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Chapter 1

The Background. Geology, Geography and Climate

Some knowledge of the geological and geographical background of the Cockermouth area will help in understanding why a town developed on this particular site and why that development followed certain lines. The results of alternating periods of submersion and elevation, of heat and pressure and of the weathering of higher layers are summarised in Figs. I and 2.

The details of these processes are beyond the scope of this book, but we may note geological features which are peculiar to the area. A great earth storm of some 300 million years ago brought desert-like conditions to Cumbria under which rocks were broken down and swept away as debris. In only three areas is this debris found, one of them being the band of the Cockermouth lava. This extends for some seven miles in a SW-NE direction, including the NW bank of the Derwent above the town. There are four or five flows of this hard, dark green basalt (similar to the Giant's Causeway) in the 300 feet thickness of the band, and these are exposed in places by streams entering the river from the NW.

In places near the town the limestone crags convey some idea of the great dome which preceded the Lake District as we know it, before erosive forces wore it down. The view of Pardshaw Crags (OS 103 256) is an example.

The appearance of the land around Cockermouth has been affected more recently by the glaciations of the last three million years. The U-shaped valleys of Embleton and Crummock Buttermere, with the falls from hanging valleys along their sides, were shaped by ice. Enormous quantities of rock were transported considerable distances and finished the journey in one of three ways, deposited along the sides of the glacier to form lateral moraines, because the ice moving more slowly here (compare the speed of water near the banks of a river with that in the centre) could not support it; deposited to form terminal moraines when the foot of the glacier melted and the rock pieces sank; or ground down during the journey to form boulder clay. Erratics unearthed during the building of Derwent School were left on the site by ice.

About 20,000 to 15,000 years ago the ice began to retreat, a retreat interrupted by partial re advances. A tree-covered moraine near Arrnaside probably marks the melting point of a glacier temporarily halted during its retreat up the valley.

By approximately 11,000 BC most of Cumbria was free of ice, the mountains being surrounded by a tundra-like landscape of badly drained boulder clays. During this period of melting great glacial lakes were formed, which eventually burst out of the hollows in which they were trapped to scour wide channels down to the coast, valleys now dry or occupied by only a small stream. The Embleton valley is an example. A

feature of this valley is the flat-topped sand and gravel delta near High Netherscale, formed when the nearby lake was considerably higher than now and which forced the River Derwent to find a new route to Cockermouth. The great glacial lakes in our area gradually shrank to Crummock-Buttermere and Bassenthwaite-Derwent, to be separated later by debris washed down from the neighbouring hills.

Ice flowing north from the Lakeland dome met that flowing south from the Scottish Uplands, with the result that part of both streams were turned eastwards and the rest westwards, where the two flows travelled side by side along the coastal plain to Morecambe Bay and beyond. The majority of the hills north and west of Cockermouth are long cigar-shaped banks of clay (drumlins) built up in the direction of the ice stream. In the Gilcrux area these show clearly the NE to SW drift of the Scottish ice, while nearer the town the long axes of the hills indicate the direction of the Lakeland flow changing from E-W to N-S. Looking south from Cockermouth there can just be seen the central dome of bare Borrowdale Volcanics, rugged and jagged in contrast to the rounder grass-covered fells of Skiddaw Slate of almost all the Buttermere-Lorton valley. West and north of the town lies the local section of the carboniferous limestone which almost rings the Lake District (Fig. 2) and the clints and grikes of limestone pavements may be seen on Tallentire Hill and elsewhere.

In the valleys and on the Cumbrian Plain the basic rocks are covered with material carried down and dropped by the ice or washed down by streams and then deposited as the land became level and the water lost its speed the sands and gravel, silt and soil, but mostly boulder clay which have made this an agricultural district.

In the town itself is a small area of glacial gravel, beginning with the Kirkbank-All Saints and Castle hills and extending a short way eastwards to half way up St. Helen' s Street.

A band of Skiddaw Slate grits crosses Cockermouth in roughly an E-W direction, its line being broken by faults and the grits overlaid by clay and alluvium, but the basic rock may be seen in the Cocker just above the railway arch (OS 122 304) and in the lower end of Tom Rudd. It is greatly contorted and folded and has minor faulting. It is exposed here in an anticline -a fold arched upwards.

The geologist may find features of interest within a short distance from the town - feldspars, etc., in the summit quarry on Watch Hill; three outcrops of diorite on Slate Fell, with others on the golf course, in Close Quarry, etc.; quartz on Ling Fell and Sale Fell; and dark blue and striped slates outcropping through the drift-covered sides of the Embleton valley. [1]

The geology of the area has given rise to quarrying and a little mining around the town and these industries will be considered later.

Half way to Lorton is the saline spring of Stanger Spa. The water, reputed to be a cure for rheumatism and skin diseases, has a bitter taste and is said to resemble the Cheltenham water which achieved greater fame. [2] It was described in 1829 as "a very strong aperient salt-spring, which is efficacious in all acute diseases of the skin, and is much resorted to in the summer season by invalids from the surrounding country", and a walk to Stanger was a favourite Sunday afternoon occupation of Cockermouth mill workers. Bottles of the water are said to have been sent all over the world and not so long ago one sailor always took a supply to sea. It is now contained in a well about 1 V:z feet [450mm] square, lined with stone some hundred years ago. A stone building has been erected over it, with four niches in the walls for vessels. Once a visitor had to obtain the key from Stanger, but the building is now dilapidated and the water which cost 6d, [2 ½ p] a bottle is free for the taking.

Many Cumbrian towns are built of the local available stone, slate, limestone or sandstone. [3] In Cockermouth one building stone does not obviously predominate. Walls of river cobbles are a feature of much of the older property still standing, door and window openings being framed in dressed stone. Limestone and freestone from the Brigham and Broughton quarries have been used extensively for later buildings, such as the Court House and the auction marts. Rendering is common on houses of every period, including the recent estates ofbrick and manufactured blocks.

Cockermouth did not develop into a town as the result of mining and quarrying in the area, but because of another industry fostered by the geology of the district -farming. The soil cover in the foothills varies from loams derived from limestone to heavy soils, difficult to work, coming from boulder clay. Although there are some good arable stretches, grassland predominates, supporting cattle-rearing and milk production. There are also large numbers of sheep on both the foothills and the plain. Farming, especially stock-farming, requires a central market town, a need fulfilled by Cockermouth.

The actual site of the town was settled by the river system and the ridge of glacial gravel in the castle area referred to above. A settlement developed beneath the castle, erected in this defensive position as an improvement on Papcastle. It is not clear whether the rivers always joined at this point, for there is a tradition that in the time of Edward I (1272-1307) the Derwent was diverted to pass under the castle promontory, thus increasing its defences. Previously, tradition states, the river followed a fairly straight course from below Wood Hall along the foot of Mickle Brow to just beyond the Gote. Askew claimed that in 1866 many traces of the old channel were still visible and E.R. Denwood said that the old bed of the Derwent could be seen in 1946 behind the tarn which lay east of the foot of Gote Brow. The discovery of river gravel in this area when digging the foundations of James Walker's factory supports the tradition. If this theory is

correct then the present line of the Derwent from the castle to Papcastle would at one time be the course not of the Derwent but of the Cocker.

The stronger Derwent would slow up the Cocker at its outflow, causing it to deposit suspended material, as can be seen occurring today where the small.Bitter Beck enters the larger Cocker and a bank of stones builds up. This meant that it would be possible to ford the Cocker at its mouth if it were not in spate, as suggested on early maps by roads terminating on both banks at this point. Eventually Barrel (Brewery to Waterloo St) Bridge was erected here.

Referring to the wealth of water power in Cockermouth, Mannix and Whellan observed in 1847

> "Besides being intersected by the Derwent and Cocker rivers the town is also refreshed by two smaller streams which rise a few miles to the east, and are a great convenience to the manufacturers of Cockermouth and neighbourhood."[4]

The two are Tom Rudd Beck, rising on the north of Kirk Fell, and Bitter Beck which drains the Elva Plain area. The two becks and the two rivers turned a considerable number of water wheels.

Not always have the rivers been "a great convenience" to Cockermouth. There is a long history of flooding, caused usually by heavy rain in the central fells. The catchment area of the town's rivers is very extensive, reaching eastwards as far as Great Mell Fell beyond Troutbeck and bounded in the centre of the Lake District by Dunmail Raise and Esk Hause. Six lakes are included. The Cocker is reputed to be one of the fastest rising rivers in the country and the effect of heavy rain in the mountains is soon witnessed in the town, whereas the water travelling by the Derwent arrives some two days later. If the rain in central areas is prolonged then the Cocker is still in spate when the Derwent rises and flooding is more likely to occur,

There was "a prodigious flood at Cockermouth, which carried away several houses, mills, etc.", on or about the 21st November 1761 [5], followed ten years later by a great flood caused by the sudden melting of snow on the hills. There was another severe one in 1852 and in 1874 the local press recorded extensive flooding of industrial premises - Mr. Fletcher's tannery was useless, Mr. Smethurst's hat factory and Messrs. Pearson's tweed mill on the opposite side of the Cocker were flooded, while in Pearson's other factory near Cocker Bridge the water lifted beams, vats and boilers. Mr. Wyndham's brewery and Messrs. Herbert's foundry also suffered. Goods were ruined in many shops, sheep were drowned at a butcher's, Main Street was under water and, as always, the Gote was flooded. [6] This was a fairly common picture, even into this century. A particularly severe flood occurred in early October 1918 (Plates 28 & 29).

On 3rd November 1931 Main Street, High Sand Lane, Waterloo Street and the Gote were under water [7] and on 18th December of the following year there were floods from Keswick to the coast. In this disaster, said by some to be the worst in memory (a frequent comment in time of flood!), rivers swollen from rain in the hills were raised still further by 5.2 inches [132mm] recorded at the castle in six days. Main Street was flooded from the Police Station to Wordsworth House and the water was over Barrel Bridge and halfway up the stairs of High Sand Lane houses. [8] Following this 1932 flood action was taken to prevent a recurrence. The river had been kept reasonably deep by the removal of cobbles for house building and road repairs. The workhouse used a handcart to transport cobbles of which men had to break two bucketsful in return for bed and breakfast (while the women worked in the kitchen or laundry). [9] The workhouse closed in the 1930s and cobbles had long since ceased to be used for house building. This small scale but continuous clearing having stopped, a major effort was undertaken in 1936. Gravel from the river-bed was deposited on land later to become the Memorial Gardens, two breakwaters on the mill side of the Derwent designed to divert water across the river were removed, [10] and three square arches were added to the northern end of Derwent Bridge in an attempt to lessen flooding in the Gote. Clearings have been made since then in 1947 the lower end of the Cocker was deepened, material being deposited below Waterloo Bridge on the left bank of the Derwent, and in July 1969 stones and gravel were removed and deposited on the same. bank between the Mill Bridge and St. Joseph's Church. [11] In 1975 gravel was extracted below Mill Bridge for use in constructing the A66, but this was not geared to flood prevention.

In spite of the efforts of 1936 the town suffered severe flooding during August Bank Holiday weekend in 1938. Water reached parts of Cockermouth never previously affected. Thirty hours of rain raised the Cocker to 15 feet above normal at Cocker Bridge and the river cascaded down a fall of six feet into the lower Derwent. Barrel Bridge collapsed as debris built up behind a wedged tree. As it did so Isaac Wordsworth, a county council workman, slipped into a crack but was grabbed in time and rescued. Quaker Bridge lost railings and masonry. A section of the main sewer which passes under Cocker Bridge was found a hundred yards away. Pavements were lifted in Challoner Street as the Cocker took a short cut through the town. Sewers backed up, water entered the gas main and houses suffered extensive flood damage -. the water was eight feet deep in one court off Market Street. Documents were destroyed as the river poured through the vaults of the Midland Bank and Huddart's shop on the opposite side of the bridge was also severely damaged, to the extent that it had to be demolished and the business transferred next door. The vacant plot may be seen on the river bank.

There was some consolation in the fact that, consequent on the alterations to Derwent Bridge, flooding in the Gote area was not as severe. Fishing in Main Street might also be

regarded as a positive result, trout being caught there by hand and a 15 pound pike taken. Numerous spectators, holidaying in the area, came into the town.

Improved river maintenance appears to have been beneficial to the town, the only post-war flood of any consequence being in August 1966 when a freak storm over and to the east of the town caused the two becks to rise rapidly. A culvert at Butts Fold collapsed, blocking the channel, so that water poured down St. Helen's Street flooding about fifty houses and shops as far as Cocker Bridge and causing thousands of pounds worth of damage. No. 9 Kirkgate, now demolished, had water four or five inches [100-125 mm] deep in the bedrooms and the height of the flood water in the Market Place is recorded on the door frame of the ironmonger's shop of J.B. Banks by a line 31 inches [780 mm] above pavement level. Tom Rudd Beck also flooded the Skinner Street area.

The 1966 flood gave birth to the Bitter Beck Scheme in which, combined with the demolition of the old hall and the clearing of many old buildings, including the lower end, of Kirkgate, the beck was reculverted and a car park laid out in 1973 at a cost of about £175,000 (Plate 6) (Fig. 76). Even in 1995 the risk of flooding still gives rise for concern, - there was a flood alert in April 1987.

On 8th January 2005, Cumbria suffered a tremendous storm with hurricane force winds (120mph recorded at Workington) and excessive torrential rain - with the worst flooding on record since at least 1822. With a month's worth of rain falling in 24-hours, the flood defences were over topped, causing about 3,000 properties across the county to flood. More than 1,700 of these properties (houses and businesses) were in the city of Carlisle. There were spectacular photographs taken of such as Hardwicke Circus, Brunton Park Football Ground and Caldewgate all under feet of water. Cockermouth, along with other towns such as Keswick and Appleby, was also flooded with some over 100 properties being badly damaged and out of use for several months subsequently. Waterloo Street, the Gote, Main Street were flooded but fortunately the businesses there were not severely inundated. Tree damage throughout the area was severe with an estimated loss of something like 500,000 trees in Cumbria as a whole. There is still the hope that low flood prevention walls along five stretches of river banks in the town can be built.

The rivers have produced other problems over the years. We shall examine later the effect of their use as open sewers and rubbish dumps last century. Even comparatively recently the Derwent Fishery Board has complained of pollution. The scouring effect of the Derwent has necessitated protective work being done below the castle and in 1853 Mary B. Dykes of Dovenby Hall complained that her land below Papcastle was being undermined, for which she blamed the building of a wall along 'the Sand' which had narrowed the river and increased its speed and power. A smaller feature of the drainage system of the town was the tam which once existed where the auction mart now stands in South Street. It was referred to in a vestry ruling of 1693 –

> 'It is put in pain that Rd. Uriell shall dress the gutter between the highway and his own Tarn Close 6s.8d.[12]

This pool was fed by two springs, one in the middle of Kittison Lonning and one in Fairfield. An old stone culvert conveyed the water along South Street to Gallowbarrow where, joined by another small beck, it turned towards the river, following the western side of Low Sand Lane. The outlet into the Derwent may still be seen today, pouring drainage water from this area of the town into the river. Of the site where now stand the buildings and concrete yards of the mart, Bolton wrote in 1912 "Many of my readers will remember the tarn and the willows that grew beside if'. [13]

A Cockermouth meteorologist, H. Dodgson, kept records for the town for the fifteen years (1862-76) [14] and we may compare his readings with those made at the Grammar School for the twelve years (1966-77), 100 years later. The average annual rainfall for the two periods respectively was 44.5 in [1130 mm] and 42.0 in [1070 mm], the mean temperature 48.6 and 47.7 degrees F, showing little difference. Over ten of Dodgson's years, Cockermouth's rainfall was 44 inches, while Whinfell Hall had 55 and Keswick 62, showing how the town benefits from not having high land on the side of the prevailing winds. Moving further from the hills Silloth had 34 inches and Carlisle 29.

Dodgson had the temperature figures for Greenwich for his period of observation, which showed London to be 1.5 OF warmer than Cockermouth in June-August, but 2 or 3 OF colder in the months December-February. The result of being only seven miles from the west coast is that the town does not experience excessive summer heat, but enjoys moderate winters. Contrary to popular belief about a place so far north, there was no snow recorded in six of the twelve years 1966-77! [15]

Chapter 2

Before the Romans

As the ice cleared, man came north and found an unattractive land of moorland, forest and bog. Only on the coast was movement easy.

Cumbria never knew the Old Stone Age (Palaeolithic), for remains of this period have been found only as far north as Derby, our area being still ice-covered at this time. There is evidence, however, that man settled on the coast in the Middle Stone Age (Mesolithic). Here he could fish, hunt in the fringes of the unbroken forest, catch wildfowl and gather food from trees and the shore. He has left evidence in tiny flint tools, [1] found in the boulder clay along the coast, where they had been deposited from a chalk reef under the Irish Sea. [2] These people may have penetrated up the rivers, including the Derwent. They were probably short in stature, long-headed (dolichocephalic) and pleasant looking. [3] It is unlikely that we shall ever know whether they reached our area.

The succeeding culture of the New Stone Age (Neolithic), of about 4000BC onwards, did exist in the Cockermouth area. There is evidence these men who were not only hunters and fishers, introduced the revolutionary ideas of herding cattle and, on a very small scale, of growing crops, using polished stone hoes. They also brought the crafts of pottery and weaving and used wood and leather for domestic utensils. Their stone axes were ground and polished, an advance on those of Mesolithic man. The limestone, hills and boulder clays were suitable for stock, while the lighter and better drained soils of the moraines could be more easily worked to grow small areas of grain.

Pollen analysis suggests that with improved axes came the first attacks on the forests, providing timber for housing and equipment and leafy branches as supplementary fodder. [4]

At Moss Garth, in Portinscale, the discovery of chippings and five unfinished tools suggests that here was a finishing place for tool manufacture [5] and proves that man had penetrated that far from the coast. We know that he went into the fells for volcanic rocks to make axes and adzes and also barbs and tips on fish-spears and arrow-heads. [6] The axe manufacture carried on at a number of sites in the central fells was a well-organised trade, with finishing sites on lower and more hospitable ground and distribution over most of Britain. [7] The Buttermere valley is one route from the central area to the Cumbrian plain and 'Cockermouth' probably saw something of this trade.

The most spectacular finds of this period were those at Ehenside Tarn when it was drained about 1870, but a number of discoveries have been made in the Cockermouth area. A canoe, burned out from a tree trunk, was found in the Stanger stretch of the Cocker. The owner probably fished from it using a flint-tipped or bone-tipped spear. In

1931 a perforated axe-hammer, rather crudely tapered to a point at both ends and 5.3 inches [135mm] long, was found in the same area at Stanger Farm. Early this century a later Neolithic stone hammer-axe was unearthed in the garden of Moorland Close, 9 inches [225mm] long, weighing 7Y2 pounds, and two lighter unpolished axes of similar size were discovered in Eaglesfield last century. A stone hammerhead 5.5 inches cobble, was unearthed at Waterloo Farm and in 1861 a coarse crystalline perforated axe-hammer of over 11 inches turned up in Bewaldeth. The following year a similar find was made at Whinfell and in 1879 a 10 inch [250 mm] polished blue whinstone axe was found at Isel.

In January 1949 Mr. W. Cook of Anfield Farm found an axe head lying on the surface of a ploughed field. One end is square-butted, the other tapers to an axe edge. The hole is central, hour glass shape and 2 inches across at the surface. The whole head measures 8 by 4 by 2.75 inches and weighs 4% pounds; it appears to be made of a coarse-grained igneous rock. [8] This axe was found within the Cockermouth boundary-how many more lie buried?

Stones which have been used for sharpening prehistoric cutting tools (celts) have been found in Cumbria, one from Lazonby having 70 grooves worn in it. [9]

Ehenside and other finds show that our predecessors of that time lived well. Great quantities of bones and shells occur amongst broken pottery, proving that they ate oxen, sheep, pigs, goats, deer, porpoise, fish and shell-fish.

Added to these products of their hunting, fishing and stock-farming would be the wild fruits they gathered and the grain they grew. They also had the benefits of weaving and leather crafts. Then came the first metal workers into our region, with the ability to use bronze. Concentrated in the south of the country, some had worked their way north to Cumbria by about 1800 BC. The new arrivals were very different from the stone-age dwellers already here. They were taller, averaging about 5 feet 8 inches muscular. Supported on cylindrical necks they had round heads (brachy-cephalic) instead of long, with broad jaws and wide mouths, up-turned noses and high cheek-bones, and eyes sunk beneath beetling brows. By our standards they were ugly! They may have enslaved the long-heads, they may have taken the women as wives, but they did not exterminate the people they found here. The evidence lies in burial barrows where long and round skulls have been found side by side and in later barrows where skulls of intermediate shape occur, proving intermarriage. [11]

The Early Bronze Age culture overlapped with the Neolithic. These Beaker Folk, so named from the drinking vessels which they made and which they buried with their dead, were nomadic stock-raisers, living in temporary wooden huts or bivouacs. The rare finds show that the earliest use of metal was to make flattish axe-heads in imitation of the stone axes. They still used stone, chipping the hour-glass hole from both sides,

and the Anfield axe may be from this period. They still used flint for arrow-heads. The Neolithic folk had contacts with Ireland, for their stone axes have been found there. The Early Bronze people developed these contacts, for Ireland was one of the main centres of bronze manufacture in Europe, as copper, gold and tin could be obtained in the Wicklow Mountains. It is probable that a trading community, of which West Cumbria was a part, developed around the Irish Sea.

Finds are rare, possibly because metal was scarce and old tools were melted down to use again, and scarcity would also account for the continued use of stone. In both stone and metal the workmanship was good, and good pottery of this period has been found in Cumbria.

The 17 megalithic (large-stone) circles found in the Lake District date from this time, their location in the Eden and Eamont region, in the Derwent valley and in West Cumbria showing that these were the areas of settlement. The nearest to Cockermouth is on Elva Plain, 470 feet level on the slopes of Elva Hill (OS 177 317).

This circle consists of 15 stones and an outlier, but by estimating what were once in the present gaps there may have been about thirty originally. The stones do not now stand high, one reaching 3 feet 6 inches, one 2 feet, the rest less, four of them being flush with the ground. Nor are they large, the biggest being about 4 feet square. tlo One proves to consist of three on close inspection, not unknown in such circles. Megalithic circles are usually near a spring and the proximity of an isolated farmhouse to Elva Circle is proof of a water supply. The circle is about 100 feet [30.5m] across, hence its inclusion in the 'large' category. Askew states that a Mr. Fletcher Grave of Cockermouth reported that in about 1820, before enclosure of the common lands in this area, it consisted of many large stones and contained an inner circle of 'similar stones, sixty and twenty paces respectively in circumference. [13] There is no trace of an inner circle nor has one been mentioned by recent investigators.

The name 'Elva' has been variously given as derived from the Old Norse personal noun Elfr or from Wlva, whence Elfhow or elf-house, indicating that the site was believed to be haunted.

The purpose of the large circles is not clear. They were for a long time thought to be for religious purposes, their proximity to reliable springs or wells which might have been regarded as sacred supporting this idea. Investigations have now shown that in the case of Castlerigg and Long Meg a line drawn from the outlier through the centre of the circle goes to the summit of a hill over which the sun rises on May 1 st or 2nd, when Beltane fires were lit on summits in honour of the Earth God, Beal or Bile. [14] Examination of the pattern and dimensions of some 250 circles suggests definite alignment. The large circles were then possibly for astronomical observations to determine solstices, etc., and, as the religion of the time was linked to the sun and moon and changing seasons,

as for example in the Beltane fires, their purpose was also religious. They would serve as tribal meeting places on these special occasions and also when an extraordinary gathering had to be called. One thing is certain -. they were not built as burial places and there are no hearths suggesting sacrifices.

The circles support the theory that Neolithic man made his way northwards from Africa, for similar ones are found in Algeria and Tunisia.

About 1400 BC the Early Bronze Age merged into the Middle Bronze, marked by a decreased use of stone, by a greater variety of types of axe and by developments in the making of spear-heads, daggers and rapiers. Barley as a cereal crop was another new feature. Trading with Ireland was continued and developed, before it fell off in the Late Bronze Age about 750 BC, perhaps because a stormier period followed a time of warm, calm summers. [15] The Irish trade used Morecambe Bay and the Derwent, Ellen and Eden Rivers. 'Cockermouth' was no doubt involved. Tools and ornaments are found over a wider area than in the Early Bronze Age and there is some evidence that manufacture and trading were thoroughly reorganised about 1000 BC, shortly before the end of the Middle Bronze Age.

Further developments occurred about 800 BC or a little later, distinguished now as the Late Bronze Age, which was to last until the introduction of iron in this part of the country probably only shortly before the Romans arrived. During fig. 7. A fiddle Bronze Age looped spear·head, 5 inches long. Found at Blindbothel (after Miss C. I. Fell, from a photograph NS 40, Tullie House Museum). this period there were two waves of new arrivals, both Celtic speaking. The first, in the sixth and fifth centuries BC, were the Goidels (Hiberno-Celts), ancestors of the present Gaels of Ireland, the Isle of Man and Scotland, who spoke Gadhelic or Gaelic. They were followed in the fourth century by the Brythons (Cambro-Celts) from Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, speaking Cymric or Welsh. [16] Some historians put these arrivals as early as 900 BC and some maintain that they were long-heads again, physically attractive and intellectually vigorous -and Askew said the inhabitants of Cockermouth and district are distinguished by their long-headedness!

As in the change from Early to Middle Bronze, so again there was now a great increase in the number and variety of bronze objects, as well as improvements in spinning and weaving. In Sweden the ox-plough had been introduced, but there is no evidence that it was known in Cumbria. Sledges and pack-animals would be the form of transport; evidence of horses or wheeled-vehicles did not appear until nearer Roman times. [17]

The Early Bronze Age people both buried and cremated their dead, ashes being placed in urns, usually collared, from about 1600 BC. Sometimes the body, or its ashes, was placed in a stone chest covered with slabs (a cist) and a cairn of stones built over. it. Hundreds of cairns and tumuli or barrows are known in the West Cumbrian foothills and

those examined have been of the Bronze Age, containing urns with human ashes and bone fragments. Cup and ring markings, such as those on the stone in Butts field at Dean (OS 073 250), are usually associated with Bronze Age burials.

Within Cockermouth itself is the small Toot or Tute Hill opposite the castle, unexcavated but traditionally considered to be a tumulus. The name derives from the ME 'tote', a look-out hill. Nearby Charley Hill is a natural mound, used on more than one occasion as a base for bombarding the castle.

Solitary standing stones, of which there were once a number near Cockermouth, may have been a method of marking the burial place of an important king, priest or warrior. Denwood refers to a huge monolith near the Derwent below Papcastle, demolished in 1946. Askew refers to one across the Derwent from what is now the A66 junction west of the town, possibly the same as Denwood's, and to three in a field between Papcastle and Broughton, all of blue-stone probably from the river bed.

In the middle and later bronze periods small stone circles were erected on burial sites in the foothills, some 500 years later than the large circles. By this time cremation was nearly always used. One such small circle stands near Studfold Gate (OS 040 224), once 1] 0 feet by 87 feet. A modem wall passes through the centre and only eight stones remain in position.

In 1876, when digging a cutting half a mile south of Branthwaite for the Ullock to Distington railway, Bronze Age burial urns were unearthed. One of them, now in Carlisle, is 13.5 inches high and 12 inches maximum diameter, the upper half decorated with encrusted work- a band of zigzag pattern between two bands of vertical lines.

Finds of this period include a bronze javelin head, 4 inches [100 mm] long, which was four feet deep in moss at High Dyke, Blindbothel. It is of the type used by the Romans when they invaded Britain and in 1874, shortly after its discovery, was on view in the window of the Old Curiosity Shop in Station Street, Cockermouth, later going to Tullie House Museum. There is a record of a 5.1 inches bronze socketed spear head being found in Blindbothel in 1872. A bronze flanged axe, nearly 5 inches long, turned up at Waterloo Farm, and one slightly larger in Branthwaite. [18] In 1883 a stone mould for casting spear heads was found, far from our area, at Croglin near Penrith. [19] A rather different find was of grains of barley, discovered in a Middle Bronze collared urn in Papcastle.

Large and small stone circles and other remains show that man penetrated into the hills in the Bronze Age, not only to seek stone for axes but to clear forest and settle. On Banniside Moor near Coniston charred remains of well-woven cloth were found in a collared urn, showing that there were sheep on the fells in the 2nd millennium BC, the sheep no doubt guarded from wolves, etc., and not allowed to roam freely as today. It has been suggested that they were kept on higher ground to avoid flatworm, a sheep

parasite requiring water for its development. [20] What held in the Coniston area most probably occurred in the hills to the south and east of Cockermouth.

Slightly later than the time the Goidels and Brythons came to Cumbria, Belgic tribes entered south-east Britain bringing with them the ability to work in iron: This would be about the fifth century onwards, but probably this knowledge reached our area only shortly before the Romans. Its spread would be delayed by the unsettled state of the north of the country, peopled by warlike and backward Brigantes ('free men'). The Brigantes were divided into a large number of clans, and while the iron age culture had been established in eastern Yorkshire by the fourth century BC and may have helped the establishment of one Brigantian kingdom extending over the north of the country, it took a long time for the culture to cross the Pennines and Lakeland mountains to West Cumbria. The arrival of the Iron Age in the south of Britain had meanwhile increased the isolation of Cumbria as the remaining demand for stone axes fell off and the related trade contacts declined, an isolation not broken until the Romans came. [21]

The Iron Age inhabitants left ample evidence oftheir presence. They developed a system of settlement in which a number of dwellings were surrounded by a rampart and ditch, probably to keep out animals rather than men. Usually sites outside the mountains were chosen, with the exception in Cumbria of the large Iron Age fort on Carrock Fell, one of the largest in Britain is approx 800 x 370 feet [240 x 110 m] and possibly a Brigantian capital or a control fort to supervise conquered tribes in the surrounding area (OS 342 337). On the other sites the hut circles of stone, turf and brushwood and the surrounding embankment of stones and rubble have collapsed and been overgrown, but the general layout may be seen and faint trackways and field outlines often discerned, especially from the air. The fallen remains of huts suggest that their walls were some four or five feet in height, capped by a pointed roof.

Outstanding Romano-British settlements, so called because of the overlap of the Iron Age with Roman occupation, have been excavated at Urswick in Fumess and Ewe Close near Crosby Ravensworth, but we have good examples within a short distance of Cockermouth. At Lanthwaite Green, at the foot of the fells and near the beck flowing out from Gasgale Gill (OS 161 210), the outer circle may be clearly seen and within it a large number of small overgrown heaps of stone. On the other side of the lake some of the considerable remains along Scale Beck where it flows into Crummock are probably of this period, although many features date from later times. There is an enclosure on the fell north of Moota (OS 141 380) and in the coastal area a round hut at Wolsty Hall, Silloth, and a cattle enclosure at Risehow both date from the pre-Roman Iron Age.

On Aughtertree Fell (OS 262 381), near Sandale, 900 feet above sea-level, is a 'village' of three large circular enclosures with hollows inside and a complex of tracks and fields outside, probably occupied during the Roman period.

There is a site within Cockermouth at the Fitz (‚riverside meadows'). In Fitz Wood, between the house and the A66, are a well-preserved rampart and ditch, 750 feet [230 m] round with a straight ditch cutting across (OS 108 304). This possibly dates from the Iron Age and may have been re-used in later times.

The Iron Age dwellers in the area also developed hilltop fortifications, probably for short-term refuge, a similar purpose to that of the peel towers of a later date. The top of Castle How at Piel (or Peel) Wyke, between the Pheasant Inn and the A66, has been adapted as such a refuge (OS 202 308). The hill is a short natural ridge. No work had to be done on the steep sides to improve its defence, but on the gentler slope of the western end four trenches were dug, while on the steeper eastern end two were sufficient. The first of these is a very slight hollow, but the inner one is appreciable, having been six feet deep and ten across. The summit, a plateau 42 yards by 20 yards, has been hollowed out and levelled, leaving the natural rock as a defensive embankment. It may have been strengthened by an oak palisade. There is no evidence of masonry and no remains, hones, pottery, etc ..have been found. Obviously it was intended as a temporary refuge for a day or two until danger had passed. Before the making of the A66 there was a place on the lake shore below where dug-out canoes could land. [23] The name 'Fairy Glen' sometimes heard recalls the legend that this is where a fairy was last seen in Cumberland.

It is impossible to decide whether some sites were settlements and equally difficult to date them. Such are the remains at Park Hill, Dean; the two sets of parallel trenches in the butts field at Dean (flax retting ?) (OS 073 251) and the mounds and cup and ring stone in the same field; groundworks at Moorland Close; and fragments of straight ramparts near Loweswater. What was the 'White Causeway' north of Pardshaw Crags (OS 103 264)? Were the raised platform of compact gravel and small boulders and the moss ring enclosing an acre of swampy ground man-made? Were other small earthworks and terraces said to have been noticeable before enclosure between here and Cockermouth constructed defences? [24]

Turning from sites to implements, the most spectacular find from this period is the Embleton sword, now in the British Museum. Probably of a rather later date, the end of the first century AD or the beginning of the second, it is the type of Celtic work which the Romans found in use when they came to Cumbria. It is of iron, with bronze and enamelled hilt and scabbard, and was found near Wythop Mill (OS 178 295).[25] In 1985 a replica of the sword was made by the apprentices at Workington British Steel and presented to the Embleton parish on the occasion of a flower festival in the church.

It would appear that the Iron Age folk did not cremate their dead. The discovery of bronze sword and horse bones with one burial suggests that they may have buried ready for the next life.

From what has been written it will have become obvious that sites were often occupied for a considerable time. The Iron Age dwellings by Scale Beck were added to by the Norse. Boat How, on the southern side of Ennerdale near its upper end, may have been occupied from Neolithic times about the end of the tenth century BC to the Viking period, over two thousand years. The extensive remains on Stockdale, east of the road over Cold Fell, may have been left by Bronze Age farmers, Britons in Roman times, Viking shepherds of the tenth century AD or sheep farmers moving from the lowlands to higher summer pastures as late as the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries [26] -possibly by more than one, even all, of these groups. The Ehenside Tarn site produced a rotary quern suggesting that it was in use in the Roman period, a long time after the Neolithic settlers. The site at Wolsty was extended during Roman times.

The Cockermouth Fitz circle may have been occupied in mediaeval times. If a site was a good one it was natural that it should remain occupied or be reoccupied after an interval. This increases the difficulty of finding evidence of the overlaid earlier cultures, as clues are easily destroyed, but in spite of this and in spite of the considerable destruction, quite unwittingly, by agriculture, we can piece together some picture of what life in and around Cockermouth was like before the Romans came to Papcastle.

Chapter 3

The Roman Occupation

The first settlement of any size and importance in the Cockermouth area was the Roman fort of Derventio, on the site of present-day Papcastle. Before considering this site in detail it will be helpful to understand something of why the Romans came, what they found here and what effect their stay had on the district.

They began a serious occupation of the south of the country in AD 43, where they found an Iron Age culture fairly well developed on a basis of arable and stock farming with pottery makiog and textile manufacture. Pushing northwards through the forest they encountered the Brigantes, a confederation of tribes centred on York. Though wild and warlike, they had evolved some degree of civilisation, having a king and queen, using gold coinage and living in small communities. The Romans formed an alliance with the confederation, which enabled them to concentrate on organising the south of the country.[1]

The alliance broke down in AD 69 as a result of pro-Roman and anti-Roman factions amongst the Brigantes. The Romans postponed their intended invasion of Wales and came north, driving King Venutius from his stronghold near Richmond to establish a

new town on Ingleborough. [2] His pro Roman wife Cartimandua divorced him. By AD 74 the native peoples had retreated into the dales and the invaders stopped for four years at a temporary fort on Stainmore, facing through the gap into unconquered Cumbria, while they again turned their attention to conquering Wales. [3] This being accomplished by 78, Julius Agricola, appointed legate of Britain in that year, pushed north to the Forth-Clyde line, but the invaders abandoned much of Scotland by AD 96.

Meanwhile further south people were settling down under Roman rule, Britons near the towns tending to adopt Roman dress, education and language. Agricola's policy of conciliation seems to have been successful during his six years of governorship.

A system of roads and forts was developed in the Lake District very broadly around AD 90 with the two-fold purpose of separating sections of the local population so as to control them more effectively and of securing supply routes, such as that from Ravenglass to Ambleside and beyond. The Romans came as conquerors rather than as settlers, so chose sites for their military value, [4] but they were to remain for three and a half centuries, as long as from the end of the reign of James I in 1625 to the present day.

The method of occupation was to make a careful reconnaissance, then to layout a network of roads dividing up the country. At each road junction, and between if distances were great, permanent forts were built. These might be for infantry or cavalry and each housed from 500 to 1000 men. A fort was commanded by a prefect or tribune, responsible to the legionary commander at York or Chester. [5]

The main roads north passed to the east of the Lake District, but the road from Ravenglass through the centre was important. Ravenglass, a port which flourished until medieval times, was with Chester a centre for importing wines and other supplies to the west. The remains of amphorae, great wine jars too big to be brought by road from Dover, have been found in the area. [6]

There were also eventually routes from Ravenglass up the west coast, probably to the end of Hadrian's Wall on the Solway, certainly to Carlisle via Papcastle, which was an important point in the developing road system.

In AD 117 the 9th Legion was defeated and shortly afterwards (in 122) the Emperor Hadrian came north. After his visit the wall which bears his name was built. There was already Stanegate from Carlisle to Corbridge and this continued to be used as a highway throughout the occupation, but Hadrian's Wall, running from Wallsend to Burgh Marsh and later extended to Bowness-on-Solway, closed the Tyne-Solway gap and became the permanent frontier of Roman Britain.

The Wall is a study in itself and we can only mention its effect on Cumbria, whose fortunes were often bound up with it. An attempt about AD 140 to provide a shock

absorber in the Antonine Wall across the Clyde-Forth neck was not successful and forces on and behind the earlier wall were strengthened in the latter half of the century. There were wars between the troops and the native people in AD 155-8, 162 and 181. The first of these was a large-scale revolt of the Brigantes south of the Wall, put down with great severity.

Then in AD 193 Emperor Commodus was assassinated and Albinus, governor of Britain, withdrew most of the troops, taking them to Gaul to fight unsuccessfully in support of his claim to the vacant emperorship. While the defences were weakened the Wall was overrun from the north (in 197) and Roman fortifications destroyed as far south as York and Chester.

No doubt Lake District dwellers joined in, possibly in their own defence against the northern invaders, possibly joining with them against the Romans. The Wall was retaken by Rome, but repairs took 10 years and in AD 208-211 Emperor Severus (who had defeated Albinus in Gaul) came in person and conducted savage punitive campaigns.

A hundred years of peace followed, during which army recruiting became increasingly local and the Brigantes grew more co-operative under the valued protection of Rome. Then once again soldiers were withdrawn because of Roman discord and in AD 296 the Wall was overpowered and badly damaged. Repairs followed and peace reigned until 367 when Picts from the north, Saxons from Germany and Scots from Ireland all attacked, possibly attracted by the wealth of the region. [7] Although restored again, the Wall gradually ceased to be an effective frontier, defence being based on forts further south until in AD 410 Honorius proclaimed the independence of Britain. This meant he could no longer hold it and troops were withdrawn from the country.

It is necessary to keep the risings against Rome in perspective. For most of the 350 years of occupation there was peace along the Wall and in the area to the south of it, a peace which brought prosperity to the Papcastle district. Then with the end of Roman rule the Scots increased their raids on the coast and the Picts poured south of the WalL Britain moved into the Dark Ages.

Chapter 4

Papcastle in the Roman road system

Recent work has revealed that from the end of the Wall at Bowness-on-Solway a complete system of mile-castles existed southwards to St. Bees, linking the forts at Maryport, Moresby, etc. The development of the road system in north Cumbria was geared to the needs of this line ofdefence against invasion by sea as well as to the Wall itself.

Five roads radiated from Carlisle and Stanwix (the nine and a half acre fort to which the military moved from the city in AD 125), including that south-west to Old Carlisle near Wigton (OS 260 465). Old Carlisle was for long, possibly always, the only cavalry fort on the western flank of the Wall and the praefectus equitum in charge was senior to the prefects of the coastal forts and the inland fort at Papcastle. He was in effect commander of a district which may have stretched as far as Ravenglass and in an emergency could move a cavalry regiment or battalions of infantry from Old Carlisle without waiting for permission from either the senior officer of the Wall stationed at Stanwix or from headquarters at York. [1]

The south-westerly road continued beyond Old Carlisle to Papcastle and in 25 miles neither suddenly changed direction to avoid a difficult feature nor diverged more than half a mile from the direct line, so thorough was the original survey. The A595 follows the Roman road for considerable distances, the chief divergence being that the earlier route passed NW of Wharrels Hill and Bothel [2] and the present one curves round the SE.

Continuing in the same direction from Papcastle a road leads to Ravenglass.

In 1794 there was an "old paved way, seven yards in width, leading north and south" [3] near Eaglesfield, made of large flat stones. In 1816, passing near Lamplugh and Streetgate (significant name) in a direct line from Papcastle, was a road 18 feet wide (S.5m] made of cobbles and local freestone. [4] Limestone was to hand for the northern section, but sandstone was nevertheless used for the foundations to a cobbled surface.

