

Staveley & District History Society

Journal Spring 2019

CONTENTS

- 2 **From the Chair**
A year of change: the Chairman's review of the past year
- 3 **Coronation benches – yet again**
Don Morris is determined to get to the bottom of their history
- 5 **The Hardman Collection Archive: the story behind one picture**
New member, John Chapman, recalls his association with the famous photographer
- 7 **Alan A. Lord – an appreciation**
by his former O.S. colleague John Parker, as Alan enters his 10th decade
- 8 **Cumbrian Lives - a.k.a. The Dictionary of Cumbrian Biography**
David Cross solicits help with this project
- 9 **Tales from the Tapes: Part 2: 'Farming in seven decades at Misset'**
James Walling's Oral History, recorded at Ings Parish Hall 14.12.17

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

Cover photo: An aerial view of Ings Hall, date unknown.

The next issue of the *Journal* (No 46, the Summer 2019 issue) will be published about the 12th August 2019. All contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor by early July.

A year of change: the Chairman's review of the past year.

The Society moved its monthly meetings from Staveley to Ings after our Summer walks season - with mixed reviews, it has to be noted. And it has had mixed results. The talks have generally been well supported and we're grateful to the new Events Secretary for his efforts in producing a varied and interesting programme. It has also been gratifying that many members now stay on and enjoy tea and biscuits so our evenings have become more sociable occasions.



Our two afternoon meetings in December and January were the least well attended. Those who did take part in the December quiz enjoyed both that and the festive fare on offer that day. The fascinating talk by Suzanne Tiplady on *Schooling in Satterthwaite* in January was also poorly supported. On the other hand our evening talks have drawn large audiences. Our first talk given by Steve Dickinson on the *Viking Longhouse in Kentmere*, and that by Andy Lowe on *Old Lakeland Buildings* stretched the capacity of Ings Parish Hall. And the attendances for Bill Myer's talk on *Cumbrian Iron Mining*, and Diana Matthews' on *Lake District boats* were also excellent.

Behind the scenes, work on Oral History moves on slowly. Our complete archive of histories has been listed and their content summarised by Sue Jones from the Windermere Oral History project. Of course, many have already been transcribed and serialised in our Journals. Those still on cassette tape will be converted to mp3 format over the coming months and thus be more readily accessible. We're delighted that, thanks to the efforts of our Treasurer, we have almost 80 signed-up members. Though the trend is downward, this remains a healthy total. But it would be wrong to conclude that everything in the garden is rosy. The Journal Editor's call for articles, with one or two notable exceptions, generally remains unanswered and our Buildings project is stalled. The work of the society is falling on fewer shoulders and that particular trend needs to be reversed for your society to continue let alone flourish.

Finally, it is with great pleasure that we note that Alan Lord, one of our longest serving members, has just become a nonagenarian. The society is deeply indebted to him for his many contributions to local history and to SDHS through his Occasional Papers, Journal articles and talks - and for his searching questions at our meetings. Alan, congratulations, good wishes and many thanks – lang may yer lum reek!

John Hiley

From The Times newspaper - December 29th 2018:

“Spotted by the broadcaster Michael Crick in a window in Cumbria: Staveley Time Travel Enthusiasts’ Club. Next meeting: last Thursday, 3pm. Hope they laid on enough cake.”

Coronation benches, yet again

Readers of this series of contributions (Journals 39, 40, 42) will be aware of the problems associated with attempting to determine both the genesis of the coronation benches project and the precise location of extant benches. Subsequent to the aforementioned articles more information has come to my notice. When our long suffering ex-Parish Clerk Stan Simpson was preparing to move to a different property within Staveley he came across original letters associated with the project. One was from Mr Wadsworth of the Staveley & District Coronation Committee written on March 4th 1954. The other was from the Ings Coronation Fund Executive Committee from Miss Sowerby on September 8th 1954. These interesting documents have been a curate's egg in helping to resolve some outstanding issues. They have been photographed for this article.

