

Autumn 2022

2022 No.2, issue 81

# The Mourholme Magazine of Local History

**40th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE**



*Mourholme Local History Society (Charity Reg. No. 512765)  
Covers the Old Parish of Warton containing the Townships of  
Warton-with-Lindeth, Silverdale, Borwick, Priest Hutton,  
Carnforth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne*

[www.mourholme.co.uk](http://www.mourholme.co.uk)

The Mourholme Magazine of Local History is issued by the Mourholme Local History Society for the study of the history of the ancient Parish of Warton, with its seven constituent townships; Borwick, Carnforth, Priest Hutton, Silverdale, Warton-with-Lindeth, Yealand Conyers and Yealand Redmayne.

The Society is named after the Manor of Mourholme, the home of the medieval Lords of Warton, their seat, the Mourholme Castle, stood on the site now covered by Dockacres.

Yearly subscriptions are £10.00 (£18.00 for family or school membership) and include evening lectures, copies of the Mourholme Magazine and access to the Society's archival material.

Application for membership should be made to the treasurer Andrew Davies, 3, Maryland Close, Silverdale, Carnforth, LA5 0TL. (01524) 701429 [andrewdavies.email@gmail.com](mailto:andrewdavies.email@gmail.com)

Contributions to the magazine – articles, letters, notes – are invited. Please send them, preferably by email, to the editor Awena Carter, 4, Lindeth Road, Silverdale, Carnforth, LA5 0TT. (01524) 701231 [dr.a.carter@btinternet.com](mailto:dr.a.carter@btinternet.com)

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THE MOURHOLME  
MAGAZINE  
OF LOCAL HISTORY  
Autumn 2022

40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE

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**THOUGHTS, IMPRESSIONS AND REMINISCENCES  
ON THE 40<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE  
MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF LOCAL HISTORY**

**Awena Carter, magazine editor**

As I wrote in last Spring's magazine, this Autumn it will be forty years since The Mourholme Magazine of Local History was first published. In order to make this edition something of an anniversary issue, I appealed to members to send in their first, or subsequent, impressions of the Society, in order to form a commemorative article. I suggested that the following questions might act as an aide memoir:

Why did you start coming?

What talks stand out for you?

What articles in the magazine do you particularly remember?

What research have you undertaken and why?

What keeps you coming to sit on upright chairs on the last Wednesday of the month?

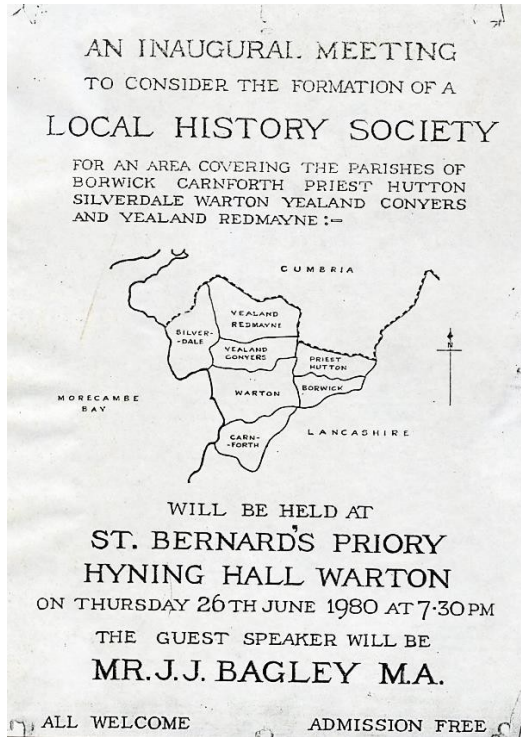
In the varied and interesting contributions that follow, you will find all these questions answered, and much more. I hope that, perhaps, some of your own memories stirred.

To steal Clive Holden's words that you will shortly read:

'Long may the society continue to flourish, as long as there are those willing to take an active part to ensure its survival.'

Now read on, beginning with the reminiscences of our President:

**Jenny Ager** In June 1980, there was a meeting at Hynning Hall in Warton, 'To consider the formation of a Local History Society'. The Society thus formed, was Mourholme Local History Society.



**Figure 1: The very beginning**

The society partly grew out of the Warton Village Society, which, among other things, encouraged interest in the history of the area and its surroundings. But it grew mainly from the Warton History Group, people undertaking Continuing Education Courses in Local History, taught by Paul Booth, at

that time a lecturer in history at Liverpool University. Paul Booth's Wikipedia entry states that "*several of Booth's classes formed themselves into local history societies, all of which have active publication programmes*"<sup>1</sup>. Two years after the inaugural meeting, the Society published the first edition of *The Mourholme Magazine of Local History*.

In 1980 I was living in Silverdale, but busy with young children, part time work as a nurse, and health related academic work, with no time for frivolous things like local history. But twenty-two years on, in 2002, I enrolled on a Certificate in Local History course run by the Open Studies Department of Continuing Education, Lancaster University, the course tutor was Hilary Walklett. The course consisted of work done at home, but also of study days where we met face to face, and that is where I first met Jane Parsons, who had recently moved to Warton, after time spent, with her husband Tony, working in Oman.

