

Staveley & District History Society

Journal Summer 2020

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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: Kentmere Church in Spring with 1000 year-old yew tree

The next issue of the *Journal* (No 50, the Winter 2020-21 issue) will be published in mid-November 2020. Contributions (letters, articles, etc.) are welcome at any time but should be with the Editor by mid-October.

Kentmere as an embryonic parish

The walls and roof beams of the nave of St Cuthbert's Church, Kentmere, as seen today, have stood for more than 500 years, and the yew tree by the entrance porch for probably twice as long. The exposure of the roof structure during renovations in 2016 (described in SDHS Journal, Winter 2016-17) revealed that the nave roof beams lay on their original 'turf' bearings, and had not been disturbed since they were first positioned on the walls. Having taken the opportunity to date these timbers, the idea of a project to investigate the history of the building and the community that built it was born.

Thanks to part funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and with assistance from Dr. Fiona Edmonds and Dr. Sarah Rose of the Rural Heritage Centre of Lancaster University, an 18 month research project has since been carried out to see what could be discovered. What follows is part of what we think we now know: it is inevitably somewhat disjointed and incomplete as evidence has been sparse, but it has provided some insights and reasoned conclusions.

Early times

The building of a church requires a considerable physical endeavour much greater than the construction of an ordinary family dwelling. Built for a community, it must involve a sufficient number of like-minded, capable individuals who want to, or can be persuaded to, set aside from the daily grind of survival the necessary resources of time and effort for a huge communal undertaking. A key question must, therefore, be: when could Kentmere have first supported such a community?

It is only the interpretation of archaeological finds, along with some linguistic history passed down over time, that enables us to begin to be able to visualise the settlers who first came to the empty valley, left bare at the end of the last glaciation more than 11,000 years ago. It must have been some time before these pioneers could have become a sufficiently numerous and well-organised group to build a church.

The 'Vale of Kentmere', as the earliest written records describe it, is most clearly defined by the topography of its boundary. Carved out of the bedrock by repeated periods of glaciation over the last 800,000 years or so, it is a deep valley, falling from the summit of High Street (828m). Although its altitude above sea level and its high precipitation would have made it less obviously attractive to settle than locations in lower, more benign conditions nearby, population growth, or hostility, would have encouraged exploration: the high sky line of its long flanking ridges is always its horizon, and must have given to its earliest visitors a sense of possible sanctuary, if also perhaps, some foreboding. A barrier of hard rock has resisted the glacial erosion at the southern end where the valley narrows, thus creating the more inviting feature of a shallow body of water – the original mere of the Kent.

There would have been, of course, very early attempts at settling, but what limited archaeological evidence exists from hut circle encampments towards the southern end

clearly implies these were not developed enough to have become permanent residences for anything beyond an extended family. It is linguistic history that gives us the strongest clues as to the first successful attempts at permanent occupation in the form of place naming. The valley's topographical profile means it is possible to see a very distinct pattern of naming in the valley, beginning from Old English origins in the lower end around Staveley, and including those hill tops clearly visible from there, and then progressing north to an ever increasing level of detailed naming with Old Norse origins. In particular, features invisible until within the upper valley itself have predominantly Old Norse names, Harter Fell (hill of the deer, as can still be seen today) being a good example, hidden from sight behind Kentmere Pike when viewed from the lower valley floor. Even those names which may be based on later dialect words still show the dominance of the Old Norse language of these settlers. It is reasoned that in those past times, only for shepherding would this detail of naming be needed in daily life. This would seem very strong evidence of who first came to the deeper parts of the valley and with what purpose.

To achieve a viable community would require a substantial migration into the area. With Norse place-name evidence and the boat found in the mere showing a distinct form of Viking boat-building skills, it appears that Vikings must have been the main influence on the group of early permanent settlers. There is no evidence of earlier influences from Roman times, notwithstanding the naming of a stretch of track on High Street. The withdrawal of military occupation and its attendant support from further north would have caused a reduced population density ripe for re-settlement, and Vikings are known to have been migrating to the west coast after their leaders' eviction from Ireland in 902 AD. Most of those Vikings who settled in Cumbria are thought to have come from the west coast but a few may have come via the northerly corridor to York and back down into Ullswater, Martindale and Mardale.

