

Staveley & District History Society

Journal Summer 2016

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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 Eagle and Child bridge is demolished - 30th June 2016.

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The next issue of the *Journal* (No 38, the Winter 2016-17 issue) will be published about the 12th December 2016. All contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor by early November.

From the President

We start a new season of our Society, we have certainly had plenty of weather to talk about. The last Journal was wonderful for its descriptions and photos of the “deluge” which indeed it was. The 'Eagle and Child' bridge is now no more as I write (see photo below on 30th June) and Scroggs Bridge has hardly any sides. We must all lobby to get a new Eagle and Child bridge, a temporary one for a start and then one built to last, as long as there is local stone employed and not dressed stone. We really cannot wait another whole year to get our village put right.



We are hoping to involve our membership in recording details of buildings in Staveley, Ings and Kentmere. To that end we have produced a simple form to fill in so that we can know more about our villages. It is now available and can be requested from committee members or by emailing the Secretary. It can be collected at our meetings from October.

When Joe Scott started our Society he was keen that members should be keen to participate in making history; there is still plenty to go at! So I hope as many of our



membership as possible will fill in our easy form. Encourage your friends and neighbours and fellow members. I would be happy to show anyone the form I have filled in for my house.

I have been asked a few times if there is a history of the Duke William, which is about to change its use. We would be glad to hear of anyone who may be inclined to pursue this.

I am looking forward to the winter talks especially to hear what connection the Brontes have with our area. I must congratulate members of our Committee who are so diligent in their work for the Society.

Clare Brockbank

How many bridges have there been at the *Eagle and Child*?

In earlier times Baptisms, Weddings and Funerals were not permitted at St Margaret's and had to be conducted in Kendal. It is quite probable that the journey into Kendal involved fording the Gowan near its confluence with the Kent which was frequently dangerous. Matters must have come to a head in 1588, when 48 Staveley men sent a petition to the Bishop requesting that these rights be carried out at St Margaret's:

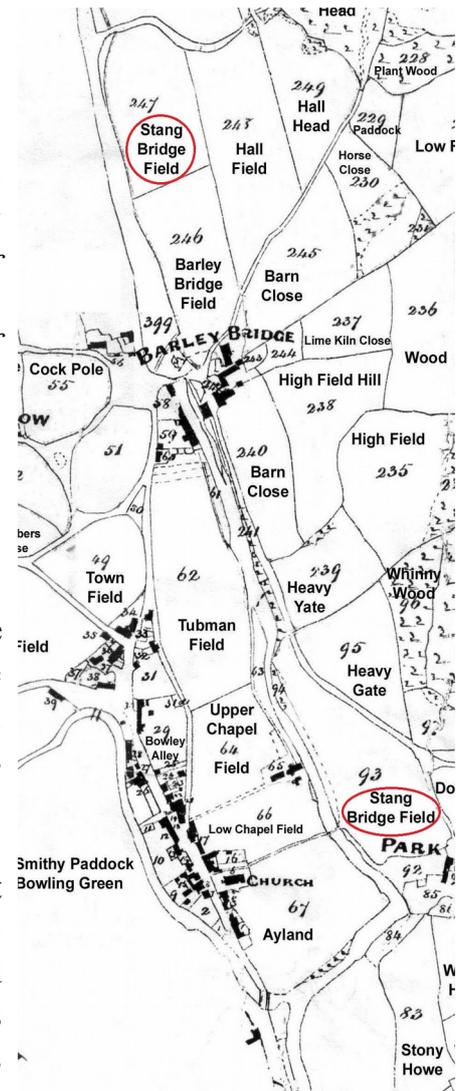
“...The waters of [the Gowan] doth at divers seasons flowe and runne soe forcible that no traveller can passe without great danger.... but most especially between Staveley Church and Kendall when the saide waters crossing the waye to Kendall and meeting the river called Kente many tymes overflowing the bankes thereof and rysing so abundantlie that men dwelling on both sides of the hie waye purposing to take their naturale rest in bedd hath been in greate danger of drowning, in so much that if the speedy helpe of good neighbours had not been, 11 men women and children had perished. Whereof some for refuge was carried into the Chapell there of Staveleyas can testify the same Gabriel Noble, John Baitman Geo. Birkhead and others more.