Its route over Hotchberry has been located and there is considerable evidence further south in both names and ground signs. [5] As recently as the 1960s field drainage work uncovered it east of Dean Village. Near Dean a branch road diverged to Moresby, which may have been a garrison supply centre and which was well placed to watch the sea and a stretch of the coastal plain. A grant of land in Distington dated 1320 referred to "the great road under frothou towards Dean" and Stukeley wrote in 1776 that "there are evident signs of a Roman road from Morbium (Moresby) to Papcastle all the way"

Going NW from Papcastle is the road to Maryport, made of sandstone, limestone and cobbles. It follows a very straight route, along the occupation road west of Dovenby Hall

to join the present Cockermouth-Maryport road from Unefoot to Dearham crossroads, whence it maintains the straight line to Camp Hill. [6] A raised section of the field path near the Dovenby Craggs - Broughton road (OS 097 325) is presumahly part of this road. As far as is known Papcastle had no direct link with Burrow Walls, the fort near the mouth of the Derwent (a harbour since pre-historic times).

South East from Papcastle a road went via Whinlatter Pass to Keswick, then continued eastwards. Evidence was provided in 1952 by the discovery just north of the former Braithwaite railway station of a metalled causeway, 20 feet wide, apparently never a farm track and lying in a Whinlatter-Keswick direction. [7] Earlier, in 1921, traces were reported of a Roman road crossing the Derwent above its confluence with the Greta and carried on an embankment to the foot of Whinlatter [8].

There is a very early reference in a Fountains Abbey Cartulary to a causeway across the nearby marshes. It seems reasonable to suppose that there was a fort in such an obvious centre as Keswick, but it has never been found.

It is a natural choice for a control centre for the surrounding hills and is at the focus of a number of valleys. Roads would go not only east and west, but south to the fort at Ambleside and north via Caermote fort to Old Carlisle.

The purpose of Caermote (OS 202 368) near Bothel Crags is obscure - possibly to control lead mining in the Caldbeck Fells to the east, possibly related to signalling from a nearby beacon. The original fort was a small 3.5 acre cohort camp and was later replaced by an even smaller one within the boundary of the first. [9] There may have been a road link with Papcastle. The road system in the immediate neighbourhood of Papcastle fort is interesting. Bellhouse points out that a change in direction of only 2 degrees at OS 133340 on the Carlisle road avoids an ascent and coincides with the old Cockermouth - Carlisle road. [10] Continuation in the same direction passes to the south of the fort and leads to Tendley Hill. Also the road from Maryport passes the fort, this time on the south-west. The two roads may have connected outside the fort but within the vicus, the Carlisle road having a link to the east gate and the Maryport one to the south or west gate.

Aerial photography has shown a road from the east gate which may have served not only as a link road but also been part of the road to Whinlatter, avoiding two river crossings by reaching the Derwent above the Cocker's present or former entry and then turning southwards.

It appears that here the main roads did not pass through the fort, as at Maryport, but skirted it, as at Old Carlisle. [11] From Papcastle, as from Old Carlisle, reinforcements could be rapidly moved along the diverging roads in an emergency. Normally the roads would be patrolled and along them would pass convoys of supplies, escorted high-ranking army officers and detachments of troops. The local people doubtless used

them to convey their produce to the welcome market provided by the Papcastle garrison.

Chapter 5

Papcastle fort and vicus

Unfortunately the layout of Papcastle fort cannot be seen, as can that of Housesteads or Chesters. We may only dimly discern some of the enclosing ramparts. Excavations, never very extensive, have however revealed sufficient for us to have some idea of its position and extent and evidence from such excavations as those at Vindolanda helps us to piece together a picture of life in the extensive civil settlement or vicus which existed below the fort.

In his first edition of "Britannia", in 1586, the historian William Camden referred to "the carcase of an ancient fort whose Roman antiquity is attested by not a few monuments". In the edition of 1607 he added

> "where among many monuments of antiquitie, was found a broad vessell of a greenish stone, artifically engraven with little images; which whether it had been a Laver to wash in, or a font... for which purpose it serveth now at Brid-Kirke, that is, at S. Bridgids Church hard by, I dare not say"

This is the famous Bridekirk font, now with runic inscriptions added in the 12th. century, possibly brought from the ruins of Papcasde as Camden says.

Detailed records begin in 1725 when the antiquary William Stukeley picnicked on the site with Humphrey Senhouse and the historian Gale. Stukeley wrote:

> "The Roman castrum lies upon the top of the hill, above the village. I soon traced out its whole circumference, though the inhabitants had not the least notion of where it stood, supposing it to be lower down.... The whole town, and perhaps Cockermouth castle and town, are built out of it; likewise the walls of all the pastures and corn-fields adjoining. Free-stone cut is very common, which they say must have been fetched a good way off, because there is none such in the neighbourhood; and a good deal of ashlar is still left in the ground .... (He then refers to coins, etc., found on the site.)
>
> The famous font, now at Bridekirk, was taken up at this place, in the pasture south of the south-east angle of the city, by a lane called Moorwent. ... (References to stones, slates and flooring discovered.} .... This was a beautiful and well-chosen place, a south-west side of the hill, a most noble river running under it, and a pretty good country about it, as one may judge by the churches; .. On the side of the hill are many pretty springs; at one of them we drank a bottle of wine, to the memory of the founders; then poured some of the red juice into the fountain-head, to the nymph of the place. "[1]

In a letter of the early 1740s Thomas Routh spoke of ruins on the declivity towards the river below the fort. In a field between the village and the river, known as Sib by, was a pavement "curiously laid with large stones three-quarters of a yard square and two or three inches thick", on a base of "coarse strong cement". Some had been torn up in a search for coins underneath. In the same field two walls ran east-west, seven yards apart. Also found were a Samian vase (brick-red or black pottery with a lustrous glaze, named after the island of Samos), a stone trough or pillar base, a drain and a clay vessel. The following year a fibula and a coin ofTrajan were unearthed.

> F.L. Ballentine-Dykes of Dovenby, who made a complete survey of the road from Papcastle to Maryport which passed his home, wrote of Pap castle in 1859:
>
> "The ditch is plain on the east, down past the Pinfold, through Mr. Wybergh's and Dr. Dodgson's grounds, and, in a somewhat irregular line, through Mr. Waugh's property to the river.
>
> There is a very fine rampart at the river's edge for some little distance, giving apparently a river frontage. Nothing can be traced up the hill again on the west, all having been obliterated by a considerable wash and run on to the land from the town.
>
> At the foot of the hill is a very distinct track of a road sweeping round to the south, and crossing the Derwent by a ford. It is popularly termed the Friar's Walk. This has greatly the appearance of a junction with the road lately discovered in Mr. Harris's pleasure grounds and running under part ofhis house (Derwent Lodge).
>
> I happened to be looking over the locality a day or two after the discovery of a perfect Roman well, in Mr. Hams's pleasure-grounds. It had shortly been cleaned out, but no remains had been met with. I found it very neatly walled, about 2ft. 4 ins, in diameter, and 25 to 30 feet deep, very similar to the one in Maryport camp. As soon as it had been cleaned out, the water began to flow rapidly.
>
> If the ditch bounded the camp, I thought that the well, being outside, might have appeared strange, but it was evidently used for other purposes. Close to it a sort of receptacle was discovered, in which was a large mass of unworked pottery-clay of a fine red colour and quality, unknown in this country. Along with the clay were also pieces of finished pottery and fragments. And the well, no doubt, was used for tempering the clay, and for other purposes of the workmen, who seem to have hastily left the locality. In the upper part of the ditch a quantity of charred grain also was found a few years ago."

Of this description Eric Birley noted:

> "the suggestion that the whole Roman site was enclosed by a rampart and ditch carried down the hill and along the north bank of the Derwent, thus in effect enclosing the vicus downhill from the fort. If Dykes was correct, that would mean that Papcastle (... like Maryport, Kirkby Thore) developed (no doubt in the third and fourth centuries) into a substantial place in its own right, the area ultimately defended by a rampart being substantially larger than that occupied by the fort under shelter of which the civilian settlement had grown up." [2]

Ballentine-Dykes drew attention to the excellence of this site for a Roman fort. It stands on a spur of heavy clay almost three hundred feet above sea-level with clear views around. The north face falls fairly steeply into a narrow depression, marshy at the bottom; to the west the land runs down in a long ridge to flat ground by the river; while to the south it drops more quickly to the riverside land. Only the neck of the spur, to the east, required defensive work. In addition the Derwent circles it to the south.

The Friar's Walk mentioned by Dykes fits in with the road to the south-west described in the last chapter. At its end there must have been a ford or bridge across the Derwent. There is no masonry visible and the crossing has never been investigated. Discoveries began to indicate that Papcastle was an important fort and the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society decided to excavate, the aim being to fix the limits of the camp by trenching. Under W.G . . Collingwood between four and seven men worked for a fortnight in 1912 at a cost of £20 and, although much of interest was found, it is not surprising that with such limited resources and time the task was not completed. To the north they found the rampart to be about nine feet across. A ditch was unnecessary on this side because of the slope, but about twelve feet north of the rampart was a retaining wall three feet wide.

There were no remains of the southern rampart. The excavators located a gate in the eastern wall. The north and south jambs were found, but the whole had been robbed and altered, the complete rampart having been removed from south of the gateway, leaving a hollow. This gateway stood just to the right of the present entrance to Castle Gardens and its discovery is of interest in assessing the size of the fort, for if it was in the middle of the rampart then we can estimate where the south-east corner was, since the position of the north-east corner is known. By this argument, the corner must have been north-west of Derwent Lodge.

The paving of the gateway, as elsewhere on the site, was a concrete made of lime and river gravel, with many quartz and coloured pebbles on the surface as ornament. Fragments of roofing slates, amphorae and Samian ware lay on the floors by the gateway. Attempts to find a granary failed, nor was the principia located, but the team did uncover a building containing large quantities of fragmented pottery. Trenching revealed that large parts of the camp were terraced with retaining walls on the slope to the south, the northern rampart being almost on the crest of the hill.

An interesting discovery in 1912 was that there had been an earlier fort on the site, further below the surface and less disturbed than the one being excavated.

Collingwood comments thus on the results of his investigations:

> "The whole site has been so thoroughly disturbed in the search for building stone that a complete excavation would perhaps be of little service. Our positive conclusions may be briefly put. There were two Roman forts at Papcastle: the earlier, of which we have only the north-east corner, built in good ashlar and lime masonry, and the later, less well built but probably larger, constructed late in the second century AD. There does not seem to be any interval of time between the two occupations; but we may perhaps connect the second with the general reorganisation of the frontier district associated with the name of Severus. Of this we have the north and east walls, the former complete and the length of the latter suggested by the position of the gate from which the Old Carlisle road started. It appears to have been a roughly rectangular fort, measuring perhaps 620 feet by 540 feet. But the comparative poverty of its internal remains might lead us to suppose that it was not an important military station." [3]

Collingwood's final conclusion is probably wrong. His suggested dimensions of 620 feet by 540 feet [188 x 164.5m] are of interest, for by comparison with visible Housesteads's 600 feet by 360 feet we may get some idea of Papcastle' s size.

A further excavation, again rather limited, took place in 1961-2. The former Cockermouth Rural District Council decided to build elderly people's bungalows on part of the site (Castle Gardens) and on behalf of the Ministry of Public Buildings and Works a small team under Dorothy Charlesworth excavated in July 1961 and April-May 1962. The limiting factors were again time and shortage of suitable labour, to which was added the further handicap of avoiding the positions of the bungalow foundations. The remains were found to be very near the present surface, making easy the earlier robbery for building stone. Also dressed stone had been extensively re-used in successive Roman buildings, presenting the archaeologist with further difficulties. There was slight evidence of a fort with timber buildings. The post-hole which held the timber upright of the east gateway was located, on the inner side of the rampart, and obviously that on the northern side of the gateway as a cobbled road ran to its immediate south.

Remains found inside the fort suggest a long history. A succession of timber and stone barrack blocks, with the levels very close together, go up to the fourth century and pottery found on a cobbled barracks floor dates the final rebuilding at about AD 367. Many of the buildings at various times seem to have been erected without foundations and when reconstructions were carried out the earlier work was completely levelled, two factors which make detailed layout and successive buildings difficult to distinguish. (In general, stone replaced timber and turf in the walls, gateways, granaries and other

main buildings of the Cumbrian forts from about the 2nd century, timber often being retained for barrack blocks.) In addition to determining that the barracks were built along the contours, the 1961-2 excavation located the commandant's quarters and in the NW corner of the area the team investigated what may have been the commandant's bath-house. It had been heavily robbed of stone, only the lowest course of masonry, set in mortar, remaining, but there were roofing tiles and a water-tank on the site.

Finds on this occasion included coins, bronze and pottery, some of it Samian ware. Three discoveries are worthy of special mention. The first consisted of some fragments of bronze scale armour. [4] The second was a tombstone. It had an inscription on its lower side, recording Apullio who died at 35 and probably his daughter Sabina and wife Huctia who died at 17 and 42. This was only the stone's first use, for after serving as a memorial it had apparently formed part of a water-tank and weapons had been sharpened on its edge wearing grooves. Finally it became a paving stone. [5]

The third find, a draped bronze figure only 3% inches ht, is in Tunie House. The right arm is broken, but the other holds a cornucopia. It may represent a goddess, possibly a blending of Roman and British mythology. [6]

Tullie House obtained in 1899 a fibula (a clasp or buckle) from Papcastie, believed to be from the beginning of the first century and therefore brought to Derventio from elsewhere. [7]

Other discoveries, often made during building in the village, include a fragment of a stone pine-cone, the form of gravestone used by the Etruscans. Tullie House also has a small uninscribed altar "found in the Derwent, probably near Papcastie."

Few inscriptions have been found, perhaps because Cumbrians were superstitious about writing on stones and defaced any they found. [8] In 1865 a stone was found with a vow inscribed commemorating the dedicator's promotion in AD 242 from Papcastle to a post at Burgh. It refers to Aballava and for long this was assumed to be the Roman name for this fort, still being used in 1925. [9]

Only comparatively recently was it decided that Papcastle was Derventio and that Aballava was the name of the fort at Burgh by Sands. "Derventio" comes from the Celtic for "abounding in oaks".

An inscription of AD 241 was "dug up amongst the ruins of the court of Cockermouth Castle ... in lowering the ground" and R.G. Collingwood drew attention to one in another part of the castle.

> "In the second Dungeon in Cockermouth Castle, close to the ground on the right as you go in, built into the wall, is a stone ten by six inches, inscribed LEG VINIPFF in a style not unlike the Sixth Legion's records in the Birdoswald sector of

> Hadrian's Wall. It therefore probably indicates work by that Legion at Papcastle in the first half of the second century." [10]

Scraps of leather have been found on the camp site suggesting a shoemaker's or leather worker's shop.

When on the move the Roman army lived in ridge-shaped leather tents, covering an area ten feet square, known as 'papilio' because of their butterfly shape. The Tullie House Museum contains a piece of such a tent from Papcastie. It shows one piece to have been superimposed on another and joined by a leather thong. Other thongs apparently tied back the flaps to open the tent. [11]

The air reconnaissance of northem Britain carried out by Dr. St. Joseph in the early 1950s [12] showed the walls on three sides of the fort, the guard chambers of the gate on the west and a road leading eastwards from the east gate. The photographs give the size as 600 feet north to south and 500 feet east to west, just over 6.75 acres. Birley observes:

> "That makes it substantially larger than most of the forts in our district, and adds to the urgency for finding more about its intemallayout" [13]

and he describes it as

> "a key site in the occupation of our territory"

Some knowledge was added by the excavation ten years later, but there is much more we would like to know about the site.

The aerial photographs indicate that the fort was enlarged. This may have been necessary from time to time to house additional units, such as a cuneus (a later type of cavalry unit) which one of the inscriptions suggests may have been stationed here.

The soldiers here would have the duties of watching the mountains and valleys to the south and east and of doing patrol and convoy duties on the diverging roads. Somewhere outside the camp would be a parade ground.

The needs of a garrison of this size were considerable and to satisfy those needs a large civilian vicus grew between the fort and the Derwent. (It is estimated that a garrison of 1000 soldiers in Housesteads required nearly 2500 civilians - men, women and children living outside). [14] Air reconnaissance and the present low ridges in the area suggest that the space below the fort was filled by a settlement of considerable size, the whole enclosed by a rampart and ditch. Vici outside Cumbrian forts grew rapidly in the 3rd century.

Life in such a settlement is a study in itself and it is impossible to give more than a brief outline of the activities which must have been found in the lower part of Papcastle at that time. The population would include British families attracted by the possibility of

work and trade and, after the first fears were overcome, by the peaceful existence within the shadow of the fort. There were probably women and children of various nationalities who had followed their soldier "husbands" across the Channel under arrangements made by the authorities. There would be retired soldiers, for after Hadrian's Wall was completed the garrisons in the area were fairly static and men would tend to settle down in the only place they knew well, practising some trade or craft and remaining on the military reserve, and making homes with the women with whom they had lived during service and whom they were allowed to marry on retirement. Many of these men would have some standing, for after 25 years' service Roman citizenship was granted, a reward much prized as a legal status.

Romans became increasingly scarce as troops were drawn more and more from other parts of the empire - Spain, France, the Rhine, the Tyrol, even as far as the Tigris, - and from Britain itself. Hadrian is thought to have favoured local farmers' sons as recruits, for they were strong and used to the climate, and if recruited at the usual age of 18 to 22 were good for about 25 years' service.

The local population became a mixture of nationalities. Inter-marriage produced a hybrid race. Figures are not available for Papcastle, but it is thought that of the 13,000 troops on the Wall itself 40% were 'married' by the middle of the 2nd century and at Housesteads half the 1000 soldiers were married by the 3rd century when the Emperor Septimus Severus annulled the regulation requiring a man to wait until retirement before marrying. The accommodation at Papcastle would be similar to that recently uncovered at Vindolanda, families sharing strip houses or living in the married quarters provided.

There were definite strata of social position and class distinction, evident in living accommodation as well as in social mixing. Commanding officers and leading provincial administrators and their wives were at the top of the scale.

Life was short by our standards. Burials provide information, inscriptions telling us of the family life and religious outlook of the time (occasional references to Christianity come in the fourth century). Human remains reveal size, diseases and length of life. Nothing is available from Papcastle, but in a cemetery for poor people at York 42% of the women had died by 26 and most of the men by 40. The men were about our size, the women rather smaller. Skeletons indicate that diet was good, without vitamin deficiency, but rheumatism was common. The civilian cemetery outside Brougham fort shows that the dead were given simple cremations and food vessels, etc., provided for the after life. [15] Somewhere lies undiscovered the cemetery for Derventio.

A multitude of tasks would be performed by the civilians; they were an essential part of the maintenance of the garrison. They would provide food and other agricultural supplies, farmers coming in from the surrounding district to the Papcastle market,

where resident craftsmen as well as the military would need their products. Converging from the valleys of Lorton and Embleton and from the wide sweep of plain to the north and west would arrive supplies of milk, cheese, butter, eggs, meat, hides, wool, skins, etc. There is evidence of some forts using a considerable variety of vegetables, fruit and wild products such as nuts and nettles. Hunters and herdsmen would be involved as well as farmers. Wine, olive oil and spices were imported to this area.

A wide variety of craftsmen would seek to satisty the needs of soldiers and civilians - leather workers making shoes, belts, purses, harness and tents; carpenters producing large articles such as doors, furniture and wagons and small utensils like cups, platters, spoons and dice-boxes; metal workers providing hammers and chisels, harness and wagon parts, nails, knives, locks, chains; and masons, quarrymen, foresters and lime- and charcoal-burners, etc., following their trades. Glass came mostly from the continent, pottery from the British midlands or Gaul, most grain from southern Britain. The Romans worked iron, copper, lead and silver in the area. They were skilled metal-workers producing finer products such as brooches and other jewellery, religious figures and harness mounts.

Celtic art was often adapted by native craftsmen to the tastes of the Roman purchasers. In 1847 quarrymen clearing the surface of the limestone at Eaglesfield found a twisted ring of fine gold, near the line of the Roman road and presumably of Romano-British origin. [16] It was sold to a watchmaker in Cockermouth.

In addition there was employment to be found as baths staff- rubbing bathers with oil, selling delicacies to the troops as they enjoyed what was a social occasion, cleaning the premises, stoking; or in managing the mansion or inn where officers travelling would stay and one could find work in the separate bath-house of the inn, in its kitchen and dining room, in the stables or in generally keeping the building clean and ready. Within the vicus there would also be drinking booths, gambling rooms and brothels for the soldiers' use.

Indications of the position of granaries in the vicus have been found. Askew quotes William Dickinson in his 'Agricultural Essay on West Cumberland':

> "The soil of Sib by Brows is reputed to be blackened with the carbon of burned grain belonging to the ancient Romans. Tradition says ... granaries .. , which stood there, were accidentally destroyed by fire; or this district may lie on the remains of an ancient forest destroyed by the same agency,"[17]

As mentioned in an earlier chapter, grain was already being grown before the Romans came, In 1904, in Brewery Field on the east bank of the Cocker, was found a filled cavity, eight feet deep and six wide at the top, lined with three inches of puddled clay. There was blackened grain in the bottom, older than the Papcastle wheat, and this may have been an early British grain store. [18] More recently, in 1923, a trench being dug for a

gas-main passed through a layer of blackened wheat near the east gateway of the fort. Many grains were almost intact, though reduced to 31 % of their normal weight. There were Samian ware remains with the wheat. This was not a granary site. [19]

Another link with the Roman occupants came in the 1940s when a local resident saw a party of Italian farm-workers, from the prisoner-of-war camp on Moota, collecting snails to eat. They said Papcastle was the only place they had found this kind, familiar to them in Italy. This was a reminder of Whellan's comment in 1860

> "The new road from Cockermouth is cut through a portion of the field where the castrum stood, The large edible snail (Helix pomatia) is said to be common in the adjoining hedges and may have been introduced by the Romans as an article of diet."

Mention must be made of the wells in the vicus. That referred to by Stukeley lies in the centre of the lawn in front of Derwent Lodge. There are others in the area, one behind Well House in the west of the present village and one now by the front garden wall of No. 6, The Mount.

Inscriptions from elsewhere indicate that a vicus was largely a self-governing community with its own village elders, [20] responsible for cleaning the streets, organising the market, providing a water supply, settling disputes, collecting taxes, making official returns, etc. Over all would be the commanding officer of the fort, responsible for general economic and political policy and ensuring that the needs of his troops had precedence, but with no time to spare for minor day-to-day administration. Nevertheless, civilian life would be constantly overshadowed by the military presence.

It is likely that the Romans paid little attention to the central hills and valleys, unless there were minerals to be mined. Provided they gave no trouble, the British living well up the valley from Cockermouth would see little of the occupying forces, although gradually some Roman influence reached them, for small Roman objects and coins have been found in the hill villages. These might have been obtained when people were tempted by the opportunity to sell in the market or attracted by the pay of army service, but on the whole the valley people remained poor and outside the main stream of events. Closer to the military agriculture thrived, farms springing up along the roads and round the forts, for here markets and protection were alike provided. Farmers experienced a prosperity they had never known before, encouraged by the Romans to grow corn to save their imports and helped by the introduction of iron ploughs.

It would be interesting to see what lies below present-day Papcastle, Perhaps little, considering the extensive use of the stone for Cockermouth Castle and other local building. We must read into the site what has been discovered in the vicus at Vindolanda -and is still being discovered as excavations continue. Even at Housesteads, regarded as a show fort, only 20% of the vicus has been investigated. [21]

When we look at the low mounds of the camp ramparts and at the flat fields along the river, it is hard to imagine a thriving, bustling community of perhaps three thousand, with roofed buildings, smoking fires, open-fronted shops, rumbling carts, marching soldiers, playing children and all the noise and confusion of a thriving market, overlooked by the hill-top fort which dominated and controlled life. The illustrators of recent publications on Hadrian's Wall, and on the soldiers and civilians who lived along it have done a great service in helping our imagination. What they depict of the Wall forts and vici would be repeated, with local modifications, at Derventio.

More About Roman Papcastle

This History of Cockermouth contains three chapters on the Papcastle Roman site, west of the town, detailing its domestic and military life and importance.

Since the 1981 edition of this book, there have been further excavations which suggest that the site was much larger than once thought and important as a military base in Cumbria.

In 1984 there was a short rescue dig on the site of the Burroughs Cottages which had to be demolished. The dig by the University of Lancaster discovered massive foundations of what was probably a temple; at a low level appreciable remains of early timber structures; a well-metalled road; evidence of much industrial activity and a number of interesting small finds, including a statue previously unknown in Britain. The dig director, Adrian Olivier, suggested this pointed to the possibility that Papcastle had been the armoury supplying the forts of the north-west of Cumbria. In the mid-1990s the occupant of a house in modem Papcastle decided to extend his home. Digging the foundations revealed much evidence of Roman occupation - pottery, large stone foundations, etc. The houseowner persuaded Channel 4's popular archaeology programme "Time Team" to visit Papcastle, and in 1998 despite being restricted to just three days, they found much at Derwent Lodge Cottage and on Sibby Brows rediscovered the extent of the vicus. Evidence from this weekend included a road system, strip houses along roadways, some perhaps second century buildings, a bronze mirror, Samian ware pottery etc. The archaeologists summing up their discoveries as "smashing finds ", now consider that unusually for the North of England, this was a permanent settlement and proper town, perhaps on a par with Corbridge. There is now strong evidence that Roman Papcastle may well have occupied nearly all the area from the fort south to the river Derwent.

Chapter 6

The Dark Ages

The Romans left Britain in AD 410. For the last quarter of the fourth century they had been training tribal leaders north of the Wall to protect the territory between it and the former Antonine Wall.[l] This policy led to the setting up in that area of the two kingdoms of Strathclyde in the west (based on Dumbarton Rock) and Manau Gododdin in the east (based possibly on Edinburgh). When the Romans left Papcastle the civilians who had worked for the occupying forces, indeed made the occupation feasible, found that everything was theirs.

No more taxes, but no longer the demand of the military for their products or for the service of their sons in the army. They naturally stayed on, for this was their home and it was pointless to move elsewhere.

Eric Birley (Professor of Roman History at Durham University) wrote

> ".. the late occupation of Papcastle need not have been specifically military; we cannot exclude the possibility that here, as elsewhere, a paramilitary or purely civilian population maintained itself for many years after the withdrawal of a regular garrison. How long the site remained occupied, there is no direct evidence to show, but significant continuity of occupation seems excluded in view of the Place-Name Society's verdict that the first element in the modem name can hardly be other than Old Norse papi, 'hermit'; that seems a clear enough indication that when Norse settlers first penetrated into the district there was only a solitary hermit living among the ruins of the Roman fort. By the same token, it also serves to discredit the popular tradition that Papcastle takes its name from Gilbert Pipard. Yet it is noteworthy that the Normans chose Papcastle, perhaps because of its plentiful supply of Roman stone, as the caput of the barony of Allerdale, only moving the lord's residence to Cockermouth when troubled times made it necessary for them to build a castle on a more easily defensible site."[2]

Of the drift of events after this first period of freedom R.G. Collingwood says:

> "descendants of Romanised Britons lingered on, impoverished by Pictish and Scotic raids, deprived of their larger settlements and richer lands, not by conquest but by devastation, sinking lower in the scale of civilisation, ... keenly conscious of their pedigree, nursing in song and legend the tradition of a greatness that had long passed away". [3]

For hundreds of years following the departure of the Romans there are no written records specifically relating to our part of Cumbria. Not until the Normans came and

the various rolls and monastic records began to be kept was there any contemporary written history. In this respect the Derwent and Cocker valleys were indeed in the Dark Ages.

Yet this was not a time of inactivity. The l;!rea around present-day Cockermouth was frequently changed from one political grouping to another, from one overlord to another, in a most confusing manner. We will give only an outline of the complex of strife, invasions and alliances of this period.

When the Romans left it is likely that many of the soldiers were just abandoned, rather than the authorities incur the expense of organising their return to their country of origin, even if they had wanted to go. [4] Many would settle down to family life, supporting themselves from the land or by some trade. It seems natural that Papcastle would have continued to be the centre of the economic and social life for the people around and that the vicus remained a settlement, extended now into the abandoned buildings of the fort.

At the height of the Roman demand for farm produce some of the hitherto neglected northern slopes and poorer marginal land were brought under cultivation and after the loss of the military market these were the first to be abandoned in the inevitable contraction of farming.

The peace of this period of rundown would be shattered periodically by raids of Scots landing on the coast or Picts coming from the north, plundering the area for cattle and probably taking slaves, but penetration and settlement by the Jutes, Angles and Saxons of northern Europe was slow. Judging from the names left in Roman record there were no occupation forces from this part of the continent, so the invaders found no friends here, only the resistant British, aided by dense forests. Gradually, after battles and spasmodic advances, they drew nearer to Cumbria, then part of the British Kingdom of Rheged which in the 5th century spanned both sides of the Solway. By AD 560 they had set up the kingdom of Deira, consisting of much of Yorkshire and Humberside, with its capital at York, and some ten years earlier the kingdom ofBernicia stretching from the Tyne to the lowlands of Scotland and based on Bamburgh. The latter eventually extended westwards to the Cumbrian coast.

In the north-west evolved the powerful British kingdom of Strathclyde, including Rheged and other minor states, extending southwards from the Clyde, sometimes to the Solway only, at others possibly as far as the Dee. Deira and Bernicia fused into Northumbria in AD 604. Cumbria was sometimes in Strathclyde, sometimes in Northumbria, and the latter's hold over the west was strengthened when the brother of Oswald, king of Northumbria, married a great-granddaughter of Urien, one of Strathclyde's greatest leaders. Northumbria remained in the early ninth century very important until the centre of political power shifted to Wessex. The Cumbrian British would be little affected by the

various wars being waged, but they were affected by the coming of the Angles from the east. First a large area round Carlisle was taken into Northumbria, then the Angles spread into the Cumbrian plain and the wider valleys, not only conquering but occupying the land by planting colonies of people from elsewhere. The kingdoms of Strathclyde and Rheged sank into oblivion for a time, but in some of the mountainous areas the British almost certainly held out. They were surrounded by Anglian settlement by AD 685, but isolated communities probably remained until the Anglo-Saxons were themselves threatened by the Norse-Irish invasion at the end of the ninth century.

The early inhabitants of southern Scotland, Cumbria, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany were of common origin and it was only when the Anglo-Saxons drove wedges between them in the Chester and Severn areas that their close connection was affected. 'Cumbria' and 'Cymru' (Wales) are of common Celtic origin and many river names are Celtic or pre-Celtic, including in West Cumbria Cocker, Derwent, Ehen, Esk, Irt and Mite. The 'pen' in Torpenhow, Penrith, etc., is Welsh, as are 'blaen' for summit or peak in Blencathra; 'glen' for wooded valley in Lamplugh (once Glanploug), 6lenderamakin, etc.; and 'cil' for chapel in Gilcrux. (see Appendix 21)

While under the Anglo-Saxons eastern Northumbria became the foremost centre of learning in Europe, farming continued quietly in Cumbria. Then came new invaders. At the end of the 8th century the Vikings landed on many of the coasts and islands of western Europe, first raiding for plunder in the summer but becoming progressively more permanent -. it has been suggested AD 787 855 for plundering, 855-954 for settling and 980-1016 for political conquest. [7] Danes predominated in the east, the Norse in the Scottish islands, with roughly equal numbers in Ireland. It was from Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man that they mostly entered Cumbria, from about AD 910. By then there had already been a fusion of Norse culture and race with those of the Irish, so that the invaders were really Norse-Irish.

Evidence for this is seen in church dedication at this time to Celtic saints Patrick, Bridget, Columba; in the Celtic practice of inverting place-names - Aspatria, Patrick' s ashtree; in a Celtic element in sculptures; and in language, such as the use of the Norse suffix -erg derived from the Gaelic -airge for a summer pasture.

Their conquest of the Anglo-Saxons was probably easy, for the latter had settled down from being invaders to the peaceful role of farmers. 'Conquest' may hardly have been necessary, for the frequent proximity of Norse-Irish settlements to those of the Anglo Saxons, which were not destroyed, suggests that they lived amicably. The invasion may have been a peaceful infiltration of farmers. The very name 'Viking' may mean the place of the people or people of the farms, although it seems more likely to have come from 'vik', the Norse for creek or inlet.

The arrival was not entirely peaceful for Carlisle was badly damaged about AD 915 by forces sailing up the Solway. It had suffered earlier destruction late in the previous century by the Dane Healfdene who had devastated Northumbria and was interested in the wealth of the monasteries and churches further west. It was Healfdene who set off the monks of Carlisle on their travels through Cumbria carrying the remains of St. Cuthbert. Names suggest they rested at ten (possibly 13) places, including Embleton and Lorton. (8] The invasion of east Cumbria via Stainmore and the Tyne-Irthing gap is attested by Danish names and by the rectangular greens of Villages.

During the tenth century the Norse settled in the valleys, right up into the mountains. They cleared much of the forest from the low land and the lower hill sides, established new farms and brought to the fells something of the bare look now regarded mistakenly as the true lakeland landscape. They introduced better ploughs and harrows. They intermarried and added yet another strain to the Cumbrian race.

Norse remains are few, but place-names very numerous.

Beck (Norse bekkr), dale (N dair), fell (N fjoll). fitz (N fit river meadows), force (N foss), gate (N gata. way, path), how (N heugrmound or hillock), knot (N knottr rocky outcrop), ness (N nes nose, promontory), scale (N skali hut, shelter), side, seat and satter (N saetr . high grazing ground), slack (N slakki depression between two hills), tarn (N tjom), wath (N vath ford), wyke (N vik . creek, inlet) and others are all slight adaptations of the Norse and are liberally spread throughout the Cockermouth area, as are the actual Norse words thwaite (clearing), gill (ravine), garth (enclosure), rigg (long, steep-sided hill), buth (booth or temporary shelter), etc. The villages and locations, including some street names still used, are too numerous to list, but a few of particular interest may be noted.

Bassenthwaite (Middle English Bastenethwaite or Bastingwait) uses the Icelandic bast of which ropes and baskets are made. (Alternatively it may be from an Anglo-French surname, as a spelling of 1220 suggests -Basrunwater, the lake of Basrun. There are often two or more possible derivations of a name, as again in Buttermere, given above as Celtic for scree, but possibly from the Norse buth).

Mosser is the shieling or pasture on the moss; Ullock (ME Ulvelayk or Ullayk) uses the Norse leikr (to play or be idle, cf the Yorkshire laikin) and ulfa (wolf) and is a place frequented by wolves; Rowrah has the Norse rug (rye) with Norse vra (remote corner of land); Bridekirk is eleventh or twelfth century Scandinavian for the church of S1. Bride; Setmurthy (Satmerdoc in 1250) is the seat of Murdoch; Stanger the Norse stong-ra (a boundary post); and Wamscale at the head of the Buttermere valley is probably Norse varna (protect) with scale (a safe shelter or hiding place).

Allerdale (Alnerdale c 1060) combines the Norse possessive -ar with a British river name, to describe the dale of the River Ellen.

Many mountain names also contain Norse, showing that the new settlers penetrated right to the heart of the district. Scafell, for example, uses skalli, meaning bald.

As with the Angles, some Norse terms were absorbed into the Cumbrian vocabulary and continued to be used, so that they tend to lose their value for dating.

The first farm in a valley was often the 'thwaite' at the entrance, [9] then later outlying booths and huts originally used in summer would be permanently settled as farms. Most dales had a pannage area for pigs, i.e. a wood where pigs could forage, so we get Swinside incorporating the Norse svine (swine) and Grisdale, etc., using griss (Pig). Incidentally, pollen analysis shows that at this time the pigs' liking for oak and beech mast prevented full regeneration of these trees, coupled of course with the clearing that was done.

The Danish -by for a farm or village occurs along an arc from Appleby to Allonby then down the coast (Moresby, etc.) - about 60 examples in the old counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. This again was used later by the Normans and others, so precise dating is difficult. A modem use is in by-law, i.e. a town law.

Some farming terms are common to West Cumbria and lceland. Twinter for a two year old sheep and trinter for a three year-old are examples. The Cumbrian for a female lamb, gimmer-Iamb, is equivalent to the lcelandic lamb-gymber and the Danish gimmerlam. The identification mark cut on a sheep's ear, the lug-mark, is in Iceland the logg-mark, log meaning law. [10]

Norman Nicholson refers to the lasting impression which the Norwegian language left on the Cumbrian dialect, with its "clicking, cracking, harshly melodious tune" [11]

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, the whole political set-up was very confused. Dating, even of specific events, is often difficult. The successive invasions stretched over considerable periods and it is impossible to clearly divide what was Celtic, Anglo-Saxon or Scandinavian. The various cultures lived on side-by-side or mingled with each other, leaving their evidence in place-names and in the type of settlement -the dispersed hamlets of the Celts; the villages of the Anglo-Saxons, often around large rectangular greens; and the small units of colonisation by the Vikings. By the end of the eleventh century Cumbria had a population descended from British, Romans and other south and west Europeans, Anglo-Saxons, Irish, Norse and Danes. Similarly the language of England from the mid eleventh century to the end of the fourteenth, Middle English, was a fusion of many basic elements.

Scotland was always keen to possess Cumbria. From the late ninth century Strathclyde began to rise from its period of minor importance. About AD 880 a Strathclyde prince became King of Scotland. Cumbria too was becoming more important in its own right.

Cumbria's importance lay in its position between the Norse of Ireland and Galloway and the . Danes of Northumbria. In AD 945 the Cumbrian king Dunmail had displeased Saxon Aethelstan's successor, Eadmund, who according to the Saxon chronicle

> "harried all Cumberland, and gave it to Malcolm I, King of Scots, and successor to Constantine, on condition that he should become his midwyrhta (ally) by land and sea against the Danes."

R. S. Ferguson comments, that since the land was given to Malcolm as tenure for military service, it became

> "a feudal benefice in the strictest sense. Cumbria thus became a fief of the Crown of England, but not a fief held within the kingdom of England. Cumbria was not an integral part of England; it was without (outside) that kingdom, and had always been so."

Cumbria was now in effect part of Scotland, held by the king of Scotland or one of his family. In the year 1000 Athelred asked for tribute from the Scots for this area and when it was refused he marched from York through Appleby into Cumberland "*and ravaged it well nigh all"*.

Around AD 1000 the border was along the Duddon to Stainmore line. It was shortened about 1032 as the result of a deal between King Cnut and Malcolm II of Scotland, under which the Plain of Lothian north of the Tweed which had been English was exchanged for most of Cumbria. [12] At various times the River Derwent formed the boundary between the two countries, so that the town side was in one country, the Gote and Papcastle area in the other.

Christianity was spreading in western Europe during the later part of Roman rule. Deira and Bernicia became officially Christian in AD 627. The faith reached West Cumbria about the middle of the seventh century, from Ireland and Iona. No churches survive, probably because they were wooden, but a number of stone crosses are to be found, on some 21 sites where the Angles had settled in the lowlands and along the fringes of the hills. [13] At Brigham, which included Cockermouth in its parish, there are six cross fragments in the eleventh century church and a cross-head at the vicarage, all of them of the ninth to eleventh centuries.

Crosses are also found at ancient road intersections, fords, etc., or marking important points on routes. They may survive in name only -- Dean Cross, Crossgate, etc. Both Brigham and Clifton churches are near river crossings.

There are in Cumbria a number of hog-back grave-stones in the shape of Norse wooden huts, the nearest to Cockermouth being at Bridekirk, Crosscanonby and Plumb land. In 1864-5 a Viking-type bronze ring-headed pin was found in the foundations of Brigham church tower, probably from a burial in the churchyard. [15] Graves with swords have

been found at Aspatria, Seaton and other places, including Eaglesfield. In 1877 Wil1iam Dickinson wrote of "the limestone bluffs at Thornberry and Tendley, where six skeletons and a sword were found" [16] Was this a cemetery? A hoard of Viking coins was discovered at Dean.

The Norse-Irish probably took over such natural hill forts as Castle How and they greatly developed the British site at the foot of Scale Beck. (Fig. 8).

Some of the settlements of the Vikings were used for many centuries. Probably in Cumbria, as happened in the Isle of Man and north-west Scotland, sites were sometimes used until the end of the eighteenth century, shepherds using the shielings - originally a small hut of low dry-stone walling, thatch roofed, with bracken on the floor, big enough to sleep three or four; possibly with an enclosure for cattle and a hut where cheeses could be made by those looking after the stock. The accommodation may have changed little during the long period of use. The Scale Beck site, with its many ruins of huts and enclosures, is a good example of successive occupation in both Celtic and Norse times.