The Wadsworth letter gives precise intended locations for the benches. It is difficult to totally correlate the intended locations with both the actual list as printed by the Coronation Committee in Journal 42 and with the possible extant list in Journal 39. For instance, there is no intended location mentioned for the seat that actually appeared next to the bus stop opposite Danes Road terrace. Also the seat past Middle Reston on the north side of the road was intended to be on the south side facing Middle Reston. There other discrepancies that readers might like to identify.

The Sowerby letter was more helpful. It retrospectively confirms the Ings Coronation Committee's selection of a location for the Grassgarth Lane seat. They also pass on the baton of maintenance to Hugill Parish Council.

INGS CORONATION FUND EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE

Hill Farm,
Ings,
St. Kendal,
8th Sept. 1954.

The Secretary,
Hugill Parish Council.

Dear Sir
On behalf of the above Committee I have been asked to inform you that the Coronation Seat has been erected by the side of Grassgarth Lane, about half way between the Main Road and Grassgarth Farm.

We understand that your Council will very kindly be responsible for the maintenance of this seat and wish to thank you for this.

Yours truly,
(Miss) B Sowerby.

(Secretary)

Don Morris

STAVELEY & DISTRICT CORONATION COMMITTEE

Hon. Secretary: N. Wadsworth

Phone :
STAVELEY 40.

FAIRBANK VIEW,
STAVELEY,

Westmorland

4th March. 1954.

To the Secretaries of the Hugill,
Nether Staveley and Over Staveley
Parish Councils.

Dear Sirs,

I have been asked by Mr. Knowles, on behalf of the Nether Staveley Parish Council, for the number of seats, and particulars of sites chosen by the above Committee, and situated in that particular Parish. As the Westmorland Rural District Council may also seek similar information from the Hugill and Over Staveley Parish Councils, I give you hereunder particulars of every site.

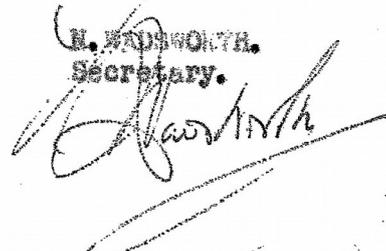
The term R.H. Side or L.H. Side indicates the position of the seat when approached from the centre of the Village (i.e. Abbey Square)

1. On green verge (L.H. Side) before entrance to Middle Reston.
2. On green verge (R.H. side) immediately past "Scargarth" near quarry.
3. On green verge (R.H. Side) between "Scargarth" and new Bungalow.
4. On green verge (L.H. side) brow of Starvation Hill - past "Stella Mount"
5. On green verge (L.H. side) Brow Foot Lane - under Black Crag.
6. On green verge (R.H. side) Kentmere Rd - bottom of Elfe How Lane.
7. In corner of field - Benson Hill - private land.
8. Near Barley Bridge.
9. On green verge (L.H. side) approx 50 yds past Sandy Hill Farm House.
10. On green verge (L.H. side) over Plantation Bridge - in corner.
11. On green verge - The Banks.
12. On green verge (R.H. side) Crook Road, approx 200 yds below "Side-Garth".
13. On green island, junction Moss Side Road and Crook Road.
14.)
15.) On the Ayland -- private land.
16.)
17.) Abbey Square.
18.)

I trust the above information will enable you to meet any queries which you may receive.

Yours faithfully,
for the Committee.

N. WADSWORTH.
Secretary.



The Hardman Collection Archive: the story behind one picture

The Westmorland Gazette recently published the photograph from the Hardman Collection which accompanies this piece. I was delighted to see it but found it necessary to write to correct the caption which asserted that the shot was taken on Helvellyn when, in fact, the scene is the summit of Kirkstone and the date, March 1963. For readers who missed the photo and, indeed, my letter, (many of my acquaintances did!), here is the story behind it.