Archaeological evidence from the excavations at Bryant's Gill in the upper valley of Kentmere in the 1980s reinforces a view that the gradual formation of permanent occupation did not occur until sometime after the 10th century. These were turbulent times in the general area and it is not surprising that what evidence can be interpreted by the time of the Conquest of 1066 suggests the population of Kentmere would not yet be regarded as a community. The records for the area in Domesday are not a full survey of possessions as elsewhere in the country, but appear as a general valuation, or 'Geld Book', taken from earlier records. The land areas involved imply only a few families, perhaps around 5 to 6 for the Kentmere valley. These would seem to have been mostly of Viking descent but mixed with some earlier residents, in permanent or semi-permanent occupation, struggling to survive in a natural environment much less benign than at lower levels nearby, yet safer from hostile incursion.

A community forms

The time when it can be said with any confidence that a coherent multi-generational community had begun to form in the 'Vale', or indeed in any of the immediately neighbouring hamlets, appears to have been around the early 13th century. This deduction comes from the first surviving documents specific to the location. The

earliest record is a list of the tenants in 1301 of the first lord of the then recently formed manor of Kentmere, John de Bellewe. John owned lands in the north-east of England and had inherited Kentmere through his wife Laderine, when the baron of all of *Kendale*, Peter de Brus III, died without male heirs in 1272, causing his land holdings to be split between his four surviving sisters, of whom Laderine was the youngest. The second record is a list of taxed persons in 1332. This fortunate chance of being able to compare two periods, only a generation apart, and early in the period when the area came under distinct lordship, begins to open up a clearer picture of those who lived in Kentmere. **Table 1** shows data from the records together with some added comments and speculations.

Of the nineteen names in 1301 and the fifteen in 1332, one appears to dominate not only numerically, at around a quarter of the population, but also as being the only clearly multi-generational line most likely to have been resident for some time. The name the scribe gave in 1301 was '*de Hayra*', but in 1332 '*de Ayra*'. This name is most likely from Old Norse – '*eyrr*' (gravel spit) of the *á* (river) – with perhaps the scribe in 1301 hearing a somewhat unfamiliar guttural, or pre-aspirated, '*Haich*' in the pronunciation of '*eyrr*'. The name also appears a generation or two later, in 1375, now spelled *Ayray*, and recorded as the 'Bailiff', a position of significant community importance as the representative of a non-resident lord of the manor. [Note: The spelling of this name later morphed progressively over time through various forms such as *Airie*/*Ayray*/*Ayrey* until finally, around the beginning of the 18th century, it settled on *Airey*, as it is today].

Where did this formative family unit of the *de Ayra* originally come from? Some insight can come from the other names listed. As populations grew and moved around, the answer to questions such as '*where are you from?*' or '*who do you represent?*' required personal identity to go beyond the simple '*I am John*' or '*I am John, son of George*'. Setting aside those with only a single forename of the 'son of' form, the above-mentioned list of 1301 appears to show only *de Ayra*, along with *de Brockbank*, to be identified by distinct, singular **local** landscape features, as opposed to most names which indicate the general neighbouring locations like *de Troutehale*, *de Coupland*, *de Grennererigge*, *de Patrickdal* and *de Hoygal* (all hamlets close to, but outside the boundary of Kentmere). The distinct naming of immediate local features – unhelpful to folk from further afield – is seen as indicating early residence, when a locative 'surname' specific to the valley area was sufficient. Those who moved into the valley would tend to be known more by the place name of the neighbouring community from which they had come, rather than a local feature of where they were going to settle¹.

Only one person, '*Broune*', is named *de Kentmere*, which is also taken to imply early residence. The name appears to have died out by 1332, but the *Broune* family could plausibly have been even earlier residents than the *de Ayras*. The cumulative evidence of spear-head artefacts found in the mere, spinning whorls and metal working slag at Bryant's Gill, Norse namings and Viking style boat-building, strongly suggests that the '*de Ayra*' family were most likely of predominantly Viking origin.

Residents of Kentmere 1301 and 1332

Table 1.

