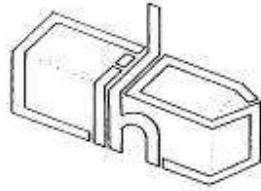


Cumbria Industrial History Society



BULLETIN

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EDITORIAL

Summer so far has been perfect and the Society's meetings to date have been very well attended. This is always very gratifying for both the person leading the meeting and also the committee how put a lot of hard work in to arrange them. The programme for next year is starting to take form with a wide range of subjects for the meetings covering most of the County.

The Society has been running an e-mail group where information on both Society events and news and notices of other groups activities are circulated to members when they become known. We also circulate any queries which arrive with the Society. You never know you may just have that bit of information that is required by someone to complete their research. If you would like to be included on the list please contact Helen Caldwell with your e-mail address (you can also receive the Bulletin as pdf if you wished.)

The Society also has a facebook page which at present has little use. Please feel free to use it to let people know what you have been to see both within the county and also wider afield. You never know it could lead to a Society visit or a possible topic for a future conference.

The Society's new web site is nearly ready to go live with the new galleries of selected photos from the Mike Davies-Shiel collection. Join the e-mailing list for early notification!!

The committee feels the need to alter the procedures at field trips from next year. From a health and safety point of view we will be asking all people attending to sign in and also supply a name and contact number in case of accident. We also intend to put a nominal charge of £2.00 in place for non-members.

The main paper in this Bulletin is about fires etc. in Blackening mills with special reference to the one at Newlands Furnace. This is mainly a collection of reports and adverts from local newspapers. For those of you not aware a large number of digitised newspapers from the 19th century can be searched and accessed on line on the Cumbria library website using your library number.

FRONT COVER WARWICK BRIDGE MILL (Part of one of the topics at the October conference)

SOCIETY EVENTS 2014

STAINMORE RAILWAY SATURDAY 23RD AUGUST 2014 10.00AM

Leader – Mark Keefe (Stainmore Railway Trust's archivist) Meet at Kirkby Stephen East station (NY 7618 0668) at 10am. Weather clothing and stout footwear.

Guided walk on the dismantled line past various quarries and former railway infra structure sites to examine Podgill and Hartley viaducts (Depending on weather and members inclination there would be the opportunity to go further) Back to KSE for a guided tour and tea in the 'buffet'. There is also the possibility of a slide show on the railway.

BROUGHTON AND DUDDON SATURDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2014 11 AM.

Meet at Donkey Rocks SD 210 867 for a walk around Duddon Furnace and the industrial sites in Broughton.

AUTUMN CONFERENCE BRAMPTON SATURDAY 18TH OCTOBER 2014

Talks include Brampton businesses and industries, Railways in the area and textile milling. Booking form enclosed.

NOVEMBER EVENING MEETING THURSDAY 20TH NOVEMBER 7.30 PM.

A meeting at Greenodd village hall to view a film on the Dolly Blueworks at Backbarrow. Hopefully a talk by a former worker and also some of MDS slides of the works.

BOOK REVIEW

ESKDALE MILL, BOOT, CUMBRIA, A HISTORY & GUIDE TO THE WATERMILL.

By David King published Friends of Mills Archive. Pp23 pages.

This is a small pamphlet produced as a special edition of Mill Memories the newsletter of the Friends. It covers a short history of Eskdale and then goes on to cover the history of the mill followed by a short section on milling customs in general and a section on millstones, oats and ancient weights and measures before a short description of the actual mill.

This booklet contains some nice photos and drawings but the content is in the category of a tourist type guide compared to an academic guide.

THE QUARRIES OF LAKELAND.

By David Glover. Published by Bookcase pp350 £15.00.

From personal experience trying to find documentary evidence for the historical side of quarries is difficult with little seeming to remain. This book after a short introduction into general quarrying techniques splits Lakeland up into a number of areas and then goes through all the quarries (mainly slate) in each of those areas. Details of each quarries location is given which is helpful for those walking the fells and want to know which quarry is which along with any historical notes and map extracts available. For those people who like to explore a bit more energetically then there is descriptions of access to each quarry along with any details of underground sections, and how deep the water may be in them.