Jane and I decided that it would be useful for our historical knowledge to join the Mourholme, Local History Society, and learn from the experienced members, some of whom were involved in writing a book. We found ourselves co-opted on to the Society's Book Group, which was considering the old parish of Warton in the nineteenth century, having already dealt with earlier times in the book *How it Was: A North Lancashire Parish in the Seventeenth Century*. The two books that followed have our names listed as part of the group, but really, I at least was there to learn from the other more experienced members. I was particularly

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<sup>1</sup> Last edited 25 May 2022

interested in Michael Wright's extensive knowledge, especially about the rather dodgy water supply system for Silverdale, which was only attached to the mains in 1938.

Later I undertook a Post Graduate Certificate in Regional and Local History run by Lancaster University, with Michael Winstanley as the tutor, and researched farms and farming in Silverdale before the First World War. At the moment, rather intermittently, I am looking at the history of my early nineteenth century house, spurred on by television programmes dealing with the history of houses.

The Mourholme programmes of talks and the magazine, which is celebrating 40 years of publication, keeps me interested and wanting to know more about this area and about the people who lived here before us. Apparently, Leonardo da Vinci approved of history and I found this quotation, which seems to sum up why we want of keep coming and keep reading: "*Knowledge of the past and of the places of the earth is the ornament and food of the mind of man*".

### **Clive Holden**

An old diary tells me that on 12<sup>th</sup> August 1995 I visited a Dallam School Summer exhibition, where a certain Mourholme Society ('What on earth is that?') was advertising its wares. I bought three copies of the society magazine, wondering why it bore such a strange name, and thinking that it would attract more attention if it aimed more obviously at its intended audience. Nevertheless, having read the magazines, a few days later I met John Findlater, joined



the society, and have now enjoyed many years of membership.

Amongst the many pleasant memories, one that stands out is of the Society's display in Warton church in 2005. One of our visitors was an aged Teddy Robinson, whom I remembered from the days when he made sure that I got a good 'short back and sides' at his barber's shop in Market Street, Carnforth. It was, I think, only a few months later that Teddy died. It would be at the same time that we lamented the death of Michael Wright, our chairman, shortly before the publication of 'Warton 1800 -1850'.

It was a pleasure to work with all those involved in that book and the subsequent 'Warton 1850 – 1900'. Fondly remember working with Jenny and Brian Ager, Jean Chatterley, Joan Clarke, John Findlater, Geoffrey Gregory, John and Mrs. Jenkinson, Sheila Jones, Jane Parsons, Arthur Penn and Neil Stobbs . Nor must I forget John Marshall, who guided us through the production of 'Warton 1850 – 1900'.

Choosing a favourite magazine article is difficult as there are so many worthy of mention, so perhaps Jean Chatterley's article about Edward Barton who lived at Warton Grange but might as well have been called 'Mister Carnforth' will suffice as an excellent example. It appears in Magazine 1995 No.1 under the title: 'Millhead Part 6a: Mr. Edward D. Barton'.

Long may the society continue to flourish, as long as there are those willing to take an active part to ensure its survival.

### **Pauline Kiggins**

As I was tidying my study recently, I came across (in a book) a letter which I had written to my son, and which he must have left behind when he left home. The letter was dated Monday 14<sup>th</sup> January and I think that the year was 1985.

I had written:

'I didn't tell you about me going out on Thursday evening last to join the Local History Society. The meetings are held at the convent at Yealand where the Bernardine nuns live, so that was interesting in itself - and the meeting was extremely interesting too. Subject: The History of Bolton-le -Sands. Speaker: Mr Kenneth Entwistle, retired headmaster of the school there. As you know, I used to live in Bolton-le -Sands and was a pupil at the school there from 1950 to 1956.'

Mr. Entwistle had published a book in 1982: *'From Bodeltone to Bolton-le-Sands'* on which he had presumably drawn in his lecture. I subsequently taught at Bolton-le-Sands school and used the book in a local history project with my pupils. I had not known the author of the book, except as the speaker at that excellent meeting all those years before. The headteacher when I taught there was a Mr Ian Entwistle, no relation to his predecessor, just an unlikely coincidence.

### **Andrew Davies**

I joined Mourholme in December 2009. I had previously lived in Leeds, but come to Silverdale quite suddenly earlier that year when my father-in-law died, I kept contact with Leeds until quite recently. A few years earlier I had

completed a Local History degree and was engaged in a research project with other students from the course, led by our very knowledgeable tutor. The project was about a clothier in Saddleworth, based on letters to him in the 1830s. Most unfortunately our tutor died. Since then, we tried to continue but slowly foundered. I keep intending to get it at least into a fit state to put on the web. Many hours have gone into transcribing the letters and researching relevant related matters so it seems a pity for it all to come to nothing.

### **Nina Gaubert**

As a new member of Mourholme Local History Society, I have been impressed by the range of speakers on diverse topics from Buffalo Bill to Richard III via Lancashire dialects. The programme for 2022/23 looks just as diverse: from fashion to Roman roads.

But it is not just the speakers, it is the members who are warm, welcoming, have a wealth of knowledge, and engage with the monthly events. Even during the latter stages of Covid confinement there was a strong attendance at all the events.