As most will remember, the winter months of 1962-63 were amongst the coldest in living memory and entailed a good deal of hardship for many. For example, frozen pipework in parts of Windermere resulted in residents having to meet their needs for water in buckets from standpipes for several weeks. However, for a youthful winter sports enthusiast such as I was, the reverse of the coin was a winter wonderland holiday which seemed to go on forever. We skated on tarns and lakes and we skied and tobogganed in fields and on the fells for weeks on end and I took full advantage. Windermere froze and crowds took to the ice as much for the novelty as for the skating (which was actually much better on the tarns) and one week-end in February Joseph Hardman was on hand with his magnificent plate camera to record the scene off Cockshott Point. I was there with my father, who was a very keen skater, and several friends and as we were making our way home I spotted a silver pocket watch lying on the path which I picked up and turned in as lost property at the Police Station

on my way past, together with my details as finder. Engraved on the inside of the cover was Mr Hardman's name and no time must have been lost in returning his property because not long afterwards I received a set of signed prints of the photographs he had taken, together with a letter of thanks. They may still be seen on the Abbott Hall website and include views of the crowds on the ice and one of Joe Kelly of Droomer Farm on horseback (incorrectly captioned as being at Buttermere). Sadly, however, I have been unable to trace the originals amongst my records.

The story of the skier (me, aged 18) then resumes. Conditions at Kirkstone summit were so perfect for skiing and the weather so settled that the Fylde Mountaineering Club were able to announce that ski races would be held during the first week-end of March. I managed to get a lift with a friend and we were able to beat the crowds to a parking space before they all went. One of Mr Hardman's views which later appeared in the Gazette, showed the congestion which occurred on that day. At that time the only parking was in the roadside verges which were still filled with immense snowdrifts. There were no ski lifts at Kirkstone so one had to shoulder skis and walk up to the top before launching down the slope on the slalom course. Consequently, as well as becoming very fit one had to ensure that every run counted.

As I was completing one of my runs from the summit I spotted Mr Hardman assembling his tripod and camera and introduced myself. He immediately asked me to repeat the bottom half of the course to enable him to take a picture. It is a tribute to his skill that, with his apparently cumbersome plate camera, he managed to catch me in motion and about to make a jump and still to have me in pin-sharp focus. He was kind enough to send me a signed print but that, too, has been mislaid in the intervening years. The next day a thaw set in and rapidly brought that most memorable winter to a close but my memories of sparkling frost and crunchy snow underfoot for weeks on end vividly live on.

I concluded my letter to the Gazette with a quotation from Wordsworth which seemed wholly apposite: 'Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive but to be young was very heaven.' Happy days!

However, there is a sequel. In 2001 I had to have quite a serious operation which involved ten days in hospital and the day after my discharge my wife suggested we take a walk to begin the recuperation. Waterside suggested itself as level and not too demanding as did a pause for refreshment at Abbott Hall. As we entered the conservatory I came face to face with the portrait of a younger and fitter me, displayed as part of an exhibition of Hardman prints. It seemed to be an omen of better things and so it has proved. We now have a framed print from the collection at home and I have been lucky enough to continue to enjoy my skiing right up to the present – as this postscript image testifies.



John Chapman

Alan A. Lord – an appreciation

On Monday the 4th of March 2019 Alan celebrated his 90th birthday. He grew up in a farming community south-east of Preston. Here, resource and practicality were needed for survival. During a period of family illness Alan was the only one fit enough to take on the dairy round. He routinely manoeuvred the truck on the farm, so it was no problem delivering the milk around the district. The fourteen year old had returned without mishap before it dawned on anyone he was under-age and unlicensed!

