NOTES

1. A beehive quern from Braeside, Papcastle
   BY JAN WALKER

The quern (Fig. 1) was discovered with a significant quantity of Roman pottery, dating to the late 1st and 2nd centuries, in the course of a watching brief in October 2005 on an extension to the bungalow known as Braeside in Papcastle (NY 1097 3122). The site is situated to the south of the Roman fort (Derventio) excavated in 1912 and 1961-2.

Fig. 1. Beehive quern found at Braeside, Papcastle. Drawings by R. Day.
The layer in which the quern was found was tentatively identified as dumped rubbish representing terracing of the site, possibly after the demolition of the early fort towards the mid/late second century, following a period of disuse, and prior to the complete rebuild suggested by Charlesworth to have taken place under Constantius Chlorus.4

The quern is the upper stone of a beehive quern. It is bun-shaped, made of hard red sandstone, possibly from the St Bees series. It has a funnel-shaped hopper, 100 mm in diameter, and a feed pipe of 20 mm diameter. A single lateral handle socket (75 by 17.5 mm) does not penetrate as far as the feeder pipe. The grinding surface shows considerable signs of wear, as it is smooth and slightly concave. This wear suggests that it was used with a side-to-side motion rather than spun round in a circle, as it is worn to approximately four degrees on the handle side. The outer surface is smooth with a few vertical scratches and chips at the edges. Diameter 320 mm; height 150 mm.

Notes and References
1 Jan Walker, Braeside, Report on an archaeological watching brief (Unpublished report in Historic Environment Record, Cumbria County Council). It includes a pottery report by L. Hird. The quern remains in the possession of the owner, Mr R. Day of Braeside.
4 Ibid., 105.

2. Watching brief at 1 The Croft, Burgh by Sands, Cumbria
BY JAN WALKER

The watching brief was carried out in February-March 2006 on an extension to the east and south of 1 The Croft, Burgh by Sands (NY 3214 5897) (Fig. 1) and again in July, when a gas pipe trench was excavated. The extension lay above the presumed line of the Vallum ditch as shown on OS maps.1

The topsoil stripping, and the excavation of the gas trench to the property revealed clear soil marks running east-west across the front of the property. These are identified as the Vallum ditch (Fig. 2).

Discussion
Since the Ordnance Survey map revisions of the 1970s several excavations have taken place which have questioned the position shown on maps of both the Vallum and Hadrian’s Wall through Burgh by Sands. Paul Austen identified the Vallum ditch at the east end of the village (NY 3273 5907) in 1978, five metres north of the OS position.2 Austen considers it probable that the ditch (NY 3295 5907) excavated by Professor Barri Jones in 1980 also represents the Vallum ditch. He is of the opinion that the Vallum predates the fort and does not deviate around it as suggested by Collingwood 3 and as depicted by the Ordnance Survey.

The site at 1 The Croft lies at the west end of the village. The north edge of the
Fig. 1. Location plan – The Croft, Burgh by Sands.
Fig. 2. Site plan after removal of top soil, showing soil mark of Vallum ditch.
Vallum ditch was established by Austen in 1986 (field 1008) (NY 3195 5905). The dark brown black soil mark recorded after topsoil stripping at the front of the property and also recorded during the excavation of the gas pipe trench is highly suggestive of the Vallum ditch. It lies approximately ten metres north of the line shown on the Ordnance Survey maps. It straightens out the bend shown on the OS maps and makes better sense.

The north mound of the Vallum at this point is presumably under the Carlisle-Bowness road. The south mound should have been visible in the garden to the rear of 1 The Croft but there was no positive sign of it. The measured position coincides with a kink in the property boundary and also with a band of silty grey clay in the sides of the foundation trenches. It is suggested that the south mound has survived on the surface as a property boundary. No dating evidence was found.

Notes and References

1. OS maps 1865, 1900, 1925, 1974 1:10,000. CRO(C).

An old road to Knott Head from Thornthwaite
BY DEREK DENMAN, M.A., C.ENG., M.I.E.T.

