

The Most Magnificent Pageant ever held on Windermere Lake



This is a familiar picture to most of us. It depicts a grand aquatic festival on Windermere, a lithograph made from a painting by J.B. Pyne. But how many of us know when the event occurred and what it celebrated? In 1825 a magnificent fleet of boats of every size and kind assembled in procession on the Lake, to honour a gathering at Storrs Hall of two of the most famous men of the day, a spectacle the like of which has never been equalled.

Earlier that year Sir Walter Scott's son, Walter, was married in Edinburgh. As a young Army officer in the 15th King's Hussars he was shortly afterwards posted to duty in Dublin. Sir Walter visited the couple in their new home in the summer. On a grand tour of Ireland in July and August of 1825, he was accompanied by John Gibson Lockhart, his son-in-law, and Anne his second daughter.

For some time Scott had been researching A Life of Napoleon Buonaparte. He invited George Canning, the Foreign Secretary, to stay with him at Abbotsford, his castle in the Scottish Borders. Canning had served in government throughout the wars with the French, and had intimate knowledge of the conflict, which would be invaluable to Scott's research. However, unforeseen political events in 1822 had disrupted their plans and the proposed visit did not take place. Three years later, while in Ireland, Scott received word from Canning that he would be staying at Storrs Hall on the bank of Windermere, the home of his political agent John Bolton, around the time of Scott's homeward journey.

If you landed at Liverpool on your return, could you find a better road to the north than through the Lake country? You would find me and Charles Ellis at my friend Mr Bolton's, on the banks of Windermere, where I can promise you as kind a welcome, and where our friend the Professor (who is Admiral of the Lake) would fit out all his flotilla, and fire as many of his guns as are not painted ones, in honour of your arrival.

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Scott needed little persuasion to adjust his route home to Scotland and crossing via Holyhead to Wales he was able to spend several days at Windermere.

On Saturday 20 August Scott's carriage arrived at the White Lion Hotel in Bowness, complete with his daughter Anne and Lockhart. They were met by John Wilson of Elleray, Professor of Moral Philosophy at Edinburgh University and Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine*, where he was known as 'Christopher North'. Wilson conveyed them by barge to Storrs, to make a morning call on Bolton and Canning, where they also met with Wordsworth and Southey. For the next few days '... there were brilliant cavalcades through the woods in the mornings, and delicious boatings on the lake by moonlight'. Although Scott was concerned at first to find Canning looking poorly, on a ride, the old man seemed to come alive again 'I fear he works himself too hard ... trying to do too much with his own hand'.

In the evening Scott's party dined at Elleray with the Professor and his lady and stayed the night. On the Sunday they attended church in Bowness and called on Mrs Watson, widow of the late Bishop of Llandaff, at Calgarth Park. Later they dined in great splendour at Storrs Hall with Bolton and Canning, Wordsworth, Professor and Mrs Wilson, Lord and Lady Bentinck, the Hon Mr Harvey, Charles Ellis MP and Capt Ellis, Miss Anne Scott, J.G. Lockhart and Sophia his wife.

Monday morning dawned with a slight mist on the Lake, but the promise of warm autumn weather. Around midday a magnificent aquatic spectacle commenced as 30 boats sailed majestically out of Bowness Bay in procession for Storrs, a scene worthy of royal progress, with flags flying, bunting and awnings waving. Wilson's ten-oared Oxford barge *Nil Timeo* at the head of the parade, carried the 'Admiral of the Lake' and Mrs Wilson, together with the Lake poets Wordsworth and Southey. At Storrs they marshalled the other boats as they arrived. There they were joined by John Bolton's ornately decorated barge, *Victory*, conveying the Right Honourable George Canning, Sir Walter Scott and most of the party from Storrs.

With Wilson's cannon roaring, the flotilla now embarked on magnificent evolutions around the islands, the Admiral directing operations:

...not fewer than fifty barges following in the Professor's radiant procession, when it paused at the Point of Storrs to admit into the place of honour the vessel that carried kind and happy Mr Bolton and his guests. The three bards of the Lakes led the cheers that hailed Scott and Canning, and music and sunshine, flags, streamers, and gay dresses, the merry hum of voices, and the rapid splashing of innumerable oars, made up the dazzling mixture of sensations as the flotilla wound its way among the richly-foliaged islands, and along bays and promontories peopled with enthusiastic spectators.

They sailed gently on a fresh breeze as far as Hen Holme to the north and back to Storrs again, all the while accompanied by two competing bands of music. When the boats returned for the last time to Bowness Bay and split up, there were three hearty cheers for Professor Wilson, the 'Admiral of the Lake', the pleasure and amusement of the day having far exceeded anything that could have been wished for.

The following day Scott and his party breakfasted at Rydal Mount with Wordsworth, before an outing to Keswick to visit Southey in his beloved library. They stayed overnight in Ambleside, taking leave of the bard at Rydal Mount. The following day he rejoined them with sister Dorothy, and the party proceeded to Lowther Castle where they stayed several days with Lord Lonsdale, perambulating about under Wordsworth's guidance.

Meanwhile, in delightful weather, Storrs Hall continued as a scene of gaiety and splendour, with Canning remaining for a further week. He and Bolton made excursions to Furness Abbey on horseback, to Langdale, Grasmere, Patterdale, Troutbeck, and Elleray.

On 1 September, Scott arrived home at Abbotsford in good health, delighted with his Irish tour, which had been 'one ovation'; and his joyous reception at Windermere. Lockhart wrote to Wilson from Melrose:

All I know of Canning's motions is that Sir W. Scott expects him at Abbotsford in October; the day not fixed that I know of. I cannot help thinking that you would be much out of your duty, both to others and to yourself, if you did not come down; for there is to be at least one public dinner in C.'s offer - I mean from the Pitt Club - and I think he can't refuse. You must come down and show that we have one speaker among us ... I wish you would just put yourself into the mail and come to me here when C. leaves Storrs, and then you would see him at Abbotsford, and at Edinburgh also, without trouble of any kind.

Many years later, Mrs Gordon, the Professor's daughter, said that 'Mr. Canning did not visit Abbotsford' as intended. Sadly he died in office as Prime Minister in 1827, the same year that Scott's book *The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte, Emperor of the French* was published in London and Edinburgh.

Undoubtedly, this grand pageant was the greatest event of its kind ever held on Lake Windermere, a dazzling tribute to the Foreign Secretary and to Sir Walter Scott; and a triumph for the 'Admiral of the Lake'.

Text & image by Ian Jones

Sources: J.G. Lockhart, *The Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.*; Mrs Jordon, *Christopher North, a Memoir of John Wilson*; *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Westmorland Gazette*.

From the Chair

With still no news of when the archive service will reopen its centres to the public we now find ourselves in a position that has never troubled our predecessors on any committee or governing body. We have, of course, to make decisions as we go along as there is no previous situation to look back upon.

As a body, the FoCAS Committee is of the opinion that the best way forward is to put into place a holding operation until such time as we can meet and move around freely. To that end it is proposed that the committee be re-elected en-bloc and that the accounts, supplied by our Treasurer, Lorna Mullet, also be adopted. This approach has been adopted by the majority of local societies and there will be a chance to question and/or examine anything that has occurred in 2019-2020 as soon as we are able to meet freely again. We are regulated by the Charities Commission and they have adopted a very common-sense approach to the coronavirus crisis which is refreshing as we strive to comply with our constitution. They have recognised that hundreds of thousands of charities will be struggling to comply with their governing documents and have relaxed those stringent rules about submission of accounts, holding of meeting etc.