I am looking forward to delving into the archives held by the society to find little gems about the townships

### **Awena Carter**

I think it was in 2010 that my husband, Richard, and I first began going to the meetings of the Mourholme Society of Local History. We had moved to Silverdale in 1972 and soon began to know a number of people, including Brian and Jenny Ager and Nancy Thomas, who was the first editor of

the MLHS magazine. Some years later I began to see posters advertising meetings of the strangely named Mourholme Local History Society, the posters usually hanging from meat hooks in Burrow's Butchers' Shop. It seemed an esoterically intimidating title. Where was Mourholme? Was my local geography deficient again? In any case I had no time to join anything new, we had four boys under ten and I was involved in a lot of things in Silverdale already.

Time passed, the boys grew up and became more independent, one by one they left home. We became busier and busier with careers and didn't take much part in village activities so that when we went to anything at the Gaskell Hall, the audience was full of people we didn't know. This was very bothering so, since I was now working part time, I decided to join a few things and try to get to know more people in Silverdale again. Of course, all our old friends were still there, and I knew Brian and Jenny were involved in Mourholme, so I asked when the meetings were, and so Richard and I decided to join, though neither of us knew very much about local history.

The first meeting was memorable because we already knew the speaker, John Champness, whose talk was entitled 'Country Houses in our Area', a memorable presentation. But the meeting was most memorable because we all stood to honour the memory of the Society's treasurer, our dear friend of so many years, Brian Ager, whose sudden death had hit us hard, and whom I would like to honour again here.

From this strange first meeting, and subsequent ones, we began to know more people and when Jenny Ager, then our

chair and magazine editor, and now our President, appealed for people to join the committee, I offered to join. Before I knew it, I was editing the magazine; the first issue I tremblingly brought out was 2013 No. 1, issue 64. Jenny was a friendly and helpful mentor and I enjoyed editing the article, 'Farming at Bottoms Farm, Silverdale, pre the World Wars: The Role of the Farmer's Wife', by Margaret Lambert, whose farm on Bottoms Lane we had passed countless times since we first arrived, and with whom we were on nodding acquaintance. It was a fascinating glimpse into the recent past, as much a part of the rich tapestry of local history as the origins of Silverdale, and, dare I say it, as the Silverdale Hoard.

## **AN INTERVIEW WITH MARGARET CLARKE**

### **Sheila Jones**

One of the most long-standing members of the Mourholme Society is Margaret Clarke who was there at its inception. Her article, “The Ancient Parish of Warton, a Background View”, is featured in the very first magazine, printed in Autumn 1982. However, the Society was born before the magazine and there was also background before the formation of the Society which Margaret was eager to talk to me about. Her enthusiasm is rooted in the feelings she had first had 48 years ago, which were still immediate to her and founded in the absolute revelation that history was not just something distant in place and time but continuous and all around her.

Margaret was living in Warton with her young family in 1974 when Paul Booth was sent from Liverpool University to conduct an outreach or extension history course in the village. He ran courses in other communities, evidently loved his job, was “a great lecturer”, and was keen to work in Warton leading up to the bi-centenary of American Independence. For this event he mounted an exhibition highlighting the connection to the Washington family, consisting largely of reading material, mounted all around the Church Hall. An early member, Desmond Holmes, a farmer from Kendal, also put up a display of old farm implements on the stage. Margaret remembers it as a superb exhibition but says there were Americans in the village at the time and a visiting American choir who were bemused by all the attention on the American connection!

However, Margaret's memories are more of Paul Booth's general research over 20 years, the results of which were shown in an accumulating or developing display again in the Church Hall. She was an avid attendee at the courses which ran in there in two-hour long sessions on Thursday afternoons. These attracted women in the main and there was always a good turnout, though the hall was not packed. Because it ran beyond school time her daughter would come across into the hall to sit with her mother. Paul brought in visiting lecturers and would sit at the back when they came, just in front of Margaret and her daughter, fidgeting and rocking his chair. He was a large man and, Margaret learned later, her daughter was always in dread that he would topple backwards and crush her.

Stimulated by the lectures, Margaret began her own research despite the difficulty of having the children to look after. She took them with her when she went to investigate the role of Worcester Cathedral as receiver of Warton's tithes (their tithe barn was on Back Lane but the remittance was in money). The children behaved beautifully, and although Nick was warned not to touch any of the old, precious books, the Cathedral librarian gave him the oldest book to hold. She went several times to the Public Records Offices at Chancery Lane, then at Kew, as well as at Preston, and always found the staff helpful. She would go with a particular purpose in mind, and it was entirely for her own satisfaction. She was particularly interested in land holdings, in estate holdings and in management. Warton's history is well-documented and very rich in this area, being classed as a manor rented from the crown. There was very little freehold, almost all holdings being sub-let from the manor. Paul Booth sourced many

documents to photocopy and share, and many of these formed the beginnings of the group's archive. Margaret also has a legacy in the archive because she hand-traced the 1848 tithe map, which the vicar, Mr Oddie, lent to her, kneeling on the vicarage floor. She further transcribed by hand all the rules and customs of the manor. Margaret had always enjoyed history, but for her, the introduction to local history was an intense experience, and she described as "marvellous" the realization that her own locality had an "extreme past". One has the feeling that she felt a living part of it, that the human continuity imprinted on the piece of land beneath her feet became a force in her own life. She was not alone in her intense enthusiasm, and named other, vibrant early participants. One was Nancy Thomas, an American living in Lindeth, who became editor of the magazine. Another was David Peter, who produced the history, "Warton with Lindeth" in 1984, edited by Dr Booth. Each of these has several articles in the magazines. And there was also Desmond Holmes, cited above.

