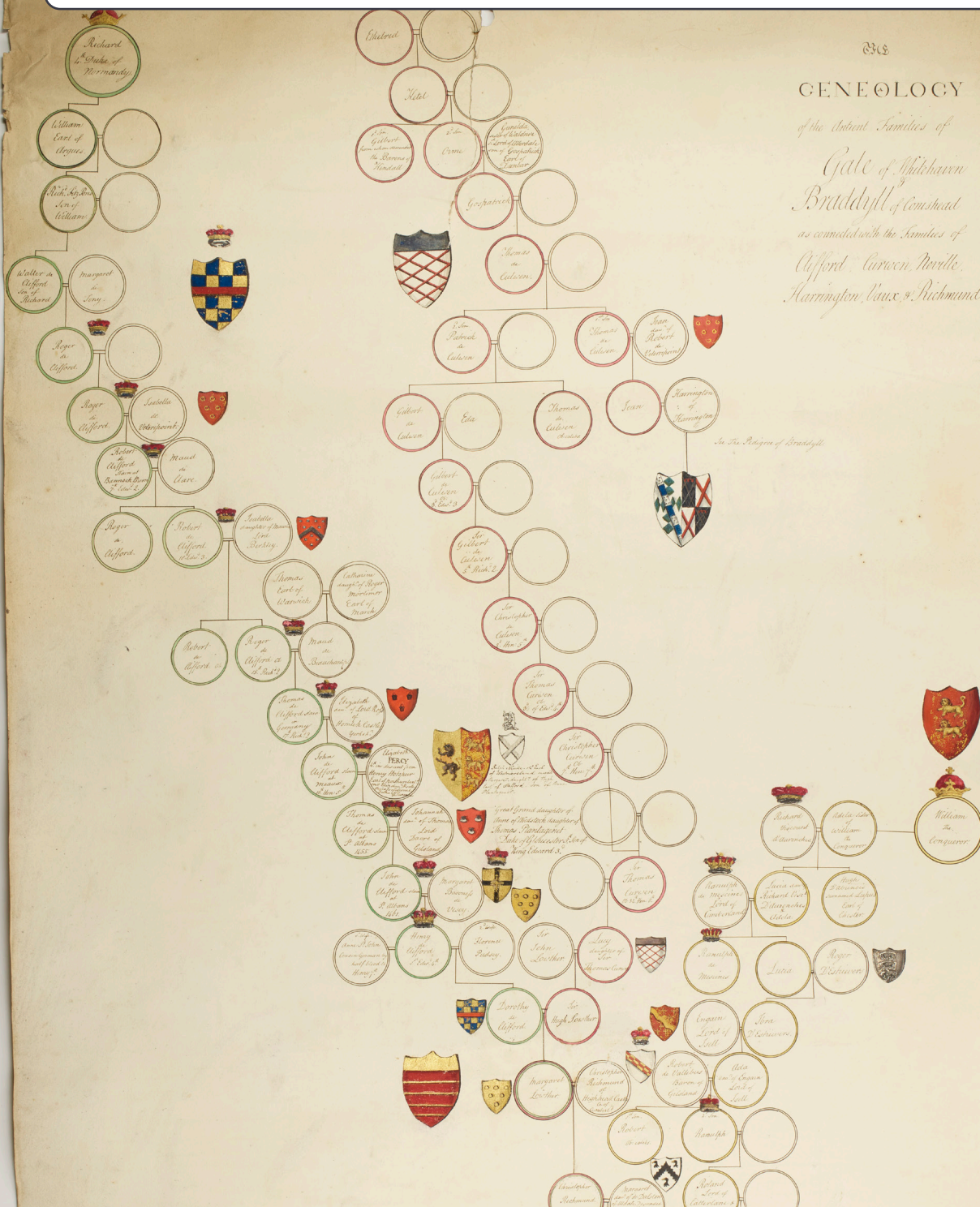


# Cumbria Archives - Newsletter



May 2024

▲ Pedigree of the Braddyll family of Conishead, Ulverston, late 18th century (Barrow Archive Centre, ref BDX 940). For further information see page 4



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## News from Cumbria Archives: New opportunities

As we come to the end of our first year since the creation of Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness Councils, I wanted to reflect on the new opportunities that have come our way in working with new partners in Cumberland and Westmorland and Furness. In particular, we are taking advantage of new opportunities to reach a wider audience for Archives and establish new relationships with museums across the County.

In Carlisle we are working with Tullie House Museum and an early highlight has been to support their project to catalogue the archives of Carlisle United FC. We have hosted volunteers recruited by Tullie House to work with Carlisle United and gave them an insight into our work and how to manage collections. Our conservation team are working with designers on the permanent exhibit in the new Carlisle Gallery opening this summer. This will see some of our archive items on loan for a few months, with plans for more collaboration going forward.

The conservation team are also pleased to be liaising with the Helena Thompson Museum and the Beacon, to collaborate on collections care. By sharing resources in staff training and development, they are aiming to put care of collections at the heart of our museums and galleries, to preserve Cumberland's heritage for the long term. We are also looking forward to supporting Maryport Maritime Museum as it relocates to its new home on the quayside at Maryport. Such collaborations are a great way to showcase the full range of Cumbria's fantastic heritage beyond our four Archive Centres.

Cumbria Archives continues to work with our library colleagues. With the prospect of major investment in Carlisle Library, we have supported Tom Robson with an in depth survey of the Jackson Library including updating the catalogue. The Jackson collection is one of the most important local history collections in the north of England and contains many rare volumes and some manuscripts.

Another key collaboration has been with Universities in the North West Region including Keele, Lancaster and Manchester. We have supported PHD student placements that have highlighted lesser known collections relating to the Poor Law, the 18th century diaries of Andrew Hudleston and, currently, the story of the refugees from the Basque region of Spain, who came to Cumbria during the Spanish Civil War. These and many student placements over the years, illustrate how Cumbria Archives is working with Universities to bring our collections to life. The story continues and I am looking forward to sharing details of new collaborations in the year ahead.

In the last year our Archive Centres supported 50 outreach events, including talks, tours and exhibitions. These ranged from discovery evenings at Whitehaven Archives and Local Studies Centre and an exhibition on the story of child refugees from the Basque region of Spain, who came to Brampton and Ambleside during the Spanish Civil War.

Not to be outdone our Kendal team look after the papers of Alfred Wainwright, many walkers' favourite irascible companion as they trudge the fells. This collection has been a fantastic resource for lifelong learning, being a popular topic for school visits and older people. Our Kendal team also marked the Coronation of King Charles with a pop-up exhibition and supported a Heritage Open Day at Townend, the National Trust's former home of the Browne family.

We continue to offer work experience placements in conservation, to open up this interesting and often overlooked career to local school leavers, alongside longer term volunteer offers for students from Northumbria University's MA in Conservation of fine art on paper.

Our colleagues in Barrow had an eventful year with the visit of the Princess Royal in November to visit the new University of Cumbria campus. Our Archivist Susan Benson provided some historical photographs of the site and was invited to meet the Princess Royal (see photo on page 3). Barrow will also play a crucial role in the development of the next generation of nuclear submarines for the Royal Navy and Royal Australian Navy.

In December a group of Australians visited the town as part of AUKUS project to provide submarines for the Australian Navy. Signal Film and Media organised an evening event to show case the Sankey project and the archives available to tell the history of the town. Susan attended the event on behalf of the Archive Centre.

**Peter J Eyre, Archives Professional Lead, Cumbria Archives**

## Barrow Archive Centre

### Visit of Princess Anne November 2023

Princess Anne visited Barrow on 15 November 2023 to view the site of the new campus of the University of Cumbria, the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority at the Marine Terminal on Cavendish Dock Road and the Citizens' Advice Bureau in Ramsden Hall (formerly a bath and then school). Ramsden Hall has been renovated and as Princess Anne is Patron of the Bureau, she opened the new refurbished building. As part of the project, the staff looked at the history of the building which was gifted to the town by James Ramsden in 1872. This was only used as a public bath for a short time and then became an annex of the neighbouring technical school. The Archive Centre provide photographs and information, so Susan was invited to meet Princess Anne who showed a real interest in the history of the town.



### Outreach

As usual we visited schools to run sessions on a local history topic, gave talks to societies, ran training sessions and put on exhibitions. The Second World War continues to be a popular subject in local primary schools: two classes from Black Combe Junior School in Millom came to the Archive Centre and visited the Dock Museum to learn about the Barrow Blitz. After a session looking at documents, Susan took the children on a short walk around the local area to look at the effect the blitz had on Barrow: newer housing in some streets, the Coronation Gardens formerly the site of the Baptist Church and a hotel which were destroyed and a missing panel on the roof of the Nan Tait building. George Romney School chose to look at Dalton during the Second World War so Susan ran two sessions looking at evacuation into the town from Salford and London, the army camps, memories of locals and Tommy the Pigeon who won the Dicken Medal for bringing a message from the Resistance movement in Holland. CANDO FM brought in nine young people during half term to view the documents relating to wartime Barrow as preparations for a project to create a radio play based in 1941. Years 5 and 6 at Newton Primary School are studying Barrow in Victorian times and asked at short notice if they could have a session.

The Archive Centre hosted an exhibition which was the result of a project funded by Historic England, The Cumbria County History Trust and the Regional Heritage Centre to enrich the listings of listed buildings in Central Barrow. Volunteers learnt how to do research and then researched a building or buildings of their choice. This was followed by the Abram exhibition about a whaling ship produced by the Regional Heritage Centre and funded by the Margaret Bainbridge Legacy. Margaret, who was born and brought up in Barrow, discovered that an ancestor sailed and died on the ship. Her research resulted in a book and an exhibition. The Centre has also been involved with the Heritage Action Zone Duke Street Cultural project, Hi! Barrow over the last four years. The final event was a day of talks by arts groups who had been involved in the various events and projects. This included Signal Film and Media on the Sankey project and the film Wishbone (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x6Gr44MaoP8>); Theatre Factory on the play Follow the Money about banking and Full of Noises on the Pop People's Museum. Two local historians spoke, as well as Susan from the Archive Centre.

