NEWSLETTER No. 36 – SUMMER 2022

1. From the Chairman

- **Back on Track** I'm very glad to report that we are almost back to normal with our monthly events. In addition, we have a Zoom talk each month, which many of you are enjoying. The events programme is being planned cautiously, in case we have further interruptions, so we are not putting out a schedule far in advance. More members have offered their houses for us to visit, so many thanks to them.
- **Appleby publication** You will receive your free copy of '**Step by Step along Boroughgate, Appleby'** with this newsletter. Written and illustrated with new photographs (apart from three old ones), by Claire Jeffery and June Hill, it aims to provide a field guide to the buildings of this beautiful and unique street. We shall hold the AGM of this group in Appleby, this year so you will be able to follow the guide on **10 September.** The publication was made possible through a grant from the **Heritage Action Zone,** which ended on 31 March. Further copies are available from Appleby Tourist Information Centre and the Courtyard Gallery, at £3.00.
- **Fellfoot Forward** The next publication will also be funded by cooperation with another organisation, this time, the North Pennine Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. **(NPAONB).** It will involve several members of CVBG, who attended the event in Croglin, pre-Covid. The focus will be on selected villages in the Eden Valley, several of which are included in the area covered by NPAONB. Each village is represented by a particular type of building, from medieval castle and pele, to watermill and bastle.
- **'Along the Lines'** This will be our most ambitious project to date, intended to be a field guide to the traditional buildings of Cumbria, in book form. Another project postponed because of Covid, we will aim to pick up where we left off, beginning with a meeting of the editorial group.
- **Renewal of subscriptions** The end of July is the date for this, and I am pleased to say that most members now renew by BACS/Standing Order. I sincerely hope that you will stay with CVBG and that it is delivering the range of activities you find rewarding. If not, please send your suggestions to us at any time. Please renew promptly as this enables CVBG to be more active.
- **Press officer** The committee made the decision to appoint a press officer to submit reports of our activities to the county's newspapers. Paul Lewis has volunteered for this role. As ever, I am grateful to Paul, and to Mike Turner, for their sterling work for CVBG and to other members of the committee for their encouragement and support..
- **New Treasurer** We are still searching for someone to take over this role from Mike Kingsbury at the AGM. Please ask around. The person need not be a member of CVBG, as long as they can deal with our funds. We cannot function as a group without a treasurer. Time is short!
- **Social media** We also need a new person to keep our social media up to date. Please get in touch if this is something you feel you could do ■

Very best wishes

June L Hill

2. A response to the Alan Smith article about Roof Slates.

Following the article published in our Spring Newsletter Number 35, it prompted overseas member Andrew Holmes-Higgins from the USA to respond with his observations, quoted here:

"Hello Mike – I just received your most recent newsletter with a very interesting article by Alan Smith on slates. I wonder if it would be possible for you to pass on this inquiry to him, as he seems to be very knowledgeable on the subject.

I own a bank barn some miles from Ulverston at the foot of Kirkby Moor. The current structure is from around the late 1800s but there was a smaller one on the same location, as shown on old maps. Some years ago, the slate roof collapsed in a storm, leaving a small mountain of slates inside, most of them sadly damaged in the collapse. Owing to cost the barn could not be re-roofed in slate, and it now has a modern roof which is nowhere as attractive sadly. However, in going through some of the slates that were salvaged, my daughter noticed a number of them had markings, which nobody had noticed at the time. It's likely these slates were from the original barn which may have been put up in the late 1700s or so.

I've attached a couple of photos below.

Images © Andrew Holmes-Higgins

You'll notice the letters "DH" and possibly "DHP" at the top of them (and a nicely preserved old wooden peg). Any idea what those initials might mean? Nobody in the family (we've owned the farm for centuries) ever had those initials in their names. Would the owner of the barn have put his initials on the slates in case they were ever stolen? Could they be of the slate merchant or whoever cut them? Either way, the position on the slate would ensure the initials would be protected and wouldn't fade or wash off, so placement was intentional.

I'd be curious if you've ever seen this kind of thing before. Thank you in advance for any thoughts you might have".