Margaret had a great deal of material which she had hoped to gather together, relating all the national laws and customs to Warton. Sadly, even devastatingly, her connection with the village was cut because her husband was moved to the North East in 1984 when the I.C.I. plant at Morecambe, where he worked, was closed down. He died in 1999 and Margaret moved back to Warton in 2004 as soon as she heard of a suitable house becoming available.



## **HOW THE TOWNSHIPS CELEBRATED QUEEN VICTORIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE, 22 JUNE 1897**

**Nina Gaubert**

As the country celebrated Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, I began to research, using local newspapers of the time, the way Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee was celebrated locally. Although some villages chose other dates, the official celebrations were on Tuesday the 22<sup>nd</sup> June 1897. The weather was fine throughout the day according to the press reports.

### **Warton's leading role**

Warton seemed to be epicentre of the celebrations in the former townships of its ancient parish. They started with a service at Warton Parish Church, with the choirs of Carnforth, the Yealands and Borwick, totalling 80, leading the singing. It attracted many hundreds of people, so much so that some were not able to get into the church. In addition to the National Anthem, 'Grant the Queen a Long Life', was sung, accompanied by the church organ and an orchestral band. The church collection raised £8, 6s and 9d in aid of the Royal Lancaster Infirmary. And it was at Warton Church too, that the celebrations ended. On the Sunday morning, a special service was conducted there, with special prayers, and a beautiful new hymn, by the Bishop of Wakefield, was sung to music composed by Sir Arthur Sullivan.

Warton Main Street was covered in numerous flags and banners, as was the arch opposite the vicarage and the church gateway. This was in addition to the residents who had decorated their houses with bunting. The Carnforth brass

band, however, was at the Morecambe Promenade celebrations and so were not part of any of the local celebrations.

### **Around the villages**

Throughout the day, the different villages organised activities, all of which, at some point, included: the singing of the national anthem; the ringing of their Church bells; and a meal for the seniors of the village.

In Warton a meal for about fifty over 60s and widows was provided at the Shovel Hotel and hosted by Mr and Mrs Burrows. In Silverdale and Lindeth thirty-two meals were served to the over 55s at the National School. Mr Thwaite of the Silverdale Hotel provided the meals and also conveyed those requiring assistance to get to the school. The waitresses serving were daintily dressed and received a silver bracelet at the end of the meal. Finally, the Yealands provided a substantial meal. Unfortunately, the papers do not provide any further information, other than that they conducted their celebrations the day after Warton.

Other adults and the children were not forgotten In Warton approximately 400 children assembled at the weir<sup>2</sup> and marched in processional order to Mr Newby's field. Here the children, along with 400 adults were served tea. Music was provided at the field, which enabled dancing until 9pm. In Silverdale and Lindeth, a light refreshment was provided to

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<sup>2</sup> an area of green common land beyond Town End. 'Weir' is a corruption of 'Ware' from which 'Warton' is derived

all comers in the Wesleyan school room between 4pm and 7pm.

About 230 children went to Challan Hall for a treat, with tea and buns, organised by Mr Murgatroyd. They enjoyed themselves as only children can do, leaving at 6.30pm. At noon the church bells had pealed, accompanied by a round of firing. Flags were then waved from the church tower, from Castlebarrow, and from several private houses.

Silverdale and Lindeth also organised a sports day, with prize money, in Mrs Hebden's Park, lent by Mr Lambert. From 3pm sports included: wrestling; various running races at different distances; a 3-legged race; a gent's bike race; long jump; a sack race; high jump; a young ladies' race; as well as various age group races for children under 8 and under 12. Piano and violin music provided accompaniment for dancing. In Yealand a marquee was erected, where sports events took place and as they had their celebrations a day later, the Carnforth Brass Band provided musical accompaniment.

Each village provided a memento of the occasion for the children. In Warton all children under 14 were presented with a commemorative medal and the under 8s were also presented with a toy. In Silverdale and Lindeth, children also received a medal and an orange. Yealand children received the most, not only a commemorative medal but also a jubilee mug, a book and a new penny.

At 9.55pm rockets or maroons were fired up and down the land, which was the signal for bonfires to be lit. At Warton Crag the fire burned fiercely for two hours. Meanwhile

Silverdale and Warton had their bonfire on a field loaned by Mr James Burrows from where they could see the other beacons on Castlebarrow<sup>3</sup> and across the bay. There is no reference that Yealand had a bonfire, which suggests the residents went to either Silverdale or Warton for the celebrations the evening before.

### **Further afield**

Soldiers from 1<sup>st</sup> Volunteer Battalion Kings Own Royal Lancaster Regiment travelled from Barrow or Carnforth by train to London, where they were camped at Lords Cricket Ground, prior to being part of the celebrations. Thomas Cook advertised holidays for visitors who wanted to travel to London to be part of the celebrations there, though they would have missed the all the celebratory fun in the ancient Parish of Warton.

### **Sources:**

Soulby's Ulveston Advertiser and General Intelligencer  
Lancaster Standard and County Advertiser

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<sup>3</sup> Castlebarrow, the highest point in Silverdale, is the site of the picturesque monument, erected in 1887, to mark Queen Victoria's golden jubilee. It is a circular stone tower some twenty feet high, and was soon known by locals as the Pepper Box – and more recently the Pepperpot.

