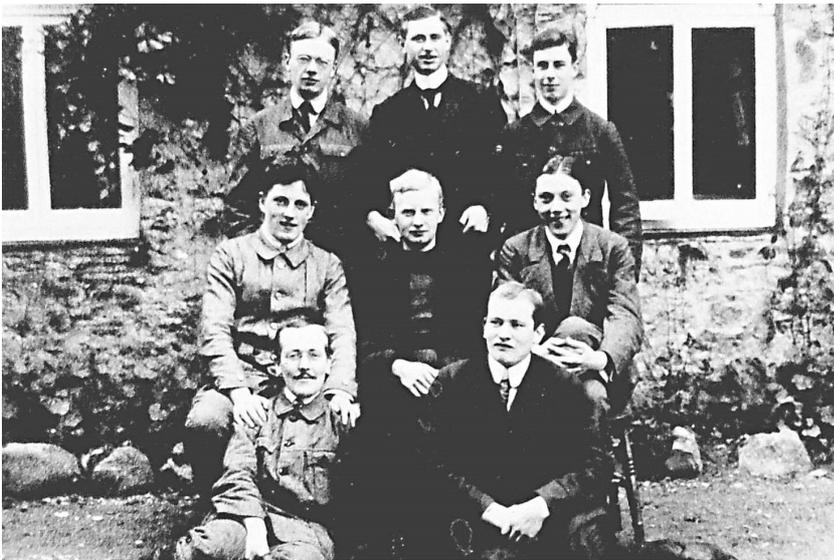
Tracing Alec’s family led in time, to the other Nomads, including Alec’s close friend, Frank Bourne, who ‘wasn’t in the war’. Reading Frank’s thoughtful chapters in the 1912 book, it wasn’t entirely surprising that this young man became a conscientious objector.



Cooperative Holidays members in Germany, with Ferienheimgesellschaft founders

Confidently backpacking in France, the Nomads were all members of the Co-operative Holidays Association. Inspired by a young minister’s experience of all too familiar social problems, the original CHA rejected all barriers between people - of gender, faith, income or politics.

Frank’s story led to Arthur Leonard’s records in the Greater Manchester Record Office, placed there by his son-in-law, Stramongate headmaster Tom Green. In a 1910 photo, Frank is surrounded by many other young men, in their teens and early twenties. Together, the CHA and Frankfurt’s Ferienheimgesellschaft worked to bring young people together, enjoying



German group at Newlands 1913

holidays here and in Germany. As Europe's leaders prepared for war, teachers and schools focused on peace. The Nomads' story led to Berlin, to Cologne, to Dresden, and above all, to British and German teenagers, enjoying 'Swallows and Amazons' holidays together, staying at the Newlands centre on Derwentwater and writing about their own adventures.

Rosamund Ridley

(Further information can be found at: www.nomads.vze.com)

Staveley's Volunteer Firefighters – Part 1

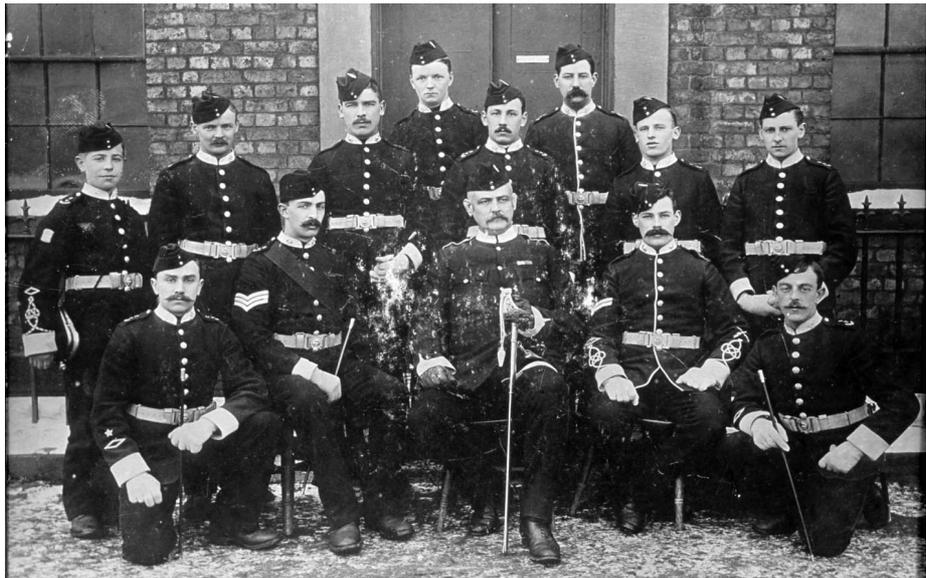
(This is the first part of an article written by John Armthwaite, transcribed from the December 1952 edition of Cumbria. It will be continued in future Journals.)

