

ART. XV – *A Retrospective*

BY THE PRESIDENT, PROFESSOR G. H. MARTIN

THE hundred volumes of the second series of the *Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Archaeological and Antiquarian Society* run from 1901 to 2000. They therefore measure out the years of the twentieth century, a tumultuous period which has left its marks on more than the affairs of learned associations. Their sequence does nevertheless record a story of its own, besides those aspects of its contents discussed in the papers which follow here, and which review the Society's interests in, and contribution to, the disciplines that it exists to promote.

In the first place, there is a striking unity in the series. It is a commonplace that the past hundred years have been characterised by wholesale technological change. Its novelty is sometimes exaggerated. Mechanical transport and electrical power were first developed in the nineteenth century, and in 1901 both the typewriter and the telephone were established in well-run offices. However, there is no doubt that mutation, like massive destruction, has been a hallmark of the century. Academic disciplines have changed with everything else, in the scope of their inquiries as much as in the techniques which they deploy. Yet there is an unmistakable edge of professionalism in the first volume, under W. G. Collingwood's editorship, and the distribution of its themes – archaeological investigation and recording, architectural studies, historical texts, a wide sweep of family history, anthropology and folklore – has proved serviceable in very different circumstances.

The principal change is rather of another kind. Like the journals of other societies, the *Transactions* were originally an annual report of the members' activities, concerned mainly but not exclusively with the conduct of their meetings, and naturally including reports of papers read and communicated there. In the 1860s there was a good deal of general historical information which was novel and interesting to many if not most of the members of a county or local society, but that was quite soon displaced by the discussion of more specialised topics which the societies themselves helped to define and develop. By the beginning of the twentieth century the *Transactions* were still a record of business, but that business was increasingly the publication of learning addressed to a wider audience than the members alone.

The 350 pages of the first volume, by a process familiar to all editors, had expanded to 537 in the fourteenth, which went to press in the spring of 1914. The next volume bears the impress of the times chiefly in its size, which had contracted to 232 pages, but also in an editorial note that the regular meeting of the Society planned for September 1914 had been postponed "on account of the war". The sixteenth volume, published late in 1916, recorded the jubilee meeting held to mark the Society's fiftieth anniversary, but also two military casualties in France – a reserve lieutenant serving as a transport officer, and a lieutenant-colonel, both in their fifties. The obituary pages of such publications ordinarily suggest that the study of antiquity and longevity go together, and it is obvious that many if not most of the

members were above military age, but the war was a hungry Behemoth. As it happened no casualties were reported in 1917, but an accomplished young captain of 27 was killed in October 1918, when even in the weeks of victories British losses were still running at 3,000 a month.

Despite the difficulties of travel and accommodation the Society was able to maintain its sequence of annual general meetings throughout the war, but excursions and some local activities had to be abandoned. The pilgrimage on Hadrian's Wall, which had been celebrated in 1896 and 1906, was postponed to happier times. The *Transactions* were progressively fined down to 200 pages and in 1918 and 1919 they were published in paper covers. When peace came to a world sadder though not very evidently wiser, there was relief but no instantaneous recovery. Decently clad boards were restored to the *Transactions* only after two years of peace; a fuller range of meetings was resumed, but there were still other amenities wanting. F. J. Haverfield, a scholar of international reputation who had been as familiar a figure on the Wall as he was in Oxford, died in 1919, in a measure a victim of the war. There had been some loss of momentum in archaeology as in other studies; and it was noted that funds for the resumption of excavations on any scale were hard to come by. On the other hand the home front had not been inactive, and by 1919 R. G. Collingwood had returned to academic life after service in naval intelligence. In the following years scientific archaeology recovered and expanded, and historical inquiries were similarly refreshed. The pilgrimage on the Wall was revived in 1920. By the 1930s the Society was busier than ever, and the *Transactions* for 1936-9, which recorded the membership as it stood on 31 August 1939, the last day of what had passed for peace, ran to 367 pages. The summer excursion to Salisbury and Bradford-on-Avon had been greatly enjoyed two months earlier, but the autumn meeting was circumspectly abandoned.