Local field names suggest quite clearly that there were at least two bridges over the Kent. “Stang” was a stake or a length of wood, so these would be wooden bridges, but we don't know how substantial they were. This is the 1836 Corn Rent Map.

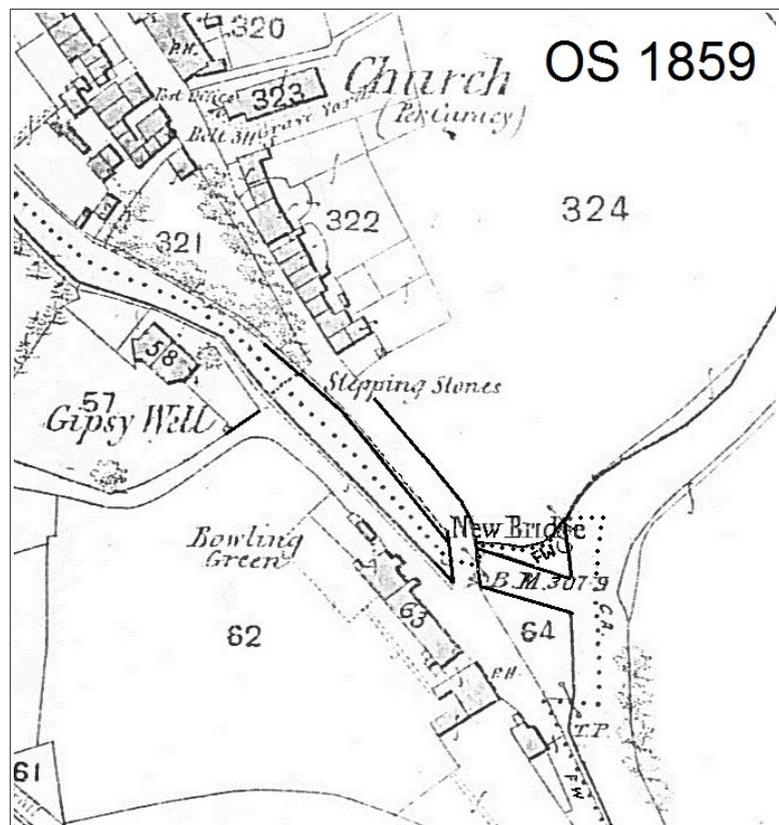
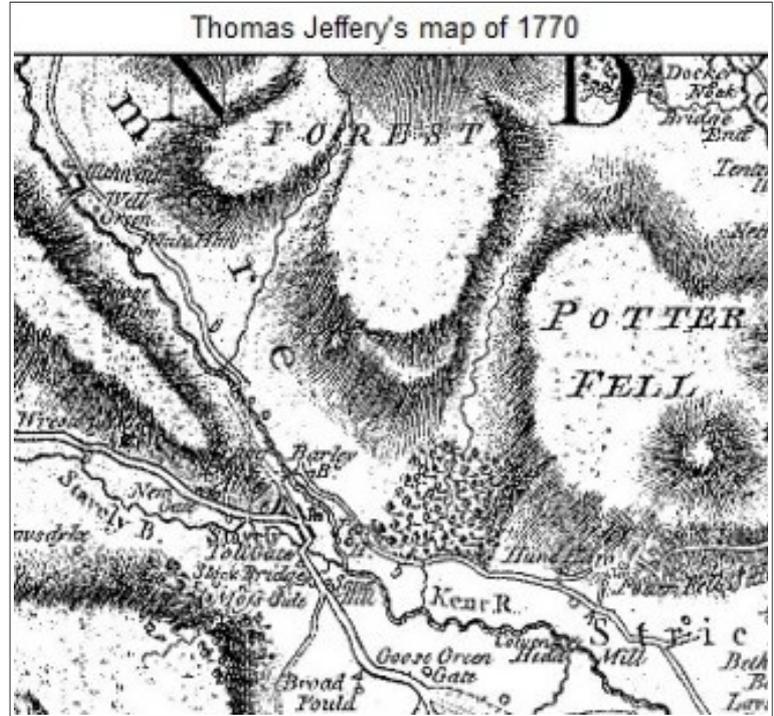
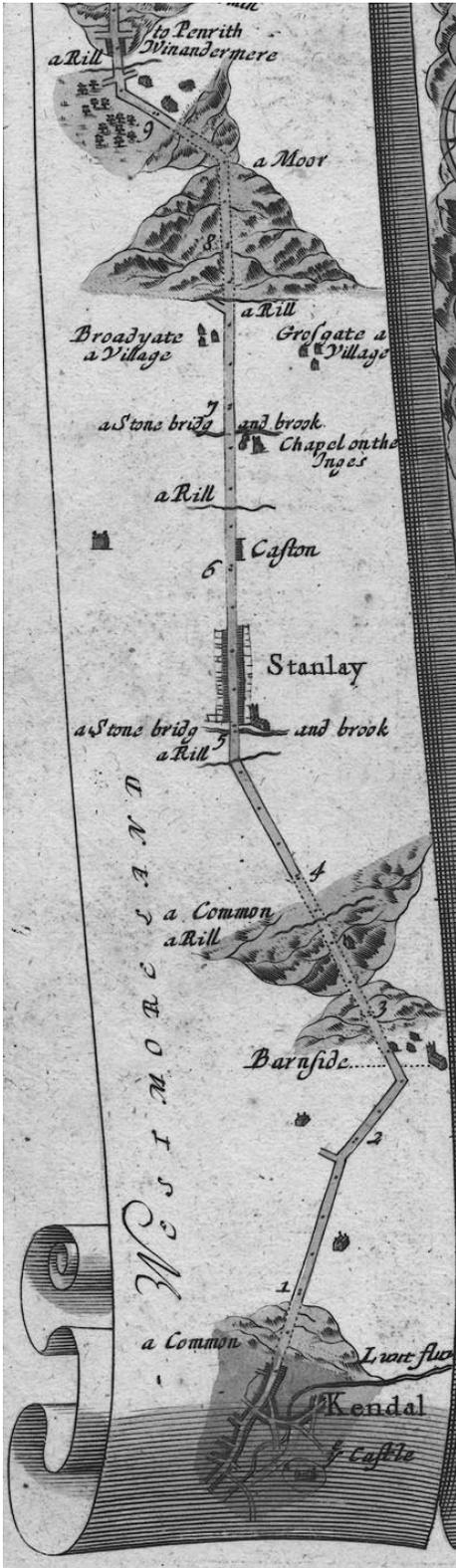
It was John Ogilby, a Scotsman from Dundee who first realised the importance of mapping the roads. In 1675 he approached Charles II for help and was appointed “His Majesty's Cosmographer and Printer”. He and his assistants surveyed 40,000 miles of roads and his “Britannia”, a book of 100 road maps, was in use for over 70 years. A section of one of his maps showing the road from Kendal through Ings and over Moor Howe towards Troutbeck Bridge is on p4. The miles are shown