During one of those infrequent times, when motor traffic is not careering along the main road, I sat on an iron seat near the Westmorland village of Staveley and enjoyed hearing the sounds which are unmistakably rural. The day was nearly half over, but an old cockerel was calling as stridently as when light first comes to the morning sky. Crowds of brittle leaves scraped along the roadway. Two cows shouted at each other across the pastures. Very faintly came the tinkle of water as it flowed over a stony bed. Then a motor lorry eased itself down the hill and I heard the distant sound of a motor cycle. With a glance at the Autumn-stained woodlands and fells above the village I walked into Staveley.

An old man was busy constructing a wall near the bridge. Skilfully he positioned the stones, fitting them into that wonderful jig-saw puzzle which is a Cumbrian wall, but I noticed with some disappointment that he was applying dabs of cement to his handiwork. My imagination would have preferred to have written that he was making a dry-stone wall. Behind him was as picturesque a joiner's shop as I have ever seen – a venerable old building which snuggled closely to the stream as though anxious to escape the modern life of the village and the noisy procession of motor transport on the nearby road. I saw with satisfaction the rusting, rotting, discarded, unwanted assembly of items which one always finds at a workshop in the country and which always fills me with the desire to investigate. There were sturdy cartwheels, which today are almost in the category of museum pieces.

Tommy Johnson and his son were working in the shop, and it was soon apparent that they are interested in all that relates to Staveley. With good spirits and humour they told me of days which long since passed into history; of characters and customs, sport and - Staveley's Fire Brigade! I had seen the brigade headquarters on the road which leads to the station and had been amused to see on top of the old building two appliances for warning the firemen - and the local population - when a fire occurs. One was a modern siren, standing in a framework of wood and netting, and the other a historic bell, with a canopy of stone, similar to those on small churches.

Tommy Johnson has been in charge of the Staveley Brigade since 1922, but he has always been interested, and remembers that when he was a lad the late J.L. Johnson was in charge. Until 1939 an old manual, horse-drawn engine was operated, and the firemen had the authority to requisition any horse they found to draw it to the scene of an outbreak. The



Volunteers back from the Boer War c1902
including: J.Usher, SJ Brockbank, WA Barker, W Bewsher, T Johnson, M. Gaskell, R Brockbank, WD Murdoch, EF Martindale

last time the engine was used, however, it was hitched on to a motor lorry and made a quicker journey. On one occasion the farmer and his son-in-law helped to put out a fire on their premises and then demanded money for giving assistance!

When fire broke out at an out-barn, the firemen could do nothing to save the building. The tenant insisted that something should be done, so the men ran a hose from a stream 150 yards away. A steep hill separated them from the barn, and they were exhausted by the time they had pumped the water through the hose. In any case, it was little more than a trickle. It was not until six months ago - fifteen years after the event - that Tommy Johnson discovered how that fire had been caused. Some children were the culprits.

Rules and Regulations

Tommy laughs heartily at one recollection of his fire-fighting days, though at the time he was very mad. He was making a round of the building which was affected, wading in deep water, when firemen from Windermere directed a strong jet of water into the premises and caught him in the chest, knocking him backwards into the water. It took him considerable time to scramble upright again. Among his treasures

is a slip of paper, crisp and brown with age, on which is written the names of firemen who were appointed to clean the engine at Staveley in 1904. He also has a copy of the rules and instructions which governed the Volunteer Fire Brigade at Staveley many years ago. The Brigade had to "*meet for drill and testing the engines not less than once in two months, or oftener if required. Any member being absent from two drills of the Brigade in succession, and neglecting or refusing to attend a fire without giving to the superintendent or officer in command a satisfactory reason for his absence, it shall be laid before the committee, who shall call a. genera! meeting, such meeting having power to fine that member a fine not exceeding 2s. 6d., or be dismissed from the Brigade.*" A fine of 2s. 6d. was imposed for practical joking "*or disorderly conduct at the drills or other assemblies of the Brigade*" or for leaving the scene of a fire without permission, unless, of course, injured by the outbreak.



Homeguard & Fire Brigade "Warship Week" Event 1942

In a note written for the benefit of the engineers occurs the following solemn pronouncement: "*It cannot be too strongly impressed on the engineers (whether in practice or at a fire) that they should avoid, if possible, playing on the bystanders.*"

I do not envy those Staveley men who came under the category of firemen, for they appear to have had

a big job: *They shall make all possible speed to the engine-house; will take orders from the foremen, and when ready for a start will take their appointed seats on the engine; and on arriving at the fire {being numbered off) they will dismount, and stand by the side of the engine until the word of command is given by the foreman. They will put the length of hose, suction, etc., together according to their drill, in the most expeditious manner, and rescue any persons or property from the premises on fire, pull down any buildings, etc., if ordered by the superintendent or officer in command, as well as to clear away any obstructions such as naked walls, burning timber, etc., that may impede the efficiency of the engine, or may be considered as dangerous; and otherwise act according to the instructions of the superintendent or officer in command.*

(to be continued)

Tales from the Tapes: A conversation about life in Ings – Part 7

Transcript of SDHS meeting held in Ings Parish Hall on 16th January 2001 chaired by Joe Scott (JS). The panel: Dorothy Buckley (DB), John Redmayne (JR), Denis Sowerby (DS) and Dorothy Whitwell (DW). Questions (Q) and statements (V) came from the 'floor' and the chairman. We conclude with final memories of the 'Good Old Days'.