Overall short on actual history but a useful guide if you want to go pottering around in old quarries.

CROSS FELL AND MINES OF THE CUMBRIAN PENNINES.

By Ian Tyler published by Blue Rock pp 654 pages £35.00

This is a lavishly produced book said to be Ian's last mining book and as the title suggests it covers a huge geographical area from Halton Le Gate in the north to Mallerstang in the south. It is written in Ian's typical style which is at its best when he is describing 'recent' happenings in such mines as Silverband, where he has been given stories of happenings either first or second hand.

There are numerous photos either taken by Ian of out of the way mines rarely visited by people or some old photos which he has acquired access to which have not been published previously.

Ian does not only deal with the mines of the fells but he also covers such happening as aircraft crashes, which he goes into quite a lot of detail with regards to the planes lost, crew and the search and recovery of the bodies and wreckage.

Unfortunately there is a major fault throughout the book the quality of the editing is very poor with long parts of the book being repeated especially in background history to mining which is repeated often in each mine section. Secondly the quality of the proof reading with a lot of sentences not making sense, jumping from one subject to another mid paragraph, and a number of obvious mistakes, which leads you to question some of the accuracy of other comments. This poor editing and proof reading has severely reduced the value of the book and is not really acceptable in a book of this price.

BLACKING MILLS

The blacking mill at Newland collapsed in the gales this winter. The roof had light railway track for rafters and angle iron instead of laths. The clippings below show why it was built that way.

FIRE.—On Thursday evening last, a fire broke out in a **blacking mill** at Newland Bottom, near Ulverston, in the occupation of Mr. John Parks; and although the fire-engines from Ulverston were promptly on the spot, and every possible exertion used, the entire property was consumed, with the exception of the water wheel.—*Cumberland Pacquet.*

Woodcocks.—No fewer than six brace of that once somewhat rare bird, the Woodcock, were yesterday week shot in the neighbourhood of Bootle, by two crack sportsmen at that place.—*Id.*

The Lancaster Gazette and General Advertiser, for Lancashire, Westmorland, &c., Saturday, November 09, 1844

FIRE.—On Friday night, the 4th instant, a building at Newland Bottom, a short distance from Ulverston, was nearly destroyed by fire, with the exception of the outer walls, which consisted of upper and lower storey. The upper part was occupied by Mr. Thomas Swaley, of Moss-side, Ulverstone, as a carding-mill; the lower part occupied by Mr. William Jackson, of Newland, as a **blacking mill**. The cause of the conflagration remains a mystery, as the place was last visited by those carrying on the business, about ten o'clock, without any artificial light, and all seemed as usual, and, to all appearance, right. Before midnight, however, the place was discovered to be on fire, the flames having commenced among a quantity of blacking (charcoal, ground to powder.) A large vessel full of water was immediately thrown amongst it, by Mr. Jackson, the owner (who previously entered the building), which agitated the material so greatly that the effect was tremendous, and caused an explosion similar to that of gunpowder. This sudden blaze immediately ignited the flooring, and, in a short time, the building was a general mass of fire. It was with considerable difficulty that Mr. Jackson made his exit from his suffocating position; and, it is worthy of remark, that, while in this precarious situation, he had no idea which way to turn himself to get out. He had, however, the presence of mind to request those outside to keep shouting at the door-way, and, by this vocal compass, steered accordingly, and, eventually, disengaged himself from the fiery storm, but was so exhausted that it was found necessary to carry him home. Messengers were instantly dispatched to Ulverstone, for the fire brigade, who were in prompt attendance, headed by Mr. G. Parker; but, in spite of their efforts, the building was reduced, as previously stated. The occupiers have suffered considerable loss from the direful catastrophe.