Alan Smith responded thus:

I come to these as the geologist, with a particular interest in Lakeland rocks, not as a building's expert or anyone with a deep knowledge of roofing slates. It is difficult to be sure what the material is from a geological point of view just from a picture, but my feeling is they look like 'Burlington blue-grey' material, from the quarries down in Furness/Torver area. Geologically they are in the Wray Castle Formation (Windermere Supergroup) - Silurian in age, so much younger than the material I was describing at the Naddle. They look smaller than the Naddle ones - I assume they were in graduated sizes.
They have been shaped carefully, rounded tops which are characteristic of the area. I personally have never seen initials on these before, but for all I know it may have been recorded by someone. My reaction is that this is the slate maker at the quarry putting his 'autograph' on them. The person who cleaved and shaped the slates out in the first place. Obviously not meant to be seen on the roof. But I just don't know.
The wooden pegs are indeed similar to the Naddle ones. I didn't really look for a complete peg at the Naddle, but as one of my pictures shows there were the remains of several. Crude wooden pegs in quite large holes in the slates.
The best I can do on this.

In the meantime, Andrew added these comments:

Gentlemen – thank you both for the quick reply to my inquiry! And you are 100% correct on the source of the slates, as the barn is situated just a mile from the Burlington quarries, or possibly they could have come from a couple of other small quarries on the east side of Kirkby Moor, one of which was known as Iron Yeats Quarry, which were too small and uneconomical to operate commercially, and the landowner at that time (Duke of Burlington or Buccleuch I believe) let anyone who wanted take whatever they could unearth.

The initials are what baffle me, as they almost certainly date back to when the barn was constructed (or reconstructed) which was the late 1800s at the latest. Possibly the barn owner might have marked slates with their initials to prevent theft, but who is seriously going to abscond with a pile of slates without getting noticed? And some simple scratching would erase any markings. And of course, there's the fact that none of my relatives ever had those initials! The only thing I can think is that maybe the quarry marked slates for customers to pick up, so perhaps whoever built the barn or supplied the slates had those initials.

Maybe a very early form of "branding"? Buy DHP brand slates! They're the best!

Anyway, I will be back in the area in May, and will look again and see if I can find any new or different markings and will be happy to share!

Again, thank you both for your time!

...cont'd/

Another email followed with these comments:

*"Gents I've been doing some more research on the "DHP" markings on the slates I sent you photos of, and my joke about "branding" may actually have been not far from the truth! See below for a legal notice in the London Gazette of May 1842. Three of the partners in a slate business at Kirkby Ireleth just downhill from what are now the Burlington Quarries were William **D**odgson, Thomas **H**artley, and William **P**ostlethwaite. Their surnames make "DHP". Also William Dodgson was the father-in-law of my ancestor who rebuilt the bank barn where these slates were found.*

NOTICE is hereby given, that the Partnership lately subsisting between William Dodgson, George Slater, Thomas Hartley, John Mason, William Postlethwaite, Thomas Postlethwaite, and Robert Postlethwaite, in the trade or business of Slate Merchants, at Kirkby Ireleth, in the county of Lancaster, under the firm of Roger Postlethwaite and Co. was dissolved, by mutual consent, on the 1st day of January last, so far as relates to the said William Dodgson. Dated this 9th day of May, in the year of our Lord, 1842.

William Dodgson.
George Slater.
Thos. Hartley.
John Mason.
Wm. Postlethwaite.
Thos. Postlethwaite.
Robert Postlethwaite.

Possibly a coincidence. Or maybe in those days the slate cutters would actually mark slates based on which customers they were intended for. And putting the marks up at the top of the slate would ensure the marks would be hidden when the slates were applied to a roof ".