DB: I think when the garage opened at first, I can remember my husband saying, before I knew him, that a lot of the local boys used to play cards. Can anybody remember that?

Fred (Unsworth): Playing cards? At the garage? We used to play cards every night there. We played Solo in the office - it was a damned nuisance when anybody came for petrol. (*laughter*) We had a dart board there as well. But Joe Walker used to come down and I think one of the Thistlethwaite's, the Speddings, and a Reston man used to come up. You could always get a hand of Solo.

Q: Was there a pub in the village in those days?

Fred: No we didn't have any thing like that. I've many a time worked till 9 at night and I didn't get paid extra for this, I just stayed there because it was a good time.

JS: It's surprising there was never a pub in Ings until quite recently with the Watermill - only about ten years isn't it - not very long.

Fred: It is surprising...there was one in Kentmere of course then.

JS: I suppose it's the fact it's so near Staveley - you could walk into the pubs in Staveley and get a drink.

Q: But you've got your own church. What sort of life did that play in the village? Were Sundays different from ordinary days in the week?

DS: Well, nearly everybody then had Sunday off. I mean, the farmers in general, you milked, did what had to be done and the rest of the time you rested and those of us who were so inclined went to church and the church was always, all my life, quite well supported. And in those days there was possibly three services a day, 8 o'clock, half past ten and half past six.

JS: And Sunday School for kids?

DS: And there was Sunday School some of the time, on and off. Depending on the vicar, because during the thirties I think we had five different vicars in Ings.

JS: You had a vicar of your own, though, didn't you?

DS: Yes, I've actually seen fifteen vicars in my 75 years.

Q: Where was the vicarage?



The former almshouses at Grassgarth

DS: About a mile away down the road - on your left as you are going to Staveley - Victorian building - the first left really up the lane.

Jean Harding: It was sold in recent years wasn't it?

DS: Yes. It was sold when our last vicar left. Of course, now we share Staveley vicar.

JS: Was that a big blow to Ings

to lose its own vicar? I mean, it loses its school, in '72 that is, and you lose your vicar, sometime in the '80's, was that?

DS: Yes, well, our last vicar left in 1993. But we'd been warned for donkey's years that sooner or later we would have to be without a vicar. For many years, we just had elderly men who just had two or three years left to do - they were perhaps 60 or over when they came, and they only did 4 or 5 years. Then in 1975, we no longer had a vicar, we just had priests in charge. Priests in charge can be moved by the Bishop whenever he wishes - they've no security of tenure, and we had three Priests in charge over a period of about 17 years. Basically their main job was religious education advisor to the southern half of the Carlisle diocese. But consequently we had more educated men because they had this other job, than the normal run of the mill, if you understand what I mean. We were a small parish but we had for those three incumbencies very clever men.

DB: Progressive.

DS: Progressive. I suppose with a lot of drive about them.

DB: It was Ian Robins who first thought when the school closed that we should turn this into a church hall and it was he who really worked at it.

DS: He was the first of those priests in charge.

DB: And of course the building belonged to the church, the school did. And they were very keen to sell it at a high price and it was a real fight to get it, to maintain, to keep this building. I think we got it for £5,000, whereas if it had been sold for building, house building, of course, they would have got a lot of money for it. And from then on of course, we started to alter it.

Q: You wouldn't have had a village hall, would you?

DB: No we wouldn't have had a hall.

Fred: Dorothy, when you say 'we bought it' for £5000, who bought it?

DB: Well, it was really the church, Ings church. But it belonged to the Diocese.

Q: It was a church school, in other words?

DB: Yes, it was a change in the '40s, it either had to belong to the education authority or the church. Well, Ings belonged to the church. But that was still a battle because the Diocese wanted money for the building.

Q When was that, was it 1972?

DB: No it closed then. When did Ian Robins come?

DS: Ian came in 1975, but it would be opened - it tells you on that brass plate there. Is it 1979? But that's after we'd completed it. It cost about the same amount to put it all in order as it cost to buy it.

MH: Where did your funds come from? How did you get funds for it?

DS: Multiple efforts, various things and quite a lot of straight donations as well.

DB: Yes, I think there were a lot of donations.