According to Dr. Thurnam the Norse left their mark in other ways than on the language and the pattern of settlement. He wrote that in the population of Cumberland are

> "unequivocal signs of a Scandinavian strain. a tall, light-complexioned, long-faced, handsome, and, in every sense, powerful! people, whether they claim Danish or Norse descent - most probably the latter. The Cumberland peasantry are remarkable for their stature ...(Men average 5 feet 9 inches, women 5 feet 5 inches., bones large, the skeleton strong, and the limbs decidedly long.) They are not a very bulky people, nor yet very fleshy; still they are athletic, and they are free in their movements.... The countenance is fair and handsome; the face is long and orthogonous; the forehead of good height and breadth,. the hair is generally of a light shade of brown, or fair, very seldom red, rarely dark, the body is marked by an inferior degree of hairiness, grey and blue eyes preponderate, an acute, shrewd people; active, industrious, vigerous, enterprising, trustworthy Everything about them is clean and respectable, not squalid, mean or paltry. In all these elements they are most unlike the Celtic races." [17]

Thumam then tempers this praise with the following additional comment:

> "Countenance not very expressive, intellect shrewd and wary, but rather slow, not bright but safe, true and persevering, long in maturing. The mathematical sciences have often been efficiently cultivated. Little communicative, not very excitable. Of great integrity and honesty of purpose, but not very candid or open; far-seeing and acquisitive, but at the same time warm- hearted, kind and 'clannish'. In the enjoyment of fun, they may be rude, but are not cruel.. -.." [18]

Chapter 7

The arrival of the Normans

The political set-up in the north of England around the time of the Norman invasion was fluctuating and involved. Serious historians give irreconcilable accounts and dates and we must be content here with a general idea of what was happening, recognising that there may be some inaccuracies.

The agreement between Cnut and Malcolm was apparently not honoured and we hear of William I arranging a peace with Malcolm on condition that he did homage for Cumberland, an arrangement possibly designed to give the Normans time to settle the more southerly parts of England.

Gospatric, nephew of Duncan once king of Scotland, was responsible for Cumberland and in 1067 he either bought from William the Conqueror the Earldom of Northumberland or William appointed him to it This made him an influential and powerful figure in the north. In about 1069 the Scots invaded Cumberland and held it by force. Gospatric attacked them from the east and the Normans then arrived to end the struggle for supremacy.

Gospatric was deprived of the Earldom of Northumberland, including Cumberland, and fled to Scotland, where Malcolm created him Earl of Dunbar. Malcolm III agreed to act as viceroy and feudal tenant of Cumberland for the King of England and arranged to do this through Dolfin, son of Gospatric, whom he appointed vice-regent of the land of Carlisle, and through his brother Waldeof (also known as Waltheof or Waldeve), who became vice-regent of Allerdale. This is one of a number of instances in the centuries following the Norman invasion when a person deposed in disgrace was replaced by another member of the same family.

The situation apparently continued very unsettled for the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle relates that

> "King William marched north to Carlisle with a large army and re-established the fortress and built the castle and drove out Dolfin who had previously ruled the land there and garrisoned the castle with his men and afterwards returned to the south and sent thither many English peasants with wives and stock to dwell there and till the ground." [1]

This would be William II (Rufus) and the date probably 1092. He thus annexed the area south of the Solway and received homage from Malcolm III.

Because of its unsettled nature and the Scottish domination of much of the area Cumber land, was not included in William I's 1086 survey of his lands, the Domesday Book.

Not only did the Normans settle people from the south in this region, but they placed its control in the hands of powerful barons. At the beginning of the twelfth century Henry I gave to Ranulf (Ranulph) de Meschines, one of the Norman adventurers who had come over with William I, the Earldom of Carleol or Carlisle, probably comprising the whole of Cumberland. (There were at least six variations on 'Meschines' and he was also known as de Briquessart or de Brichsard.) Ranulf married the daughter of Yvo Talboise, who had the Barony of Kendal (from the Lune to Windermere), so this land also came to him. His possessions were very extensive. The Denton Manuscript states

> "King William the Conqueror, about the latter end of his reign, gave the counties of Cumberland and Westmoreland to Ranulph, or Randolph de Meschines, sister's son to Hugh Lupus, Earl of Chester, and left him men and munition to defend the country from all hostility ... Randolph de Meschines being quietly possessed of every part of Cumberland, presently surveyed the whole country, and gave all the frontiers bordering on Scotland, on Northumberland, and along the sea-coasts, to his friends and followers, retaining still to himself the middle part, between the east and west mountains, a goodly great forest full of woods, red and fallow deer, wild swine, and all manner of wild beasts, called the forests of Englewood, ... Randolph, gave to his brother William Meschines, the great barony of Caupland or Kopeland (from the Norse kaupaland, meaning bought land), which lies between the rivers Dudden, Darwent and the sea, and so much of the same as lies between the rivers Cockar and Darwent. The said William granted over to one Waldeof, the son of Gospatrick, Earl of Dunbar in Scotland, together with the five towns about Cockar, that is to say, Brigham, Eaglesfield, Dean with Branthwaite, Crayksothen, and Clifton, with the hamlets thereof, Little Clifton and Stainburn. This Waldeofwas Lord of Allerdale-beneath-Darwent." [2]

The above version of events is that Ranulf divided Cumberland into baronies, usually given as eleven, keeping Inglewood and possibly other areas for himself. [3] Another version is that Henry I formed the baronies and gave William de Meschines Gilsland, which he found difficult to hold and subsequently exchanged for Copeland. [4]. In either case William gave Waldeof the 'five towns' which thus for the first time appear in the Honour of Cockermouth and become a manor of Cockermouth.

It appears that William de Meschines held the Barony of Coupland 'enfeoffed' by the king, the caput baroniae being Egremont which eventually led to the barony being known as that of Egremont rather than Copeland. Allerdale, the barony below or north of the Derwent, was held by Waldeof enfeoffed by Ranulf, the caput baroniae being at Papcastie. Waldeof did not merge his new manor of Cockermouth in his barony of Allerdale because it was held by a distinct title and was dependant on Copeland, as is shown by the fact that when Waldeof granted to the Church of the Holy Mother of God

and St. Bega, at Stainburn, a parcel (a part) of the five towns the gift was confirmed by William de Meschines of Copeland.

In 1120 or soon after, Ranulfs nephew, the Earl of Chester, was drowned and Ranulf succeeded him. The Earldom of Chester was second only to the Crown in importance and a more attractive barony than Cumberland. Ranulf surrendered his northern possessions to the Crown. Some think that it was now that Henry divided the country into baronies, others that he hesitated to appoint a new overlord, as the great earls were becoming difficult to control, and that the two counties of Westrnaireland and Carliol or Cumberland (from the Solway to the Duddon plus Alston) were formed, with sheriffs directly responsible to the king.

Ranulf asked Henry if his immediate feoffees in the lands he was vacating might become tenants in capite of the Crown. The Sheriff's return shows that this was done. Waldeof continued to hold the Barony of Allerdale and the Honour of Cockermouth (the five towns), now responsible through the Sheriff to the king as superior lord. The Waver to Wampool area was later separated as the Barony of Wigton, granted to Odard de Logis, but as he had no heir it came back into the Barony of Allerdale.

We now have the following arrangement. William de Meschines as Baron of Copeland, with his residence at Egremont. His title later became Baron of Egremont and his lands which stretched from the southern boundary of the five towns to the Duddon, were referred to as Allerdale-above Derwent. The five towns, now known as the Honour of Cockermouth, and Allerdale-below-Derwent were Waldeof s, with his caput first at Papcastle and then at Cockermouth.

The Saxons had divided society into the *ealdremen* (governors, hence our 'aldermen') next in importance to the king; the thanes, with a property qualification of about 600 acres; the churls (or ceoris, freemen) and villeins (labourers in the service of a particular person, but not strictly slaves), who were under the protection of the thanes and for whom they had to do service. The land was divided into Boc-Iand, which carried a title to it recorded in a deed, and FoIe-land, the land of the folk, either portioned out for a term or held in common. The former, the freehold land, had certain charges for defence, repair of forts and bridges, etc.

The Normans took over this feudal system and strengthened it, retaining many of the Saxon laws and customs. (They probably also took over the Saxon land units as a basis for their baronies.) In 1215 King John invested the grantee of Cockermouth manor with all liberties and free customs, and through the sheriff undertook to maintain and defend his men, things, lands and possessions.

The early inhabitants of Cockermouth were very much under the hand of the castle. The lord of the manor had the power of life and death and the right to a gallows. He also had

the right to confiscate for himself the goods and chattels of felons; to assize of bread, and to *deodants*, that is living and dead things that caused the death of a person.

The chief tenants of the lord repeated much of the structure at a lower level, keeping demesne land to cultivate themselves and letting the rest in return for military service, which they had to provide for their overlord. This was true feudalism.

Chapter 8

The holders of the honour and Castle of Cockermouth

We have seen that, when Gospatric was expelled from the Earldom of Northumberland, Allerdale passed to his third son Waldeof. Waldeof had also received from William de Meschines the whole territory in

> "Kokyr et Derwent" of the five towns of "Brigham, Eaglesfield, Dene, Greysothen, Bramthwayt et duo Clifton et Stainburn". [1]

This was the new Honour of Cockermouth, but de Meschines remained superior lord of this strip of land. Waldeof is reported to have brought from Jerusalem a bone of St. Paul, a bone of John the Baptist, two stones of Christ's sepulchre and a piece of the Holy Cross. [2] These relics he gave to the Priory of Carlisle, which he had already liberally endowed. Initially he lived at and administered his lands from Papcastle, but before the end of his life he probably built Cockermouth Castle and moved there.

The succession here is rather uncertain. In the next fifty years or so the barony probably passed first to Waldeofs son Alan, one of the founders of Holmcultram Abbey. It is interesting that Alan made a gift from Cockermouth to the monks of St. Bees, which suggests that he was living there, but Wigton was still doing suit at the court of Pap castle in the 1280s. [3] As Alan apparently had no issue, the barony passed to his aunt Ethreda (Octreda), sister of Waldeof. Her husband had been Duncan n, King of Scotland, and from Ethreda the estate went to their son William Fitz Duncan, nephew of the reigning King of Scotland. (At that time the prefix 'fitz' meant 'son of and did not imply illegitimacy as in later times.)

Meanwhile William de Meschines and his wife Cecilia (Cecily) de Rumelli, lady of Skipton in Yorkshire, had the barony of Coupland which eventually passed to their daughter Alicia (Alice). Alice married William fitz Duncan so the two baronies were joined, making William a very powerful lord.

William and Alice had two sons - first Gospatric who died in infancy, then William - followed by three daughters. Young William, always known as the Boy of Egremont, succeeded to these large estates. Not only was he closely connected with the King of Scotland but he was also second cousin to Henry 11 of England, so that if he had lived a holder of the Honour of Cockermouth might have gained a throne. Unfortunately he was drowned in the Strid, trying to jump this gorge in the River Wharfe, which, while only about four feet wide, is in places thirty feet deep. [4]

The three girls were still very young and Henry II appears to have assumed legal possession of the barony until they were of age to inherit. Their mother Alice presumably continued to live in Cockermouth and it may have been after her death that

Henry granted the baronies of Allerdale and Coupland and other lands to the three sisters and their husbands as co-parceners. To the eldest Cecilia, given in marriage by Henry to William de Blois, Earl of Albemarle (known as 'le Gros'), went the Barony of Skipton. Amabel (Amabilla, Annabel), wife of Richard de Lucy, inherited Coup land and Richard built Egremont Castle. Allerdale-below-Derwent and the five towns (the Honour) passed to the youngest sister Alicia (Alice) and her husband.

Alice had married Gilbert Pipard, being first his ward and then his wife. Gilbert was an itinerant justice of Henry n, Sheriff of Lancaster and holder of various important public offices. There is a record that in 1192 he held the forest of Allerdale from the Crown at a rent of three marks a year and he is also mentioned in the pipe roll of Richard I for 1193, probably the year of his death. Alice later married Robert de Courtenai, who took a turn as Sheriff of Cumberland. She outlived Robert (he died in 1209) and was childless from both marriages. After Robert's death she paid King John £100, ten palfreys and ten oxen for the liberty of her inheritance, so that she had sufficient income from the estates of both husbands to make it unnecessary for her to marry again.

When Henry Il assigned to Alice the five towns, as a royal gift they ceased to be a part of the Barony of Egremont and this land became an honour in its own right.

The Sheriffs return for 1212 records that "Alice de Rumilly holds her land in Alredale of the king by rendering annually of cornage of £15-13s-4d."

She must have died about 1215, for in that year King John delivered the estates of Cockermouth and Allerdale to her great-nephew William de Fortibus II pending the division of the property between the descendants of Alice's two elder sisters.

The eldest of the three sisters, Cecily, had a daughter Harwise (Harwisia, Helewise) who married three times. By her first and third husbands she had no children, but by her second William de Fortibus to whom she was given in marriage by the king in 1195, she had a son - the William de Fortibus 11 just mentioned.

He succeeded as the Earl of Albemarle (from his grandfather) and to the Skipton estate, and married Avelina, daughter and coheir of Richard de Montfichet.

The Allerdale lands which William II was holding were divided in 1224 into two shares of equal value. To him as senior parcener (and incidentally one of the signatories of Magna Carta) went the manor of Cockermouth and the manor house of Papcastle, where the tenants of Allerdale still attended to do suit. The other portion passed to Thomas de Multon, guardian of the infant daughters Amabilla and Alicia of Richard de Lucy, lord of Coup land. By his second marriage he was stepfather to the girls and they married the two sons he already had, Lambert and Alan, and from these marriages came the Multons of Egremont and the Lucies of Cockermouth.

In 1216 Henry III came to the throne and after his coronation made a tour of the country to ascertain the state and custody of the royal castles and probably to find if any had been newly erected or crenellated without his permission. (He introduced licencing for crenellation.) William II opposed this inspection and refused to open the castle at Rockingham, on the border of Northamptonshire and in the de Fortibus Lincolnshire estates.

Later William rebelled more openly. The degree of Henry's displeasure was shown by the command he sent to the Sheriff of Westmorland in 1221 that

> *"without any delay he should summon the earls, barons, knights and freeholders of his bailiwick, and that they should hasten to Cockermouth to besiege the castle there, and when they had taken the same, should destroy it, to its very foundations."* [5]

Richard de Umfraville of Prudhoe Castle, and of a family to have connections with Cockermouth later, was summoned with other barons to assist in the siege.

There is no record of the instructions being fully carried out, but the western tower of the castle has 14th century superstructure on early 13th century foundations. The original building on these foundations may have been destroyed under Henry's orders or may have been purposely demolished in the course of rebuilding.

Developments in the next few years are confused. In the same year as the above order, 1221, Henry III granted to William a charter to hold a market. If this was before the order to besiege, then Wil1iam would still be lord of the manor. That he may have been deprived of his position is suggested by the following note of 1241, the year of his death

> *"Mandate to Henry de Nekcton, Escheator beyond Trent, the King having taken homage of William, son of William de Fortibus, sometime Earl of Albemarle, for all the lands, tenements and castles which the earl held in chief, to deliver to him the castles of Cockermue, Skipton in Craven and Skipse in Holdemess."* [6]

This was William Ill, son ofWilliam 11 and Avelina.

A flaw in the argument that the inheritance was held by the king until William Il died, is that in 1222 he gave permission for the Cockermouth market to be held on Mondays instead of Saturdays, and this order was addressed to William. Was William II then still acting as lord of the manor? Finding circumstances were against him, did he relent and decide to obey Henry? There is a suggestion that the Archbishop of York interceded on his behalf. If this is the course that events took, then the mandate to de Neketon must have been merely for his information that the inheritance of the barony by William III was approved and confirmed.

William III married Isabel, heiress of Baldwin de Redvers, Earl of Devon, and when William died in 1260 she received a share of Cockermouth and Allerdale as her dower.

Isabel lived until 1293, but in the Record of Pleas for 1268 there is an account of an interesting incident. Isabel made

> *"complaint against Roger de Lancaster, Richard de Fleming and others, that, vi et armis, they had come to her castle at Cockermouth, and seized and carried away a goshawk, three doves, and consumed her goods to the amount of forty marks*."

Were Lancaster and Fleming and their friends just taking advantage of a widow and 'throwing their weight about'? There was a sequel. Isabel and William UI had first three sons, all of whom died in infancy, then two daughters, the elder of whom was Aveline.

In 1269, the year after the above incident, A veline was given in marriage by Henry III to Edmund - and Edmund was Edmund Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster! In 1273 Edward I made an order for Aveline and Edmund (who was his brother) to have seisin of her inheritance as she was now old enough to receive what had been in the king's keeping during her minority.

She died soon afterwards, probably in 1274, without having children. Her younger sister must have already died, for Aveline's part of Allerdale-below-Derwent escheated to the Crown for thirty years.

The first half of the 14th century saw continuous efforts by Edwards I, II and III to find tenants for the castle. Sometimes it was granted as a reward for loyalty to the crown, sometimes in payment of a debt. Frequently it was awarded for life, but either the tenant died soon afterwards or for some reason surrendered it to the king - Edward II's worthless favourite Piers Gavestone received it in July 1309 and gave it back in August! There were long periods when Cockermouth escheated to the crown and a constable was appointed to manage the estates for the king, who periodically issued orders for the castle to be repaired and well maintained, as when Edward II told the constable to "safely and securely keep and defend the castle of Cockermouth so that no damage or danger happen to the same, for the greater security and tranquillity of his people" [7] while he was abroad.

In 1275, 1307 and 1316 claims were made to the Cockermouth estates by claimants arguing their descent from earlier owners [8] the last of the three being Anthony de Lucy. He eventually acquired them as a reward. In 1318 Andrew de Harcia, Earl of Carlisle, was made governor of Cockermouth Castle for life, in return for defeating the Earl of Lancaster at Boroughbridge. He was either too ambitious or very concerned to quieten down the northern counties, for he made an alliance with Robert Bruce which led to his downfall.

De Lucy visited de Harcia in Carlisle Castle, to all appearances a friendly call. His retinue had arms hidden under their cloaks and at each defended point of Anthony's entry he left some of his men to chat to the guards. At a given time all were

overpowered, Anthony and his last companion taking de Harcia himself. De Harcla was tried and hung, drawn and quartered. With a callousness characteristic of the times his remains were displayed at Carlisle, Newcastle, York and Shrewsbury before being handed over to his sister.

So we find in 16 Edward U(1323) a Royal Charter ofAnthony's reward for services rendered:

> *"King to Anthony de Lucie: castle and honour of Cockermouthe, and manor of Papcaster in Allerdale said to be appurtenant thereto, with knight's fees, advowsons of churches, fairs, markets, free chases, warrens and all other royal liberties in castle, honour and manor, and return of royal writs in the honour; for service of one knight's fees: witness William Archbishop ofYork [and several others] given at Bishopthorpe"*

Thus Anthony gained Cockermouth.

There hangs in Cockermouth Castle a document bearing a large seal depicting a knight on horseback, the caption to which reads:

Letters Patent

4 June 16 Edward II (1323)

Grant to Anthony Lord Lucy of the Castle and Honour of Cockermouth

and the Manor of Papcastle.

The Lucy Cartulary, which contains the charter quoted on the previous page, also has an entry for 1324 recording a marriage settlement because

> *"Thomas de Lucy had agreed at the King's request to marry the King's kinswoman, Agnes."*

This would presumably be Anthony's son, the only Thomas alive at that time. Anthony not only gained Cockermouth, but he was also made Sheriff of Cumberland and Warden of Carlisle Castle - he stepped into de Harcla's place.

On his death in 1343 Cockermouth passed to the Thomas mentioned above and in 1365 to the next generation, Anthony again. Anthony died in the Holy Land three years later and his sister Maud (?r Matilda) inherited. This was the end of the Lucy owners. One writer stated his opinion that

> *"As far as I can leme, the nobilist house of the Lucies were they of Cokerrnuth, yn Cumbreland; and these Lucies were also Lordes ofWreschil Castel, about the mouth of Darwent river, in Yorkshire. "*[9]

Maud brought two well known names into the history of the castle.

Her first husband was Gilbert de Umfraville, Earl of Angus, who died in 1381, and her second, whom she married four years later, was Henry Percy, first Earl of Northumberland.

William Percy came from Normandy with WiHiam the Conqueror, when he received an estate and a Saxon heiress. He was a great Yorkshire baron by the time he died in 1096. His descendants were primarily soldiers, though on occasion they were also good statesmen.

Maud

> *"did by a ffine levied in the year 1384, settle this town and castle upon the said husband and his heirs upon condition that they shall bear the arms of Lucy."*

The son of Maud and Gilbert died before his father and she had no children by Henry. After Maud's death in 1398 Henry married Margaret Neville. His son and heir, Henry (Hotspur), was killed in the Battle of Shrewsbury in 1403, five years before his father lost his life in the Battle of Bramham Moor. By this time he had already forfeited his estates to the Crown. The Percies were a great power in the north and were frequently involved in treasonable plots. This father and son had visions of dethroning Henry IV and holding England north of the Trent for themselves they already had great possessions in Cumberland, Northumberland, Yorkshire and the Isle of Man.

The estates were restored to the second earl, son of Hotspur and again "Henry", in 1416. When he was killed at St. Albans in 1455 the title passed to his son, yet another Henry, who died in the Battle of Towton in 1461. Neither of these holders of the title saw much of Cockermouth, living mostly in Northumberland and Yorkshire.

The Crown took possession of the Percy estates because of the activities of the family and the honour was granted in 1465 to Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, known as the King-maker. Since the Percies had been actively engaged in working for and against claimants for the throne, Cockermouth thus had two families of king-makers within a few years. On Neville's death the estates were returned (in 1471) to the Percy family, to Henry the 4th earl, who was murdered at Cock Lodge on his Yorkshire estates. They passed to Henry "the magnificent", who was the first Percy owner to die a natural death. Again these two owners spent little time at Cockermouth.

Meanwhile Agnes de Percy, a daughter of the fourth earl, had married Jocelyn, Lord of Petworth and constable of Arundel Castle, and so formed the link between the Petworth and Cockermouth estates which still exists today.

The fifth earl was followed for a short time by another Henry, who died in poverty in Hackney about 1537. He had assigned some of his property and revenues to Sir Thomas Wharton, comptroller of his household, in 1530 and in the following year gave to the Crown the rest of his Cumberland estates. The nickname of "the unthrifty" given to this

sixth earl was the result of his inability to manage his financial affairs, but circumstances were often against him. The Tudor policy of centralisation affected estates in the north and in other ways he had an unfortunate life. Attached to Wolsey's household, he fell in love with Ann Boleyn. Wolsey and the King were always jealous of him, forced him into a marriage although the attraction of Ann lasted throughout his life, and constantly interfered in his household and in his work as warden of the Scottish borders, a post which he fulfilled well. Although he had been disgraced and arrested by Wolsey, Henry refused to join his brothers in the Pilgrimage of Grace of 1536-7, a rising in the north against Henry VIII's treatment of the church and others of his actions, even though he was head of the Roman Catholics in the north of the country. His estates were restored to him shortly before his death, but it was not until 1739 that the Wharton estates were regained.

The sixth earl had no son and his brother and heir had already been attainted for his part in the Pilgrimage of Grace, so once again the estates passed to the Crown. Twelve years later Philip and Mary restored them to Henry's nephew Thomas, "the simpleton". He became earl in 1557 and when he was beheaded in 1571 for taking part in the Rising of the North three years earlier the estates passed back to the Crown, to go to brother Henry in 1572.

The eighth earl, who gained the nickname 'Cruel Henry', was another absentee lord, but it was he who was responsible for the great 1577-8 survey of his Cumberland estates. The Percies were frequently in trouble with the Tudors because of their Catholic sympathies and it was royal policy to keep them in the south, at Petworth or Syon, where a watchful eye could be kept on their activities.

When they did travel north it was usually to Leconfield, Wreschil or Alnwick and not to Cockermouth. This earl was imprisoned in the Tower for his alleged part in plots supporting Mary Stuart and in 1585 he died mysteriously from a pistol shot while still imprisoned.

The ninth earl, Henry, was a mixture of heroism and shrewdness, of simplicity and learning. At his own expense he equipped several vessels (the family fortunes had apparently revived) and personally helped in the destruction of the Annada. Although a soldier and sailor, he was also a man of science and a patron of learning. Nicknamed the 'Wizard Earl' because of his interest in alchemy and scientific experiments, he also built up a fine library. He had friends in learned circles, being praised for example by Bacon, but was unhappily married to Dorothy Devereux. Shortly after his marriage he found a mistress in London and openly flaunted his 'affair' before the Court. It was he who built 'Percy House' near Cocker Bridge, which has in an upstairs room a decorated plaster ceiling which includes the Percy motto 'Esperiance en Dieu' (Hope in God). Henry was allegedly involved in the gunpowder plot and consequently imprisoned in the Tower from 1605 to 1621, when he was released on paying a huge fine of £ 11,000. His

wife remained true to him and frequently visited him in prison until her death in 1619. Henry died a natural death in 1632.

Henry Percy's son Algernon succeeded. Some say he hated the Stuarts because of their treatment of his father and as a result Cockermouth Castle was garrisoned for Parliament in the Civil War. Others maintain that he was respected by both sides in the War and that Parliament gave the children ofCharles I into his keeping, to whom he was very kind. [11]

The 11 th and last Earl of Northumberland, for only two years, was Algernon's son Joscelyn. He died in 1670 when 26, one of the four earls not killed. His sole heiress was daughter Elizabeth who, thanks to her mother's efforts, was married three times before she was 16 - when only 13 to Harry, Lord Ogle, heir to the Earl of Newcastle, who died a year later; to Thomas Thynne of Longleat, killed by her lover in 1682; and thirdly the unhappy girl married Charles Seymour, the sixth Duke of Somerset. When she came of age in 1688 she brought him the vast Percy estates which had been taken by the Crown on Joscelyn's death.

Charles, the 'Proud Duke', agreed on his marriage to take the name Percy but refused when he came of age. He bought back the Wharton lands on 18th January 1738-9 for £13,300, gave large endowments to Cambridge and founded the University Press in 1696. He retired from public life in 1716 and lived until 1748. His outstanding characteristic was his pride in his rank and birth, which according to Macaulay "amounted almost to a disease". He is reputed to have cut one daughter out of his will because he awoke to find her sitting in his presence, a relaxation forbidden to his children.

The estates passed to Algernon, son of Charles. In addition to being the seventh Duke of Somerset he was created the first Earl of Egremont and received also the revived Earldom of Northumberland. Charles's second daughter, Lady Catherine Seymour, married Sir William Wyndham of Orchard-Wyndham in Somerset. When Algernon died without male issue in 1750 Petworth, Cockermouth and the Earldom of Egremont passed to his nephew Charles Wyndham, the eldest son of Catherine and William. The rest of the estates, including Alnwick and the Earldom of Northumberland, went to Algernon's son-in-law Sir Hugh Smithson, later created the first Duke of Northumberland. This Charles was a prominent politician, succeeding Pitt as Secretary of State for the Southern Department in 1761-3, and through him the Cockermouth estates came to the present family, the Wyndhams.

After a period during which the owners showed little interest and rarely if ever visited Cockermouth, the family now began to regard it as one of their homes. The third Earl of Egremont, George O'Brien Wyndham, son of Charles, inherited also the estates of the Duke of Thomond and took the family name of O’Brien.

He served on the Board of Agriculture and was interested in progressive fanning methods, but is remembered most for his patronage of the arts and his hospitality. A cultured man, he was a close friend of Turner and other painters and men of letters and entertained some of them at Cockermouth.

Turner was a guest in 1809 and his oil painting of Cockermouth Castle hangs in the Turner Room at Petworth. When George died in 1837 he was survived by only illegitimate children. A nephew, George Francis Wyndham, became the fourth Earl of Egremont and on his death in 1845 the title became extinct. Some of the possessions passed in 1837 to the third Earl's adopted heir, his eldest natural son George, but his second son General Sir Henry Wyndham was given a life interest in the Cumberland estates and was responsible for Cockermouth from 1837 to 1860. This George was created the first Baron Leconfield in 1859.

Sir Henry had been an ADC to the Duke of Wellington in the Peninsular Campaign and was remembered for his success with four other young officers in closing the door of the Chateau of Hougoument after it had been forced by French troops. Years later one of his nieces stayed with him in Cockermouth Castle, where, seated in an icy draught, she was heard to remark that no Wyndham had ever closed a door since Hougoument!

When Sir Henry died Cockermouth went to George, the first Lord Leconfield, and on his death it passed successively to his son Henry (1869), this Henry's son Charles Henry (1901), Charles's brother Hugh Archibald Wyndham (1952) and then the nephew of Charles and Hugh (1963). This sixth Baron Leconfield, John Edward Reginald Wyndham, was created the first Baron Egremont, a title revived in 1963.

At the beginning of the century the castle was "frequently visited by the present owner" [12] then for many years it was little used except during the grouse shooting season. The family resided at Petworth, given by Charles Henry to the National Trust in 1947 with a large endowment and the Wyndhams continuing to live in a part of the building. The same Lord gave the Scafell area of the Cumberland estate to the Trust about 1920.

His nephew and successor, John, was for many years private secretary to Harold Macmillan, following him to the Ministry of Supply in 1940, the Colonial Office, Allied HQ in Algiers and then the Air Ministry. He became head of the economic section of the Conservative Research Department while the party was out of office, then returned to Macmillan in 1955 when he became first Foreign Secretary and later Prime Minister. It has been written that

> *"their friendship and collaboration, that of statesman and private secretary, had no counterpart in modern history".*

John died in 1972 and his elder son Max became second Baron Egremont and seventh Baron Leconfield. The castle is again regarded as a home, the mother of the present lord spending a considerable amount of time in Cockermouth.

It is interesting to realise how the lords of Cockermouth, a town so often apparently outside the main stream of events, have been involved in royal affairs or held high office in government. Admittedly this was sometimes the result of the owners' more prominent possessions elsewhere and sometimes these other possessions have dragged Cockermouth into a conflict. The Castle has seen action on a number of occasions and this will be the theme of a later chapter.

We have seen that since the lord had other homes there were long periods when he was not resident in Cockermouth. Consequently careful records were kept by the steward, not only for the efficient running of the estates but for examination by the lord if he wished. Estate accounts, leases, farm records. etc., survive from the mid-fifteenth century, letters from the time of Elizabeth I and detailed plans and documents of iron and lead mining from the 1640s. There is a wealth of economic and social history stored in the castle records.

The stewards and other officials who wrote these records were important men in the life of Cockermouth, representing the lord and having power to deal with many matters on his behalf.

Chapter 9

The Castle buildings

Cockermouth Castle was built with two aims in view -. the first, like other Norman castles, to overawe the surrounding countryside and subdue the inhabitants to their new Norman overlords; the second, to control one of the invasion routes from the north. The approach from Scotland lay across the wild country of Nichol Forest, avoiding Carlisle Castle on one side and Bewcastle on the other, after which invaders were converged by the Pennines and the Cumbrian mountains into the Lune Gorge, through the Stainmore pass or down the West Cumbrian plain. William 11 (Rufus, 1087-1100) ordered a chain of castles to be built to obstruct these approaches to the heart of England, Cockermouth and Egremont controlling the way down the coast to the sands crossing of Morecambe Bay.

There is no evidence that the site of the present castle was used before Norman times. If the assumption is correct that Waldeofmoved the caput of the barony from Papcastle to the new site then there must have been a building here by the middle of the twelfth century. Some say it was erected in the 1130's, contemporary with Windsor, but evidence is difficult to obtain. Certainly the twelfth century was a period of intense castle building, some 740 being erected in the years 1066 to 1215.

Early Norman castles were of the "*motte and bailey*" type. Because of the need for speed the buildings were at first of wood, only later replaced by stone, and wooden buildings leave little evidence.

An alternative opinion is that, since there is no specific reference to a castle in King John's restoration of the manor to William de Fortibus 11 in 1215, it did not then exist. [1] The record refers to "*the manor of Cockermua with its appurtenances*". If this all-embracing term means there was nothing so important as a castle, then the first Cockermouth building must have been erected in the period 1215-1221, for there was definitely a castle here in 1221 when William de Fortibus was in trouble with the Crown.

The first building would be a typical Norman fortress on the extreme tip of the promontory, 36 feet above river level, defended by a dry ditch and raised, as is the inner bailey at the present time, some six or seven feet higher than the outer bailey. William de Fortibus Ill, the owner from 1241 to 1259, was probably responsible for the stone-built spherical triangle, its sides some 42 yards long, with the western tower and two circular bastions at the three corners. The outer bailey would be surrounded by a timber palisade.

Remains of this early building are still visible. The round tower in the western apex of the triangle is one of only three round towers in Cumberland. [2] The lower part of this tower, including the archers' seats and the loops for firing through, is original thirteenth

century. From such round towers archers could cover about 2700 without any blind spots. Also of this building are the bottom fourteen feet of the south curtain wall, the footings of the eastern wall of the present inner bailey and lower parts of the Bell Tower. The present upper walls, such as the top ten feet of the south curtain, are of ashlar added later. The original gate was in the south-east corner, near the Bell Tower, and one of the door jambs may be seen. A postern gave access from the outer bailey to what is now Wyndham Row. Living quarters would probably be of timber, placed along the inside of the curtain walls.

The castle is built mostly of freestone from the quarries at Brigham and Broughton Beck, the source of the stone used for the Roman fort at Papcastle. In the mid-nineteenth century Brigham quarrymen often found the wedge marks of their Roman counterparts, like small harrow teeth. Much of the Papcastle stone was removed to build the present castle, probably dragged along the river (Derwent or Cocker) which is said to have frozen for two or three months in the winters of those days.[3] There are recognisable Roman stones to be seen in the castle.

There is a tradition that the Derwent originally flowed in a straight line from below Woodhall along the foot of Mickle Brow to join the Cocker at Low Gote, it once being the Cocker that flowed behind the town and round Sandair. The diversion was made to further protect the castle.

Thomas de Lucy (in possession 1343-1365) probably built the upper part of the four-storeyed round tower on the early base. Though round outside it is hexagonal inside. Each floor had a single trefoil-headed window and was reached by a newel staircase (stairs spiralling round a central column). On the second floor a door on the northern side opened into a garderobe.

(There are several of these smaller rooms within the walls of the castle, usually wardrobes or lavatories, but sometimes larger private rooms.) Thomas de Lucy also built about 1360 the range of rooms along the inside of the north wall, notably the great hall 52 feet long and 32 wide. The north wall itself, in which the hall had three windows, would be rebuilt on de Fortibus's foundations. In addition to these early windows three large Tudor windows were later inserted in this wall. Sufficient stone-work remains for their original designs to be appreciated. The three massive external buttresses to the same wall were added much later in the eighteenth century. Only the base of the south side of the hall remains. The shape of the original ridged roof may be traced high on the wall of the kitchen tower. This would be an open timber roof and some of the corbels which supported it remain in the north wall. The cellars below were about ten feet high - the original floor level of the hall may be judged from the floor supports in the north wall and the level of the window seats. The castle well against the south wall of the hall goes down 61 feet, far below river level, to comparatively hard water.

At the western end of the hall would be a dais. Beyond it was a solar or withdrawing room for the lord and lady, then other apartments, linking the hall with the round tower.

The next owner, Anthony de Lucy, had the castle for only three years before his death in Palestine, but he may have inaugurated improvements leading to greater comfort for the occupants. It was his successor Gilbert de Umfraville (l368-l381), husband to Lucy's sister, who really started in earnest. Although the lord would continue to dine with his retainers in the great hall, a need was apparently felt for better accommodation than that provided to the west of the hall or in the cellars beneath - not only better state rooms and bedrooms, but improved cooking facilities.

Gilbert built the foundations of the present range between the two baileys in the eighteen feet deep ditch which de Fortibus had made, replacing this with a ditch further out on the eastern side. (This was filled in level with the outer bailey in 1649.) His unfinished work was completed by his widow's second husband, Henry Percy, the first Earl of Northumberland. The Earl completed the massive inner gatehouse with its many interesting features. It contained a number of rooms, from cellar level upwards, the largest being 29 by 21 feet. Of particular interest are the guard-rooms on either side of the entrance passage and the dungeons below them.

The guard-rooms are entered by narrow doorways on the inner bailey side, the dungeons by trap doors in the floors of these rooms. A prisoner was lowered into the oubliette-type dungeon by a rope tied to a beam resting in holes in the walls of the rooms above, holes which may still be seen. One dungeon is eighteen feet deep, the other appreciably less. Lighting and ventilation were through a slit in the outer wall of each dungeon, as the floor openings would normally be covered. The same slits are sometimes said to have been the means by which food was passed to the prisoners, [4] but their narrowness and their height above the level of the outer bailey (even greater when there was a ditch) make this doubtful.

The gatehouse passage was vaulted. It contained two pairs of doors, also a machecoule or bretesche-hole in the ceiling of the passage through which invaders could be attacked by dropping stones, firing arrows, etc. Access from the outer bailey was by a drawbridge over the new ditch end of this range of buildings. Henry Percy also completed the kitchen tower (sometimes mistakenly described as a keep) at the other end of this range of buildings. The kitchen was on the same level as the hall and had an open timber roof, the corbels for which remain. It had two large fireplaces on the south side, windows (including two narrow ones 24 feet high in the east wall) and storage recesses. An interesting feature was a wooden gallery seven and a half feet above floor level along the north wall, from which the chef would supervise activities below. The gallery was reached by a staircase within the wall in the NE corner. Access to the hall from the kitchen was through a door in the original hall. The great pointed arch was made in the nineteenth century to prevent further deterioration of this wall, most of

which had already fallen. Near the former door, on the hall side, is a trefoil-headed recess with stones to support a shelf.

The basement of the kitchen tower is known as the Mirk Kirk, the dark church, indicating that this was probably the chapel for the castle community. There is a piscina in one wall. Entered by steps from the inner bailey, it was originally lighter, having two deep splayed openings on the east wall until these were blocked by further building. The structure of this 30 feet square room is attractive, eight vaulting ribs radiating from a central octagonal pillar formed of two stones to each course.

Between the gatehouse and the kitchen tower were apartments, with cellars below. The floor levels, hooded fireplaces and communicating stairs may be clearly traced. There are here a number of passages, staircases and even rooms within the thickness of the walls. Between the new state rooms and the kitchen is a newel stair which gave access to the roof.

(Stairs spiralled in the direction which enabled a defender, descending to meet invaders, to have room to use his sword in his right hand and were sufficiently narrow to prevent people passing, so that invaders were unable to storm up them.) A doorway half way up leads into a room 9V2 by 5 feet [2.9 x 1.5 m], beautifully vaulted and with a small rose window. This was probably a small oratory for prayer and meditation, possibly the chantry referred to later.

In the light of the experience of the Scottish raid in 1387 Henry Percy strengthened the outer bailey, building the flag tower, the outer gatehouse and the upper part of the bell tower. The gatehouse was erected in or soon after 1400.

Henry's first wife Maud died in 1398 and the family arms of his second wife, Margaret Neville, appear on the outer wall, so, as he himself died in 1408, the date of the building may be stated within fairly narrow limits. From outside the castle the gatehouse was approached between flanking defensive walls, a barbican (Plate 4). These walls, 18 feet long, 15 high and 7 thick, had protected walks on top, reached by stairs within the walls. The outer ends were square pillars supporting a cross-arch, also protected and useful in defence. The 1790 Universal British Directory says "Approach has been kept by a drawbridge over a deep ditch." This draw bridge, raised by chains and weights, would serve as a door when up and in the walls there are 12 inch recesses into which it fitted. The moat it spanned may have had water in it, filled by a small stream now culverted in the garden to the north-east, but it was probably dry - the 1578 survey refers to it as "a trench or dry ditch". A small door on one side gave access to the foot of the eastern curtain wall, above the moat.

The gatehouse measures 52 by 32 feet and has three floors. The passageway through it is vaulted and had three doors, the outside one replacing a portcullis (from the French port-coulis, a sliding door), the groove for which may be seen. The doors were of two

leaves, massive wood studded with iron bolts and encased in iron. When closed they were secured by one or two stout oak beams which slid into cavities in the walls. The upper part of the gatehouse has had some rebuilding and the windows have been enlarged.

The flag tower at the SE corner now houses the extensive castle records. The tower has stepping of the kind often seen on Scottish buildings, where French influence was strong. In this tower the steward held his Court of Audit twice a Year and at one time the Quarter Sessions used it. Bulmer in 1777 referred to it as *'the court house'*.

The south curtain wall of the outer bailey has been strengthened by two external buttresses. Part of it collapsed early on Good Friday in 1975 but was rebuilt two years later.

Above the entrance to the outer gateway are five coats-of-arms, weathered and without colour but still sufficiently clear for the designs to be seen. In the centre is the shield of the Lucies three silver pikes or lucies on a gold ground, hauriant, that is upright as though they are being drawn out of the water. To the right of centre is first the lion rampant of the Percies -. azure on a gold ground; then the silver saltire (St. Andrew's cross) on a blood-red field, the arms of the Nevilles. Left of the centre are the Multon's three silver bars on a red background; and further the cinquefoil and crosses of the Umfraville family.

A door near the gatehouse (Fig 29) gave access to a path below the north wall to a postern in the round tower, the latter secured by a beam resting in slots. Posterns on the least frequented sides of castles were used by messengers during siege.