with a dot every quarter mile and are drawn at a scale of one inch to a mile. This scale, which he introduced, remained in use for nearly 300 years. This enlargement of the portion through Staveley shows the beck at Stock Bridge and St Margaret's Church, and there is now a stone bridge over the Gowan, which suggests that the wooden bridges had proved inadequate.

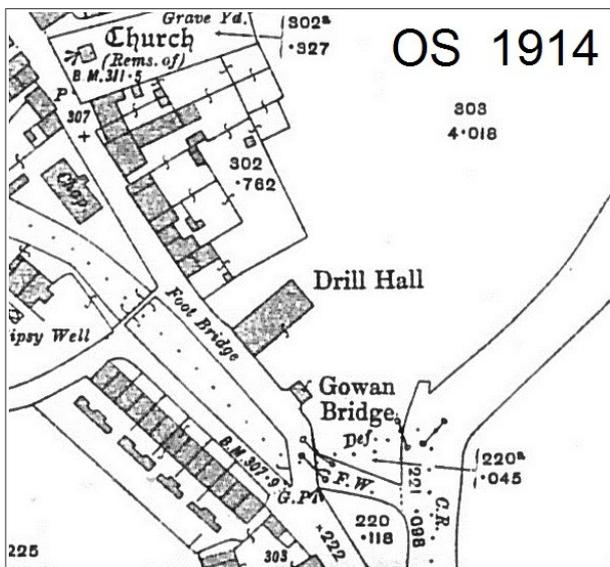


Jeffery's Map of 1770 introduces the "Turnpikes" with a Toll Gate at the Eagle and Child. The bridge over the Gowan now forms a distinct bend, much as it is today, showing a deviation in the road alignment which appears illogical, but must have had a purpose. Possibly it was to reduce the impact of the Kent against the side of the bridge during flood conditions. The Corn Rent Map of 1836 shows the conflict at the confluence of the two rivers, where the Kent and the Gowan meet head on. In flood



conditions the Kent could flow up the Gowan. There appears to have been some attempt to reduce this problem.

An extract of the 1859 First Edition Large Scale OS plan on p4 shows that some work has been undertaken to reduce the conflict. The surveyor, after consulting all the interested parties, has mered the boundary as “Face of Wall” which suggests that this was generally agreed to have been the original course of the Gowan. The name however was given as “New Bridge” so it appears to have been replaced fairly recently. How long would one continue to call it a new bridge?



This is an extract of the 1914 Edition of OS Large Scale plan. The boundary remains in the same position, but since the wall has been partially removed, there is no detail to which it could be mered, so the mereing has been changed to Defaced. The name of the bridge is now shown as Gowan Bridge.