The relative impact of the two wars, judged by these recondite standards, was much the same. In terms of physical damage and civilian casualties in this country the effect of the First World War was marginal and the Second formidable, but both were disruptive. The first also made only a slow impression on the civil economy, whilst in the second the government assumed wide ranging powers from the beginning. Industry and local government had been unobtrusively prepared for war by 1939, and the civil population was now regarded and treated as a valuable resource in itself. Its morale was correspondingly higher, but its energies were more closely directed. The Society responded first by restricting, and then after September 1940 abandoning its general meetings altogether, subsisting on an annual meeting of council to maintain its corporate life. It also resumed paper covers as a wartime dress for its restricted publications. In 1944, when the *Transactions* declined to 194 pages, there was no record of proceedings at all, but that was in part because of the death of W. T. McIntyre, who had been editor since 1926 and had taken up the presidency as well when R. G. Collingwood fell ill in 1938. The last wartime council met in March 1945, and the autumn general meeting was resumed in the following September.

What is remarkable is that despite the dislocations and distractions of wartime, there were always papers, and paper, available for an annual volume. Restrictions remained and prices rose in the peace, but the *Transactions* grew again to 261 pages by 1950, and the pilgrimage was resumed in 1949, the centenary of Collingwood

Bruce's famous excursion. That fiftieth volume, compact but wide-ranging, half-way in the series, opened with an account by Clare Fell of the Great Langdale axe-factory. The discoveries in Langdale were of great significance for prehistoric studies, and they were the results of close observation and patient fieldwork by Brian Bunch and others. Those investigations, of a kind very different from the large-scale works which were being resumed on the Wall and elsewhere, were in a continuing and productive tradition of local exploration and inquiry.

After the celebration of the Society's centenary in 1966, reported in the sixty-seventh volume, the primary section called Proceedings was dropped from the *Transactions*, which became, as they have remained, an historical and archaeological annual for their native ground. Their territory was redefined as Cumbria by the Local Government Act of 1972, as one of many administrative blessings, but the old title has held. The page-size of the volumes was enlarged in 1977, a change generally found in such journals about that time, but in all respects the series has maintained its character and purpose together. Now the *Transactions* are about to begin a new century and a new series, and the Society which sustains them hopes to continue to acquit itself well in all its undertakings. Its founders might be surprised by the outcome of some of their works, but they would recognise much else, and be reassured by it.

The Prehistoric Period

BY TOM CLARE

One hundred years ago there was no means by which the exact antiquity of humans could be measured, although it was recognised that (stratigraphic) links existed with geological time, which itself remained to be dated. Since then, however, the development of absolute dating techniques has removed the need to "estimate" the age of particular deposits and there has been a refinement and development of methodologies to understand past environments, including geological ones. Allied to these have been changes in the collection and recovery of evidence and in interpretation.

Absolute dating techniques, and in particular radio-carbon dating, have revolutionised our understanding of prehistory. At Oddendale, for example, it is possible to envisage the timber monument standing for several centuries (CW2, xcvi, 11-44), whilst at Plasketlands, an enclosure similar to others thought to be Romano-British has been shown to be of neolithic date (CW2, xciii, 1-18). However, the number of sites and artefacts actually dated within Cumbria has remained remarkably small.

Whilst nineteenth century antiquarians were aware that the prehistoric environment differed from our own it has become possible to visualise in some detail what those differences were and to see that the prehistoric period was in fact one of great, and at times rapid, environmental change.

The general pattern and history of sea level changes provide, for example, a context in which to understand some specific sites, such as Eskmeals and the general distribution of others. Again, whilst it has long been suspected that prehistoric sites and land surfaces might be buried below marine, fluvial, aeolian, and hill slope deposits, there has been little investigation of them. However, the Mesolithic site at Gleaston, the flint scatters on Walney Island (*CW2*, lxx, 277-280), and the palisaded site at High Crosby, are indicators of the potential for such investigations whilst requiring caution in the interpretation of the distribution of known (surface) sites.