## LANCASTER'S CORRUPT MP Simon Williams

‘Lancaster is the most fearfully corrupt place I was ever in’  
(Henry Schneider)<sup>1</sup>

‘There is some fun in an election contest, and I dare say we shall have it’

(Henry Schneider)

‘Schneider...[had] a deliberate and long-formed determination to carry his election at any cost, by corrupt means and in defiance of the law,’

(Parliamentary Inquiry, 1867)



Figure 1, Henry Schneider's statue, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness

In 1867 a Parliamentary investigation found that voting in Lancaster was so corrupt that its two MPs were kicked out of office. For nearly 20 years electors were deprived of the vote.

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<sup>1</sup> In a letter to an MP on the day before the 1865 General Election.

At the centre of the scandal was one of the North West's leading industrialists: the Barrow-based iron and steel magnate Henry Schneider.

Schneider was one of the major figures in the modern history of the Furness peninsula, and in the rapid industrial boom enjoyed by Barrow in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. His grandfather, John Henry Schneider, came to this country from Switzerland in the mid-18<sup>th</sup> century, and founded a business associated primarily with mining exploration and development. His son John went on to expand the scale and wealth of the company, particularly in mining in Mexico. John's son, Henry was born in London in 1817 and, when he was old enough, followed his father into the family business. By the age of 18 he held the position of secretary of the Mexican and South American Company. He also developed mining and copper smelting in Australia.

On a holiday visit to the Lakes in 1839 he visited the Furness district to examine what was by then a long-established but small-scale iron industry. He immediately sensed the region's potential. Through buying existing mines and forming partnerships with others, Schneider's Furness business expanded. And he began to champion the region's interests at Westminster. He was the driving force behind winning parliamentary approval for the building of a railway to transport iron ore and finished products. Subsequently this track became the Furness Railway. Goods traffic began running between Dalton and Barrow in June 1846, providing much relief to the lanes of Furness which were often clogged with carts carrying ore from mine-heads to the shipping port at Bardsea (just south of the Conishead Priory).

As well as improving the efficiency of existing mines, Schneider engaged geologists and mining prospectors to seek new reserves of iron ore. He was patient, diligent, and lucky. For some years he had been prospecting on land owned by the Earl of Burlington near Askam, north of Barrow. By 1851 the search was not going well, and Schneider was about to call time on the surveys. But his prospectors begged to differ. They asked for just one more week to continue the search. Schneider consented but told them there would be no pay for this work. They agreed, and the result was the discovery of a rich seam of iron ore that would eventually be developed into the world's largest iron mine. Schneider used to tell this story referring to the 'free week' he had been given.

The business expanded. An iron and steel works was built at Barrow to serve Britain's rapidly expanding rail network. Thousands of tons of rail were produced each week. Schneider was a driving force in the development of the railway, the docks, and Barrow's civic amenities. As his stature grew, he developed political ambitions. In 1857, and still living in London, he was elected as a Liberal MP for Norwich, but in a taste of things to come, he lost his seat in 1860 on a charge of electoral corruption.

Schneider moved to Ulverston in 1862 following the death of his wife. He married again, in 1864, to the daughter of the vicar of Lancaster. Schneider was now wealthy, and became a major benefactor to local causes and projects. This increasing involvement in civic life may have increased his appetite for re-entering politics.

In the mid-nineteenth century the City of Lancaster returned two Members of Parliament. In 1865 one of them died and, standing as a Liberal candidate, Schneider was returned unopposed. But just months later a General Election was called, and this time the two MPs, Henry Schneider and Matthew Fenwick, both Liberals, were facing a Tory, Edward Lawrence, the Mayor of Liverpool: three men fighting for just two seats.

Electoral reform lay in the future. There was no secret ballot, so every observer could tell who had voted for whom. Before the 1872 Ballot Act, Members of Parliament were elected at a public event by electors speaking their votes at a specially-built polling booth. At its most basic the booth was little more than a table with chairs for the poll clerks, who would ask electors to confirm their identity and qualification (sometimes with an oath) before inquiring how they wished to vote, often surrounded by cheering onlookers and the agents of the candidates. The voter would state his choice and the clerk would then mark that in an official poll book, based on the latest electoral register. Check clerks would keep separate tallies and hourly bulletins of the 'state of the poll' would usually be circulated by the candidates' agents. Once the poll was over, enterprising publishers and local newspapers would frequently sell lists showing how each voter had polled.

To make matters worse, or more liable to corrupt practices, the electorate was tiny by modern standards. The 1864-5 register contained the names of just 1419 voters out of a population of about 17,000 adults: 980 freemen and 439



householders. Some men were both freemen of the City *and* householders, so they were allowed two votes.

When the Lancaster results were declared it was clear it had been very close-run.

Schneider	687 votes
Fenwick	713 votes
Lawrence	665 votes
<b>Total</b>	<b>2065 votes</b>

So Fenwick and Schneider were returned, the latter with a majority of just 22 votes over Lawrence. But the matter was not to end there. The Tory candidate complained that the election had been corrupt, and a preliminary report into the affair led to the appointment of a Royal Commission.

The public inquiry opened on 27 August 1866 at the Shire Hall, Lancaster. The approach was to question as many of the voters as possible, in public and in front of journalists. The three Commissioners deliberated for 34 days, examining 1400 voters (nearly all of the 1408 that voted) and asking 39,000 questions. Reading the hearings gives a strong sense that the Commissioners enjoyed playing to the large audience, and their frequent attempts to appear droll at the expense of the witnesses now make them seem rather puffed up.

