

Staveley & District History Society

Journal Winter 2015-16

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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: The refurbished Staveley War Memorial

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The next issue of the *Journal* (No 36, the Spring 2016 issue) will be published about the 12th April 2016. All contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor by early March.

From the Chair

I am delighted to report that the Staveley War Memorial has now been refurbished, as depicted on the front cover of this Journal, to coincide with the centenary of the end of WW1. Sandstone slabs have been used to replace the worn and loose cobbles which had made the surface there uneven and slippery. In fact, the final appearance is much like that on old photographs of the memorial. Some thanks are due. Staveley with Ings Parish Council masterminded the repair and contributed 50% of the funding. The other half was raised by SDHS, from our members and from a generous donation by Lakeland Ltd. It gives me particular



pleasure to thank all who contributed and enabled our Society to play a role in helping to ensure the longevity of one of the village's important historical artifacts.

Almost concurrent with this refurbishment, Ings' bus-shelter was damaged by the impact from a towed car. The work of the car left the

structure unsafe so further demolition was carried out. It is said that little happens

in Ings, so it was deemed necessary to record this event for posterity. Here are the 'before' and 'after' pictures. The picture above is taken from the Westmorland Gazette, November 29th 1991. The caption reads: *Chairman of South Lakeland District Council. Coun. Stan Lewis, cuts the ceremonial tape to officially open the new bus shelter in Ings, which has been built by residents of the village. Pictured (from left) are Mr Don Kewley, Mrs Marjorie Hiley, Mr Andrew Taylor, Mr Stan Lewis, Mr Alan Carrie, Mr David Carrie, and Mr Henry Hiley, chairman of Hugill Parish Council.*



Seasons greetings to all our members and readers.

John Hiley

Windermere Grammar School - a personal reminiscence

John Clarke grew up at Fairbank Farm, Ings and attended Windermere Grammar School from 1958 to 1965

WGS was a great little School and, I guess, an early form of comprehensive. One of the remarkable features was that I had the same teachers for each subject throughout my school days. Would that today's scholars were so favoured. I owe WGS a lot. Indeed I remember that when I first became a Director of Barclays back in 1986, the Head of Personnel invited me to meet Shadow Education Minister Jack Straw just to prove to a highly critical Labour Party that with a good education and some training, a farmer's son from a small country school really could make it in The City. What I did not say is that a rather disaffected Staff Manager told me when I joined in 1968 that to get to be a Director one had to be Eton, Oxford, Guards and 6ft 2 inches. I had one out of four!



John Clarke (on right of group)
- field trip to Ingleton Caves 21.06.61

The following is an edited extract from my personal diary, age 14 years and 1 month (Safell House Form 3L):

Friday 14th July 1961 dawned cloudy, damp and chilly, a not untypical Summer's morning in the Lake District. All or most Windermere Grammar School scholars arrived at school as usual and gathered in front of the bike sheds to await the arrival of Brown's Motor coaches for today was House Climbs day and it was Scaffell's turn to ascend Fairfield. "Killer" Robinson and "Trosh" Thomas, respectively Deputy Head and Head, sniffed the air, surveyed the lowering cloud base and decreed that the House Climbs were to proceed. The Brown's Motor coaches duly departed as a light rain began to fall in a stiffening breeze.

Scaffell House alighted from their buses at the foot of Dunmail Raise and, under the leadership of teachers Mike Houston and Alf Henderson, started the climb towards Grisedale Tarn. Most boys were clad in 1960's leisure wear which included canvas gym shoes, wellingtons, jeans and plastic pac-a-macs. A few of us, myself included, became separated from the main party, attached ourselves to Mike Houston and got ever so slightly lost. Meanwhile, as we climbed ever higher the wind strengthened to gale force and the heavy rain and some hail hit us horizontally...not an entirely unusual occurrence above 2000 feet in a Lake District Summer.