Susan spent a whole day at Croftlands Junior School, Ulverston looking at 19th century Ulverston with three classes. We looked at transport including crossing the Sands, and the coming of the railway, shops and businesses, industry and the Ulverston Canal. In December a group of Australians visited the town as part of AUKUS project to provide submarines for the Australian Navy. Signal Film and Media organised an evening event to showcase the Sankey project and the archives available to tell the history of the town. Susan attended the event on behalf of the Archive Centre. She also spoke to the Furness U3A Monthly meeting held at the Coronation Hall, Ulverston on the history of Barrow. It was the largest group she has even spoken to, 157! The talk on the Sankey Collection to the Furness Carers' Support Group was a much smaller affair, with 16 attendees.

We have organised two training events to explain to researchers how to use the Archive Centre and to give them an idea of what sorts of documents they can look at. The first one was for researchers interested in doing work for the Victoria County History, specifically on the Furness area. The second one was for the Egton with Newland, Mansrigg and Osmotherley History Project, a community development project to help the people living in the area to collaborate in the production of written, oral, and visual records capturing their unique historical past.

### **Interesting accessions**

BPR 10 Holy Trinity, Millom Digital copies of three notebooks of research compiled by Rev W Sykes: Place names of Millom; Roads in Millom; Kirksanton. early 20th century

BDSO 185 Rusland Horizons Project (<https://www.ruslandhorizons.org/>)

Oral History transcripts and recordings; Field names research; Book entitled The story of Rusland Horizons 2016-2019; Greenwood walk leaflets.

BDSO 179 Morecambe Bay Partnership

Oral history recordings and transcripts gathering memories from local people of the Second World War during the Defending the Docks (Barrow) project.

BDX 940 Pedigree of the Braddyll family of Conishead, Ulverston late 18th century (purchase)

The Genealogy of the ancient families of Gale of Whitehaven and Braddyll of Conishead as connected with the families of Clifford, Curwen, Neville, Harrington, Vaux and Richmund. Pen and ink on wove paper, armorials in gilt and colours, 24 cm closed vertical tear to middle of upper margin with small area of loss to blank area of margin, occasional fraying to edges (130 x 76 cm) (see cover image).

The final entry in the genealogy is that of Thomas Braddyll (1776-1862), of Highhead Castle, Cumberland and Conishead Priory, Lancashire. He was the first son of Wilson Braddyll MP and Jane, daughter of Matthias Gale. He was educated at Eton 1786-93 and married Frances Bagot, daughter of Charles Bagot Chester in 1803. In 1819 Thomas took the names of Richmond and Gale before Braddyll. He was heir to a large but depleted estate in Cumberland and Lancashire. Braddyll retired from the Guards after Peninsular service and stood in Parliament as MP for Bodmin from 1818-20.

**Susan Benson and Hazel Gatford, Archivists**

## My student placement at Barrow Archive Centre

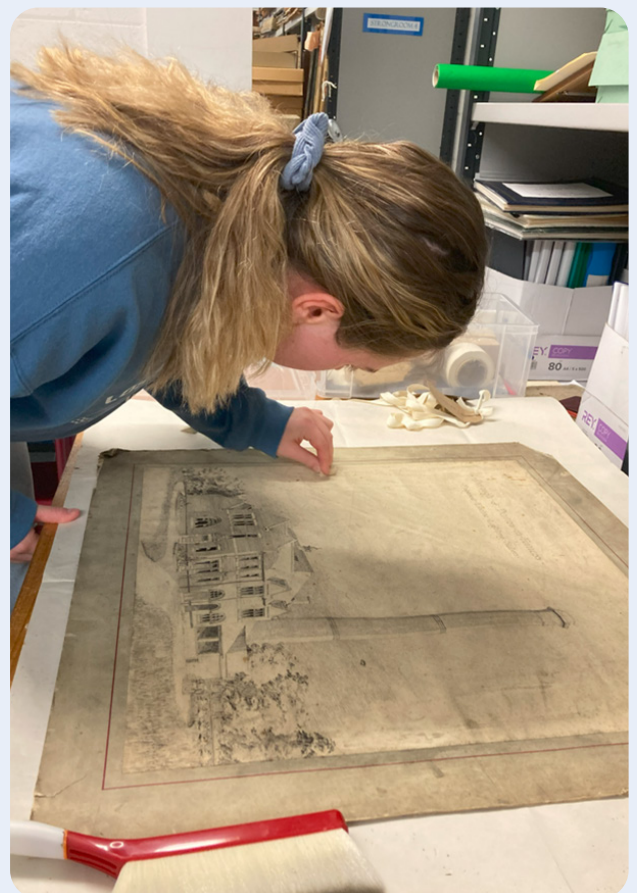
I am a 2nd year student from Lancaster University who has had the pleasure of working on a placement at Barrow Archive Centre over the past six weeks, being shown the different routes and career paths into the heritage sector. After being offered a placement opportunity within my course and applying for multiple positions, I received an offer at Barrow to look through the Walter Johnston collection, learning about different areas around Cumbria, such as Dalton-in-Furness, Grizebeck, Ireleth, Kirkby and Askam. As a girl from Sheffield, these places were new and exciting to me, and I really enjoyed learning about the local history of the places in the area I called home.

Whilst working at the Archive Centre, I have been presented with so many opportunities to experience and understand the ins and outs of working among archivists and learning about how the history we look for online becomes available to us. Archivist, Susan Benson, has introduced me to the work of an archivist and taken me under her wing in demonstrating her ways of bringing history to multiple communities. Whether that be through a talk on the history of Barrow-in-Furness that I was given the pleasure to see in Ulverston, or the methods and skills to critically sort through and organise a collection to be made available to the public. Other members of archive staff have been so friendly, and it has been a pleasure getting to know every one of them. Through hearing crazy stories during coffee time or a little conversation here and there throughout the day. Barrow Archive Centre is one of the friendliest places to be given the opportunity to volunteer at.

A memorable moment whilst volunteering at the archive that will stay with me for the rest of my life was the meeting with Claire, the conservator, who explained and showed me the processes and experiences to her job and even allowing me to work on a piece myself. This enlightened me to a potential career that I would greatly enjoy. After applying and choosing this placement in the hope of finding something I would like to do with my career, I can safely say that I will be leaving 100% more certain of what I want to do with my life. So, I owe Barrow Archive Centre a huge amount of thanks.

So, if you are thinking of volunteering at Barrow, then go for it. It's a wonderful place to work, with so many different and wonderful people. I could not be happier that I took this opportunity.

**Charlotte Pryke**



## Carlisle Archive Centre

### Building a log house in Pennsylvania

An 1822 letter to John Heysham of Carlisle (likely Dr John Heysham who founded the first dispensary for the poor in Carlisle) was sent from a branch of the family who had emigrated to America. Robert Heysham Jr wrote to convey the news of his father's death (Robert Heysham Sr) following a sudden illness. The letter also includes details about family and life in early 19th century America (ref DMH/10/9/26-27).

A family history website (<https://shissem.com/Index.html>) suggests that the recently deceased Robert Heysham Sr had an interesting career fighting in the American Revolutionary War, serving as a quartermaster for the Pennsylvania militia, possibly trading as a merchant, and later employed as engrossing clerk to the Senate of the United States. Heysham Sr supported a strong central government; his loyalty was to Federalist founding fathers such as Alexander Hamilton after whom he even named one of his sons – Alexander Hamilton Heysham.

Robert Heysham Jr was working as a Customs Officer at the Philadelphia Customs House and was 'at the seat of government Washington' when his father became ill, so only made it home to Philadelphia for the funeral. His letter also shares news of the Gibbon and Sayre families who were cousins of the Heyshams. The letter notes that John H Gibbons recently qualified as a physician and 'practices medicine at a place called Holmesburg'; while his cousin William H Sayre moved to Bear Gap 'where he is clearing and improving his land... clearing away the roots, building a log-house, and then setting down contented'. Alongside the letter is a charming book of silhouette portraits of Heysham, Gibbons and Sayre family members based on the ages of some family members (who are clearly still children in the silhouettes). This appears to have been made a few years before the letter was sent (see image on the right).

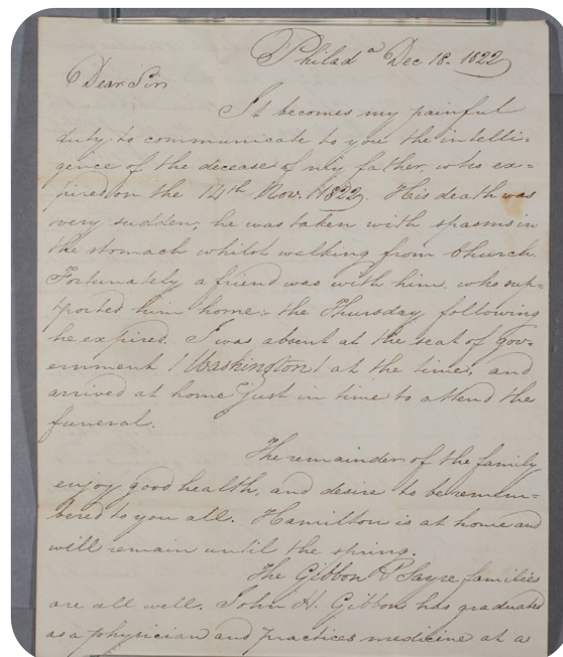
**Kelda Roe, Archivist**

### Accessions

A selection of interesting deposits has been received over the last six months. A draft transcript (with glossary and cypher notes) of Andrew Hudleston's encyphered diary, otherwise known as the Bencher's Diary, 1773. Andrew Hudleston (1734-1822) was a Bencher and resident of Gray's Inn, London, in legal practice. The file includes correspondence between a lady called Vanessa and her friend Ralph (Magdalen College, Oxford University) who came up with a scheme to help decipher the diaries.