They uncovered extensive bribing of the electorate. Money was channelled through voters who were informally appointed as agents of the candidates, or go-betweens as we might call them. In addition, some voters were supplied with election expenses for sitting on non-existent committees, or for acting as intermediaries.

Much was reported in the press, and was presumably pored over by Lancastrians eager to see what their neighbours had got up to. It's worth including a selection of exchanges here to illustrate: the sums of money being given to buy a man's vote; just how normal that seemed; and to show how that money was usually spent by the recipient (generally in the inns of Lancaster).

### **James Walker**

Here is an illiterate voter being paid handsomely by both sides for his vote, or supposed committee work. As the Lancaster Guardian<sup>2</sup> reported:

“James Walker, cotton spinner, Skerton, voted for Fenwick and Lawrence, and received £10 at the Blue Bell, on the Quay. Got 30 shillings for being on Lawrence's committee, and something from Towers, but he forgot how much.

‘Do you mean to tell us you got nothing more from the other side?’

‘I got 5 shillings from Mr Carruthers. Towers did not offer me £10; he only offered me £7.’

‘Were you on no committee?’

‘Yes, I was on both committees, and got 30 shillings from each. I am a married man, cannot read or write, and do not care much for politics’”

### **John Townley**

Again, here is a man taking money from all sides. Lancaster Guardian:

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<sup>2</sup> Lancaster Guardian, September 29, 1866

“John Townley, labourer, Henry Street, voted for Fenwick and Schneider, and received £8-10s from John Bleasdale.

‘He says he gave you £10?’

‘Then I have 30 shillings to come in’ (laughter).

Commissioner Hill: ‘How came you to take money from the Blues?’

‘George Danson offered it to me, so I took it.’

‘A very good reason’ (laughter).”

### **Nathan White**

Lancaster Guardian:

“Nathan White, Cable Street, voted for Fenwick and Schneider, and received £5.

‘I was not on a committee, but I was offered £10 from the other side, Money was flying about, and I thought I might as well have some of it’ (laughter).”

### **William Spencer Barrow**

Another opportunist, but this time trying to claim he’d earned his bribe – then mocked by the Commissioners for taking too little! Lancaster Guardian:

“Wm Spencer Barrow, shopkeeper, Skerton, voted for Mr Lawrence and received £13-7s-6d altogether. This was not for his vote but for his services (laughter). Was very actively canvassing for a month. Received money in small sums with the exception of £10 paid by Mr Clark. There was no excess of charge.

Commissioner Hill: ‘Oh dear no. I think yours was a very moderate demand’ (laughter).”

### **John Towers**

Another voter mocked.

Lancaster Guardian:

“John Towers, Bare Lane, labourer, voted for Fenwick and Schneider, and got £10 for it. His usual wages were 2s 6d a day.

Commissioner Newton: ‘What are your politics? Do you care about politics? Do you know what the word means?’

‘Not exactly’ (laughter)”

### **Masheded**

A sorry state. Lancaster Guardian:

“The man Masheded was again sent for, but the police constable said he was in a very bad state, and the horrors were coming on. He was too drunk to give evidence.

The Chief Commissioner: ‘Has he no wife to take care of him?’

Police constable: ‘Yes, but she is on the spree too.’

Chief Commissioner: ‘Well he must be here again at 10 o’clock tomorrow morning, and we shall have him here every morning until he is sober.’”

In January 1867 the Commissioners met to conclude proceedings and present their report, a hefty 750-page volume. Their conclusion was that all three candidates had bribed extensively – but that Schneider deserved special mention. He was guilty “of a deliberate and long-formed determination to carry his election at any cost, by corrupt means and in defiance of the law.” Schneider was invited to

make a statement, but sensing that no good could come from testifying, declined.

Of the 1408 eligible voters 843 had been bribed and a further 89 electors had been involved in handing out the money. This amounts to 66% of the electorate being found to be corrupt or having been corrupted. The two Liberal candidates, Schneider and Fenwick, had channelled £6000 through a Lancaster grocer, Henry Welch. The report included the colourful detail that on one occasion Schneider had instructed the manager of his Barrow Haematite Company to bring £1000 in gold sovereigns from Barrow to Lancaster for the purposes of bribery. In total they had spent £7459 – over £650,000 in today’s money.<sup>3</sup>

Schneider and Fenwick were ejected from Parliament. But worse, a Reform Bill was pushed through to disenfranchise Lancaster, Totnes, Reigate and Yarmouth – which were judged to be incurably rotten. But the solutions were plain. The Morning Star thundered:

“... there can be no two opinions in the country as to the utter futility and absurdity of all such inquiries. We know the cure for bribery – all of us know it – and yet Parliament will not apply it. Large constituencies and the (secret) ballot would kill electoral corruption in a month.”

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<sup>3</sup> Estimated using the Bank of England inflation calculator.

Parliamentary reforms were gradual, and Lancaster was left without representation in Parliament. As a result of Gladstone's Ballot Act of 1872, the secret ballot replaced the traditional public hustings, where observers had been able to observe and record whether a man had voted in line with the bribe given. And the Corrupt and Illegal Practices Prevention Act 1883 set limits on election expenses and demanded proper record keeping by candidates. Finally, the Redistribution of Seats Act 1885 redistributed existing Parliamentary constituencies to form ones of equal size. Only then was Lancaster re-enfranchised, now as a larger county constituency, represented by a single MP.