While on the subject of the committee I may say this is not 'an old pals club' that re-elects itself every year. We have vacancies at the moment and we can also co-opt anyone who would like to join us in our deliberations. If you feel you would like to be nearer what is happening in the archive world, please get in touch. My contact details are at the foot of this article. We absolutely will not think that you are being 'pushy' or 'forward' if you contact me, we shall just be delighted that someone wants to help.

Right, that's all the constitutional stuff out of the way. Now, what do I have to report? Very little really. You will read elsewhere about three items that came to our notice at auction. We were successful in obtaining the minute book of the Penrith Centre of the London County Westminster and Parrs Bank Guild which was their staff association. Another item pertaining to William de Stapleton at Carlisle Castle in the 14th century was sold at far higher than estimate and exemplifies the rise in value of ancient documents.

One of the 'good' things to come out of lockdown has been the offer from many organisations to provide free access to their holdings or the lifting of restrictions on copying. Some organisations have seen such a surge in interest in the freebies and giveaways that they have made them permanent. It is well worth looking at certain sites which you knew were restricted in the past just to see if they have opened up to a more liberal regime.

Hopefully by the time the next *Newsletter* is ready for publication there will be some clarity on a vaccine and the county council will have found a way forward to open the archives. Here's hoping

Chester

From the Treasurer and Membership Secretary

I think that most of what I want to say about our finances is contained in the Treasurer's Report for 2020, which accompanies the professionally examined accounts in another part of this *Newsletter*. My other task is the oversight of membership so I would like to say a few words here about this. Our membership figures at the moment are static, or rather, and sadly, slowly declining as members 'quit this mortal coil'. We need new, and dare I say, younger members to remain a vibrant society. This is not only the case with FoCAS. I would argue that many societies of whatever sort are facing the same problem of declining numbers and an ageing membership profile. Two thoughts:

1. You act as a FoCAS ambassador and 'sell' us to friends who have an interest in history and research. Point them to our website (planned for updating) and the Membership Application forms, or refer them to me at the email address/phone number below.
2. One of our Trustee Committee members is retiring and it would be good to replace him with someone who would be prepared to take on the brief of membership recruitment. Please give this some thought and if you are interested please contact me. I promise I won't bite your hand off!

Many thanks and, if you are not tired of hearing it, may I say take all care and keep well.

Many thanks, Lorna

Email: wastwater@talktalk.net, Tel: 01768 840903

Mr William Nanson (c.1792-1868), Town Clerk of Carlisle, 1818-46



*Oil portrait of William Nanson, 1852
(reproduced courtesy of Carlisle City Council)*

The Public Catalogue Foundation has performed a signal service in publishing a series of catalogues of *Oil Paintings in Public Ownership*. In its volume covering Cumbria (2012), there are several portraits of unidentified persons, including one of 'a gentleman, 1852' recorded as held by Carlisle City Council. Retained at the Civic Centre, though no longer in the office of the Town Clerk, where I recollect seeing it in the mid-1970s, believing it to be a portrait of a former Town Clerk, holding as he does a book, with a shelf of tomes in the background, and recollecting that the then Town Clerk, Mr William Hirst, had given me to understand that it was of a Mr Nanson, I embarked on some research to establish more about the sitter and likely artist. Consulting the minutes of the City Council held by Carlisle Archive Centre (CAC), the local press (Denis Perriam generously drawing my attention to references to Mr Nanson), exploiting online resources to access census details and his will, and making contact with Paul Donovan of Cranbrook Colony Study Centre at Cranbrook Museum, I have been able to produce the following account.

William Nanson was born in c.1792 in the parish of St Clement Danes, London. A member of a very old family of Carlisle freemen, he trained as a solicitor. With a home in Fisher Street, Carlisle, he was one of the 'Capital Citizens' of Carlisle, who formed a component of the pre-1836 Corporation of Carlisle. Upon Alderman William Hodgson (1773-1850), a fellow solicitor who held the office of 'Common or Town Clerk' of Carlisle, being elected Mayor

of Carlisle in October 1818, William Nanson was elected to succeed him as Common or Town Clerk. William Hodgson retained the position of Clerk of the Peace for Cumberland, to which he had been appointed in 1809. Hodgson and Nanson were in fact in partnership as solicitors, with Nanson taking a prominent role in securing the passage through Parliament in 1819 of the Acts providing for the gas lighting of Carlisle and its suburbs and for the making and maintaining of a navigable canal from the outskirts of Carlisle to the Solway Firth. (The distinguished Carlisle-born artist, Sam Bough, RSA (1822-78), began working in the offices of Hodgson and Nanson when he was aged about 14 years; though his office career was short-lived, he later painted a view of 'Carlisle from Etterby Scour' for Nanson's son, said to be his first commissioned painting.) The post of Town Clerk of Carlisle remained part-time until 1889, following the resignation, regrettably under pressure from members of the Council, of William Nanson's son, John Nanson (1820-91), who succeeded him as Town Clerk in 1846, whereby they were able to undertake a great deal of legal business for a large number of clients. Prominent amongst the clients of William and John Nanson were Thomas and William Parker of Warwick Hall, the extensive archives of Messrs Hodgson, solicitors and Clerks of the Peace, and of the Parker family, held by CAC, being drawn upon in Professor Peter Roebuck's study of the Parker family, *Cattle Droving, Cotton and Landownership: a Cumbrian Family Saga* (CWAAS, 2014). Whereas John Nanson was not succeeded as Town Clerk by a family member, William Hodgson (1773-1850) was succeeded as Clerk of the Peace for Cumberland in 1839 by successive members of the Hodgson family until 1942.*

Having served as an energetic Secretary to the Carlisle Canal Company, in 1829 William Nanson was appointed as Secretary of the Carlisle Committee of the Newcastle and Carlisle Railway, a post he held until 1843. Meanwhile, under the Municipal Corporations Act of 1835, the unreformed Corporation of Carlisle was replaced in December 1835 by the election of a new Council, comprising Aldermen and Councillors, who at their meeting on 1 January 1836 appointed William Nanson as Town Clerk. At a time when, as the new Council stated in its loyal Address to King William IV, 'this large and increasing Borough' was enjoying a 'rising prosperity', it was fortunate that Nanson, as Town Clerk from 1818 onwards, was able to ensure the orderly transition of business from the old Corporation to the new Council. In response to the new Council's request, he enumerated the duties which he considered to pertain to his office: his attendance at all meetings of the Council, and recording the proceedings and also the preparation of the annual rental for the Council's Treasurer; also, and not subject to any professional charge, any advice or assistance he may give to committees or individual members of the Council upon corporate affairs. Not regarded as part of the duties of the post was the prosecution of the Council's legal cases, etc.

It was with deep regret that in November 1846 a letter from William Nanson to the Mayor, James Steel, was received by the Council, resigning, on grounds of ill health, the office of Town Clerk. The Council put on record its best thanks for the able and efficient manner in which he had filled the office for so many years. In his place as Town Clerk, the Council elected his son, John, who, shortly after being admitted a solicitor in 1843, had been

taken into partnership by his father, the firm carrying on business as Messrs William and John Nanson, latterly at 9 Castle Street.