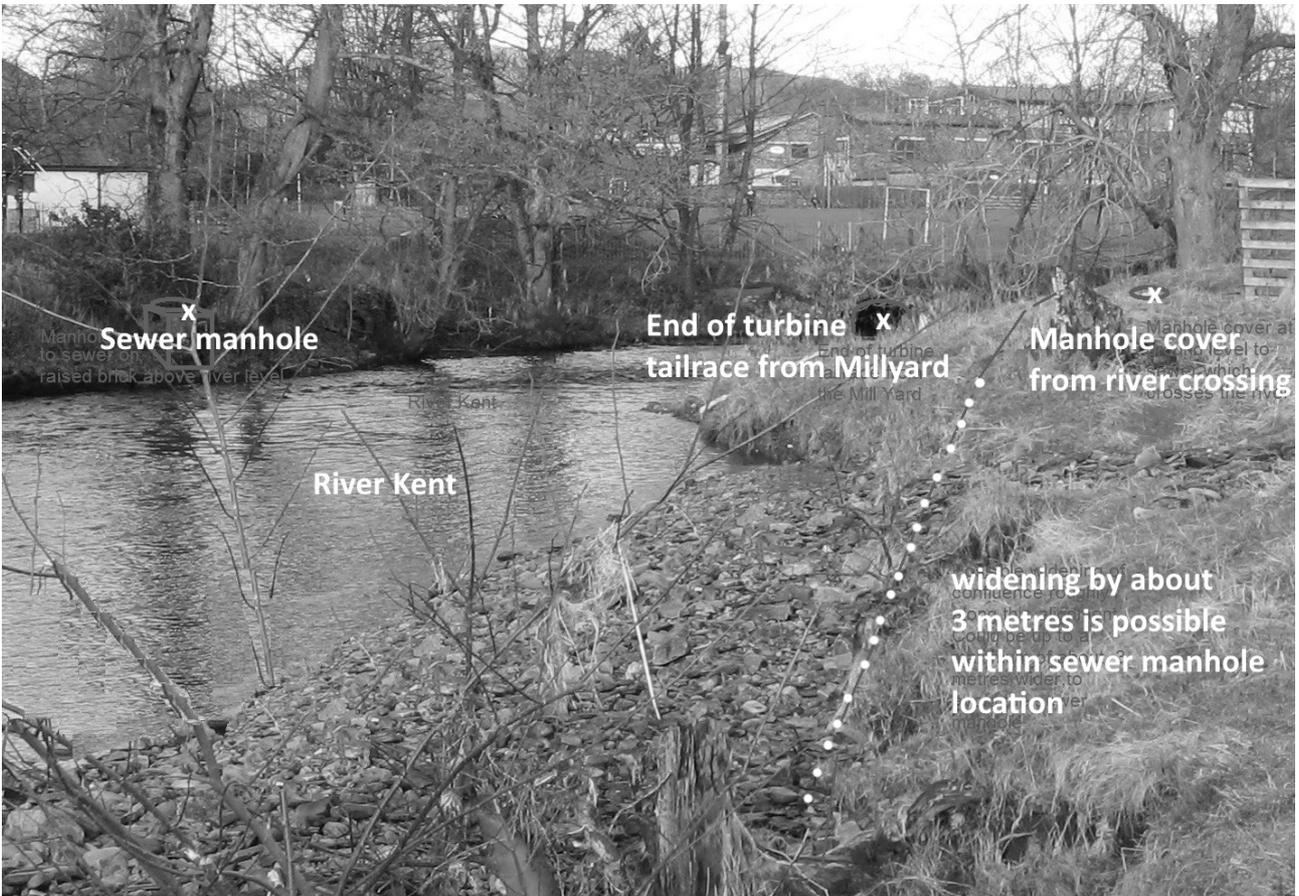
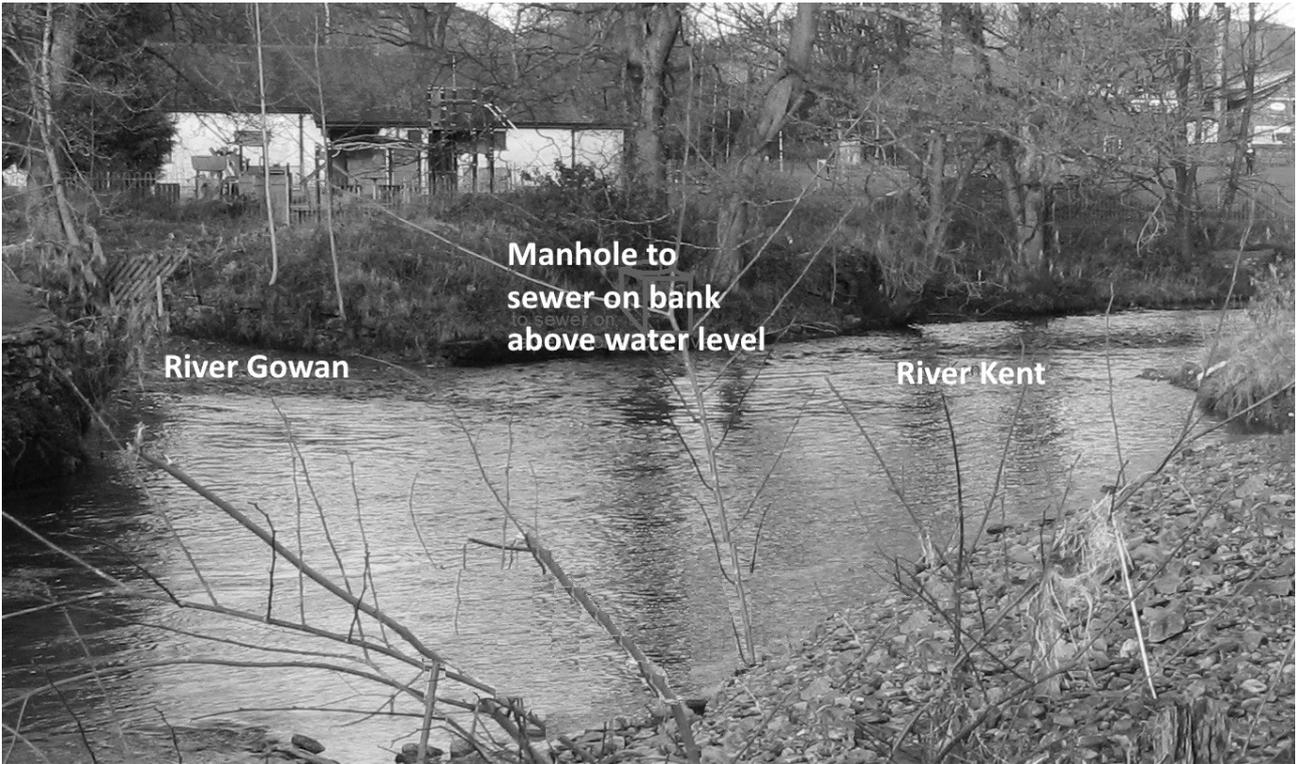
The photographs were taken in the field opposite the Eagle on the day following the December 2015 flood when the flow of both rivers was much reduced. They show some of the problems and offer some possible solutions. The flow down the Kent being

