

# Staveley & District History Society

## Journal Summer 2017

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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: Celebrations for the re-opening of the Eagle and Child bridge 18.5.17*

The next issue of the *Journal* (No 41, the Winter 2017-18 issue) will be published about the 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017. All contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor by early November.

## From the President

Welcome to a new season of our History Society.

The first thing to announce is the retirement of Don Morris from his role of Events Organiser. Don has provided us with fascinating lectures on a host of topics to do with our area which he has done efficiently and cheerfully for the past 10 years or more. Don has agreed to stay on the Committee so we shall not lose his expertise altogether. Thank you Don.



Secondly, we have a new Bridge and an amazingly secure Scroggs Bridge, I wonder what the derivation of "Scroggs" is? The new Bridge at the Eagle and Child is not the attractive shape of the old bridge. I just hope modern technology makes it last as long as the original one.

Your Committee has made some momentous decisions regarding 1: the venue for our meetings, 2: the date for our meetings and lastly,

3: the times of our meetings in the winter – from October 2018. To take the last point first, we are going have an **AFTERNOON** meeting in December and January starting at 2.30pm, the rest will start at 7.30pm as now. There seems to be an awful

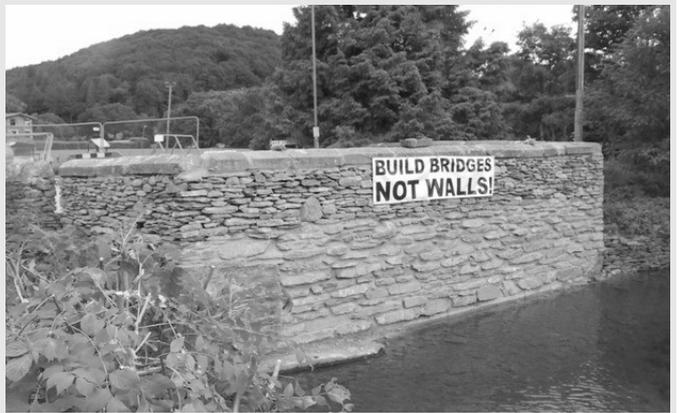
lots of things happening on Tuesday evenings so we have decided that the **THIRD THURSDAY** in each month would suit the majority of our members and committee better, The best venue when we change is Ings Parish Hall where there is a kitchen so we can have refreshments at the end of the meeting to enable us to meet each other. We will be able use the Ings Vintners car-park in the

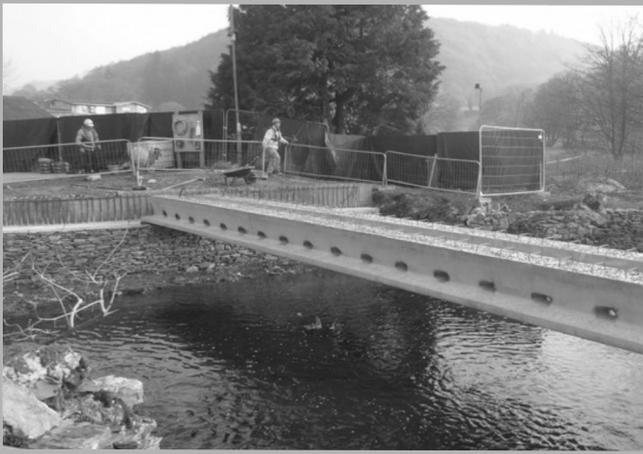


evenings. All these new arrangements will start in October 2018. By changing the date perhaps we will be able widen our membership with those interested in our Society but unable to come on a Tuesday.

*Clare Brockbank*

# The Eagle and Child Bridge – 5.12.15 to 18.5.17





## **Kentmere Head by Thomas Allom – True to Nature or just an impression?**

Historical documents require a measure of interpretation to account for their context and time of creation. Pictorial documents need additional interpretation because the styles used by artists are more variable than with writing. This paper examines how misinterpretations can occur.

Creating images onto some sort of flat surfaces has been the most common method of creating pictures for centuries past. In the enlightened period in Europe of the early C19<sup>th</sup> an explosion of images on various media occurred, partly due to the improvements in materials but most importantly a need for re-production for sale to meet the demand from a rapidly changing social structure and burgeoning population. Different ‘schools’ of artistic impression grew up in this period, one of which was devoted to landscape. John Ruskin (1819-1900) wrote in defence of JMW Turner that the principal role of such artists was ‘*truth to nature*’.