In contrast, pollen analysis or palynology has been relatively widely applied in Cumbria. Originally developed within Scandinavia in the earlier years of the twentieth century, it has been applied in the County by a number of workers and as a result it is now recognised that the 'natural' forest canopy of 5,000 B.C., itself a mosaic, became denuded in different areas at different times during the prehistoric period. For that reason the technique has been used to deduce where prehistoric settlement might have been or to allow the formulation of theories about general economic changes.

Useful though palynology has proved to be there is, however, increasing recognition of its limitations. In addition the apparent existence of "pre-elm decline cereals" in south-west Cumbria and elsewhere, and the recognition that the "elm decline" – conventionally interpreted as coinciding with the introduction of farming – was not a single nor synchronous event, has required the concept of the "neolithic" to be questioned. Similarly, the terms "Bronze Age and Iron Age" – adopted more than one hundred years ago because there was no other way of constructing chronologies – appear to be barriers to recognising continuity and regional patterns within prehistoric evidence.

Whilst photographs could be taken from balloons in the last century it remains a fact that data collection by aerial photography is a wholly new, twentieth century development. The technique is widely known and all that need be noted here is that it has enabled new details to be recorded about previously known earthworks, such as the enclosures on Aughtertree Fell, and dramatically increased the number of new sites and type of sites. As such it has extended the inventories of Collingwood (*CW2*, xxiii, 206-276 and *CW2*, xxvi, 1-57) and those of the former Map Holders' of the Society.

Nevertheless, one of the major developments in Cumbrian prehistory during the last century was the identification of the "Langdale Axe Factories" (*CW2*, l, 1-13). The discovery was, however, only possible because of the petrological analysis of stone implements, for that technique, together with the trace element analysis of bronzes and fabric analysis of pottery (*CW2*, xcii, 13-22 for the latter), allow us to identify the sources of particular materials or artefacts. As such they have a potential to allow the construction of trade models and, based on those, models for the organisation of society itself.

Looking to the future there are other techniques now available which have a potential to revolutionise our understanding of prehistory. The analysis of lipids within pottery, for example, allows identification of what the vessel contained or was used for. Similarly the isotopic composition of bone and teeth can show what animals and humans were eating. However, in this context it is necessary to note that almost no prehistoric bone material (other than that cremated) has been

recovered from Cumbria. The one exception is the cave site briefly investigated near Cautley Spout.

One reason for the existence of little faunal material is the type and small number of sites excavated. In part this reflects the organisation and policies of State Archaeology as it developed in the last quarter of the century, and in the idea that sites should only be excavated if threatened. (Note, however, that even in 1874, in the very first paper in *Transactions*, a plea was made by the then President to preserve burial mounds for future “scientific” excavation.) As the twentieth century has drawn to a close there have been national calls from the Council for British Archaeology and others for a new strategy based on research agendas. In that context our understanding of the prehistoric archaeology of the County owes much to the individual programmes pursued by many members of the Society. To identify them all is not possible here but it is necessary to acknowledge the work of Clare Fell and Jim and Peter Cherry and, more recently, Chris Salisbury and Bob Bewley, as people who have contributed enormously to our understanding of the period.

In part, excavation and research strategies will, as ever, be informed by interpretation of the existing data. In some respects, however, interpretation has progressed little in the last one hundred years. Whilst, for example, burial sites (*CW2*, xcvi, 11-44) are capable of yielding more evidence than one hundred years ago, the data is often recorded without attempt to reconstruct the meaning attached by prehistoric peoples to the construction, use, or practices of the monuments. In part this results from attempts to make archaeology an “observational” science, where “experience teaches us that it is not safe to assert or deny anything in matters antiquarian, except what we see, and never to be over confident of the correctness of the conclusions at which we arrive” (the Society’s first President, first *Transactions*, *CW1*, i, 6).