We have taken in the usual flow of parish council records including minutes of meetings, accounts, planning applications and the registration of land from a variety of Councils: Kirklington Middle, Gilcrux, Holme Abbey, Allhallows, Cummersdale, Plumblund, Brampton, Hayton and Mealo, Kingmoor, and Rockcliffe.

In a collection of papers relating to the Brown Family of Cockermouth and Kirkoswald, 1799-934, we received a pedigree starting with William Brown of Scales, Kirkoswald, soldier in the service of Oliver Cromwell; two letters (one with transcript) written by Joseph Brown to his parents after travelling to London to enter the firm of Yeats, Brown and Company, Wine Merchants, May 1799 and 1803; invoices (3) including John Jones, Grocer and Tea Dealer and J A Kerman, Tailor, 1804-1819; wedding invitations to various family members, 1929-1937 and 1803; letters to Joseph Brown from his younger brother Timothy who was residing in Brooklyn, New York, 1850s; letter from Reginald Brown to his auntie; 1855; letter from Joseph Brown to his son Reginald, 1896; letter from Joseph Brown to his sister Sarah while she was attending school at Stainford Hill, Middlesex, 1833; family announcements of birth and death including the death of Mr Joseph Brown; pledge by Reginald Brown to serve as Queen's Counsel [undated]; bond to secure £1,000 for Mrs Elizabeth Taylor in case she survives her husband, 1802; family history research notes with photographs compiled by Oswald Mantague Brown, 1924; copy of the Freedom of the City of London [undated].



We received records from the Cantonelle Choir which ceased operating in 2019. These records include minutes and agendas of committee meetings and annual general meetings; correspondence; financial reports; certificates of merit awarded by Carlisle and District Music and Drama Festival; newsletters; song lists for performances; constitution of the choir and photographs.

Maryport History Society deposited their group's more recent records including programmes of events, AGM minutes, committee minutes, Mary's Bird Poem, 1994; Millenium Report; magazine articles in Maryport Matters; accounts and financial statements; correspondence; and an article on 50 years of Maryport Natural History Society.

Those interested in mountaineering might be interested to hear that we received four photograph albums (1926-1957) relating to Mabel Barker who was an academic, lecturer and leading exponent in the sport of rock climbing.

We have taken in quite a significant deposit of Catholic Church records which have been divided in to nine separate collections. These include: St Margaret Mary's Junior School, Carlisle - Minute book of School Managers' meetings, April 1958-February 1968; log books (2); August 1938-July 1986; St Patrick's Voluntary School, Carlisle; Minute books of Foundation Managers of Catholic Schools of Carlisle (2), 1903-1950; St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Primary School, Carlisle; Minute book of School Managers' meetings, September 1907-April 1925; log books (2), June 1896-December 1953; St Bede's Roman Catholic Primary School, Carlisle; Log book,

July 1907-January 1962; minute book of School Managers' meetings, December 1954-December 1976; Warwick Bridge Roman Catholic Church of Our Lady and St Wilfrid - Notice books (2), June 1987-December 1994; minutes of Catholic Church Council meetings,

December 1973-March 1990; Christ The King Roman Catholic Church, Carlisle - Parish notice books (4), December 1952-September 1967; Parish Committee minute book (central, social and annual meetings), 1970-1976. Society of St Vincent de Paul - Cash book,

March 1868-December 1899; minute books (2), January 1906-December 1910 and November 1937-December 1945; cash and collections book, October 1857-1881.

## Cataloguing

In December we closed for two weeks as part of the annual stocktaking exercise. We used this time productively to tackle one of the rooms in the attic of the old house that had previously been filled with plans. Over the course of the fortnight we moved, cleaned, re-packaged and listed approximately 1,500 plans which can now be readily accessed. This was a tremendous achievement and was very much dependent on all staff pulling together and working as a team.

Work continues on Lowther family estate plans (ref DLONS/W), Cowans Sheldon, Civil Engineers of Carlisle engineer's drawings (ref DB 40) and records from the Mounsey-Heysham family of Castletown, Rockcliffe (ref DMH). Work has begun on listing the indictments held in the Cumberland Quarter Sessions (ref Q/11/3).

## Outreach activity

Archives are a great resource for supporting learning at Key Stage 2 and 3. Primary schools continue to make use of this resource and the autumn and winter terms saw sessions with Yewdale Primary School for a workshop on World War II; Rockcliffe Primary School for a workshop on the Industrialisation of Carlisle; Stoneraise Primary School for a workshop on World War II; and Bishop Harvey Goodwin School for a workshop on Alfred Wainwright.

On 12 March local historian John Little gave a talk based on his latest publication *A very satisfactory manner* which tells the story of the Netherby Hall robbery of 1885. This was supported by a display of original documents in the map room on the theme of crime and punishment. The event was extremely popular, with 43 people in attendance.

Photos on the right were taken during the 12 March event.

**Michael Stephens, Archivist**



## **4,000 Basque Refugees and The Bombings of British Merchant Ships during the Spanish Civil War: Cataloguing documents detailing Wilfred Roberts vital involvement**

Since January I have had the opportunity to engage with and learn the process of cataloguing archival documents. The documents I am working with hail from a recent deposit made by descendants of Charles and Cecilia Roberts, the couple who led the organisation of the hostel for Basque child refugees in Brampton and the parents of liberal MP Wilfred Roberts.

One file contained a variety of documents detailing the evacuation of the Basque refugees in Bilbao in May 1937. Evacuation of Bilbao was deemed necessary following the devastating bombing of the market town of Guernica in April 1937. Within the file there are copious numbers of telegrams and handwritten and typed letters that thoroughly detail the chaotic and desperate situation in Bilbao at this time and the complex reality of the evacuation of the children to Britain. Most correspondence occurred between Leah Manning, Wilfred Roberts, the Duchess of Atholl, Commander Harry Pursey and Jose I. de Lizaso - all of whom were integral to the successful evacuation of 4,000 child Basque refugees on 21st May 1937. The correspondence not only details the political procedures, protocols and setbacks of the evacuations, but also the emotional investment and necessity of the situation is demonstrated by Leah Manning and Commander Harry Pursey, who were present in Bilbao itself.

The second file, which I am currently cataloguing, differs greatly in terms of topic as well as document type, including official reports, memorandums and many newspaper article clippings. During 1938 there were numerous attacks on British Merchant ships, which not only damaged or sunk them but also led to a number of woundings and fatalities among seamen. Aircrafts responsible for the attacks were of German and Italian origin and were operating in support of General Franco. Franco made claims that such attacks were either not deliberate or it was suspected some ships were carrying contraband. As a result of these attacks the owners of these ships, and other shipping companies, appealed to their MPs, including Wilfred Roberts, to put pressure on the British Government to take decisive action. Due to the Non-Intervention Policy, this was a more complicated task.

A particular highlight of my experience, so far, was the discovery, within the second file, of handwritten letters, which stood out from the other 1938 documents. These letters were written in the 1970s to Wilfred Roberts from the daughter of a former Basque refugee, Alicia Pedrero, who had stayed at the house of Charles and Cecilia Roberts. The daughter, Yolanda Powell, was reaching out to Wilfred Roberts requesting to speak to him about the events of the evacuation and life of the refugee children while in Britain, as part of her independent research. It has been exciting to discover that in 2022 Yolanda Powell published a short book titled, *The Basque Children in Britain: Committees, Colonies and Concerts*, which I am sure will be a very thought-provoking read for anyone interested in the era and topic.

Working with this collection has been a fantastic experience. As someone who is typically found obsessing over ancient Greek animal figurines or visiting forts along Hadrian's Wall, it has made a welcomed change to learn about unfamiliar events of 20th century history. It is also a privilege to be involved in the cataloguing and handling of such informative and unique documents.

**Georgia Deeley-Bull, Current MA History (Heritage Pathway) Student at Lancaster University**

## Newton Rigg Agricultural College – project to create social media content

As part of my course, I was given the opportunity to apply for a history placement at Carlisle Archives that would provide excellent first-hand work experience in a field that I am passionate about. The project was to create social media content about Newton Rigg Agricultural College which was closed in 2021. The College dates back to the 1800s and holds a lot of significance for local people. I was drawn to this project as I believe that social media is an effective way to engage people with history and provide alternative access to archive collections.

During my placement, I was able to look through Newton Rigg College archive collection and gained many ideas for the social media pages. For example, I came across a number of year-group photographs ranging from the 1960s up to the 2000s, and I thought this would provide a great opportunity for people in the local area to spot any familiar faces that went to Newton Rigg. I found it interesting to learn how to handle older and more fragile documents such as photographs that date back to the 1920s. It was fascinating to learn about all the different visitors the college received, and how influential and pioneering the Forestry School was.

I had the privilege of being able to work with the staff at Carlisle Archive Centre throughout my placement. I was able to learn alongside people with a passion for history and to learn what it takes to be able to work in this field. The placement allowed me to not only develop skills in archiving and resource creation but also how to work in a professional environment. My experience has reinforced my passion for history and made me realise that a job in the heritage field is something that I want to pursue. I would recommend this placement to other students.