1301 (19 persons) ¹ List of Tenants	1332 (15 persons) ¹ Lay Tax	Taxed Value	Economic Status ²	Interpretation	Comments
<i>William de Noyne</i>	<i>William de Noyne</i>	200s	'Seigneur'?	Assumed same person?	Family head in 1332
<i>Robert de Noyne (son)</i>	<-Deceased?				Previous family head in 1301
<i>Son, Robert de Noyne</i>	<i>Robert de Noyne</i>	75s	Yeoman	Possible scribing error?	Eldest son of previous family head?
<i>Richard de Noyne</i>	<-Deceased?				
	<i>Gilbert de Noyne</i>	20s	unskilled		Sons from unidentifiable
	<i>John de Noyne</i>	37.5s	Yeoman		members of the extended family
<i>Thomas de Troutbeck</i>	<i>Thomas de Troutbeck</i>	45s	Yeoman	Assumed scribing error?	Long term residents?
	<i>William de Troutbeck</i>	30s	Husbandman	Son of Thomas?	
	<i>Robert de Troutbeck</i>	90s	Yeoman	From Troutbeck?	New Off-comer in 1332
	<i>John Ormoune</i>	45s	Yeoman		New Off-comer in 1332
	<i>Gilbert son of John</i>	35s	Yeoman	No father identified (but could be John Ormoune?)	New Off-comer in 1332
<i>Richard de Mogyf</i>	<i>William de Mogyf</i>	30s	Husbandman	Assumed father and son	Long term resident ?
<i>Peter de Cuypland</i>	<i>Peter de Cuypland</i>	30s	Husbandman	Assumed same person	Long term resident ?
<i>William Muckford</i>	<i>Nicholas Muckford</i>	22.5s	Husbandman	Father and son?	Long term residents?
<i>Thomas de Kentmere</i>	<-Deceased ?				
<i>Richard servant</i>	<i>Richard Ormoune</i>	20s	Unskilled	Possibly the same person?	Faithful servant inherits?
<i>William de Grommiffe</i>	<-Deceased no progeny?				
<i>Richard de Charsfeld</i>	<-deceased/moved?				Hugil/Applethwaite border?
<i>Son, Richard</i>	<-Moved?			From Patterdale	
<i>William de Gylpin</i> ⁴	<-Moved/non resident?			⁴ Grandson of Richard of Ulthwaite?	Gilpins returned to valley by 1375 marrying into the Ayra family
<i>William Sirdale</i>	<-Lineage died out?				
<i>John son of Simon</i>	<i>John son of Mous</i>	15s	Unskilled) Unattributable males,	
<i>Robert son of Jordan</i>	<i>John son of Ormoune</i>	15s	Unskilled) assumed unmarried but	
<i>Peter son of Richard</i>	-----?	<10s	Poor ³) above age of consent.	
<i>William son of Bruce</i>	-----?	<10s	Poor ³)	

Notes:-

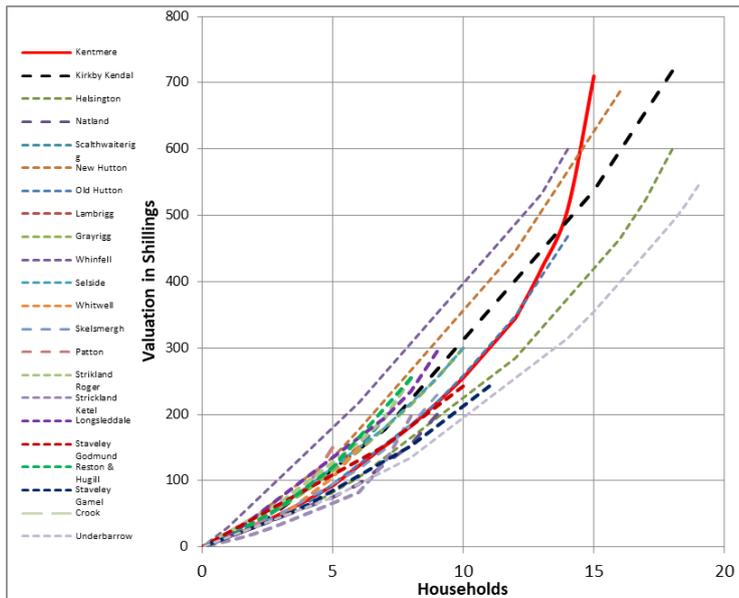
¹ Figures are totals of named 'taxed' persons only. The nature of both the taxes and customary rents levied can be interpreted as charges against the household head. The reduction in numbers by 1332 may be at least partly due to the effects on prosperity of the 1316 and 1322 incursions in the Kendal area by the Scots, together with recorded events of famine and animal disease.