There are a number of 14th century references to the chapel or chantry of Cockermouth Castle, where priests, paid by the castle owner, said mass for the souls of deceased members of the family. In 1330 there was an agreement regarding the oblations of the chapel and the tithes of a water-mill and in 1395 an inquiry was held in Carlisle regarding a proposal to endow two chantries founded by Henry Percy and his wife Maud with a messuage in Carlisle for the upkeep of a chaplain saying service daily in the chapel of All Saints in Cockermouth Castle. Four years later royal approval was obtained for an endowment of two closes of land and Maud's first husband was now included in the list of those for whom mass was said. By 1446 an annual salary of £6-13s-4d. was being paid from the revenues of the Honour to each of the two chaplains.

In surveys of chantries, churches, etc., made in the 1540s by Henry VIII and Edward VI, there are records of this salary having been paid to William Lamplugh and Peter Hudson for saying service in two chantries. The entries are almost identical in wording. The second one reads:

> *"Chaunterie within the said kinges majestie castell of Cockermouthe. Sur Peter Hudson, clerk, chaunterie preste saing devyne service within the forsaid castell, receyveth yerlie for his stipende vj ii. xiij s.iiij d. by thandes of the said Henry Whitreson, the said kinges recyvor, (Total) vj ii. xijj s- iiij d.* "[£6-13s-4d] [5]

After 1547 William Lamplugh, now aged 60, and Peter Hudson, 46 years old, received pensions of £6 per annum. A further entry in the royal survey reads:

> *"Plaite and omementtes apperteining to the said castell of Cokennouth. Furst one chales of sylver parcel! gylte (xxvj s. viij d.), one pyxy of sylver (xx d.), one vestemente of grene sylke floured (iij s. iiij d.), one vestemente tawney sylke (ij s.), one of domex (xx d.), two corporax with cases (ij s.), iiij alterclothes (xx d.), ii towels (iiij d.), ij messes bookes (ij s.), one graile and one salter (ij s.). (Total) xliij s. jiij d. [43s 4d]* [6]

There are references to the salaries of various chaplains in the Castle Muniment Rolls for 1446, 1477 and 1485 and in that for 1477 there are also records of a payment of 21d. to John Thomas for 3 Ibs. of wax for wax lights to burn before the images of the Holy Saviour and the Blessed Mary; 2d. for one hair rope for the bell; 6s.8d. to William Hall for making and fixing a new candelabrum and 6s. to William Glazier (note the name) for repairing glass windows in the chapel.

The only work done on the castle premises for the three or four hundred years after the completion about 1400 of the extensions consisted of repairs, maintenance and some slight modifications. We find, for example, that in 1477 the fourth Earl, concerned about the state of the Duilding, paid Thomas Walker for 900 shingles (wooden roofing 'tiles'), at 3s per 100, for re-roofing the kitchen tower.

Henry Percy inspected the castle in September 1567 and reported that "in dyverse places of the same ther ys some neade of reparciones, as fyl1eting the leades in the wall and in some places the hye leades to be new cast. And the kytchen being a faire square tower ys in the roofe in utter decay and rewyne. .. Ten years later the great survey reported "*The saide castle is now in great decaie as well in the stoneworke as timberworke thereof'* [7] and three years after that a survey found "*This house or castle...ptly decayed and for divers good consideracons thought meete to be repayred"*.[8]

In 1645 the then Earl did not consider it worth garrisoning, but it must have been repaired almost immediately to be manned for Parliament. In 1669 repairs were made by a mason, William Sherwen, costing £104 - .presumably to the gatehouse and flag tower, as these were the only parts left intact by the dismantling after the Civil War. A few years later, 1676, the gatehouse and a small part next to it on the north wall were reported habitable, with four bedrooms, a dining room and a kitchen. At the same date there were stables and a bakehouse in the outer bailey and courts were held

periodically in the flag tower. There were small repairs in 1682-3 and it was probably about this date that the octagonal summer-house or gazebo was built in the garden. It has some architectural interest stone quoins at the corners and a broken pediment above the door.

"An inventory of the Goods in Cockermouth Castle belonging to his Grace the Duke of Somerset" made about 1689 listed the contents of the living room, three bedchambers, hall, chamber above the hall, kitchen chamber, kitchen, larder, bakehouse, cellar and stable -. obviously very limited accommodation. It is significant that there was no harness, etc., in the stable, merely "One Oat barrall Rackes and mangers Lock and Kay". Space allows mention of the contents of only one room.

> *"In Mr Brooker Chamber one Standing bedsted with Curtains vallance and head pene (?) and tester one ffeather bed one boulster one pellow 3 blancats one Red Rugg one trundell bed stead one tfeather bed one boulster one pellow to blancats one head Rugg one Chare thre Stoles one tabell one iwon Grate one tfender one ffire Shoull one pear of tongs one poww(!) one Cloce Stoole with pott one lock and kay to the Chamber Dowe."*

In 1751 John Dobinson surveyed the castle and reported that the south wall was in danger of collapse and the north curtain even worse. It was in the following year that the great buttresses on the north wall were erected and three years later there was made "a Water Wear to Prevent the River Derwent from undermining and washing away the Castle Hill". [9] It may have been now that the north wall of the outer bailey was changed. The upper portion is certainly later than 1739, when Buck's view shows it lower than at present. (Plate 2)

Undermining was a recurring problem. In 1765 there is record [10] of payment "for the water works at the Castle Lands to secure the same from the River Derwent" and, undated but by comparing writing probably about 1800, a reference [11] to "cradles" and loads of stone to secure the castle and lands.

In 1755 the Earl of Egremont came to stay in the spring with the intention of winning for his family the two Parliamentary seats in the 1756 election. He tried to buy votes but when the election came lost heavily to the Lowthers. Disgusted, he never paid another visit, but is said to have commented frequently on the intractability and unpleasantness of the inhabitants of Cockermouth! However, his visit left its mark. The outer gatehouse, in which he must have stayed, was reroofed and the rooms repaired - walls replastered, ceilings renewed and windows replaced. He brought with him his bedroom and dining furniture, including twenty "*mahogany chairs with Spanish lether bottems*", and presumably took them away again. Furniture transport could have been no easy matter in those days. Whitehaven benefitted too, for the Earl was a great eater and spent large sums on oysters, salmon and lobsters from that port.

Grose wrote in 1775

> *"the present Earl has caused the outer walls to be newly pointed and the rubbish to be removed from the inner court*" [12],

but according to Bulrner the gatehouse was still the only habitable part, with two rooms on each floor, in 1777. Then in 1802 the third earl decided to come up in the late summer every year from his usual residence at Petworth and he had built a new house by the north wall of the outer bailey. [13] It was completed in the spring of 1805. The only portion surviving unaltered is the entrance hall with the staircase. The present stable block was probably built at the same time.

With more frequent use the castle was better cared for and the Earl's entertainment there of artists and others brought it to the notice of a wider public. With the ruins tidied up and further deterioration halted, for it was probably now that the great arch in the kitchen tower was made, the castle became a feature to be seen by the increasing number of visitors to the Lake District. Wordsworth, who had played amongst the ruins when a young boy, and Turner were both inspired by the grandeur of the ruins and in their work they gave it publicity.

Wordsworth, revisiting in 1833 the scenes ofhis boyhood, wrote the sonnet:

in 1833 the scenes ofhis boyhood, wrote the sonnet:

"Thou look'st upon me, and dost fondly think

Poet! that, stricken as both are by years,

We, differing once so much, are now Compeers,

Prepared, when each has stood his time, to sink

Into the dust. Erewhile a stemer link

United us; when thou, in boyish play,

Entering my dungeon, didst become a prey

To soul-appalling darkness. Not a blink

Oflight was there; and thus did I, thy Tutor,

Make thy young thoughts acquainted with the grave;

While thou wert chasing the wing'd butterfly

Through my green courts; or climbing, a bold suitor,

Up to the flowers whose golden progeny

Still round my shattered brow in beauty wave."

In 1847 Sir Henry Wyndham replaced the 1805 buildings along the north wall, except for the hall and staircase, at the same time filling a gap which had been left to allow light

into the Mirk Kirk through windows which now became blocked. The portion filling the gap was a mock baronial hall, open to the roof with bare stone walls on which skins were hung. A later Wyndham inserted an upper floor around 1900.

The extent of the restoration and use of the castle in the middle of 19th century is shown by an inventory of the contents dated 1860.[14J 16 rooms were in use, in addition to the domestic and servants' quarters. There were nine horses, total value £291, and under "Carriages" were entered "Four Horse Drag, Omnibus, Dog Cart, Light Cart and Stable Utensils". Two 4-Horse Whips and two 2 Horse Whips had a value of only £3, but "1 Whip presented to Sir H. Wyndham by the Cabmen of London" was valued at £21. Hip baths, taper stands, wash stands, cases of stuffed birds, stag horns, etc., are a reminder of life 100 years ago. All rooms were liberally furnished and from the list of contents it is possible to imagine their appearance.

We give No. 3 Bed Room as an example:

> *Wardrobe and Drawers 2 Drefsing Tables 1 Coat Stand I Shower bath 2 Towel Rails Carpet and Hearth Rug Bedstead and Curtains 2 looking Glasses I Hip bath I Night Commode 4 Chairs Large Jug and basin 2 Wash Stands 1 Large Looking Glass I Foot bath Fender irons and Guard 2 Sets of Chamber Service*

Sir Henry was also well provided for. Under *'Wearing Apparel'* we have.

> *22 Coats 20 pairs of Trousers 27 Pocket Handkershiefs 2 Night Caps I Pair of Silk Stockings 35 Shirts 2 White Vests 2 pairs of Low Shoes 2 Hair Brushes and Comb Stud Case Carpet bag 27 Vests 1 Dressing Gown 27 Neck Ties 2 pairs of Braces 5 pairs ofGloves 22 pairs of Drawers 4 Hats 2 pairs of Slippers 2 Tooth brushes Portmanteau 21 Scarfs 9 Silk Neck Ties 1 Vest piece 27 pairs of Socks 1 pair of Muffatees 15 Under Shirts 15 pairs of Boots 7 Razors and Case I Nail brush 3 Red Shirts*

The assessor, John Thwaite, who was a licenced auctioneer in Cockermouth, gave the total value of the castle contents as £2028 4s.

The mock baronial hall was changed by the third Lord Leconfield, who lowered the ceiling from the two-storey height and panelled the walls in oak. An interesting feature then introduced is that the room may be enlarged for special occasions by pushing back the complete wall on the kitchen tower side. The whole wall is on rollers and access to the back of it is gained from the roof loft.

With the erection in 1904 of a further office block on the eastern side of the outer bailey, next to the flag tower, the buildings as we see them today were completed.

In front of the outer gateway, across the ditch, stood in 1578 "two barnes and other buildings and also a parcell of land called the greens without the Castell gate" In 1668 the Duke of Somerset made a bowling green on part of this area which was used

thereafter by the people of the town, although a later earl complained in 1777 about the uprooting of cabbages and thorns alongside the green. The site is clearly seen inside the main gate. A number of sites in this area were considered for the new office block.

Rumours abound regarding underground passages between the castle, the old hall, the churchyard, the brewery area, etc. There were certainly drains from the castle to the rivers people still living played in them when children. Larger passageways, now blocked, appear to have gone from a property in Wyndham Row under the road to the castle grounds and from 28 Market Place under Castlegate towards the castle, Are there others?

Wordsworth wrote of the ruins and their history, but made the common mistake regarding the Civil War:

Proud old castle, in thy ruined grandeur

Thou yet doth stand, a record of the past:

Where Derwent's wave still rippling, doth meander,

That once a well filled moat around thee cast.

Behold the pile which foreign hands once raised,

When Norman Will reigned monarch of this land:

And let the eye regard its walls amazed,

That works of this rude age so long should stand.

Look on that tower, - behold that deep sunk well,

Yon rootless hall, and narrow donjon keep;

Ah, these could each a varied story tell!

To cause a smile, or make the tearless weep.

Those high stout walls once mocked proud Cromwell's

power,

When he his shot against the ramparts hurled;

But famine, not the iron tempest's shower,

Left Cromwell's flag upon the walls unfurled

To appreciate the significance of the ruins amongst which we move on trim lawns it is necessary to make a real effort to picture them as they must once have been. First the buildings walls complete, floors inserted, roofed over, chimneys projecting upwards.

Then the life within them. The lord with his family and friends eating in the great hall, a roaring log fire, tapestries on the walls, dogs foraging for scraps, and all the related bustle in the kitchen, the cellars and the yard outside. At other times arrows landing from besieging Scots; cannon balls striking from Royalist batteries; sentries patrolling the ramparts. Tenants or petitioners making their way to the flag tower corner. And over all the smell of wood smoke and horses, the shouting of orders and the general background noise of a vigorous, active community.

Chapter 10

Military action in and around the Castle

The Border Troubles

The first half of the 13th century saw constant warfare for Cumberland. Early in his reign Richard I sold the county to William of Scotland to raise money for the crusades, but his brother John retook the territory, to lose it to Alexander II in 1216. Scottish dominion of the northern counties of England ended with an agreement made at York in 1237, but the feuds between the two kingdoms continued for more than three centuries. A chance of peace was missed about 1290, when the intended marriage of the grand-daughter of Alexander to the son of Edward I was thwarted by the death of the girl.

In 1296 Edward I invaded Scotland and John Balliol surrendered the crown to England. The following year William Wallace, who had become the champion of Scottish independence, defeated the English at Stirling and, bypassing the garrison at Carlisle, advanced into Cumberland and laid waste the whole of Allerdale as far as Cockermouth. A number of unsuccessful attempts to take Cockermouth Castle were possibly made during the early years of the 14th century.

Edward Il attempted to retake Scotland but his army was defeated at Bannockburn in 1314 and the following year the Scots again poured into Cumberland. They were led by Black Douglas and Robert Bruce (who had become King of Scotland in 1306 by stabbing the rival claimant) and laid waste the area from Cockermouth to St. Bees, plundering Brigham church. There was a further raid in 1319 under James Douglas and Thomas Randolf. Whether this force reached Cockermouth is uncertain, but three years later Bruce again ransacked West Cumberland.

In these troubled times Cockermouth Castle was an important factor in English offence and defence. The feudal lords had to give 40 days free service a year, being paid for anything in excess of this - an expensive business when war was as continuous as it was around 1300. The lords had to provide their quota of cavalry and infantry. Cockermouth men would be conscripted for service by the lord of the manor.

For service outside the county the rates of pay were 4s. [20p] per day for a banneret (a knight in command of troops provided by other knights), 2s.[IOp] for a knight, Is.[5p] for a trooper (a mounted soldier), 2d.[about Ip] for an infantryman (archer or spearman). In 130011 two thousand foot soldiers were summoned from Cumberland for service against the Scots, but only 940 turned out, and many of these returned home after a few days, concerned to protect their homes against marauders. [1]

The Statute of Winchester had laid down in 1285 that

"Every man between 15 and 60 years of age shall be assessed and obliged to have anns according to the quantity of his lands and goods; that is, he who holds land worth £15 a year and goods worth 40 marks shall have a coat of mail, an iron helmet, a sword, a knife, and a horse; from land worth £10 and 20 marks of goods, a coat of mail, an iron helmet, a sword, and a knife; from land worth £5, a doublet, an iron helmet, a sword and a knife; and from 40 up to 100 shillings' worth of land, a sword, a bow and arrows, and a knife; and they that have less than 40 shillings' worth of land shall be sworn to keep halberds, knives, and other smaller weapons; and they that possess goods worth less than 20 marks shall equip themselves with swords, knives, and other smaller weapons; and all others out of the forest shall have bows and arrows, and within the forest bows and bolts.

The view of arms shall be made twice each year. And in every hundred and franchise two constables shall be appointed to make the view, and the constables shall bring before the justices, when they come into their area, the defaulters whom they have discovered ." [2]

Edward I wanted a thousand men from Cumberland in 1307 and for the local contribution a commission was issued to John de Eglisfeld and Thomas de Musegrave "*to select in the liberty of Cockermuwe sixty men to be at Carlisle next Monday"* [3]. Financial help was also demanded. Edward II commanded Gilbert de Culwenne, keeper of the castle and honour of Cockermouth in 1309, to pay David, Earl of Athol 50 meares towards the expenses of his march into Scotland.[4] It was essential that the castles should be not only garrisoned but kept in good repair and there are records of money being spent on repairs to the defences and to the accommodation at Cockermouth and on the victualling of the garrison. At the time of the invasion following Bannockburn Thomas de Richmond successfully held Cockermouth Castle with 20 *men-at-arms* (heavily armed horsemen), 46 *hobelars* (light horsemen) and 80 archers.

Andrew de Harcla similarly held Carlisle when besieged for ten days by Bruce, with a garrison four times the size of Cockermouth's, and as a reward he was given Cumberland by the king. The Cockermouth garrison included craftsmen for the castle's maintenance as well as troops. About 1320, the complement when the Scots threatened was 37 men-at-arms, 51 hobelars, 8 crossbowmen, 60 footmen, 2 porters, a watchman, an engineer, a mason and a carpenter. When the Scots did not threaten this was reduced to 8 men-at-arms and 20 footmen, with the engineer, carpenter, porter and watchman. When Anthony de Lucy took over from de Harcia the numbers at Cockermouth were very low - no knights, 2 men-at-arms, 3 hobelars and 4 foot. The corresponding figures at Carlisle were 5,34,40 and 40, but Egremont had only 0,1,0 and 3.[5]

Raid and counter raid continued, decreasing towards the end of the century - although Carlisle Castle was still attacked four times in the 1380s. These raids affected Allerdale and Copeland to varying extent. In 1387 the Earl of Fife, the Earl of Douglas, the Lord of Galloway and others, with an army of 30,000 Scots, ravaged Cumberland for three days. Cockermouth Castle held out, but some think the garrison may have been surprised, [6] although with the warning system of the time this may be only conjecture. What is reasonably certain is that the Scots set fire to the castle, tor it was reroofed soon after the raid.

During this century there was intense poverty in the border counties. Edward I had to retire to Carlisle after the Battle of Falkirk in 1298 and after taking Caerlaverock Castle in 1300 because the country was too impoverished to support his troops.[7] People must often have been at starvation leveL In 1302 the bishop asked no disme (his tenth) from some of the churches and only two-thirds of it from many others. The value of the possessions of Lanercost Priory fell from over £72 in 1292 to nil in 1318. The papal taxation return for Carlisle diocese shows that over the same period the total value on which the tenth was assessed dropped from £3171 to a seventh ofthis amount, £480. [8]

In 1389 Cumberland, together with Westmorland and Northumberland, petitioned for remission of tax arrears, a remission which was granted on account of their poverty. Again, in 1403, Henry IV pronounced

> *"This king pardoned and released to the men of the counties of Northumberland, Cumberland, and Newcastle-upon-Tyne, all escapes of felons, fines, issues, and amerciaments, with all kinds of tenths, fifteenths, etc. - on account of the grievous injuries they had sustained by the Scots, and their great losses by the falling of bridges, occasioned by sudden inundations of waters;"* [9]

Exemption from tax was again granted in 1488 and even as late as 1555 a similar allowance was made, this time extended to Durham.

The stronger government of the Tudors improved the situation in these northern counties. Henry VII pursued a policy of peace and his daughter Margaret married lames IV of Scotland. The attempted union of the two countries under a common king in 1603 was ineffective and relationships had bad periods until the final Act of Union in 1707. The lessening of national conflict resulted in men who were used to burning and plundering turning to this as a way of life when no longer enlisted in the armies, but these border troubles would rarely affect Cockermouth directly.

During the earlier period of border warfare there developed not only the system of castles noted at the beginning of the last chapter, but the building of peel towers, of which nearly a hundred are to be found from the border areas as far south as Morecambe Bay. These fortified towers, some of which have been incorporated into

later buildings as in the halls at Dovenby, Isel and Lorton, consisted of three floors - the ground floor, with ventilating slits, for cattle, sometimes extended by a stockaded enclosure or barmkyn; a first floor with a fire-place, serving as a communal hall; and an upper floor with rooms for the women. From the flat or pitched roof invaders could be fired on. The towers were intended only as short-term refuges until danger had passed. They could not be taken by an ordinary raiding party and there was nothing to burn.

Edward I instituted the system of watching and lighting beacons, which were an important element in defence. In the Cockermouth area they were placed on Workington Hill, Moota, Sandale, Skiddaw, Eaglesfield and 'Watch Hill' (the Hay) to the east of the town. [10] Warning could be quickly passed on by beacon fires, starting with those in the north, such as Brampton and Carlisle Castle. The warning system was useless unless rigorously enforced and we have evidence of this being done as late as 1602. In that year there was delivered to a jury of burgesses a

> *"petition by John Newcome of Simonscales, in the Township of Eaglesfield, against being amerced by the Cockermouth Jury for not watching at the Beacon on the Hay, saying that he and his ancestors watched at the Eaglesfield Beacon".* [11]

His appeal was successful.

A later development of the border troubles was the establishment of country-keepers. An act was passed in 1662-3

> *"for preventing of Theft and Rapine upon the Northern Borders of England" by "a great number of lewd, disorderly and lawless persons, being thieves and robbers, who are commonly called Moss-Troopers"*

and who constantly crossed from one country to the other to avoid punishment. The justices in Cumberland in Quarter Sessions were empowered to raise £200 (similarly £500 in Northumberland) to employ what came to be known as country-keepers. Usually appointed from one of the leading families, the officer held what rapidly became one of the most important positions in the county. He had a force of 12 men (30 in Northumberland) to help him catch offenders, and we may picture these groups patrolling the border area. [12]

However, his salary ofup to £200 had strings attached. Owners registered their horses and cattle with the booker or book-keeper in the nearest market town, giving full details of each animal. If an animal was stolen or strayed the loss was reported within 48 hours and, if it was not found, the owner had the right to recover its value at the next Quarter Sessions supported by a certificate from the booker -and ifhe was successful in his claim the money came out of the £200.

Although far from the trouble area and unlikely to make claims. Cockermouth helped by providing some of the officers from local families and no doubt bore a share of the cost. The Fleming Senhouse papers record that in 1738 Humpbrey Senhouse followed his father in the office, the salary being then £140. [13] Cockermouth inhabitants would also be reminded of the scheme when claims were made at the Quarter Sessions held in the town. The plan was intended for five years only, but was so successful that it was repeatedly renewed until found to be no longer necessary in 1757, 50 years after union.

The Wars of the Roses

In the Wars of the Roses (1455-1485) Cockermouth Castle saw little action. It was held by the Lancastrians until April 1461 and then by the Y orkists after the defeat of the Lancastrian army at the Battle ofTowton, near Tadcaster. The Earl of Wiltshire and Dr. John Morton, chancellor to the young Prince of Wales, were captured at the castle with very different consequences -the Earl was beheaded at Newcastle soon afterwards, the Doctor became Archbishop of Canterbury. We saw in an earlier chapter how the castle changed hands at this time, passing from the Lancastrian Percies to the Y orkist Warwick and returning later to the Percy line. It was only under Mary in Tudor times that the Percy estates were fully restored.

Mary Queen of Scots

One of the occasions in Cockermouth's history most frequently referred to is the visit to the town ofMary Queen of Scots in 1568. Her forces had been defeated at Carberry Hill on 15th June 1567 and she abdicated in favour of her son, James. She herself was imprisoned in Lochleven Castle but escaped, and when her supporters were again defeated at Langside near Glasgow on 13th May 1568 she sailed from Abbey Burnfoot, landing at Workington on Sunday evening, 17th May, after a four hour crossing of the Solway. Sir Henry Curwen took her to Workington Hall for the night, where Lady Curwen is said to have given the Queen and her maids a change of linen. She wrote to her cousin Elizabeth, whose protection she was seeking, "*I am in a pitiable condition, not only for a queen, but even for a gentlewoman, having nothing in the world but the clothes in which I escaped.*"

The Curwens, who had no wish to be involved in plot and counterplot, regarded Mary's arrival "*as a very troublesome and unwelcome business*" but they acted kindly towards her.

The next day Sir Henry, his son and other gentlemen accompanied the Queen to Cockermouth. News had spread and tradition says that the town turned out in its best attire to welcome her. The Earl of Northumberland was not in residence at Cockermouth but at Topcliff in Northumberland, so she was entertained for the night by Henry Fletcher.

(Another version is that the castle was not in a fit state for her to stay there, but this is less likely to be correct, especially as an incident described below shows that the Earl was indeed away.) The Fletchers, ancestors of the Fletchers of Hutton and the Vanes of Armathwaite Hall, were successful merchants and had acquired land and property. Henry lived in a large house in the Market Place (later demolished and replaced by an Elizabethan mansion which became known as Cockermouth Old Hall) and it was here that the Queen spent the night. Her host gave her 13 ells (about 16 yards) of rich crimson velvet for a dress. The following morning, after holding court in the Fletcher house for the ladies of Cockermouth, the Queen left on a horse litter for Carlisle, watched by the people of the town. She was conducted to Carlisle by Sir Henry Lowther, sheriff of the county and deputy warden of the western marches, who had hastened to Cockermouth to meet her.

The Earl of Northumberland, learning of these events, went to Carlisle and demanded to take charge of her, since she had landed in his liberty of Cockermouth, and he wished to take her to Alnwick. Sir Richard refused to hand over the Queen, whereupon Northumberland became angry, very angry, as described by Lowther:

> *"My Lord growing into some heat and angre and a like language, calling me 'varlett' and suche others as I neither desserved at his handes neither looked for at anye man's hand for the servyce of the prynce. "* [14]

The insulted Lowther having complained to Queen Elizabeth, the Earl was severely rebuked. This rebuke was one of the factors which led him to join in the 'Rising of the North' in the following year, an unsuccessful attempt under the Earls of Northumberland and Westmorland to rescue Mary from imprisonment, to bring down the government of Elizabeth, and to restore the Catholic faith. [15] As he owned the barony of Cockermouth he must have drawn some of his supporters from this area.

The story has two sequels - Mary, who had hoped for the sympathy of her cousin, spent 18 years in prison before being executed at Fotheringay Castle in Northamptonshire; and, on a happier note, when James I, son of Mary, visited Carlisle in 1618 he summoned Richard Fletcher, grandson of Henry, and knighted him in appreciation of the help given to his mother by the Fletcher family.

It is interesting to speculate what course English history might have taken if the Earl had been at home to receive Mary.

The Civil War

Cockermouth next saw action in the Civil War (1642-8). We have seen how Algernon Percy hated the Stuarts because of their treatment of his father and the castle was garrisoned for Parliament. Most of Cumberland supported the King, including the local families of Fletcher, Lamplugh, Vane, Stanley and Dykes. Among the few supporting Parliament were the Lawsons of Isel and of course the Earl of Northumberland.

"Cockermouth was a den of Puritanism, for it was under the influence of the Earl of Northumberland,..... who had espoused early the side of Parliament." [16]

Events in Cumberland at first moved slowly. Carlisle garrison had been disbanded in 1641 following a treaty with the Scots, and the arms and munitions were stored in the Cathedral Fratry. It was regarrisoned when the war began and an attempt was made to seize it for Parliament in 1643. [17] In April 1648 there were two strong Royalist forces in Carlisle, the English and the Scottish being under separate commands as the former would not take the covenant supporting Protestantism and the Presbyterian system and the Scots would not combine armies unless they did! [18] General Lambert, in command of Parliamentary forces in the north, made his headquarters at Penrith. Life was still quiet in Cockermouth, where Lieutenant Bird was in charge of the castle for Parliament. Then in July all three armies moved south into Lancashire and beyond. The Royalists thought they now had Cumberland at their mercy and 500 of them, under Sir Marmaduke Langdale, laid siege to Cockermouth Castle.

Cromwell's forces began to move northwards again and as they did so, passing through Penrith to take Carlisle Castle, a force was sent under Lieutenant-Colonel Ashton to relieve the besieged garrison in Cockermouth. The Roundheads were freed on 29th September 1648, the Royalist besiegers withdrawing to Appleby having suffered some casualties, as listed below. By now the end of the war was near, for Charles was executed four months later.

Nicholson and Burn (1777) and Askew (1866) mistakel)ly state that the castle was garrisoned for Charles I and that it was besieged by Cromwell' s forces. Mate attributes the confusion to a mistake in copying from the church register, writing 'reduced' instead of 'relieved' by Parliamentary forces, the former wrongly implying that the Royalists were inside the castle. Askew further states that the besieging forces erected a half-moon battery "above Fitz House", a quarter of a mile south-west of the town, and at the time he was writing a ditch eight or nine feet deep could still be seen. He also attributes the origin of the Broughton Baptist Church to the presence of the Parliamentary troops and a former Baptist Church in Waterloo Street would probably begin at the same time. The troops seem to have created an impression in Cockermouth - they were God-fearing, paid fully for anything they bought, did not gamble and did not molest the women. When there was no immediate Royalist threat the castle garrison would be free to move around the town.

The site of the half-moon battery is traditionally at the corner of Fitz Road and Lamplugh Road, where the 'pepperpot' house now stands. There was possibly another battery in the Wood Hall area. [19]

[19] Casualties were few in the siege. A page in the register for the chapelry has the following entries:

"The fiege was laid agt Cockermouth Caftle Auguft 1648 and the Caftle was relieved the 29th. September in which time were flain of the Befiegers

I. George Bucke near the Goate bridge.

2. Chnftopher Burne, on Cockerbridge.

3. Anthony Johnfon of Workington, shot on Cockerbridge.

4. John Cape, Milner, shot in the ftreet near the Mootehall.

5. John Hartley.

6. Henry Dalston.

7. John Hire,

8. . .. a Trumpeter in Mr. Tukell loft.

9. Myles ffisher of Cocker mouth shot about the quenching of Mrs. ffearons back-houses (bakehouse?) ..

10. Captain John Hobson, shot on Cockerbridge.

11. Robert Murell, shot in ye Caftle being all that was flain in ye Garrison, September 21,1649." [20]

The castle buildings may not have suffered greatly but when the Parliamentary troops withdrew roofs were removed and the upper walls demolished. Only the outer gateway and the flag tower, venue of the Quarter Sessions for many years, were left intact. The empty building was looted, for in April 1649 a list was made of castle goods recovered in the town - a cartload of lead, many planks and joists, five bedsteads, two doors, a table, etc.

A sequel to the siege came six years later, when two of Cromwell's supporters claimed promised compensation.

"September 1st. 1654. Minute of Council of State. Petition of Richard Uriel and Thomas Crosthwaite, late merchants of Cockermouth, Cumberland, to the Protector. In 1648, by order of Major-General Lambert, we assisted the later Major William Bird to defend Cockermouth Castle. on a three months' siege by Sir William Huddleston, who totally plundered our estates, value £1965, by which we have been disabled to maintain ourselves. When the Castle was relieved by you on your march from Lancashire to Carlisle we told you our losses, and you acknowledged our fidelity and ordered us to appeal to you in London when something should be done for our relief. This we did, but after our long journey found you had gone to Ireland. We have since been often solicited by persons of quality, and in June 1652 were promised speedy reliet: but have obtained none,

to the total ruin of our families, and our creditors daily threaten to imprison us. We beg speedy relief, according to your former gracious promises. "[21]

Two certificates were appended, each with 12 signatures testifYing to the loss of £1000 by Richard Uriel and his father and of £965 by Thomas Crosthwaite.

The claim was considered by a committee and an order made for settling land in Ireland, the order being finally approved on 2nd September 1654 [22]

"for their faithfulness to Parliament and losses at the siege of Cockermouth Castle".

The Jacobite Risings

In the next important military events at national level, the Jacobite Risings of 1715 and 1745, the castle was not involved, for activity in Cumberland was largely along the Carlisle-Penrith-Kendal road and Cockermouth was by-passed. The people of the town were however drawn into national affairs. On the first occasion forces were raised under the Militia Acts - a troop of horse and seven companies of foot from Carlisle, Cockermouth, Penrith, Millom, Appleby, Kendal and Kirkby Lonsdale areas. The Cockermouth force was commanded by Thomas Lamplugh and sent to Penrith, the Penrith company being moved up to Carlisle. The company from Millom, under a Senhouse, was stationed in Cockermouth. [23] There was no active support for the Jacobites, any likely leaders (including Curwen of Workington) having already been imprisoned in Carlisle Castle.[24]

The above arrangements suggest that for military purposes Cumberland and Westrnorland were regarded as one unit and in the 1745-6 rising there is a reference to "the Regiment for Westmorland and Cumberland". On this later occasion Colonel Pennington (of Muncaster) had a company raised from Allerdale-above-Derwent based at Whitehaven and Major Senhouse a company from Allerdale below-Derwent stationed in Cockermouth with leave to march to Workington. [25]

Again nothing much happened in the Cockermouth area, but there were a number of alarms. A Mrs. Dorothy Palmer of Great Broughton wrote letters [26] at the time which indicate the state of unrest. Under the date 18th October 1745 she relates

"As for us hear (sic) at Broughton and the towns about we are not terrified about the Rebills marching this way, as we were some time since, nor do we think the Rebills will attempt to take Carlisle."

This confidence had been shaken by 12th November

"... this day an Express came to Cockermouth, that they had left Carlisle, and marching towards Penrith, we're all in the utmost consternation here, especially at Whitehaven and Workinton (sic), where they have shipped their best effects

and put to sea most places about have removed their best effects I have sent our Horse with 2 of Bro: Fletchers to Mrs. Clarke of Buttermere."

The 1745 militia has been described as a rabble. Men were enlisted only a month before the Highland forces reached Carlisle and they were untrained, undrilled, without uniforms, carried an assortment of arms and were inclined to run from the enemy. The parish or landowner, having to provide a quota, tended to make a contract with the first idler encountered, sometimes giving him arms, sometimes promising a wage. The low standard of the militia, not only in Cumberland, led to the passing of the 1757 Militia Act providing for regular training, etc

Chapter 11

Forests, parks and waste

The names "Skiddaw Forest" and "Copeland Forest" appear prominently on the ordnance map of the Cockermouth area. It is obvious that these areas are not 'forests' in the sense in which the word is now used. They were so named in Norman times, when certainly a large proportion of the land was wooded, but when 'forest' denoted a tract of country over which strict controls were exercised.

The whole of north Cumberland, from Crossfell to the sea and from the Solway to the Derwent, was at one time the "*Forest of Cumber land*". South of the Derwent, stretching from Borrowdale to the coast, lay "*Copeland Forest*".

The original very extensive areas tended to be divided into smaller units, which could still be quite large. Near Cockermouth was the Forest of Derwentfells, sometimes known as Cockermouth Forest and part of Copeland. There is a record of it being granted c. 1170 by Alan the son of Waldeof. [1]

In the 13th century, forests were restricted by Henry 1II, considerable areas being disafforested, including the land from the Cocker to the coast. Derwentfells remained and was divided in 1247 between William de Fortibus UI and Alan de Multon.

Life in and around a forest was governed by forest laws, aimed at preserving the game, especially deer. Inglewood, for example, sent venison in the 13th century to such places as Windsor, York, Nottingham and Winchester. [2]

To foster game the cutting oftimber was strictly controlled. In the free chace no one could hunt a deer, wolf, boar or any of the smaller animals - hare, fox, beaver, badger, otter, squirrel, pole cat, wild cat, pine marten, etc. - without permission of the holder of the franchise. The chace was not 'free' in the sense of being available to all .

The management of a forest was under a warden, an hereditary position which carried certain privileges, such as permission to take timber. There were fines for breaking the forest laws -injuring or felling trees, poaching, assarting. Such laws applied not only to the wooded areas within a forest but to 'waste'.

The "committing of waste" (eg.: building a house) was a very serious offence. Forest laws of this kind obviously hindered the development of land and the growth of settlements at a time, in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, when the population was increasing. The only concession might be permission to pasture animals in the restricted areas or to drive in pigs each day to feed upon the acorns.

Timber for building or burning or additional land for cultivation could only be obtained under licence. However, some encroachment on forests was authorised at quite an

early date, as shown by a charter granted in 1202 by Richard de Lucy to Adam de Mosser. 'Mosser' meant 'the shieling on the moss', a moss of which there are still remains between the present hamlet of Mosser and the villages of Pardshaw and Pardshaw Hall. The charter enabled scattered farms to develop along its edge, stating that

> *"the aforesaid Adam and his heirs shall till, build and assart the wood"* [3]

This marginal development may have been exceptional at so early a date, but gradually landowners came to realise that there was profit to be had in clearing and cultivating land and that at the same time they could still reserve considerable areas for hunting and hawking.

Trouble could come not only from poaching peasants but from a neighbouring landowner. The division of Derwentfells Forest, mentioned above, was soon in dispute. In the year of the division, William de Fortibus complained that Alan de Multon and his wife Alice.

> *"were causing waste, sale, and damage in the forests of Alredal, Cokermue and Kaldebek (Allerdale, Cockermouth and Caldbeck), which should be common to both parties."*

The boundary was finally settled in .i aodell Fig 31. The three parks near the town based on the John the King's Court at Bedford as running Speed map of1610 from the mill of the Prior of Carlisle in Lorton by Wychebeck (Whit Beck) to the top of Lauerdsate (Lord's Seat) and by Bethwythop (Beck Wythop) to the summit of Skydehowe (Skiddaw) and down into the Caldew. Nine years later de Multon complained that de Fortibus was depriving his men of "*reasonable estovers in Derwentfells*".[4]

Rather later, in 1285, Thomas de Lucy granted to Sir Thomas de Ireby 85 acres of land and meadow outside the coverts which the latter already had at Embleton (the tun or farmstead of a Norseman Emer or Amer), Shatton and Stanger in the waste and free chace of Derwentfells. In return for a rent of 4d. per acre per year Sir Thomas and his "*free men and tenants dwelling in the same improvements*" were to enjoy *common pasture, housebote and haybote, green wood for building and dead wood for burning, in the waste and free chace everywhere in Derwentfells*, except in the new improvements made by Thomas de Lucy.[5]

The same Sir Thomas was granted the liberty of enclosing a park around his manor of Embleton in the grantor's forest of Derwent Fells, as recorded in a deed for Cockermouth Castle witnessed in c. 1285 by John de Lamplugh and contained in St. Bees Register. For this the lords of Ireby had to do homage at Cockermouth Castle and the Lucies retained the right to slay two beasts a year - a stag between the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin (15 August) and the Feast of St. Michael (29 September) and a doe

between the Feast of St. Andrew (30 November) and the Feast of St. Hilary (13 January). Eighty years after the agreement an order was made

> *"to release from suite of court, indent: Thomas de Lucy, lord of Cockermouth, to Robert de Tilliell. lord of Ireby: Whereas Robert owes suit every three weeks at Cockermouth for manor ofIreby. Thomas releases him for life, except that he is bound to do suit himself or by attorney at the three chief courts."* [6]

All the map makers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries show parks in this area. Speed in 1610 has them at Cockermouth, Wythop and Isel, depicted as surrounded by fences. *'Park'* comes from the French for an enclosure for arable farming or for pasture, but here means an enclosure for keeping deer near at hand. Thus a supply of fresh meat was assured and one or two animals could be released from the park for hunting over a wider area when desired.

The Lucy Cartulary has a copy of a charter granted in 1323 by Anthony de Lucy giving free warren in his demesnes lands of Cockermouth and elsewhere. The holder of a warren had the right to take hares, foxes and other small animals. The Normans were very religious and liked to endow religious houses and in this way much of Cumberland passed into the possession of the monasteries, which extended their lands by purchase as their wealth increased. Alice de Rumelli sold upper Borrowdale to Fumess Abbey for £1 56-13s-4d. in 1209 and the land between Derwentwater and Bassenthwaite to Fountains. [7] St.Bees had land in Loweswater, Carlisle Priory in Wythop and Holm Cultram in Blindcrake, Isel and Setmurthy.

Sheep (and to some extent minerals) were big business with the monasteries. They organised their lands efficiently (Fountains Abbey had 41 farms and a grange in Borrowdale); [8J built boundary dykes to their holdings which may still be traced in places on the hills; and sent their representatives to the wool markets. A tenth of their income went to Rome.

When William de Fortibus III died in 1259/60 an inventory of his possessions included 60 acres of demesne land and the Park, two leagues in circumference, "which may be closed to sustain the bucks and hindes therein contained, of which there are by estimation 100". This lay NE of the town. In 1530 the sixth Earl of Northumberland granted the park to Thomas Wharton, comptroller of his household, and when it came back into the estate in the 18th century the timber had been felled for the tanneries in the town and the land ploughed. The Percy Survey of 1577/8 described the park, 340 acres enclosed by a wall, a hedge and ditch, and the River Derwent. 200 acres were pasture, the remainder wooded.

> *"There is.... a great number of small oke trees worth now presentlie to be soulde at one with another 6d. the tree as followeth: Horse Close Wood 1340; Middleton Spring 5220; St. Anthonie's Wood 5080; ...etc."*

There is no mention of deer in the survey, indicating a possible change of emphasis from preserving timber in order to have animals available to selling it for its financial value.