Schooled at Hutton Grammar, he joined the Ordnance Survey at seventeen. His national service was spent in survey units of the Royal Engineers. Any discipline he absorbed from these institutions was channelled into his objective approach to tasks and the meticulous way he sought to provide the best answer for the customer. Alan's thinking "outside the box" enhanced our job of resurveying the communities, dales and fells, both in preparation and execution. The many instances included place-name complexity or the difficulty of depicting steep terrain, which he overcame with easy-to-use diagrams and adaptations of equipment for the surveyors.



Alan (aged 3 or 4)
and his Grandmother



On retirement his concerns for the environment led him into surveys and research for the National Trust and the Friends of the Lake District. He and the "*Last of the Summer Wine*" team maintain Saint Margaret's Tower and old churchyard. Should Alan's recent address-finding mapping, enjoyed in both Staveley and Ings, be adopted nationally there'd be an

end to lorry-jams, lost parcels and delay of the hospital-bound! Apart from Staveley and District History Society, Alan both attends and contributes to the Kendal Engineering Society and the Bateman Club of Ings. May "Any Questions?" continue to elicit searching query and insightful commentary from our new Nonagenarian!

John Wilson Parker (OS colleague and pal)

Cumbrian Lives - a.k.a. The Dictionary of Cumbrian Biography

In September 2004, the new Oxford Dictionary of National Biography [O.D.N.B.] was published by Oxford University Press, containing 60,000 biographies. This massive project, largely generated in the 1990s, involved the re-writing of the lives included in the volumes of the original Dictionary of National Biography [1885 to 1900], and the inclusion of the lives of those written up in supplements [1912-1996]. The O.D.N.B. also included the lives of those who had been excluded or omitted from the earlier volumes, particularly those of prominent women and members of ethnic minority groups. There is a full sequence of the O.D.N.B. volumes in Carlisle Library and also online.

In anticipation of this publication and in collaboration with the editors of the O.D.N.B., in June 1999, almost twenty years ago, David Cross, a Cumbrian art historian, called a meeting at Charlotte Mason College to establish a county wide project, initially entitled the Dictionary of Cumbrian Biography [D.C.B.]. The initial aim was to identify and research the names and biographies of significant Cumbrian figures who had not, at that date, been included in the O.D.N.B. survey. William Rollinson, Robert Woof, Michael Wheeler, Keith Hanley and others were unable to attend. Apart from David Cross, those attending the first meeting included Les Shore, the engineering historian [chair]; Angus Winchester, the historian; Rob David, the historian; Alan Hankinson, the journalist and obituarist; Richard Hall, the archivist; Jackie Fay, the librarian and Christine Parker, the original secretary of the project. Soon afterwards, the D.C.B. was re-named, more succinctly, Cumbrian Lives. Its ultimate goal was to be an online source of Cumbrian biographies. There followed some ten planning meetings at Kendal Archive Centre from 1999-2000 and the committee members set about listing suitable names and accumulating bibliographical details.

For 2018-19: an exhibition of Cumbrian portraits, both paintings and photographs, is being planned to be shown in Carlisle Library demonstrating the range of figures so far included in the ODNB and in Cumbrian Lives. Much has been achieved already, but there is still a great deal to encompass. David Cross, whose publications include writing on Cumbrian artists, including George Romney, Sawrey Gilpin and Percy Kelly, in addition to his recent volume on Cumbrian public sculpture, is keen in his semi-retirement to assemble a new team to carry the project forward. The current plan for 2019, the 20th anniversary year, is to meet in Carlisle for several hours once a month. There will be scope for more frequent meetings, if the new members are keen. If anyone would like to join the project, please let David know via: dcrossart@gmail.com.

David Cross www.davidacross.org.uk

Tales from the Tapes: recorded at Ings Parish Hall 14th December 2017
James Walling *'Farming in seven decades at Misset'* Part 2.

You soon begin to realize that pet lambs are quite often rejected by their mothers because there's something wrong with them, so it's always a hit and miss job whether a rejected lamb survives,. Fortunately I think more than half of them will survive but the others suffer various physical deformities that prevent them from living more than a few days.