An interesting subject which has prompted interest beyond these shores, although unresolved it made food for thought. Is the subject now closed, or, quite possibly, there's more to come? ■

Mike Turner
Newsletter Editor

3. Newbiggin Village Hall and Chapel Farm – CVBG Chairman June Hill

Monday 28 March 2022, 10.00 am – 4.00pm

Attendees:
John McDowell, Frances Garne, Lyn Prescott, Anne Porter, Stephanie Hewison, Graham Brooks, Roy Hill, Juliet Wright, Jen Callis, Alan Smith, Gilly Kendall, Bridget Davey, Lynne Seignot, Barbara Grundy

After coffee and biscuits kindly provided by Newbiggin Village Hall, we assembled in the Sunbeam Room for a talk by June Hall on the settlement of Newbiggin. Established some time before the Norman Conquest, with the name meaning 'new building', the long village leads from north to south, on a road latterly used by cattle drovers, avoiding the toll road through Penrith. The wells and springs, providing water for both humans and cattle, have been restored, from a time before piped water came to the village. No houses remain from the early period, but Tymparon Hall at the north end is mentioned in medieval times, although the present building appears to be Victorian.

There are numerous houses of seventeenth/early eighteenth-century appearance, some of which are orientated to the south, others to the west, in a seemingly random fashion. On the east side of the present road, which sits on top of the very narrow exposure of Tyne Bottom limestone, the building line is set back, leaving small paddocks in front of the houses. Apparently, this land was open but over the years has been incorporated into the holdings. According to the archaeological record, the medieval village occupied this space, as uneven ground suggests that house plots can be discerned. At some time, possibly in the 1500s, a new line of buildings was created further back, on which the present houses are based.

Houses were all small holdings, with house a single room deep, and adjoining byre being the common pattern. This 'up house, down house' arrangement has been modified and added to over the centuries. The first major modification took place around c1690 – 1710, as houses where it has been possible to examine under the render, have revealed 'thatch lines', which show the original single storey dwellings. Such houses include Holly House and Chapel Farm. Unfortunately, no doors and windows from the earlier period survive, and the oldest evidence for openings is from mullioned windows which date from the late seventeenth century phase.

Plan forms remain. Most of the older houses are of the cross-passage plan. Inglenooks, fire windows, and dated door heads with opposing rear doors, staircase outshuts and mullioned window surrounds re-used in the jambs, lintels and sills of later sash windows, all testify to period of activity mentioned above, when there was a sharp rise in the standard of living, smoke was brought under control, increased privacy was required, and thatch was replaced by slated roofs.

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Houses consisted of the same cross passage layout, with a hall or firehose entered from the *hallan* (passage), and the *mell* (short passage into the *firehouse* (main living room or hall). The mell was separated from the inglenook by a *heck* (short partition of either stone or timber). From the firehouse, a *bower* (parlour) was reached. This was the private room of the household, where both sleeping, and entertainment of important guests took place. Probate records of the period (c. 1500s – c.1700), reveal in the inventories of possessions at the time of death, that beds were found in the parlours.

In the down house, either in the same space as the cross passage or if that was a narrow, walled space, beyond it, was a service area where food was stored, in *meal arks* (flour and grain chests) and *butts* (barrels of ale) stood. The byre was entered separately through a door from the farmyard. Here were standings for a few cattle, (milk cows, calves, perhaps a bull, young livestock, or oxen for pulling a plough) and maybe a stall for a working or riding horse. Most houses in Newbiggin had been given a Georgian appearance, by the change to sash windows, and even a new-fangled front door, leading directly into the hall or into a new passage between the hall and parlour. This latter necessitated the insertion of a fanlight over the door, to admit light. A few houses e.g., Newbiggin House and The Hill, were made even grander by nineteenth century extensions containing more rooms with higher ceilings, but the smaller earlier two-unit dwelling is still detectable.

Members ate their packed lunches in the new bar area of the village hall, after which they examined the village, looking particularly at Holly House, for which Alan Rich had kindly provided notes and an enlarged photograph of the house while the cement render was removed and before its replacement by lime render. (Alan, like several other members, sent apologies for non-attendance, because they lived in a household where someone had Covid.) There was an opportunity to buy the book 'Our Long Village', written by Alan Rich.

