

LOCAL HISTORY NEWS

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Special points of interest:

- Lectures alternate between Cartmel Institute and the United Reformed Church Hall in Grange
- We still need a new Treasurer
- We would love to hear from you if you have personal stories about life in war time



A walk with Jack Manning to see the fishtraps at Cowp Scar 16 July 2005

A large group of people, including several members of the Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society, experienced a fascinating walk over the salt marsh on a glorious Saturday afternoon in July.

We gathered at the end of Mile Road by West Plain Farm, and initially walked out over the salt marsh to view the recently exposed remains of the embankment that had been built in 1808 to enclose land reclaimed from the bay. Two large farms were created and a screen of trees was planted on the seaward side. Before that, high tides had touched Flookburgh village. However, in 1828 the Leven Channel, flowing out from Greenodd and parallel to the shore at Ulverston, had changed direction heading towards Humphrey Head instead of heading towards Morecambe Bay, and undermined the embankment and one of the farms was destroyed. James Stockdale, in his *Annals of Cartmel* described the reclamation and destruction on pp 535-545.

Since 2000 the channel has traced this course again for the first time since it destroyed the embankment. In recent

weeks, remains of the trees and roots have been exposed and Jack showed us the few remaining trees that have not been washed away by the last high tide. They had been perfectly preserved under sand for the last 177 years.

We were then led over wet sand and then slimy stones towards the fishtraps at Cowp Scar. On the way we were shown man-made ponds for holding fish which were carefully marked out with large stones laid in a regular line. Amongst the mish-mash of all the stones there was no doubt that these were man-made features.

As we approached the Leven Channel we saw various height stakes in the sand; some knee high and others just little stumps, but there was no doubt they represented something organised as whichever direction you looked they lay in straight lines, and interlinking the stakes were lines of large and small carefully placed stones. The size of the area surprised me. I had not imagined that it would be so large. Jack explained the way that sticks would be woven between the stakes to produce low hurdles that

were used to channel the fish towards baskets at the end. As the tide receded, the fish would be unable to swim over the hurdles and would become stranded. He went on to tell us that radio carbon dating of a piece of wood taken from one of the posts had come up with a date of c1411.



The stakes had only been revealed when about 20 foot depth of sand had been washed away by the newly realigned Leven Channel. The stakes had been preserved and protected beneath the sand bank.

Jack's family have been fishing these sands for generations and there were no mention of these fish traps in stories handed down. No written evidence about the existence of these traps has been found. We were looking at man-made features that had been hidden for nearly 600 years! No wonder Jack and his

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NEW PROGRAMME OF LECTURES FOR 2006

We will shortly have our new Programme of Lectures for the coming year available.

We have some interesting lectures lined up including a history of the postal service in Cumbria; armour and quilting; ice houses in Cumbria; and more.

The new Programme will be available from the end of November (at our AGM), and those members who are not able to attend will have a copy posted to them as usual.

The last three lectures in the 2005 season include a talk about the way the ruins of Furness Abbey have been interpreted by artists, poets, etc. from the dissolution to the present. This talk will be

given by Dr Christine Dade-Robertson on 29th September at the United Reformed Church Hall.

On October 27th Dr Jean Turnbull is to visit us once again and present a talk about the development of urban housing in the north-west between 1850 and 1950. This talk is to be held in the United Reformed Church Hall.

On 24th November Dr Ruth Hughes will examine a specific sector of the housing supply market by introducing the work of the Kendal and District Housing Society between 1925 and 1939. This talk will be followed by our AGM and will be held in the Cartmel Institute. All talks are from 7.30 p.m. All are

welcome to attend our lectures and we sincerely hope that you will.



THE VANADIS—SHIPWRECKED OFF HEYSHAM 22ND FEBRUARY 1903

In the sands at Half Moon Bay, Heysham, lie the remains of a large wooden sailing vessel. Barbara Copeland had visited the remains and wondered about the story behind it. After doing a bit of research and finding absolutely nothing relating to the wreck, she had almost given up when a chance remark brought her into contact with someone who works at Heysham Power Station. He informed her that they had photographs of the ship as it had been before it ran aground, and afterwards, and also a potted history of its demise.

The Vanadis was a 3-masted Russian sailing ship, measuring 185.7ft overall with a draught of 22.3ft. She had a wooden hull which was double skinned for protection against ice, and was copper sheathed.

She was built at Jacobstad in 1874 and was registered at Mariehamn, in the Aland

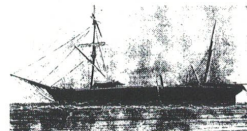
Islands off Finland. Her captain was J. Anderson and she was owned by V. Sundman.

The Vanadis was driven ashore under full sail whilst bound for Fleetwood with a cargo of pitch pine. Why she ran aground is not known at present. However, the ship broke her back leaving its crew stranded. They don't appear to have been there for long though.

On board were at least 14 crew members and the pilot. It is recorded that ten of the crew were rescued by the Fleetwood lifeboat, whilst four others and the pilot came ashore at Heysham where local families took them in and cared for them. It is possible that somewhere some families still tell the story of how their grandparents, or great-grandparents took in shipwrecked strangers.

The cargo of pitch pine was also rescued, being taken

off the ship by horse and cart. The salvage squad soon moved in when the Vanadis was declared a total wreck, with a local smith stripping the valuable copper from the ship's hull.