² The economic status is an illustration only, interpreted from the valuations and the possessions of similar persons recorded in later times. Seigneur is interpreted as being an unelected, wealthy and longstanding community member in the absence of a resident lord of the manor, such as Thomas Ayra, in 1375 (but by then appointed bailiff)

³ 'Poor' denotes those persons below the valuation cut-off of 10s for taxation. It is assumed that at this level they did not live independently but were unpaid servants, although some may have held a half-sized land tenements, or 'toft'.

⁴ A William *Gylpin* – different spelling – is named as a witness to this record and written in the same hand. The witness is taken most likely to be the son of Richard Gilpin (Gylpin), lord of Ulthwaite.

The valuations of the 1332 Lay Tax records are also available for the 22 neighbouring ‘parishes’ most adjacent to Kendal. A comparison of these valuations is shown here as a cumulative value against the number of households taxed.



Whilst the cumulative valuation is seen to be fairly consistent with a familiar shape of greater wealth amongst a few, Kentmere stands out as not only being more wealthy per capita than any of the other 21, but also, as the increasingly steep curve shows, with a very high valuation of its wealthiest. The individual valuations in Kentmere show the

family *de Ayra* not merely rated with over 45% of the total taxed valuation, but also containing the highest individual rating in the 22 comparable parishes surrounding Kendal. Analysis of the valuations and the evidence from later probate inventories provides clear evidence that sheep farming was the source of this wealth, with the mills at Ulthwaite very probably a key economic driver.

Although these early records were of tenants of the first lord of the manor of Kentmere, John de Bellewe, these folk probably prospered without much direct interference from their lords. As had been the case with Peter de Brus III before them, John and Laderine had no male heirs and thus when Laderine died c1278 and then John in 1301, the manorship passed via their eldest daughter Sybil (sometimes Isabel) to the grandson *Nicholas de Stapleton*. As Nicholas was then a minor the manor thus lay in the wardship of the king, but after proving his age the manor was assigned back to Nicholas in 1311. The de Stapletons were a noble and devout family, with even larger estates in the north east of England than the *de Bellewes*, and Kentmere was but a small part of their holdings. There is no evidence that either the de Bellewes or the de Stapletons were ever resident in Kentmere, although some visits would seem likely from time to time. The reference to the bailiff, *Thomas Ayra*, in 1375 supports this non residency, as bailiffs were normally appointed only for those manors with absentee landlords, and points again to the primacy of the Airey family in the valley².

By the mid-14th century, it thus appears that the population of Kentmere possessed sufficient wealth and independence to have been capable of a major community effort, just as others were at this time in neighbouring districts.

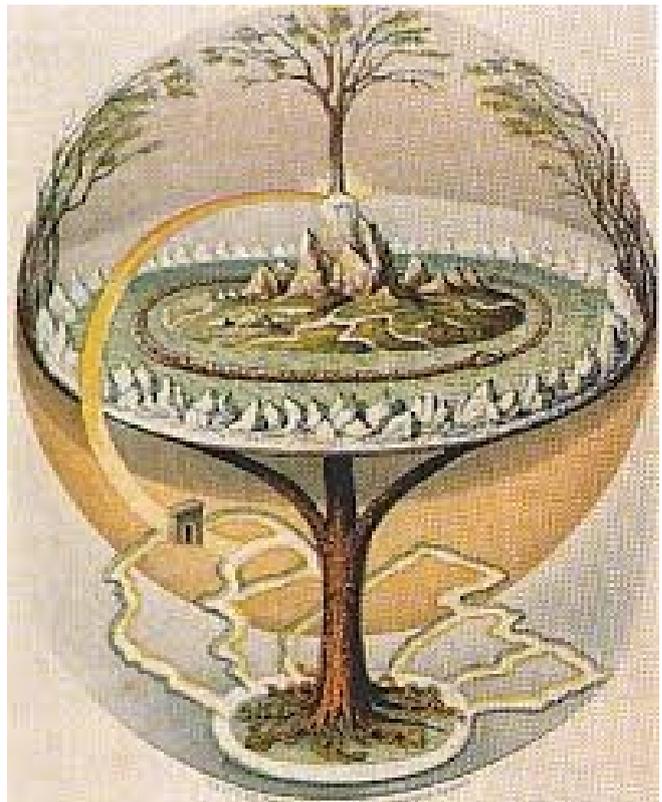
Religion

It is interpreted from archaeological finds elsewhere in Cumbria that by this time paganism had been well absorbed into Christian practices. Exactly what spiritual practice and beliefs were earlier held by a small isolated community of a dozen or so families in Kentmere cannot be known. Such beliefs were not yet regulated or