At 2.00 pm members reassembled at Chapel Farm, my former home, which is at present empty. Notes had been distributed indicating the many features which can be seen, both inside and outside the house. A particular item is the survival of a lant trough, a stone trough inserted into the wall of the byre, for the collection of urine, which was used in the finishing process of woollen goods, prior to the Industrial Revolution. Another example exists in the village and a few more are known in the area, suggesting that handloom weaving was practised in the eighteenth century. Another notable feature is the 'man's room', a room separated from the family accommodation by a stone wall rising to the roof ridge. This room is in the downhouse, above the cross passage and service room. It was where the hired man, or men, slept and was entered through a door at first floor level, reached by a ladder from the yard. It is now incorporated into the main house, and the door has been partially blocked to form a window, while the original, very small window, has a stone sill which bears the traces of knife

sharpening. More evidence for this activity is found on the door jambs at the cross passage. Thanks are due to Alan Rich for making the outside of Holly House available to see and for his preparation at the hall, including refreshments and notes ■ June Hill, March 2022.

Comments on the event have been received and include the following.

"...a very interesting and well researched day.... Good to meet members again in person, it felt a bit more like times past!"

" It was a privilege to go round Chapel Farm and the accompanying notes and your talk made it a real learning experience."

" Your notes on the day were very good to have. What an interesting and very welcoming feeling house."

"….so many details to look out for that we've always missed in the past."

All images © June Hill

(Top) Hall or firehouse, with fire window, hearth, heck, mell and cross passage.

(Left) Man's room window, with evidence of knife sharpening.

(Right) Landing, looking towards man's room, now part of the main house.

4. CRUCK FRAMES AT BLACKWELL HOUSE, CARLISLE.

Blackwell House is a grade II listed house with adjoined barn 1730 - 40 and stables (stable extension 1901). The listing is mainly a description of the outside of the house with no details of roof structure etc. The farm had been purchased in 1896 and was converted to provide stabling for the new racecourse which opened in 1904.

Recently development of the land in front of the house and barn has started to be developed with the building of several new houses. Part of this development has led to the demolition of part of the stables attached to the house. This demolition has revealed a pair of cruck frames holding up the roof of the barn.

The exposed cruck appears to be a raised cruck which is truss crossed at the ridge. It was not possible to see the detail of the second cruck further down the building.

What the plan for this barn and the crucks is not known ■

CVBG Member, Graham Brooks.

Image © Graham Brooks

5. CVBG event Winton, near Kirkby Stephen, 26 April 2022

The event was organised by Jennifer Callis and June Hill and based at Winton village hall. The morning was spent looking at the exteriors several buildings in the village. Winton Manor, which had been used as a school in the nineteenth century, is a handsome three-storey house, only one room deep, with a rear wing. The facade of six bays, is of regular ashlar sandstone with quoins, a cornice and an off-centre door with curved pediment. The roof of Westmorland slate carries end stacks and gable coping with kneelers.
The main visit was to see Winton Hall, an intriguing property which turned out to be older than it seemed. Paul Lewis later was able to go inside and to return to make a closer investigation and take aerial photographs with his drone. Here is his report.

5.1 WINTON HALL

The written record for Winton Hall as a *messuage* starts in 1314 and by 1422 belonged to the Cliffords. The Scaife family reside here as Burgesses of Appleby from the 14th to 18th centuries. In 1390 the house is known to be sacked and laid waste during Scottish raids but about 1666 undergoes substantial improvement following the Civil War; a porch is added on the south side at this date and is extended to two storeys in recent times (marked purple below).

The early phases of development are not clear, but the aerial photograph below indicates how the Tudor house (blue) was built up against a possible earlier structure (red) with its substantial masonry walls on a different alignment.

Figure 1. Aerial photo of Winton Hall showing possible phases of development (right is north).

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The result is an unusual non-rectangular internal shape to the Tudor phase with a splayed corridor, the front (right) and rear (left) walls being unparallel.
During the Georgian period the remains of the earlier structure (red) appear to be remodelled; there is internal evidence that the structure was reduced in height and floors inserted at different levels. In the 19th century the adjoining agricultural building appears to undergo conversion to residential use (shown lime above).