about four times the flow down the Gowan, the Gowan is struggling to make any headway and its width appears even narrower than it is further upstream.

At some stage following the modification of the confluence shown on the 1859 map, a sewerage system was introduced and the main pipe crosses the Kent with inspection chambers at each end and then continues across the field. It might be possible to widen the Kent somewhat as indicated by white dotted line, but the inspection chamber on the left bank restricts it to about two metres at most. It might also be possible to lower the bed of the Kent, but that depends on the depth of the sewer pipe.

A more effective solution would be to divert the Kent round behind the inspection chamber so that its confluence would be about 50 metres further downstream, helping to ease the pressure of water on the bridge. This would take about a fifth of an acre off the field corner. Alternatively, an overflow diversion along the same route, would comprise a shallow depression dry and grazeable under normal conditions, but low enough to allow excess flood water to leave the Kent from an earlier point upstream.

Alan Lord



Summer Walk May 2016, Old Bowness, with John Campbell

For anybody with an interest in the history of Bowness this was pure Viagra. Both John Campbell's knowledge and enthusiasm were prodigious. This was the best Society walk I have been on. The sixteen attendees were entertained with many anecdotes from John throughout the evening.

The walk started on Rayrigg road with a look at Fellside, a group of terraced cottages where John's grandfather lived. After two and a half hours going through the village, a deal of which John now considers to be 'tat' we ended up at Fold Head overlooking Old Fallbarrow. The walk took us from Fellside to Queens Square and up Cragg Brow until we walked the length of Langrigg Drive meeting Brantfell Road. Descending School Hill a detour up Kendal Road allowed us to examine the site of the old Crown Hotel. Ash Square and Market House Square took us to the Parish Church of Windermere. Finally after a visit to Bowness Bay we meandered back eventually reaching Piper Hill and Rayrigg Road. For those members who missed this walk much of the evening's information may be found in John's book, "Village by the Water. A History of Bowness-on-Windermere".

I wonder just how many members are aware of both the starting *and* finishing properties? Despite the comment above John's affection for the village and its history was quite obvious. A splendid evening.