The same survey states

> *"there is also about the said Castle certain Domain Lands as followeth:*
>
> *The Garden and Orchard adjoining the Castle Green worth 3s-4d.*
>
> *The Dear Orchard adjoining to the said gard.contg. 2 acres 10s-0d.*
>
> *The land between the Horse Close and the waters of Darwent containing by est. 4 acres 26s-8d.*
>
> *The Horse Close lying betwixt the said land and the park containing by est. 16 acres. 40s-0d.*
>
> *The Wheat Close adjoining to the Park cent. 20 acres. 40s-0d.*
>
> *Sum total of the said domains £6-10s-0d."*

Eventually almost all the former forests and hunting preserves became huge areas of common land. There was a large area of waste to the north of Cockermouth and two commons bordered it to the south. Cockermouth Moor to the east of the Cocker and Gallowbarrow Moor to the west. Both these commons had gates to prevent stock from wandering and there were penalties for not using them properly, as witness a Court Leet ruling of 1679 that

> *"It is put in pain that ye inhabitants within this boro' shall not cast off ye hinges or prop open ye public gates subpoena 6s-8d." [9]*

Two years later it was decided

> *"We find it convenient to have four yeates (gates) to be hung two above bridge (Cockermouth Moor, etc.) and two below (Gallowbarrow, etc.) at the charge to the Borough for securing the goods upon the Common." [10]*

The bridge was Cocker Bridge. In 1694 there is a record of four entrance gates into the town, including the Moorgate somewhere south of Christ Church [11]

Chapter 12

Fields, enclosures and farming

From maps and records it is possible to follow the enclosure of the commons and the development of the field system in Cockermouth from the late 18th century, but there is less certainty about the arrangement in earlier times. There were small enclosures at an early date. Thomas de Lucy referred in an agreement of 1285 to enclosure improvements at Embleton. [1] As early as about 1290 Furness Abbey was given permission to enclose Pastures adjoining the forest of the Lord of Egremont. [2] The Abbey was free to choose its own method of enclosure -. dyke, wall or fence - to keep in the sheep, but the boundary must be low enough for deer to leap.

Isolated farmsteads, villages and small towns like Cockermouth would from their very beginnings have a number of small enclosures round them, with ways or 'bars' through these fields to the commons beyond.

Tbe method of development from these beginnings varied considerably over the country, but the infield-outfield system was widespread and lasted a long time in northern England. This consisted of intensively and continuously cultivated infields, growing oats, barley, beans, etc., heavily cropped and heavily manured each year. Beyond lay the outfields or larger cropped areas, cultivated to varying extent according to the immediate need and manured by cattle pastured there after they had been gathered. Manure was a valuable commodity. The Court Leet passed the following resolution in 1690

> *"It is put in pain that no inhabitant within this borough shall sell or give any manure to any in Brigham sub poena 6s. 8d. "(33p)*

and even in recent farm-letting agreements occur clauses such as

> *"all vewtures shall be consumed on the farm"*

ensuring that the farm land is not impoverished during the tenancy.

As population increased the infields would extend at the expense of the outfields, which in turn would push further out on to the waste.

In early medieval times Cockermouth would have fields of arable land divided into strips. A man might farm several strips in various fields, so that he had a share of both the better and the poorer land. The fields themselves were enclosed by hedge or wall, but neighbouring strips (in a corn field of the width a sweep of the scythe could cut) were divided by only a furrow or small ridge. There had to be co-operation regarding crops, so that the whole field could be harvested at the same time, enabling stock to be

turned into it to graze. The stubble of a strip of oats could not be grazed while a tempting root crop grew unprotected alongside.

The strip fields in some of the villages around Cockermouth have been located, for example a fairly extensive system north-east of Bridekirk which was confirmed by aerial exploration in 1976. In Cockermouth itself we do not know how many fields were strip-farmed - building has made aerial confirmation impossible - but there are indications that one such field was east of Kirkgate in Long Crofts. Wood's map of 1832 shows a number of very long, narrow fields, much longer in proportion to width than the usual rectangular fields of the enclosure around this date.

Individuals would buy or exchange strips, enabling them to have a number together which were easier and more economical to farm than scattered holdings.

Eventually a group of strips might be large enough for the tenant, subject to the agreement of his neighbours, to enclose them as a field of his own. Possibly this happened in Longcrofts to produce the 1832 field pattern. The 3-field system did not develop here, but there is evidence that fields were left fallow to improve them. [3]

As far back as the second half of the 13th century there is a record of the manor of Cockermouth having a close of 25 acres below the castle; 83 acres of arable land in Ourebyfeld and a field near St. Helen's chapel; and another 56 arable acres in le Cragges and Brudekirkefeld. [4] There were demesne meadows named Apeltonmeded, Braythemire, Spytelenge and Kirkemire. We still have Spittai lng. Kirkemire was presumably near the church, swampy ground along the Cocker or Bitter Beck. Early records make it possible to locate the fields of Longcrofts, Urebyfield (or Overbyfield .the above-town field) and Hulland Closes to the east of the town, and Laithwaite (or Lathead) to the west. Norse ending of Ureby is evidence that there was a farmstead or small settlement in Cockermouth before the castle was built. A 17th century map (Plate 1) labels Deare Orchard, Whete Cloffe, Horseclofe and Laund (Lands) in the lord's demesne. It suggests a complex of fields in other parts of the area, with "The Common" and Derwent Fells beyond, but one cannot be certain whether, in an ornate picture map of this kind, the apparent boundary lines are merely decoration or whether they depict reasonably accurately the field pattern at this time (Figure 33).

We have seen that co-operation was necessary in order to farm the infields and this also applied to the outfields, how much should be cultivated, which areas should lie fallow, how many animals a man might have on the common pasture a stinting system still in operation today on unfenced fell land such as Skiddaw. Co-operation required that those concerned should meet, in either a manorial court or a town meeting. The extent of the field system depended largely on the size of the population and the consequent demand for food.

To take two examples: - The 4 million population of the country on the first outbreak of the Black Death in 1348 was reduced to little more than a half during the next 25 years and numbers began to increase again only about 1450, taking until 1600 to return to the 1348 level. [5] Many fields would obviously fall into disuse, some abandoned strips being consolidated into hedged pastures after about 1450 to meet the increasing demand for wool. Then again as the population increased in the 17th and 18th centuries and restrictions on development of 'waste' lands were relaxed., smallholdings would be started along roads, near streams etc., om hitherto uncultivated land. This rather haphazard development proved insufficient to meet the demand and economic factors in the 18th century necessitated the speeding up of the process. Much enclosure was done by agreement, land being disafforested, and sometimes there was agreement not to enclose, retaining the common grazing rights.

In 1704 proposals were *'humbly offered*' by the inhabitants of Cockermouth to the Duke of Somerset to *'improve'* waste ground and common in the borough, with suggestions for fees and inheritance fines on each improved acre.' [6]

Much enclosure was achieved under parliamentary acts. There was an application to Parliament for Cockermouth enclosures in 1777. The Cumberland Pacquet carried the announcement

> *"Cockermouth Inclofure. Notice is hereby given purfuant to a Refolution of the Honourable the Houfe of Commons, That an Application is intended to be made to Parliament in the next Seffion of Parliament for obtaining an Act for Dividing and Inclofing certain commons and Wafte Grounds lying near the Town of Cockermouth in the County of Cumberland. September 12, 1777."* [7]

In 1810 a meeting was held in the Moot Hall of proprietors oflands and others interested in the enclosure of further commons and waste and on 21 April 1813 Royal Assent was given to a further act for inclosing 1200 acres, probably the area of Cockermouth Moor extending from st. Helen's Street to Strawberry How road. The act ran to 31 Pages and contained well over 200 claims, such as

> *"No. 2. Allison Wm. Claims a portion of common for the dwelling houses occupied by himself and Daniel Harrison and John Black situate in Cockermouth known by the name of the Old Hall."* [8}

There was concern that the rights enjoyed on the common lands, for example taking turf for fuel, should not be ignored.

The Castle has a plan of the enclosure, dated 2 December 1815, signed by John Huddleston and Richard Atkinson, Commissioners, and Jas. Steel, one of his Majesty's Justices of the Peace for Cumberland.

Over the whole country some 2000 acts were passed for different parishes from 1793 to 1815, the rate then falling as the number unenclosed dwindled. The increase of population, the lack of imports because of war and the big rise in prices in the period 1760 to 1810 made investment in hitherto unproductive land an attractive proposition. Local enclosures at this time included Eaglesfield and Blindbothel 1812, Brigham 1812-3, Setmurthy and Embleton 1813, Great and Little Broughton 1815, Greysouthen 1819. Whinfell1820 and Lorton 1826. [9]

Enclosures made at this period may be easily recognised by their straight sides and frequently rectangular shape as distinct from the irregular fields of earlier times. Such may be seen on the approach to Moota along the Carlisle road. The new fields tended to be of five to ten acres, with larger enclosures of 50 acres or more further out, but the latter proved to be too big even for pasture and were mostly divided into smaller units. [10]

The powers of parliamentary enclosure increased. In 1836 a two-thirds majority of landowners could compel a parish to enclose, but by 1845 a permanent commission had powers to enclose land wherever it was considered desirable. Eventually the public became aware how much access was being lost and the Commons Preservation Act of 1876 curbed the process unless it was recognised as being for the benefit of the community. The crowded inhabitants of the growing industrial towns needed open country within reach.

The effect of enclosure survives in Cockermouth, although there are now few fields actually within the town boundary, for the overall shape of housing estates on the outskirts of the town has been determined by the pattern of the fields on which they were built.

The landowners and larger farmers benefitted from having their own enclosed fields-easier to work, no restrictive communal rules, more varied crops, an ability to drain and improve one's land without waiting for the full agreement of other people. Land value doubled and trebled. The people who suffered were those who had been able to work one or two strips or to keep an animal on the common and now found themselves with nothing.

The mid-17th century was prosperous (sturdy farmhouses and strong oak furniture date from this period), but by the beginning of the following century Cumberland was one of the most backward agricultural areas in the country.

> *"The extensive commons, the distance from markets and commercial centres, all encouraged the idea that Cumberland should be content to feed and clothe itself, and keep alive its poor herds of stock over the winter. A few sheep, the poorer sort of Irish and Scotch beasts, grazed on the higher lands … Draining was hardly heard of. The implements of husbandry were of the rudest character, and*

everything about the farms was similar... The dependence of the small farmer was on the commons." [11]

There he kept horses, pigs, geese, sheep and cows and found turf and peat for fuel, wild berries for food and rushes for lights. It was stated in 1794 that

"There are probably few counties where property in land is divided into such small parcels as in Cumberland; and these small properties so universally occupied by the owners; by far the greatest part of which are held under the lords of the manors, by that species of vassalage, called customary tenure; subject to the payment of fines and heriots, on alienation, death of the lord, or death of tenant, and the payment of certain annual rents, and performance of various services, called Boon-days, sueh as getting and leading the lord's peats, plowing and harrowing his land, reaping his corn, haymaking, carrying letters, etc., etc., whenever summoned by the lord." [I2]

Often a small fanner and his family supplemented income by home spinning and weaving, quarrying, mining or lime burning.

The prices which a fanner might expect for his crops in 1782 were fixed by Quarter Sessions held in Cockermouth as £1-18s-8d for a quarter (8 Winchester bushels) of wheat, £1-1s-4d for rye, 10s-8d. for oats, £ 1-16s-8d for bigger barley, £] -ls-4d for beans, £ 1-12s-0d for malt and 18s-8d. for gray pease. [13] The expenses of raising crops in 1804 were:

Barley: For 3 ploughings and harrowings at 10s: £2-10s-0d

30 loads of manure, leading and spreading: £4-15s-0d

Wheat: for 40 bushels of lime and leading: £2-10s-0d

Manure 25 loads and leading and spreading: £3-19s-2d

Four ploughings and harrowings: £1-17s-6d

Turnips: Ploughing, manuring, cleaning Total £7-16s 8d

Standards gradually improved, largely through the inspiration of John Christian Curwen of Workington and J. R. G. Graham of Netherby, who experimented in selective breeding of stock, grew more fodder and turnips for winter feeding to obviate the autumn slaughter, manured and drained their land. Still there were hazards which could not be foreseen .. .long frosts, droughts, or wet summers bringing sheep rot and other diseases. There were other hazards besides natural forces, such as the collapse of corn prices in 1815 when many who had borrowed money to expand to meet the demand of the war years were unable to repay. Ruined as fanners they became landless labourers or drifted into Cockermouth and other towns to find work. There came competition from American grain and Australian frozen meat (first in 1880). Sometimes the growth of

industry helped, for people needed meat and vegetables, but this might be offset by the migration from our area to the new industrial towns further south.

In ten years from 1871 the number of farm workers in the country fell by about 100,000. Once even the top of Whin fell was ploughed, but in contrast there were long periods of depression, the most recent being 1880 to 1940 when many farm buildings around Cockermouth fell into disuse, to be eagerly sought in recent years for conversion into dwellings.

Acts of 1892 and 1908 relating to smallholdings and allotments (2 acres and a cow) endeavoured to turn the tide. The two wars boosted demand for home grown food. Derating of farm premises came in 1929, there were marketing acts in the 1930s and grain subsidies were introduced, and since the last war there has been a variety of help and, in particular, subsidies for hill fanners in our area. Still the drift from the land continued at about 10,000 workers a year between the wars. The number of farmworkers was halved from 1870 to 1930. With amalgamations and increase mechanisation the situation is now more static. Meanwhile Cockermouth has continued its centuries old function as market and supplies centre of an agricultural area, a function we shall examine later.

One of the expenses fanners (and others) had to meet was the tithe or tenth payable to the church. This was distinct from the church rate or cess levied for the upkeep of the structure and over which parishioners had control in both its amount and its use through elected churchwardens and vestry meetings. Tithes were taken in kind by a rector or by the impropriators (lay owners) of a living who were obliged to appoint and pay a vicar. They were payable on the increase of all living things hay, com, honey, hens, etc., etc. In return every parishioner, including dissenters, had the right without favour to the ministrations of the church.

A Lamplugh record gives some idea of the thoroughness of the system. In 1771 the rector, Richard Dickinson, wrote:

> *Corn … The Owner cuts down, binds up and stooks the Corn, and the Parson by the Owners knowledge and consent sets out every tenth Stook and tenth part with liberty to dry his Corn on the Stubel. Wool… The Owner lays it in five heapes and the Rector takes one and divides that in two and the Owner takes one half back again, Lambs … If the Owner have One he pays a Halfpenny, Two a Penny, Three three halfpence, Four Twopence, Five Half a lamb, Six a whole lamb paying Twopence out, Seven paying Three halfpence, Eight paying a penny, Nine paying a halfpenny, and the Owner sets them ten together beginning with ten of the Best then takes up Two and the Parson One and so on..*

and so on for geese, pigs, hens, bees, cows, roots and hay. [15]

We may note here certain fees which all parishioners had to pay, listed in the same memorandum

> *"For every Communicant after the first time of Receiving is Three Halfpence pay'd on Easter Tuesday. An oblation for every Churching of Women fourpence. Every Wedding by Bands one shilling, by licence five shillings."*

Rates would be similar in Cockermouth.

In addition the parson had "right of Common on all the Commons in the parish". Land brought newly into cultivation was free of tithe for seven years. Men would be employed to collect wool, corn, etc., and to take it to the tithe barn. They would act for the rector in selecting the tenth.

A record of 1700 for Arlecdon Parish states

> "*Lambs set out in Tens, owner take up 2; Tither take lout of 8. Touch and take. Fleeses of Wool laid out in Tens, owner take up 2; Tither take lout of 8. Touch and take. [16]*

"Touch and take" prevented handling before making a choice. The tithe payer would know his stock, but the collector had to rely on appearances.

When dissenters refused to pay tithes a warrant for distraint was obtained from the magistrates and goods sold to raise the money. For Quakers in Dean parish this was usually £3-8s-0d., but the Rector's expenses in obtaining it averaged £4-17s-6d.! [17]

It gradually became more convenient for all concerned to make a money payment instead of giving a tenth of stock or produce. This began to some extent before 1600 (tithes date from pre Norman times) and by 1750 all tithe on corn in Dean was paid in cash. [18] Unfortunately we do not have the records for Cockermouth. Finally all payment in kind was ended by the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. An assessment was made of the value of every field and building and a rent fixed based upon the price of wheat, barley and oats. This was revised every seven years and tables published annually to help in calculation. The evaluation for the country in 1836 was about four million pounds.

The Articles of Agreement on Tithes for Cockermouth [19] dated 31 March 1840 give the area of the town as 2222 acres, of which 1262 acres were subject to payment of tithes in kind - 492 acres of arable land, 709 of meadow or pasture and 60 of woodland. The land not subject to payment in kind belonged to three owners Henry Wyndham, whose 887 acres (including Cockermouth Parks) were "exempt from the render of all Tithes in Kind by the Payment of One Stone Weight of Wool Yearly at Michaelmas"; John Hodgson for 16 acres of St. Helen's Closes, etc., by the payment of JOs.; and Humphrey Senhouse whose 56 acres were excused from tithe by an allotment of land given to the impropriator.

The Agreement sets out the following rates of payment for all other Cockermouth holdings

> *"For Each Milch Cow Threepence For Each Foal Sixpence*
>
> *Three Halfpence is paid for every Communicant above the Age of Sixteen Years throughout the said Township and Ten Shillings for a Mortuary*
>
> *For Each Cast of Bees Twopence.*

Richard Atkinson of Bassenthwaite Halls was appointed valuer to apportion the rents in lieu of tithes, the gross rent charge being £150. The price per bushel of wheat was given as 7s-0Y4d [35p], of barley 3s-11 'i'2d. and of oats 2s-9d. (20]

The Bishop of Chester, Bishop Gastrell, made a survey of his diocese in 1714 and posed the question "Have you any particular or unusual system of Tything?", to which Cockermouth replied

> *"We have four men called Proctors which collects of every Inhabitant at Easter three Halfpence which they call Communicant money but neither provides bread nor wine with it. We Have these four proctors wch if anybody above ye age of 16 years refuse to pay their dues (as they call it) They get a Conviction before ye Justices of ye Peace and makes them pay unreasonable Charges. They will not receive their dues sent by any Quaker unless they will carry such fees themselves: but gets them Convicted. They farm these tythes to make a proffit.* [21]

Tithes are not yet quite dead. The Tithe Redemption Commission was laid down as recently as 1960 and its work of phasing out tithes by the end of the 20th century transferred to the Board of Inland Revenue.

Very detailed maps were drawn for Cockermouth for the commutation of tithes, one representing the very centre of the town, the other the surrounding areas. [22] Each plan was accompanied by a schedule, Part 2 for the centre, Part 1 for the rest. Entries (there were over a thousand) were made under eight headings - landowner; occupiers; number on plan; name and description of land or premises; state of cultivation; area in acres, perches and roods; amount of rent charge apportioned upon the land and payable to the impropriator; remarks.

There is much of interest in the thousand items, but space forbids more than five by way of example, the first from Part 1, the others from Part 2.

landowner	**occupiers**	**number on plan**	**name and description of land or premises**	**state of cultivation**
Rudd William Esq.	Himself	1	Croft	Pasture

		56	Common Field	Pasture
		28	Gallowbarrow Field	Arable
	Jonathan Coney	9	Low Laithwaite	Arable
		10	High Laithwaite	Arable
		22	Common Field	Meadow
	Joseph Armstrong	190a		Arable
Johnstone Gee William	Johnstone R	360	Public House Yard & Garden	
	Himself	1065	Garden	
		767	House and Yard	
Meeting Independent	Williamson	48	Dwelling	
	Armstrong	49	Dwelling	
		50	Meeting House	
	Wordsworth and others	150	Infants School	
Stamper William	John Bell and others	297	Weaving Shop and Dwelling	
	Stoddart	427	House and Garden	
	Swimburn	777	Houses etc	
	Mitchell	778	Houses etch	
	Garner	7791	Houses etc	
Swan John	Fallows	1023	Barbers Shop	
	Swan John	102	Public House and Gardens	

Cockermouth's tithe barn no longer exists. Presumably it was in the area of the Tithebarn Hotel in Station Street and the barn mentioned several times as standing near the Station Street/South Street corner may well have been it. General Wyndham had 125 properties entered, 86 in Part 1 occupying 887 acres, for which he paid the stone of wool in lieu, the 114 acres of the remaining entries being in Part 2 and rented at £7-5s-7d. The other landowners with more than 100 acres were Andrew Green (50 entries totalling 170 acres, rent £] 8-11s.0d.), John Watson (42 entries, 200 acres, £22-ls-6d.) and the Trustees of William Park (29 entries,149 acres, £17-ls-6d.). John Hodgson had 15 entries, many of them connected with his tannery - tanyard field, tanyard wood, tanyard and buildings. Thomas Mackreth got his 73 properties in less than two acres, rent 5s., but Mackreth was a builder and these were presumably small houses, many of them not yet occupied as they were listed as 'empty'. As more land was enclosed a whole variety of distinguishing names for new fields was needed. Occasionally a name incorporates one of the three basic types of farm land arable, -ploughed and seeded;

meadow - natural grass near a river; and pasture - grazing outside the 'head dyke' which protected the arable land from stock on the lower fell slopes .. Sometimes the type of land became part of a name - mire if wet and boggy; holme if an 'island' not quite as wet as its surroundings; or butts if an awkward part of a field difficult to plough. 'Croft' indicates a home field, near the house, and 'acre' the amount ofland which could be ploughed in a day, as in Ten Acre Field.

A map of 1810 showing the new fields in Hulland Close illustrates a variety of methods of naming. Clover Field, Corn Close and Wheat Field would be named after crops grown in them and the names retained after the land was used in other ways. Local features provided a convenient means of reference and Hulland has Barn Field, Barn End Field, Spring Meadow and Fell Field. A very unusual method found here is straightforward numbering, as in first to seventh fields on the town side of the occupation road. A later map shows that as enclosure spread eastwards there appeared Newlands north, middle and south, and beyond that Brick-kiln Close - west, middle and east. Near' and 'far' are very common sub-divisions, and other descriptions such as 'higher' and 'lower' or 'large' and 'small' occur frequently. Recent events and well-known people were commemorated, Waterloo and Wellington Farms proving that these areas were enclosed and the farms built soon after the Napoleonic Wars. There were many examples in Cockermouth of owners' names becoming attached to fields. To take just one, a field described on a map of the Parks enclosures as 'Land occupied by Mr. John Atkinson' had become'Atkinson Field' by the tithe map of 1840. Finally, remote fields were sometimes given the names of remote places if we travel far enough beyond Park House along the Isel road we come to 'Near Botnay Bay' and then 'Botnay Bay'.

Cumbria was badly hit in 200 I by a massive outbreak of foot and mouth disease in cattle and sheep. [The last previous outbreak had been in 1967-8]. It was suspected that the source had been illegally imported meat from the Far East, infecting sheep which were traded at Longtown Market. The resulting problem was widely distributed in 44 British counties, unitary authorities and metropolitan districts from the Scottish Borders to Anglesey to Cornwall. Cumbria was by far the worst affected with 891 outbreaks recorded by the Carlisle Disease Control Centre out of 2026 national outbreaks. Cockermouth was no exception although by fewer direct infections than the lowland areas along the M6 corridor, through Eden district and, to the North. Apart from total restrictions on access to the countryside, which seemed to be well respected by walkers, a programme of culling animals was put in place, not only those infected but also those from neighbouring farms which might have become infected. The epidemic lasted 221 days and in total, nationwide, approximately 4,200,000 animals were culled (12% cattle, 3% pigs and 85% sheep). Whilst farmers received compensation, the tourist industry was badly hit and took some time to recover.

Chapter 13

The early town

Although 'Ureby' suggests a pre-Nonnan settlement, the first written record of the town occurred in c. 1150 when COKYRMOTH appeared in the Register of the Priory of St. Bees. In charters, rolls, etc., of the 13th century there appeared KOKERMUE, COKERMUA, COCREMUTH, COKIRMOWTH and KOKERMUTH. These and other variations continued to be used until the present spelling became generally accepted, but in every case the same three elements of COCK-ER MOUTH occur. The first two syllables come from either the Welsh 'cock-or' for a red mountain (heather on Grassmoor?) or the British 'kukra' or 'cucdi' meaning crooked. The name ends with 'mot' for the meeting of waters or rivers, as also found in Becker-met and Egre-mont. The river was referred to as the KOKER in Holm Cultram records of c. 1170, as KOK in the 1195 Feet of Fines, as COKER in the Patent Rolls of 1305 and COCKAR in Camden's 'Britannia' of 1610.

Whatever the origin of its name, the present town began near the meeting of the two rivers. it is not, as Britton and Brayley described it in their 'Topographical and Historical Description of the County of Cumberland', 'a large sea-port town'!

A deed of about] 195-1200 mentions a fulling mill and house and land at Cockermouth [1] so there must have been some settlement by AD 1200.

Cockermouth has the two essential features of a medieval town a market place, the focus of the local community where goods were sold or exchanged and business done; and a castle, the seat of power. Authority could be exerted from either a castle or a cathedral, sometimes both, usually, as in Cockermouth, situated in an enclosure slightly apart from the rest of the town. Cockermouth would develop as a centre for the surrounding countryside and the lord of the manor doubtless encouraged its growth as the base for the administration of his land and for dispensation of justice.

In addition to the market, the town had a further attraction in the freedom enjoyed by some of its citizens, which we will briefly explain.

William I insisted on homage and regular military service from his tenants-in-chief and his successors continued this system. The tenant had to provide an agreed number of armed horsemen for 40 days service a year. In return, as Henry I stated,

> *"To knights who hold their land by military service, I grant as my own gift that their land shall be quit of all gelds and all labour requirements, so that, relieved of so heavy a burden, they may equip themselves well with horses and arms ready and able to serve me and to defend my realm." [2]*

Henry still imposed a fine on change of tenancy

> *"If any baron or earl of mine or anyone else who holds from me directly shall die, his heir shall not redeem his land as he would have done in my brother's day, but he will redeem it by a just and lawful payment." [3]*

Within the town were *burgesses*, *custory* (or customary) tenants, and *villeins* or serfs. The first, usually farmers, craftsmen or traders, rented burgages in the heart of the town. They fanned strips in the town's fields and were allowed to sell in the market without paying the tolls charged to outsiders. They elected the town officials and were excused fines on change of bur gage tenancy, as distinct from the customary tenants who paid fines on a change of ownership. The burgesses were free men, able to travel and to trade.

On the other hand, the villeins were a class of peasant occupier or cultivator entirely subject to the lord. Serfs were only distinguished from full slavery by certain limits placed by law or custom on service to their master.

From the beginning of the 13th century Cockermouth was consistently referred to as a borough, until comparatively recent times, and enjoyed borough status. In 1829, for example, there were within Cumberland one city (Carlisle), one parliamentary borough (Cockermouth) and 17 market towns (Maryport, Workington, Whitehaven, Penrith, etc.) [4] Although no original charter has been found, that such a grant of borough status had been made was implied by a charter issued by Alice de Rumelli before she died in 1215:

> *"Alice de Rumeli daughter ofWilliam Fitz Duncan to all who shall see and hear this charter, greeting. Know that I have granted and by this charter confirmed to my free men who reside in the viii of Cockemouth and to all their heirs that they are quit of all services to me and my heirs for ever. That is I free them from bearing witness with serfs and from all suit and from all servitude and things which are prejudicial to the liberty and free custom which are held to belong to the free men. (There follow regulations regarding disputes and debts.) ..... I also grant to them all their easements and customary liberties and commons in wood and plain, in the viii and outside it within their right and proper boundaries. Rendering annually to me and my heirs for each whole toft four pence, half at Pentecost and half at Martinmas for all service except foreign service and customary pannage and mill tolL All these things I and my heirs grant and will warrant to them and their heirs for ever. And for the grant of these liberties the vill of Cockertnouth will give me in acknowledgement eight pounds of wax annually at the Assumption of the Virgin Mary."[*5]

An inventory of the Honour of Cockermouth made in 1260 (following the death of William de Fortibus III the previous year) gives a picture of an active and growing town. In addition to the castle, demesne land and park there were the rents of 177% tofts, totalling 59s-3d. at the standard national rate of 4d. per toft; two water mills valued at

£13-6s-8d, a year; a fulling mill at £11-6s-8d; a dye works (tinctorie) at 20s,; three 'fabricae' or workshops, probably smithies as each of the tenants had the name 'Faber' (a worker in metal, wood or stone), rented at 3s., 2s-6d. and 2s.; market tolls of £6-13s-4d.; a malt kiln; and the castle fishery worth 106s-8d. per year. The total value of the borough was put at £55-5s-1OY2d. and the whole honour valued at £1 55-6s-2d. [6]

Surnames of burgesses indicate even at this early date the importance of wool and animal products in the life of the town, names which translated meant skinner, tanner, weaver, fuller, dyer and smith. The accounts of rents collected in the period 1266-1318 tell something of life in the town. In 1267/8 the fulling mill rent was £3 greater than ten years later [7], the drop being explained in the records as due to an outbreak of sheep murrain. This is known to have swept the country in the late 1270s and Cockermouth did not escape. In 1289/90 6s. 2Y2d. is given as "decayed rent of certain burgages, burnt and wasted", so a major fire had apparently destroyed 18 burgages at a time before the Scottish raids.

This was not the end of the downward trend. In 1310 the fulling mill was worth only £3-6s-8d. and by 1316-8 it lay derelict and without a tenant. The dye works too fell in value, from 20s. in 1267/8 to 6s-8d. in 1310. Rents from burgages rose until 1310 (possibly because of an expansion of the town) but were down to 52s. by 1316-8, where the entry "*propter guerram Scotorum*" (because of Scots wars) gives the clue to this general falling off in values. By 1368, 44s-4d. was received from 133 burgages, but an additional explanation to Scottish raids may be that as properties became vacant and reverted to the lord he was at this time re-letting them to tenants at will or customary tenants.

Conditions began to improve in the 15th century. In his accounts for 1437/8 the bailiff mentioned four shops "*under the Tolbothe*", the *Flesh-shamels* and the *Fish-shamels*, with rents respectively of 26s-8d.(£1-34p) for the four, 8s.(40p) and 3s.(15p) The fulling mill was back in action and worth 13s-4d.(68p), while the corn mill tolls brought £17 and fishing in the Derwent and the herbage of the Park each £13-6s-8d. [9]

By 1478 some new names appear 'Carhon Close', rented at 4d.; a burgage described as being next to 'Sketirbek'; a parcel of land called 'Kirkbank' and another beside the Cocker named 'Lymepitts'. 'Tenturholme' occurs and Laytheld has been divided into 'Highleytheld' and 'Lawleytheld'. R. Norman repaired the chapel of St. Helen and was rewarded with a close in Urebyfeld called Seynt Elynclose.[IO] It seems that the tenancy of this Part of Urebyfeld was the payment for keeping the chapel in repair (Fig. 34).

Moving into the next century there is little change. Mills, fishing and herbage remain the same in value, but there are various 'improvements', areas of land newly brought under cultivation. 'Middynsted' is one of these, the four-acre 'Scrawlesymyes' an improvement on the moor and there was one often acres next to 'Slatestonefall'. By 1518-20 one of the fulling mills was again untenanted, the other with its parcel of land being rented at

8s 10d. [11] In 1541-3, when Thomas Wharton had acquired part of the estate, values were. the Park £ 13-6s-8d, fishing £7 -6s-8d, corn mill with tolls £ 13 6s-8d, mill5s-4d., garden called Applygarth 12d., and Seynt Elyn close 13s-4d. [12]

The town had certainly spread to the west of the Cocker by this time. 'Spitelhowse (hospital) was mentioned in 1260 and St. Leonard's Close (*calella sancti leonardi*) about 1280, the latter probably a triangle of land between the river, the road westwards and the town boundary, later to be the station site and for a time occupied by Thomas Armstrong Ltd (building contractors). Excavation in 1980, before the restoration of Strickett's Court and 75-85 Main Street, revealed that this end of the town was inhabited by 1300 AD or earlier. In 1270 AD there were 163 burgage properties, which must have stretched a considerable distance from the Castle Market Place area. In the early 1500s there were references to burgages "on the west side of Cocker Bridge", "*in the west part of the town*" and "*in a street called Ketywent*", this last indicating that side streets were developing off Main Street.

The bailiffs accounts for 1578-80 show Wharton still held the herbage of the Park, the mills and their tolls, and the Derwent fishing, of total value £34-8s-10d. Three mills are recorded -.the new water corn mill (40s. [£2] rent), the water corn mill near the close called Langcrofts (20s, [£1]) and a fulling mill near Moorclose (22d.). The shambles are listed at 14d. [6p] and six shops at 4d., 8d., 3s-4d., 4s., 4s. and 6s-8d.-a wide range in rent value.

This was the time of the great Percy Survey. There were then (1578) 108 burgages, but many would have been divided and there may have been as many as 200 units with street frontage. In addition there were 19 messuages and at least 13 shops, mostly in the Market Place. Allowing an average of 4Y2 persons to each dwelling, the population of the town at this time would be about a thousand.

Before leaving the 1578 survey some of the entries are worth examining in more detail. A number of closes of land and a walk mill were situated at Moor Close, but this is not the Moorclose of Fletcher Christian's family, since it is described as "*otherwise High Lathelds*", an area to the north of and below the present Fitz Road, extending beyond the later railway line. A new mill referred to in the accounts of the bailiff was "recently erected at Casbay on the water of Cocker" and was probably Rubby Banks Mill, although Cocker Lane has been described as leading down to Casbay. The name may have been a general term for this stretch of river and possibly have a derivation other than our present 'bay'. The corn mill on the lord's waste near Long Crofts was mentioned as formerly a fulling mill and, since it was a water mill, must have been on Tom Rudd Beck.

By now a number of enclosures had been formed further out on the waste - Strawberry Howe (*ON haugr* for hill or *OE hOh* for a projecting ridge) of seven acres of arable,

meadow and pasture was described as situated on the common or moor; Graystone Close, in the angle between the present Lorton and Strawberry Howe roads, was some eight acres and Symonskell (Simescales, Simonscales, Sunscales) had 18 acres. Other closes were located at Badskine (between Simonscales Lane and the Cocker), Moor Hills, High Close, Sowter Closes, St. Helen's, the Crofts and Galla Burgh. There was a kiln on the lord's waste at Long Crofts and somewhere a smithy. Many of our present names are thus 400 years old, several of them much older.

Galla Burgh Close is said to be under Milne Hill, so there must have been a mill in the area. There is no water in the Gallowbarrow area (the present Moor). Was the Parkside Avenue and Cocker Brows rise once known as Milne Hill because of its proximity to Double Mills?

Mawkyn Close in the 1578 survey is the same as Carlton Close mentioned in 1453, a block of fields at the upper end of St. Aelen's Street which intrudes on to the demesne enclosure Wheat Close. 'Carlton' occurs within a mile or so of the centre of several Cumbrian towns and probably signified the settlement of the peasants who tilled the lord's demesne, the name coming from 'ceorls ton', the town of the peasants. Winchester suggests that this settlement was on Bitter Beck, possibly the forerunner of the Market Place settlement. If this is so then Ureby, an earlier settlement, was probably on Tom Rudd Beck .supporting evidence being a reference in 1547 to land in Urebyfeld in Langcroft, suggesting that it lay between Bitter and Tom Rudd Becks, and references in 1619 and 1778 to Tom Rudd as Ureby Beck. [13]

In addition to the detailed knowledge gained from records of the routine management of the manor lands we can form general impressions of the town from the accounts left by those who visited it. One of the first was William Camden, the headmaster of Westminster School but also an antiquarian and historian, who in his 'Britannia' wrote of Cockermouth in 1582

> *"From hence (the Keswick area) sometimes within a narrow channell, other whiles with a broader streame speedeth him (the River Derwent) very fast Northward to entertain Cockar. Which when they doe meete doe incompasse, almost round about, Cockarmouth a mercate town of good welth, and a castle of the Earles of Northumberland. The town is built fair enough, but standeth somewhat with the lowest betweene two hills; upon one of which the Church is seated, and upon the other right over against it, a very strong Castle."[*14]

In 1665 the Herald's Visitation, a nation-wide enquiry, found in Cockermouth five families of sufficient standing to have coats-of-arms. Comparing this number with Carlisle's two and Penrith's and Kendal's one each, we see how important Cockermouth had become in the 17th century. In the Fleming-Senhouse papers of 1671 we find

> *"Cokermouth, ye best Market Towne in this part of ye county wch being adorned with a stately Castle (belonging heretofore to ye Ear/es of Northumberland), a Fair Church, two good stone bridges, a fair house (belonging unto Sir Geo. Fletcher of Hutton in this county, Baronet, being ye ancient seat of that Family) and many other fine buildings doth give it small reputation."* [15]

Bishop Nicholson gave a more detailed description of the town as it was shortly before the end of the century (1685).

> *"The houses are built of stone and slated mostly with blue slates; they comprise two streets, one above the River Cocker in which is the Moot Hall, Market House, Corn Market and Shambles; and in the other is the Beast Market."* [16]

Between 1325 and 1350 a map of Great Britain was produced which shows most of the principal castles and abbeys, known as the Gough or Bodleian Map. Cockermouth is not named, but a building shown east of Working ton may represent it.

Early maps showing details of the town are few. That of about 1620 (plate 1) has houses along both sides of Main Street, Market Place and St. Helen's Street from Sullart Street to Waste Lane, with Castlegate also built up. The only other development extends for short distances along Sullart Street, Challoner Street, Market Street and Kirkgate, to use the modem names.

By 1587 the number of burgages had risen again to 135. Then in 1665 the hearth tax returns show a considerable number of houses of an appreciable size -10 had 5 hearths or more (the old hall headed the list with 16), 7 had 4 hearths, 21 had 3, 56 had 2 and 62 had 1. Much of Kirkgate was built in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. A map of 1739 shows little change - a few houses nearer Derwent Bridge on the river side of the street and perhaps a slight extension up St. Helen's Street. It shows clearly, however, the Moot Hall and the gate closing the upper end of Castlegate and leading to the Castle Green. During the middle years of the 18th century there was considerable expansion of the town. Hodkinson and Donald's map of 1775 shows more houses at the western end, expansion in St. Helen's Street beyond the turnpike, and further growth along Sullart Street, Challoner Street and Kirkgate. These three side streets were linked up by Cocker Lane and Back Lane (or Cross Went, later South Street) and houses were scattered right along this link, the level part of Cocker Lane being completely built up. The most notable growth was in Kirkgate, where houses stretched from its upper end beyond Longcroft (now Windmill Lane) and into Skinner Street and Scaw Brow.

Note: Excavations in the summer of 1980 revealed that there was some development at the western end of Main Street (present nos. 75-85 near Sullart Street) as early as AD 1300.

Chapter 14

Life in the early town

Life in the simple dwellings in the shadow of the castle was geared to the land and must have often been hard, depending greatly on the demands of the lord of the manor and on the vagaries of the weather. Even as early as the 13th century compulsory service was being changed to paid work in some parts of the country, the latter being more satisfactory than work done grudgingly under compulsion, but it is unlikely that any change came to Cockermouth until much later.

Customary tenants were hard hit by the death of either lord or tenant On the death of a tenant the lord was entitled to take the family's best beast He was also entitled to the 'heriot', a 'fine' enabling the heir to assume the tenancy, usually the payment of an extra year's rent. A similar payment had to be made by tenants on the death of the lord, often bearing no relationship to the annual rent. In 1826 Nathaniel Nicholson, agent to George O'Brien, Earl of Egremont, notified Joseph Smith that, at the Court of Dimissions, he had

> *"assessed upon you as only Son and Heir of Richard Smith Hatter deceased a Descent Fine ofTen Pounds for and in Respect of a Parcel of Land called the Garth with a small Cottage Barn and Smith's Shop lately built thereon of the Rent of three Pence".* [I]

On 27th December 1836 the earl's steward informed Thomas Mackreth that he had been assessed

> *"as only Son and Heir at Law of John Mackreth deceased a Descent Fine of £24-7s-0d for and in respect of a Parcel of a Messuage and Garden in Kirkgate of the Rent of 2d.... now consisting of one Dwelling House in Front of the Square and three Cottages adjoining and behind the same .... And I do hereby give you further Notice that a Descent Fine of £20 due to the said Earl upon the admittance of the said John Mackreth to the said premises upon the death of Margaret the Wife of Thomas Mackreth to whom he was Heir at Law is also still in arrear and unpaid." [2]*

These two fines date from as recently as the 19th century.

A further example of the lord's control over life was the *'merchet'*, a fine payable to him for a marriage.

After the Black Death in l348/9 labour was in demand and peasants realised their worth, but authority clamped down on them and for the next 200 years wages, work and clothes were strictly controlled by a succession of laws. Edward Ill, having freed the serfs for the advantage of the nobility, ordered a national scale of wage rates- master

carpenters, thatchers, plasterers and wallers each 3d. a day, freemasons 4d. a day and all labourers 1½ d. a day. A mower was to receive 5d. for an acre of meadow. Idleness was punishable by a temporary return to slavery, by branding and perpetual slavery for a second offence and by the halter for further offences. No wages were to be paid for festival days. To prevent movement of labour, payment was made yearly, later half-yearly in Cockermouth. Hours of work were dawn to dusk from September to March and from before 5 a.m. to after 7 p.m. in the summer, with an hour to eat, except that in the months of June and July, when days were long, 30 minutes was allowed for breakfast and 90 minutes at midday, so that a rest could be taken. [3]

Clothing was controlled to denote class and, later, to help the woollen industry. Servants, carters, ploughmen, etc., were to wear cloth costing Is [5p] or less per yard, while yeomen, tradesmen and artificers, the middle class, could go up to Is-6d. The kerchiefs of wives and maidens might not be more than 12d. [5p] in value. [4] Even the length was regulated - jackets, coats and gowns might only just cover the buttocks in the lower classes, while on craftsmen and merchants they could reach to the knee. Lords, churchmen and graduates might wear them as long as they wished, and actors were exempt from control.[5]

Gradually people in and around Cockermouth became grouped into three classes - the yeomen, who might be middle class countrymen, small farmers or servants and retainers working for the upper classes; farm labourers without any land of their own, working on others' farms; or town workers, earning a living either in domestic industry or in the small workshops which developed. The town dweller might still have his bit of land or keep a cow on the common, but there was a tendency for him to rely more and more on the wage he was paid for his work.