In 1815 the hall was advertised as the "Winton Hall Academy", and by 1841 accommodated 36 boys. 10 years later the house is a Ladies Academy, and the boys are then taught at nearby Winton Manor. Conditions were much like those of Dickens' tales of Dotheboys Hall in Bowes. It was owned by the Mason Hornby family during this period. 20th century tenants, Mr and Mrs Coates bought the property in 1958 and it underwent restoration again with new owners from 1993.

Views from the northeast and southwest are shown in plates 2 and 3.

Figure 2. View from the northeast.

Figure 3. View from the southwest.

Figure 4. The subdivided garth and adjoining enclosures.

In 1989 the adjoining coach house was converted into residential accommodation for Mrs Coates and the garth was divided into two plots as shown in plate 4 above.

The adjoining field to the east of the hall (right) shows evidence of medieval strip farming ■

CVBG Deputy Chairman

5.2 WINTON MANOR HOUSE – Text and Images by Paul Lewis

Listed Grade II* for its architectural importance by Historic England, this "polite" Georgian house gives the appearance of dating from 1726 with its symmetrical presentation of windows over six bays and a portico over the front door. However, the internal layout does not achieve the fashionable 'square pile' layout of the period of four ground floor rooms and a central staircase. The main structure is only one room deep and the staircase appears to be an addition (see plate 2). The 1726 works may therefore be a modification of an earlier structure.

1. The "polite" Georgian front elevation.

This contention gains further weight when the roof structure at the west end (plate 3) can be seen to incorporate 'crucks', a form of roof construction more common in 15th and 16th centuries. The three western bays of the structure incorporate substantial masonry walls, reminiscent of a tower house, indicating that the earlier structure may once have been a 3-unit plan of 'L' shape with solar, hall and kitchen range.

The Manor House shares a common history with Winton Hall during the 19th century when in 1851 it housed 20 pupils as a boys Academy, 14 from Manchester and Cheshire, 3 from London and even one from the United States. By 1861 the school is closed. The relationship to Winton Hall in the village setting is shown in plate 4 overleaf.

The Winton Hall Estate was eventually sold in lots at an auction held at the Kings Arms Hotel in Kirkby Stephen on Monday 19th May 1919; the extent of land holdings in the area at that time is shown on plate 5 (Page 14) ■