Don Morris

Bowness Historical Trail – key to map

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|--|
| 1 | Fellside | 31 | Date plaque 1813 |
| 2 | Hollin Cottage | 32 | Restaurant, former inn |
| 3 | Parish Room | 33 | Old buildings (early shop) |
| 4 | John Peel Inn | 34 | Victoria Buildings |
| 5 | Sutherland's Restaurant | 35 | White Lion Inn/Royal Hotel (former) |
| 6 | Albert (Arms) Hotel | 36 | Figureheads |
| 7 | Central Buildings | 37 | Wakefeld, Crewdson & Co's Bank (former) |
| 8 | Chestnut tree | 38 | Tenter Beck Pool & Drinking Fountain (site of) |
| 9 | Smithy (site of) | 39 | Marker House (former) |
| 10 | Cragg Brow (NW side) | 40 | Windermere Parish Church and Churchyard |
| 11 | Cragg Brow (SE side) | 41 | Belles Howe/Quaker Burial Ground (site of) |
| 12 | Fent shop (site of) | 42 | Lake Cottage (remains of) |
| 13 | Lonsdale Gallery (site of) | 43 | Cushion Huts (site of) |
| 14 | Chestnut Tree (site of) | 44 | Steamer Pier |
| 15 | Public Hall | 45 | Belsfield Farm (site of) |
| 16 | Police Station (former) | 46 | Belsfield Hotel |
| 17 | Brow Top | 47 | Waterside Cottage (site of) |
| 18 | Langrigg | 48 | Old England Hotel |
| 19 | Poor House and Gas Works (site of) | 49 | Stags Head Hotel |
| 20 | Fairfield | 50 | Tiles |
| 21 | School plaque | 51 | Rose Cottage |
| 22 | Windermere Endowed School for Boys (site of) | 52 | Robinson Place cottages & inn (site of) |
| 23 | Windermere Endowed School for Girls & Infants (former) | 53 | Royal Windermere Yacht Club |
| 24 | Royal Oak Inn | 54 | New Hall Inn |
| 25 | Crown Hotel (original; former) | 55 | Fold Head |
| 26 | Crown Hotel (former) | 56 | Old Fallbarrow |
| 27 | Spinnery Cafe | 57 | Fallbarrow Hall |
| 28 | Laurel Cottage/ Windermere Grammar School (former) | 58 | Green Farm |
| 29 | London, City & Midland Bank (former) | 59 | Millbeck Stock |
| 30 | Deborah Ash (site of) | 60 | Windermere Hydro Hotel |
| | | 61 | Sir William Forwood's Drinking Fountain |

Summer Walk June 2016 to Misset, Ings, with James Walling

Twenty-five members and friends gathered on a balmy evening in front of the old farmhouse at Misset. James Walling, resident there for over 70 years, entertained us first with a short history of the farm before taking us on a tour of the buildings and on a delightful walk up the hillside behind the farm. James's accompanying discourse was a veritable history of farming, a 'must' for our Oral Historians.

The place name appears in the 13th century as Micheleslet or Micheleset and is thought to be derived from the Middle English personal name Michel and saetr, a shieling or summer pasture. The farm was associated with the Braithwaite family, probably going back before the existing 17th century records. In the mid-18th century, wealth came their way when a family member, a surgeon, invented (or perfected) an opium based medicine known as the Black Drop, such that in 1872, Hannah Braithwaite's will caused a sensation, her estate being worth £100,000. The bulk was left to her friend Thomas Rogers, whose nephew sold it to James Crosthwaite of Orrest Head House by 1907. His antecedents passed it to the National Trust in 1987.



Misset Cottage, next door to the main house, is a former Friends' Meeting House founded in 1703, the Braithwaite family having become Quakers in the mid-1670s. Before the cottage was built, meetings were held in the main house. An adjacent stable was also built to accommodate the horses of visiting Friends. In addition, there was a Quaker burial ground and members of the Braithwaite family were buried there as late as 1806. The cottage was closed as a Meeting House in 1821.

John Hiley

Summer Walk July 2016, Tour of Kirkby Lonsdale with Mike Kingsbury

A meagre group of eight members enjoyed a splendid conducted tour of Kirkby Lonsdale with Mike Kingsbury. Meeting at the [new] Market Square we learnt that when the Royal Hotel was built [then Jackson Hall] no other buildings were visible from the Square. The buildings in the square were built after 1820. One shop in the square, the sweet shop, has been continuously in the same family since the early 19th century. The Chemist next to The Snooty Fox has also been opened for that time but has recently been acquired by Boots.



We were then taken through Kirkby Lonsdale via Main St, New Rd, Mitchelgate, Market St, Queen St, St Mary's Church & Ruskin's View, the swine market, the old market site, Mill Brow, the horse market, Back Lane, and finally Jingling Lane before reaching the Market Square again. There are too many interesting facts to relate here but one thing that fascinated me was that the now underground stream which ran the

short distance from Market St steeply down to the Lune worked no less than seven water mills. A good day out, in good weather.