The properties of the human eye present very real problems for depicting on a two dimensional medium the reality of what the brain perceives from the spherical images on the retinas of two eyes. The complexity and lengthy learning processes needed to achieve a satisfactory landscape picture will be familiar to the great majority of people. Their own difficulty in mastering the desired ‘real’ effect in a painting, or the disappointment in seeing the difference in a photographic image from what they recalled at the time, demonstrates that the process of ‘seeing’ engenders emotion as well as simple image replication.

Because evolution has made the horizontal field of view in the human eye some five to ten times that of the vertical field above the horizon, landscape artists wishing to be true to nature adopted different strategies; three common approaches to what at the time was considered ‘*Pictorial Art*’ can be easily differentiated. One was simply to make the ‘canvas’ so big the total field of view filled the eye when seen in a large room. Naturally such pictures tended, for monetary reasons, to be the preserve of those with wealthy patrons and most often depicted images somewhat less than ‘true nature’ unless they were merely the family mansion in its estate, or portraits of its benefactors. To cash in on the development of reproduction methods, notably lithography, much smaller images were needed to make a living. The two common methods then were to either present the image magnified and of limited extent – particularly appropriate for architectural subjects - or to condense the lateral field of vision relative to the vertical to fit a canvas of the popular ‘golden section’ (still the dominant shape today), which was used for steep landscapes as in the Lake District and other dramatic topographies of the world. (note that ‘dramatic’ in this context almost invariably means unusually large vertical fields of vision compared with the horizontal). This latter method is often derided today because it seems to exaggerate the steepness of slopes, and is thus consigned to having been merely influenced by contemporary romantic descriptions of ‘awful’ or ‘hideous’ precipices. This notion then leads to a disregard for the graphic skill that may be contained by the artist seeking to be true to the image not merely seen, but ‘felt’.

The effect of condensing the lateral field of view achieves the desired effect of bringing in to the central view the impression that peripheral vision has on the brain. Showing nothing gives the feeling of openness whereas bringing in steep terrain brings the feeling of confinement as perceived when traversing beneath such slopes. Thus apparent exaggeration is no more than a clever device to effect 180 degrees of peripheral vision onto a canvas of only roughly 1.5 times as wide as it is high. Interpretation of such pictures must thus start with this understanding.

Thomas Allom (1804-1872) an Architect, and one of the artists of the early 19<sup>th</sup> C who fall into the category of ‘topographic illustrator’, was largely devoted to presenting landscape accurately ‘true to nature’ as might be expected of his profession; ‘*faithful and vivid delineation of native scenery*’ as his publisher’s described it. Thomas Allom travelled widely both world-wide and in this country, and made many pictures of Lake District subjects. One of his drawings was published<sup>1</sup> as a lithograph in 1832, and in various print forms since, called ‘**Kentmere Head and Slate Quarries, Westmorland**’. This picture may be familiar to members of the Society as it appears in both the book ‘A Lakeland Valley through Time’ and the Occasional Paper 14 on extractive industries. In both these documents the picture is said to depict a view ‘*from the north*’ or ‘*SW from Kentmere Head*’. In the occasional paper the reproduction is annotated with Rainsborrow Crag (as the dominant subject hill), Steel Rigg (quarry) and the site of the Reservoir. The original lithograph is shown to the right of this page at the top.

Examination of this depiction by using 3-D computer modelling and shape-changing of photographic images shows that the above description is mistaken in its identity. This paper contends the view is from the south, looking NNE, and is found to be an extremely accurate representation. Inevitably a little ‘licence’ can be detected. For example, the position from where the foreground ford crossing was viewed can be easily found today a little up from the now culverted Bryant’s Gill, with the drawing realistically depicting the rocks in the stream and the direction of the track and land beyond. It is represented without exaggerated scale. Beyond that, an exaggerated view of the vertical field of view is merged with the foreground. Allowing for this, the rest of the view is unambiguously seen to fit reality; an example is the very convincing representation of the zig-zag track to the north of Jumb Quarry is seen - a striking feature in the picture, unchanged today.