In 1998 a group of members1 of the Lorton and Derwent Fells Local History Society made excavations, with the consent of the landowner, on an old disused road which ascends the fell-side between Thornthwaite and Knott Head.2 The group had been established to study and seek Roman roads in Lorton Vale, based on the common understanding that the Whinlatter Pass was once on the route of a Roman road; for example as proposed and surveyed by Allan in The Roman route across the northern Lake District; Brougham to Moresby.3 Having been unable to find clear physical evidence of such a road at the western end of the pass, the group turned its attention to the eastern end, and the relationship of the ascent with the closest piece of proven Roman road, the old causeway by Braithwaite railway station reported by Bellhouse in these Transactions in 1954 and 1960.4 The group found a long disused, unreported old road to Knott Head, consistent with the conjectural route proposed by Bellhouse. This paper reports and discusses the findings.

Location and context of the road

Figure 1 provides a composite map of the area based on the first edition six inches to one mile Ordnance Survey of 1863. This map has been annotated with features and boundaries relevant to the road and the excavations made. Where it is shown as a full line, from GR 2227 2467 to GR 2213 2458, the road is a clear and distinct terrace-way, climbing the fell side to the south of the valley cut by Masmill Beck. The map shows the current route of the Whinlatter Road, turnpiked under an act of
FIG. 1. The general area of Knott Head, Thornthwaite, based on the first series Ordnance Survey of 1863.
1761, which runs between Braithwaite and Lorton, plus the Hallgarth Road, running alongside and mostly to the south of Masmill Beck from the turnpike to Hallgarth, as it was specified to be built in the enclosure act of 1814. Immediately to the south of the Hallgarth road is a wall enclosing the commons allotments, which contain the old road. The map is annotated with the extent of the “ancient enclosures” at 1814, where ancient in enclosure terms means at least 30 years before the Act, or 1784 in this case. To the north is the old Ladstocks Enclosure. The more recent enclosure on the fell-side to the south-east appears to be later, the older fence being at the break of slope.

Fig. 2. Plan and section of excavations of the old road at point A, facing downslope.
The old road is shown in no known maps or descriptions except possibly one. In
James Clarke’s survey of the Lakes of 1787, the map of this area, not drawn to a
measured survey, shows a road from the turnpike to Lonin-foot, or Lanefoot, between ancient enclosures. There was “a road from this station to Thornthwaite in
at Lonin-foot, yet it is so steep you cannot ride down it”. Therefore it appears that a
lane from the Whinlatter road went to Lanefoot before the commons enclosure but
was replaced by the Hallgarth road, though no mention of the old road is made in
the award.

Description of the road and excavations
The land containing the road was used as common grazing before enclosure, and
remains unimproved grazing today, with bracken, gorse and a scattered planting of
larch adorning its higher parts. The cover of the road, from silting and vegetation,
suggests that it has been out of use for many decades, but not many centuries. In
most of the part shown by a full line, the road surface has a consistent width of 4 m
and is constructed as a curving terrace. The route of the road appears to have been
chosen to avoid the steeper slope of the fell further to the south, keeping its slope
within 25%. The terrace-way was sectioned at point A, GR 2215 2461, and
evidence of a properly constructed road was found, as illustrated in Fig. 2. The slate
bedrock had been cut away as necessary to maintain the steady line and slope of the
road. The terrace had been built out, retained by a kerb of large stones, and finished
at a width of 4 m.

The part of the road shown as dashed, and becoming gradually more conjectural
above the terrace, is less steeply graded and on transversely level ground, with little
material covering the bedrock. On the southern side of Masmill Beck at point B, GR
2208 2444, a number of large flat glacial boulders were found, forming a dry, solid
approach to the beck. A crossing here would be consistent with extrapolations both
of the line of the old road, and also of a second old fell road, shown dotted, that
merged with the current turnpike at Knott Head. This suggested that, before the
turnpike was built, both the Whinlatter road and the Thornthwaite branch to
Lanefoot might have crossed the beck at point B. The land across the beck at point
B, an enclosure allotment, has been extensively disturbed by forestry.

A section made at point C (GR 2233 2469), where the surface suggested a
possible agger, showed no sign of purposeful construction. No hard base, indications
of metalling or lateral ditches could be found. However, this general area contains
numerous uninvestigated linear features in the ground, consistent with its earlier use
as the access point to Thornthwaite common for many centuries.