Nevertheless, some have now begun to move from “observation to interpretation”, and in this context it is necessary to acknowledge the work of Alexander Thom, who suggested that stone circles were built using complex mathematics, a standard unit of measurement and incorporating astronomical alignments (*CW2*, lxxv, 1-16 for references and some comments). However, the latter have also been interpreted in a symbolic fashion and their sizes have been used to estimate population numbers (*CW2*, xciv, 1-12).

Whilst individual settlement sites have been excavated – albeit the excavations have been small scale – it is apparent from palaeoenvironmental evidence and the work of Thorpe (*CW Newsletter* no 15), that the interpretation of their distribution, and the meaning of dates obtained for a particular episode, need to take into account continuity of landscape exploitation over centuries, perhaps millennia.

Despite the technical developments of the last one hundred years we are still not much further forward in being able to explain the why and wherefore of the monuments such as stone circles. In particular, there remains a dearth of known settlement sites and an inadequate number of excavations. In short, the database is inadequate. In part this could be addressed by research strategies but these will need to recognise the potential of continuity in landscape exploitation and the need to move from simple data collection to socio-economic interpretation.

The Roman Period

BY D. C. A. SHOTTER

If the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries were the period of the antiquarian in the study of Roman Britain, the twentieth has belonged to archaeologists, historians and, increasingly, to applied scientists. Previously, sites, often much more visible than now, were located and artefactual material retrieved; some excavations were initiated, usually with limited objectives, such as finding an inscription which might reveal a site's Roman name and allowing it to be related to those documents containing lists of Roman site-names. More recently, we have become concerned to understand the chronologies of sites in as much detail as possible, how sites related to each other, who lived in them, their environments and how they "worked". Large numbers of people have made contributions to the advance of these studies. Whilst it would be invidious in so short a summary to single out particular practitioners, to each of us groups of names will come readily to mind.

The developing organisation of archaeology, including its place in the planning-process, has greatly helped in its effectiveness – although many may regret the introduction of competitive tendering as a "bridge too far". However, to an extent, excavation-programmes can be geared to answering questions which have already been established through survey and research as significant. Now, instead of having to try to interpret sites from slit-trenches and keyholes, larger areas can be opened for examination, allowing horizontal relationships to become as significant as vertical ones. The objects used for dating and for cultural and economic assessment are much better understood now than they were a century ago, because over that period we have seen many more of them and the contexts in which they appear. Certain finds have been of outstanding importance – for example, the unforgettable timbers which have survived in Carlisle and, perhaps most dramatic and significant of all, the written records that have emerged from sites such as *Vindolanda* and Carlisle. Indeed, the techniques for recovering, conserving and understanding objects from waterlogged deposits have opened a whole new vista both in terms of the study-methods applied to Roman Britain and of the results secured.

We have in our area, of course, the single most important surviving monument in Roman Britain – Hadrian's Wall; understandably and rightly, much energy, thought and resource have been devoted to studying it. Questions relating to its development and purpose(s) continue to exercise scholars and lay-people alike; there remain many features that we still do not properly understand: how many people, for example, in A.D. 2000 could agree with each other on the circumstances of the Wall's construction, on the purpose of the *vallum*, or the reaction to the Wall of people who lived in its vicinity? At least, however, we have learnt – most recently in the important excavations at Birdoswald in the 1980s and 1990s – that we should not try to force developmental or strategic models on to sites that we hardly know. The excavated samples from the best-known sites are still small, and many sites have not been excavated at all. Any statistician would confirm that the predictive reliability of small samples is circumscribed with risks. In this, as in other Romano-British questions, we still have to try to understand prevailing circumstances and objectives before we can hope to explain the bricks and mortar of individual sites. It was wisely said in the past that, at the end of the day "archaeology is about people";

it is concerned with what people did and what they thought.