Until arable and stock farming learned new methods in the 18th and 19th centuries the majority of people lived very near starvation level. Vegetables such as peas and beans and coarse barley, rye and oats, with home-brewed ale, were the chief items of food, with very occasionally cheese and meat, usually pork.

Labouring people ate rye bread and oaten bread in large thin cakes baked on iron plates called "girgles". The few 18th century visitors to the Lake District complained about the blackness and coarseness of the bread, although there were some favourable comments on 'oat clap bread'.[6] Every source of food had to be used, as shown by a Court Leet ruling of 1640

> *'That none of the inhabitants or dwellers in Cockermouth shall suffer anie of theire children or servants to gather anie heads amongst anie man's stooks till such time as the corn be housed upon pain 6s-8d*."[7]

Fruit and eggs were sold to the upper classes and according to a manuscript of 1460 even they might eat meat only once a week - beef, mutton or pork. The cattle put on the

harvested fields or the common pasture were small and thin, most being slaughtered at Martinmas and salted for winter use.

The poverty of the county is reflected in the tax returns. In 1693 a national tax of 4d. in the pound brought payments averaging 7s-2'i4d. from England and Wales as a whole. Bedfordshire paid the highest, with 11s Y2d., while at the other end of the scale Cumberland paid only 11.375d [4.7p]. Even Westmorland paid over 2s. [8]

Men of all classes poached, not only the workers for whom it was an essential part of family maintenance, but the gentry and clergy. Carrying nets at night to catch a hare or rabbit for the poacher's hungry family carried a penalty of transportation and only in the latter part of the 19th century did a more humane attitude develop. [9]

The cost of living in 1700 was four times that in 1600. Wages at this time are recorded in the day books of Humphrey Senhouse when managing his aunt's estates at Millom Castle. In 1700 and the years immediately following a man earned 4d. a day for haymaking or digging peat in summer, 3d. a day in winter for hedging, manuring and threshing. Making a new hedge could earn 6d. a day, mowing hay and shearing corn 6d. a day for men and 4d. for women. A boy driving a plough was paid 1 d. a day. Masons, carpenters, etc., earned 8d. and a carter using his own horse and cart could claim up to Is. a day. Men living in on a farm were paid £2 to £4 a year, a cook £1-15s. [10]

There was an appreciable change in money values and consequently in wages during the 18th century. A government enquiry into agricultural wages was made in 1790 and again in 1804, the later figures being roughly 50% greater than the earlier in Cockermouth. [11]

The returns for the town in 1790 were:

> *Day labourer in winter 1s-6d., in summer1s-8d., in harvest 2s*
>
> *Threshing wheat per quarter 1s-8d. and barley per 1s-3d.*
>
> *Reaping wheat per acre 7s.*
>
> *Mowing barley per acre 5s.*
>
> *Blacksmith's work - wheeltire 8d., plough work and chains 4 ½ d. and shoeing 1s-8d.*
>
> *Carpenter, mason and thatcher by the day, each 2s.*
>
> *Collar maker's work 2s-8d.*
>
> *Poor rates and other town charges in the pound 1s. (Up to 3s-8d. in 1804.)*

About the same time (1811) the Earl, George Q'Brien, paid 3s-6d. a day to a journeyman carpenter and 2s. a day to his apprentice for work at the castle. [12]

This was a particularly hard time because of the war with France, reflected in the almost fourfold increase in the poor rate shown above in a period of 14 years. In 1813 over £7 million was spent on poor relief in England, compared with a total of £1Y2 million from local taxes for all other purposes. Wheat, 43s. [£2.15] a quarter in 1792, had trebled to 126s [£6.30] some 20 years later. [13]

Then the war ended and was followed in 1816 by a particularly bad year. Corn prices collapsed and thousands of farmers were ruined, as we have noted. Handloom weavers were hard hit by the new machinery and by 1818 were more likely to earn 8s. a week than the 23s. of a few years before. To add to suffering the winter of 1816 was unusually bitter. The corn laws did not solve the problems of the next 30 years. Bad harvests, industrial booms and collapses, made conditions in the country as a whole very bad. In the early 1840s the agricultural wage was about 1Os. a week and a skilled worker in the town could earn only some 18s. Then trade improved. British exports in 1872 were four times as great as in 1850. Food prices rose by 60% in the same period, but wages rose considerably more. [14] The standard of living improved. But while industry thrived farming entered a decline which was to last until 1914, a decline sparked off by a series of bad harvests in the late 1870s aided by foreign grain imports. While Cockermouth prospered as an industrial town, it continued its role of market town to an agricultural community which was less happily placed.

To return to the earlier period, the enclosure acts provided a certain amount of work at a time when it was greatly needed. The new fields required labour, including women for weeding, and men were required for the actual process of enclosure-draining land, hedging new fields and making roads. The number of men without work may indeed have been a stimulus to enclosure. At a vestry meeting in Cockermouth in 1817

> *"It was Resolved that the Overseers and Surveyors should have power to undertake the making of the New Roads and Footpaths, and to treat with the Commissioners appointed by the Inclosure Act for carrying the work into execution without delay. And that they employ such of the persons as are now receiving relief from the Town to work upon the said roads and footpaths as they may think proper and necessary."* [15]

Relationships between employer and employed have been comparatively good in Cockermouth. The widespread outbreaks of violence in the 14th century did not affect Cumberland. One factor in a better feeling between the upper and lower classes was the ever-present threat from the north. [16]

With the disappearance of servile labour (which persisted much longer on the continent) necessary communal tasks might be undertaken with a certain dignity. Of the latter part of the 14th century Trevelyan said.

> *"For purposes of war and police, and for town-works of all sorts like digging a town ditch or drain, repairing the town bridge, helping in the harvest in the town fields, very occasionally cleaning or mending the street in front of his own house, a man might be called upon for personal service by the civic authorities. Such work in the common cause was not regarded as 'servile', like work on the lord's demesne."* [17]

Dignity came too in each man having a share in the affairs of the town. The lord of the manor was still chairman and a great influence in the manor-court or leet-court, but in such an open court each man might take a part, as he did in regulating use of the common fields. However poor the townsman might be, there were matters in which he had the right to make his voice heard.

Work in field, home or workshop was hard and long. Workers and their families (of whom all but the very youngest were workers too) must have looked forward to Sundays and the holidays of saints' days, when rest was enforced under penalty of fines by church courts -a beneficial ruling. The church and other groups organised festivities, either outdoors or in the nave of the church. [18] During the 15th century there began 'church ales' arranged by the clergy to raise funds for the church fabric or some other good cause, when ale was sold and drunk in the churchyard or in the church itself. We can see here the beginning of the church tea or bazaar.

Long hours, hard work, often no food to spare but over all a sense of community in a small town which still had not reached 3,000 people by 1800.

Chapter 15

Local Government before 1863

We have already referred to the meetings to manage the common fields and the manorial court, through which the inhabitants of Cockermouth took their share in the affairs of the town. An early reference to the responsibilities of the town reads

> *"Cockermouth 1292. In the 20th. Edward I, the same privileges (a view of frank-pledge, with infangthef, gallows, pilloty. assise ofbread and beer) were claimed for the borough ofCockermouth."* [I]

The lord of the manor was empowered to hold a manorial court or court leet (the origin of the word is unknown), usually summoned twice a year by the lord's steward issuing an order to the bailiff for the burgesses to attend. On the appointed day they had to answer their names as being present. The autumn court, held within a month of Michaelmas, swore in a jury of twelve men for Cockermouth.

A similar court was held in Cockermouth at Easter for the 'five towns' and Derwent Fells, at which reports were received from the 'turnsmen' of Blindbothel, Branthwaite, Great Clifton, Dean, Eaglesfield, Greysouthen, Pardshaw, Stainburn, Ullock and Deanscales, and Whinfell. These medieval townships or vills were the basic unit of local administration and had

> *"to perform various administrative duties - to deliver evidence at inquests, to catch and watch thieves, to mend roads, to contribute in keeping up bridges and walls, to assess and levy taxes, to witness transactions, etc."*

It was laid down in an old survey book belonging to the castle

> *"And ther ys ailso to be remembred that the Burgefses or Borough Men of Cockermouth aforesaide being chozen upon the Lord's Enquest and swome at the great Courte holden ther about the Feaste of St. Michaell th'arch angell do elect & yearlie chose a Baylife or Grave, who upon his Election is to be charged with the Gatheringe and collectings of all Rents and Amercyments ther due and payable for the Year followinge and therofto be aecomptable, to his Lord's Use accordinglie."* [2]

The duties of this town officer eventually included such tasks as being registering officer for elections and clerk of the market. The castle records include a list of 109 bailiffs who served from 1640 to 1756 (Appendix 4).

The court also appointed a considerable number of other officials. Two constables were chosen for the year. They wore three-cornered hats as a symbol of their authority, with long coats, short knee-breeches and rough hose.

A town crier or bellman was appointed and there is a reference in vestry book records of the 1770s to the "public posts in the town" at which he 'cried'. [3]

Four assessors were needed to value houses and land for dues payable to the lord of the manor, for the poor rate (later the responsibility of the overseers), for the church cess, etc. [4] Also four assessors of distraint who seized goods for non-payment of rents, etc.

Two assessors of bread and ale looked after these important items. Most inns had their own brew-house and the assessors had to ensure that the ale produced was not too weak - there was no upper limit, but it must not be below a certain strength. Fortunately the inn-keepers did not all brew on the same day. Tasting was not, however, the only method of testing strength - ale was considered to have sufficient body if, when the assessor poured some on to a wooden bench and sat on it in leather breeches, he found it difficult to stand up! The same men were responsible for the weight, quality and price of bread being satisfactory.

Two milllookers ensured that the tenants, forced to take their grain to the lord's mills, were not taken advantage of. They checked that stones and equipment were working efficiently, without undue wastage; saw that the miller took his correct proportion (multure or mooter) of corn for doing the job; and settled disputes about priority of batches. Three market lookers inspected and regulated the markets. Two pinfold lookers were responsible for the pound where stray animals were taken, its position at the upper end of St. Helen's Street being perpetuated in 'Pinfold Close'. Four hedge lookers checked boundary fences, two leather searchers were. busy in the tanneries and two swine ringers would be concerned with the identification of pigs turned out to find pannage.

None of these tasks, designed to protect the townspeople, was an easy undertaking and their performance often brought unpopUlarity. In fairness to all they were reconsidered each year and shared out and passed round amongst the inhabitants.

The court where this was done would be held in the Moot Hall after its erection in the Market Place and this same court gave its support to the assessors in their work, as when in 1677 the court leet fined Nicholas Plaskett 3s-4d [IM'2p] for not allowing his swine to be ringed.

While the officers of the borough administered the town, the townspeople themselves had a parallel involvement in what, at least as far back as the late 16th century, became known as the vestry meeting. The church played a major part in the life of the people, not only in providing religious services but in arranging festivities, running the free grammar school, etc. The church vestry was the natural place in which to meet to discuss such matters, although at times the 'Vestry' did meet elsewhere. Though mainly

concerned with church fabric and other church affairs, this meeting gave people a voice in some more general town activities.

The Vestry elected its representatives, the churchwardens, wh0 did not have to be members of the established church. With the vicar's warden they were responsible for much church administration. Meetings were usually called to discuss some specific issue and were open to all.

> *"Notice is hereby given that a Vestry meeting will be holden on Wednesday next at two o'clock in the afternoon at the Ring of the Bell to consider some method for Recovering of the £100 lent by the Town to the late Mrs. Elizabeth Fletcher, decd., July 31st. 1791."*

In the vestry book the decision of the meeting was signed first by the churchwardens and then by all present.

We have referred to early methods of collecting taxes hearth tax, lay subsidies, etc. The lay subsidy list for Cockermouth in 1333 [5] contains 34 names, beginning.

> *COKERMOUTH HAS IN GOODS:*
>
> *Henry, son of Richard £2-1s-8d*
>
> *Robert Musey 12s-0d*
>
> *William le Barker 15s-0d*

Only three had goods valued at over £3, another four between £2 and £3. The total value was £42-16s 10d., the tax yield being a fifteenth, viz. £2-17s-1 d.

By the end of the 17th century the wardens were responsible for collecting the church cess or church tax, used for a variety of purposes in the early days. They were elected at the Easter vestry meeting, at which time an estimate of expenditure for the next year was made and the church cess settled accordingly. The wardens had to tread carefully, for they were held responsible for any overspending during their year of office.

The court leet reported in 1709

> *"Whereas a complaint hath been made to us of several abuses by persons sessing and collecting of sesses within this Burrow. We order for the future no sess to be sessed and collected until first entered in a book kept by the Bailiff for that purpose, and for his reward we order that one penny in the pound be allowed him for every pound so sessed under ten pounds, and for every pound higher one farthing. And any person collecting any sess before it be entered and signed by the Bailiff for every default we put in pain 6s-8d."*

The first churchwardens' account book is for 1668-1702, in effect an early ratepayer's list for Cockermouth, but earlier books have existed. The title page reads:

HA Booke of accounts of the Parish of Cockermouth. Wherein is contained the Bookes, Recordes, Writinges and other Utensals belonging to the Church and Free Grammar Schoole there: To be delivered from Churchwardens to Churchwardens successively.

Made by Christopher Peile, John Peile of the Swan, Anthony Plaskett, Peter Allanby, Anthony Fisher, Churchwardens, in the year ofour redemption, 1668" [6]

The fifth warden, Anthony Fisher, came from Setmurthy, a chapelry of Cockermouth having right of representation.

When there was a publican amongst the wardens it was customary in many parishes to hold meetings in his inn instead of the church vestry and during John Peile's term of office this happened in Cockermouth, the back parlour of the Swan in Kirkgate being the venue.

Expenditure of cess outside the actual church includes an entry in 1691 for "mending 2 Church bridges", one of which crossed Bitter Beck in Kirkgate and the other the same stream in Church Lane, (Market Street) at the bottom of the 'church stairs' - both footbridges.

Burgesses claimed expenses from the cess, as in 1693 "paid George Pearson for going about town 4d." In 1748 a meeting was arranged to talk about the sliping of the grammar school roof and Is 8d. was entered as "spent in drink at the meeting called to consider the matter". In the same year someone was paid for "correcting ye boys for breaking Church Windows 6d." The Vestry decided in 1789

"That the salary allowed to the person appointed to ring the School Bell in the morning and the Supper Bell in the evening and to take care of the Clock and Chimes is not belonging to or part of the Salary of Parish Clerk of this Parish. but ... these duties are separate and distinct from the Office of Parish Clerk, and that a Majority of the Inhabitants in Vestry assembled have a Right to appoint proper persons to perform the said Offices ... "

To the appointment of churchwardens, overseers, sidesmen, bellringers and parish clerk was added before 1840 that of highways surveyors; and in 1832 an appointment was made of a collector of the various rates, with accommodation provided:

"It was resolved that Nicholas Williamson, of Cockermouth, be appointed such assistant overseer and surveyor with a salary of £35 a year. It was resolved that the said Nicholas Williamson shall reside in the workhouse, in that part thereof which will be set apart for his use, with board and washing; and that he devotes the whole of his time to the services of the town; and that he shall collect the poor rates, highways rates, and lamp rates; and that he shall give a bond with one sufficient surety for the faithful performance of his office."

Interest in local government increased from the late 18th century onwards. John Bolton reports that at the beginning of the 19th century Cockerrnouth was the second most important town in Cumberland, with a good reputation for managing its affairs. He mentions health, the poor, care of the sick and orphans, dispensaries and schools of industry. Government of the town was becoming a more specialised task, as instanced by the appointment of a special rates collector. Just before this, in 1829, towns had been given power to appoint Select Vestries to undertake certain duties. At the beginning of the following year Cockermouth appointed such a vestry (Appendix 5). This select vestry often, with the vicar, churchwardens and overseers of the poor, became responsible for local government.

A public vestry was still held, open to all whatever their politics or church allegiance, and still with some power, such as the fixing of certain rates. At this time the poor rate was about 6d. in the pound, the county rate Id. and the police rate Y4d. The church rate, kept separate and varying according to what needed to be spent on All Saints, the churchyard and the grammar school, was decided from year to year, as when on 14 May 1840 the Vestry resolved

> *"to lay a rate for the necessary repairs of the Church. three-half-pence in the pound be laid."*

It had been as high as 4d. in 1832.

A report issued about 1832 regarding proposed changes in the boundary of the Borough of Cockermouth said

> *"The Town has not many houses of a better sort, and little seems to have been done towards its improvement. The streets are narrow in many places, with a want of foot-pavement everywhere; and though the lower orders of people seem to be better off than in many other Towns which we have visited, yet there seems generally to be very little about the place tending to improvement."* [7]

Fifteen years later, in 1847, a bill was promoted known as the Cockermouth Improvement Act. This followed a Vestry meeting held at the beginning of the year

> "*for the purpose of taking into consideration the necessity of having a Local Act for Paving, Lighting, Watching, Cleansing and Improving the Town and Township of Cockermouth*".

The suggested bill caused deep dissension within the town. Two commissioners, John Job Rawlinson, a barrister of the Inner Temple, and William Hosking of Adelphi Terrace, London, Official Referee of Metropolitan Buildings, heard evidence for and against. Present at the preliminary enquiry at the Globe Inn were the promoters of the bill- Rev. Edward Fawcett, Abraham Robinson, Jonathan Cooper, Edward Bowes Steel, Joseph Brown, John Richardson jnr., Thomas Wilson, Richard Bell, John Steel, John Tyson,

Joseph Banks and Thomas Bailey jnr., and the opponents - Jonathan Wood, John Sancton, Isaac Atkinson, William Bragg for Lieutenant-General Wyndham and for himself, George Sanderson, Jonathan Ashley and William Ponsonby Senhouse. After examining witnesses the commissioners prepared an 8-page report to lay before Parliament which is so revealing of conditions in the town in the middle of last century that it is worth quoting at length:

> *"The Bill does not Profess to have for its object the improvement of the drainage or sewerage of the town; ... we have to report that there is at present nothing which can rightly be denominated a sewer in the town, and consequently there are no drains to carry off the refuse and ordure from the houses, into common sewers. There are drains to carry off the surface water from the streets, into one or other of the rivers Cocker and Derwent, and some of them are laid in such a manner as to preclude the escape of water from them during freshets or floods in the rivers. The descent in the river Cocker is rapid, and it would be easy to carry a stream of water from it commencing at some point above the town, through the whole of the town west of that river, and to give it an outfall into the Derwent, below the town, so as to act at all times as a sewer, and to be at the same time a certain easement for the surface water."*

The report went on to say that the promoters had no intention of improving sewerage and draining, the main object being the provision of street lighting. The opposition stated that there were already sufficient powers to repair streets, keep drains in order and provide lighting. A special act for Cockermouth would be expensive and was also unnecessary, as the opponents expected

> *"a general measure for the paving, cleansing, lighting and sewering of towns will be passed into a law and that they would be willing to avail themselves of the provision of such a general enactment."*

The report continued

> *"We are of opinion, that the Promoters of the Bill have shown no special reasons why such a Bill as they are soliciting should be passed into law. It is true that the footways of the town of Cockermouth are roughly paved and ill kept; - that the streets are often in a dirty state from the duties of the scavenger being ill performed; - that the police is either insufficient in force or inefficient as to powers; - that the town is wholely unsewered except by the rivers, and by the becks or mountain torrents, which latter are greatly diminished, and sometimes wholly fail in the summer season; but we are unable to discover any security in the provisions of the Bill for these defects to be remedied.*
>
> *Mr. Hosking perambulated the town, attended by some of the inhabitants ....*

Having just arrived from Sunderland, Mr. Hosking did not find anything peculiar in the dirtiness of Cockermouth; but it was remarked to him ... the scavenger had been more than usually active in removing the dirt from the streets within a day or two preceding our arrival at Cockermouth. Some public middensteads, which Mr. Hosking was required to observe in the narrow and winding alleys north-west of the Market-place, and immediately under the walls of the Castle, ... were brimming with their filthy contents; and a cluster of privies for the common service of some houses at a place called Camperdown .. were found to be as revoltingly offensive in their exposure as in their foulness ... , such conveniences as those at Camperdown are not commonly to be found at Cockermouth, ...and he could not fail to observe that wherever houses are upon one of the rivers or upon one of the becks, the margins of the stream are covered with human excrement, which falls from privates jutting out from the houses and overhanging the beds of the watercourses .. .in summer, when the streams are low, the accumulations must be great, inasmuch as on a wet winter day the margins of all streams in and through the town were much befouled."

The opponents of the Cockermouth Bill approached the promoters to await the expected general act and they agreed to do so, without lessening their determination to see the bill through if necessary. However, the bill was finally dropped, perhaps because of the discouraging report of the commissioners.

It is clear that expense was the main ground of objection, at a time when in the country as a whole one child in six died in its first year and one in three before the age of five; when typhoid, tuberculosis, diptheria, etc. were rife; and when cholera epidemics occurred far too often. [8] General Wyndham submitted his own 'humble petition' to 'the Honourable the Commons', informing them

"That your petitioner is Lord of the Honour and Manor of Cockermouth and the owner of considerable property within the town and neighbourhood of Cockermouth and his rights and interests will be seriously affected by the passing of the said Bill as it now stands inasmuch as the cost of passing the said Bill and the rates to be levied under the authority therof will impose a serious burden on your petitioner and other Inhabitants of the said town and neighbourhood. .the said Bill is wholly unnecessary and uncalled for and that it is being pressed forward without the sanction of the Inhabitants and rate payers of the Town and Township of Cockermouth between 200 and 300 of whom at the meeting held for the purpose of considering the proposed application to Parliament dissented therefrom while 9 only assented thereto." [9]

Then came the 'Health of Towns Act, 1848'. Instead of being "willing to avail themselves of the provisions of such general enactment" as stated in the commissioners report, the people of Cockermouth appear to have ignored it.

Meanwhile frequent Vestry meetings were held, one of which, in November 1847, did resolve by a two-thirds majority of the ratepayers present that from an act of the 1830s the part relating to lighting should be adopted and that eleven inspectors should be appointed to carry out the proposals at a cost of £200. At this time the poor, county and police rates amounted to Is in the pound (1848 figures).

Eventually the 1848 Act was superseded by the 'Local Government Act, 1858'. Cockermouth was one of the few towns in Cumberland that had to make several attempts to adopt it. It was announced in December 1858 that "a meeting will be holden for the purpose of considering a resolution for the adoption of the Local Government Act 1858 ... ".[10] There was a majority vote against it. Another attempt in April 1862 failed. Then an outbreak of fever in Whitehaven revived interest and in September a stormy meeting was held in the Free Grammar Schoo1. A poll was held and a decision to adopt the Act finally taken, voting being 388 to 292. The opponents of the Act still refused to accept defeat and petitioned the Local Government Board that the working of the Act in Cockermouth would be very expensive, but its adoption by the town was nevertheless gazetted by the Board to take effect on 25th December 1863.

Thus, after a long struggle, much of the responsibility for the town passed to the Local Board of Health, although there were still some aspects of local government which were the concern of other bodies.

Chapter 16

Local government - the Local Board and Urban District

The first meeting of the Cockermouth Local Board of Health was held on Saturday, 30th September 1864. Elected members had to possess the financial qualifications of being rated for the poor at a minimum of £15 or of having property worth at least £500.[1] There had been 35 candidates at the election (Appendix 6). Joseph Brown was the first chairman of the 12 members and the manager of the City and District Bank was made treasurer in a bond of £2000. Henry Faithfull was appointed as the first clerk according to Bolton, but by the time the Board published its bye-laws (dated 1864) Joseph Hayton was listed as clerk. [2] Mr. Wyndham offered the use of an office and this was accepted as temporary headquarters. Included in the business at the first meeting were salaries, a request for the inspectors to submit reports on the highways and the gas supply and a request to the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway to repair the new road from the town to Gallowbarrow. [3]

The 1864 booklet "*Cockermouth Local Board. Bye-laws, etc*." has some 70 pages, printed by Daniel Fidler, 70 Main Street. The first part is concerned with routine matters - committees and the duties of the clerk, surveyor, treasurer, inspector of nuisances and collector. Numerous building regulations are given, relating to the structure and size of walls, beams, fireplaces, chimneys, etc., and to ventilation and the amount of space round a building. Plans for new buildings had henceforth to be submitted for approval. The conduct and registration of slaughterhouses, always liable to become a public nuisance, are ruled upon, including an order that no animal must be confined in a slaughterhouse while the whole or part of a carcase lies there.

There are regulations for the cleansing of streets and for the width of new ones.

> *"Every occupier of premises shall keep clean and free from snow, filth, dust, ashes and rubbish, the footway and pavement adjoining ... "*

....Streets must not be obstructed and arrangements are made for dealing with traffic during processions and public rejoicings. To prevent "disagreeable or hurtful effects" deodorizers must be used when privies. cesspools and ashpits are emptied and night-soil, etc., must be covered up when it is being carried, anything spilt on the roadway to be cleared up by the carrier between midnight and 8a.m. Carts collecting sewage, etc., must stand in any place only while loading.

Stray cattle are to be taken to the common pound. The owner may claim his beast on payment of up to 40s. [£2] plus expenses incurred, but if this is not done within three days the pound-keeper can advertise the animal for sale, giving seven days' notice at the owner's house if he is known; proceeds from sales to go to the Local Board. Any

attempt to save the 40s. by stealthily removing an animal from the pound may bring three months' imprisonment.

The list of nuisances which can be dealt with by the inspector is varied and interesting. They include holding sales, exhibitions or shows in public streets; repairing a cart in the street unless it is essential to carry out repairs on the spot; lack of control when driving; parking of carriages, etc.; obstructing footways with goods; hanging clothes across the street; ferocious dogs; prostitution; profanity; drunkenness; firing guns; throwing; unsafe window boxes; no standing on upper window sills to clean or paint; having an open cellar area; having places for bull-baiting, cock-fighting, etc.; and victuallers harbouring a constable while he is on duty. A conscientious inspector of nuisances must have led a busy life!

Although termed a "Board of Health" it is obvious that 'health' was considered a wide enough term to include anything affecting the well-being of the townspeople. When the "West Cumberland Times" began publication, ten years after the formation of the Board, the regular reports of the medical officer, Dr. Fox, show conditions at the time - typhus caused by insanitary conditions and semi starvation; schools closed because of epidemics; filter beds allowing vegetable matter and frog spawn to get through to the taps. The Public Health Act of 1875 made infectious diseases notifiable; ruled on drainage, sewage disposal and water supplies; and ordered polluted food to be destroyed. Even these items, so taken for granted today, were opposed by some MPs as interfering with liberty.

Other issues before the Board in these early years were the need for baths and washhouses; street lighting being extinguished at 7pm on fair day, in accordance with the Board's contract with the Gas Company; the nuisance of slaughterhouses scattered about the town; the keeping of pigs;

the fact that in the 1876 Board elections (total cost £ 13-9s-7 d.) 191 electors, one out of every five, were unable to sign their names. [4]

Refuse and dust were perpetual nuisances. In 1876 a rubbish site was being sought, one Board member's solution being "Throw it in the river!" [5] There were difficulties too because the refuse men collected only ashes. It was reported that the "tradesmen of the town - had more goods wasted by the dust than would pay their share of the rates". [6]. The Board decided to hire a horse and watering cart to replace 'the old apparatus' which needed skilled men to operate it.

At this time official meetings - the Local Board, the Guardians, etc. - were held in the Court House. The room used, on the first floor front at the river side, still had the wall seats round it until incorporated into one of the flats formed in the building in 1975. Thomas Wilson, the owner of Cockermouth's largest hat factory. had died in 1857 and in 1874 John Birkbeck Wilson offered the factory to the Local Board. [7] It stood on the

Cocker between Bitter Beck and the bridge end of the Market Place (Plate 15). Suggestions for the use of the building were many - baths and washhouses with drying closets, and if these were provided John Wilson offered also the large steam boiler still in the building; a large Board room which could also be used for lectures; offices for the Board's clerk and surveyor; a restaurant; public reading rooms; a covered corn market; a fire engine station; rooms for friendly societies, etc.; lock-up shops on the street frontage; a public urinal at the bridge end; etc. The development was envisaged as involving both public and private enterprise. However, no action was taken at the time - the rates were just going up from Is-6d. to Is-9d. in the pound. Then in March 1875 the first positive move was made when part of the property was sold to Mr. Rydiard for his boot and shoe business. [8] Soon afterwards the Board began to meet "in the cock 10ft", approached by a yard off Cocker Bridge, and the council offices were to remain in the old hat factory for over 50 years.

A further increase in the general district rate, bringing it up to 2s. [lOp] in the pound, was recommended in 1876. The estimates for six-month periods ending in September 1876 and 1889 doubled from £1369 to £2565. It is of interest to see how these were made up, as in the table below

	1876	1889
Interest on borrowed money	420	674
Repayment of same	142	
Sewers	20	87
Water supply	50	106
Highways	200	192
Fire brigade	10	4
Public lighting	155	160
Salaries	62	125
Special charges	35	
Other expenditure	60	
Law charges	200	
Election	15	
Sinking Fund		388
Scavenging	*	60
Watering	*	12
Markets		87
Establishment		40
Gas supply		630
TOTALS	£1369	£2565

(*Possibly included in highways)

Over 40% went in loan interest and repayments in 1876!

There were at this time four bodies responsible for local government in and around the town the Cockermouth Local Board of Health, the Board of Guardians, the Cockermouth School Board and the Cockermouth Union Rural Sanitary Authority. Then in 1894 came the Local Government Act establishing urban and rural district councils and Cockermouth town became the Cockermouth Urban District, with the surrounding villages forming Cockermouth Rural District, these also having parish councils with fairly limited powers. For the first time some women were able to vote and to seek election. Cockermouth UDC had 12 members, who met every fourth Wednesday in the Cocker Bridge office and worked through a town clerk (John Fearon at this time), treasurer, medical officer of Health, surveyor and sanitary inspector, gas manager and rates collector.

Some tasks were undertaken by the county council- major roads, some education, etc.- but there was plenty left to occupy the UDC.

Some services provided will be considered separately, but we way note here a few of the very varied concerns appearing in the minutes of the Council and of its General Purposes Committee. Many recur time after time - licensing of knackers and bone-boilers, of cowkeepers, of slaughterhouses and of common lodging houses; inspection of premises and cases of overcrowding; nuisances arising from sewers, offensive trades, stable smells; pollution of Bitter Beck; provision of public lavatories (a chapter might be written on the lengthy search for sites for such conveniences). Surprisingly as long ago as 1920 the Council dealt with house extensions and even controlled the erection of greenhouses and garden sheds, which were sometimes forbidden. Eventually telegraph lines, aerials and the war memorial became council business.

The Council horses are one feature of town administration which has disappeared. In 1914 the surveyor was looking for a home with a farmer for an old horse Tommy, replaced by a new one costing £45, and there are other records which show concern for horses which had fallen lame or were too old to work. [9]

Both day and night presented problems. In 1898 tallow chandlers were reminded of a request some years earlier [10] that they should render their tallow only between 11pm. and 6am. and in 1925 the Council considered a request that All Saints bells and chimes should not ring between 10pm. and 6am. [14]

While some concerns were, even comparatively recently, very different from those of today, others persist. In 1930 the Council proposed to ban street parking throughout the town and the 'Cockermouth Advertiser' commented

> *"We feel sure that no broadminded citizen will object to paying the trifling charge of Is. which the Council proposes to levy for parking space for one vehicle for a full day or part of a day on Fairfield." [11]*

The county districts were reviewed in 1932 and the County Council suggested that Cockermouth might become part of a rural district. A post-card poll of electors showed 87% in favour of remaining an urban district, so Cockermouth remained a very small urban island - only 2390 acres of land and 35 of water. About the same time (1935) Cockermouth wished to incorporate Papcastle, but only the Gote, Hames Hall and Derwent Mills area came into the town, Papcastle village remaining outside. [12]

It was also at this time that the Council sought to draw attention to the town by setting up a publicity department and the first town guide made its appearance in 1937.

In 1939 plans were prepared to accommodate in Cockermouth 2,800 evacuee children from the South Shields area and the town found itself involved with Air Raid Precautions, the Home Guard, Civil Defence, shelters, rationing, a British Restaurant, etc.

In some ways the Council was progressive for a small country town. As early as 1910 a week's holiday with full pay was awarded to the Council's workmen with more than a year's service [13] and the next year they supported the demand for Women's Suffrage and the Daylight Saving Bill. On the other hand they refused for some reason to adopt the 1907 Notification of Births Act.

Cockermouth was, and still is, a registration district with the Superintendent Registrar formerly at Grecian Villa and now in Station Road. Cockermouth, Keswick, Maryport and Workington are sub districts for registration.

On 1 April 1974 began a nation-wide reorganisation oflocal government. Cockermouth became part of Cumbria, a new county comprising six separate entities - Cumberland, Westmorland, the Furness district of Lancashire, the Sedbergh area of the West Riding of Yorkshire, the previously separate borough of Barrow-in-Furness and the city of Carlisle. Urban and rural districts disappeared and Cockermouth UD with Keswick and Maryport UDs, W orkington Borough and Cockermouth and Wigton RDs formed a new district council, one of six in Cumbria, reviving the name 'Allerdale'. 'Allerdale' was chosen because as a one-word name it was preferable to the possible alternative of 'Solway and Derwent'.

Within Allerdale District, Cockermouth itself acquired parish council status, although preferring the title 'town council'. The functions of the new Cockermouth Council are very limited but it has a valuable role to play liaising between the townspeople and the district and county councils, which share between them most functions of local government. The Town Hall was purchased by the UDC for £325 in 1933.

After the 1974 re-organisation it passed to the new ADC and most of it was occupied by the Planning Department until it was relocated in the new "Allerdale House", built on the Cloffocks in Workington. During Allerdale's occupation the Town Council had scant

accommodation for its meetings and a small office, but since the building was converted to the Tourist Information Office, it has a council chamber and other rooms. For 40 years the building played an important part in the life of the town, the basement being used for brownies, first aiders, children's dancing classes, jumble sales etc

The Town Council has had 12 members ever since 1894, until 1978 always elected by all the electors in the town, and from 1974 the whole town chose its four representatives on Allerdale District Council. In 1979 this was changed, Cockermouth being split into two wards, Castle and All Saints, divided by the Cocker down to Cocker Bridge and then by a line up the centre of Castlegate and Castlegate Drive. Each ward now elects six members of the Town Council and two of Allerdale D.C. Allerdale District Council became Allerdale Borough Council on the 26th July, 1992.

Chapter 17

Cockermouth Poor Law Union & the workhouse

For centuries the poor could find food and perhaps a 'dole' of money at the gate of a monastery and in giving such relief the monasteries were helped by the church and the merchant and craft guilds, who felt this an obligation laid upon them. By Tudor times the numbers needing help had become too great to be assisted in this way and gradually a proper system of poor relief, based upon compulsory rates, was evolved - the first such system in Europe.

There were a number of stages in this development. A compulsory poor rate was first introduced in 1572 and acts of 1598 and 1601 ordered the appointment by Justices of the Peace of overseers of the poor in every parish. They had to provide work for the poor and have "*a convenient stock of flax, hemp, wool, thread, iron and other stuff to set the poor to work*". Various measures during the 17th century were not very effective and in 1691 control was given to vestries and J.P.s, appointed overseers being empowered in 1723 to establish workhouses and to contract for the employment of the inmates, outdoor relief being prohibited. [1]

In consequence of this statute, we find the Cockermouth ministers and churchwardens meeting in 1746 to select a site for a workhouse, eventually choosing'

> *"a certain house and dy houses of the property of Joseph Wain, Elizabeth Wain and Ann Wain, Widdow, ... The premises to be conveyed to the minister, overseers, and Churchwardens, and their successors in trust."[*2]

See p81 Fig.41. Front elevation of the 18th-century poor house (based on an early 19th-century drawing).

This property was in Skinner Street, on the bank of Tom Rudd Beck, and the workhouse became known as *'Three Brigs Hall'* from the three bridges close by. It was demolished in the early 1970s (Fig. 41).

In 1794 articles of agreement [3] were covenanted between John Simpson, Joseph Birkbeck and Thomas Hodgson, churchwardens, and Joseph Bowman, lames Williamson and Isaac Whitelock, overseers of the poor, on the one hand, and Joseph Smithson, weaver, Jno. Stoddart, manufacturer, and Robert Smithson, waller, all of Cockermouth, on the other, under which the last three should provide from the money allowed them for the maintenance of the poor in the poorhouse

> *"sufficient meat drink washing, lodging, clean and wholesome clothes and wearing apparel, bed and bedding, Physick Medicine" and should "employ an experienced surgeon and apothecary" when necessary.*

The agreement ran to eight large pages. The weekly amount allowed per person for all the above was Is-8d. [8p] The job of poor house master was no easy task. One Vestry minute declares

> *"Hugh Cowperthwaite master of Poorhouse vindicated of a great many scandalous expressions thrown out against him."*

In 1800 the Vestry was again called to consider

> *"the very alarming and enormous expense of the poor and to fix on some plan for meleorating the condition of the poor as well as lessening the expense thereof .... .It is therefore resolved to discontinue all house rents, all out pensioners and none allowed again unless by three directors. To take account of the workhouse master and to discontinue him. To find the paupers work and not to let them wander about the Town as heretofore .... "*

The condition of the poor was very bad following the Napoleonic Wars, especially in farming communities, so prominent in the life of Cockermouth. There was increasingly frequent reference to the increase in the cost of looking after them. On 24 July 1816

> *"At a Vestry held this day for taking into consideration the reliefof the numerous poor making application for relief owing to the reduced price of wages, it was resolved that a meeting be held in the Moot Hall to hear applications by those persons seeking relief."*

Earlier, in 1795, the Vestry had stopped assisting wages, but the practice had apparently developed again. We have already seen how enclosures and new road works provided some work and relief at this time.

The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834 divided the country's 15,000 parishes into about 600 unions with elected boards of guardians. the whole under three Poor Law Commissioners. Cumberland was divided into nine unions - Alston, Bootle, Brampton, Carlisle, Cockermouth, Longtown, Penrith, Whitehaven and Wigton.[4] The Cockermouth Union, containing 50 townships, had four sub-districts - Cockermouth, Keswick, Maryport and Workington - and its boundaries were similar to those of the later rural district The Board of Guardians, elected by the ratepayers, replaced the Justices of the Peace in affairs relating to the poor. The Act aimed to reduce the number of persistent paupers living on relief and at the same time to diminish the burden of the rates, and it did in effect reduce the national poor rate by a half.

A writer of the early 19th century says of Cockermouth

> *"I would rather travel about and ask here and there for a penny, and lead a life of liberty, and breathe the fresh air of Heaven, than trust to the tender mercies of the master of the workhouse. It would be to me a far greater trial to be cooped up*

> *in a poor, miserable dwelling like Darwinside (his name for Cockermouth) workhouse, in that narrow, dirty street, than to go about and ask alms."* [5]

A Vestry meeting in 1828, before the new act, considered selling the workhouse and field and erecting a new one on land belonging to the town on Kirkgate Common near The Towers", which had been recently built. George Cape was to prepare the plan and specification and a committee was formed to sell the old building and ascertain the cost of the new one. The formation of the Cockermouth Union resulted in the building of the new workhouse in Gallowbarrow in 1840-3, with the first part opened in June 1841. The basic cost was £4,000 but a further £500 was spent on improvements and £600 on an east wing and fever hospital addition in 1847. [6] The total number of indoor and outdoor paupers given relief in the quarter ending March 1846 was 1475, excluding 826 children whose parents claimed. Most of the outdoor relief would be to the aged or infirm, in accordance with the new act.

Fig. 42. The 19th.century workhouse and Fairfield School from Fairfield (from a photograph in Cousin Charley's Magazine, November 1899).