The Preston Guardian etc , Saturday, June 12, 1847

FIRE.—On Saturday evening, about half-past nine o'clock, in the **blackening mill** of Mr. Wild, in Manor street, an alarm of fire was given, when Mr. Higson, superintendent of the fire brigade, was immediately on the spot, and attached a quantity of piping belonging to the mayor to a self-acting valve in Manor-street, also a quantity belonging to Mr. Seowcroft, to a valve near the Roe Back. A great force of water was poured upon the fire, and the flames were got under about half-past ten o'clock. The Jesse engine arrived with a number of the fire brigade, but was not used. It appears the fire originated near one of the coal mills, and then spread its flames towards the ceiling, doing considerable damage to the buildings, which are covered by insurances in the Defender Company. The damage is at present unknown, but it is supposed will be about £100.

Manchester Times, Wednesday, September 14, 1853

Sales by Mr. William Jones.

**SALE OF VALUABLE MACHINERY, &c., AT
CAERGWRLE CHARCOAL AND **BLACKING
MILL**, FLINTSHIRE.**

MR. WILLIAM JONES begs to announce, that he has received instructions from the Representatives of Joseph Phillips, (deceased), to **SELL BY AUCTION**, on the above premises, on Tuesday, the 6th day of December, 1859, at One o'clock, precisely; the whole of the valuable **MACHINERY, &c.**, consisting of one large Pulley Wheel; do. Spur do., attached to Engine; Blacking Mill and Balls complete, 6 feet 6 inches long, by 2 feet 8 inches diameter; one do. 9 feet 3 inches long, by 2 feet 6 inches; wrought-iron Shaft, with Muff and Clutch couplings; pair of Mitre Wheels; do. Spur Wheels; two Iron Feeders; Two Belt Pulleys, with wrought-iron Shaft, 9 feet 3 inches long, and Belts; Charcoal dressing Mill, complete; iron Kettle; two cast-iron Plates, 2 feet 6 inches, by 2 feet; small iron Stove; one Charcoal iron Stove and Grate, 6 feet long, by 2 feet 11 inches; one do. 11 feet 6 inches long, by 2 feet 11 inches wide, with brick seating; iron Scrapers; do. Shovel; do. Vice; sundry Tools; Wheelbarrow; patent Weighing Machine, to weigh up to one ton; Sieve, Tarpauling, Sacks, Ladder, Timber, Planks, four Casks of Charcoal Blacking, (about 24 cwt.) about 48 cwt. of Coal dust, do. 6 tons of Charcoal. Also about 15 tons of White Wood, which is now lying in a field adjoining Wood Cottage, Higher Kinnerton, Hope, &c. Auctioneer's Office, Hawarden.

*Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser, and Cheshire, Shropshire and North Wales
Registe* Saturday, December 03, 1859

FIRE.—On Tuesday morning last, between six and seven o'clock, a fire broke out at the **blackening mill** at Newland, in the occupation of Messrs. Swainson Bros. It is supposed that a quantity of ground charcoal, which was heaped together in a damp state, had spontaneously taken fire and ignited the building; but as soon as it was discovered a messenger was despatched, and the

fire brigade and engine, and the superintendent and six policemen, were on the spot in little more than a quarter of an hour, and the fire was soon got under. The damage done is estimated at about £10.

The Lancaster Gazette, and General Advertiser for Lancashire, Westmorland, Yorkshire, &c, Saturday, June 07, 1862

EXTENSIVE FIRE AT BRAMPTON, NEAR CHESTERFIELD.
—Yesterday morning a very serious fire took place at Mr. John Booth's chemical works, at Brampton, near Chesterfield. It appears that about two o'clock in the morning two colliers from Brampton were on their way to work at Speight Hill, when they observed smoke issuing from the buildings, and on a closer examination it was found that a portion of the extensive works were on fire. An alarm was at once raised, and a messenger was sent for the fire engines, and the Chesterfield borough engine, and the Nottingham and Derbyshire Fire Company's engine were, in the course of half an hour, at the scene of the conflagration. Mr. George Gatley, with the other firemen, set to work vigorously. Twenty or thirty men were employed in fetching water in buckets from a neighbouring pond, and a continuous stream of water was poured upon the burning mass. Despite the efforts of the large number of people who had gathered together, the fire gained strength, and the roof of the grinding **mill** and **blackening mill** fell in with a crash. The burning charcoal was blown about in all directions, and in a short time the roof of the sawing mill fell in. The crowd and the fire engines were kept fully at work, and by six o'clock the flames were mastered. It is supposed that the fire originated in consequence of some over-heated charcoal being put into a sack, and no person being at work on Sunday, the fire had time to spread until it communicated with some wood, and the roofing and the wind caused it to blaze. The damage is estimated at about £700., and the building is insured in the Nottingham and Derbyshire Fire Office.—*From our Correspondent.*