As for Henry Schneider, he seems to have come through this scandal largely unscathed. Curiously, although the law deemed the proceedings to have been corrupt, and Schneider certainly shown to have promoted this state of affairs, yet no proceedings were brought against him, nor the other candidates. He lost his position as a district magistrate in Barrow, and his reputation had taken a blow. But once Barrow became a parliamentary constituency in 1885 he had the nerve to stand again, this time as a Conservative. He lost to the Liberal candidate but, with no apparent sense of irony, he raised a petition claiming that voters had been bribed through refreshments. He was unsuccessful.

Henry Schneider died in November 1887 and was memorialised in a large statue erected in Barrow's town centre in 1891. Perhaps the last words should be his. In a public speech in 1869 he commented:

“... in the excitement of an election contest, many are led to do that of which in their more sober moments they would entirely disapprove.”

**Sources:**

**Barrow Steelworks** – Stan Henderson and Ken Royal, 2015

H.W. Schneider – AG.Banks, 1984

**Corrupt Practices at the Lancaster Election of 1865**, from Lancashire & Cheshire Antiquarian Society Volume 63 – J.D.Marshall, 1952-3

**Contemporary newspaper reports** – Ulverston Mirror, Lancaster Guardian, Morning Star

## **REPORTS OF EVENING MEETINGS** **Clive Holden, and Andrew and Pam Davies**

### **30 March 2022: A Cumbrian Colony in the South Pacific**

Retired local head teacher **David Fellows** spoke about Norfolk Island, a speck on the map 877 miles east of Australia and somewhat north of New Zealand. In his childhood he had known of it as the originator of some of the most boring postage stamps: ‘just forest’. In fact, the island’s flag features a tree, the Norfolk Island Pine (*Araucaria heterophylla*), which is an endemic species, not found growing naturally anywhere else. He visited the island with a local ‘tramping’ (New-Zealand-speak for ‘hiking’) group, for a week’s holiday while working down under, and found a striking contrast between the beauty and peace of the place today and its painful past.

He showed several slides commemorating the discovery of the island by Captain James Cook on 10th October 1774, and the visit of Queen Elizabeth in 1974, as part of Australia’s bicentenary celebrations. Cook named the island in honour of Mary Howard, Duchess of Norfolk, who had supported his expedition.

From 1788 to 1814 and again from 1825 to 1855 the island was used by the British as a penal colony, and we saw slides of some of the buildings remaining from that period. Then, in 1856, one hundred and ninety-four people arrived from the Pitcairn Islands, which had become overcrowded. They were descendants of Fletcher Christian, who came from Eaglesfield, Cumbria and led the ‘Mutiny on the Bounty’. Their descendants still take pride in their Cumbrian roots.



The island's current status is that of an 'external territory' of Australia, treated for some purposes, to the dismay of some of its inhabitants, as part of the Northern Territory, the poorest of Australia's states and territories. It has a population of about 1,750, who speak English and also a local creole language called 'Norfuk', described by Wikipedia as 'a blend of eighteenth-century English and Tahitian', which we saw on signposts in some of our speaker's pictures. His visit coincided with an event that raised much local excitement: the first ever murder trial on the island, which attracted international media coverage.

### *Afterword*

We read afterwards, our curiosity triggered by a question from the floor, that although Captain Cook 'discovered' an uninhabited island, there is archaeological evidence that it was occupied in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries by people from Eastern Polynesia.

### **27<sup>th</sup> April 2022: The Reformation.**

After a speedy AGM, **Christopher Tinmouth**, deputising for the previously arranged speaker, spoke at length about the Reformation. So detailed was the talk that only the bare bones can be listed here; you must add the flesh to the bones yourselves.

The following is a list of some of the items mentioned in this story of religious turmoil which can be researched separately at your leisure: Purgatory; Heaven; the Treasury of Merits; Indulgences Martin Luther; the Eucharist; Justification by Faith Alone; John Calvin; Charles V the Holy Roman Emperor; the Counter Reformation; the Council of Trent;

King Henry VIII as Defender of the Faith (both Catholic and Protestant); Dissolution of the Monasteries; the Pilgrimage of Grace; Robert Aske; Mary Tudor and Catholicism; Elizabeth I and Mary Queen of Scots; the Babington Plot; John Knox; James I and witchcraft; George Fox and Quakers; Charles II's opposition to Quakerism; the Glorious Revolution and so on.

It would seem that Christopher believes the Reformation to be ongoing, so having heard of the fates which awaited many of the participants in his story, it would be wise not to have any burning ambitions, hang around too much or lose your head in a crisis.

### **28<sup>th</sup> September, Lady Anne Clifford**

**Christine Rafaat's** talk left no-one in doubt that Lady Anne Clifford was not only a talented and industrious person, but also what we might call 'a tough cookie'. In an age when women were expected to accede to the whims of their betters (i.e. men) she declined to follow the trend, expected others to 'jump to it' at her command, and was not afraid to say 'no' when expected to bend the knee, even if it meant offending persons of rank (including royalty). It took her many years to gain her true inheritance (she being an oldest surviving child), but eventually perseverance paid off and she achieved her aim. She had difficulties with both of her husbands, but defied and outlived them to become very rich. She was a patron of the arts, leaving for posterity her own diary amongst other things. She also improved her properties including the castles at Appleby, Brough, Brougham, Pendragon and Skipton. The Great Picture, a triptych showing Lady Anne, formerly in Appleby Castle, can be viewed at Abbot Hall in Kendal. Had Lady Anne herself been

present at the talk, the microphone, which sometimes decided to show rebellious tendencies, would surely have been on its best behaviour.