Eventually we found Alf Henderson and his party and I plodded on, head down against wind and rain, to what I assumed was the summit of Fairfield which we reached at midday. I heard a cry and raised my head to see a little first former's pac-a-mac sail into the void some 2500 feet above Rydal. Fortunately the first former was not attached to it but for the first and only time in my school career I saw genuine concern on the faces of Messrs Houston and Henderson. There was a hurried conference, some sturdier sixth formers hoisted the smaller boys onto their backs and we all descended as quickly as possible to Rydal Village where we arrived at 1.45pm. We were all soaked to the skin and exhausted. There we caught a Ribble bus (The 68 Keswick to Lancaster service) back to Windermere and Staveley.

On arriving home cold and wet I was given a hot mustard bath and attempted to wash off the dark blue stain that my new jeans had left all over my lower body. That would also explain the dark wet stain I left behind on the Ribble bus seat. Next day my father went for his monthly haircut at Jack Laidler's in Windermere. He learned that Mrs Laidler had complained to Mr Thomas. House Climbs were abandoned to be replaced by a choice of visits and activities. And so on Thursday 12th July 1962 a party of nine of us, led by "Golly" Gowland, climbed High Street in perfect summer weather.

John Clarke

An unidentified location

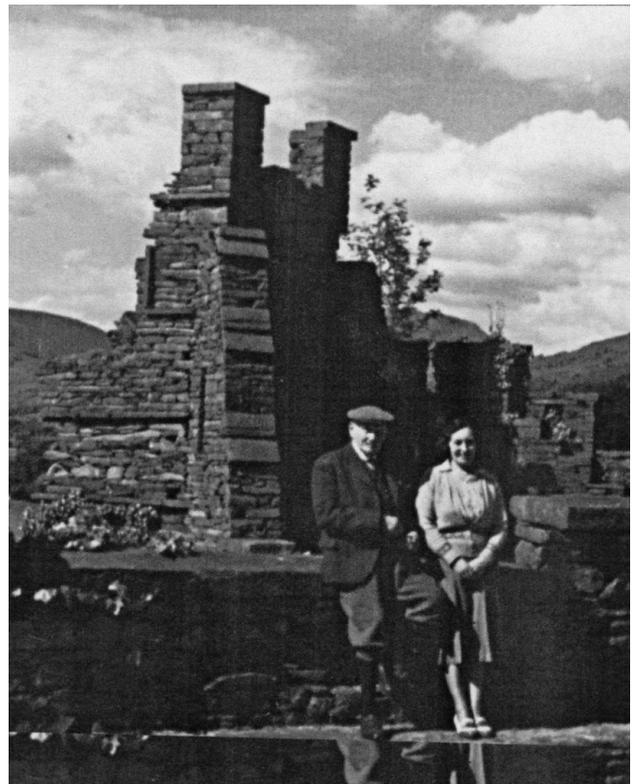
from: 7 Lansdown Road, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 6AN 22 August 2015

Dear Secretary,

I wonder if any of the Society's members can identify the location of this picture of my grandfather, Alfred Braithwaite, who had a cycle and coach business in Sedbergh. The lady with him is Mrs Walkden, a relative who lived in Crook. It is most likely that they were in Sedbergh or Crook or possibly Staveley and I would date it to the late 1930s. The building/ruins may, of course, no longer be standing. I would be most grateful if you can help.

Yours sincerely,

Gordon Braithwaite
gandmbraith@talktalk.net



The Parish Church of St James, Staveley, 1865 – 2015

A service, attended by Bishop Robert Freeman, was held at St James, Staveley, on 13th September 2015 to mark the 150th anniversary of the church. Hymns and readings celebrated its historic role in the village. Accounts of Church activities, both past and present, and of the building's history and the changes made over the years, were presented. Messages of support were received from former vicars and the other benefice churches of St Anne at Ings and St. Cuthbert in Kentmere. The service concluded with refreshments in Staveley school.

Many readers will be unaware of this event and that, in 2015, the Parish Church of St James in Staveley was 150 years old. In contrast there will be few who do not know of the old church tower on the main street in Staveley which is now all that is left of St Margaret's Chapel, founded in 1338, though the churchyard there is still used for burials. St Margaret's had been a chapel in Staveley within the parish of Kendal for over 500 years before it was demolished in 1865. In 1860 St Margaret's had been described by the vicar of Kendal: *'The floor is in a very bad state, the pavement broken and the level below that of the ground outside. It is very damp. Several of the windows are defective and let in the weather*'

In 1856, Kendal became part of the diocese of Carlisle (previously being in the Diocese of Chester) and churches in Staveley, Ings and Kentmere were approved as three separate parishes by the Bishop of Carlisle. Staveley planned to build a new church whilst Ings rebuilt the village school and Kentmere provided a new school and church tower. Each of the new parishes built a new vicarage of sufficient size for a large Victorian family and their servants!