**Chloe Burgess, Second Year History and Politics Student at Lancaster University**

## Kendal Archive Centre

### Highlights from recent accessions at Kendal Archive Centre

Some recent deposits and donations to Kendal Archive Centre include:

K Fellfarers, minutes, newsletters, photographs, etc. (WDSO 371)

Fell and Rock Climbing Club, series of George and Ashley Abraham glass plate negatives of the Lake District [with some of north Wales, Scottish Highlands, and the Alps], 1890s (WDSO 163)

Tirril and Sockbridge Reading Room, minutes 1901-2003; financial 1901-1992, etc. (WDSO 427)

Kirkby Lonsdale Cricket Club, minutes 1852-1900, 1937-1985, 1996-2006, 2010-2022; score books [1st and 2nd XI] 1947-2019, etc. (WDSO 429)

Cumberland, Westmorland, and Lancashire North of the Sands fingerposts, research notes, articles, maps, photographs, etc., relating to fingerposts, compiled by Mike and Kate Lea (WDX 2090)

Le Fleming Family of Rydal Hall, letter from Colonel J Grahme to Sir Daniel Fleming, 27 July 1689 (WDRY)

Anne and Alec Swailes papers, drawings/pastels: working drawings, some finished drawings, including of Carr House, Mallerstang, Cautley Craggs, Wildboar Fell, Little Asby Scar, Sunbiggin Tarn, Howgills, limestone fells, etc. (WDAS)

Bampton Endowed Schools, log books (4) 1873-1999; admissions registers (2) 1913-2005; governors' minute book 1877-1991; etc. (WDS 3)

## Kirkby Lonsdale Cricket Club minute book

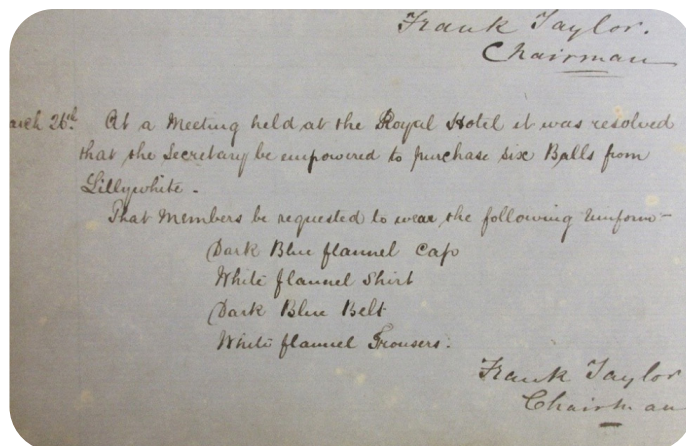
We were pleased to accept a deposit of Kirkby Lonsdale Cricket Club records a few months ago (ref WDSO 429). The collection includes records typical of a club, including minutes, financial records, and correspondence, and more specific records such as score books and season programmes. A stand-out document in the collection is a minute book which starts in 1852 and is one of the earliest minute books for a sports club that we hold at Kendal.

The minute book (ref WDSO 429/1/1) contains some nice references to cricket equipment and kit, including the purchase of a pair of wicket keeper's gauntlets in 1853, and a request in 1863 that club players wear a uniform consisting of a dark blue flannel cap, a white flannel shirt, a dark blue belt, and white flannel trousers. In 1871 the committee decided to trial a patent rubber compound cricket ball manufactured by Hamlet Nicholson of Rochdale. An important purchase was made in July 1873 when the club bought a small tent to house refreshments at matches. Refreshments for a match mentioned in the minutes included two gallons of beer and three dozen bottles of ginger beer.

Matches were organised against teams from Settle, Sedbergh School, Windermere College, Lancaster, and others. One match against Heversham School in 1865 was called the 'Alphabetical Match' in the minute book as one XI was chosen from members 'whose names begin with any letter of the alphabet from A to K and the other eleven from K to Z.' Discussions about transporting the players to away fixtures are common, as when expenditure was authorised on June 30 1853 to engage 'two drags...to convey the players to the "scene of action"' to play a match at Middleton. Waggonettes, conveyances, and omnibuses pulled by horses were all used, normally departing from an inn or public house, and players sometimes travelled to away matches by train. There was much discussion relating to cricket fields, mostly about levelling the surface, but also about finding a suitable field to train and play on at Underley Park. Underley was owned by the Earl of Bective, who was also club President from 1854. The club made use of this connection when they borrowed the Underley Farm bailiff's heavy roller in 1873.

There are a few mentions of the club employing professional cricketers, such as in April 1868 when it was proposed to engage a professional player for the season, the sum to not exceed £13. A professional cricketer called Robert Willows was employed for two weeks 'to instruct the club' in June 1864 at a cost of £2 2s per week. Census returns show that Robert Willows was a professional cricketer born in Cambridgeshire and living in Birkenhead in 1861; he is in Much Woolton, Lancashire, in 1871 and still employed as a professional cricketer. Willows had changed profession by 1881 as he was running a pub called the Niagra Vaults in Liverpool.

Robert Willows was mentioned in a newspaper article in The Daily Post of 13 September 1874, entitled 'The Clown and the Policeman'. The article details a drunken assault that occurred after a match involving the Casey and Robson team of clown cricketers, to which Willows was a witness. This team of clown cricketers was one of a number of teams popular in the 19th century that toured the country bringing their unique brand of mayhem to the cricket pitch (and sometimes after the match as per The Daily Post article). Kirkby Lonsdale Cricket Club couldn't resist the clown cricket craze and in April 1877 the minutes record 'that [a] committee be appointed to make arrangements with the London Imperial Clown Cricketers for a match to be played at Underley Park during the ensuing season.'



*Kirkby Lonsdale v. Kendal.*

1 <sup>st</sup> Innings.				2 <sup>nd</sup> Innings.			
Order of scores etc.	Names	How out	Bowler	Runs	Eds.	How out	Bowler
1	Marsden	b.	Atkinson		6	Bowling	M. Willows
2	Thompson	b.	b.		11	b.	b.
3	Scott	c. Claudiaby			3	b.	b.
4	Armington	b.	Atkinson		13	L. h. w.	Atkinson
5	Davidson	b.	S. Willows		1	b.	Atkinson
6	Smith	b.	Atkinson		13	run out	
7	Gibson	b.	S. Willows		1	b.	Willows
8	Croft	c. S. Willows			1	c. Mitchell	
9	Willow	c. Bibby			5	not out	
10	Tompson	run out			1	c. Webster	
11	Willow	not out			0	run out	
			Wyes		3		Wyes
					51		



## Researching Cumbria's Fingerposts: An opportunity for you!

By the beginning of this century the old roadside fingerposts in Cumbria were either decaying or disappearing. Ten to fifteen years ago members of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society (CWAAS), alongside others with an interest in recording and preserving these roadside structures which were largely connected to early motoring, began to record those which survived. Various interim reports were published but the project was never completed and fully written up.

Mike and Kate Lea were central to the investigations that took place, and earlier this year Kate deposited their archive in Kendal Archive Centre, as many of the fingerposts which had been investigated were situated in the old county of Westmorland. Kate is keen that someone continues this research with a view to publishing the results and would be very happy to help a new researcher to get started.

If anyone is interested, a number of CWAAS Newsletters include interim reports by various authors. All the following articles can be downloaded from their website: No 52 launched the CWAAS historic sign project; No 56 included a history of guideposts in Bewcastle; No 58 had an article by David Gosling on signpost restoration; No 60 - The Numbered Fingerposts of Westmorland; No 61 includes information on foundries; No 62 covered mixed media fingerposts in Furness; No 63 covered the original iron fingerposts of Cumberland; No 64 included one of a number of articles by Mike Kingsbury - this one on fingerposts at Casterton.

The articles in Nos 60, 61, 62 and 63 were by Mike and Kate summarising their results from many years of travelling round Westmorland, Cumberland and Furness locating, photographing and recording the condition and type of fingerposts still in existence. Based on their extensive research trawling through old Council and Parish records, foundry day books, old newspapers, early Ordnance Survey maps etc., for any mention of fingerposts, they were often able to precisely date when and where each fingerpost was cast and installed and how much they cost to make, as well as explain the patterns behind their installation. Their archive also contains correspondence and material which provides background and insight into people and places particularly in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Kendal Archive Centre has accessioned Mike and Kate's archive and its listing can be viewed on the online catalogue CASCAT under reference WDX 2090. The image above shows a selection of documents from the fingerpost collection [ref WDX 2090]

If you are interested and want to learn more please contact Kate at: [k.lea@talk21.com](mailto:k.lea@talk21.com)



## **'This is a time men must suffer for what others please': Colonel James Grahme's letter to Sir Daniel Fleming, July 1689**

We were pleasantly surprised to receive an interesting donation by post recently. The item is a letter from Colonel James Grahme to Sir Daniel Fleming of Rydal Hall dated 27 July 1689. The letter is listed in the Historical Manuscripts Commission list of manuscripts surveyed at Rydal Hall in 1890, but it was one of a number of letters dispersed by sale in the early 20th century before the Rydal Hall MSS were deposited at Kendal Archive Centre (see image on the right. WDRY/5/3582).

The short letter concerns the return of Grahme's horses and reveals some of the tensions after the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Colonel Grahme writes:

'...this [letter] is to begg a favour off you to give what assistance you can to my servants in recovering my horses which I know are seized upon the notion off my being a Papist, God knows how different my principles are from theirs, but this is a time men must suffer for what others please...'

It seems that Colonel Grahme was viewed with suspicion by some in Westmorland at this time, probably because he was made the keeper of the privy purse by King James II, and enjoyed the King's confidence. Colonel Grahme would go on to show Jacobite sympathies after 1689, but after accusations of treason, a few arrests, and a spell in the Fleet prison, Grahme eventually settled at Levens Hall to a quieter life and became a popular figure in the county.