Interpretation
It is likely that the most recent use of the old road was to connect Thornthwaite with
the Whinlatter road both before and after that road was turnpiked in the 1760s. As
evidenced by Clarke in 1787, the road then started at Lonin-foot or Lanefoot, rather
than Hallgarth. It was replaced by the Hallgarth road after 1814. Prior to the
construction of the turnpike, the Whinlatter road, which is attested in 17th century
manorial records as a highway, may well have met the Thornthwaite road at a crossing point B on Masmill Beck.

The major interest in the old road is as a possible part of a Roman road from Keswick to Papcastle over the Whinlatter Pass. Although that road is commonly accepted to have existed, as part of a route from Maryport to Brougham and Brough, examination of the literature shows the physical evidence to be lacking or unproven. The necessary Roman fort at Keswick has neither been found nor located, and the only proven piece of Roman road between Keswick and the fort Derventio at Papcastle is the causeway passing between Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite lakes, found near Braithwaite station, west of the Derwent and Newlands Beck crossings. The existence of this route, of another from Caermote, near Bothel, passing along the east side of Bassenthwaite Lake, and their conjunction near Keswick, is rooted in the conjecture of Horsley, 1732, and developed in the other works cited in this paper.

The importance of a Roman attribution to the origin of the old road would lie in its confirmation that a Roman road did cross the fells via the Whinlatter Pass. The road does not have a design and construction that is diagnostically Roman, but it is consistent with Roman practice for a minor road in this type of terrain. The route is also fully consistent with the conjectural line of ascent proposed by Bellhouse, based on the alignment of the causeway with the viewpoint at Knott Head. Furthermore, it has been shown to be an old road, neither a turnpike nor an enclosure road nor associated with any known serious mining or quarrying. It appears too well surveyed, designed and constructed for a medieval or early modern purpose, entailing considerable removal of rock to achieve the line and width desired. While it is of course impossible to eliminate the effect of a thousand years of history on this piece of land, it is credible that this section of road could have Roman origins. It provides, taken with the causeway, the best evidence so far that a Roman road crossed the Whinlatter Pass.

Notes and References

1. The members of the group were: the late Ken Deas, Ruth Deas, Derek Denman, Anne Flower, Robert Flower, Michael Grieve, Adrian Head, Joan Head, Daphne Holbrook, Alan Norris. The group had the advice and involvement of Alan Richardson in this area.
2. The land containing the road remains is privately owned and not accessible under the right to roam legislation.
6. CRO(C) QRE/1/10.
8. Ibid., 92.
10. CW2, lx, 25.
13. CW2, liv, figure facing page 20.
The Anglo-Saxon pot in the Senhouse Museum, Maryport
BY IAN CARUANA

In the 1956 volume of these Transactions Kate Hodgson described an Anglo-Saxon burial urn, then in the collections at Netherhall (Fig. 1.3). Her article included a detailed consideration of the pot by the acknowledged expert on early Saxon pottery, J. N. L. Myres, and the pot was also examined by Brian Hope-Taylor, the excavator of Yeavering in Northumberland who noted parallels with one of his own discoveries. The question arose about the provenance of the pot and whether it could have been a local find, as was implied by the comment in Hutchinson’s History of Cumberland. Ultimately the conclusion was reached that the pot might have come from or near the Senhouse estate at Welton or Ashby St Leger in Northamptonshire. When Myres’ Corpus appeared the pot was listed under Welton in Northamptonshire where there was a well-known Anglo-Saxon cemetery of the

Fig. 1. The Anglo-Saxon pot from the Netherhall Collection: 1. Hargrove’s illustration of 1789; 2, drawing in Hutchinson’s History of Cumberland (x3); 3. Hodgson’s (1956) drawing.
The pot is now part of the core loan collection which forms the Senhouse Museum in Maryport. New information has now come to light, which shows the Northamptonshire connection to be entirely false, and gives a precise provenance for the pot. The pot was actually found in 1756 in a tumulus known as Deuil Cross, three miles south of Boroughbridge in Yorkshire. The burial mound was on the land of a farm called Hunday Field (OS SE 430 634) in the parish of Marton-cum-Grafton, close to the Roman road between York and Aldborough.