2. The staircase addition at the rear.

3. The roof structure at the west end includes crucks, indicating a possible earlier phase before the 1726 rebuild.

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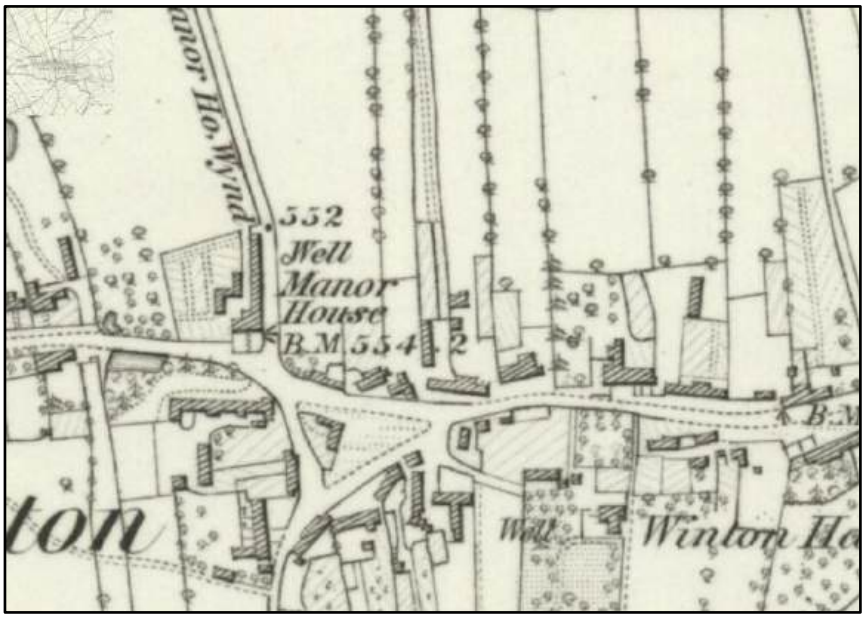
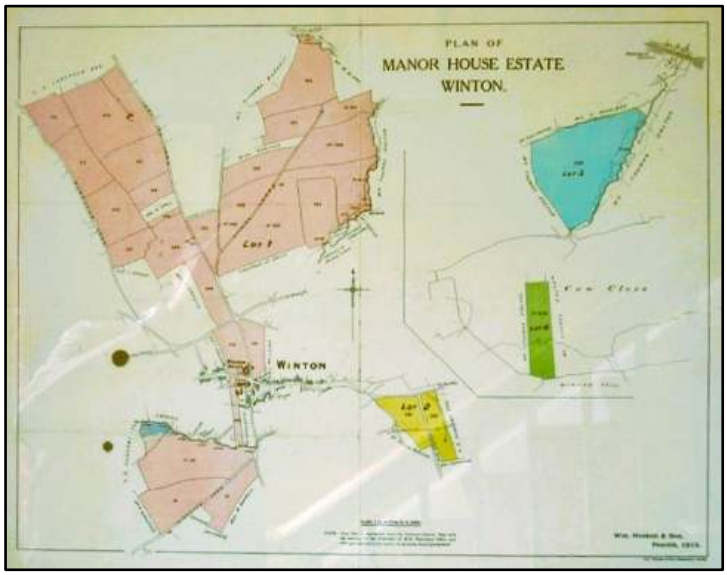


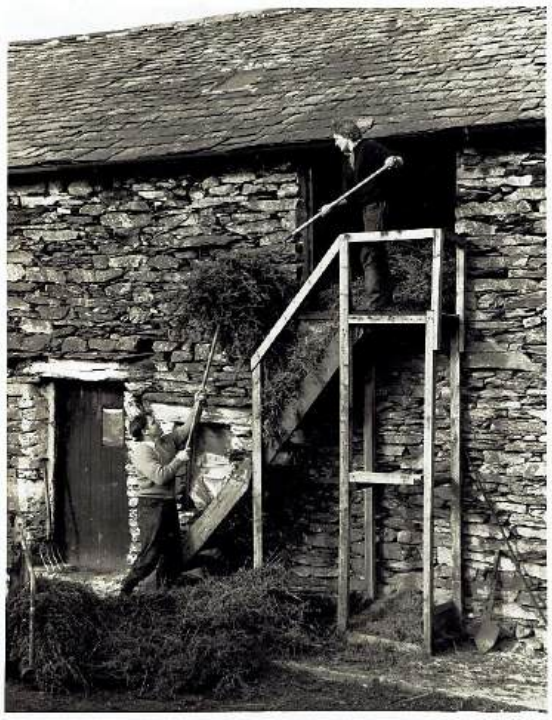
4. Extract from the 1847 Ordnance Survey map showing the relationship of the Manor House to Winton Hall during their respective uses as Academies for children.