The average number of inmates during 1846-7 was about 230 and Mannix and Whellan wrote

> *"The classification of paupers here is admirable, and it is one of the most complete and best conducted workhouses in the north of England."*

Numbers rose to 260 by 1883 - 72 men, 70 women and 118 children, but fell to 139 in 1891. Of poorhouses in general G. E. Mingay writes

> *"The union workhouse was a grim establishment, where the comfort and diet were of the sparsest and the discipline of the harshest. Strict rules, enforced by the ex-sergeant-majors who were often appointed to the post of workhouse master, prohibited the mixing of the sexes and enjoined silence at meal times. Families entering the workhouse were broken up, and the men put to the hard, dusty and humiliating work of breaking stones for the roads or crushing bones to make bone meal for the farmers. The prime object was to discourage pauperism."*

Mingay goes on to say that it was difficult to make life in the workhouse worse than in the lowest paid work outside and many guardians were too humane or too afraid of the consequences to enforce very bad conditions. A side effect in rural areas was that farmers tried to take on extra men to keep them out of the workhouse and so prevent rates increases. Outdoor relief persisted in help with rent or fuel to widows, even when otherwise banned. Towards the middle of the century the railway boom was a help, first in employing an average of 100,000 over the country for 20 years in laying track and then in providing more permanent employment as railway staff 65,000 in 1851, rising to

174,000 by 1881.[7] Cockermouth's railways opened in 1847 and 1865 and there were several lines built to the west of the town in the latter half of the century. Economy appears to have been a matter of pride in Cockermouth. We have mentioned some meetings concerned with expenses and further objections about the cost of the poor in the town led to another one in 1835 for the purpose of

> *"deciding on the propriety of reducing the expenses of the workhouse establishment by appointing another person in the room of the present assistant-overseer with a less salary and who may have a less family. It is resolved that the present assistant-overseer shall retain his situation at his present salary."*

Another attempt to save money was made by the overseers when in 1839 they decided to collect the rates themselves. The effort was not a success and after a year they agreed to revert to the previous method and appointed Archibald Brown as assistant overseer to collect the rates, at an annual salary of £25 plus all reasonable expenses when called away from home on the business of the town. [8]

Money was saved in the actual running costs of the workhouse. After the West Cumberland Times first appeared in 1874 it becomes easy to follow the workhouse numbers and expenses and one can sense a feeling of satisfaction that Cockermouth's expenditure was low compared with most of the county. In the half year ending 25th March 1875 Cockermouth's weekly average of 3s 2Y4d, [16p] per person was less than any other union in the district except White haven, which managed on 2s-5d. Wigton spent 4s-ld. and Bootle was as high as 4s-8d. -still low compared with the 5s 11 Y4d. of Saddleworth on the Lancashire-Yorkshire border. Cockermouth's figure was made up of 2s 2Y4d. per person on provisions, 4Yzd. on clothing and 7Y4d. on coals, soap, cleaning materials, etc. The total was 3d. less than for the same period in the previous year. [9]

The average cost of relief given both indoor and outdoor at Cockermouth was in 1876 2s-61f4d., the lowest of the seven unions in the county, which averaged 2s-1 Od. with 3s-7d. the highest figure. [10] The salaries at this time of the workhouse master and matron, husband and wife appointments, were £70 and £40 per year and those of the schoolmaster and schoolmistress £35 and £20, towards which the government granted £30-2s. and £12 respectively. A new porter and tailor was appointed in 1874 at a yearly salary of £25. [11]

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"deciding on the propriety of reducing the expenses of the workhouse establishment by appointing another person in the room of the present assistant-overseer with a less salary and who may have a less family. It is resolved that the present assistant-overseer shall retain his situation at his present salary."

Another attempt to save money was made by the overseers when in 1839 they decided to collect the rates themselves. The effort was not a success and after a year they agreed to revert to the previous method and appointed Archibald Brown as assistant overseer to collect the rates, at an annual salary of £25 plus all reasonable expenses when called away from home on the business of the town. [8]

Money was saved in the actual running costs of the workhouse. After the West Cumberland Times first appeared in 1874 it becomes easy to follow the workhouse numbers and expenses and one can sense a feeling of satisfaction that Cockermouth's expenditure was low compared with most of the county. In the half year ending 25th March 1875 Cockermouth's weekly average of 3s 2'i4d, [16p] per person was less than any other union in the district except Whitehaven, which managed on 2s-5d. Wigton spent 4s-1d. and Bootle was as high as 4s-8d. - still low compared with the 5s 11 'i4d. of Saddleworth on the Lancashire-Yorkshire border. Cockermouth's figure was made up of 2s 2¼d. per person on provisions, 4 ½ d. on clothing and 7 ¼ d. on coals, soap, cleaning materials, etc. The total was 3d. less than for the same period in the previous year. [9]

The average cost of relief given both indoor and outdoor at Cockermouth was in 1876 2s-6 ¼ d, the lowest of the seven unions in the county, which averaged 2s-10d with 3s-7d the highest figure. [10]

The salaries at this time of the workhouse master and matron, husband and wife appointments, were £70 and £40 per year and those of the schoolmaster and schoolmistress £35 and £20, towards which the government granted £30-2s. and £12 respectively. A new porter and tailor was appointed in 1874 at a yearly salary of £25. [11]

The nation-wide attitude to workhouse children was to get rid of them as soon as possible, by placing them in apprenticeship, sending them to the colonies (often without the parents' consent), etc. Cockermouth boys would sail to a new life from Whitehaven. In some areas waifs and strays were put out to tender, to find work in weaving sheds, etc., sometimes when as young as six years. The articles of agreement mentioned above, dated 1794, enjoined the three men responsible to ensure that

> *"the Poor Children which shall be in the sd. Poorhouse are taught to read English and their Catechism as far as their capacities will admit and to Work as far as their Ability will Extend in a Sufft. Manner for their Instruction and Benefit.... And in case any of the sd. Poor Children shall be put or placed out Apprentices by the sd. Churchwardens and Overseers or their successors during the sd. Term that the sd. Jos. Smithson, Jno. Stoddart and Robt. Smithson or some or one of them .. shall and will at his or their own Expense give to each of such Children such Change of Clothes as has usually been given or allowed on such occasion."[*12]

In March 1887 the workhouse schools at Flimby were opened for 80 boys and girls and the schoolmaster and schoolmistress moved there with the children.[13] This may account for the fall in numbers in Cockermouth workhouse between 1883 and 1891. Later Petworth House, nos 1 and 3 Henry Street, was bought as a children's home, replacing the use of Flimby for boys in 1929.[14] Some children were boarded out and one report to the Board of Guardians on 21 such children stated

> *"The children were found in a satisfactory condition. The foster parents were much attached to the children, and none of the children were willing to return to the workhouse, nor were their foster parents willing to part with them. "[15]*

The medical officer's report in 1874 deplored the fact that there was no accommodation for sick children separate from the adults and that the only nursing care given to the sick was provided by other inmates, mostly aged or infirm. In reply the chairman of the Board of Guardians said he had never seen the necessity of having paid nurses in this department and their medical officer always reported insufficient nurses. One Board member rudely added that men who were well paid and had nothing to do always liked to make some suggestion, after which the subject was dropped! The medical officer did gain something by his persistent efforts, for it was decided to convert two rooms of the fever ward in the workhouse into accommodation for sick children at a cost of £5 for the necessary alterations, but he made no progress regarding the nursing. [17] In 1903 a Local Government Inspector reported on what he found in Cockermouth. One nurse

had to cope with 62 patients in the sick wards by day and one by night. The next worst authority was West Derby with 1 to 29 and the best provided 1 to 7. Ideally Cockermouth should have had a superintendent nurse and four assistant nurses. He did not blame the new master and matron, who were doing their best, but he told the Guardians that 'Cockermouth stands absolutely alone" and accused them of being morally and legally responsible for patients dying earlier than they need. One point in favour of the Board was their reaction to a suggestion in 1874 by the Wycombe Guardians that a petition be submitted to Parliament for it to be made compulsory for workhouse children of 10 to 12 years to do farm work during the day and in the evening attend school "under a properly certificated teacher and subject to the same compulsory clauses as day scholars". This the Board refused to support, maintaining that agricultural work was hard and such a scheme would be too much for the children. [18]

The town felt a responsibility towards the workhouse people and organised events to raise money for outings and Christmas treats and groups gave entertainments in the workhouse itself. To take two examples from 120 years ago, - in June 1875 the annual trip to Maryport took place, organised by the Popular Entertainment Society. The workhouse people were given dinner in the Maryport market hall; spent the afternoon on the shore, the pier and inspecting the lifeboat; and fmished with tea and dancing in Netherhall Park. The same society visited the workhouse to entertain the residents and gave them delicacies, tobacco and snuff. The second example - a trip to Workington of 12 boys, 10 girls and a teacher to the band contest. These are not isolated instances, a number of treats and outings taking place each year. The press report of th!? Christmas of 1877 reads:

> *"The inmates of the workhouse had their customary Christmas dinner of roast beef and plum pudding. Mrs. Watson, of the City and District Bank, also treated the old women lodged in the sick wards to a quarter of a pound of tea and a pound of sugar each; and Miss Benson, of St. Helens, sent tea and sugar to all the other old women who are inmates of the house. The Rev. W. Williams, vicar of Christ Church, who is chaplain to the workhouse, gave snuff and tobacco to those of the old inmates who use these articles. To the children he also presented oranges, and Mr. J. B. Banks furnished them with a supply of marbles."* [19]

To take one later example, in 1927 the Huntsman Lodge of the Rechabites, with the help of voluntary gifts, took 60 aged residents to Silloth, where they were given tea and each a shilling to spend. [20]

Workhouse statistics reflected events - decreasing outdoor relief signalled the approach of summer and outdoor relief figures for the Union of £34,000, £84,000 and £46,000 in successive years resulted from the coal strike of the mid-1920s.

Towards the end of the Union's existence the change in meetings from fortnightly to monthly showed its work was less needed. Old age pensions were introduced in 1908, a first step towards reducing the number of elderly people in the workhouses. As far back as 1909 a commission suggested the end of the Poor Law system and of workhouses, replacing them with unemployment insurance, a social services system and a national health scheme. Unemployment benefits and health insurance came in t911, but Poor relief continued alongside these and later developments. Then in 1929 Poor Law Unions and Boards of Guardians were abolished, Cockermouth's responsibilities passing to the County CounciL The 'overseers of the poor' officially vanished after more than 300 years. The National Health Service Act came in t946 and in 1948 the National Assistance Act removed the last traces of the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act.

Before turning to the last days of the Gallowbarrow building there is one further aspect of life there to be considered - the insane. To quote a report of one of the Commissioners in Lunacy who visited the workhouse on 18 February 1874

> *"The males and females respectively on the insane list are now thirteen and ten, altogether 23. These I have spoken to. They are in charge of paupers who receive extra rations. The imbeciles are tolerably clean and fairly well dressed. Elizabeth Ritson, referred to by my colleague at last visit, has been discharged. His recommendation as to the removal of partitions in the dormitories has been complied with and these rooms are now more commodious. The beds also are now supplied with two sheets, but they are not changed it seems more often than once in three weeks. I think they should be changed more frequently. Some improvements have been effected in the women's bathroom, ... but blinds are wanting at the windows. All sleep on straw and have straw pillows .... Means of amusement were most scanty in the day rooms. A few do domestic work, pick oakum, and beat sand, and one makes himself useful as a shoemaker."* [21]

A month later it was reported to the Guardians that the blind was fixed; sheets were to be changed once a fortnight; and a draughtboard and other small games had been supplied. [22] Two months later it was mentioned that there were illustrated weekly papers and dominoes provided and the Guardians agreed to the inmates having caged birds and to normal residents being allowed to talk to the insane members.[23]

A visit at the end of the next year (December 1875) showed that the lot of the 11 insane men and 11 women at that time could still be improved. The men's clothes were reported as worn and ragged, although the women's were better, and several residents were pale and thin, to remedy which malt liquor was suggested. Beds and rooms were in a proper state, but one man was in a stone-floored cell because of his dirty habits and the matron promised to look into his case. They were all bathed once a week, but the same water was used for four or five and it was suggested that it be changed more

often. All the cases were quiet and not likely to benefit by asylum treatment, though some were dirty and destructive - and there was no paid nurse. [24]

We have travelled a long way to the present methods of general hospital psychiatric departments and of Dovenby Hall, bought for conversion to a mental hospital in 1930. Developments regarding the workhouse building followed the formation by the County Council of the Mid-Cumberland Area Guardian Committee, an area including Workington Borough, Cockermouth, Maryport and Keswick Urban Districts, and Cockermouth and Wigton Rural Districts.[25] In May 1933 the Committee proposed selling the Cockermouth workhouse or Poor Law Institution, to give it the proper title. There were objections from Cockermouth and Keswick Councils that there was no other institution near, but it was closed and advertised for sale in August 1935, and again advertised unsuccessfully 14 months later. [26] .

During the war the still vacant building was used by the Royal Army Service Corps and then in the late summer of 1949 demolition of the unwanted premises began. The Institution Bell, which came from the forecastle of the wooden frigate 'Lord Etdon of Sunderland', grounded at Allonby after a fire, found a home in the Council Hall in Grecian Villa, and is now in Wordsworth House. [27] The orchard had by now been plundered and the lead on the buildings had gone, but the timber was reported in excellent condition by the demolition contractor, J. B. Mossop of Whitehaven. Some of the walls were found to be almost a yard thick. Still in good condition in the entrance and dining hall were mural paintings, presumed to have been done by a resident, of Cockermouth Castle, Cockermouth Viaduct, Cockermouth Castle Gateway, Friar's Crag, etc.[28]

So disappeared, with few regrets, a feature which had been part of the Cockermouth landscape and the town's life for over a hundred years.

Chapter 18

Markets and Fairs

> *"Concerning a market.*
>
> *Our Lord the King has granted to William de Fortibus Earl ofAlbemarle that he should have a market at his manor of Cockermu each week for Saturday until the coming of age of our Lord the King unless that market etc. [Le: be to the detriment of neighbouring markets] and the Sheriff of Cumberland is commanded to allow him to have that market. Witness as above." (i.e: Hubert de Burgh our justiciar at Westminster 19th. day of May.)* [1]

So runs an entry in the Close Roll (Chancery) of 5 Henry III (1221) and Cockermouth received a market charter - a system of licensing markets possibly dating from the time

of Alfred in the late 9th century and inaugurated as a method of raising money for the king. It was probably a recognition of trading already existing and was one of the earliest Cumbrian charters, the first being Kendal in 1189. [2] Henry was at this time only about 14, hence the reference to 'coming of age'.

About a year later a similar charter changed the day to Monday and on Monday it has remained until now, over 700 years, although early last century there was also some selling in the Market Place on Saturday mornings and evenings.[3] It has been suggested that the reason for the change was the difficulty in cleaning up the streets after a Saturday market in time for Sunday, but this is conjecture.

By the end of the 17th century the number of market towns in Cumberland had risen to 16, giving a system of markets approximately 15 miles apart, so that people did not need to travel more than about eight miles.

At one time the church service on a saint's day, which would be a holiday, was followed by a fair and market with sports. etc., in the churchyard. The market aspect spread to Sundays and in about 1306 Cockermouth sent a petition to Parliament complaining of the injury to its market caused by the bartering which took place at Crosthwaite Church on Sundays and saints' days.[5] Corn, flour, peas, beans, meat, fish, linen and other cloth, etc., changed hands after the service instead of being brought to Cockermouth market and the Cockermouth people were complaining that they were losing business and unable to pay their rent. It is not clear how this petition relates to a date given [6] for the granting of Keswick's market charter, namely 1276, 30 years before the complaint. If the people of Keswick had to travel 13 miles to Cockermouth, further from east of the town, they too had cause for complaint. The system of church bartering was fairly widespread and there is a record that at Wigton the butchers hung their carcasses in the church porch and that when people began buying before the service and hanging their purchases over the backs of the seats the vicar stepped in to stop the practice!

In early days there was variation in weights and measures over the country. Even in one market confusion could arise. A reference to Cockermouth in the Holm Cultram papers shows a varying equality between gallons and bushels (Bz) according to the commodity being measured.

> *"And in Cockermouth Market wth.in the said County of Cumberland there is and haith bene lyke uncertame and untrewe mesers for buying and selling come and graine, viz.- for benes, peses, wheat, rye and salt about 12 gallons and for bige [barley], oits and malte a Bz of 22 gallands or thereabouts...* '[7)

A bushel finally settled down as a dry measure for grain, fruit, etc., equivalent to eight gallons. There were other variations, which were the concern of the market lookers appointed by the court leet. In 1684 a court record reads

> *"We do amerce Thomas Harrison, of Crosscanonby, for his wife keeping unlawful weights and selling by them 3s-4d."* [8]

and in 1688 was recorded

> *"We amerce John Peile, fellmonger, for keeping false weights 3s-4d. Robert Lancton, Bailiff."*

Justice was such that John Peile, a fellmonger (wool-buyer), churchwarden and burgess, obviously an important man in the town, was fined the same amount as an outsider coming in to use the town market.

Some standards were more difficult to enforce and regulations had to be made such as this one from the court in 1714

> *"We do put in pain that no person or persons shall sell any linen yam within the Borough of Cockermouth but what shall be three quarters and a half reel, and six score threads to each cut and twelve cuts to each hank upon pain of6s-8d. for each default."*

One regulation of 1679 was designed to make conditions of buying and selling fair for all, enabling those who lived in the surrounding villages to reach market in time to have an equal chance with the townspeople and not when the best goods had already been sold.

> *"It is put in pain that no butter shall be sold or carried out of ye markett before ye hour of 11 o'clock and at that time ye skavander shall give notice by the bell belonging to his Grace, and in default sub-poena 6s-8d."*

The skavander or scavenger was in charge of some aspects of the market on behalf of the lord of the manor and under the direction of the bailiff, and one of his duties was to give a signal for the opening of the market by ringing the bell, known as the market, badger or butter bell, or at one time as his Grace's bell (after Charles Seymour, the 'Proud Duke of Somerset'). The bell hangs in a niche on No. 9 on the south side of the Market Place, on the wall of the former Greyhound Inn. Stolen in June 1977 when scaffolding was erected against this property, it has been recovered and re-hung. It was last used in February 1910. [9]

Not only could the public be fined for not obeying the bell, but the bell-ringer himself could be penalised for not doing his job efficiently.

> *"It is put in pain that the scavenger shall from this day forward every market day ring the market bell exactly at 12 o'clock sub-poena 6s-8d."*

ruled the court of 1685.

There were regulations also to ensure that all business was done in the market area, with no buying and selling elsewhere in the town or on its approaches in order to avoid paying market tolls. Thus the court leet ruling of 1685

"It is put in pain that nobody shall buy any butter in any house or shop to sell again or transport unless in open markett, sub poena 6s-8d."

This is an early mention of shops. In 1715 the court stated

> *"Whereas great abuses have been done by the Butchers of this place buying sheep and calves, etc. , out of the usual markett place, we put in pain for every default 6s. 8d., viz. they are to buy between ye East end of Cocker Bridge and the Hall Gates" (probably near the market bell).*

Butchers were the subject of many rules and regulations.

Tolls payable early in the 19th century included:

> *"One penny per head for all eattle sold in the Market between Michaelmas and May Day. Four pence per head for all Horses sold on Gallowbarrow on Michaelmas Fair. Two pense per head for all Horses exchanged at the Fair on the same day in the Market for Sale. If a person has more than one sack of potatoes no more than one half penny is paid. One halfpenny for every Stall or Stand erected or placed in the Market. Persons having Settlements in the Township of Cockermouth pay no Stallage for any thing they set down in the Market for sale ..... But if the Person is merely resident in the Town without a Settlement he pays the Stallage for whatever he sets down in the Market for sale whether the article is grown within the Township or not at the Rates above mentioned."* [10]

There was sometimes difficulty in collecting tolls from traders coming in from neighbouring villages

> *"Memo. that on the 29 Jan. 1759 Jeremyah Stephenson the farmer of the Small Tolls at Cockermouth Demanded of Grace Head Spinster the Dam. of John Head of Pardshaw one half penny for a sack ofpotatoes standing in Cockermouth Market for sale, being the customary paymt. due for the same, weh. she refused to pay and that on the 19th Jan. 1759 the like Demand was made & refusal of paymt. Witnefs my John Stamper."* [11]

In 1830 a meeting was held in the Court House to consider grievances regarding the taking of toll on grain, when it was stated "that the Toll of Corn is One Handful out of each Sack sold in the Market, and no more." [12]

The castle records of about 1800 include evidence of a further abuse

> *"A Practice has gained ground of late years for the owners of Houses in different parts of the Market to receive yearly Rent from persons placing their Stalls in the*

> *front of tfleir Shops and Houses ... in addition to the halfpenny paid each Monday to Lord Egremont's lefsee - This should certainly be prevented .... "*

It was a natural consequence of Cockermouth's position that it should be a market not only for domestic needs but also for sheep and cattle. In addition to the Monday market for provisions and grain there were in the 17th century horse and cattle fairs held on the unenclosed land along the Derwent. This was the Sands or Sulwith Sand, stretching from the river to the backs of the Main Street property, now occupied by Waterloo Street. The right to hold this cattle market was granted by Charles I to Algernon, Earl of Northumberland, and his heirs in 1638

> *"he may keep a fair in his towne of Cockermouth every Wednesday from the first week of May till Michaelmas"* . [13]

The cattlemarket seems to have gradually moved into Main Street. Bishop Nicholson wrote in 1685 of

> *"two streets, one above the river Cocker in which is the Moot Hall, Market House, Corn Market and Shambles; and in the other below is the Beast Market."*

In] 790 the Universal British Directory reported the cattle fair in the spacious street below the bridge, with the horse fair now on common land adjoining Gallowbarrow.[14] The eastern end of Main Street, opposite the Globe Hotel, is traditionally the site for cattle until the present marts were built.

Before considering the growth of the cattle market, we may note two developments in the Market Place area -the Moot Hall and the Market Hall (Fig. 44). There is considerable difficulty in determining what is meant in early references to the moot hall, the tolbooth and the town hall. The Minister's Accounts mention the tolbooth, where markets tolls were paid, in 1437, 1453 and 1478. There were rents paid for 4 shops subtus le Tolboth. The same accounts in 1437/8 refer to le Motehall being decayed and in the lord's hands. In view of this, could the moot hall and the tolbooth be the same building? Then in 1547 a court book refers to *opeUae and pentes* (pent house or lean to) *subtus Moythaill* and to workshops under the tollbooth. There are the accounts "*for the building of the Towne Hall aft Cockermouthe begone in 1690* [15] giving details of payments for the carting and supply of lime, sand, slate, timber, etc., and of the wages paid -10d. a day to wallers and carpenters and 6d. to labourers who helped the wallers. A reasonable conclusion would be that this was a rebuilding of the moot hall, but the difficulty is that the accounts refer not only to the building of the town hall but to new windows being provided in the moot hall. What we can be certain of, from old drawings, is that the moot hall was similar to that still standing in Keswick -an open-sided covered market slightly above street level and, supported on stone pillars and approached by steps at one end, an upper room which was the moot or assembly place where meetings and courts were held. (Plate 9)

In front of a number of the Market Place premises were the wooden fish shambles and an 18th century reference to one house describes

> *"Fish Shambles or Fish Stones & the piece or pcel. of grod. whereon the same now stands .. within the Market Place of Cockermouth afsd. in front of the house of the said Jno. Muncaster ... with thc liberty of selling and erectg. Fish Shambles or conveniences for exposg. fish to sale ... yeady custry. rent of 14d. & subject to the payment of other dues exposing fish for sale.".*. [16]

The hall stood here until 1829 when it was demolished and the stone used in building a new court house.

> *"The Moot Hall and wooden Shambles, being a great nuisance to the place, were taken down in 1829".*

Traces of the foundations have been found from time to time when the roadway has been dug up to lay services. This demolition was a serious loss to the market. Activities which had been concentrated there became spread over a wider area and the scattered butchers' stalls were particularly undesirable, The following letter was sent by a future M.P. for the town to Lord Egremont's bailiff

> *"Dear Sir, The increasing trade and population of Cockermouth have long caused a good Butcher Market out of the Main Street to be much wished for, not only to increase the space in the Main Street appropriated for the Sale of Corn Potatoes etc., but as a place to which the various Stalls and Shambles set up by Butchers in many parts of the Town and are a nuisance to the Market might be removed. We are about to sell a considerable property situated in the Centre of the Market Place above the Bridge which is exceedingly well calculated for a new Butchers' Market and near to which most of the Slaughter Houses are situate. - I am inclined to think that many persons would be glad to join id the purchase of this property chiefly for the purpose of making a good Market upon the Site, but this would be in vain without the countenance and support of Lord Egremont as owner of the market. If his Lordship would interest himself in the matter and prevent Butchers from setting up Stalls in the Public Streets by which they would be forced into the new market, the scheme of improvement would not only be beneficial to the Town generally, but to the Subscribers ... I am Dear Sir, Yours very truly, John Steel. Cockermouth. 16th. April 1836."[*17]

In November the owner sold for £1300, the indenture mentioning George O'Brien Earl of Egremont and Baron of Cockermouth, Abraham Robinson wine and spirit merchant, Thomas Wilson hatter, Jonathan Wood wine and spirit merchant, George Cape builder, John Sancton woollen manufacturer, Jos. Steel and Wm. Bragg gentlemen and H. T. Thompson of Bridekirk. [18] The hall was designed by John Dent, a native of Cockermouth, on the lines of St. John's Market in Liverpool, and built by a Cockermouth

brickmaker and builder, John Mackreth. The money was raised by 106 shares at £25 and £2000 from the Earl of Egremont and the total just cleared the cost. Lord Egremont directed that the interest on his shares should be used "*to aid decayed tradesmen in the decline of life"* in Cockermouth. [19] The hall, one of the largest in Cumberland, was opened in 1837 and Askew's description of it in 1866 contrasts strangely with its use until recently as the headquarters of refuse collection.

> *"Monday is the chief market day. The market is abundantly stocked with every description of native produce, and to the stranger or tourist is especially worth a visit. From about 10 o'clock in the morning to 12 at noon, the spacious Markethouse is filled with a dense crowd of townspeople, butchers, farmers, portly farmers wives and blooming dairy-maids, all eager to make a profitable exchange of their several commodities. Whilst greengrocers, milliners, dyers, Cheap Johns, and other miscellaneous dealers put forth to the utmost their keenest trading abilities towards turning an honest penny during the short busy harvest."*

Some farmers' wives kept the household largely on the profits made here on poultry and milk. [20] The Market Company's purchase included some property and land in Church Lane (later Market Street), of which the Shoulder of Mutton Inn was part, stretching from the Market Place to the church footbridge at the foot of the 'Stairs'. The new development included the market hall with slaughter houses below it, a fish market lower down than the hall entrance (kept separate from the main market because of the smell), a cottage for the collector of market tolls near the present lavatory site, and three houses and shops in Market Street from the corner to the Plough Inn, which replaced the Shoulder of Mutton. [21]

The market hall opened on 11th December 1837 and the 12 rules drawn up for its management included a charge of Is-6d. per stall per week; a charge of 1d. for each basket brought or 2d. per yard of bench occupied; gas lighting to be provided until 9pm. on Monday and Saturday; with 6am. opening in summer, 7am. in winter. [22] When the Local Board of Health was formed, it bought from the private Market Company the 'new market house', cottage, fish house, slaughter house, etc., and the market rights, which had been handed over to the Company's trustees by Lord Egremont.

The right to hold a market had been granted, as was customary, to the lord of the manor and he was entitled to the payments made for setting up stalls and for pickage (a toll paid for breaking the ground to erect a stall or tent), to the tolls on the sale of produce and cattle, and to the manure and sweepings from the streets.[23] It was these 'rights' which Lord Egremont gave to the Company and which passed to the Board, then to the Urban District Council and to Allerdale Council. The money received from the market rights has been a considerable relief to the rates of the town.

The Local Board stated that the Market Hall and Market Hill (Church Brow) were

> *"to be appropriated as a market for the sale therein and thereon of butchers' meat, bacon, pork, cheese, eggs, butter, poultry, geese, pigeons, rabbits, fruit, vegetables, seeds, flower roots, plants, shrubs, provisions, grocery, drapery, glass and earthenware, ironmongery, woodware, boots and shoes, pastry, spices, confectionery, and other marketable commodities."*

Tables were measured off and nobody had a prior claim to any particular position, but farm produce must be given preference. The toll for a basket, etc., not occupying more than half a yard of table or ground was Id. per day. A innkeeper's tent erected in the cattle market on Fairfield or on the streets was taxed Ss. a day. No badger (a buyer of corn or other commodities to sell elsewhere), batcher (the same?), higgler (itinerant dealer), haggler or hawker was allowed to buy until a certain time, when it was considered that the needs of the townspeople had been supplied. The overflow from the hall lasted into the 20th century, for we read of

> *"the butter and general produce market being held on the brow and in the old Market Hall on the left, half way up the hill".[*24]

The hall was filled by stallholders until rationing in the 1939-45 war finally killed marketing in the building and the Ministry of Food used it for storing extra rations, the weight of which brought down a bay so that strengthening buttresses had to be erected.

From about 1965 the Urban District Council used it as a garage for refuse-collection vehicles, having bought it for £1800. The following year young boys set fire to salvaged paper stored inside and the hall was burned down, only the walls remaining. It was rebuilt in the present unfortunate style, when, before the clearing of old property and the opening up of the area as a car park, it was less conspicuous (Fig. 76).

It passed from the Urban District Council to Allerdale District in the 1974 changes. The refuse department ceased to use the building in the early 1990's and the Town Council leased it in 1995 from Allerdale Borough Council, the present owners. Its future use has not yet been decided. Many Cockermouthians favour its demolition, opening up the view to the churchyard. The weekly Monday domestic market continues in the Market Place. Stalls are few in winter, but increase in the summer months. There was a period in the early 1970s when it was feared the market might die out, partly because the major industrial concern in the town shortened its dinner break and many employees who had visited the market were no longer able to do so, but in recent years there has been some recovery.

There has been talk in recent years of moving the market to another site, but no definite plan has materialised. In 1994 a meeting of all interested parties was held to consider ways of upgrading the Market Place property and activities. Since 1992 it has been

closed to traffic on Monday (market day) between 9am. and 4pm. Half day closing for Cockermouth shops was officially ended by the District Council in March 1991, but a few still close at mid-day on Thursdays.

For many years it was the practice for market people to leave their baskets in the barn of the Sun Inn at the lower end of Kirkgate. [25] The barn has been demolished, but it had a useful life not only as a basket store but as a mortuary until a special building was erected in Fairfield and as the venue for Roman Catholic mass before the building ofSt. Joseph's Church.

The new mortuary building was on the left corner of the entrance to Fairfield from South Street until its demolition in 1982.

Reference has been made to the start of cattle markets and their move to Main Street. The various branches developed in definite areas. The corn market was in the Market Place, based on Walker's grain shop. The hay market was in South Street, on the south side and well into the 20th century the whole length of the street would be filled by carts of corn, hay and straw, the horses from which were stabled at the Appletree (now the Wordsworth), Bush, Huntsman, etc. All these inns had market rooms. Hay was bought by grocers and other shopkeepers and by Jennings Brewery for cart and delivery horses. (26] On Main Street, pigs were sold near the Police Station, with the fellmongers opposite. Cattle stood from Station Street corner as far as the site of Cleeland's shop, with sheep opposite them in the area of Boots. A Saturday night market was held for vegetables, etc., from Station Street corner to the Black Bull.[27] There was a public weighing machine here, a short distance east of Station Street.

The sale of horses moved from Main Street to Fairfield in the late 18th. Century

> *"Mr. Wordsworth, the bailiff of Cockermouth, formed some useful regulations respecting the public market there, by which the dangerous practice of showing stallions in the street will in future be prevented, and many nuisances lately complained of (particularly that of suffering swine to go in the streets) will be entirely removed*."[28]

In 1790 there is a reference [29] to Cockermouth's only horse fair being at Michaelmas, but they increased in number. By 1866 there were three, in February, April and October and more in later years. 50 or more animals were frequently advertised and in 1878 the catalogue listed 158. The number of cattle sales also increased over the years and a definite calendar evolved, with sales every Monday and often on Wednesdays when Mitchell's new mart opened.

A feature of market life which disappeared between the wars was the sale of Irish geese, landed at Silloth or Whitehaven after harvest time. They were driven through melted tar and then sand to prevent sore feet during their long marches. This 'shoeing' was done in

Cockermouth at the foot of Gote Brow, near the entrance to 'Senhouse Park'.[30] They were sold as they passed through villages or to and those intended for the Cockermouth market on Monday usually reached the town on Saturday to be rested in Deer Orchard or the field where the hospital now stands.

The trade lasted for about six weeks. They sold at about 4s-6d. to 7s. and some people kept their purchases in the back yard, fattening them on scraps. The better-off families had their first goose on Martinmas Sunday and another at Christmas, with a third on Candlemas Sunday if they could afford. [31]

At the bottom end of Fairfield, long the site of horse sales, developed the first auction company.[32] Robinson Mitchell, the founder of the present business, was born in Ullock and, after being apprenticed to his father as a boot and shoe maker, travelled as a journeyman shoemaker. Trade being poor and his heart not really in the job, he joined his brother in his bacon curing business in Cockermouth, but when this too met hard times he collected some of the debts owing to him from his journeyman days and was fortunate in being able to fulfill his ambition to become an auctioneer when John Thwaite, the conductor of country sales in the area, was prevented by ill health from continuing. He issued his first handbill in 1849, which read:

Auctioneer and Appraiser

Robinson Mitchell Respectively informs Statesmen, Farmers, and the

Public in general, that he has taken out a Licence for

the above profession, and he hopes that by diligence,

perserverance, and integrity for those who may

employ him, to meet with a fair share of support.

Cockermouth, November 23rd., 1849.

T. Bailey and Son, Printers, Cockermouth.

Auctions of houses and furniture were held in various inns in the town - at the end of the 18th century in the Globe, the Sign of the Buck, the Sign of the Sun, the Sign of the Ship, etc. Sometimes sales took place in the street. Robinson Mitchell began in the same way. His first sale. when he was 28, was of old furniture and was conducted in the street. Then he sold some timber in Wythop Woods and his first farming stock sale was at Mosser for William Green. He noticed that stock sales often dragged on from lOam. to 8 or 9 p.m., with much private bargaining, and that a man might take his beast home having wasted the whole day trying to sell it. Often a complete day was spent 'higgling and piggling' over half-a-crown in a £5 sale. He decided to start selling at 72 Main Street where he lived, later J. W. Mounsey's grocery shop. The cattle stood in the garden and

yard, which were covered with a four-inch layer of clinker; the horses stood where the warehouse now is and temporary pens were erected on the street.[33]

Mitchell moved to Fairfield on the first Monday in March 1860, using similar pens and then a wooden shed, and on Michaelmas Day 1865 he opened the Agricultural Hall on the west side of Station Street, probably the first auction mart in Cumberland. The firm, which became Mitchell, Bowe and Mitchell, progressed well, both in the Fairfield mart and in selling property, for which the Sun Inn and the Globe Hotel were used.

Then came opposition from a new concern, the Cockermouth Auctioneering and Estate Agency Co. Ltd., which erected a mart with a sale ring, stalls for 50 cattle and sheep pens at the top of Station Street, on the opposite side to Mitchell's, and like it conveniently placed for the station, an important factor when many animals were moved by rail. The company, formed in 1873 with a capital of £5000 raised in 1,000 - £5 shares, had an office at 80 Main Street and began Monday auctions in the new mart on 1st June 1874. [34]

The older concern was worried by this development and on legal advice turned itself, in 1873, into a limited company, Mitchell's Auction Co. Ltd., charging a commission of 4d. in the pound and guaranteeing a 4% dividend for the first three years.

Robinson Mitchell kept the outside work separate from the new company - real estate, furniture and farming stock. This section remained a purely family concern for three generations until bought by the company in 1947. Activities were varied. There is, for example, a press report of a sale in 1877 which dealt with bank, railway, auction mart and factory shares.[35] The true auctioneer was a professional, consulted about buying and selling, valuing for probate, the procedure on retirement or in bankruptcy, as well as the routine cattle sales. An earlier take-over had been the purchase in 1921 of the rival concern, which had become Hall's Farmers' Auction.

Mitchell's thus came to own not only the two marts, but the present sites of the Grand Theatre, the County Garage, the Methodist Church, the Preston Farmers and the Rampant Bull, all of which except the auction buildings were sold during the 60 years up to 1970.

Fairfield House had been built as a family residence in 1868 (three Mitchell brothers born there married three Peacock sisters from the Globe Hotel), and this too was sold - to the Council, who used it as a food rationing office during the 1939-45 war. The Company bought it back in 1964 to convert into offices and a flat.

Since 1950 considerable work has been done on the Company's premises - new penning, concreting, extending, etc. New developments have been the abattoir (1963) and the Fairfleld Restaurant (1964). The last amalgamation brought in the Whitehaven and West Cumberland Auctioneering Company in 1960. To mark the centenary of a

company which has played a big part in the life of Cockermouth the share capital was increased from £60,000 to £90,000.

Some numbers of animals passing through Mitchell's mart are given below - there would also have been sales of poultry, straw, hay, implements, etc.

	Cattle	Sheep	Pigs	Horses
1876 [36]	11,537	61,042	284	1,316
1978	12,000 store 450 dairy 3,250 fat 7,500 calves	24,000 store 63,500 fat	 1,350 fat	
1994	13,000 prime	21,000 store 75,000 prime 11,600 lambs		

(The law forbids dealing in fat and store pigs on the same day, and the small numbers involved do not justify dealing in the latter)

Some indication of prices in 1874 and 1978

1874 Michaelmas fair [37]

Bullocks £20; Heifers £16; Irish cattle £4 to £7; Agricultural horses £20-£50; Good draught horses £40-£80; Ponies £15-£20

1978 (average)

Fat cattle £344 per animal 68.5p/kg; Fat sheep £28 per animal (140p/kg); Fat pigs £46 per animal (65.5p/kg)

In the 1875 Christmas sale a fat sheep would fetch about £5 7s. 6d , so that in real money terms a sheep is now worth considerably less than 100 years ago. In 1995 the market tolls are 1 p per sheep, 2p per pig and 5p for one prime beast. These are collected by the auctioneer for payment to Allerdale Borough Council, the payment being simplified by taking an average block figure for the year. [38] The 1995 calendar was a market every Monday for sale of butchers' cattle; every Wednesday (recently increased from fortnightly sale) cast cows, prime bulls and light weight lambs for European market, also One Friday per month - store cattle. The firm found it necessary to move to another site when European Union directives made the South Street site unviable. After much delay, due to negotiations with potential supermarket interests and then the Foot and Mouth crisis in 2001, the company moved in 2002 to a site off the A66 roundabout at Oakhurst, now known as the Lakeland Agricultural Centre.

In 1978 Allerdale Council decided not to renew the Irish cattle licence.[39] Irish cattle were sold at the lower end of Fairfield in pens which belong to the Council, a very flourishing business which was conducted through Cumbrian ports and the extensive cattle pens at Cockermouth station. The trade having now died out, there was no value

in bringing up to present standards the feeding and watering facilities in Fairfield, hence the decision not to continue the licence and to demolish the pens. The horse drinking trough which once stood in the north-east corner of Fairfield was moved to Stanwix, whence it originated, about the end of 1985.

The hiring fairs of Whitsun and Martinmas, great events in the life of Cockermouth and district, began in 1349 when labourers, shepherds and ploughmen were freed from serfdom by Edward III and had to obey the Statutes of Labourers which he introduced to regulate their employment. One statute compelled them to go to the nearest market town twice a year to offer their labour for hire, on penalty of being placed in the stocks.

At first the regulation was largely ineffective but eventually these hiring fairs became firmly established, known in some parts of the country as *'statiz'* from the word 'statutes'. The great survey of 1578 records

> *"There is in the saide towne of Cockermouth a markett every weeke kept uppon the mondaie and alsoe twoe faires in the yere the one uppon Whitson mundaie and the other uppon the feast of St. Michaell tharchangell."*

The hiring at first took place in the castle 'yard' [40], probably the castle green at the top of Castle Street as it was then known; but for most of their existence the hirings were situated in Castlegate and the Cocker Bridge end of Market Place, the women and girls latterly being separated and using the Market Hall. (Plate 10). The numbers appearing for hire dwindled before the 1939-45 war and hiring finally ceased altogether by about 1950. The scene in about 1800 has been described thus

> *"Early this fine May morning the long wide street of Darwinside (Cockermouth) is alive with fair-day folk putting up their stands and booths, hammering and tying up, busy as bees ... Now the lads and lasses are congregating in the market-place, and in the narrow street going up to the castle; and here the farmers, with their sturdy wives, go to choose their servants for the half-year. There stand the stout, fresh-looking girls ready to close with the first good offer. There, in another line, stand the youths and young men, each having a piece of straw in his hatband to signify that he is open for an engagement. Now a master comes up to one of the young men, terms are arranged, the piece of straw is pulled out, the master hands a shilling as earnest money, and the bargain is made. So much for the half-year ending at Martinmas, when a new bargain may have to be made or the old one renewed."* [41]

Farmers and master craftsmen seeking employees for the next six months were helped in their search by the emblems or tools displayed by those needing work. A carter had a length of whipcord in his hat; a cowherd or dairymaid pinned cow hair to their clothes. A blacksmith had his hammer, a carpenter his saw, etc [42] Two days before the hiring of May 1874 the West Cumberland Times spoke of the degrading process of public

scrutiny of the men and women's physical condition. When the Urban District took over the market they issued regulations for the conduct of markets, sales and fairs. The 21 items listed in the 1909 edition included

> *"Fairs shall be held ... Whit Monday and following Monday, Hiring of Servants, Pleasure and Amusement. 11th. November ... and the next following Monday ... (variations when 11th. not a Monday) ... Hiring of Servants, Pleasure and Amusement. The Hiring of Servants shall be held in Castlegate."*

Pay depended on demand. In 1783, for example, there was the greatest number of servants available for many years and wages were consequently low. 1790 rates averaged £10 a year for men and £4 for women. In 1874 most men could get about £20 for a half year, the better workers perhaps £22, inferior ones only £15 to £18. Lads for team work were paid £10 to £12, women £10 or £1 1, girls £5 to £8. In 1880 wages had dropped appreciably.