The contemporaneous Corn Rent Map (c1836) helps corroborate that the view shows Jumb Quarry. This map clearly shows the quarry (albeit without detail), its tailings dam and Quarry House (land parcel 583, ‘owned’ by Davis & Moore), but perhaps the key interpretive element in the litho drawing is the depiction of the face of Rainsborrow Crag on the left side and its shadow across to Jumb Quarry. The peak of this shadow line accords with sun beams at around 20 degrees elevation and azimuth 230 degrees, as occurs around 3.00 p.m. on the first few days of October and mid- March. This seems a very likely time to be completing the picture, whereas if the alternative orientation is taken, not only is there no summit to Kentmere Pike which could produce such a shadow but for the appropriate orientation of the sun it



Kentmere Head, and Slate Quarries  
Litho print published in 1832 from original drawing by Thomas Allom<sup>1</sup>



Details in the original drawing on a vertically exaggerated photograph taken north of original view. Steel Rigg post-dates the original drawing and Jumb Quarry was also expanded in later years.

<sup>1</sup>: Westmorland, Cumberland, Durham and Northumberland. Illustrated. From original drawings by Thomas Allom, George Pickering etc. with descriptions by T. Rose. Fisher, Fisher & Jackson, London and Paris

would have been, at best, only just on the horizon at 4.00 a.m. on the longest day in June.

If the view were to have been southwards, the viewpoint location would have been in only gently sloping land to the east side of the valley and with only lower hills forming the horizon ahead below the dominant hillside straight ahead. The valley floor would also have sloped down and away (not easily seen today because the reservoir blocks the view) and not as shown. It would seem improbable in the extreme that this northerly location had been chosen to draw from, partly because the ‘subject’ would not have been a view of Kentmere Head but Rainsborrow Crag, and partly because to have added the bulk of a crag to the left side and distance would have been a figment of imagination added to a picture of such fine detail elsewhere, and for no apparent reason; the oppressive impression of the depicted valley wall (which, from a northerly viewpoint, must be the lower flanks of Kentmere Pike) is simply not present in the peripheral view when looking south; during the greater part of the day it is also commonly illuminated by the sun.

When seen from the location of the foreground depicted by Allom, but bringing forward the more distant view - as was common at the time, most probably depicted with the aid of a telescope - the content of the original is seen to be indeed an attempt at ‘truth to nature’. It shows the track crossing at Bryant’s Gill, the lower slopes of Rainsborrow Crag, at that time yet to be quarried and thus no sign of Steel Rigg quarry, the far plateau of High Steet touching cloud as it commonly does, the bulk of Lingmell End, the dip of Nan Bield pass, Smallthwaite Knott above Jumb Quarry and Hart Crag quarry high on the side of Kentmere Pike (reputed to have been the earliest quarry in Kentmere). The reservoir site had not been established at that time, but the



View of Rainsborrow Crag from Lingmell End looking SW, noting the relatively shallow valley sides to the east, and the absence of Steel Rigg Quarry – always hidden from this direction by ill Bells SE spur.

low rounded topography, which today hides it from the true viewpoint, is also accurately depicted. To get to the main track where the two-pony cart carrying the slates is shown (two needed for braking power on the descent and the hard work to haul back – again an historical verisimilitude) the slates were first carried across a ford from Jumb to the west side track. There is no equivalent track on the east side – it is 200m higher up.

It is perhaps unexpected that in a recent book titled ‘The Quarries of Lakeland’ its author should comment about the engraving and its apparent depiction of Steel Rigg quarry that ‘*it was obviously working and looking much bigger than it does today!*’ Misinterpretation, like ‘fake news’, can travel widely, and it may detract from the potentially more useful information that skilled topographic illustrators of the past can bring to the historian. The accompanying text to the original publication correctly said ‘*The Head of Kentmere is remarkably grand, from the amazing height of the mountain walls which surround it*’. It is, as Allom shows us.

*Robert Courtier*

## May walk 2017

Ten members gathered at the Market Cross in Ambleside for the first walk of the season. We were divided into two groups of five and had staggered start times. My group was taken initially to the Market Square, and besides learning about the history of the old market we also were told that the Tesco shop was once the home of the artist William Green. Next after a quick look at North Road we went up into the 'northern quarter' of the village. After Peggy Hill we looked at How Head and eventually found ourselves at St. Anne's Chapel. Although the chapel is now a set of flats the land is still consecrated.