Rev. Chaplin

Staveley's new church was mainly due to the work of William Chaplin. He had studied theology at St Bees and was ordained in 1850, aged 25, becoming a curate in Kendal before moving to be curate in charge of Staveley in 1856. He was vicar from 1858-1896. Chaplin also became County Inspector of Religious Education. He was assisted from 1857 by Joseph Anthony Martindale who was the village schoolmaster from 1859-1902. The two became close friends and were important reformers in the village, though much credit is usually given to Chaplin alone. It is recorded in the 1871 census that Chaplin was married to a Kendal girl and was living in a new vicarage on Brow Lane with three children and two servants. In 1896, aged 72, Chaplin handed over the parish to his son, also William. William Snr. retired to Kendal where he died in 1904, aged 80. William Jnr. however resigned after two years feeling Staveley needed a married vicar but he returned in 1902 staying until 1920.

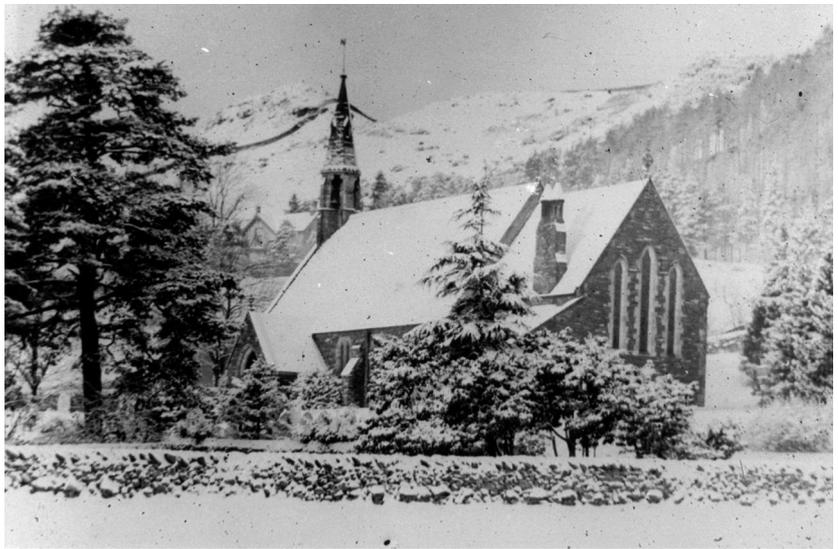


R.W. Buckley

By 1863, William Chaplin Snr had collected sufficient money for building work to begin, raising the £1600. 10s. 6d required. R.W. Buckley, a London barrister and wealthy local landowner with a holiday residence at Browfoot, had given generously of both land and money, sufficient to consider a move from the low-lying and damp location of St Margaret's chapel to a higher site in the village. The first sod was cut on 28th July 1863, the new church being consecrated on 24th April 1865 by Bishop Waldegrove. The building was designed by Joseph Stretch Crowther, 1820 – 1893, a Manchester based architect, in the traditional, at that time, gothic style for such buildings. Crowther had studied under Richard Tattersall from 1838 to 1843 becoming managing clerk and partner with Henry Bowman until 1846 after which

he worked independently. Crowther was actively involved with all aspects of work on the new church between 1861 – 1865. He also worked locally on the country house at Holehird and numerous other churches.

The church was built with rubble walls using local stone, with window reveals and masonry trim in sandstone. The tower had two bells fitted in an exposed turret and the building included some materials removed from St Margaret's. In 1868 correspondence regarding the bells is noted with John Taylor and Co, Bell-founders of Loughborough but letters ceased by 1888. The roof is steeply sloping with a graduated green slate roof with stone ridge tiles and copings. The main entrance porch has a large pine entrance door with decorative hinges. Since completion in 1865 St James' Church has been adorned and improved with contributions from parishioners: the lychgate in 1880; the East window in 1881; a new altar in 1899; the Wilkinson organ in 1910, and



St James' Church in snow 1895

a new pulpit 1925. The organ was considered at the time to be the best organ to be seen in the area. It had become fashionable by the mid-C19th for churches to be equipped with organs and local people trained to play them. Harry Read was organist from 1866 until 1928. He was a self taught musician starting off as a professional singer, playing and singing in local pubs. On 13th May 1928 he died aged 80 whilst playing the organ at evensong. A wall tablet is erected in his memory in the centre of the south wall.