By his first wife, Elizabeth, daughter of John Ferguson of Carlisle, William Nanson had a son, John (born in 1820) and two daughters (Jane, born 1825, and Louise, born 1831). Elizabeth Nanson died in 1834, aged 43 years, and in 1837 William remarried and had further children. Though he retired as Town Clerk in 1846 and in the 1851 census was described as a retired solicitor, he continued to undertake a certain amount of legal work. From 1849 until 1853 his home was at Camden Lodge, Cranbrook, Kent, and then he moved to London, occupying in succession a number of properties in the Russell Square area of the city. What is believed to be his portrait dates from 1852. The initials of the artist, FkH, seen in the bottom left hand corner of the portrait, might be those of Frederick Daniel Hardy (1827-1911), an eminent member of the Colony of Cranbrook artists from 1853 onwards, who is known to have undertaken portrait commissions in his early career; alternatively they might be those of Frederick Yeates Hurlstone (1800-69), a London-based portrait and historical painter, as the Public Catalogue Foundation now suggests. In his will of 1863, William Nanson describes himself as 'formerly of the City of Carlisle and now of Bedford Place, Russell Square in the County of Middlesex'. He evidently made the occasional return to Carlisle and it was while staying at a house in Victoria Place (possibly that of a relative) that he died on 10 September 1868, aged 76 years; he was buried in the family plot in Stanwix churchyard. His wife, Frances, died aged 86 years in September 1876, being buried alongside her husband.

Though no obituary of William Nanson appeared in the local press, a correspondent wrote to the editor of *The Carlisle Patriot*, in praise of his exemplary life and public career as Town Clerk; he was a strong supporter of 'Evangelical religion at a time when it was at a very low ebb in Carlisle', proving one of the most zealous supporters of the Revd John Fawcett (d.1851), Perpetual Curate of St Cuthbert's Church, Carlisle, 1801-51 (and father of John Fawcett, who in 1829-30 erected what is now known as Lady Gillford's House, its extension forming CAC) and at his own expense he had maintained a Sunday school in Fisher Street; while the Corporation was 'much indebted to his ability for tiding them over a period of considerable difficulty' [in 1836]. To each of his grandchildren, William Nanson left £20 and 'an octavo Bible with marginal references bound in Morocco with the earnest hope and prayer that they may by God's grace make it the guide of their earthly pilgrimage under the teaching of the Holy Spirit and I commend them to God and the word of His grace'.

Drawing the attention of the Public Catalogue Foundation to this research, the online edition of its volume for Cumbria (accessible though the Foundation's Art UK website) now records that the City Council's portrait of 1852 is that of William Nanson, Town Clerk of Carlisle, 1818-46, though it records it as by Frederick Yeates Hurlstone (1800-69).

Adrian Allan

*Photographs of the oil portraits of the Hodgson family members who served as Clerks of the Peace for Cumberland, 1809-1942, held by Cumbria County Council, are reproduced in *Oil Paintings in Public Ownership in Cumbria*

Useful Information

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Website: www.friendsofcumbriaarchives.org.uk

Retirement of Stephen White, Jackson Librarian, 1990 - 2020

A face, well known to many thousands of researchers left the historical scene at the end of July. Stephen White, librarian of the Jackson Library within Carlisle Central Library, decided to retire, just as libraries were reopening to the public after four months in lockdown.

Stephen started in the library service at Tullie House Library, Carlisle in 1972 before the local government reforms which saw the library service become part of county responsibilities. After joining the service and gaining practical experience he went to college in Newcastle to obtain his qualifications. After qualifying he remained at Carlisle Library and in 1990 applied for the vacant post of Jackson Librarian. Although the post was advertised nationally it was Stephen who secured the job. Ever since he has been the face that nearly everyone sees when making local history enquiries.

The Jackson Library houses all the local studies material for north Cumbria with the original core of books, documents, pamphlets, engravings, research material and photographs donated by the widow of William Jackson of St Bees soon after his death. There are well over 70,000 items in the collection covering everything from original documents to printing plates used for printing wonderful coloured postcards by artist Thomas Bushby in the early 1900s. Stephen was also responsible for the curation of the online database of cumbriaimagebank.org a site containing over 50,000 images of Cumbria

Speaking of his time as Jackson Librarian Stephen said one of highlights of his career was the visit of Royale Family star Sue Johnston for the BBC programme *Who Do You Think You Are*. As the episodes are timeless and oft repeated, Stephen still get phone calls from friends saying that they saw him on the TV the other day.

Although Stephen denies that furlough due to coronavirus gave him the inkling of what it is like to be retired he is enjoying the freedom to do what he wants, when he wants. In retirement Stephen has considered updating his personal site of [carlislehistory](http://carlislehistory.com) which contains a 300-page Encyclopaedia of Carlisle and the memorial inscription data from Carlisle and Stanwix cemeteries.

A keen cyclist, Stephen can often be seen riding around the out-of-the-way places, always accompanied by his trusty camera.

Chester Forster

Sankey Family Photography Collection

At the beginning of January 2020 Signal Film and Media started its ambitious National Lottery Heritage funded project 'Seeing the North with Sankey'. The aim of our project is to explore, research and celebrate the newly-digitised Sankey Family Photography Collection with communities across Barrow-in-Furness and Cumbria. Our first workshops proved so popular that we had to arrange an additional one to accommodate over 50 people who signed up to volunteer on the project. We began the early work of delving into the glass plate photographs by looking closely at images, and learning archive research methods for the collection from Susan Benson, the archivist at Barrow Archive & Local Studies Centre.

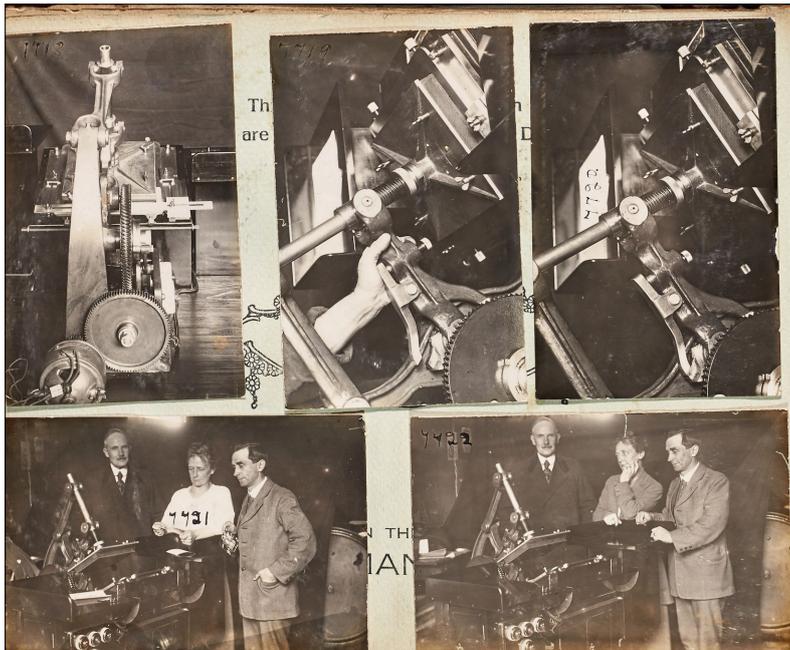


Within six weeks of starting this process we were thrown into lockdown and had to quickly adapt the work we were doing. We moved online to Zoom and email, and focused on work to transcribe postcards and the image catalogues. Later we began work on the beautiful set of photographic albums the family produced which sat alongside the negatives. There are 22 albums in total, which represent the first print of each postcard series

the Sankeys created. Many of the images we have described and catalogued have never been seen beyond the family, and contain an amazing mix of subjects from street scenes, to industry, to poignant portraits of late Victorians. The images are everything from funny, sad, eye-opening and everyday.

Through the hard work of dedicated volunteers, we have made impressive inroads into the collection. The team has been able to connect photographs and postcards to major early 20th century events that have shaped our town and wider society, including; the suffragette movement, World War One and the burgeoning businesses in the town. Through two online exhibitions some of the in-depth research has been showcased for everyone to view. Our first online show launched in June 2020 and received over 17,000 visitors - the numbers are still increasing by hundreds every week.