Don Morris

From the Over Staveley Parish Council Minute Book 30 April 1952

'Miss Miller, having recently been supplied with a new car, several members of the public have been speaking unfavourably of her habit of carrying her large dog about in it. It was decided that the clerk write to the County Council pointing out the matter and asking if, in the interests of cleanliness etc., it can be stopped.'

Tales from the Tapes: Slate and slate quarrying. Part 3

The third instalment of the interview of John Williams of Kentmere by Joe Scott in November 1991

JS: You're talking about the twenties?

JW: Twenties and earlier.

JS: Yes, the number of slate works had fallen off and slate was less important about that time wasn't it?

JW: Well, J.J. Thomas was once the Mayor of Kendal, and he used to be the lessee of Kentmere for a while. In fact, during the first world war, he kept all, not all the staff, but all the staff that weren't called up to military service. He kept them all.

JS: Mrs. Gosden says that nearly all the labourers went off to the army, because you could not get labourers then.

JW: And he kept everybody on he could and the story is that he had 400 tons of slate in stock by the end of the war and he sold it all within a couple of months.

JS: Did he?

JW: Yes because he had the backing, he was a little Welshman, his brother used to come up here, quite often. I remember him but I can only just vaguely remember J.J. Thomas. How time flies.

JS: You'd bought a compressed air system....

JW: Possibly, possibly, yes I wouldn't be too sure about that.

JS: I bet when Christopher Robin... that's what he says in his notes.

JW: Yes because a big engine that used to drive the compressed air system was driven by a big engine driver of a chap who lived in Kendal, his family ran the wire mills and he lived at, their home was Castle Green where the Electricity Board offices are now. He, their family had quite a big interest in it. They had the registered office was at the wire mills at Stramongate Bridge. He used to come up on a motorbike and I'm pretty sure it was before the war, the first war.

JS: Yes according to Christopher its in the 90's quite early on, you got the compressed air. This J.J. Thomas comes at the time of the strike I think.

JW: Phew, I don't know about that. You see I remember J.J. Thomas in the thirties.

JS: He died in 1942 according to Christopher. I think he must have got some information from somewhere.

JW: Oh he must have, he could possibly be right, but I would have said certainly that the compressed air system was in before the first world war.

JS: Yes well I think he would agree with that then, he would go along with that, yes.

JW: I am surprised because Hugh John Thomas... John was the middle name of both because there was Hugh John, John John and so on.....anyway he, Hugh John was a quarry man in Spain for most of his life but when he retired he came back here. He used to come up to Kentmere, his brother was long dead by then I think, and it was pandemonium right up to 1942.

JS: But then in the 20s and 30s the Kentmere quarries fell off to the investor.

JW: Yes, yes between 20s and 30s, well I don't know about 20's because early 30s I can remember going up there and it was very active then, Oh yes, three of the workings would be producing and I would say about there would probably be something like twelve men living in the barracks and as many if not more travelling daily from Staveley.

JS: The barracks would be roughly where the reservoir cottage is?

JW: No, the reservoir cottage is the reservoir cottage, always has been. The barracks is the one the Blackburn Education has now. That was built as the barracks and I don't know if that was built in the early 20s or so. Before that they probably wrapped themselves up in a sack in a shed. You cannot believe how tough they were.

JS: Was this the labourers, or the companies themselves?

JW: The companies and the labourers as well, of course.

JS: They must have been tough.

JW: Because they couldn't afford to move and travelling back and forwards was time lost. They could work as long as they wanted. There was no restriction on the amount of time they put in so that they would work as long as they could get the labourers to work for them.

JS: And the quarry was lit by candles?

JW: The quarry owners supplied candles, gunpowder and if you like to call it, accommodation, but they even charged for accommodation.

JS: They charged for it?

JW: Oh they charged for the accommodation.

JS: And they used to go down to Staveley at the weekend?

JW: Well the month end. They were all paid then and they used to go down to Staveley on spree at the month end with their wages and the Fat Lamb, which is...

JS:where Ronnie Parkinson is.

JW: Where they live, that was the main pub but now there's the Duke William as well. The Eagle and Child was not terribly popular. It was, I think, at that time, didn't George Cannon senior old senior run the Fat Lamb?

to be continued