The church is thought to have been built with clear glass windows with stained glass coming later. A three-lighted east window was added in 1881, designed by Edward Burne-Jones and made by William Morris. It is thought by some that Burne-Jones designed the centre panel and Morris the outer two. The William Morris company made the east window in memory of William Chaplin showing St Margaret and St James, the patron saints of the old and new Staveley churches. A section of this east window achieved national fame for Staveley in 2009 after being chosen as the basis of the Royal Mail 2nd class Christmas postage stamp. The south wall has a window in memory of John and Isabella Taylor of Elfhove whose two sons went to the Australian gold mines. A small coloured pane removed from St Margaret's when it was demolished was installed in 1878 opposite the vestry door. It shows the heraldic shield of the Harrison and Stanley families though



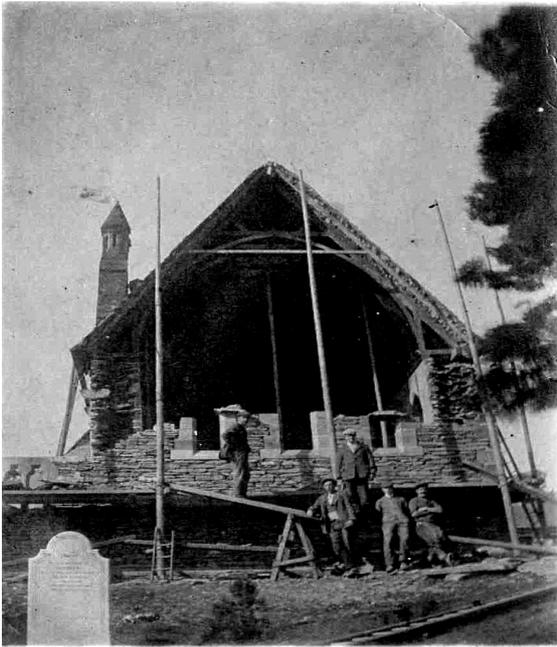
this is disputed, some feeling it is a mere collection of fragments. The Harrisons were a wealthy local family linked with the Abbey Hotel, which, at the time was not making the money expected with the coming of the railway. Near the pulpit is a window in memory of James Elleray, curate 1837-58, who was the last curate/schoolmaster of St Margaret's. On the north wall opposite the main door is a window in memory of Margaret and Ada Mather which was given by Harold Mather of Sidegarth a leading landowner and benefactor of 1920's and 30's. Next to this is a window in memory of RW Buckley whose gift of land did so much to make the building of a new church possible.



The brass lectern was given in 1918 by William Challiner of Middle Reston in memory of his son William who was killed in WW1. The east wall was completely demolished and rebuilt in the early 1900's. In more recent times the Parochial Church Council added a new kitchen and toilet annex in 1993 sensitively designed and in keeping with the existing building by church architect Michael Bottomley. The pulpit and wooden choir stalls made by Arthur W Simpson of Kendal at the end of

C19th are designed in the style of the Arts and Craft movement and are topped with decorative carvings. Simpson himself took responsibility for the choir stalls with his son making the pulpit, the difference in skill being shown by the joints being slightly more obvious in his sons workmanship.

A grave slab brought from St Margaret's, to the left of the main door of St James Church, marks the death of George Jopson 1696. Jopson lived at Low Scrogg and



Rebuilding of East end 1909

owned fulling mills at Elfhowe and Scroggs. He left his farm and mills to the curate of St James 'to perform the office of school master within the chapelry'. This was worth about £12 a year at the time. The idea of schoolmaster-curates had become very popular and particularly successful by the eighteenth century. Bibles became available in English around 1536 with the obvious person to teach religion being the curate in the chapel. Thomas Garnet, a curate in Staveley, collected £7 3s 5d as chapel salary, with each cottage in Staveley paying 4 ½ d. 6/- came from New Hall. In Jopson's lifetime, the school was held in the chapel, but a new schoolroom was built beside St Margaret's Chapel in 1755. This, sold in 1840 for £64, is now a house, 65, Main Street.