A nearly dry Rattle Ghyll

At this point there was a discussion of the effect of John Kelsick's considerable endowment in 1723. Reaching the Kirkstone Road we wandered down past the Golden Rule, saw the Old Police House with its well constructed doors, and then reached the Old Bridge House on Rydal Road. Finally, after a discussion of the mills that had inhabited Stock Gill we learnt the important difference between 'above Stock' and 'below Stock' to the good folk of Ambleside. Good value at a pound per head, this price also include a useful Ambleside Heritage Trail leaflet.

## June walk 2017

We did not have Henry Wilson, who was the first Alderman in 1575, nor the first Mayor, Thomas Sleddall, who served in 1637, but we did have ex-Mayor number 374 John Bateson, who served in 2009, to escort us on an evening tour of Kendal. After moving North to the Stricklandgate/Highgate 'junction' (this fact was demonstrated by two adjacent number 2 yards) John took sixteen members on a ramble around the perimeter of an approximate square in which two opposite points were the Bird Cage



and the old Working Mens' Institute in the Market Place. John was ably accompanied by an old friend of the Society Trevor Hughes. If I could recall 10% of the information delivered I would know an awful amount of detail about the town.

Highlights for your reporter included finding out the first police Station was on Finkle St, and that the Market Place cafe was once a pub with the splendid name 'The Football Inn'. This may be confirmed by visiting: <https://www.visitcumbria.com/sl/kendal-oldpubs/> A splendid evening, and many thanks to the 'Two Ronnies', John and Trevor.

*Don Morris*

## July Walk 2017



A party of sixteen visited High Lickbarrow Farm, left to the National Trust in October 2015 following the death of the donor Michael Bottomley. On the edge of Windermere (town), the traditional Lakeland farmhouse with formal front garden and topiary is set amidst the beautiful lowland landscape leading up to School Knott. This is no doubt what kept Michael, his sister Elizabeth and their parents there from 1947. The interior of the

farmhouse tells us much about the family: mother Lynton's love of music; Elizabeth's conservation farming methods, and Michael's cultural links, his painting and architectural practice. The farm land is approximately 43.5 hectares and much of it is of great ecological value, with almost half designated an SSSI. It is home to a herd of rare Blue Albion cattle that graze the fields from May to October.

*John Hiley*

## The Coronation seats – an update

*(Editor's note: please refer to the earlier article on the seats in Journal 39)*

The seats were made at Victoria Forge, Windermere, then owned by Mr. G.W. Reed. I worked with him from 1947 to 1969, less National Service between 1954 and 1956. This was quite a large job for us as there were no other employees. The first order, I think, was for ten seats for Staveley Village. These have the ERII plaques on them which were, I think, cast iron and sourced from a foundry in Lancashire. Those seats without plaques were a second order, probably for Ings. The seats were primed at our workshops and collected by Ralph Ambler who I assume painted them green before he fixed them. Joe Rose, who lived up Grassgarth Lane and was the blacksmith at Ings, was not best pleased when we got the order for the seats. The seat on Grassgarth Lane was made by him and is a different pattern to the others.

*Tommy Bland*

## Christopher Gregory 1924 – 2017



We are sad to record the recent death of Christopher Gregory at the age of 93 years. He was a founder member of the Staveley and District History Society with Joe Scott and an enthusiastic participant attending most meetings right up to this last season. He was a keen member of the committee for many years. He had an interest in both local and industrial history and wrote a significant paper for the society on the mines and quarries of the Kentmere Valley and organised several walks and visits for members.

Educated at Charterhouse and Clare College, Cambridge, where he attained a degree in Geography, he devoted his professional career to teaching in this country and in Canada and later concentrated on advising students on their career possibilities and the opportunities during "gap years". He is survived by Shirley, his wife of almost 60 years, and their four children and families.

*Iain Johnston*

## **Tales from the Tapes: Staveley Pharmacy. Part 2**

*Recording by Adrian Runswick on 4<sup>th</sup> November 1997 of John Wood, who kept the Chemist's Shop in Staveley. John is a pharmacist. He now lives in Ings and was doing so at the time of the recording.*

*I guess, John, that pharmacy has changed quite a lot, even in your career so far?*

Yes, it has. As I say, when I first came to Staveley I did do a lot of my time making up cough mixtures on prescription, tonics on prescription and sleeping draughts on prescription. Most of these are now on what is called a 'black list' because it could not be proved that they worked and so now they are not allowed on the National Health. A lot of the ingredients of these medicines now also aren't dispensed because they feel they are too dangerous for people to take. One of the most popular remedies, my first time in Staveley, was a thing called Potassium Bromide & Valerian which of course now people would come to me and get. Well, it was a forerunner of the old Librium tablet and a tranquillizer sedative which worked just as effectively only you didn't get dependant on it and it tasted so foul that as soon as you could come off it you didn't want to take it any more.