A good deal, too, has been learnt about the *Stanegate*, the reasons for and circumstances of its creation, and its relationship with “the Wall”. In the course of this, we have come to appreciate the complexity of pre-Hadrianic arrangements in Solway and the “coastal extension” of Hadrian’s Wall, which a century ago was hardly known at all. Coupled with this, we have considered the important question of why such fortifications were built, and with this has come the important realisation that the north-west was not always a uniquely military zone. The appreciation of the existence of the *civitas* of the *Carvetii* has helped to narrow the “north/south divide”. It has shown us that the north-west was “home” to some wealthy Romano-British, capable of contributing to their own organisation, and not just (as used to be assumed by many) to a scattered handful of poverty-stricken and recalcitrant natives. This appreciation has also pointed the way to an idea of the kind of town that Roman Carlisle may have become, which incidentally has provided a context for the often-quoted observations on Carlisle made by Bede.

Our ideas of the progress of conquest and occupation have changed too. A hundred years ago, when education was centred on the Classics, Tacitus (in his *Life of Agricola*) dominated thinking about the conquest to the extent that every Roman military site was regarded, without question, as a foundation of Agricola’s governorship. Now, more sophisticated artefactual studies, together with the availability of such techniques as dendrochronology, and a degree of common sense and logic, have shown us that the process of conquest and initial occupation in the north took up most of the period from Nero to Hadrian. In our area, in particular, many of the military sites are now known to have been established after the mid-80s, whilst others go back to the early 70s – or even the late 60s. We should also, however, do well to remember that surviving fort-remains relate to the “police-stations” of occupation; the campsites of campaigning armies need more sophisticated techniques for their retrieval, before even they can be studied at all. Without such information, the anatomy of conquest will remain in many ways a matter of surmise.

Finally, the people of Roman Britain in the north-west: we have already alluded to the traditional caricature of them. Now, however, we see them in urban communities that grew up outside forts, mixing with families, discharged soldiers, and people from other parts of Britain and even distant parts of the Roman empire, in communities that in an entrepreneurial fashion took advantage of the market-economy that Roman Britain represented. As the historian, Dio Cassius, put it, “they became different without knowing it”. We have seen that in some circumstances they became sufficiently wealthy to share in the task of governing themselves. Aerial survey and limited excavation have shown them, too, in a rural environment, many no doubt producing the goods that the market-economy wanted and expected. This shows that Romanisation occurred in the north-west, even though it may have taken different physical forms from those found in the south; we realise now that one did not have to live in a palatial villa or a smart town-house to be Romanised. “Them-and-us” has given way to the notion of integration; few Romano-Britons in the north-west would have endorsed the judgement of the Caledonian chieftain, Calgacus, when he said, “they create a desolation, and they call it peace”.

We should not, of course, fool ourselves into thinking that, in the twentieth century, we have moved fully from ignorance to knowledge. Many gaps remain – even in basic matters; detail is often lacking; much of what was going on in the third and fourth centuries remains a “closed book”. This is particularly true, despite the attention currently given to it, of what is still inappropriately and misleadingly called “the End of Roman Britain”. If we may look forward, we should expect by the year 2100 to know a good deal more about this “process” than we do now.

Nonetheless, in the twentieth century, many giants of scholarship and many indefatigable and inspired field-workers have graced the study of the north-west in the Roman period; their successes have not been inconsiderable.

It has been said that an excavation that is not published might as well not have taken place. It will, therefore, provide a fitting conclusion to this review of research into Cumbria’s Roman past to highlight this Society’s role in the publication of both excavation-reports and syntheses – through the pages of *Transactions* and through its various series of occasional monographs. It is perhaps appropriate that the century which began with the publication of work at Hardknott, arguably Cumbria’s most dramatic Roman site, in the later volumes of the first series of *Transactions* and the early volumes of the second series (*CW1*, xiii and *CW2*, i), is ending with a monograph on the same site in the Research Series (No. 9; 1999).