recorded by any wider ‘church’. The Registers of the Archbishops of York in the 14th century, along with other such documents, show the embryonic spread of church ministry to have been very limited and clearly curtailed by the radial distance from the centre of the See. This is presumed to reflect the low population densities and poor communication methods across northern England in these times of unrest, somewhat complicated by the allocation of Kendal (and Kentmere) to the Archdeaconry of Richmond within the See of York in 1088 and Cumberland being removed to the See of Carlisle in 1227 – the two not to be re-united again until the 19th century.

The rocks of Kentmere are unsuited to durable carving, so it is unsurprising that no religious artefacts from Medieval times have been found in the valley, unlike in other parts of Cumbria where the transition from pagan to Christian beliefs has left archaeological evidence to be analysed. A possible key indicator of the situation does exist, however, in the form of the yew tree in the present-day church yard close to the entrance. From its girth and the parts with exposed growth rings, it is estimated to be of the order of 1000 years old, or more.

Its location lies at a central point between the three most probable early habitations: the confluence of Hall Beck and the Kent on the west side of the mere (the probable origin of the ‘eyrr á’ feature?); Longhouses on the east side of the mere, and the Hallowbank shoulder. The location of the current site is highly visible on a well-drained local promontory, which in early times was unlikely to have been tree-covered due to its exposure and steeply shelving ground. A singular yew tree was as likely as not to have been transplanted by hand, as they are difficult to propagate, but even if it was randomly self-sown, it strongly suggests having been subsequently well looked after to have survived so long. Christian churchyards often feature yew trees: their longevity seems to have associated them with immortality. Trees also have connotations in other religions. The Vikings had a notion of a tree of life, Yggdrasil, which is said in some illustrations to appear like a yew tree. Celtic art also depicts a tree of life. The nurturing on this site of a particular yew may therefore have resonated spiritually with any of the early settlers of the time – Christian, Viking, Briton or non-believer – and, perhaps as a result, the tree was preserved, as it clearly has been for something like a millennium. There is no evidence to suggest more can be deduced.



Yggdrasil

by Oluf Olufsen Bagge (1847) courtesy
Northern Antiquities

The first Chapel

The outside influence of the Church on the valley community appears to have come circa 13 April 1358, when the Register of Cardinal John Thoresby, Archbishop of York from 1352-1373, records that he ‘*granted a licence during pleasure for Sir Miles de Stapulton, knight, to have masses celebrated in an oratory within the vale of Kentmere.*’ No record has been found to suggest how or why this grant had been instigated.

Today the location or form of this oratory cannot be determined. There may well have been nothing yet built at the time of the licence being granted, as to build something without a licence might have seemed too speculative, but equally it could have been normal practice for a licence to be granted once all was in place. A hierarchy of church, chapel and oratory existed in these times but was more about the qualifications of the religious cleric and the nature of his ministry than about the building in which it was to be performed. An oratory could even be portable, as evidenced in France during the contemporaneous Hundred Years’ War, so little can be inferred about the nature of the building from the name in the Register.

Our only clues come from what happened later, but it is a big jump, requiring a good deal of speculation. It has not been possible by document research to find out anything yet about the history of the first building of either the ‘Pele’ tower at Kentmere Hall (a possible location of some sort of oratory, although the part of the building sometimes referred to as ‘Chapel Barn’ post-dates this period by over 150 years), or of any building at the location of the present church. If the oratory was a building, then the likelihood must be that it was at either one or the other of these locations, as no suggestive structures, relics or ground features have been found elsewhere, nor has LiDAR (laser imaging) and normal aerial photography revealed any clues. Modern subsurface techniques, such as geophysics, have unfortunately been shown to be ineffective in the boulder moraines of the area.