Our next area of focus will be to describe and date the negatives from the collection - all 9915 of them. We will also launch the other areas of the project - work with schools and local groups across Barrow.



Captions. Page 6 left: Nelson's butcher's shop on Dalton Road, Barrow in Furness. Page 6 right: Washing at Scotch Buildings, c.1900. Page 7: Edward with his newly-designed printing machine, c.1925

The collection is Barrow's (and Cumbria's) 'photograph album'; a visual chronicle of some of town's the most interesting times. Yet unlike many family albums, this collection is not destined to be left gathering dust in an attic, it is being brought alive through activities and events. We aim to remind and educate both young and old about Barrow's fascinating history, to draw on personal experience to enrich our understanding of the Sankey's work, and to achieve a deeper appreciation of the town and its people.

Of course, we have a family firm to thank for this wonderful collection of images taken from the early 1900s until 1965. The company's founder was Edward Sankey who started the business in a shop in Buccleuch Street in 1895. Later, Edward's eldest son Raymond joined the firm as a photographer, followed by the youngest son Eric, who worked in the shop. As with so many shops at the time, the Sankeys traded in more than one thing, selling goods from fishing tackle to photographic equipment and stationery. We were also lucky to find some previously unseen images of the people who

created the collection; Edward with his specially-designed printing machine from 1924, and photographs of Raymond and Eric when they were boys.

The collection has been cared for throughout these years, but the family decided they wanted it to be publicly accessible now, and for future generations. The entire collection has been generously donated to Cumbria Archive Service (CAS) for safe keeping. Signal Film and Media is running the project with support and expertise from the CAS. The aim of this project is to create a fully accessible database of images which will be available online for everyone to search.

Julia Parks & Jean McSorley, staff members for the 'Seeing the North with Sankey' project

If you are interested in getting involved please contact julia@signalfilmmedia.co.uk, 01229 838592
For more information or visit our website: <https://signalfilmmedia.com>

If you would like to see the Photo in Focus exhibitions please visit:

Photo in Focus 1: <https://signalfilmmedia.com/sankey-photo-in-focus-exhibition/>

Photo in Focus 2: <https://signalfilmmedia.com/sankeyphotoinfocus2-about/>

Visit our Facebook Page @signalfilmmedia & @sankeyphotoarchive to see our recent Facebook Live Q&A events where people who are taking part in the project discuss their findings

John Laing Photographic Collection Breaking New Ground

FoCAS members from the Carlisle area will know the history of John Laing, a Carlisle company that went on to become one of Britain's leading building contractors in the late 20th century - famous for the building of Coventry Cathedral and the country's first main motorway as well as many other key infrastructure projects.

Historic England holds the 10,000 images in the John Laing Photographic Collection which, according to Historic England, 'exhibits a true kaleidoscope of British people, places and progress'. The recently-completed 'Breaking New Ground' project was supported by the John Laing Charitable Trust to digitise the images in this collection. The images have been conserved, catalogued and digitised and are freely available in the Historic England Archive online at:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/photographs/john-laing/>

The archive is easy to search and contains many images of John Laing's Cumbrian building projects. It also contains large numbers of photographs of the firm's Carlisle workforce and their outings and activities, including those taken at Laing's Carlisle Sports Club.

Jean Turnbull (who lives in a Laing's house built in Kendal in 1961)

News from the Cumbria Archive Service

Service-wide News

Restoring our services

We are thankfully nearing the time when Archive staff will be able to return to our offices. A small number of our team were given permission soon after lockdown was announced to undertake periodic collections and strongroom inspections and check environmental monitors. Other staff (as attested by articles in this edition) volunteered for redeployment by Cumbria County Council to assist in the community aid programme for vulnerable people in lockdown. I hope some of the content my colleagues have produced in this *News/letter* also reflect the useful background archives work they were able to do remotely.

My colleagues in Community Services with responsibilities for managing staff and premises have had an extremely busy time in the last few weeks. Priority had to be given to ensure Registration Services for births, marriages and deaths could continue with minimal disruption. The Community Services Managers, Properties and Library staff made a huge effort in adapting and equipping buildings and training staff to allow the six main libraries to open from 10 August. Managers will now ensure staff are able to return to our Archive Centres and agree tasks to help restoration of our services. We are currently producing the details for an enhanced remote enquiry service to deal with queries and copy requests. We shall look to prioritise those relating to urgent Freedom of Information, Data Protection and legal cases. We hope the remote service will be able to deal with a sizeable number of smaller information and copy requests. Those with larger research needs are likely to have to wait until we are able to offer physical public access to our Archive Centres. We are not yet able to provide a date or further details of our reopening. We shall of course give updates on any developments in restoration of public services on our website, via our Twitter account and through Friends of Cumbria Archives.

The Archives Card: replacing CARN reader ticket scheme

A quick reminder that Cumbria Archives has subscribed to the new Archives Card system which replaces the CARN (County Archive Research Network) ticket scheme. It will be necessary for all users of our Archive Centres to have the new Archives Card to access original records. We encourage FoCAS members who are researchers (and indeed all our users) to find out more about the new Archives Card and register their application at www.archivescard.com

Robert Baxter, Senior Archivist (working remotely in Kendal!)

News from Carlisle Archives

On Monday 23 March archive staff were sent home from work and told to await further instructions. These came the following day from the HR department; the service was to be closed for the foreseeable future and staff were asked to redeploy to another role. The most pressing need was for work in the County Council's Service Centre, on the newly-established COVID-19 helpline. This had been established for elderly, vulnerable and shielded people, who may need assistance with food supplies, prescription deliveries and other issues, such as social isolation, care of pets and myriad other issues relating to the daily round of life. As I was not able work in my normal role, I wanted to be able to contribute towards the council's effort to assist residents of Cumbria through the crisis and so I redeployed to the helpline.

Although I work in a public-facing service, this role is very different to the work I normally do. It was a revelation to discover the range of difficulties that life presents to many people and the distressing circumstances that some face, through illness, infirmity, disability, difficult relationships and poverty. Many things that I would take for granted, such as being able to undertake basic shopping, could prove insurmountable for some people and I was pleased that we were able to help out. The work enabled me to view situations from other people's perspectives and also to become aware of issues that I never would have under normal circumstances. On a lighter note, I worked on the helpline with colleagues from the library and formed some new associations, which was a very positive development. We developed a camaraderie and could all report some of the more unusual requests that we received - the most notable being, supplies of gin, delivery of a portaloo and sale of a lawn mower.

In the early stages of lockdown, the helpline received many calls. It took a while for shielded people to be able to access priority supermarket delivery slots and for local businesses to adapt to offering a local delivery service. Many people had support networks around them from the beginning and others were soon able to put arrangements in place but there were a significant number of people who had no access to support at all. This was the case across all age groups. Although the majority of our callers were in the over 70 age group; there were many younger people with health conditions that made it necessary for them to shield or that they were caring for others who were shielding. Our role was to record callers' details and the nature of the assistance they required, before transmitting this information to the local area support hubs within each district of Cumbria. The support hubs worked with council colleagues and voluntary sector organisations to provide appropriate support for each caller. This included emergency food parcels for those in extreme need.

After the first few weeks, when people had been able to adapt to lockdown and put their own arrangements in place, the demand for the helpline decreased. This was a positive development and highlighted the resilience and adaptability of people. It was interesting to find that many people were not comfortable with asking for help; a situation which they had never had to consider before COVID-19 had made it necessary.

As lockdown eases, I'm looking forward to resuming my normal duties. It was disappointing to not be able to continue with our work but I hope that I have been able to make a small contribution to helping people through this national, indeed global, crisis.