In between these two milestones, *Transactions* has contained reports – amongst many others – of R. G. Collingwood’s work at Ambleside (*CW2*, xiv, xv, xvi and xxi), annual reports of the work on the Wall carried out in the 1920s and 1930s by the leading field-practitioners for the Cumberland Excavation Committee and, in more recent years, the reports of the pioneering work of Richard Bellhouse, especially that on sites of the Cumberland Coast. More recently, however, the growing size and complexity of excavation-reports have led to their publication within the format of the Research Series – for example, Timothy Potter’s work in the 1970s (No. 1), that of Carlisle Archaeological Unit (Nos. 4 and 5), as well as work at Bewcastle and Old Penrith (Nos. 6 and 7).

Transactions have also carried numerous important articles by scholars such as Haverfield, Richmond, Breeze and the late Dorothy Charlesworth, and the masterly (and still invaluable) syntheses of many of the Roman sites in Cumbria, produced first of all by R. G. Collingwood (for example, Hardknott in *CW2*, xxviii), and then continued by the late Eric Birley (for example, Brougham in *CW2*, xxxii; Low Borrow Bridge in xlvi; Old Carlisle in li; Brough-under-Stainmore and Ravenglass in lviii; and Papcastle in lxiii). Importantly, too, *Transactions* has always “found space” in its “Notes” section to record individual, isolated, items of interest which may appear small at the time, but which often have the potential to contribute to larger pictures.

In all, therefore, it can be said that the twentieth century has been one of considerable achievement in terms of advances in our knowledge of the Roman history of Cumberland and Westmorland – achievement, moreover, which crucially has always been matched by the commitment of this Society to ensure its communication into the public domain. That, after all, is where it has to be, if it is to be seen, discussed and further built upon by future generations.

The Medieval and Early-Modern Period

BY A. J. L. WINCHESTER

The second series of *Transactions* straddles the sea change which has swept through local studies in the twentieth century, as Victorian antiquarianism has been replaced by modern, systematic approaches to archaeology and local history. Nowhere is this demonstrated more clearly than in the medieval and early-modern periods. The focus has shifted from the parish church and the manor house, the twin staples of antiquarianism, close to the heart of the clergy and county families who championed antiquarian study, to questions concerning the development of communities, the economy, and institutions at a local and regional level.

The antiquarian tradition has never died in the pages of *Transactions*, as testified by the continuing stream of contributions recording local detail. Particularly notable are the numerous painstaking analyses of the fabric and building history of the castles and manorial halls, which form such a rich legacy of medieval and early-modern buildings in the Cumbrian landscape, the lead in this area being taken by John F. Curwen and J. R. Martindale. By and large, the greater houses were covered first, so that, by the middle decades of the century, it was the homes of the parish gentry and upper yeomanry which were receiving attention. A significant development after 1950 was the attention paid to farmhouses and other vernacular buildings, pioneering studies appearing in *CW2*, liii and liv. An increasing awareness of what might be termed the “yeoman inheritance” in Cumbria also extended to the complementary strand of antiquarian research, which reconstructed the histories of the families who owned and lived in the halls and farmhouses. The composition of the steady stream of genealogical papers changed to include not only the gentry but the upper yeomanry as well. Moor’s study of “statesmen” families in Irton (*CW2*, x) leads the way, and detailed family histories of yeoman and parish gentry dynasties were published by the 1920s. In contrast to the numerous genealogical studies, biographical accounts of individuals have been comparatively rare, those of members of the Parr family of Kendal being a notable exception.

Large parishes, poor livings and Border warfare have all played a part in limiting the number of medieval churches which survive in the Cumbrian landscape. Despite this, the history and architecture of over 30 parish churches were explored in the first half of the century and, although the fashion for recording individual parish churches waned, many other aspects of medieval religious history have been examined. Monastic remains have been the subject of architectural and archaeological investigations, and other religious institutions, such as hospitals and chantries, have been surveyed on a regional scale. Lists of clergy have been compiled for selected parishes; a good scatter of churchmen have been the subjects of biographical studies; and church fittings and furnishings, including stained glass, grave slabs and bells, have been recorded. The pioneering survey of church dedications in the diocese of Carlisle by T. H. B. Graham and W. G. Collingwood (*CW2*, xxv) remained almost unique as a regional survey until the 1990s.