Our interpretations of what is visible today are our only means of forming a ‘picture’ of the earliest structures that were built on the present site of the church. The current nave and tower show a number of features which strongly support the view that the northern wall of the nave is the line of a wall which predated both the tower and work done at the beginning of the 16th century. This early wall, therefore, must have been in place for some time before that, and so could easily date back most or all of the 150 years to the date of the oratory licence: a smaller chapel, probably without a tower at first, could have stood on the same site.



There are several reasons for deducing that the tower was built later than the rest of this chapel. It is argued that the need to incorporate means of preventing water running down a tower’s face from entering the roof of a connected building was well known before the 14th century: a good

nearby example being Staveley's St Margaret's church tower built before 1338 which shows evidence of an integral 'drip course'. Ruins visible today of the great abbeys and monasteries also show abundant knowledge of the need for these junctions where a high wall meets a lower roof. Kentmere's tower, however, does not appear to have any of these integral connecting details, although it is just possible that they may have existed and then been destroyed or hidden by subsequent work. In addition, a building with a contiguous tower constructed in this period would normally have an entrance on the west end, but thermographic imaging has not revealed one in Kentmere's tower, nor is the big difference in level of the foundations consistent with an entrance without substantial steps. We cannot be absolutely sure without seeing the stonework beneath the render, but this large difference in level points very strongly to a conclusion that the tower was built against a pre-existing structure which may well have been the oratory built as the result of the licence in 1358. A purported document of 1453 which might have given further insight has not been found in spite of diligent searches (refer footnote)³.

The tower itself has features which suggest it was built in a period which had defence in mind. The access to the tower has a draw-bar slot inside, and the orientation of the spiral stairs is that traditionally perceived as assisting the defending occupant. The small window is very high above the ground, another feature regarded as being designed to provide safe sanctuary. St Cuthbert's at Dufton (recorded in the 1291 *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of Pope Nicholas IV) is a good example of what adding a tower to a pre-existing nave could be expected to look like when there was no issue of defence. This involved raising the ground (c1673) to bring it up to level with the pre-existing chapel nave and the incorporation of an entrance in the west end entrance – very different to Kentmere, seemingly built more as a defensible lookout tower not just an embellishment to the chapel.

The late 14th and early 15th centuries were violent times and although there is no evidence of raids into Kentmere whether by Scots, Border Reivers, or during the 'Wars of the Roses', it is thought that fear, by a prosperous community, of a violent incursion may have been enough to have caused the inclusion of defensible attributes in any building likely to be needed as a safe sanctuary. The characteristics of both the Pele and church towers would thus appear to reflect these times around the middle 14th century, but unlike Staveley we do not have the luck of a charter document surviving to help us date them. It would not be until the early 16th century that we can reliably date what happened next, not by the written word, however, but from physical dating.

The overall conclusion is that pursuant to the granting of a licence in 1358, there was a low chapel building constructed on the site of the present day nave (even if its clergy may have been licensed only for limited rites), with no evidence that the community was homogeneous enough or large enough to have come together significantly earlier. Depending on how costs were funded, this could have been a wooden and reed-thatched structure, or a stone and slate-roofed one, but by the time this construction was likely to have been built, stone walls, at least, would have been by far the more likely. If the tower was indeed added later, as implied by its position, this could easily have also involved a change of roof materials for the chapel from thatch to slate. The building of the tower appears to have followed a period of fear causing its construction to provide

safe sanctuary and capability of warning, joining it to the pre-existing nave via an ‘undesigned’ connection. Whether this is a correct interpretation will require more forensic investigations of the tower when, perhaps one day, an opportunity will arise. What is quite clear, however, is that the nave was eventually enlarged in width and the roof raised c1511-1516, and again around some 50 years later to become what, in the most part, is seen today, subsuming the first chapel entirely. Only the yew remains from the past to fuel speculation of the first chapel’s true nature.