Louise Smith, Archivist

During my leisure time in lockdown, my Google chromebook has become my access to the outside world, albeit with a slant on history. Through it I have learnt about life on Hadrian's Wall, improved my reading of early modern Scottish palaeography and learnt more about museums as a source of learning. By far the most interesting course I have undertaken so far was about the history of photography. With the help of Sandi Toksvig and Cumbria Museum of Military Life, I have discovered blogs.

Inspired by BBC One's programme 'Secrets from the Museum', about the 'daily life' of the Victoria and Albert Museum; I listened and watched in awe at Kimonos: Kyoto to Catwalk exhibition, with Anna Jackson, keeper within the Asian department. I have just re-discovered the fact that the museum holds a large collection of Beatrix Potter's drawings, letters and other material. I am looking forward to a virtual visit.

To celebrate William Wordsworth's 250th birthday, with the help of the Hay Festival, Vanessa Redgrave, Simon Armitage and Margaret Atwood, amongst other performers, read his poems to me. Helen McCrory read some journals from Dorothy, his sister.

Sarah Wood, Archives Assistant

An update from Barrow Archives

It has been a very different few months. We were sent home on Monday 23 March not really knowing what to expect and wondering what on earth we could do from home. The last few months has shown us that there is work we can do, mostly things we wouldn't have had time to do if we were in the Archive Centre, but also that I would rather be working in the office. Selena and I have edited a number of spreadsheets compiled by volunteers so that I can then transfer them to CALM. So the pamphlet collection which belonged to Barrow Library will soon be available on CASCAT along with details of slides collected by various people. Selena is now working on updating details of collections on CALM. One of our volunteers, June (aged 92 years) has spent a number of years stocktaking a number of collections and it is these that Selena is working on. She discovered that a number of the society collections only had a collection level record and so she is busy adding all the other items in the collections.

I have learnt a lot about social media as I have created videos/slide shows using digital images of photographs we have in Barrow and photographs I have taken during my daily exercise walks and cycle rides in Furness. I recorded a commentary and uploaded this to the video. These videos were posted on the Barrow Library and Archives Facebook page and on the Cumbria Archives Twitter account. As well as this we have had three series of photographs on the Facebook page: first old photographs, secondly 'Where is the Archivist today?' (current photos of places with a link to the relevant record on CASCAT) and now images of documents held in Barrow.



Above: Building work at Barrow archives

All of the posts have created a lot of interest and hopefully reminded people that the Archive Service is still relevant and maybe even introduced us to new potential customers. Images of documents are now being put on the Barrow Library Instagram page by one of my colleagues in the Library and these are proving popular.

We have started collecting items for the Cumbria COVID 19 Archive. I have contacted all schools via the Schools Portal and then local schools again. I have received two submissions so far. Radio Cumbria has advertised the Cumbria Archive Service (CAS) regularly. We have put posts on Facebook pages and Twitter. I have contacted parish councils, town councils, Business Improvement Groups in the Furness area and asked colleagues to do the same in other parts of the county. I have had some photographs, diaries and poems. I think we will need to reach out to further groups in the future.

The events following the killing of George Floyd and the toppling of statues made me think that perhaps the CAS should try to engage with local groups to collect their thoughts on the Black Lives Movement and life in Cumbria generally. I have had some poems from a local school written in response to the events as I saw an article in the local paper and a video of a conversation between a local pastor and a mixed race couple who attend his church. I have also been in touch with the Furness Multicultural Youth Club as I have worked with them before and I hope that we can do more work once life is more settled.

The building work continues in the Library and Archives after a short pause when everyone was sent home. Selena and I spent some time moving all the books and catalogues into the strongroom and then Steeles Removals came to take all the furniture, map cabinets, filing cabinets of photographs, microfilms and pamphlets into safe storage. The archives' searchroom is now full of plasterboard, light fittings and bags of plaster. The builders are very helpful and have helped move furniture etc. so that the library can be prepared for reopening. Having major building work at the same time as living through a pandemic has been very challenging. Selena and I hope to be able to work in the strongroom once the library has reopened and do some much needed sorting out and appraising of collections while we wait to reopen.

Susan Benson

An update from Whitehaven Archive Centre

I returned to work after a week's leave which coincided with the start of lockdown. Initially working from home, I answered a few enquiries which had come in from the public, collated statistics on cataloguing and the website, completed some online training courses and edited Excel spreadsheets of volunteer listing (of some of the Percy Kelly letters and the Waugh and Musgrave solicitors' papers). Once edited and formatted, these could then be imported into our archive software Calm. I also finished off cataloguing a collection of Workington Local Studies material, adding it into the existing borough collection. There have been a number of webinars from our cataloguing software provider (Axiell) in place of the conference they had planned to hold.

Within two weeks, my redeployment post at the Copeland Welfare Hub began. I was tasked with providing business support, a mainly administrative position which included compiling and maintaining a directory of businesses and services operating in Copeland during the lockdown and contacting those in the Allerdale area. I was appointed as the Intelligence Officer for Copeland, supporting the regular district Resilience Group meeting and welfare coordinators and collected information about community groups, pharmacies, foodbanks, meals on wheels, local grocery stores, charities and third sector organisations. We entered this data into a new GIS mapping website, created by Sellafield and hosted by the County Council (accessible at www.cumbria.gov.uk). It was intended to be of use to people who were shielding or self-isolating, their relatives looking to find them local advice and support and staff covering the council's call centre, who may not be familiar with the caller's area.

Diane Hodgson, Archivist

When we closed our doors to the public at Whitehaven Archive Centre I volunteered (along with many of my colleagues) to be redeployed to assist any way I could with the Covid-19 emergency situation. Initially I wasn't needed so I concentrated on promoting the Archive Service through social media using our twitter account and Whitehaven Library's Facebook page. I ran a number of posts in the run up to the VE Day 75th anniversary, showcasing how locals celebrated on VE Day.

However, it wasn't long before I was redeployed to my new position. Cumbria County Council has an emergency support service which initially ran alongside that provided by Copeland Borough Council. The service is available for people at high risk of becoming seriously ill, as a result of Covid-19, and who do not have support available from friends, family or neighbours. I am tasked with following up with the person in need and asking them for more information on their current circumstances to ensure that I can assign the correct support to them. The calls we get in mostly cover assistance with obtaining food, medicine and essential supplies. Some of the calls are quite straightforward and others can be quite complex where you can spend all day assisting someone. The number of calls for the Copeland area in the past two weeks has dropped quite dramatically, which is obviously a good thing. However we will be here if required should there be a second spike - fingers crossed it doesn't come to that!

Jacqueline Moore, Community Services Officer Copeland

Digitising the catalogues of the Egremont (Leconfield) estate collection

One of the main tasks I have undertaken during lockdown is to digitise the content of the hard copy volumes of catalogues relating to the Egremont/Leconfield estate collection held at Cockermouth Castle. This collection, relating to the Cumbrian estates of the Wyndham family, variously Earls of Egremont and Barons Egremont and Leconfield, and their Percy Earls of Northumberland ancestors, is one of the most extensive and significant in the county. With the exception of the manor of Croglin, the estate's sphere of interest and influence within Cumberland lay almost exclusively in the west - the area bounded by the rivers Wampool in the north and the Duddon in the south, by the sea in the west and Lakes Bassenthwaite and Derwentwater in the east. The three principal groups of surviving records are those of estate management, of manorial jurisdiction, and of mineral workings; but almost any aspect of local life is illustrated to some degree. I hope making the catalogues available online will complement the work of Lancaster University's 'Archives of the Borderlands' Project (part-funded by FoCAS) in scoping the records of the great northern families.