Another aspect of the antiquarian tradition is the gathering and publishing of documentary materials. In the absence of a county record society for Cumbria, *Transactions* have doubled up as a vehicle for the publication of archival sources. Although the Record and Extra Series, together with the publications of the Surtees

Society, have gone some way to providing a steadily accumulating body of primary material for Cumbria, successive generations of medievalists have published papers which make available texts or calendars of primary sources. Of particular note are the numerous documents included in the long series of papers on Inglewood Forest by F. H. M. Parker (*CW2*, v-*CW2*, xii) and on manors in north Westmorland by F. W. Ragg (*CW2*, viii-*CW2*, xxviii), the latter intended as raw material for a Victoria County History of Westmorland, which still remains unrealised. Indeed, across the century, a considerable body of documentary evidence has been printed in articles in *Transactions*, including calendars of feet of fines, and of original deeds in the collections then at Tullie House, transcripts of the 1377 poll tax for Carlisle, 1670 hearth tax for Kendal barony, estate accounts, wills and inventories, and churchwardens' accounts.

The impact of more modern approaches to history is visible in papers which reflect the growth of interest in economic and social history nationally, though coverage has been patchy. There have been several attempts to survey aspects of social and economic history on a regional scale, including papers on private forests, open fields, crime and society, the operations of manor courts, and local government units. Increasingly, social and economic themes have been explored in local case studies, particularly in the fields of agrarian and early industrial history: pastoral farming in Troutbeck; village morphology in north Westmorland; woodland history in Windermere and Troutbeck; fulling in Grasmere; bloomeries in Eskdale and Wasdale, and salt pans by the Solway, for example.

Perhaps surprisingly, medieval settlement history (the study of villages and towns, as opposed to individual buildings within them) has received comparatively little attention. The main advances have been in the study of urban settlements. The borough charters of Kendal and Cockermouth have been discovered and published, and work carried out on the medieval topography of Appleby, Carlisle, Cockermouth and Kendal.

So, what has been achieved for the medieval and early-modern periods in the pages of *Transactions* across the twentieth century? The volume of antiquarian detail collected across the century is impressive. But it has to be admitted that the material thus salted away has yet to be exploited to the full, to test ideas based on work elsewhere against the evidence from Cumbria, and thus to contribute to wider historical debates. For example, the many pages devoted to genealogy and calendars of original documents provide the raw material for studying social change; and the detailed observation and analysis of the fabric of manorial halls and churches, the data to relate historic buildings to their social context. Many facets of medieval and early-modern life remain to be explored, but the tireless, careful recording and transcribing by successive generations of scholars, described above, has ensured that the volumes of *CW2* will form a rich quarry of detailed local evidence for the future.

Industrial History and the Modern Period

BY J. D. MARSHALL

Industrial history is a general term for a portmanteau subject derived from economic history and relating to various aspects of social history, population history, the development of banking, commerce and business history, urban history, the history of housing, and the history of transport. It is commonly associated with industrial archaeology and the history of technology. Agriculture, mining, quarrying and fisheries are industries, and, needless to say, their industrial history has not been confined to the urban environment.

Topics fitting one or more of these headings have appeared in papers published by the Society during the last fifty years. They represent a remarkable widening of subject matter, noticeable especially after the middle of the century, and they go far to explain why the Society's *Transactions* are among the most interesting and varied in the counties of Britain. This characterisation owes something to the willingness of the Society's successive presidents and vice-presidents, as representative leading members, to investigate unusual or innovative topics. Hence names like Collingwood, Curwen, McIntire, Hobbs, Melville, Brunskill, Bouch, Jones, Cherry, and Wilson, occur immediately in a discussion of this kind.