A new Staveley school was built on land next to St James' in 1841, costing £138. 8s. 0d. This building is now used by junior children with work on a modern infant block commencing on the playing field and schoolyard in 1970.

The national decline in both church attendance and membership together with changes in population and transport have had important local effects for Staveley. In addition to building changes the organisation of the Parish has also changed. The Church of England decided to concentrate its manpower and reduce costs by selling off vicarages. The Roman Catholics in contrast built a new church on Station Road in 1957, though it is now closed. The Primitive Methodists closed their chapel in 1939 and the Wesleyan chapel closed in 1994. In 1972, St James' became part of a United Benefice joining with St Cuthbert's in Kentmere. A benefice of three churches was formed in 1993 incorporating St Anne's in Ings. St James' Church is now the only remaining church building in use in Staveley. It is a grade 2 listed building mainly due to the importance of the Burne-Jones east window.

John Morris

Obituary – Gerard Leighton

Gerard Leighton died on Aug 26th 2015 at his home near Bath. His mother was a Mather and her father built Sidegarth and owned land in and around Staveley. Mr Mather opened the new Village Hall in 1936. Gerard Leighton (his grandson) sent the presentation key back to Staveley to be exhibited in the foyer of the Village Hall when appropriate alterations have been made.

Clare Brockbank

Tales from the Tapes: Slate and slate quarrying. Part 1.

This is the first instalment of the interview of John Williams of Kentmere made by Joe Scott in November 1991

JS: You for instance, your Dad, was a Manager...

JW: No my uncle, my father was a dresser, a slate dresser. I don't know how much you know about it, how it works?

JS: No, could you tell me about it?

JW: The company, the quarries were owned by the quarrier and they employed very few people directly, a foreman or manager foreman what ever you'd like to call him. He was directly employed by the quarry owner but all the slate getting or mining or what ever you'd like to call it, was done by contracted companies, which were groups of tradesmen who got together, struck a bargain with the foreman: so much time to get slate out of such and such a place and then it was their responsibility. The company usually consisted of what we called an inside man or a rock hand, he was the man that actually took the stone out of the quarry, inside the quarry. Then it was wheeled out on bogies by labourers and those labourers were paid by the company. They're not paid by the quarry owner at all, the contracted company.

JS: I see.

JW: Then it was brought out to the bank, what they called it, where it was split by the rivers or docked up into shape on the doctor saw and it was split by the rivers and that was the company, the ropeman the docker and the river.

JS: And they worked as a team?

JW: They were the team and they took the contract from the quarry owner and they employed the labourers.

JS: The labourers weren't in the team?

JW: No, no they were just employed, shilling a day, they got.

JS: What period are we talking about now? Before the first world war?

JW: Yes, yes.

JS: In your Dads day?

JW: Yes, and they, they got the rock, it was then docked, split and dressed. Docked and split and piled up ready for the dresser and the quarry owner charged the candles, charged the gunpowder. He charged everything.

JS: He supplied that?

JW: He supplied and charged it to the company, yes, and then when it had been riven, that's split to the slate thickness, the company then employed a dresser, who was usually an itinerant, because a dresser could cope with far more slate than one company could produce.

JS: He was a skilled man?

JW: Oh yes, he was the most highly skilled of the lot was a dresser.

JS: What did he get paid?

JW: He was given something like half a crown a ton. They paid him by weight, because the skill of the dresser was to get the maximum quantity, saleable slate out of the available stone.

JS: As bigger sizes as possible?

JW: Yes, all random sizes out of the small quarries, it was only Burlington and the Welsh quarries that unified the size of slate, anywhere else you just get random sizes unless you pay fantastic wages.

JS: But if it was sold in sizes would it..