Although this collection is not held by the Archive Service, the owner Lord Egremont has previously provided researchers with access to its contents to by granting permission to the Archive Service to collect and return records to the muniment rooms at Cockermouth Castle. There is currently no access to the collection as the Egremont Estate is intending to refurbish the muniment stores due to storage and safety issues there. Between the 1970s and 1990s, the Archive Service invested considerable time and effort by sending archivists on site to list and sort records at Cockermouth Castle. These tranches of work produced some nine volumes of catalogues in total, although significant proportions of the collection remain unlisted (particularly in the series of large tin trunks of estate records and also minerals plans).

Continued overleaf

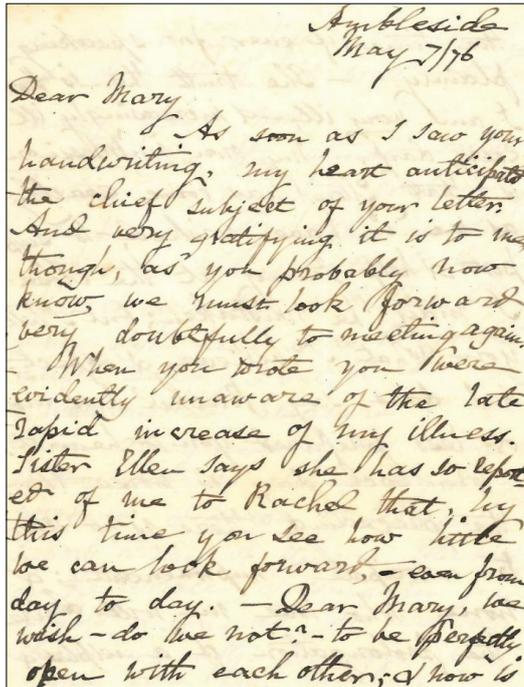
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I scanned the catalogues to create PDF files and then ran the files through an optical character recognition (OCR) application. I could then export the electronic text produced into MS Word to do further cleaning up and editing. This process has been very laborious as the variable quality of the original typewritten pages inevitably produces many incorrect characters and formatting which all needs to be corrected line by line in some cases. There then follows another stage of turning the Word files into a series of spreadsheet entries. Six catalogues have now been completed, leaving another three still to process. I expect doing the rest will take a lot more time as I will inevitably be able to spare less time on this now as lockdown eases and we prepare to reopen. The spreadsheets produced through this process can then at the final stage be imported into our CALM system to produce entries on the CASCAT online catalogue. I shall keep FoCAS members posted on progress in the next newsletter!

Robert Baxter, Senior Archivist

Update from Kendal Archives

More Kendal documents on CASCAT



Ambleside
May 7/76

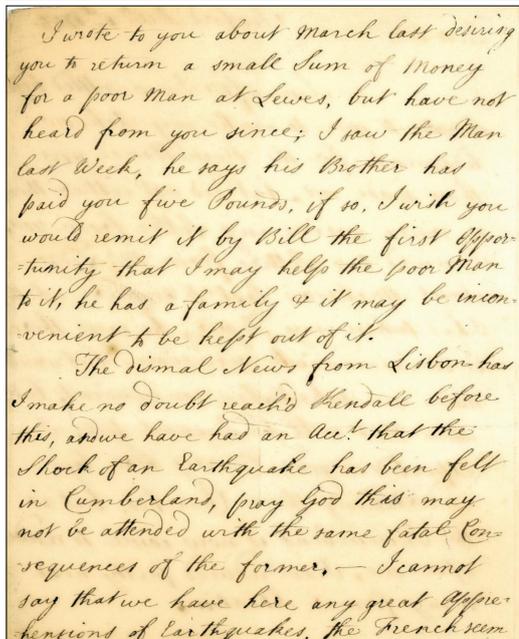
Dear Mary

As soon as I saw your handwriting, my heart anticipated the chief subject of your letter. And very gratifying, it is to me though, as you probably now know, we must look forward very doubtfully to meeting again. - When you wrote you were evidently unaware of the late rapid increase of my illness. Sister Ellen says she has so reported of me to Rachel that, by this time you see how little we can look forward, - even from day to day. - Dear Mary, we wish - do we not? - to be perfectly open with each other; & how is

Like a lot of staff working from home, I've used some of my time to add more Kendal collections to the online catalogue, CASCAT. From title deeds of property in Underbarrow, to photographs taken by Rupert Potter, father of Beatrix, hundreds of new entries have been added and I hope that researchers will browse CASCAT and discover some documents that are new to them. A couple of collections I've added that stand out are letters of Harriet Martineau [WDX 482], and letters and papers of Zachary Hubbersty of Kendal, attorney at law [WDX 744].

Harriet Martineau (1802-1876) was a writer and social theorist who moved to Ambleside in 1845 where she designed and lived at The Knoll. Martineau wrote many books including a popular guide to the Lake District. Kendal holds over 60 letters to family members in collection WDX 482, and they cover a range of topics from anti-slavery campaigns in America, domestic politics, literary pursuits, domestic details (such as when she mentions that she is about to try sleeping on a new spring-mattress instead of hair: 'the extreme of luxury'), family news and numerous illnesses. People mentioned in Martineau's letters include Florence Nightingale, Erasmus and Charles Darwin, Lord Palmerston, and George Eliot when she mentions Miss Evans being the author of *Adam Bede* (published pseudonymously in 1859) in a letter dated 16 Nov 1859. In one particularly rich letter dated 13 Jun 1862, Martineau notes that the Great London Exposition kept tourists away from the Lake District; mentions writing in the Daily News about 'bird murder'; mentions drownings of University men by boat accidents in Oxford and the Lakes and the need for everyone to learn to swim; mentions cotton from India and Lancashire manufacturers; and states that a new incumbent is building a handsome house on Loughrigg above Miller Bridge. Her last letter in the collection was written on 7 May 1876, in which she talks of her illness, stating 'I am inclined to think it will not be many days now'. She died on 27 June 1876.

The collection of Hubbersty correspondence and family papers consists mainly of letters to Zachary Hubbersty, who was an attorney-at-law in Kendal, from his brothers: John at Queen's College, Oxford, and Robert who was starting out in business, initially in Liverpool and later in Birmingham and London. The letters provide an insight into the lives of members of the Hubbersty family in the mid-18th century,



I wrote to you about March last desiring you to return a small sum of money for a poor man at Lewes, but have not heard from you since; I saw the man last week, he says his brother had paid you five pounds, if so, I wish you would remit it by bill the first opportunity that I may help the poor man to it, he has a family & it may be inconvenient to be kept out of it.