Above: the Vanadis



Above and below: the wreck of the Vanadis 2005



THE WILL OF ROBERT WEARING (B1788) DATED 15 MARCH 1853

Some months ago a Norman Wearing contacted the society re: his ancestors who came from Cartmel, though moved around the peninsula and eventually to Warton (his Ggrandfather married a Margaret Birkett, schoolmistress, in Warton in 1855) where they seem to have been trading as butchers. Norman's GGrandfather was Robert Wearing, butcher, who married Mary Birkett at Cartmel in 1826. Recently Norman has acquired Robert Wearing's will and has asked if it could be included in our newsletter. I have transcribed the details as Norman has given them to me.

'To Mary my wife an annuity of £20 per annum chargeable upon all my messuages, tenements, farms, lands and hereditaments in equal half yearly portions. This should be accepted by her in full satisfaction of her claim to dower.

To Thomas £800 charged to Birkby Hall Estate.

To Allen, Birkby Hall and peat moss on Ellerside Moss and pew or seat at Flookburgh Chapel.

To Thomas my cottage with barn, stables, outhouses and garden which adjoin and be-

long also to two fields near Flookburgh.

To John, estate at Spring Bank and also three fields called Apperstack, Fichet field and the barn field. Also seat or pew in the light battery in Cartmel church.

I give and bequeath equally unto my sons Allen, Thomas, and John, share and share alike'.

Codicil 16 July 1857

'I give to John the close of land situate upon Grange hill in the said parish, bought from the trustees of the late Allen Wearing, who is freed and discharged from any of the said annuity to my wife in the will mentioned.

To Thomas, £100 over and above the bequest, to be chargeable against real estate of John.

In all other respects I confirm my said will'.

Proved by oath of William Bigland of Templand, farmer and William Withers of Hampsfield Hall, farmer.

William Laurence of the Green, farmer, was to replace William Bigland as executor.

Robert Wearing died 12 October 1858, his will proved 1 April 1859.

His descendant, Norman, has a number of questions relating to the contents of the will and would be grateful if anyone could provide him with any information which could help fill some gaps in his research.

Norman would like to know if anyone knows the position of the pew in Cartmel Church and also the meaning of the phrase 'light battery'.

He would also like to know whether the names of the fields mentioned in the will, Apperstack, Fichet and Barn, have remained in use to today.

Also does anyone have an image of Birkby Hall, other than the one that appears on the millenium plan?

Also do we have a Pinder farm in the area (once known as Well Knowe)?

Please contact the editor if you have any information you think may be of use to Norman—he would be very grateful for any information you could give.



THE COST OF MAINTAINING CLARE HOUSE LANE BRIDGE: A CONTINUING PROBLEM

The cost of maintaining the bridges over the railway line to the Promenade in Grange is not a new problem.

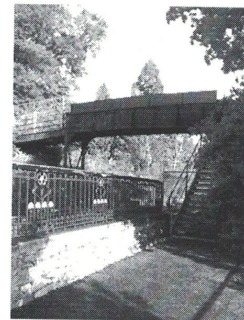
On September 30th 1895 Grange Urban District Council members discussed the condition of the road leading from Park Road and the footbridge over the railway at Clare House Lane. It was resolved that they be 'put into repair by the council and that tenders be obtained for repairing and repainting the said footbridge'.

At this time the road leading to the bridge was in the ownership of Mr Park of Clare House and the council had to negotiate an agreement which gave them access to the bridge. Further negotiations with the Railway Company were necessary to enable the council to undertake maintenance and repair of the bridge itself.

On 24 February 1896 Mr Park was to be requested if he would 'transfer his interests and rights' respecting the

footbridge to the council who would then carry out the repairs.

Tenders were accepted from Mr Bush to repair the steps and provide and fit new floor and handrail to the bridge for £5.18.0d; Mr Wilson to provide new ironwork under the floor and bolts for £5.5.0d; and Mr Ward to paint same as well as the urinals and some notices for £4.15.0d. Would that those prices held today!



Clare House Lane Bridge taken 22 Sept 2005

Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society

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Local History News

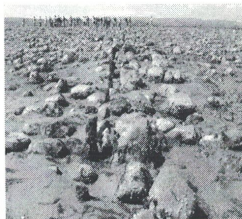
Cartmel Peninsula Local History Society was established over ten years ago under the name Cartmel and District Local History Society. Three years ago the Society changed its name to reflect more accurately the historical interests and area that our members encompass. Our aim is to cover as broad a spectrum of historical enquiry as possible in order to reflect the interests of members, and to interest and include non-members in what is, we feel, a very exciting and enjoyable subject. One of the ways we plan to further this aim is through the pages of this newsletter and by having and maintaining a presence on the World Wide Web.

We also plan to hold a series of informal meetings in which specific themes will be discussed and in which our members can play a more active role if they so wish. These meetings have not yet been set and we would welcome suggestions as to possible themes for discussion. For example, a number of you may have a specific interest in the history of Cartmel Priory and the Augustinian monks who lived there; others may be interested in architectural history and would welcome a chance to discuss this interest with other like-minded people; still others may have an interest in archaeology, a subject the Society has not really addressed but to which it is open to suggestions. The list of possible discussion topics is endless.

If you are interested in joining an informal discussion group please contact either myself or Mrs Barbara Copeland who will be pleased to provide further information.

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colleagues were excited. We felt very privileged that Jack was prepared to share this wonderful discovery with us. We were lucky to see them on a clear warm and sunny day, but it is not hard to imagine how hostile and remote the location must have felt to the fishermen as they went about retrieving the fish and repairing the traps all those centuries ago.



Jack expects the traps to disappear under sand in the near future as the

channel once again changes course. I wonder when they will reappear?

Pat Rowland, August 2005

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Mr Stewart E Allen
Dr Malcolm Arthurton
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Mr Trevor Moore
Dr Peter Le Mare

Articles for publication in this newsletter are always welcome. Please contact either Barbara or Ruth on the above numbers.