We had the horses and the old tractor and then we actually moved on to - up to date at that time - a little grey Fergie which was a huge advance because Ferguson also had a range of equipment, and we had a plough, a ridger, a cultivator and a mowing machine which was the triangular blades that went backwards and forwards. That was a big advance so the horses disappeared. We also were required, for some time, by the War Agricultural Committee, which was stuffed full with 'experts', to plough up certain fields and grow barley or turnips or potatoes, or whatever to feed our livestock. The one thing you soon learn when you plough is that soil, when it's turned, always goes downhill, it doesn't go uphill, it always goes downhill and eventually it became obvious, it was when I started to drive properly, that continuous ploughing on some of the meadows was making the rocks appear above the soil and on the steep field it was moving the soil gradually down to the bottom of the hill so eventually, sort of early fifties I suppose, late fifties we gave over ploughing and the farm became an all grass farm.

Before that we had grown barley, which was cut and stooked. It was cut and a string put round and then we made it into stooks. The bundles were stacked up in sixes or eights, they were eventually collected and put in a barn, and then the big threshing machine would come along with the tractor and the big belt drive and the stooks would be put in at the top, the string was cut and the machine worked away at it, the straw came out at one side and the grain came out at the other side. The grain was then carried in bags or barrows across the road into the feed store where it was stored and then used for feeding the animals in winter. The same way with turnips or even potatoes. The turnips were grown for feeding to the cattle and we did have, I still have a turnip chopper, which is a big hopper with a cast iron machine underneath with a big drum. It has various openings and a huge wheel on the side with a handle and if you turn it like that the turnips all drop down gradually and this drum produces chips, if you turn it one way, and slices if you turn it the other way. And really it was a quite efficient way of producing food. It gave you strong arms.

Moving on a little bit, in 1954 we had electricity. Electricity came! No more petrol engine to drive the milking machine. We got an inside loo and a bathroom. We no longer needed the Tilley lamps, the paraffin lamps or the flashlights or the candles, and probably the lights stayed on for a while until somebody worked out how to switch them off, but it did make a big difference to working in the dark.

I left school in 1959. I'd been schooled in such glorious subjects as Latin and French and science, wonderful subjects and you wonder what use they would be in the future, but actually the Latin proved quite useful because some of the veterinary terms and the medicines and things are derived from Latin and it was reasonably easy to understand. Anyway that's beside the point; I used to feel quite jealous of the non-grammar school kids, who were busy gardening outside the window while I was in the building learning Latin.

We bought feed from two local merchants, and also sugar beet became available. Sugarbeet was grown in South East England, East England, and came to Windermere rail station by train and farmers would go down. I went down with tractor and trailer and we would unload these bags of shreds, what we called shreds, sugarbeet shreds, directly from the railway trucks, which was fine if they were sheeted properly. If they hadn't been sheeted properly, well, the sugarbeet was wet and you don't want wet sugarbeet, believe me. Interestingly the sacks themselves weighed over a hundredweight each, and they were very large, very tall sacks. Again you had to be strong. We were also growing kale, which was a green plant, with big leaves and quite a thick stem and it was my job when I left school. I remember it well! In winter, it was down with a hatchet and chop these sticks of kale down the row till you got a trailer full. Load it onto the trailer, then bring it home, then load it into the shippons to feed to the cattle. It was labour intensive and we did have one worker to help us.

In 1963, Father was quite forward looking and a new style of housing cattle was coming in. It was called loose housing, whereby the cattle were not tied up. Sorry, you realise that cattle were tied by the neck in shippons, all through the winter, they didn't go out and they didn't move, they were held there on a flexible haltering system, and the landlords at the time agreed to provide a concrete structure if we would fit it out. By fitting it out I mean the interior walls, doors, mechanical equipment and everything else. We decided on a building which was 100 feet wide and 110 feet long that would house 50 cattle complete with the food, complete with a room where the cattle would be milked, complete with a dairy and a washing up system. I have forgotten how much the structure cost but our cost in 1963 was about £10,000.