Robert Courtier / The Kentmere Heritage Project's history of settlement

1. The question ‘Where are you from’ has been a common feature for the first acquaintance of strangers all through later centuries and still today, often leading to a moniker as an aid to recognition.
2. A bailiff could be an appointment beneath a sheriff or direct to a lord of the manor. In the situation of an absentee landlord, the position would be the highest representative of the king’s court in a community.
3. A reference to a 1453 document is quoted in the 1934 CWAAS transactions of the Summer Meeting of 6 July 1933 which visited Kentmere Hall and Kentmere Chapel, where a member Mr W.T. McIntyre spoke to the assembled party. (This reference will also be found in other ‘histories’). *‘Dealing with the theories as to the Norman origin of this building, Mr. McIntire stated that the earliest mention he could find of the church was in a deed of 1453, relative to the neighbouring Brockstone farm. It was then a chapel under Kendal.....’*. This alleged document has not been traced and it is questioned if the date is in anyway correct. The nearest reference to anything near Brockstone is the field ‘Priest Parrock’ next to Hollowbank House recorded on field maps of 1836 and 1837. The adjoining land was owned then by Staveley and Torver curacies. There is also no evidence that Brock Stone as an abode existed in 1453. The name does not appear in early documents whereas Hollow Bank and Stile End were clearly the dominant habitations in the 16th century when the naming of abodes first began to be used in probate documents to differentiate folk of the same name. It is concluded that the above reference is unreliable and probably misquoted: it certainly does not appear to relate to the current location of the church.

Review - ‘A Lakeland Boyhood’ by David Clark (Hayloft Pub. Ltd 2020)

SDHS member, David Clark attended Bowness Elementary School and, from 1951-1956, Windermere Grammar School. After leaving school, he worked in forestry and in textiles, before studying Economics as a mature student at Manchester University and thereafter at Sheffield University. He became Labour MP, first for Colne Valley, and from 1979-2001 for South Shields, during which time he was a member of the Shadow Cabinet and then the Cabinet when Labour came to power under Tony Blair. He subsequently became a member of the House of Lords. He has also been Chairman of the Forestry Commission and led the successful campaign which resulted in the Lake District becoming a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Of course, this book isn’t about his illustrious career in public service but about his early life, the context for the personal development which shaped that career.

David’s father, George, was a gardener. He learned his trade at Lowther Castle for an employer with strong anti-socialist views. George nonetheless became, in 1918, a founder member of the local branch of the Agricultural Workers Union. He was working at Lindeth Fell, Windermere when, in 1931, he married Janet, David’s mother. From a mining family with Cumbrian roots, she was in service as a housemaid in Windermere. David was born in the early months of WW2, in the part of the stable block at Threave House near Castle Douglas, which was their accommodation; it had neither electricity nor water. George, was head gardener, first there, then at nearby Arbigland on the Solway coast growing produce for evacuated children. Wartime rationing and the mild climate encouraged self-sufficiency, the Clark family diet being supplemented by fruit from the hedgerows, honey, eggs, pigeons and rabbits, and flounders that young David learned to guddle.

The severe 1946/7 winter and its widespread food shortages were the prelude to a move to Broad Leys, where George became head gardener in April 1947. Then it was the retirement home of Frederick John Milne of Kendal Milne, the Manchester department store. The fields, woods and fellsides thereabout became the playground of young David, and he helped on the local farm. Cycling also became a passion. He went to school at the Endowed Boys School in Bowness where he thrived - and became ink monitor! When Milne died and the house sold to the Windermere Motor Boat Club, George was without work and simultaneously the family had no home. A desperate time followed, but eventually they moved to yet another tied house when George became head gardener at Garden Hill on Storrs in 1951. But David wasn't allowed to take his beloved dog Pat there, the whole experience making a lasting impression.

He writes fondly of home life: listening to the radio; *Dick Barton, Special agent* on the Light Programme and Wilfrid Pickles' *Have a go*; playing board games such as Monopoly; politics was off the agenda, too risky for a family dependent on an employer's whim; reading Arthur Ransome over and over with its links to places he knows; a square of carpet in the living room, lino in the bedrooms; the stone hot water bottle; roaming the countryside and love of nature; otters and red squirrels; birdwatching; going to hound-trails; playing conkers; apple scrumping; rowing on the lake; fishing and skating; supporting Carlisle United (like his Dad) and Bowness Rovers. He supplemented the family income with a paper round. And scouting played an important part in his life from 1950; camping at Tower Wood; bob-a-job week. He also became a choir boy at St Martins Church in Bowness where he joined the Church Youth Fellowship and writes of the enthusiastic and creative leadership there. This also provided the opportunity to interact with girls which his boys-school education didn't. He thus makes a case for co-education.