JW: No it wasn't sold in sizes it was sold random, when you get these local roofs, diminishing course roofs. It was the slater that had to pick the courses. The slater had to course, he bought them random and he sized. As I say it was only the Welsh people and Burlington-fellows working to and selling by the size. The dresser would probably work for three companies and I can remember, oh I can't remember, but it was in my very early years, beyond my memory.

JS: Can I just ask you when your were born?

JW: 1926. And my father, he ran the film transport business as well, but he also had spare time from that and he used to do dressing for two companies, one here and one at Rangle G111 up Longsleddale. Yes and he could cope with everything they turned out.

JS: And he walked over there?

JW: He went over there on a motorbike.

JS: By motorbike!

JW: Yes but most itinerant dressers could cope with perhaps three companies and they would walk for miles, most of them walked over the fells because you see, Honister, Tilberthwaite, Kentmere, Troutbeck were not far apart over the tops, and thats the way they used to work, they always lived in the valleys.

JS: And did the companies rule where they'd work?

JW: Only when they fell out which happened pretty frequently.

JS: Yes I suppose it would.

JW: But you see they were on monthly contract and they only got paid once a month and they only got paid for what they had produced, thats why the dresser was so important. Because what they produced really put the jam on the bread.

JS: Was it divided out equally or in proportion?

JW: Oh in proportion, the labourer at the bottom of the scale and the dresser at the top of the scale. They were paid, the labourer by the day and the dresser by the ton. And that seemed to work, obviously its what happened in a lot of the small works quarries as well. Of course, in large quarries, their system was so much different, they had so many thousands of men working there. The Dinorwic quarry had in their heyday



Quarries near blacksmith's shop, Kentmere 1920

about 8,000 men working there.

JS: Did your father come from there?

JW: My Grandfather.

JS: Your Grandfather, yes. And perhaps he brought Welsh systems here, did he?

JW: Well I shouldn't think so because, they were a pragmatic lot they were. They would go somewhere else and find what

they know is different, and keep their bloody mouth shut, because they want to keep their job. What they say in the pub at night or when they get home is maybe another matter. But they all seemed to fit in very well and some were Cornish quarrymen, a lot of Cornish quarrymen.

JS: Was when your Grandfather came connected with that strike, there was a big strike?

JW: No, do you know, many years I thought that that was why he came but I found, not too long ago, that he came long before the strike. Whether he realised something was going to happen and got out while he could, because, before he got the stigma because even now you couldn't believe it, but theres still the stigma in the quarry industry for people who went on strike....in the late 1890s.

JS: When did your Grandfather come then?

JW: He came about ten years before that.

JS: He'd be in the 1891 census then?

JW: Well that's where we got the name from.

JS: I bought a book the other day that was published by the Caldbeck Mining Museum which is about Honister Quarries particularly but your Grandfather came up to work at Honister and he's listed.

JW: Apart from that I don't know what the date was but he had come to Honister but he lived in Borrowdale. Honister owned Kentmere proper owners but they were lessees of Kentmere here to manage working in the various quarries in Kentmere be one of the quarries they'd move about.



Quarry on Rainsbarrow Crag, Kentmere

Yes, there were several they were working. When he came there would be at least three or four working but there were two still reached, there was one this side of the river and there would also be the Rainsbarrow, the cauldron they called it, which is in Rainsbarrow and he did experiment trying to get another Welsh friend of his that came up to develop one up just above the reservoir and they reckon they found an awful lot of good slate but he couldn't persuade Honister to exploit it. You had to be heroes exploiting the quarries. I mean you're only working on faith, hope and charity to know whether your are actually going to get to slate. Actually it isn't quite as bad as that because most quarrymen had quite a very good idea where it runs, but they don't know whether its a hundred yards in or two hundred yards.

JS: That sort of distance in, was it?

JW: Yes. You'd get there going along a tunnel and then he is drilling and blasting,

JS: It must be dangerous?

JW: Yes but theres a very strong sense of self preservation. But you didn't get many... in fact I was told there had been one fatality....

JS: There's one in the Churchyard...1801, quarryman killed in the quarries.

JW: Yes, but it doesn't say which quarry.

JS: No, oh no.

JW: It could have been the one over at Kentmere Hall. Mrs. Gosden's grandfather was blinded....and I know one bloke who lost an eye because of gelignite.

To be continued