This information comes from a history of Knaresborough by E. Hargrove, the text of which includes a drawing of the pot (Fig. 1.1). After describing the destruction of the tumulus the text concludes with a description of the urns, "The annexed print is a representation of one of them, dug up here in the year 1756; now in the possession of Humphrey Senhouse, esq., of Nether-hall, near Cockermouth. It was nine inches in height, and 32 in circumference." Hargrove’s history went through a number of editions and it has been possible to trace the first appearance of the pot to the 4th edition of 1789. The drawing was not present in the edition of 1782.

The existence of drawings and especially dimensions in all the sources has created a sound trail of evidence to confirm the identity of the pot. The earliest Cumberland source to mention the pot is Hutchinson. Although the drawing (Fig. 1.2) is crude it shows the correct shape and the out-turned rim and it gives the dimension of nine inches height and a similar measurement of the diameter. Crucially, Hutchinson confirms that the pot was already at Maryport by the end of the 18th century. Another interesting point arises out of consideration of the editions of Hargrove. Since the figure first appears in the 1789 edition and is not present in 1782, it suggests that the drawing may only have been made in the 1780s. However, the drawing is quite distinct from that made by James Lowes for Hutchinson and neither drawing is copied from the other, nor did they use a common source. If Hargrove’s illustrator saw the pot in Yorkshire, it implies that the Senhouses only acquired the pot around 1790, rather than soon after its discovery.

The new information only takes the story so far. We still do not know how or why Humphrey Senhouse acquired the pot. One point to note here is that anyone travelling north from London, Ashby St Ledger, or York in the 18th century would have passed close by the find-spot and through Boroughbridge.

Notes and References

2 J. N. L. Myres, A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon Pottery of the Pagan Period (Cambridge, 1977), no. 406, fig. 26
4 Information on the provenance of this pot came from Nick Wilson of Hunday Field Farm who first approached the Senhouse Museum about the survival of the pot and provided copies of Hargrove’s text.
6 W. Hutchinson, History of Cumberland (1794) Maryport, no, 66, plate IV.
5. *A list of the garrison at Carlisle Castle 1383*

*BY WILLIAM COOK*

There is a list of the 1383 castle garrison at Carlisle stored in the National Archives which I believe has not been mentioned in any written history of Carlisle Castle. The source lists 21 men-at-arms and 30 archers residing at the castle under the command of Adam Parving, the sheriff of Cumberland. This number indicates a steady build-up of the garrison from 1381 when, according to Mike McCarthy, “castle and west march were defended by two knights, 21 men-at-arms and 27 archers, and there was a similar force of 20 men-at-arms and 30 archers in the castle the following year”. The build-up continued after 1383 as by 1384 the castle’s garrison had risen to 50 men-at-arms and 100 archers. This increase took place at the same time as cannon were installed on top of the keep and shortly after the completion of William de Ireby’s Tower, the castle’s new outer gatehouse. The enlarged garrison was therefore part of a general expansion of the castle’s defences instigated by the sheriff of Cumberland who clearly anticipated a period of conflict. Attacks launched by the Scots in the city in 1383 and 1384 would justify his measures.

---

**A list of the garrison at Carlisle Castle, 1383**³

Men-at-arms and archers being in the guard of the king’s castle, Carlisle. Seventh year [of Richard II, 1383] [. . . Adam] Parving, Sheriff of Cumberland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Men-at-arms</th>
<th>Archers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sir Robert Parving</td>
<td>William de Boursted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Bowet</td>
<td>Thomas de Boursted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard de Skelton</td>
<td>Thomas del Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Skelton</td>
<td>William Adyson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Salkeld</td>
<td>Thomas Huetson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard de Morthing</td>
<td>John Grenelef</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>George de Warthewy</td>
<td>John del Munnkhous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Ormsby</td>
<td>William Ladyman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert de Brystowe</td>
<td>William Mairman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Aglionby</td>
<td>Ralph atte Neelhous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas de Ragton</td>
<td>John Bacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Senhouse</td>
<td>John Caunterbury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John del Hames</td>
<td>John Blakhaie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Ketyson Junior</td>
<td>Walter Ingram</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas Stodhird</td>
<td>Stephen Cooke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Mundvile</td>
<td>John del Butery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard Bowet</td>
<td>William Ferour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Yorke</td>
<td>Thomas del Burne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Hunter Junior</td>
<td>John del Halle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John de Dalston</td>
<td>William Finlane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Fother</td>
<td>John de Stayneton Sen[jior]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Archers (continued)
William de Stayneton
John del Wode
John de Etedby
William de Etedby
Robert Lynok
John de Neuby
John Birkeshawes
John de Weresdale
Adam Chaumberley

Acknowledgements
I would like to thank P. H. W. Booth at The University of Liverpool who initially discovered the source at the National Archives and who advised me during the course of translating it.