You can view the letter along with the rest of the Rydal Hall MSS at Kendal Archive Centre.

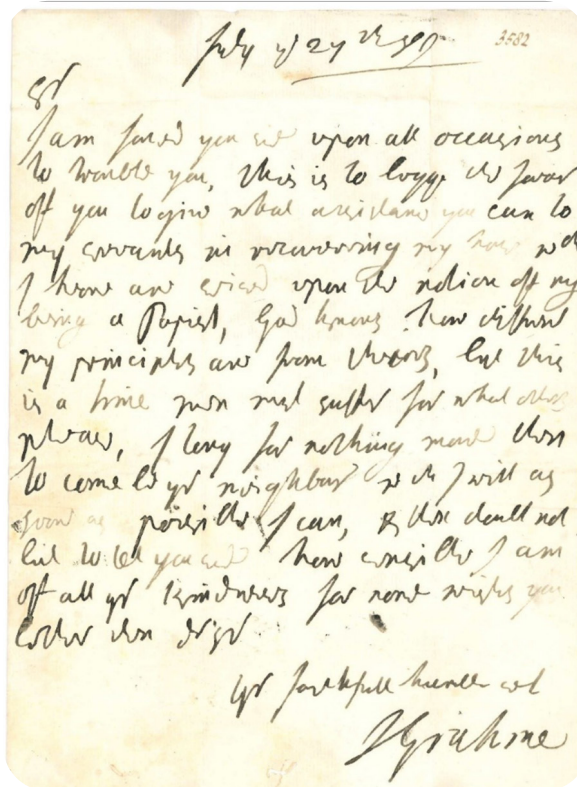
**Anthony Hughes, Archivist**

## **Nonconformist collections update**

Over the last couple of years I have been tasked, alongside my colleagues at Kendal Archive Centre, with recataloguing and repackaging items from our sizeable collections of Nonconformist and Roman Catholic records. These collections include the following denominations (followed by their collection reference): Baptist (WDFCB), Congregational (WDFCC), Independent (WDFCIND), Inghamite (WDFCI), Methodist (WDFCM), Plymouth Brethren (WDFCPB), Presbyterian (WDFCP), Society of Friends (Quakers, WDFCF), Unitarian (WDFCFU), and the United Reformed Church (WDFCURC - Presbyterians merged with the Congregational Union to form the United Reformed Church in 1972. Roman Catholic records are, unsurprisingly, listed under the reference WDFCRC. There are also records of the Fellside Christian Trust, based in Kendal, referenced WDFCFCT.

Numerous records that were previously uncatalogued are now listed on CASCAT, Cumbria Archives' online catalogue. The records have often been quite mundane and repetitive in nature, with a succession of minutes, accounts and in the Methodists' case preaching plans, but there have been a few gems along the way to raise morale. One item especially caught the eye, a pen and ink drawing of The Old [Methodist] Chapel 1808-1883 in Kendal which, though unsigned, had the inimitable style of the guidebook illustrator supreme, Alfred Wainwright. Taken from a watercolour by Thomas Robinson, it is now listed on CASCAT and available for researchers to view, ref WDFCM 2/4/38. It also adorns the cover of a booklet to commemorate the 150th anniversary of Stricklandgate Methodist Chapel. To confuse matters, the booklet's author, W. Stanley Jones, acknowledges that "grateful thanks are due to Mr Arthur Wainwright for his exquisite drawing of the first chapel." (see drawing overleaf)

The Methodist collection is very large and over the years has, admittedly, been added to without close attention paid to its cataloguing structure which if updated and then implemented comprehensively would be a complex and time-consuming process. It is to be hoped that in years to come this collection will be catalogued in a more logical, structured way, but a daunting task awaits.



Amongst Society of Friends' records at Kendal we have the digested registers of Quaker births, marriages and burials for Westmorland Quarterly Meeting (also available on microfilm at Kendal Library). Meeting minutes are plentiful and are often split between the sexes; for example, the earliest Women's Monthly Meeting minutes for Kendal date from 1671. There is evidence of lethargy amongst Quaker worshippers in the early 18th century - Grayrigg's

Preparative Meeting minutes of 1702 start with a copy of recommendations sent by a Quaker called James Fell from the Quarterly Meeting in Kendal, for coping with any tendencies towards "fullness, heaviness and slepyness" of Friends at Meetings.

The Society of Friends' collection is another large set of records, almost on a par with the Methodists in complexity, but at the time of writing an attempt is in progress to improve the structure of the catalogue so there will, eventually, be specific headings for local Preparative Meetings as well as the overarching Westmorland Quarterly Meeting and the subsidiary Monthly Meetings. In addition, there will be a specific listing for Swarthmoor Monthly Meeting (though many of its records use the spelling Swarthmore). It is something of an anomaly that we have records for Swarthmoor, as being situated near Ulverston it's outside our usual patch, but the more the merrier.

**Max Clark, Archive Assistant, Kendal**



## Whitehaven Archives

### Outreach

Whitehaven Archives hosted an Archive Discovery Evening on Family History in October and a Christmas Tea Party for our volunteers and regulars. Both were well-attended, and the latter featured a particularly challenging festive quiz, generating some lively debate. We've also had a visit from Distington Family and Local History Society which came for a talk on the work of Cumbria Archives and a display of Distington archives as well as some of our Treasures.

In October and November, an undergraduate student, Vincent, did a month-long placement with us which included appraising and listing records, shadowing in the search room and researching and composing posts for social media. A display on Basque refugee children in Cumbria has been up in the search room. We are preparing to give a talk and tour for a ladies' ghosthunting group later this month, with a visit from another local history society in the spring/summer. After Easter, we will have our annual Lancaster University placement working on listing the letters of Percy Kelly. We've been contributing to Cumbria Archives' social media accounts too, with posts and tweets about Dustbusters, Secrets and Women for Explore Your Archives as well as celebrating the 200th anniversary of the RNLI with early photos of lifeboats at Whitehaven, Workington and Seascale.

## **New Material at Whitehaven Archives**

- Beckermeth Women's Institute programmes and financial records (YDSO 75)
- Whitehaven Methodist Circuit, places of worship certificates and marriage solemnization certificates, St Bees Methodist Church Council minute book, annual accounts for various chapels, 1863-2016 (YDFCM 2)
- Millom Town Council, Millom Parish Council, Copeland Borough Council: minutes, declarations of acceptance, attendance registers, reports, correspondence, clerk's files, financial records, 20th century (YSPC 38, YSPC 8, SDCO)
- Cockermouth Savings Bank, Carlisle and North-Western Counties Savings Bank, minutes, customer account ledgers, directors' balance books, cash books, days books, declaration book, c1818-c1968 (YDB 104)
- Workington, Westfield St Mary: preachers' books, registers of service, register of funerals, electoral rolls, Mothers' Union minutes and accounts, 1889-2016 (YPR 44)
- Reverend C H Steel, List of subscribers presented to Steel on his departure from the parish of Egton in North Yorkshire, 1930; autograph letters, mainly from clergy and Oxford Dons, c1843-1944 (DH/366)
- Additional material from Stephen Holliday's Local Studies Collection, 19th-20th centuries, postcards, and original inquest and inquiry papers relating to Wellington Pit disaster, 1910 (YDX 765)
- Receipts addressed to John Whittle of Whitehaven and other miscellany including Egremont Wesleyan Methodist Church Bazaar Cookery Book [c1910], 1769-1927 (YDX 787)
- Attested copy of conveyance of land at Victoria Road and Midgley Field, Whitehaven, 1937 (YDX 788)
- Seascale, St Cuthbert, architect's report, design for reredos, marriage licences, correspondence, trust deed, 1878-1985 (YPR 39)
- St Bees Grammar School: statutes and ordinances of Edmund Grindal, Archbishop of Canterbury, letters to the Governors, manor court verdicts, receipt and account books, report on the school colliery and coal royalties, quatercentenary exhibition material, 1583-1983 (YDS 60)
- High Duddon and Duddon Hall Estate sale particulars, 1902 (YDX 789)
- Sale catalogue and newspaper article for Muncaster Castle, 1995 (DPEN)
- Archaeological watching brief for Geotechnical Pits in Egremont, Oxford Archaeology North, 2015 (YDSO 39)
- Netherwasdale, St Michael and All Angels PCC minutes, accounts and papers, 1946-2006 and Wasdale St Olaf parish profile, c2004, (YPR 20, YPR 21)
- Cleator Moor Methodist Church, Church Council Meeting Minutes, 2006-2014, Church history, c1994 (YDFCM 2)
- Cumbria Methodist Circuit plans and newsletters, 2004-2023 (YDFCM 2, YDFCM 4)
- Cleator Women's Institute account books, 1961-2012 (YDSO 189)
- Gosforth Methodist Church meeting minutes and youth group attendance, 1961-2022 (YDFCM 2)
- Archaeological reports on Parton Roman Fort, Campus Whitehaven and land at the former chemical works, Wardell Armstrong Ltd, 2017-2022 (YDB 79)
- Photograph of Seaton Mill, undated, and flier for Fisk University Jubilee Singers' performance at Cleator Moor, 1898 (YDX 790) See flyer overleaf
- Miscellaneous papers from British Steel and Jack Lancaster Collection, 1948-1996 (YBSC, YDX 129)

## Cataloguing

The latest cataloguing of Workington Borough Council archives (SMBWO) includes records concerning water supply, street improvements, grants of easements, and an overcrowding survey.