DS: And we got some from such as the Scott Trust.

JS: It sounds as if Ings was much more of a community in the past than it is nowadays? Perhaps in some ways it looks as if it's still a lively and active community dealing with the changes and adapting itself to them. I suppose one of the main differences is that the average person here is much older now than they were.

V: More young families then.

JS: More young families? There's not so many families then, mostly grey haired folk like us.

DB: No, the young farmers aren't so interested in doing things. I mean it's just their interests have changed, haven't they?

Q: Is there a trust to do with the you know the chap who died away in Leghorn? Bateman? Is there a Bateman Trust?

DS: Yes, the Bateman Trust owns six flats, cottages down the road. Several of our tenants from those cottages are here tonight.

DB: The almshouses were sold up at Grassgarth. We were able to sell them and then build.

Q: When was the Bateman Trust founded then?

JS: There's a legacy from the 18th century, isn't there?



Reston Hall c1991

DS: Yes. You see, Bateman, who founded this trust, he had the present church building built.

JS: Is he the chap that built Reston Hall?

DS: Yes, in 1743. And eventually he left the church of course and he left the almshouses. And I think it lapsed for a number of years, did the Bateman Trust charity, but it's functioning now. Eventually it sold St. Anne's Farm and St Anne's cottages and with the money it made on that, it purchased an extra couple of almshouses. There were originally four almshouses and there are now six.

JS: These are at Grassgarth?

DS/DB: Now down here. There were four at Grassgarth originally.

Q: Was there a doctor? What sort of medical provision did you have?

DB: No...a Staveley or Windermere doctor.

David: I'd like to ask a general question, we did just touch on it earlier on. But I'd like to hear each member of the panel give

their view as to whether they - on the whole, on balance, have we been talking about the good old days, or do we say to ourselves, 'Well thank God that no longer applies'. So, is it progress or anti-progress?

JS: Could we ask them to cover in turn? Denis?

DS: Well, when I was young, the only protection against disease was the small pox vaccine. The next immunisation that I can remember was against diphtheria at the beginning of 1940. There was a lot of illness then. There was measles, there was, I remember the school being closed through an outbreak of whooping cough. Also an outbreak of impetigo which you think, well, that wasn't a reason for closing the school. It was apparently terribly infectious and I think we all got it eventually. I remember having mumps, all sorts of horrible things and I don't think you could say that those were good old days in that respect. And there's none of us now who are hungry or suffering shortage of food. I can't say that we were ever short of food, but only with a lot of sacrifice by our parents were we able to have decent meals.

JS: Dorothy. Good old days or bad old days?

DB: I was quite happy. My father was a countryman so food wise we always had shooting. We always had our own hens so there was plenty to eat and good cooking. I mean it was basic. When my father built a bungalow when he was 21 for mother,



New almshouses – Meadowcroft Cottages, Ings

well there wasn't a bathroom, but that would seem to be common everywhere. My grandparents had a bath, they lived in a bigger house. The one they built had two bedrooms...there wasn't a bathroom. And we cooked, in those days when I was tiny, on an oil stove even though it was a wooden bungalow. But yes, I can't think that they were unhappy days, perhaps we were lucky.

DW: Yes, what you'd never had you never missed. All these things that you've got now, you never thought about them because you hadn't had them. And yes, my childhood was happy and I enjoyed the community life of the village which I still do. And yes, on the whole, they were good days. I know there was shortages and there were things you didn't have but on the whole yes, I enjoyed my childhood and I don't look back with any bad memories either.

JR Well, life's just what you make it, right from whatever it is, isn't it? Going back to youth, like, I thought it was great, life...I always thought neighbours joined more together in everyday life than they do now. Everybody's racing on now, they haven't time for the other fellow now, like. So I think earlier in life, it were better than now.

JS My main feeling is that we're older now than we were then. Could I end the meeting really? Has anybody got a key question that they want to ask that they haven't yet managed to raise.

Q: How did you manage without computers? (*gale of laughter*)

JS: They did it without computers, they could add up, they learnt lessons, their tables at school. But I'd like to thank our panel very much for coming along and answering our questions. Shall we give you a round of applause?



Ings from Reston Scar

JR: Just one funny little thing might make you laugh, you know. Back in rationing time in this village there was only one place where you could buy tobacco and cigarettes, toffee, like, and it was at Meadowcroft there. It was Mr Mason really. You know you took your ration book for a few sweets, maybe a packet of Woodbines like, you know, and...he was very keen in his garden and he used to generally be in the garden when you went, summer time anyway, and as you went to the shop, there he would come, hands absolutely covered in soil, like, you know - you would ask for a quarter of fruit drops, (*laughter*) they weren't wrapped up then - straight into the jar like (*laughter*) so you got fruit drops, soil and worms (*laughter*) all at the same price!

JS Thank you very much.