Birmingham Daily Post, Tuesday, July 21, 1863

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE AT MIDDLESBROUGH.—On Wednesday, about nine o'clock, the Cleveland Blacking Mill, situated near the docks, at Middlesbrough, was discovered to be on fire. The premises belonging to the Middlesbrough owners, consisted of one storoy, and were occupied by Mr. T. Wright, for the manufacture of blacking for foundry purposes. A grinding stone and other machinery were in the basement storoy, and by the time the fire brigade arrived, it was found the flames were so powerful that any attempt to save the building or stock would be useless. Efforts were accordingly directed to prevent any extension to the adjoining premises belonging to Messrs. Harris and Co., ship chandlers. Great quantities of rope, coal tar, naphtha, and other articles of trade were stored here, and it was feared that if the fire spread, a much more serious conflagration would be the result. In the course of two hours the fire had burned itself out, doing damage to the stock to the extent of about £600, which is covered by insurance. The building was also insured. It is supposed that the fire resulted from spontaneous combustion of the stock, which is of a most inflammable kind.

Woodward, a mail cart driver, was killed yesterday by a train at Copplestone station, North Devon Railway.

The Leeds Mercury, Friday, April 1, 1870

Early yesterday morning a fire was discovered in the Scottish Blacking Mill near Bargedie. The Coat-bridge Fire Brigade was summoned, but before it could reach the mill the fire had obtained a complete hold. The building, machinery, and a large quantity of manufactured stock were destroyed, and the damage is considerable.

Glasgow Herald, Friday, April 15, 1892

DESTRUCTIVE FIRE.—The Blacking Mill, at Newland-bottom, near this town, in the occupation of Mr. John Parker, was, at an early hour, on Sunday morning last, discovered to be on fire. A messenger was immediately despatched to Mr. Geo. Parker, superintendent of the Fire Brigade, Ulverston. A horse was procured and attached to the large engine, which, with the brigade, was, without loss of time on the spot, but on arrival it was found that the roof had fallen in, and the greatest part of the machinery destroyed. A copious supply of water, however, from the engine, was immediately applied, and the fire extinguished. The cause of the accident is not known. The same premises were similarly destroyed about five years ago.

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 30 Jan 1851

DEATHS.

In Quebec-street, in this town, Jane, wife of John Cleminson, weaver, aged 72 years.

At Newland Bottom, near this town, on Tuesday last, Mr. William Parker, **blacking** manufacturer, advanced in years.

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 5 Jun 1851

TO THE CREDITORS OF THE LATE
MR. JOHN PARKER,

CHARCOAL **BLACKING** MANUFACTURER,
NEWLAND BOTTOM, NEAR ULVERSTON.

A MEETING will be held at Mr. Roper's Office, in Ulverston, on Monday next the 7th inst., at two o'clock p.m., precisely, to consider the best means of securing and realising the assets.

Ulverston, July 2nd, 1851.

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 3 Jul 1851

TO IRONFOUNDERS.

OAK CHARCOAL DUST, OR
BLACKING

MAY be obtained from the Advertisers, of such quality, both as regards material and manipulation, as to adapt itself to the finest efforts of Casting, producing so little "Bran," or Waste, as to render it cheaper than that generally offered to the Founder. It is made in a country where the Oak is abundant and favourable for this peculiar adaptation.

The advertisers would also call the attention of Couriers to their VEGETABLE LAMP BLACK, which has obtained such general approval as producing without "Swarf," that fine, even, deep finish to Leather, hitherto so difficult, and seldom attained.

MESSRS. GILKES BROTHERS,
OSBORNE MILLS, LEONMINSTER.