The records of Cockermouth Savings Bank (YDB 104). There are minutes, customer accounts, ledgers, cash books, day books, a stock register and declarations book going back to 1818. We have received further records from Westfield parish, Workington (YPR 44), including service registers, a funeral register, electoral rolls, accounts and Mothers' Union records.

We have started listing and appraising the many boxes of records from Millom Town Council (YSPC 38) and its predecessor Millom Parish Council (YSPC 38), which we collected at the end of last year. So far, records of councillors such as declarations of acceptance of office, attendance registers and photographs of parish council

chairmen have been added to these catalogues. We would like to thank Lee at Carlisle for all his hard work in cleaning 45 boxes of this material.

We are currently working on cataloguing nine boxes of records from local schools such as Southfield and Wyndham, recently transferred to us by Records Management. These include governors' minutes and attendance records.

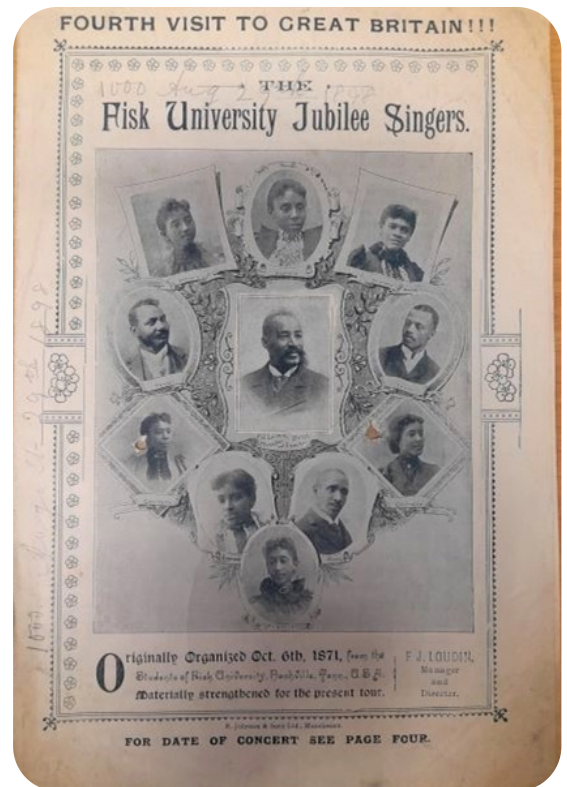
A collection of title deeds of properties owned by Lodore Limited, the investment company of the Walker family, is now fully listed on Calm (YDB 103). This includes the Wasdale Hall estate (formerly owned by John Musgrave), the Manor of Castlerigg and Derwentwater and the conveyance of certain fells in Wasdale and Borrodale to the National Trust in memory of members of the Fell and Rock-Climbing Club who fell during the Great War.

More photographs and postcards have been listed as part of Stephen Holliday's Local Studies Collection (YDX 765, see images below) following a further deposit. Additional title deeds and letters pertaining to St Bees School have been added to the YDS 60 collection along with a volume of statutes and ordinances of Edmund Grindal, Archbishop of Canterbury, for the better governing and ordering of the school, 1583.

Work has continued to clean, arrange and repackage a portion of the Curwen archive that includes Workington Harbour vouchers and Harrington Colliery pay bills (DCU); and to provide more detailed listing of Ennerdale building plans (SRDE/3/Plans3).

Our West Cumbrian Industrial History Digitisation Officer has completed the digitisation of the photographs of the British Steel collection (YBSC) - an impressive achievement as this is a collection of over 20,000 images.

**Diane Hodgson, Archivist**



▲ Flier for a Fisk University Jubilee Singers performance at Cleator Moor Market Hall in 1898, billed as their 4th visit to Great Britain from Nashville Tennessee



## Digitisation and Conservation Update

It's been a busy few months in collections care - the conservation and digitisation teams have been working on a few different projects, as you'll see below.

My main focus this year is to complete a detailed survey of the archive, to make sure we're on target to complete our repackaging and environmental targets for 2024. The Preservation Assessment Survey is taken on every ten years, so this will be the first time since 2014 that we've had a good look at the whole archive. Claire and I will be taking a sample of 5 per cent of the collections at every site, and assessing the condition of the items there. This data gathered will help us to design a service-wide plan for the next ten years - it's a big job! Along with the day to day bench work, this will give us a strong foundation for putting the collection at the heart of our service planning.

**Erika Freyr, Senior Conservator**

### Digitising Archive Materials

I'm one of the team responsible for digitising archive materials, and I'm proud to say I have got something big to report. Over the past two years I've been working on a collection of photos from the Distington Engineering Company, a steelworks which operated in Workington over the course of the 20th century, ultimately incorporated into British Steel before being closed down. I have now completed the digitisation.

The company employed a full-time photographer and the photographs – some 14,000 - are beautiful. It is a wonderful collection to work with: the photographer ranged around the site, posing workers doing their tasks, showing managers in meetings, shooting the view from the slag heaps outside and down the mines where they extracted iron ore and tested out mining equipment, taking aerial shots of Chapel Bank and going out on the sea to photograph the ships that carried the steel all over the world. It's a social history as well: Christmas parties, company sports days, leaving presentations, tours for visitors and dignitaries, weddings, and many photos of the Westfield housing estate built for workers. There are some oddities in there as well. There's one photo of an Indian elephant and another of a single potato.

The collection is notable for photos of the workers, either mid-task or as posed headshots, and many ex-staff are still living in Workington, including the last manager of the site who is an expert on the history and often delivers talks about the company. We're planning to promote the collection locally and encourage people to provide more information.

If you would like to browse through the collection it will shortly be available on computer at the Whitehaven Archive and Local Studies Centre. Ask for YBSC 22/1.

**Helen Leech, Digitisation Technician, West Cumbria Industrial Heritage Project**



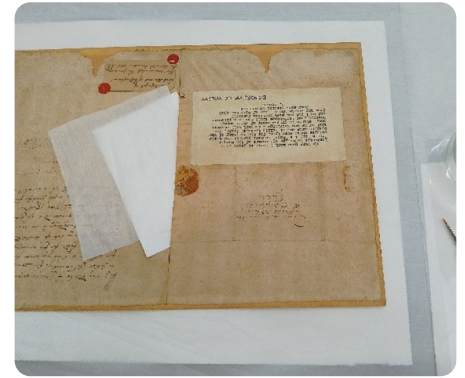
## Removing non-archival materials used on records in the past

In conservation, we often find that the non-archival materials used in the past to store or display records can cause serious damage and endanger a record's preservation. I began the year working on a 1588 letter (WDX 1808) from Lord Howard of Effingham to The Right Honourable the Lord Treasurer of England asking that the owners of the barques Bond and Hope be paid their money for their part in the removal of the Spanish army from Calais. The letter had been glued to acidic mounting board, which was accelerating the deterioration of the good quality 16th century paper.

A backing removal was needed, but an added complication was the remains of a wax seal on the letter, which was crumbling to the touch. To prevent further damage, I prepared a traditional adhesive called isinglass, which is made from the swim bladders of fish, usually the sturgeon. Carefully applied, this held the wax in place so that I could turn the letter over and begin the painstaking task of peeling away the damaging board layer by layer. This is intense work, undertaken in short bursts between other tasks as the danger of piercing through the original paper is high!

Once the bulk of the board was off, there was still residue that had to be carefully removed with a technique called poulticing. This uses a methyl cellulose gel to gently humidify the residue, so it can be carefully scraped off. The letter was written with iron gall ink, which is damaged by moisture, so this added an extra layer of peril to the task. I'm relieved to say, all went to plan, and the letter is now safely housed in archival materials so it will last for many more years.

**Claire Dean, Conservator**



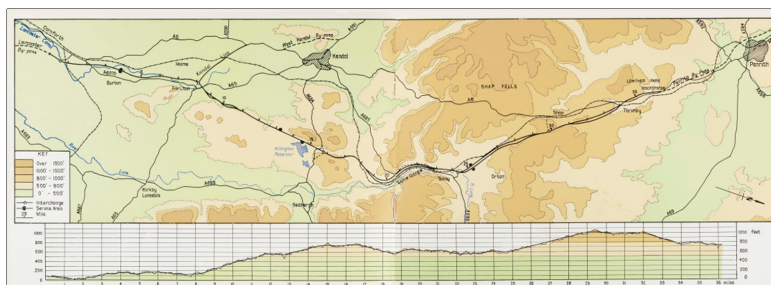
## Digital copies provided to aid research

Alongside the digitisation team's focus on capturing Cumbria's heritage treasures for long-term archival and public access purposes, we also provide digital copies on request to aid research. Regardless of the outcome, our work remains the same: careful handling in temperature and light-controlled (read: cold and dark) environments - a keen reflection of our Cumbrian weather.

As with any work it's gratifying to see the results of our labour, and more so when the result is fame! Credited for her 'tireless' assistance, Francesca has received an acknowledgement in Sidney K Ohlhausen's, *The Life and Letters of Rev. George Leo Haydock*. She didn't bring it up, so I did, and in thanks to Bill Shannon for bringing it to our attention I'd like to spotlight his digitisation request. A rule of conservation is never to do what you cannot undo. A similar rule applies to digital preservation: we capture what is there, resist the urge to 'photoshop' it, to preserve the item in full authenticity. However, sometimes we are treated to a request that proves too tempting to not take the loopholes offered. I am of course referring to the 1968 Brochure of the M6 Motorway Lancaster to Penrith Bypass.

Within we found a map suitable for Bill's publication on Cumbria Maps and Plans, to be published later this year by Inspired by Lakeland. While fitting his request, the team decided it was not fit for purpose. With the Lune Gorge blemished by aged staples in the original capture, we smoothed the seam between the left and right page and removed the offending staples. (See below). Credit where it's due, I think it looks pretty good.