*I think you have a quite strong Homeopathic side. Is that not so?*

Yes, I got interested in homeopathy quite by accident. I'd been asked about homeopathy a lot when I first came to Staveley but I didn't know how or where to start. There was a free-lance representative who was selling cosmetics and as she turned over the pages in her glossy folder, there it was, a stand by "A. Nelson's of Wimbledon, Homeopathic Remedies", and a little leaflet telling what each one was for. I felt 'Oh right', so I bought one of those and put it on the counter and it started going quite well. About six months later I saw an advertisement in a Chemist and Druggist magazine – a firm called Weleda who were having an Open Day in Ilkeston where their new factory was, so I went down to see that and started keeping some of their products, went on some of their courses, and then basically started buying books and reading and trying to teach myself a little bit about it. I wouldn't say I'm an expert on it but we try and advise people and if I feel I can't then I know one or two homeopaths in the area and give them three addresses who I think are competent and it is up to them to choose which one to go to.

*Do you think this is an aspect which is going to grow in the future?*

I'm not so sure about homeopathy. Homeopathy at one time was the 'buzz' word but I feel, looking on products coming on the market, especially from the Continent, we are going back to the old way as I was brought up in pharmacy and that is with herbal preparations, tinctures and extracts and tablets made from plants, whatever. There's more and more of that coming through and I am sure that it's going to take over. I think people are getting more worried now when they read in the papers about side effects and things, are putting chemicals inside themselves. What they don't realise is that even with a herbal preparation you are still putting a potent chemical in yourself so you've still got to be a bit careful, you can't just swallow them. But people are

looking for a cure from nature now or a remedy from nature rather than one from a laboratory.

*Do you see any other developments likely to take place?*

In pharmacy, yes. I think a shop like a village shop, unless it's going to be subsidised quite heavily by the government is going to disappear. I'm not saying this because of money; I'm saying because of service. People are wanting a greater and greater service and availability of people providing that service. Pharmacies are now appearing in supermarkets which are open from 8 o'clock in the morning to 10 o'clock at night, seven days a week, and that pharmacy is manned throughout those hours. And some are even open overnight and I think that is the way that community pharmacy as we know it is going to be. I think pharmacists, or the younger pharmacists, have really got to think and try and promote themselves more as an adviser. Rather than having a pharmacy there will be more pharmacists in a large Health Centre where they would be dispensing drugs. They would be the adviser to the doctor on setting up a formula, what he should use, what to buy, what not to buy, alternatives for people who might be allergic to penicillin or can't take things say like Brufen because they are taking Warfarin. I think that is the way forward for pharmacy, not so much your old role as dispensing and handing out medicines, but as an adviser on medicines. Both because now they do more, there's a new position appeared in hospital which is called a Clinical Pharmacist, and he goes round in the bigger hospitals with the Consultants advising on newer treatments, because with the best will in the world a Consultant cannot know every new drug or preparation that has come out on the market. It is up to the pharmacist to make sure that he does and I think that is the way forward for pharmacy.

*Well I think that's sad because the difference between a supermarket pharmacy and yours is that, I guess you know lots and lots of the customers who come in and, more importantly, they trust you. I think in medicine trust between doctor and patient, nurse and her patient, pharmacist and patient, is very important indeed. I don't see how you're going to get that by going into a supermarket.*

No, that's the problem, it's just that. I would feel that when I come to sell my business, I will probably have trouble finding a pharmacist who would buy it, purely because he can go and work for Boots or Superdrug or Tesco and earn as much as he would running a small pharmacy in the village without having to buy the property, without having to invest, without having staff worries, and without thinking "Who can I get for my holidays?" And I'm afraid that's the way it is.

*So I may be getting the last pharmacist?*

You may! I hope not, because when I first came in 1972 I decided that three years here and then that's it – I will buy a bigger shop in Blackpool, Preston, Kendal or wherever, but unfortunately I liked it so you've still got me.

*To be continued*