The dismal news from Lisbon has I make no doubt reach'd Kendal before this, as we have had an acct that the shock of an earthquake has been felt in Cumberland, pray God this may not be attended with the same fatal consequences of the former. - I cannot say that we have here any great apprehensions of earthquakes, the French seem

Captions. Top: First page of Harriet Martineau's letter to Mary Martineau (7 May 1876) mentioning the rapid increase of her illness [WDX 482/64]. Harriet, while deaf and losing her sight by this time, still finds joy in her companions and writes further on in the letter 'it is an inexhaustible pleasure to see their enjoyment of our month of May, with its almost dazzling verdure, and heaps of blossom, and superb arrays of flowers'. Bottom: Part of a letter from John Hubbersty to Zachary Hubbersty of 1 Dec 1755, mentioning the Lisbon earthquake as well as an earthquake in Cumberland [ref WDX 744/81]

and show how John and Robert relied on Zachary for money, advice, and advancement. Zachary was declared bankrupt in the 1760s, which must have been a huge blow to the family. Many of the letters from John and Robert to Zachary contain requests for money and other items, such shirts for Robert, since he is obliged to appear clean at his place of work in Liverpool and only washes his linen once every three weeks. John at Queen's College, Oxford, also requests shirts, along with stockings and various books. A letter from John to Zachary dated 27 Sep 1751 contains a request for a bill for £20 so that he can pay to take his degree and because he needs money for a horse, a pair of boots, a great coat, a suit of clothes, and pay his quarter's expenses. John also writes further letters requesting advice about whether to take his degree or not, while Robert writes about business ventures, his hopes for better positions and his need of Zachary's advice. By 1755 Robert has resolved to settle in the grocery business so asks for bills for £150 to purchase goods in London and Bristol; he has written to Liverpool for samples of baked and raw sugars and information about the state of the markets. Robert also asks his brother to look out for an empty shop in Kendal with a good cellar and adjoining warehouse. In another scheme Robert has plans to set up in business in Kendal manufacturing brass candlesticks, beer cocks, warming pans, and kettles, requiring a loan of £350 from Zachary. Zachary, perhaps wisely, does not respond to Robert's request for a loan. Further business ventures are outlined in other letters.

Glimpses of Zachary Hubbersty's own life are revealed through the letters, such as when John congratulates him on his marriage in a letter dated 20 Jun 1750, and the brothers congratulate him on the subsequent births of his children. Congratulations on his marriage are short-lived as John complains that Zachary seems too busy with housekeeping and marriage to write to him [John] in a letter dated 20 Oct 1750. John shows more concern with his brother's family in a letter dated 29 Sept 1755 when he asks after Zachary's daughter Nanny who has been suffering from smallpox. While John and Robert Hubbersty sent frequent letters to Zachary, they may have been less enthusiastic correspondents with each other as revealed in a letter from John to Zachary in Dec 1756 in which he states he 'should be glad to know who brother Robert has married'.

With references to trade, politics, illness, business, national and international events, and more, the Hubbersty papers are well worth exploring to gain an insight into family affairs in the 18th century.

Anthony Hughes, Archivist

Additions to CASCAT

Over the last few years work has been done by local school pupil work placements, my colleague Sharon Dugdale and myself to improve the conservation and cataloguing of the Lakes Urban District Council collection. Many previously unrecorded building control plans have now been added to CASCAT, our online catalogue, and some have been cleaned and repackaged.

Lakes Urban District Council was formed in 1935, absorbing the Urban Districts of Ambleside and Grasmere, together with the townships of Langdale, Rydal, Loughrigg and Troutbeck from South Westmorland Rural District Council, and the township of Hartsop and Patterdale from West Ward Rural District Council.

A series of 90 sale particulars from WSUDL (CAS reference for Lakes UDC) have been added to CASCAT during lockdown. Dating from 1869 to 1949, the sales particulars include a number of notable properties:

Above Beck, Grasmere (with its garden designed by Thomas Mawson). We have other records for this property in one of our Mawson collections [ref. WDB 86]

Allan Bank, Grasmere (former home of William Wordsworth and Canon Hardwicke Rawnsley, amongst others, now under the ownership of the National Trust)

Glen Rothay, Rydal (now a hotel)

Hammarbank, Windermere (formerly the home of Hubert Coutts, watercolourist and first President of the Lake Artists Society), now known as the Windermere Manor Hotel

Holbeck Ghyll, Windermere (award winning hotel and restaurant)

Hollens Mansion House and Estate, Grasmere (presently the National Trust's Lake District HQ)

Millbeck Estate (including the New Dungeon Ghyll Hotel), Great Langdale

Salutation Hotel, Ambleside

Wray Castle Estate, Low Wray (now a National Trust visitor attraction)

All the above can be found listed on CASCAT under references WSUDL/9/15, or WSUDL/9/16

Hundreds of Lakes UDC building control plans dating from 1871-1937 have also been added to CASCAT in the last few months [ref. WSUDL/10]. Included is a plan for 'loose boxes for cattle' for Mrs. H. B. Heelis, better known as Beatrix Potter

Max Clark, Archive Assistant

The Conservation Unit, Carlisle Archive Centre

Conservation in Lockdown

It is a difficult time for any conservator to be away from their studio for an extended period, as we are used to regular practical hands-on work. Unable to carry out any physical treatments on items that are in need of repair, the balance of our work has shifted towards the preventive care of our collections.

The correct storage environment is one of the most important elements in caring for our archives, as it slows down the rate of deterioration and has an impact on all the material we hold. This is regularly monitored under normal circumstances, however in lockdown there is a heightened risk to collections due to the reduced staff presence. We have been working with colleagues at each archive centre to ensure our collections are safe by carrying out regular checks of our storage areas. As part of this we have been closely monitoring the environmental conditions, ensuring the temperature and relative humidity are kept within the appropriate ranges. Visual inspections of the areas are also carried out to identify any physical issues that may be of concern, such as water ingress or any evidence of pest activity - those that feed on archives like quiet, dark spaces. Luckily we have not seen any!

The greatest benefit to lockdown has been the reaction from the conservation community as a whole, who have risen to the occasion and supported each other throughout. In addition to the sharing of resources and experiences to enable an informed approach to the new challenges Covid-19 has posed, there have also been many free talks and courses made available online for us to continue our professional development. I have learnt about new techniques and materials from home and look forward to dusting off my tools and using my new knowledge in the studio.

Fay Humphreys, Conservator

Introducing our new Senior Conservator

When you think about it, it's a conservator's dream to have a summer where no one is allowed to touch anything. No one in the reading rooms pawing through documents, no archivists with towering piles of papers on their desks, no one leafing through pages of books, no biros left on tables near fragile parchments ... our collections are having a rest.

In reality though, it's frustrating. I began my new job as Senior Conservator for Cumbria Archive Service in May, and I have yet to pick up a smoke sponge. Being relegated to desk duty is challenging for a conservator, and I am very grateful for the quality content being produced online helping us all to feel connected and useful. It's very comforting to snatch a couple of hours to learn a new binding style, when you are suddenly expected to spend your 9-5 actually finishing all that paperwork you've been avoiding.

I am also so grateful for being able to start a new job at a time when so many industries are facing uncertain times.

I count myself extremely lucky. I finished my MA in the conservation of fine art at Northumbria University in 2013, but I was always more interested in words than pictures. I specialised early on in archive conservation, learning to love the large scale of the collections, and days measured in miles rather than millimetres. I began professionally by picking up a number of freelance projects in Scotland, before settling in to work on the Northumberland Estates in Alnwick.

There, I was encouraged by the nature of the collection to specialise in parchment conservation. Parchment is a fantastically versatile and sturdy material, it's beautiful, and just a little bit grisly too. Hold some up to the light, and you can see the bones of the animal it came from. There was a huge range of other materials in the collections too, which meant I have had the opportunity to work on paper and parchment documents from the 12th-19th centuries; miniatures on paper, parchment, and ivory; works of art; gilded and painted frames; and objects, from leather shoes to a full coach and livery. I could easily have spent a lifetime working on the archive alone, but when the opportunity came up at Cumbria it was too good to ignore.



The history of a place lives in its archives. I was born and raised in Newcastle, and my affection for desolate industrial landscapes is deep rooted. Cumbria has an industrial past that is at least as diverse and complex as that of the east coast, and I'm keen to find out more about it. I'm looking forward to working over a larger area and to travelling between the stores, getting a real picture of the varied historic collections of Cumbria. Driving around the lakes? There are worse ways to make a living!