**George Platt, Digitisation Technician**



## Digitising Archive Materials

At the archives we have to be very organised with the storage and preservation of, not only paper records, but also our digital files. We don't just collect and preserve paper documents, but also Word files, PDFs and other digital files. Archival image files can be RAWs and TIFFs, the access files being JPEGs; sound files can be uncompressed WAV files, with the access files as mp3s. These are securely stored on our servers.

If, like us, you have interesting material at home, such as family photos and books, you may like to think about storing it in archival material. There are some good suppliers of archival packaging below:

<https://www.preservationequipment.com/>  
<https://www.cxdinternational.com/>

When it comes to your digital photos you can set yourself the project of sorting them out, here are some points to consider:

### 1. Identify where you have digital photos

- Identify all your digital photos on cameras, computers, and removable media such as memory sticks.
- Include your photos on the Web or in cloud storage, such as in Flickr, Google Photo, or Amazon

### 2. Decide which photos are most important to you

- If there are multiple versions of an important photo, save the one with highest quality and file size

### 3. Organise the selected photos

- Give individual photos descriptive file names.
- Tag photos with names of people and descriptive subjects.
- Create a directory/folder structure on your computer to put the images you picked.
- Write a brief description of the directory structure and the photos.

### 4. Make copies and store them in different places

- Make at least two copies of your selected photos – the more copies the better.
- One copy can stay on your computer or laptop; put other copies on separate media such as an external hard drive or \*cloud storage. DVDs, CDs and DVDs are prone to degradation so are not recommended for long term storage. See the bronzed DVD in the photo above!
- Store copies in different locations that are as physically far apart as practical. If disaster strikes in one location, your photographs in the other place should be safe.
- Put a copy of the photo inventory with your important papers in a secure location.
- Check your photos at least once a year to make sure you can open and see them.
- Create new media copies every five years or when necessary to avoid data loss.

\*If you store photos on iCloud, be aware that, if your computer's memory is full, your photo files will be replaced by small thumbnail files!

If, in the future, you want to deposit any records of local or historical interest with Cumbria Archives, then having your records organised and stored in good conditions will make the process easier. We don't just accession paper records, but digital ones too. There is some information on our website about making a deposit.

**Depositing Records with Cumbria Archives | Cumberland Council and Westmorland and Furness Council**

**Francesca Halfacree, Digitisation Technician**



## Local Studies Libraries in Westmorland and Furness

### New Copying Service

We have introduced a new enquiry and copying service at our main Local Studies Libraries and you can now pay online for copies requested. We can carry out up to half an hour of research free once in a six-month period as long as details of name, date etc. are provided. Any copies required will be charged at £1 per scanned image and can be paid via a link to gov.pay. Please send any enquiries to [kendal.localstudies@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk](mailto:kendal.localstudies@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk) and we will get back to you.

### Outreach

Local Studies Libraries have been busy with our outreach to young people. We had a visit from Kendal College Students who wanted to use our Local Studies collection as inspiration for artwork to brighten up some of our yards in the town. We have also had visits from St Thomas School year 2 learning about the First World War in Kendal. Vicarage Park School year 1 came for a story in the Children's Library followed by a visit to our Local Studies Library to learn about Kendal Castle. The story of the Kendal Library Dragon provided a good starting point and there were numerous dragons hidden around the Local Studies Library that morning. Grayrigg School year 6 also visited, learning about local recipes for Cumberland sausage, Grasmere Gingerbread and Westmorland Pepper Cake and how the introduction of spices influenced our recipes.

Penrith Library staff also had an outreach opportunity with a visit to St Catherine's School to lead a session about the Plague in Penrith. The children particularly enjoyed trying on the Plague

Doctor's costume loaned to us by Kendal Archive Centre. March was 'Women in History Month' and this time we focused on 'The role of Women on the Stockton to Darlington Railway'. Next year will see the 200th anniversary of the railway and the display was put together by Anne

Taylor who is carrying out research for the Lottery-funded project. Schools in the Eden area will be involved. Kendal Library Assistants also put together a poster on Mary Wakefield and, in Penrith, a poster outlining the life of Dorothy Una Ratcliffe, local author and socialite was displayed along with a portrait and some books kindly loaned by The National Trust at Acorn Bank.

May will be local history month and the theme will be 'A sense of place'. Look out for displays and events around our Archive Centres and Libraries.

Local Studies Staff are busy carrying out an audit of books in the local studies reference collection in Kendal. The lending collection has already been checked. Any books which are not currently on Koha – our online catalogue - are being added and the catalogue is being updated to make it more accurately reflect what we have on the shelves. This will take time but will make the collection more accessible.

We regret that Kendal Local Studies Library will be closed from Monday 13th May to Saturday 18th May. This is so that essential work to the heating and air conditioning can be carried out. We apologise for any inconvenience caused.

**Kate Holliday, Library Development Officer. Local Studies lead for Westmorland and Furness Libraries.**

## The Victoria County History of Cumbria

*'This is a tremendous opportunity to enhance our skills and achievements' (VCH Cumbria volunteer)*

The Victoria County History of Cumbria is a community-based project. Since 2010, we have been supporting lifelong learning and empowering local volunteers to contribute to the creation of a new, authoritative history of the county. Our work is overseen by the Cumbria County History Trust (CCHT) and forms the regional element of the national Victoria County History (VCH), which aims to produce encyclopedic histories of each of England's counties, ranging from the earliest archaeological records to the present day.

The VCH was founded in 1899, making it one of the longest-running research projects in the world. Over the course of the 20th century, however, little progress was made with completing the Cumbrian portion of the national project. Two general volumes focused on the historic county of Cumberland were published in 1901 and 1905, and a volume focused on the Furness district (formerly part of Lancashire) appeared in 1914. VCH Cumbria picked up where these pioneering efforts left off. After more than 100 years, we are on the brink of bringing out our first 'Red Book', which covers Lonsdale Ward in the south east of the county. VCH Red Books are authoritative histories of specific localities, and they form the building blocks of the national VCH. The

Lonsdale Ward Red Book, which builds on the foundational work of Emmeline Garnett, will be the first VCH volume dedicated to a part of the historic county of Westmorland. The book ranges from Roman roads to the M6, and from internally renowned landscapes to industrial history.

Over the past 14 years we have developed a participatory research method (now being adopted nationally) that enables local volunteers to write place-based histories in collaboration with academic historians based at Lancaster University. This approach benefits the volunteers through lifelong learning and enhances the project through local knowledge and wide-ranging expertise. Many of our volunteers have enjoyed the satisfying experience of honing their research skills under professional guidance while contributing to a significant national project.

VCH Cumbria's contributions to the study of the county's past do not stop there, though. We have also improved public access to historical research, resources and skills through our project website ([www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/](http://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/)) and free training programmes. This ensures that everyone can play a part in producing published histories of the highest academic standards. Our website is an internationally recognised resource on Cumbrian history and enables us to make the volunteers' work freely available online. In 2023, our website was consulted by 42,106 'new users', including ones in North America and Australia. Over the course of the year, visitors downloaded historical resources from our site nearly 30,000 times.

We are very grateful for the support we have received from Cumbria Archives as well as the Friends of Cumbria Archives, prior to their disbanding in 2023, amongst other regional and national organisations and funders. In addition to enabling the completion of the Lonsdale Ward Red Book, this support is aiding the volunteer-engagement work that will lead to the completion of a new Red Book for the Furness and Cartmel peninsulas. This second Red Book will update, enhance and extend the 1914 volume, answering the urgent need for a revised version that reflects the subsequent urban development of Barrow-in-Furness.



◀ Devil's bridge, Kirkby Lonsdale. Engraving from Thomas Pennant's *Tour from Downing to Alston Moor*, 1801.



- ◀ Many outputs from the VCH project can be found on the Cumbria County History Trust website.

To further this work, we have run skills training courses in conjunction with Morecambe Bay Partnership. The most recent, held over the winter of 2023–24, was entitled 'Help tell the Story of Furness' and had 17 participants. We were also commissioned by Historic England to establish a project in Barrow-in-Furness, in which volunteer historians surveyed and undertook contextual research into the history of listed buildings in the town. The volunteers drew on rich local archival resources, including the internationally important and recently digitised Sankey Photography Archive. A short film about the project was produced by Signal Film and Media and is available on our project website:

**<https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/exploring-listed-buildings-barrow-furness>**

Within the project there are roles for people of all stages of qualification and experience, including absolute newcomers. As one of our volunteers has explained, 'the biggest impact on many of us is being able to make a real contribution to a national historical publication and, as a result, becoming ... more "professional" in our approach to local history.' Hundreds of volunteers have contributed to the project since it began, and their feedback assures us that they have valued the experience. One volunteer commented that 'this is a tremendous opportunity to enhance our skills and achievements', adding, 'it is impossible to exaggerate the importance for us.'

We currently have a dedicated core group of volunteers who are closely engaged in drafting articles that will ultimately feed into VCH Cumbria publications. This group of drafters receives support through contact with our Research Associate, Dr Sarah Rose, and training activities. In the next phase of the project, we are diversifying our network of volunteers, working with a wider range of groups and individuals in new ways, especially in Furness and Cartmel.