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 27 Jan 1853

FIRE.—On Thursday morning last, the **Blacking** Mill, at Newby Bridge, belonging to Mr. Thomas Barrow, jun., was discovered about five o'clock, by one of the workmen to be on fire. Assistance was quickly at hand, and the fire, which is supposed to have originated by the friction of the machinery, was speedily extinguished. The damage done is estimated at about £25 to £30.

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 5 Feb 1857

BLACKING MILL TO LET,
 AND ENTERED ON AT MAY DAY NEXT,
THE CHARCOAL BLACKING MILL,
 at Newland, near Ulverston, now in the
 occupation of Mr. William Jackson.
 For further particulars apply to the
 present tenant, or to HARRISON, AINSLIE, &
 Co., who will receive written offers for it
 until the 10th April next.
 Newland Furnace,
 Ulverston, March 20th, 1862. 50

Soulbys Ulverston Advertiser 20 Mar 1862

Peter Sandbach.



PHOTO OF BLACKING MILL, NEWLANDS, MDS COLLECTION.

Community History in Action: the VCH Cumbria Project

The Victoria County History (VCH) is an encyclopaedic record of England's places and people from the earliest written records up to the present day. Founded in 1899, the VCH has been based at the Institute of Historical Research in the University of London since 1933. In 2012 the VCH was re-dedicated to Elizabeth II to mark her Diamond Jubilee. More than 225 VCH volumes have been published since 1900, many of which are now available online (www.british-history.ac.uk), and research is still ongoing in more than 20 counties. One county where VCH work has been revived in recent years, thanks to local support, is Cumbria.

Although two general volumes exist for the historic county of Cumberland (published in 1901 and 1905), the only parts of Cumbria to have topographical coverage are the Furness and Cartmel areas, which are covered in *VCH Lancashire, Volume VIII* (1910). The VCH Cumbria project therefore has a long way to go, with the long-term aim of producing 344 separate parish/township histories. Nevertheless, despite the enormity of this task, the VCH Cumbria project has made significant progress since it was revived with the help of the Cumbria County History Trust four years ago.

The greatest resource of VCH Cumbria is undoubtedly its volunteers. More than 100 volunteer researchers came forward when the project was launched, and numbers have remained stable ever since. Volunteers vary in terms of their skill and experience: some have a professional academic background, while others are entirely new to historical research. However, all have a great deal of enthusiasm for the history of Cumbria. Since 2011, a small core of volunteers, working as individuals or in small teams, have been drafting VCH parish histories under the close supervision of Angus Winchester of the Department of History at Lancaster University, who is acting as County Editor. Since then, work has gradually gained momentum and research is currently underway on more than 30 places across Cumbria. Complete drafts for five townships have already been posted on the project website at <http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk>, while several more are close to completion.

To mark the re-dedication of the VCH for the Diamond Jubilee in 2012, many of our volunteers compiled brief historical digests (christened 'Jubilee Digests') for every community in Cumbria. These contained basic historical data drawn from a handful of key sources, including Ordnance Survey maps and 19th century trade directories. These have all been posted on the project website where they serve as a 'front door' to the individual webpage created for each place. As a repository for information and completed work, the website is thus rapidly becoming a valuable resource for local historians in Cumbria.

The driving force behind the VCH Cumbria project is the Cumbria County History Trust (CCHT). A charitable association, CCHT was established in 2010 with the backing of several voluntary and local government bodies, to support and organise the VCH in Cumbria. Part of their work has been to mount a programme of tailor-made training events to encourage the research skills and confidence of volunteers. To date, this

has included sessions on computer literacy, the Poor Law, geology, and palaeography. The work of volunteers has also been supported through the production of a Volunteers' Handbook. Used in conjunction with the national VCH guidelines, the Handbook provides advice on what to include in each of the six sections that make up a VCH article, namely: introduction (covering landscape, settlement, communications and population history), landholding, economic history, social history, religious history, and local government. The Handbook outlines Cumbria-specific source material and content for each theme, as well as helping volunteers adhere to the VCH's core principles: accuracy of detail; use of primary sources; and referencing all sources of information.

Sarah Rose, Assistant Editor for VCH Cumbria

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