Internally or privately stimulated research has sometimes attracted contributions from other writers, and all through the period, academically competent papers on, say, demography or social history, have found a place in *Transactions*. The liberality of editors has of course played a part in this process. Whatever main influence has been in the air, the Society has been able to adjust itself to changes in historical research and writing, to the extent of exemplifying the transformations in historical viewpoint and subject-organisation in broader and even international institutions. To be sure, it has not done this consistently, and often there has been a time-lag or even a fallow period in which very little of import has appeared. Often, historical debate has merely contrived to keep alive. For example, in the late 1920s several members published well-observed papers on town or open fields in Furness or Cumberland, when the subject of the open fields was steadily expanding in national historiography. There was certainly some local awareness, if not debate. The contributors had apparently read Gilbert Slater and H. L. Gray, and much later, in the sixties, Elliott took hold of the subject as relating to Cumberland. The Society had played its part.

The generally innovative tendency has certainly been visible in the Society's publishing history, and in one field at least, that of the industrial archaeology and history of iron making, it has been in the forefront nationally. Two of our most original and distinguished members, W. G. Collingwood and H. S. Cowper, reported on the subject of the so-called bloomeries of High Furness, this before the present century (and in the Old Series), and in so doing they opened up an archaeological conundrum which still worries field workers a century later, in an age of metallurgical analysis and controlled experiment. How did the bloomeries operate?

The two pioneers published only part of their findings in *Transactions* and one suspects that such a novel subject was distasteful to many. However, by degrees this form of industrial history became established, and in the second half of the twentieth

century it surged forward to tackle rather more sophisticated forms of iron production. The dedicated local specialist has a contribution to make: Parsons on the Troutbeck woodlands gives one of the most authoritative accounts of charcoal burning yet published (*CW2*, xcvi).

The Victorian haematite iron and steel industry of North Lancashire and Cumberland provoked interest in its economic and social consequences, and led to a set of memorable contributions by the late Dr. Alan Harris, published in *Transactions* from the mid-sixties onward. The growth of iron-making towns like Carnforth, Askam and Millom, was traced carefully and with scholarship. This study was followed by another, of the coalmining area at Midgeholme and Tindale, embracing transport and lime manufacture, which *inter alia* surveyed miners' housing. The sum of Harris's contribution was so considerable as to represent the most important of its kind to be published in *Transactions*. But the signally outstanding work of the late Dr. Oliver Wood on the Cumberland coalfield, the bulk of it published separately in Extra Series XXIV, ensured that a future extended V.C.H. for Cumberland would have plenty of industrial foundation.

Good industrial history must have a regional background, and Bouch and Jones's *A Short Economic and Social History of the Lake Counties, 1500 to 1830* (1961), reminded the reader that the late Professor G. P. Jones was a distinguished economic historian with a gift for lucid generalisation. The late Canon C. M. L. Bouch had an equal love for Cumbrian history, the study of which must be generalised as well as specialised. Articles published after 1945 improved in quality and quantity. The turning point seems to have been in the sixties, when the subject of industry assumed many guises. The 1974 volume of *Transactions* contained five out of eighteen articles on industrial subjects and two at least had a pioneering content; Joseph Hughes gave an insight into wind-power use in Cumberland, and Davies-Shiel illuminated a mediaeval industry (potash) through his extensive fieldwork. Most of the important papers of this kind have been the work of individuals; Watts on water power (*CW2*, lxvii), G. P. Jones on local and regional population movements, and (a rather rare example of a partnership), Hobbs and Melville on Furness transport, published in the forties and fifties. Some papers, sadly, were of a kind that could not be followed, like the late Sidney Pollard's "North West Coast Railway Politics in the Eighteen-sixties" (*CW2*, liii). The point here is that too many admirable papers have sunk in the sands of time, without leading to a quickening of debate. That, perhaps, is the unsentimental verdict on the Society's discussions in so far as they relate to history. Unused information too easily slides into antiquarian spoil heaps, and it is our duty to revalue past work.