5. The Manor House once formed part of a large estate that was sold in lots in 1919.

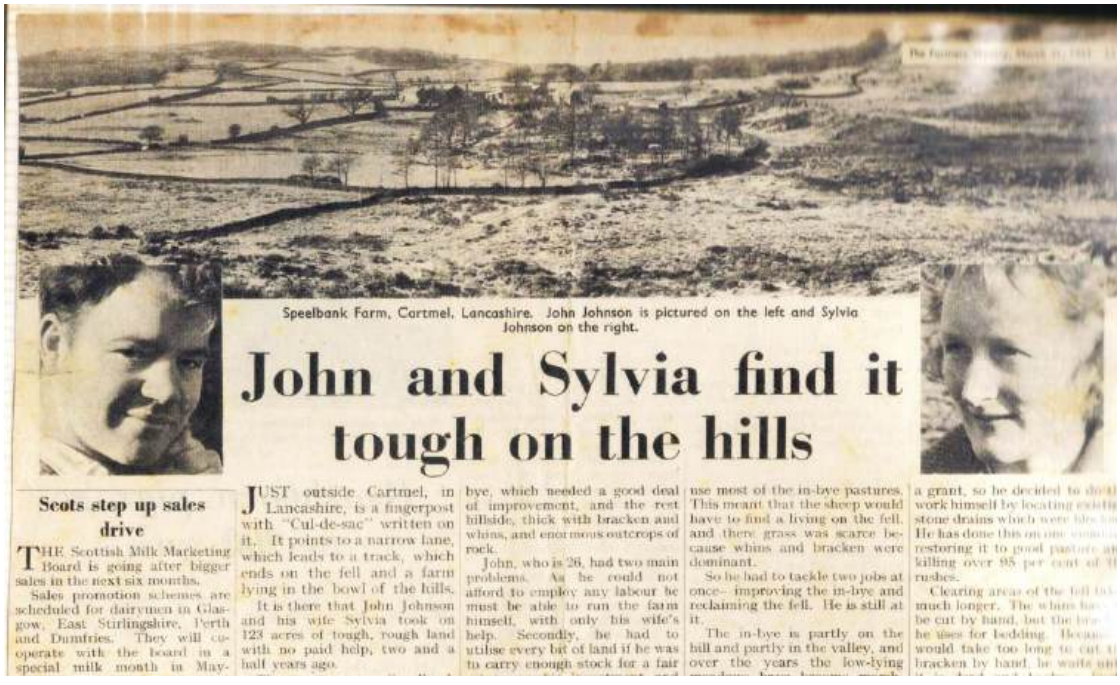
Some members enjoyed lunch at the Bay Horse in the centre of the village, while others preferred a packed lunch. After this, we were welcomed by Jen Callis at Yew Tree House, once a cross-passage dwelling, but it had undergone some changes. The building is now in the middle of a block of three houses, and we were invited to work out the sequence. The lovely garden and the barn raised interest. A circular post in the middle of an extension to the barn caused speculation. Was it once the pivot of a horse engine? (J.H.)

6. Then and Now



Submitted by CVBG member Lynn Prescott, Flookburgh.

The first photo was taken in 1961 for an article on a young couple (my parents John & Sylvia Johnson) published by the Farmers Weekly about Speel Bank Farm near Cartmel. In this picture they are forking bracken into a loft to store and use for stock bedding material. The second photo shows the current farm building with the wooden steps removed and a stone seat installed. Otherwise, the building is very similar externally to 1961, although from the stonework it is clear that the floor height of the loft was raised from its original position before the first photo and the roof of the building was raised by a similar amount between the first and the second photo (around 1 foot)



Speelbank Farm, Cartmel, Lancashire. John Johnson is pictured on the left and Sylvia Johnson on the right.

John and Sylvia find it tough on the hills

Scots step up sales drive

THE Scottish Milk Marketing Board is going after bigger sales in the next six months.

Sales promotion schemes are scheduled for dairymen in Glasgow, East Stirlingshire, Perth and Dumfries. They will co-operate with the board in a special milk month in May-

JUST outside Cartmel, in Lancashire, is a fingerpost with "Cul-de-sac" written on it. It points to a narrow lane, which leads to a track, which ends on the fell and a farm lying in the bowl of the hills.

It is there that John Johnson and his wife Sylvia took on 123 acres of tough, rough land with no paid help, two and a half years ago.

bye, which needed a good deal of improvement, and the rest hillside, thick with bracken and whins, and enormous outcrops of rock.

John, who is 26, had two main problems. As he could not afford to employ any labour he must be able to run the farm himself, with only his wife's help. Secondly, he had to utilise every bit of land if he was to carry enough stock for a fair

use most of the in-bye pastures. This meant that the sheep would have to find a living on the fell, and there grass was scarce because whins and bracken were dominant.

So he had to tackle two jobs at once—improving the in-bye and reclaiming the fell. He is still at it.

The in-bye is partly on the hill and partly in the valley, and over the years the low-lying

a grant, so he decided to do it work himself by locating existi stone drains which were like He has done this on one occasion restoring it to good pasture an killing over 95 per cent of th rushes.