**Erika Freyr, Senior Conservator
Conservation Unit, Carlisle Archive Centre**

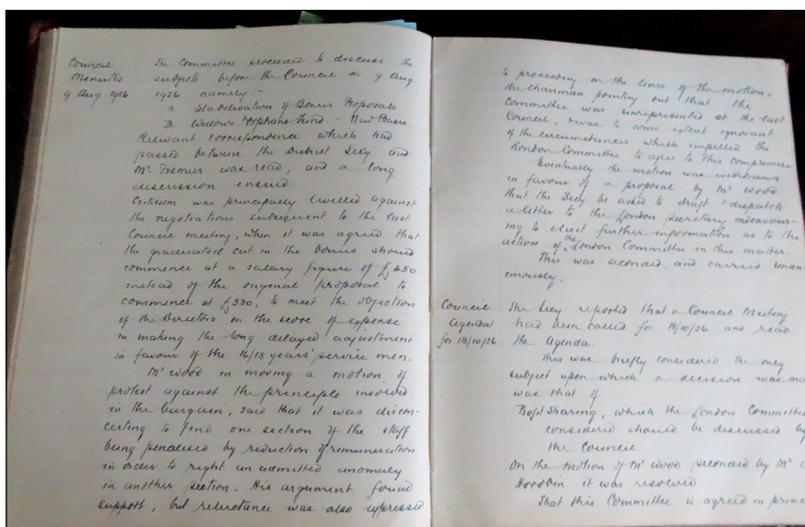
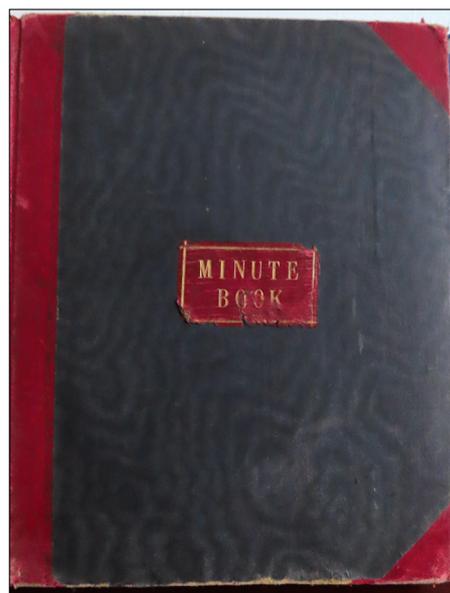
FoCAS buys bank book at auction

During the lockdown we have been made aware of some items that were coming up for sale. Two items were notified to the Archive Service by the National Archives Auction Monitoring Team and another by a well-intentioned member.

The first item to come under the hammer was a memorandum book of from the Penrith Solicitors, Bleaymires which mentioned various local families and was for sale at a London Auction House. The estimate of £200-£300 was easily surpassed with the book eventually being sold for the hammer price of £460 plus 30 per cent buyer's premium. We were the under bidder.

A local sale at Laidlaw Auctions in Carlisle saw a minute book of the Penrith centre of the London County Westminster and Parr's Bank Guild being offered for sale. The estimate was £40-50 but it was purchased by FoCAS for £28 plus charges and premiums in the on-line auction. It will be handed over to Carlisle Archive Centre when that centre reopens for business (see photographs of the bank book cover and pages from the book on the right).

The TNA monitoring team made Cumbria Archives aware of a document which was an indenture dating from the reign of Richard II for William de Stapleton to be Constable of Carlisle Castle. Our diligent member, Adrian Allan, made enquiries as to the importance of the document with that doyen of historians, Dr Henry Summerson who translated the Norman French text and signalled that there was nothing in the document which added to knowledge of that period in history. It had been hoped that it could have thrown light on troop dispositions, numbers of troops and financial arrangements but such nuggets of information were sadly lacking. Dr Summerson also reported that a similar or exact copy of the document was held at TNA. The parchment was being offered at what we considered was an inflated price, considering the paucity of information that it contained. In the end the price realised was £2,750, almost 50 percent over the high end of the estimate.



Chester Forster

Deadlines for copy for the Newsletter are:

1 April (May edition); 15 August (September edition); 1 December (January edition)

The Editor welcomes contributions to the Newsletter from FoCAS members

**Articles should be in the region of 500 words (preferably with illustrations)
Articles on members' own research interests are particularly welcome**

Please contact me at: jean2.turnbull@btinternet.com

**Rob David, *A County of Refuge: Refugees in Cumbria, 1933-1941*
CWAAS, Extra Series 50, 2020. 133pp., £17 + p&p. ISBN 9781873124857**

The plight and flight of refugees are rarely out of our headlines today. The subject generates strong feelings and debates about their treatment and reception. Rob David's timely study of the background of refugees and the people and organisations who sought to help them, reminds us that these issues are not new. During the 1930s in particular, significant numbers fled, or in the case of the Basque children during the Spanish Civil War, were brought over from Europe to escape potential or actual persecution and danger. But it is not just the broader stories that this book touches on; it is intensely personal, not just in its study of the individuals who found a home, temporarily or permanently, in Cumbria, but in its relevance for Rob himself. His own father had been sent England as a 13 year-old boy by his parents from Nazi Germany in 1933. Others followed. Yet others were left to face the consequences of Hitler's policy. Like those discussed in this book, his family relied on the generosity of individuals and voluntary organisations rather than government aid, and this book also celebrates, if that is not too strong a word, the work of such people.

The opening chapter gives personalised examples of some individuals from Spain, Germany and Austria who found homes in Cumbria during the 1930s, shedding light on why they left, how they got here and how they were received. The intention here is not to provide a complete picture but to illustrate the issues and themes which underpin subsequent chapters. There then follows a study of British government policy during this period. It may come as a surprise to some to realise that the Aliens Act of 1905 supplemented with the Aliens Order of 1920 which sought to restrict and control migration into the country remained government policy until after the *Anschluss* of 1938 when large numbers of refugees flooded in, including from Czechoslovakia. How well the government responded to this crisis has been the subject of considerable historical debate. What is not disputed is the important role individuals and organisations played in aiding and assisting these refugees and it is their activity in Cumbria which forms the bulk of this book.

Assistance for children brought over from the Basque region of Spain in 1937, not all of them Basque natives, to escape the civil war, was championed by Wilfred Roberts, Conservative MP for north Cumberland, who had travelled to Spain the previous year. Many were housed in the old workhouse at Brampton; others in Carlisle and Wigton. Their plight was overshadowed from 1939 by large numbers of adult refugees from central Europe, some of whom found a home, albeit largely temporarily, in Cumbria. Rob David gives generous, but much deserved credit to three women in particular who did much to help them. Catherine Marshall, better known for her earlier suffrage work, opened her house to Czech refugees and nearly bankrupted herself in the process. Mary Crewdson, wife of Eric Crewdson, managing director of the Kendal engineering firm Gilbert Gilkes and Gordon Ltd., used her role as councillor and magistrate to provide hostels for the refugees. Clara Boyle was herself from Poland but had moved to Berlin where she married the then British Consul and settled in England. During the 1930s she brought over and helped many family and friends from Europe.

The final Cumbrian chapter explores the deliberations of the Whitehaven tribunal, one of several throughout the country, which was established to ascertain which refugees should be subject to alien internment, the proceedings of which are well documented in the Catherine Marshall papers in Carlisle. The concluding chapter returns to broader themes, and reflects on what this country gained from taking in these refugees.

All in all, therefore, this is a penetrating, critical yet ultimately moving story of the triumph of altruism and generosity and an insight into an aspect of Cumbria's history few of us were probably aware of. It is also a reminder of how important local and national archives are for exploring that history.

**A County of Refuge:
Refugees in Cumbria
1933-1941**



Rob David

Mike Winstanley