New volunteers are always welcome. If you would like to become involved in the VCH Cumbria project, or would like more information, please contact Sarah Rose: **[s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk](mailto:s.rose2@lancaster.ac.uk)**



## PhD research with Cumbria Archives

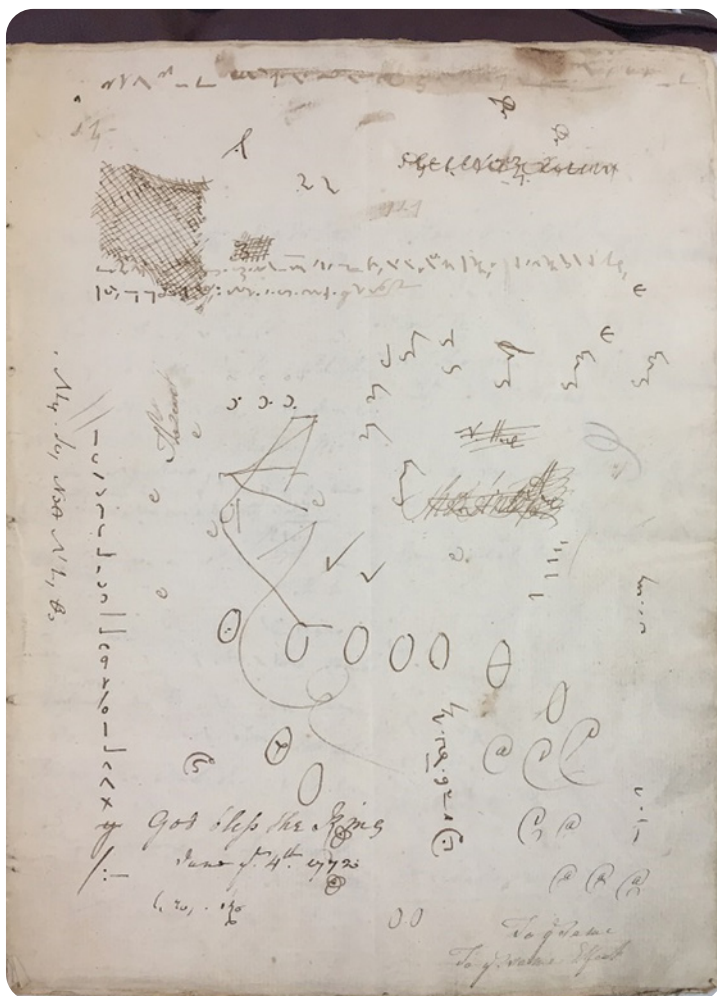
I'm a final year PhD student funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (North West Consortium Doctoral Training Partnership), and my project is a collaborative doctoral award with Keele University and Cumbria Archives. My thesis is interested in the development of genteel masculinity in the late 18th century. In addition to my supervisors Prof. Nicholas Seager, Prof. Alannah Tomkins, and senior archivist Robert Baxter, my research has greatly benefited from the help and kindness of the Cumbria Archives staff, in particular Helen Cunningham.

The first half of my thesis is focused on the representation of the gentleman in novels, periodicals, poems, and visual culture. The second half is concerned with coded life writing and correspondence of Andrew Hudleston (1734-1822), a Cumberland-born gentleman barrister.

The Hudleston's of Hutton John belonged to the lesser gentry of Cumberland. Though they did not possess a peerage, they claimed an ancient lineage stretching back to the Norman conquest. By the early 17th century, the family reached the zenith of their power and wealth, boasting of land holdings across Cumberland and neighbouring Westmorland, as well as property in Lancaster, Oxford, and Westminster. However, their support for the Stuarts in the English Civil War and commitment to Catholicism resulted in the loss or confiscation of large portions of land. A generation later the family supported the Willemite cause and converted to Protestantism, however, this did not lead to the economic recovery of the family, or the return of lands lost over the course of the last century. In the 18th century the Hudleston's of Hutton John attempted to improve what land they did have and establish themselves as successful gentleman lawyers, although those aspirations would not be realised until the 19th century with Andrew Fleming Hudleston (1796-1861) working for the East India Company and overturning a century of decline.

In 1802 Andrew Fleming's father, Andrew 'the Bencher' (1734-1822), lamented his family's dire financial position, as well as his own floundering legal career. In an attempt to console himself, he concluded his manuscript history of the family by remarking that despite the humble station of his ancestors they were all 'unassuming and not vain Boasters, and we ought to be thankful that there are no wicked Scoundrels to blot the Escutcheon'. As for his own life, the Bencher claimed to have lived his youth in genteel innocence among 'Shrubberies, Books, Horses and pointer dogs' with 'Morals unimpeached'. His explanation for the state of his legal career, or lack thereof, was due to an overbearing father and an overall lack of legal connections within the bustling communities of London and Carlisle. His diaries and life writing tell another story, however.

It is possible that his knowledge of what constituted a scoundrel may have come from personal experience, his diaries detail instances of revelry, drunkenness, and pre-marital liaisons. Equally, his commonplace books note down jokes and quips alongside more meticulous transcriptions of philosophical and historical works. Aside from complicating his life of innocence amongst the hedges and shrubberies of Hutton John, his diaries, memorandum, and commonplace books detail a rich and expansive inner life totalling 229 volumes spanning the majority of his life (1764-1821). Moreover, almost all of these volumes were written in an adapted shorthand code.

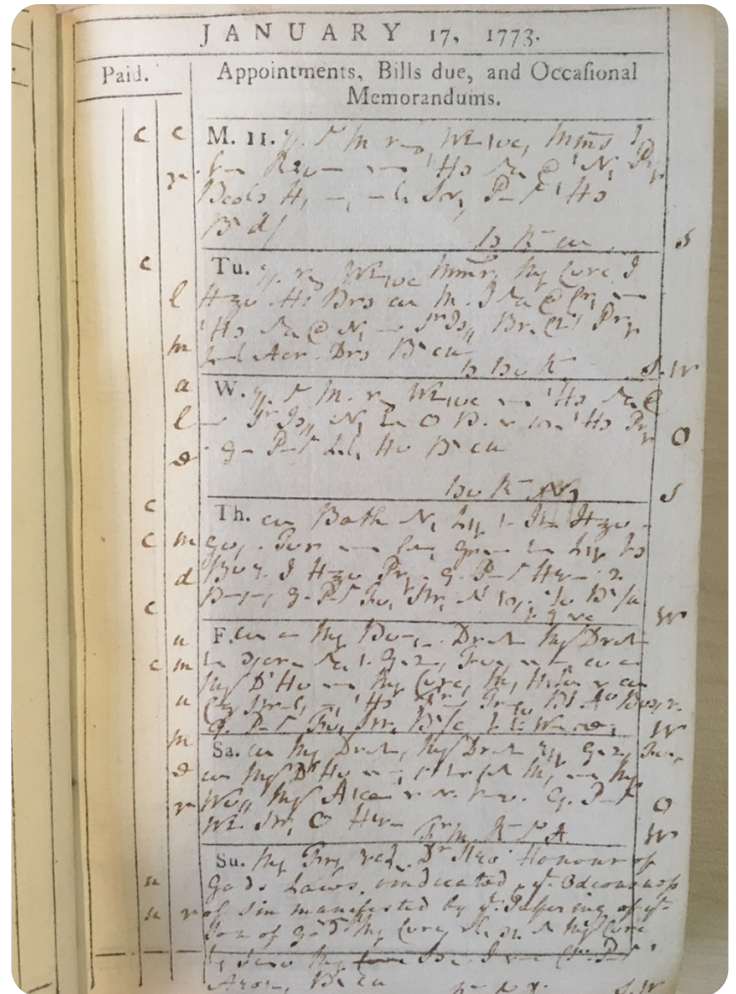


▲ Andrew's code was developed from Thomas Gurney's Brachygraphy, his alphabet (later changed by Andrew) can be seen on the left of the page. Commonplace book, 1772-9

My research has been primarily focused on Andrew's life writing as an act of genteel self-fashioning, a means of creating and developing an identity which seemingly had very little to do with his legal career. Beyond amusing anecdotes or scandalous secrets, his writing provides an almost continuous record of his daily life, sometimes in the most minute detail. His daily regime, his diet, appointments, health, even the weather were all important nodes of information which Andrew sought to record. In addition to that, his commonplace books provide insight into his reading habits and ideas about politics, history, philosophy, and meditations on his life. Throughout his long-life Andrew lived through significant change within his household, his country, and abroad all of which is evident within these writings. At its most fundamental level however, my research hopes to demonstrate that his life writing provides insights into the formation of identity within the 18th century. At the same time, I hope to convey that identity and self-fashioning were not then, and are not now, a linear process of becoming. Andrew's conception of himself as a leisured gentleman was in direct conflict with his financial position and the economic reality of his estate. His life writing contains a multitude of information, the mundane and the exceptional.

Outside of my own interest, these diaries, memorandum, and commonplace books offer a wealth of insight into 18th century life. They are a unique resource in understanding the use of code within life writing, the tabulation of finances, notetaking practices, as well as a myriad of other modes of historical enquiry.

Ed Hardiman



▲ His memorandum book summaries his day. Tabulated columns on the left account for his daily monetary transactions. Memorandum Book, Jan. 1773

## Cumbria Archives – opening hours

**Barrow Archive Centre:** Wednesday to Friday: 9.30am to 1pm; 2pm to 5pm (closed between 1pm to 2pm)

**Carlisle Archive Centre:** Wednesday to Friday: 9.30am to 1pm; 2pm to 5pm (closed between 1pm to 2pm. The Victorian Kitchen will be open for visitors to stay during the lunch closure but bring your own refreshments). Please also note that Reception at Lady Gillford's House will be closed 12pm to 1pm. Archive users already in the building will be able to exit the building but there will be no admittance of visitors during this hour

**Kendal Archive Centre:** Wednesday to Friday: 9.30am to 12.30pm; 1.30pm to 4.30pm (closed between 12.30pm to 1.30pm)

**Whitehaven Archive Centre:** Wednesday to Thursday: 9.30am to 12.30pm; 1.30pm to 4.30pm (closed between 12.30pm to 1.30pm); Friday 9.30am to 12.30pm