References
2 Ibid.
3 PRO E 199/7/11 m.7.

6. Croft Cottage, a newly discovered true longhouse
   BY NINA JENNINGS

This remarkable clay dabbin stands on the south side of the cul-de-sac in Longburgh, a hamlet of Burgh by Sands, which is situated on the edge of the salt marsh. It is a former farmhouse of the cross-passage type, with three remaining crucks (Fig. 1 – AA; BB; CC), and it appears, from the positioning of the firewall relative to the crucks, to have been originally built as a true longhouse, with a central hearth and no chimney.¹

When the Kewley family moved in about 32 years ago the house was semi-derelict. Since then the barn end has collapsed, because a tie-beam was cut by a previous owner, probably in order to give more headroom. The end has since been rebuilt in brick on a slightly longer plan, but in keeping with the rest of the building. A modern bathroom, a spacious new sitting room, an extra staircase and two more bedrooms have also been installed. The former barn cruck has been retained. There is also a conservatory and kitchen extension at the rear and a modern porch at the front. These were installed by the Kewleys to give the extra support which was needed. A portion of the back wall of the dwelling house had collapsed, and the lower section of this wall is now part clay, part breeze-block, the upper section still being brick.

The chimney is brick and the roof is now entirely of Welsh slate; formerly the barn end and a small coalhouse were roofed with sandstone slabs. The windows are
of various dates but none have dressings apart from sandstone sills; at the front, on the upper floor, there is a casement window and two with a single opening pane. A third one, at the back, used to light the stairs landing. The Kewleys have replaced it with a Velux window, and moved it downstairs. At the front, from the north southwards, there is a small non-opening window, a 4-pane sash with no 'ears', a much larger modern window, and a slightly unusual sash. There is a small window high in the north gable and at the back, upstairs, two former outside windows.

Entering through the porch, we find on our right-hand side the recently rebuilt barn and new staircase, and on our left the firewall. This latter is mostly clay and contains a niche, which must show the former position of the setpot. In the firehouse, the inglenook retains its heck post, bressumer and firewindow but not the heck partition. The hearth contains a modern grate in a plain, undecorated sandstone surround with a brick fireback, but there are traces of a former kitchen range. There is now no sign of the firehood. The boards above the inglenook show the position of the bedroom fireplace, upstairs. There are no stops on the joists. The feet of two pairs of full crucks can be seen.

FIG. 1. Plan of Croft Cottage showing position of crucks.
At the far end of the room are the feet of a cruck pair AA, up against a wooden partition with a door at each end. One door leads into a small parlour with two windows, one of which is very small: the previous occupants used this room as a kitchen. In both the firehouse and parlour, the ceilings are unplastered.

Returning to the firehouse, the other door gives onto a wooden staircase with a partition on both sides. The door is cut away at the top in order not to foul one of the cruck blades. Mounting this we arrive at a small landing: to the right is a small bedroom with a gable window and a front window: to the left a larger bedroom, with a Victorian iron grate. The top of CC, one of the cruck pairs is concealed by the ceiling, but David Cook has examined it and found that it is of Alcock’s Type C.² It no longer directly supports the ridge, which has been raised, and there are two empty slots beneath a reused tie (Fig. 2). BB, the cruck pair near the firewall, has been cut off at first floor level and is not visible upstairs. The front wall and the north gable are clay, with brick above.

![Diagram](image_url)
Fig. 3. Croft Cottage – sketch of cruck A, top view from east (drawn by David Cook).
A door beside the firewall leads onto the landing above the crosspassage, the new staircase, bathroom and bedrooms. Returning to the conservatory, the former back door (now blocked) can be seen. It has plain square section sandstone dressings, like those of the hearth.