Clearing areas of the fell tak much longer. The whins ha be cut by hand, but the bra he uses for bedding. Becaus would take too long to cut it bracken by hand, he waits un

Article reproduced by kind permission of Farmers Weekly: First published March 1961

7. CVBG visit to two watermills

On Thursday19 May, a group of members visited two very different water mills near Carlisle. We gathered in Milton village hall, itself a vernacular experience, for coffee provided as usual by Barbara Grundy and her husband Gordon's delicious baking. Graham Brooks led the day's event and introduced the mills.

The first was at Milton, south of Brampton, where the ruins of a mill built to serve a farm are clear to see.

Images above & below - Milton Mill buildings © Stuart Harling.

In a secluded and delightful setting on private land, there are the remains of three buildings – the mill, a corn-drying kiln and a pig sty (apparently pigs were fed on corn). Now in a dangerous state of disrepair, we did not enter the mill building, but could see the wheel pit.

After a packed lunch, we set out for Warwick Bridge, where the three storey, sandstone water powered corn mill has been restored to working order after falling into disuse last century and being placed on the Heritage at Risk register. It was newly built in 1804, but a mill had been on the site since the Middle Ages.

Graham is secretary of the trust which runs the mill and could explain the workings – five sets of stones driven by the water of the Cairn Beck. The Trust is a Community Benefit Society, which is funded by shares and sales of bakery products. A breast-shot water wheel, 10 feet/3 metres wide, receives water from a head race diverted by a series of sluices, which falls into buckets on the wheel, the weight of which turns it. The horizontal power is transferred to the vertical to drive the stones by a series of gear wheels.

CVBG Members gather outside Warwick Bridge Mill before the tour © Stuart Harling.

We were able to watch Karen, the miller, as she operated the sack hoist, which takes corn up to the top floor, and ground it into corn. A drying kiln, the floor of which is made of metal plates, was part of the mill, but isn't now used. Flour and meal produced include wheat, oats, rye, barley and spelt. After a good look round the mill and having a better understanding of the workings, members were able to sample tea and bakery products and buy bread and flour ■

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General interior views © Stuart Harling & Mike Turner.

See the website for more information.

www.warwickbridgecornmill.co.uk

8. A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER

The CVBG Bank Account is held at the HSBC, so as many of you know they now charge **40p** for every cheque paid into our account. If possible, can you please pay by direct bank transfer (BACS) for your membership renewal, events, etc.

Can I also remind you that I am stepping down as Treasurer at the AGM in September, so a replacement is needed. The role is as simple or as complicated as you want to make it, but some familiarity with Excel spreadsheets would be useful.

If you are potentially interested, please contact myself or June Hill.

Thank you

Mike Kingsbury

9. A NOTE FROM THE SECRETARY

A polite note to remind all members that annual subscriptions are due at the end of July. **(CVBG Membership Year runs 1st August – 31st July)** Rates remain the same, Individual Member £10 and Joint Membership for two people living at the same address £15.

To make it simpler; by using a Standing Order, it will ensure that you are never out of date and you will continue to receive your Quarterly Newsletter, E-News and complimentary publications as and when they are published, all for a subscription that has not changed since the group formed in 2013 – great value for money!

Details of how to pay can be found on the rear cover of this newsletter.

Thank You

Mike Turner, (Secretary & Membership)

10. FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Monday 4 July Zoom Talk by Richard Wilson
'Living Upstairs: Bastles and Bastle Derivatives'
Monday 1 August Zoom Talk by Paul Lewis
'Harby Brow Tower, nr Wigton'

Possible Visits
Hartsop Village with Anna Gray
Scales Hall with Paul Lewis

Saturday 10 Sept: CVBG AGM at the Moot Hall, Appleby
December, Christmas Lunch, venue TBA

N.B. FULL DETAILS WILL BE ANNOUNCED FOR ALL EVENTS.

To order extra copies of this booklet, please email the secretary, details at the front of this newsletter.