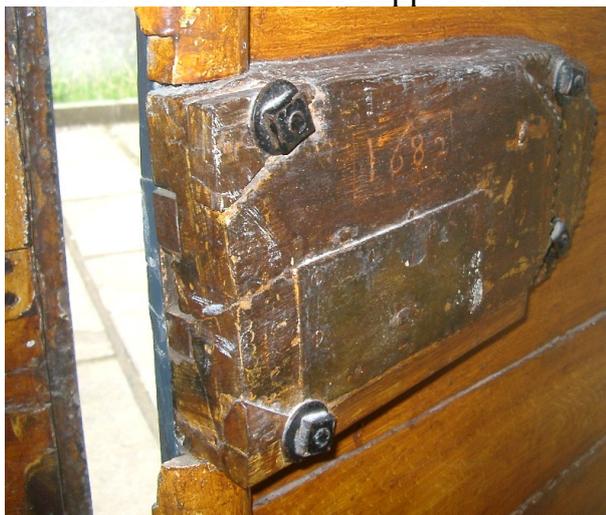
In late Summer 1951, David started at Windermere Grammar School, the requirement for a school uniform being a huge financial burden. He confesses to enjoying school dinners (tapioca, semolina and rice pudding!) but questions how inclusive the school was back then. It had become a comprehensive school for boys in 1945 but he feels that it clung on to its previous grammar school tradition well after that even though the avant-garde (for the time) timetabling system allowed 'late-developers' to succeed academically. The approach to history wasn't traditional either, the Social and Economic History curriculum suiting him. He was an enthusiastic member of the school Young Farmers Club, a career in farming being an attractive option for him. He'd begun helping out at Bellman Ground, bringing in the cows, learning to milk by hand, harvesting turnips and kale and recovering lost sheep. Other part-time work saw him looking after hens and working for a timber business. So, despite being invited to stay on at school to do A levels, financial pressure led him to leave school after O levels to work in forestry, for Mould and Bloomer just over the Ferry, clearing, fencing and planting, not just on Claife Heights but as far away as Leck. He might have made a career in forestry but the waiting list for Forestry Commission training was many years, to a young lad an eternity, so he began work as a lab assistant for Lansil Ltd in Lancaster, a large employer at the forefront of man-made fibre development. The job came with day-release classes at Lancaster Tech.

That's about where the book ends, and the rest is history! It is delightfully open for one who has been so much in the public eye. Lifelong loyalty to his old school chums and neighbours is nice too. His wide knowledge of country life, his work in forestry and farming and also in a scientific environment, prepared him well for his political career when many of our politicians seem to have little work experience, particularly manual work, many going straight from full-time education into political and governmental internships. And, of course, the experience of his family's dependence on 'the large house', with tied cottage and low wage, not only shaped the colour of his politics but he'd actually lived a life more like many of those whose lives which as an MP he sought to better. David's love and knowledge of the Lakes shines through the book which concludes with a chapter on how the Lake District in general and Bowness in particular have changed in the face of the boom in tourism. He questions: 'Is it right to entirely sacrifice the local community in preference to possible economic benefit of the few?'

John Hiley

A new key for Ings Church

The year 1682 is scratched on the lock at St Anne's Church. This predates the existing building by 60 years. It is known that there was a previous building on the site but no records of it exist. It is supposed that the lock was transferred to the new door in 1742.



Until last month, there was only one key. It is made of wrought iron, nearly 25cm long and weighs 500gm. It has a hairline fracture in the edge of one of the castellations (*the wards*) on the bit (*'the part of a key which is specially shaped or notched to operate the mechanism of its own particular lock or latch'*) It is unlikely to be misplaced and a keyholder on his/her way to lock the Church on a dark winter's night feels safe from footpads. A police 'stop and search' might regard the key as an offensive weapon.

A chance meeting with SDHS member Phil Booth resulted in him offering to fabricate a duplicate. Various wooden replicas were created, the main difficulty being the need for a hollow stem to pass over a long metal pin within the lock. In locksmith's terminology, this type of key is called a Pipe key, defined as '*a key with a flat bit and a hollow circular shank to locate on the drillpin.*' A successful wooden model having been made, the new metal key was 'forged' by Mike Tullis of Inglefield Nursery, Staveley. The pipe is a recycled stone cutting tool to which the bit and handle have been welded. The new key is as robust and works just as well as the old one. The new keyholder is confident that it will 'see him out'.



Ings Church keys
1682 (top) and 2020 (below)

John Hiley