It is clear from the position of the firewall inside a bay, that it is a later insertion. The original hearth would have been in the middle of the floor, with at most a partition separating the domestic and farm accommodation. This is only the eighth or ninth such house to be found on the Solway Plain.

It must have been single storey when built, with at most a loft over the parlour, reached by a ladder. In the deeds there is a reference to a chicken loft, but this could be a small loft over the crosspassage. The house would have been thatched. Eventually the firewall and a firehood were installed, with a setpot behind. Later a stone fireplace was added and a brick flue with an upstairs hearth inserted into the firehood.

Possibly at the same time, possibly later, the upper floor was constructed with its internal stairs, cruck BB was truncated at floor level and cruck CC’s tie was raised. Originally there would have been fewer and smaller windows.

Notes and References

1 Nina Jennings, Clay Dabbins: Vernacular Buildings of the Solway Plain (CWAAS Extra Series XXX, 2003), 34.

7. Unusual boundary markers

By Nina Jennings and Peter Messenger

Woodhouses is a hamlet on the road from Great Orton to Thursby and lies within the parish of Orton. The farmhouse of Orchard House Farm is built along the road. It is a four-bay house with the original two, clay-built centre bays still surviving. The house has been faced with Flemish bond brickwork and a brick bay added at each end. The handmade bricks and the style of the windows with their projecting sills are consistent with the inscription 17 AB 51 on the lintel over the front door. There are no straight joints in the brickwork so clearly the whole remodelling with the extensions, the brick facing, door and window frames were carried out at the same time.

The gable with its outshut is rendered apart from an inscribed stone and five projecting square stones. The well carved inscription states that “A BARNES PROPERTY EXTENDS AS FAR AS THESE 5 STONES PROJECT 1791” (Fig. 1). The five stones project about 150 mm (6 in.) from the gable wall, each having a face about 100 mm (4 in.) square. Each face has a number inscribed on it, from 1 to 5. Numbers 1 to 3 are roughly in line, with 1 near the front elevation and 3 at the rear. Number 4 is at ground level and 5 is high up on the gable.

Hutchinson writing in 1794 states that Orton parish is “. . . now in the entire possession of Sir John Brisco . . .” and tenure was “Generally freehold, under Sir
PLATE 1. Orchard House Farm, Woodhouses, showing boundary stones in the house gable.
John Brisco”. There is a tantalising reference to there not having been “... ever any litigation with regard to property, except one suit with the lord of the manor above fifty years ago, at which time their right was fully confirmed ...”. Unfortunately the court rolls have not survived with the Brisco papers, so we are unable to identify which property was the subject of this dispute.

The Tithe Map of 1843 and the Tithe Award of 1844 show the boundary of Orchard House Farm going past the south gable and this is shown marked onto the First Edition OS map of 1865 (Fig. 2). The joint owners are given as John Newton and Jane Barnes. However, in the 1851 census John Newton is “Landed proprietor farming 50 acres”. (The other Woodhouses farmers are designated simply “farmer”; presumably they were tenants). He is married to Mary, born in Orton, and there is also in the household one Jane Baines, annuitant, born in Orton, sister-in-law of John. This is presumably a misspelling of Jane Barnes’ name, i.e. the joint proprietor with him in 1843. Clearly Jane is the sister of Mary. She may have sold her interest in the property to John, in exchange for an annuity.

A search of the Bishops’ Transcripts shows that Anthony Barnes (d.1766) of Aikton, was the owner of Orchard House Farm and the great-grandfather of Mary and Jane. The farm was rented out to a tenant for life. Joseph Barnes’ will, written 1818, leaves the farm in trust to his son Joseph, and properties in Wigton to his daughters Mary and Jane. The elder Joseph Barnes died in 1833, but his son died intestate in 1839. John Newton must have acquired Mary’s property on marriage. (With all my worldly goods I thee endow).

Another Anthony Barnes was the uncle of Mary and Jane but his will has not
survived. Presumably he predeceased his brother Joseph but in 1791 when the inscription was installed he was the owner of what is now Orchard Farm. Wishing to prevent the gable of his recent extension becoming a party wall, he must have thought it prudent to install these unusual boundary markers against any future encroachment by the Briscos.