## **22<sup>nd</sup> October 2022: Horrockses Fashions.**

**Christine Boydell's** talk began with the modest beginning of firm of Horrocks in 1791. Started by John Horrocks, the son of a quarry master, the firm grew and flourished through the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Horrocks died in 1801 at the age of 36, but the firm continued through various developments such as Horrocks, Miller & Co. (1815), though the Horrocks family ceased to have an interest in the company after 1840. By 1887 Horrockses, Crewdson & Co. was firmly established. Specialising in ladies (and children's) fashions, the firm was 'the greatest name in cotton', so successful that it moved its main base from Preston to London and built more factories elsewhere. By the 1920s it was being patronised by foreign potentates, and by its policy of exclusivity was keeping potential rivals at bay. Helped by the establishment of The Cotton Board in 1940, Horrockses emerged from the war in fine fettle, and after the war, by employing top designers and by judicious advertising (even tempting leading model Barbara Goalen) it entered its greatest period, helped not a little by the late Queen's choice of Horrockses cotton dresses for her Commonwealth tour in 1953/54. It became obvious when Christine passed examples of Horrockses' cotton fabric round the audience that it was not a case of 'never mind the quality, feel the width', but 'never mind the width, feel the quality'.

## **WHAT'S NEW?** **Pete Baker**

Mourholme Local History Society, working with the Morecambe Bay Partnership, Arnside Silverdale AONB and Natural England, has provided an Interpretation Panel, placed on a small limestone plinth, for one of the most distinctive coastal landmarks in our area - the Chimney at Jenny Brown's Point in Silverdale.



Figure 1: The plinth and chimney at Jenny Brown's Point, Silverdale  
Photo, Simon Williams

The Chimney is on a popular public footpath, much used by visitors and locals alike. Many stop to photograph the Chimney but are left mystified as to its purpose. The Panel,

now explains the history of the Chimney and associated buildings, built for a copper smelting enterprise at the end of the eighteenth century.

*I am grateful to Pete Baker for this first appearance of a new feature. I hope it will become a regular part of the magazine and I invite other contributions from the membership.*  
*Awena Carter, magazine editor.*

### NOTES AND QUERIES

In the Spring 2022 magazine, in his article, ‘**Researching the Origins of the Silverdale Village Players in their Centenary Year**’ Keith Hildrew asked if any one could identify the actors in the following two photographs. Fortunately, Janet Adams née Hodgkinson, who acted with the players in the 1970s, could supply most of the names in both pictures, including that of her uncle, John Webber.



#### **THE UNEXPECTED GUEST, 1969**

**Left to Right: Back:** Robert Bolton, Noel Coleman, John Webber, Pat Simpson, ?, Cedric Dyson.

**in front:** Peter Meddows, Ruby Coleman, Jacqui Bolton.



**SAILOR BEWARE,**

**L to R:**

**Back:** John Webber, ?, ?, Jacquie Bolton, Pat Simpson,  
Cedric Dyson, Noel Coleman.

**Kneeling,** Margaret Brown, **seated,** Ruby Coleman.

**MOURHOLME LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY'S  
LECTURE PROGRAMME 2022-23**

**Meetings are held in Yealand Village Hall at 7.30 p.m.  
Our talks generally finish by 9 p.m.**

**14 December 2022: Arnside Maritime Heritage**

Alasdair Simpson

The Kent estuary forms Kendal's port, and Arnside has a long maritime heritage. There the Victorians held regattas, and it was where Crossfields built Morecambe Bay prawners and other boats from the 1840s to 1940s. Their boats notably included Arthur Ransome's "Swallow" and Arnside Sailing Club's very own "Severn".

**January 25 2023: Roman Roads and the Old Roads  
through Carnforth**

Brian Jones

Largely for reasons of geography, the road routes northwards from Lancaster pass through Bolton-le-Sands and Carnforth. Although the changes in the style of transport, and the ages of Canal and Railways, led to modifications to the road network, clear traces of the old routes have been left behind.

**22 February 2023: County Lunatic Asylum for Lancaster**

Pauline Churchill

The Asylum at Lancaster was the first to be established in Lancashire and was the fourth Asylum to be built in England. In July 1816 the buildings were ready for occupation. We look inside at the inmates, their daily lives and at the key events in this 19<sup>th</sup> Century institution.



**29 March 2023 : Short Brothers**

Judith Shingler

This audio-visual Presentation by Ambleside Oral History Group uses extracts from interviews with those who worked at Short's Sunderland Flying Boat factory at Windermere during World War 2. Although a huge enterprise employing over 1,500 people, it came and went almost without leaving a mark.

**26 April 2023: Market Street, Carnforth**

Clive Holden

A potted history of Market Street from its beginnings in the 1880s up to the present time with, it is hoped, input from members of the audience who may know things that the speaker doesn't!

*This talk will be preceded by the Mourholme AGM*





THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF  
LOCAL HISTORY, SPRING 2022

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