Cattle are very clever actually. I like cattle, you can cuddle them without getting a slap round the face! They're quite intelligent and they learned very quickly to come in, in sequence, into the room where they were to be milked. They would go into a stall where the feed was, you just put a chain round their bums to stop them backing out, and put the unit on and the cattle would produce the milk. When they were finished milking the unit was swapped across onto the other cow and the first cow walked out through the front, a gate was opened, and it walked out. It was a very good efficient system and we could milk three or four cattle, in our case three, constantly. The machines never stopped, they were swapped from cow to cow to cow.

The milk was sent through and initially it was in churns which were stacked and collected. We had a milk stand, by that time, at the farm entrance and the milk was taken down and put on the stand there. Soon after that bulk tanks came in where you had one big large tank which stored all the days milk, we had two days capacity within the tank in case anything went wrong and the milk tanker came and collected the milk, just connected a



The old byre (from 1939) at Misset, with boskins, water bowls, tether and vacuum pipes for the milking system¹

hose, sucked the milk into the tank into his lorry and took it away, after he had measured it and everything else. We also had a feed hopper outside, a tall cylindrical hopper, with an augur system to bring feed into the milking parlour. Again there was no lifting, you see, though if I hadn't had all this lifting in my younger years I might have been a little weak person by now. And we usually used, probably about five or six tons of this feed a month.

¹The traditional type of winter housing in Cumbria was the byre (or shippon). Each cow had its own bed within usually a two cow standing. Each cow was tied up by the neck with either a chain or a rope, on a slide to allow it to stand and lie at will. Originally the partitions (boskins) were wood or occasionally slate but later precast concrete was the commonest. There was a feed trough in front and also a water bowl on a piped supply. With the introduction of milking machines most of the byres had a vacuum line to which a milking unit could be attached to allow each cow to be milked twice daily.

The cost of the building and obviously the landlord wanted a bit of extra rent to pay for the building and we were finding it difficult to make ends meet having spent out, spent nearly ten thousand on the equipment and we also had to buy a few extra cattle, it caused us, you know, we weren't exactly hard up, but you could see the business was going the wrong way, so we bought a milk round business and it was a hundred gallon a day which I undertook and we were bottling a hundred gallon of milk a day and selling it direct to customers in Ambleside. I would set off about half past five in the morning and get back about half past eleven. Then I would start doing farm work, either cleaning the cattle shed out or making hay or whatever was necessary. And two years later Dad took my sister and myself into partnership and we called the business J. Walling and Son.



'Milking Troubles ~ No Sir ~ I Milk The Gascoigne Way'

The farm has continually changed according to commercial needs, weather, politicians. And the style of farming has changed as well. The grass, instead of being loaded dry as hay was now made into silage which is fresh grass, chopped, at that time through a chopper and stored in a big heap, very big heap, my heap would be

thirty foot wide, about sixty foot long and about eight foot high and the cattle, there was a fence across the front, the cattle would eat at it and eat at it, but because it was so high we also had to cut sections off to drop down. But it was called self-feed, so you didn't have to feed the cattle. So everything was now becoming automated. With automation comes breakdowns of course and from time to time you acquire knowledge of how to mend something.

We carried on for several years with the milk round until the big companies started to move in and undercut us. And we eventually sold that business on to someone else. The sheep in the meantime had remained fairly constant, we started off, like I say with eighty sheep, they were of Dales bred or Rough Fell breed but eventually it became obvious that you could make more money by having a breed called North of England Mule which was a combination of a Leicester ram and either a Dales bred or a Swaledale ewe. We built up the sheep numbers to about a hundred and eighty at maximum and we used a Suffolk ram and because our land varies from 500ft up to 900ft, its the sheep that tend to be on the higher ground and further away from the farm and the cattle stayed around the farm.

To be continued