Acknowledgements

We would like to thank the staff of Carlisle Record Office, especially Susan Dench, Tom Robson and David Bowcock, for their help, and also the Ordnance Survey for permission to reproduce part of the first OS map, and finally Mr Keith Dayson for permission to photograph the building.

Notes and References

2 CRO(C) DHA.
3 CRO(C) DRC 8/144.
4 CRO(C) DRC 6/114.
5 CRO(C) P 1818.
6 Book of Common Prayer.

8. A portrait in Warcop Church

By Mark Blackett-Ord, M.A., F.S.A.

On the west wall of the nave of St Columba’s church, Warcop, a large brass plaque states that £4,000 had been added to the church endowment, “here where her early life was spent”, as a fund in the name of Eleanor Breeks, who died in 1903, “by one who loved her”. No hint is given of the identity of the donor.

In the vestry hangs an immense photogravure portrait of a middle-aged lady in the dress of about 1880 (Plate 1). She has no identification. A label on the back of the heavy carved oak frame gives the maker as “Holland & Co., Mount Street”. They were eminent upholsterers, and had been responsible for the drawing room at Balmoral in 1855. The whole picture is so heavy that it takes two men to move it.

However, St Columba’s Terrier and Inventory for 1936 record her portrait in the vestry, with the note, “A certain Mr Lewis gave £4,000 in memory of Eleanor Breeks (see the brass on the west wall of Nave) and it is reported that the gift was made on condition that the photograph of Eleanor Breeks remains hanging in the church”. This fact, together with information preserved by the family and other sources, enables us to piece together her story.

Eleanor (Nelly) was born at Warcop in 1838 and was baptised there on 7 April, daughter of Richard and Elizabeth Breeks, Gentleman. She was one of a number of high minded and energetic children of an elopement. The father, Richard was the son of another Richard, yeoman of Warcop and his wife, Mary Mason of Kirkby Stephen. The mother Elizabeth Wilkinson, daughter of James Wilkinson and
Nanny Eggleston, was an orphan, who had been placed at Warcop Hall (which he rented) by a rich uncle, Thomas Wilkinson in 1820, as a companion to his own blind and widowed sister Jane Dent. The Wilkinsons were rich, and the Dents immensely rich, from the East India and China trade. Elizabeth’s brother, William Wilkinson, was soon building the villa called Eden Gate at Warcop, and would be High Sheriff in 1856. Her cousins the Dents, who had paid for the rebuilding of Crosby Ravensworth school in 1784, would soon be rebuilding Skirsgill Park near Penrith and Flass House at Maulds’ Meaburn, each on a lavish scale.5

The elopement was soon forgiven, and children were born, and Nelly and her brothers and sisters were richly brought up with financial assistance from their two Wilkinson bachelor uncles. Until they married they divided their time between Warcop and houses in Fitzroy Square and Regent’s Park, the area of London
patronised by new Eastern money. Nelly’s two brothers were sent to India, where Richard died but the survivor James married the Susan Maria, eldest daughter of the Governor of Madras, Sir William Denison. (This event caused James’s uncle William Wilkinson to buy the Helbeck Hall estate three miles from Warcop for the young couple). Nelly’s three sisters also married well. In 1861 Agnes Jane married the fifty-five year old George Moore (1806-1876) as his second wife. He was a self made Victorian philanthropist and commercial hero of the wholesale lace trade, with an estate at Whitehall, near Wigton, a mansion in Kensington Palace Gardens and, after his death, a biography by Samuel Smiles.

But no-one married Nelly. She stayed living with her widowed uncle Robert Wilkinson at 22 Cumberland Terrace, Regent’s Park. There she became acquainted with a draper called John Lewis who had opened his own leasehold shop in Oxford Street in 1864. She began to see much of him; she told him of her childhood in Warcop, and perhaps allowed him a photograph of her, from which the photogravure portrait could later be made.

A serious social relationship could hardly have developed over the shop counter. But her uncle Thomas Wilkinson had been a partner in Thomas Dent & Co. in Canton, trading raw cotton, manufactured goods and (illegally) opium to China, and tea and silk to England. John Lewis’s drapery business was founded on cotton and woollen fabrics and silks. The records for the shop for its first year of trading show regular payments to “Dent”, including two sums of £149 in September 1864. Perhaps a commercial relation between John Lewis and Nelly’s uncle, allowed them to meet.

They wanted to marry but her family would have nothing of this. He was a shopkeeper and it was out of the question. Nelly seems lacking in enough strength of character to make anything of the fact that her sister had married George Moore, a wholesaler. But George Moore, it could be said, was a millionaire, and John Lewis was not – at least not yet.

For the next twenty years John Lewis remained a bachelor, and worked hard and successfully. By 1880 his turnover was about £70,000. In 1906 he was to buy Peter Jones Ltd., in Chelsea, walking down from his store in Oxford Street with £20,000 in his pocket. By 1884 he had accepted that Nelly was unattainable for him, and he married a thirty-two year old schoolmistress from the West country. According to their elder son John Spedan Lewis (1885-1963), his father had a Rolls Royce, very little education, no friends, but an extraordinary energy.

Nelly remained a spinster. In 1887 her uncle Robert Wilkinson died, leaving her £5,000 and the house at 22 Cumberland Terrace for her lifetime. But she may not have stayed long, because a letter-book compiled by her sister-in-law, Susan Maria Breeks, records that by 1895 she had moved to live with her elder widowed sister Elizabeth, at Ash Bank, Penrith, together with an “Aunt” Jane Chamley and a niece, Daisy Thompson. It was not a happy household. In November 1899 her sister-in-law’s copybook records, “Nelly gets more and more imbecile”. Early next year she moved into Mrs Theobald’s Home for Inebriates at Tower House, Leicester, (“Ladies only, of the upper middle class; two-and-a-half guineas a week”). At the time of the 1901 Census she and Elizabeth were boarders in a house at The Heads, Keswick, but Nelly was soon back at Leicester where she died in January 1903 and she returned to Penrith only to be buried.
The sequel comes a few years after her death. At her home, Ash Bank, where the niece was still living, a motor car arrived (a rarity in Penrith) and a man got out, leaving his wife in the car. He was John Lewis, he said, of the London store. He had loved Nelly, and he was going to leave a large sum as an endowment fund for Warcop Church in her name. The condition was that her portrait should hang in the vestry for ever. The arrangements were duly made although they took until 1919 to conclude – Lewis died in 1928.

The large brass plaque in the nave and the portrait in the vestry, so magnificently framed in Mount Street (near the Oxford Street store), boast his affection for her on an unnecessary scale, as if in answer to the contempt he had suffered from her family long before.

Notes and References

1 Inventory dated 15 March 1936 CRO(K) WPR 13/I94 – kindly found and copied for me by Vivienne Gate, Research Assistant at CRO(K).
2 CRO(K) WPR 13/5.
3 They married on 13 February 1828 at Warcop and subsequently had the following children – Richard, ch. Warcop 15 February 1829; James Wilkinson, ch. Warcop 22 March 1830; Agnes Jane, ch. Warcop 5 May 1833; Elizabeth; Mary, ch. Warcop 24 August 1836; Margaret Sarah, ch. Warcop 22 February 1840.
5 For the Wilkinsons see ibid., 321 and for the Dents see ibid., 100. I am also grateful for genealogical information supplied to me by my mother Mrs Blackett-Ord of Helbeck and my cousin Nicholas Dent.
6 Ibid., 50.
7 She died at Whitehall in 1888. For her memorial see Rev. F. B. Swift, “The old church of Allhallows”, CW2, lxxv, 126, 131.
9 Oxford DNB, entry “John Lewis (1836-1928)”.
10 Unpublished research by Nicholas Dent.
11 Oxford DNB, entry “Dent Family (Far East Merchants, c.1820-1927)”.
12 Oxford DNB, entry “John Lewis”.
13 Copy Westminster Bank passbooks supplied to me by Judy Faraday, John Lewis Partnership archivist.
14 1881 Census for Middlesex RG11 0179/26.
16 Elizabeth had been since 1883 the third wife of Canon George Frederick Weston (1819-1887), Vicar of Crosby Ravensworth.
17 See the enthusiastic description in The Nursing Record for 2 May 1889.
18 She was buried in Penrith Beacon Edge Cemetery on 21 January 1903, aged 64 years (Eden District Council Cemetery Register).