Labourers and servants shared the meal table of their employers. As one woman still living (1979) in Cockermouth put it, they looked for 'not so much a wage as getting a good meat shop.' The men usually slept in the house, the girls and women certainly did. Wages improved - the woman quoted earned £3 a week, but a 1979 Cockermouth resident remembered being hired for £7 a half-year, then eventually earning £7 a week.[43] Hours of work were very long, from perhaps 5-30am. to 6-30pm. and much later at hay-time and harvest. If a man had two hours off on Sunday afternoon he would have to be back in time for milking. Single men had more freedom than married, for they could move at the end of a six-month hiring, while those married were more tied to the job.

The 1909 UDC regulations mentioned pleasure and amusement at the hirings. For many hired men and women, and often for the younger members of farming families, these were the only two occasions in the year when they got away from their village or isolated farm. As transport improved the fairs attracted people from further afield - 9,000 arrived in the town by train alone for the 1874 Whitsun hiring. [44] There was all the fun of the fair - swings, cake-walks, roundabouts, shooting galleries and a host of stalls, with more sophisticated swing-boats, etc., as these were developed. Early this century Biddles Theatre, complete with fairground organ, presented its Ghost Show to packed houses and when Mr. Biddles died he was brought to Cockermouth for burial and was reputed to have the finest headstone in the cemetery. There was dancing all day in the Drill Hall and the Appletree dance room.

Not all the entertainment provided was of this quality and the grotesque played a part, such as the exhibition of an emaciated youth far gone in consumption. The amusements lining Main Street in 1874 Whit hiring were described by the West Cumberland Times [45] as *'ragabash'*, mostly human monstrosities and curiosities.

They were reported no better the following November and this time there was the additional comment that

> *"A considerable part of Main Street was lined with stalls Piled up with ginger-bread and other similar delectable substances that had been coated with the dust and mud of twenty market towns."* [46]

These occasional visits to the town were accompanied by rowdyism and drunkenness. Cousin Charley wrote in the 'Chat' column of his children's magazine, following the Whitsun fair in 1900

> *'Hiring fairs are to me neither edifying or entertaining. The deafening din, the gaudy tinsel, and the jostling crowds have nothing attractive about them whilst drunkenness and rowdyism which are apparently the necessary accompaniments are decidedly objectionable. Of course, I know that some allowance has to be made for the farm servants, who, after being isolated in some quiet country district for six months, wish to make the most of their brief spell of freedom and possibly do not do this in the best or wisest manner."* [47]

He goes on to contrast fair days with the better behaviour on the occasion of festivals and patriotic demonstrations. As the isolation of the farm worker lessened and visits to Cockermouth became more frequent the less desirable aspects of 'fair day' diminished.

When the fair was in Main Street traffic was diverted round the town, using the narrow entrance from the Market Place into Kirkgate, Victoria Road, Lorton Street, South Street and the then equally narrow opening of Sullart Street on to Crown Street. There were repeated objections to having it in Main Street because of the noise, smoke, dirt and the disturbance of arrival and erection during Saturday or Sunday night. Yet in 1930 tradesmen in the Cocker Bridge-Market Place area were asking that they might have amusements there as they were 'missing out'. As far back as the 1870s the press was pointing out that the town had bought Fairfield for £2000 and the rates were burdened with £80 a year interest on this sum, yet the caravans were still in Main Street. [48] The Local Board discussed a move in 1876 [49] and doubtless the matter came before the Board many times in the next 80 years.

It was the increasing size of road transport serving the factories of West Cumbria and the difficulty if not impossibility of long lorries and buses negotiating the alternative route through the town which finally drove the stalls and sideshows to the Fairfield car park. This was about 1970 and there was a hope, supported by the Cockermouth Town Council and a majority of the Chamber of Trade, that it would return to Main Street when the new A66 was opened.[50] This hope did not materialise. The Showmen's Guild is happy - they prefer the Fairfield site [51] - but the town has lost a feature. There was something very appealing in the view of the town centre packed with stalls and massive

fairground erections from Kirkgate to Sullart Street, particularly after dark when crowded with lights and life.

(Further examples of market tolls - Appendices 11 and 12)

Chapter 19

Public Services

Some of the services provided by local or central government are considered elsewhere education, libraries, highways, police, etc. In this chapter we look at the remainder, provisions for the life of the town which usually began as private concerns but eventually passed into public control.

Water

Cockermouth, like the rest of Britain, relied for water on the rivers and the wells, the former also serving as sewers and the latter often close to middens. Outbreaks of disease gradually strengthened the demand for a proper town supply and the first scheme evolved, taking water from the Cocker at a point above the town and its pollution, and pumping it to the old reservoir on the southern corner of Lamplugh Road and Parkside Avenue. Railway Terrace now stands on the site of the former water works, but the pump house remains in the corner of the enclosure, converted into a bungalow. (Figs. 70, 72) In 1874 two schemes were considered. The first was to extend the Cockermouth waterworks to supply Workington and the intermediate villages via a new reservoir near Scales Farm. [1] This £25,000 plan would have given Workington purer water, but it was never implemented, possibly because a bill was about to be considered by Parliament prohibiting the placing of sewage in rivers. (Cockermouth Local Board was granted an extension to find an alternative to its use of the Derwent.) The second and more favoured scheme was for a 'Whinlatter reservoir to supply Cockermouth, Workington, Maryport and the villages with 900,000 gallons per day. [2] This too was finally abandoned in 1876 and the following year the Crummock Water scheme was put forward. Parliament passed the Cockermouth and Workington Bill and water began flowing on 15 May 1880. The old pumping station by the Cocker was advertised for sale. [3] Since then various improvements in the supply have been made. A new reservoir was built on the opposite corner of Parkside Avenue, connected to one above Towers Lane (with a stone tower) which provides pressure for the higher parts of the town. In the 1960s a new pipe line was laid from Crummock and treatment works built downstream from Scalehill.

A handbook of the Local Board shows that in 1867 water charges were 'block' charges for dwellings, shops, inns, etc., in three broad categories of rateable value. By 1911 the block charge was giving way to one based upon rateable value - 2s. [10p] for a house rated up to £4, but beyond this 4d. in the pound. There were additional rates for certain trades - building, car hire, photography, etc. - and for gardens and animals. [4] In 1978, the supply now being part of the North West Water Authority, the domestic rate was 8½p per pound rateable value, plus a basic charge of £5.50. NW Water now makes sewerage a separate charge, 10p in the pound in 1978. Complaints were made in 1921 of the

inadequacy of the sewerage arrangements. An estimate of £20,000 was given for a new works,[5] but in a time of high unemployment such a scheme had an additional attraction and it went ahead, to be completed about four years later. [6] Meanwhile Maryport continued to obtain water from the outskirts of Cockermouth, pumping from a well by the Derwent, next to Low Gote Mill, to a height of 220 feet [67m] at the sand filtering beds at Bridekirk. [7] From there it flowed by gravity to the Hayborough reservoir. Alternative arrangements were made and the pumping station was converted into dwellings in 1974. The outstanding square and stepped chimney was demolished. The station had an attractive interior with decorative columns and a polished floor; also, until it went for scrap in the 1939-45 war, a beam engine. The stone-lined well has been preserved intact and covered in such a way that it may still be examined by the industrial archaeologist. [8] (Fig. 62).

Gas

Elaborate notices appeared in the town over the date October 26th. 1830 which announced "Lighting the Borough of Cockermouth with Gas. Subscriptions are now receiving for lighting this Town with Gas, in 600 Shares of £5 per Share". [9] With the £3000 thus raised a private company built the gas works in 1834. [10] Additional capital was raised later in the century for extensions. The Vestry discussed gas lighting in the streets in 1836 and eventually a contract was agreed with the gas company. In 1847 the lamp rate was 4d. in the pound. There was periodic disagreement between the Vestry and the company and at times the town was in complete darkness.

Negotiations for a take-over by the Local Board of what was now the Cockermouth Gas Light and Coke Company were ended by the arbitration of a firm of London solicitors (after both sides had submitted bills to Parliament), as a result of which the Board took over the enterprise for £]4,644 in 1888. At this time the streets were lit by some 170 lamps. [11] The Cockermouth undertaking passed to Northern Gas on I April 1947. In January 1970 the town supply was converted to North Sea natural gas and the Cockermouth works became storage only, the two holders having a capacity of 400,000 cubic feet. 1979 charges were 20.3 pence per therm for the first 52 therms used, then 15.3 pence, about ten times the cost in 1888. [12] Both holders have now been demolished.

Electricity

Cockermouth was one of the first towns in England to install electric street lighting. Because of dissatisfaction with the gas lighting of the town, the Local Board obtained two tenders from John Whittle and Son of Whitehaven. [13] The first was for 109 gas lamps with wooden posts and house brackets, with lighting and extinguishing for three years, at £275 per year. The second was for six Brush Electric Light System lamps, each of 2000 candle power and the six together estimated to be equivalent to 800 gas lamps. The six were to be placed in Crown Street (Derwent Street corner), Main Street (Sullart

Street and Station Street), Market Place, Kirkgate Square and Station Street (South Street). Electric lighting not being economical for the back streets, 25 gas oil lamps would be erected in these. The total estimate, again with lighting and extinguishing, was £270 per year. Both estimates were slightly below the current cost of gas lighting and the second was accepted. Mr. McQuhae, the most enthusiastic supporter of the scheme, said when the tender was accepted "We shall have all the world to see us." [14] Certainly on 1 September 1881 people crowded into the town for the great switch-on. Four thousand came by train alone, a number of special trains being run. [15] The event was given much publicity and attracted attention overseas as well as in this country. A Paris engineer commissioned to light Buenos Aires wrote to the "President of the Municipality of Cockermouth" about the scheme. [16] Mr. McQuhae switched on in a shed built by Palmer Robinson in High Sand Lane to house the 12 HP dynamo. There was a flash and darkness, the second-hand engine not being able to meet the demand. [17] To temper the disappointment of the waiting crowds the supply was restored for two brief periods. A new dynamo was acquired and by 23 September five of the lamps were working. The electric lighting did not last and the town reverted to gas. In 1927 the Urban District Council contracted with the Old Silkstone Quarries Ltd. to supply electricity to the town [18] and electric street lighting gradually spread, but there was still a lamplighter after the last war and the last gas lamp disappeared in the 1970s. The Cockermouth Electric Light Company operated in 1883 . Later we had the Mid-Cumberland Electricity Co. Ltd., which in 1947 became part of the North Western Electricity Board, 'Norweb'. Since deregulation there have been frequent changes of ownership and a multitude of supplier names, e.g. United Utilities, Powergen, etc

Fire Brigade

Cockermouth's first fire engine would be a hand-operated pump, then later came horse-drawn vehicles. At one time the engine was kept in a warehouse on the Sands [19] but there are references to one before the date of the Waterloo Street buildings. Apparently there was dissatisfaction with the fire fighting arrangements in the town, for in 1817, [20] a public meeting of the Proprietors of the Fire Engine and others was called by the Vestry to put matters on a sound basis. Eleven rules were drawn up, including payment for use in the town and in the country and the need for the engine to be used at least once every three months. The engine was owned by the subscribers, but a new move came when in 1847 the Vestry allowed £16 a quarter for its maintenance. It was kept at that time below the market hall and it was here that an old manual engine used in the 1870s and 1880s was crushed when the market hall floor collapsed during the war. [21]

A booklet of 18 'Rules of the Cockermouth Volunteer Fire Brigade' issued in 1864 stipulated the size of the force (20 effective members plus reserves); uniform (helmet, Guernsey shirt and belt for effective members, cap for reserves) to be worn only on duty; regular drills, with fines for absence; etc.

The rules carefully laid down the duties of officers and brigade members - who gave orders, positions on the hose, clearing up after a fire, etc., all in great detail.

There were procedures for entering buildings. Instructions were given for maintaining the engine and for care of the hoses, which at this time were of leather, woven canvas and india-rubber, certain oils for their preservation being prescribed.

These hopeful plans were not observed for long, for in April 1876 there was a complaint that the brigade had not had either a call-out or a practice for four years, the last being the burning of Mr. McQuhae's workshop in Challoner Street. [22] This accusation was denied, but it was accepted that few men turned up for drills. Whether there were any drills to attend is doubtful, judging from an experience just after Christmas in the same year which cannot be described in better words than those of 'Whiteoak' in the West Cumberland Times. [23] A barn fire occurred in the night at Greysouthen and, while the villagers did their best with buckets,

> *"somebody was sent to Cockermouth to summon the Fire Brigade and Tom Weatherstone was chosen because his horse was the fastest in Greysouthen. He rode to Cockermouth at a furious pace and roused Superintendent Taylor, who roused Mr. John Cook, and among them they alerted the Fire Brigade men ..... they were told by word of mouth because when Superintendent Taylor tried to ring the fire bell the rope broke at the second tug. However, the men were collected at the engine house, but when they got inside they found the engine hidden under a heap ofold tools and broken wheelbarrows which had to be shifted first. And then "Heave, heave!" . But the engine wouldn't budge. One of the wheel bearings had seized up in solid rust, and somebody had to fetch an oil can to try and work it loose. Working with commendable energy, the firemen decided that if one wheel had rusted up the others also needed oiling, so the engine was given a service while somebody, who had discovered another urgent requirement for the occasion, went to roust out the horseman at the Globe Hotel and borrow a couple of horses to haul the engine to Greysouthen. To make sure his horses were well treated the Globe ostler came along to drive them and all went well, once the nags were harnessed up, as the fire engine, well loaded with firemen, sped along Main Street to the cheers of those of the populace who had bothered to get up.... at the Bread and Beer House, near Brigham, ... a wheel flew off the engine and its crew were pitched head over heels into the dyke .... A lynch pin had come out of the axle, so another was found and fitted, but a few hundred yards on the wheel came off again... Once on the spot ... with three men on each handle of the manual pump, the Fire Brigade sprung into action. The men holding the nozzle of the hose waited in vain for water to appear, and then a shriek from the now unemployed Greysouthen firefighters told them where their water had gone. The hose had a hole in it, and was spraying the crowd."*

This experience apparently provoked the town into action, for a year later uniforms were newly bought for the Volunteer Brigade and we find the Council taking a greater part. The services of the brigade still had to be paid for in the 1920s and subscribers and non subscribers to the brigades funds paid by the hour at different rates. In 1923, for example, there was the following table of charges:- [24]

Town Fires

Captain - First hour 7s – Each additional hour 5s

Lieutenant - First hour 6s – Each additional hour 4s

Firemen - First hour 3s 6d – Each additional hour 2s 6d

Country Fires

Captain – First hour subs 8s – non subs 10s – Each additional hour subs 6s non subs 7s

Lieutenant – First hour subs 7s – non subs 9s – Each additional hour subs 5s non subs 6s

Firemen - First hour subs 5s – non subs 6s – Each additional hour subs 3 ½ s non subs 4s

Basic charge for subscribers £3-10s-0

Basic charge for non-subscribers £6

In 1921 there were 14 members of the brigade and they received drill allowances of 3s, per hour for not more than nine drills a year. [25] The Cockermouth Brigade became part of the National Fire Service during the war. The Cumberland Fire Service was formed in 1948 and on local government reorganisation on 1 April 1974 was absorbed into the Cumbria Fire Service, the second largest territorially in the country.

The establishment of the Cockermouth brigade in 1979 was 12. It was a retained brigade, (i.e. part-time). In 1979 [26] the fee payable to firemen was £34 r per year, in addition to which a man rj!ceived £2.50 for attending a fire and £1.36 for reporting to the station in response to an emergency call.

In 1995 there are two categories of firemen, those undertaking to attend 100% of call-outs, paid £1440 rising to £1575 after three years' service, and those attending 75% with £1080 rising to £] 185. Attendance at a fire earns £10.67 plus £4.75 per hour and for responding to an emergency call the payment is £5.80. Personnel attend the station two hours a week for training and maintenance of equipment, for which they are paid. There is no charge for the services of the brigade in attending fires or other incidents involving human life, but a charge is made for help in other ways, such as filling a swimming pool. Cockermouth has a water tender carrying 400 gallons but no longer possesses the 35ft.

[10.7m] ladder which it had in 1979, its needs being supplemented by appliances from neighbouring towns.

The county fire service moved from Carlisle to Grecian Villa in 1955, occupying three first floor rooms and sharing with other tenants such as Weights and Measures and the Court, It eventually took over the whole of the building. Then in 1986 what was now the Cumbria HQ moved to purpose built premises on the former station site which were opened by Princess Anne on 30 March 1987. From here are controlled 5 full-time and 33 retained brigades, having over 700 full and part-time staff. The total of calls per year around 1980 was some 5000, of which 109 were answered by the Cockermouth brigade, now risen to 9,000 turn-outs for all reasons in 1994/5, 171 by Cockermouth. A new fire statiop for the town adjacent to the county headquarters was built in 2002. [In 2006, no use has been agreed for the old site.] Cumbria Fire Service is one of the most efficient in the country, making good use of modern technology. This is a far cry from the time, not so long ago, when the men had to look for horses when the alarm sounded. The present range of efficient appliances is also a far cry from the engines provided by public subscription, even into the 20th century. A handbill issued in 1922 under the heading 'Fire Brigade, Cockermouth' read:

> *"Dear Sir or Madam, In order to protect you from the terrible consequences of Fire, it is proposed to purchase for Cockermouth and District, one of the New Stanley Motor Fire Engines, at a cost of about £500 .... We propose to raise the money amongst property owners of the district."* [27]

The handbill describes the engine and appeals to each to contribute their fair share, pointing out that Lord Leconfield had given £35. This new engine was housed in Fairfield, but in 1948 the Lorton Street station was built. The siren was on the station roof until July 1972 when radio alerters were issued to firemen.

Parks

In June 1893 a public meeting was held in the Court House to consider how the town might commemorate the marriage of the Duke of York to Princess Mary. [28] The provision ofa public park was the proposal most favoured and the next year the Local Board suggested an area on Rubby Banks, with Deer Orchard as a possible alternative. The estimated cost was £1500 with annual expenses of £120. Within a few months Mrs. Eliza J. Harris, who had been considering how she could commemorate the life of her husband Joseph, offered the town £2000 to purchase land for a park in his memory. [29] Hence 'Harris Park' of some 13 acres on Rubby Banks. A Public Park Committee was formed, but management was soon taken over by the Council. In the early 1970s, when the Riverdale Estate was built, land on the east bank of the Cocker below the 150 feet contour was added to the park. In August 1987 two members of the Harris family came from the south of the country to open a new 'bower' or clubhouse for the Harris Park Bowling Club. In three years in the early 1980s, peace trees were planted near the

terrace walk to mark the anniversary of Hiroshima. Arranged by the Cockermouth Peace Group, in 1981 trees were planted by Dale Campbell-Saviours (local MP) and John Crawley, Rector of Cockermouth. In addition to the Wordsworth memorial fountain and a drinking fountain near the tool shed (moved from a site near the railway station in 1920), the park once had a gun, the base for which remains with the words 'Taken in 1857 and placed here to commemorate completion of the Water Works March 1877'. In 1933 a scheme was put forward for constructing bathing and paddling pools at the bottom of the park, principally to provide employment, but this was never started.

Another scheme which never reached fruition was the development of land in High Sand Lane as Coronation Gardens. In 1937 the Council asked Messrs. Jennings for the land and the brewery gave it to the town, the Council to be responsible for clearing and fencing it.

There are a few open spaces in the town for which the Council is responsible. The land for the Memorial Gardens on the north bank of the Derwent was bought in 1946 and opened as a war memorial by Lt. Col. Chicken on 11 August 1956. The gardens were recently extended eastwards along the bank of the river. To celebrate the 1990 European Year for the Disabled, a Euro-trail for the disabled, suitable for wheelchairs, was made here in July 1991, much of the work being done by fourteen members of an International Voluntary Work Camp drawn from nine countries. Since then a similar track has been laid in the original Memorial Gardens, sponsored by Rotary and a number of local firms. Small play areas have been provided on the Slate Fell estate, the Riverdale estate and on Isel Road, and more are being asked for. The Council also maintains small areas of flowers in the Gote, at the Derwent Bridge corner, in the rockery at the top of Kirkgate, round the war memorial and, most notable of all, along the centre of Main Street.

Burial Grounds And The Cemetery

Burial was originally in the churchyard, but interments also took place in Sepulchre Close in St. Helen's Street, [30] behind the Friends' Meeting House and, judging from the gravestones, behind the United Reformed Church and in front of the Town Hall (formerly the Wesleyan Methodist Church), on these two sites. The last two were small areas; the Quaker burial ground is still used occasionally. The churchyard naturally became overcrowded and in 1854 a meeting

> *"resolved that a new Burial Ground be provided by the Ratepayers of the Township of Cocker mouth".*

Nine ratepayers were elected to form the Burial Board. Later the same year the Board was given authority to purchase part of Cockermouth Common for a Burial Ground. [31]

In summer 1855 the Board bought the Parsonage Field of five acres from General Wyndham. Charles Eaglesfield was the architect of the buildings

> *"The Churchmen's Chapel, on the right, will be joined to the Dissenters' Chapel, on the left, by a beautiful tower rising over the entrance, which will cause the chapels and gateway to have the solemn appearance ofan ecclesiastical structure."*

The total cost ofland, landscaping, chapels and curator's house was £2,800. [32] The cemetery had been enlarged three times already by 1912 and by 1938 the original five acres had grown to almost 20. A further post-war extension was made eastwards along the railway line. The valley of Tom Rudd makes it a most attractive area, especially when spring bulbs are in flower in the older portions.

When the cemetery was first opened in 1856, being consecrated by the Bishop of Carlisle on 12 September of that year, the approach from the town was down Skinner Street and up Scarwell Brow. A funeral procession was preceded by the verger, carrying a prayer book and indicating by his dress the status of the deceased. He was given black crepe to fix round his hat for a man's funeral, a pair of white gloves to carry for a spinster, etc. At one time this official was the Mr. Mounsey who saved the church silver and when the railway was newly opened he was on one occasion nearly run down by the funeral horses, startled by a shunting engine puffing steam over the bridge. [33] For almost the whole of the twentieth century the cemetery has been in the care of two families J.D. and then William Percy Kirkbride, followed by Harry and then Norman Pitts. The curator in 1995 was R. Deacon.

The Postal Service

We consider elsewhere the post-coach connections between Cockermouth and other parts of the country and the 1761 attempts to improve these connections by new "cross road branches."[34] An early post office in the town was a room on the Kitty Went side of the Globe. [35] There was a wall letter-box here until 1882. William Wood was postmaster. Cockermouth was a halt on a through post route, for mail from London, Lancashire and the south arrived at 8am. and at the same time there was a dispatch to Workington; mail arrived from Workington at 5 pm. and at the same time there was a dispatch southwards. In 1829 the town had a horse post to and from Maryport at 8-10 am. and 4 p.m., and a foot Post on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings to Bridekirk, Tallentire, Gilcrux and Aspatria, with an incoming mail later the same days. [36] William Wood was followed by his son Jonathan who moved the office across Main Street into Smails Yard, where he combined it with a wine and spirit business.

In 1847 the London morning mail arrived by rail from Carlisle - this was Cockermouth's first year with a rail link to Workington. The 'evening' mail coach arrived at 1.26am from Windermere Station, bringing also Kendal, Ambleside and Keswick bags. Outgoing letters went by rail to Carlisle at 5-50 pm. [37]

In 1874 the post office opened from 12-45 to 1-45 on Sunday for delivery of mail to callers. The office was at William Bell's in Station Street by 1883. Postal business could be done from 7 am. to 8 pm., 8 to 10 am. on Sundays, money order and savings bank from 9 to 5 and telegraph from 8 to 8. [38]

There was initially no country delivery. Farmers' mail [39] was left 'at their quarters' in the town, each having a fixed place, such as a particular inn, where he would call on each visit. The Earl of Lonsdale was mainly responsible for starting country deliveries when he was Postmaster General. In 1889 a rural postman, William Barwise, was provided with a pony and trap. [40] Some used bicycles, others walked. One took the 7 am. train to Bassenthwaite Lake and walked back via Bewaldeth and IseL [41] In 1905 the Cockermouth area included Greysouthen, Arlecdon, Lamplugh, Buttermere, Bassenthwaite Lake, Tallentire and Broughton. [42]

Gradually the times of inward and outward mails [43] extended, e.g. 6-30 am. to 7-20 pm. in 1905, the 7-20 being a "supplementary night mail despatch (by Apparatus)", but since the second war there has been a contraction in the number of collections from boxes and in the opening hours of the offices. There is now only one sub-office in the town, in Windmill Lane, and the Station Street office ceased to be a crown office in 1970. It has moved very frequently - Station Street, 18 Main Street in the early 1990's, then into Walter Willson's Supermarket in Lowther Went and now into the Co-op Supermarket further up on Station Street.

Telephone Services

The National Telephone Company applied to the Local Board for permission to extend its exchange in 1885, [44] so Cockermouth had the telephone by then. The first exchange had been opened in London in 1878. The first Cockermouth exchange and call office' was at Joseph P. Douglas's hairdressers at 82 Main Street (now R Relph's butchers shop) and then at Miss Ede's baby linen & ladies underclothing shop, on the corner of Bridge Street (94 Main Street). Miss Ede moved with it to the post office when the Company was nationalised in 1912. A modem automatic exchange is situated behind Norham House.

Broadband access to the Internet arrived in 2004 for the town although some of the outlying villages are still too far from the exchanges to have the full benefit of this.

Chapter 20

Courts, Crimes & the Police

As the centre of large estates and a seat of local government Cockermouth naturally became the location of a number of courts. These were held first in the castle, then later in the Moot Hall, the Court House, Grecian Villa (from 1954) but moved to Workington Magistrates Court (from 1979).

The exception was the Court of Audit, formed by the lords steward and the commissioners responsible for the management of the various manors, which remained in the castle. Its area of jurisdiction and purpose were described thus in 1777:

> *" … the barony of Cockermouth, and the several manors of the five towns, DelWent Fells, Braithwaite, Coldale, Westdale, Aspatric, Bolton and Westward. And all leases are there granted of all demesne lands, mills, mines, profits of fairs and markets; and all rents, fines, profits are paid in there by the bailiffs and tenants of the respective manors."* [I]

The 'fines' mentioned above, payable when property changed hands, have already been explained. Two instances from nine in the first nine months of 1898 [2] show how varied the amounts could be:

PERCY MANORS

In the Manor of Braithwaite & Coledale the Tenant Jno. Wm. Postlethwaite - Fine Assessed on Death of Wm. Postlethwaite £15-0s-0d

WHARTON MANORS

In the Manor of Great Broughton the Tenant Thomas Dobie on the Event Admitted Surr of Robert Beattie the Amount of Fine Assessed is 1s 8d.

Cases of trespass, recovery of debts of up to 40s. and some grievances of tenants were the concern of the Court Baron, still to this day never officially abolished but in effect superseded by the County Court Act of 1867. This court, with a jury summoned by the steward and bailiff of the Borough, met every three weeks. In 1829 it was being held in the Buck Inn, [3] but this may have been an interim arrangement between the demolition of the Moot Hall and the opening of the Court House, for it was in the Court House soon after this date. There were, however, earlier occasions when an inn was used, as in this sample case from the Court Baron records:

> *"Holden at the House of John Mackreth Innholder of Cockermouth in and for the said Borough on Wednesday the Nineteenth Day of December in the Year of our Lord 1792 …*

Daniel Satterthwaite Complains of John Thompson in a plea of Trespafs on the Case upon Promises To the Plaintiffs Damage of 39-11" [4]

The castle archives contain the records of such cases from 1678 to 1857.

The Court Leet or Manor Court, active until the Summary Jurisdiction Act of 1848, dealt with minor criminal offences, administering royal jurisdiction through delegation to the lord of the manor. We have given elsewhere examples of this court's work in appointing town officers and in drawing up byelaws, [5] and give here a selection from the many hundreds of criminal cases recorded.

At a court in 1664

> *"We amerce Antho Plaskett for drawing blood upon the Borough Bailiff 6s. 8d. We amerce Antho Plaskett for calling the Bailiff a robber and that he robbed him of seven shillings 21s. We amerce Antho Plaskett for speaking falsely and undecentiy ofLeonard Scott 20s."* [61

Pollution of becks and streets brought frequent prosecutions, as

> *"We amerce John Peile, fellmonger, for lying skins in Bitter Beck contrary to payne 6s-8d." [7]*
>
> *"Jurators presentent James Busby and his wife for disturbing Thomas Plaskett Scavenger in ye Execution of his office and for taking (?) his Dunghill to lye in ye Queens high street contrary to paine and amcie him 0:6:8." (£0-6s-8d)* [8]

The work of the various searchers brought many to court

> *"On the Information of Joseph France Leather Searcher and Leathe~ Sealer, we Amercie Frands Fisher the Elder, Frands Fisher the Younger, Miles Sawrey, John Gasgarth, Joseph Thompson, and Henry Wood all Tanners in the sum of six Shillings & eight Pence severally for selling Leather unsearched and unsealed - and for refusing the Leather Searchers to do their office."*

Three further examples to show the range of affairs dealt with

> *"We do continue Michael Todd and Wm. Lancaster surveyors of the highways for this ensuing year since they have acted nothing in the fonner year."*
>
> *"We amerce Hy. Atkinson for having a house office at his garth end in Bitter Beck to the greate annoyance of his neighbours 6s-8d."*
>
> *We amerce Mary Towerson for beating the Constables 3s-4d."*

As there was no 'Towerson' in the cess list at this time Bolton suggests that the irate woman may have been a visitor to the town.

Local lords and gentry were first given judicial powers in 1361 and their powers increased over the years until they were concerned with all crimes except treason and had wide administrative powers (wages, licensing, roads, vagrants, etc.) which eventually passed to Poor Law Guardians, Police Watch Committees, etc. - bodies largely formed of the same lords and gentry! Later much administration passed to local and central government, but their work in the courts remained, except in large cities having professional stipendary magistrates. Justices are now selected from differing occupations and have some training for the task.

In the 17th century the inhabitants of Cockermouth successively petitioned that "assizes and sessions might be held at Cockermouth" The earliest surviving record of Cumberland Quarter Sessions is a minute book for 1668-95, in which period they were held in Penrith at Michaelmas, Cockermouth in January and Carlisle at Easter and Midsummer.

The 'Pacquet' of 22 January 1782 recorded the cases just dealt with at Cockermouth Sessions oaths taken by various officials of Whitehaven and Harrington ports, certifying the prices of grain, a young man charged with embezzling sacks of flour (given two months hard labour in Cockermouth House of Correction) and a great number of appeals for inheritance by bastards.

In 1858 a monthly county court was being held alternately in Cockermouth and Workington. Having jurisdiction in bankruptcy the bailiffs appointed (14 of them by 1910) were auctioneers, house agents or debt collector. [9] This court covered the area from Arkleby to Loweswater and from Keswick to the coast.

The Cockermouth Petty Sessional Division covered a much smaller area, from Plumbland to Buttermere and Wythop to Broughton Moor. [10] This was a magistrates' court dealing with minor charges, meeting every Monday. The last Petty Sessions held in Grecian Villa were on 29 January 1979; the following week the court moved to the new court house in Workington, Cockermouth cases being heard by Cockermouth magistrates although away from the town. Three or four of the ten JPs sit at anyone time (Appendix 13).

The press announcement still appearing early in the 20th century [11]

> *" that The Court Leet and view of Frankpledge of our Sovereign Lord the King with the Court Baron of the Rt. Hon. Charles Henry, Baron Leconfield, Lord of the Honour of Cockermouth, etc. , will be held"*

on a certain day takes organisation for keeping good order back to Anglo-Saxon times. Under the Norman system of *frankpledge* the heads of a group of families bound together for the good conduct of each other, a system which led to the Leet or Jury system. The Anglo-Saxon equivalent of frankpledge was *frith-bonds* under which the

members had to answer a summons to appear at a time set by the lord to witness for and against those accused of crimes against life and property or neglect of duties. [12]

Then followed the system of juries elected by the Court Leet. The list ofjurors was read at the Michaelmas and Easter courts. In 1691 we read

> *"Terrewestell Peile for not answering his name at the court amerced 6d."*

He was an important Cockermouth burgess and lived in property out of which the Cocoa House in Kirkgate (No. 22) was built. [13] The juries from outside the town were sworn in from the *'turnsmen'* of each village. In 1705 there were fourteen villages or groups of villages making appointments of 1 to 5 jurors, the list beginning

> *"3 Lorton Johos Wilkinson Jur*
>
> *Josephus Peile eqr. Jur*
>
> *Thomas Peile Jur*
>
> *(Jur represented jura, signifying they had been sworn)* [14]

Quakers refused to swear oaths and we find the following in the list for October 1711

> *"Blindbothel James Dickinson Quaker & John Gill Jur*
>
> *Eaglesfield Thom Hudson Quaker" [15]*

If a juror failed to attend a fine was levied on his village.

The crimes with which these courts had to deal might have a different emphasis from today, although few have disappeared completely. Ill-treatment of horses was very common at one time, as were press notices advertising for news of apprentices who had run away or warning the public against pickpockets on market days. It is interesting to find vandalism 100 years ago - a band of young farm men going about breaking into larders and senselessly stripping washing off clothes-lines and scattering it around (1877), 20 panes of glass broken in empty property (1876), damage to trees in the cemetery (1876), breaking of street lamps by catapult, one lamp having a new glass every day for a week (1877). [16] Two interesting press items from the same period - a prosecution for failing to report an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, [] 7] and a comment that the profanity of young children playing in Cockermouth was worse than anything one would hear in the army or Billingsgate. [18] In 1843 John Parker of Pap castle thought up an unusual offence when he threw a cabbage down William Massey's chimney "a most disgraceful act" which cost himl1s." (55p) [19]

Going back another 100 years, we find in the early numbers of the 'Pacquet' - several carts and a beached boat thrown into Whitehaven harbour and windows and doors in houses broken (1776); a reward offered for a piece of cloth 52 yards by 3 yards stolen from the bleach green in Bridekirk (1783); Mary Wilson, who kept a house of ill-fame in

Workington, sent to the Cockermouth House of Correction for falsely claiming money for children expected, with a note that others would be joining her (1783); and an advertisement seeking to trace a Scot, Jane Kennedy, believed to be the mother of a three-month old girl found deserted in a Cockermouth street (1779). [20] In 1912 John Bolton was incensed by

> *"those who not only smash the lamps and windows in our streets, but disfigure painted and cemented walls in such a disgraceful manner with chalk, ... The striking of matches on newly-painted shop doors is nothing to the disfigurement of the town by the idiotic chalking now so common."* [21]
>
> (Some things never change)

If punishment was by fine the amount was less than £2, for the Court Leet was not allowed to recover through the bailiff this amount or more, so penalties of £ 1-19s-11 d. were common. Physical punishment was also used. We have travelled a long way since the ordeals of the 12th century - by combat for knights, fire for freemen and water for serfs - but comparatively recently punishment could be barbaric. In 1756 a horse-thief was sentenced by Quarter Sessions

> *'to be publickly whipped until his body be bloody at the post in the publick market in Cockermouth',*

so Cockermouth had a whipping post as well as stocks, of which a ruling in 1679 says

> *"it is put in paine that ye Constables shall put ye stocks in good repair before they goe out of office sub poena 6s-8d."*

The last person to sit in the Cockermouth stocks was a plasterer named Corrie, a Scot. who was fined 5s. or a spell in the *'bilboes'*. He chose the latter for a day and as he sat there occasionally placed half-a-crown in each eye to show that he sat there because he refused to pay the fine and not because of poverty. [22]

Cockermouth also had liberty of pillory and liberty of tumbrill, probably the cucking stool used for ducking women offenders.

If the culprit went to gaol it might be to the cells of the police station or to the house of correction. The first police station in the town was in the present Challoner Street, earlier known as Globe Lane and Chandler Went and also as Kitty Went,'kitty' being the slang term for the local lock up. But at the same time there was in existence the House of Correction on the bank of Bitter Beck, opposite the Bowling Green Inn in St. Helen's Street. This was possibly built because the accommodation in Kitty Went was too small. The house had iron doors and iron-lined ceilings, with rings used to shackle prisoners by the ankles. They slept on a concrete slope near the fireplace. [23] . The County Treasurer's accounts for 1741 include a payment to Thomas Holloway, "Master of the

House of Correction at Cockermouth his salary £2-10-0", so this was a county responsibility.

For a period the House of Correction was known as *'Billy Macbeth's Parlour'*, after the keeper, who lived on the upper floor. The building was recently demolished.

In 1854-6 a new police station was built on the bank of the Cocker behind the Court House. It incorporated a new 'house of correction' - five good cells, a charge room and an exercise yard, [24] and one feature was direct access by a ramp to a door in the rear of the Court House which opened into the court room.

In 1894 came a further move, to the present building on the site of the Horse and Harness Inn and occupied the site of 'Hunters' yard to the rear, which contained several cottages and workshops. In common with other towns, hangings took place in Cockermouth. Over 200 offences carried the death penalty and 400 more meant transportation to Australia until 1823, when Peel removed 180 crimes from the capital offences list. The situation had arisen where a humane jury would sometimes refuse to convict rather than hang a man for a petty offence. Hangings were public until the middle of the 19th century. Two raiders of a house at Cleety Bank

> *"were taken to the top of Gallowbarrow Field, as was the custom of the time, to within sight of the place where the crime was committed. There, on a gallows or gibbet, they were hanged.... The exact spot where this execution took place is opposite the road leading to Brigham on the site now occupied by the reservoir of the new waterworks. From this circumstance the place obtained the name of Gallows Barrow, by time changed to Gallowbarrow."* [25]

To be *'within sight of the place where the crime was committed'* the gallows may have been erected at different places along this stretch of road, which would account for differing traditions of the exact location.

For centuries people lived in fear of violence and theft and we have seen that steps were taken to make life more secure and orderly. For a long time the only policing in Cockermouth was done by the two constables appointed annually by the Court Leet. But the populace was expected to help them

> *'Every tenant refusing to raise hue and cry' after a felon the same shall be amercyed for every default 6s-8d"* [26]

In 1820 the town had one constable, helped occasionally by the poorhouse master. [27]

Peel's London force was formed in 1829 and a series of acts in the following 30 years extended the police powers and responsibilities of local councils, with the help of government grants. In]847 the Challoner Street station had a superintendent and three men, covering Cockermouth, Keswick, Maryport and the villages, [28] and when a select committee enquired in 1852-3 there were still only four men in this Derwent Division.

The chief constable complained that with three men he had insufficient for a night patroL Justices were empowered to form county police forces in 1839 and they became compulsory in 1856, jointly under local and national control in administration, discipline and finance.

The castle records contain actions for distraint, usually by the bailiff on behalf of the earl for rent arrears. Sometimes the matter was settled by selling stock, as in two cases [29] on 15 August 1766 when Thomas Green, bailiff to George, Earl of Egremont, seized three geldings and three cows from Hugh Cowperthwaite of Cockermouth, tanner, and George Beeby, also of Cockermouth, a leather dresser, they being given five days to pay rent and costs before the stock was sold. Some cases of distraint are more pathetic reading. Joseph Harrison's is a good example. On 27th September 1792

"An Inventory of all and Singular the Goods Chattels and Cattle Seized and Distrained … By George Ramsay Bailiff of the Right Hon'ble George O'Brien Earl ofEgremont for the Sum of Eight Hundred and Sixty ffour Pounds and Nineteen Shillings being Rent due and in Arreares … for certain Mefsuages Lands and Tenements Situate at and near Park House in the Parish ofCockermouth." . [30]

There follows a long and detailed list of all stock, field by field, some 473 animals. Then comes the inventory of the house, missing nothing:

> *"In the Dwelling House [living room].One Clock and Case, two Dining Tables with some Knives and fforks in the Drawer One Stand Table, One Arm Chair - Six Small Chairs - One Snap Table, One Drefser on the same Six Pewter Plates - Three Pewter Dishes, Three Delf Dishes Six Glafsed Pictures - two Other Pictures - on the Chimney Piece three Iron Candle Sticks One brafs Candlestick two Tea Canisters one Pair of Tongs and Poker In the Clofsett Eighteen Delph Plates - One Gun hanging in the House - one ffender - one Weather Glafs - one Pair of Toasting Prickers. Upon the Shelves Twenty Cheeses."[*31]

This continued throughout the house, room by room. The outside premises were then examined - the swine hull (two young swine) and all the equipment, carts, etc. in the stackyard, the barn, the garden, the fold, the stable, the byre and "Six Hundred and ffifteen Stooks of Oats Cut, Eighteen Stooks of Barley Cut" in Whinney Park.

There followed the concluding statement that unless arrears were paid within five days goods would be sold.

The castle records also contain the verdicts of inquests in the Liberties of Cockerrnouth and Egremont. The life and service of each person in a manor having once been regarded as the property of the lord, inquests and inquiries into death by misadventure or violence were a matter for the lord's courts. The first is dated 4 May 1610, when Thomas Watson had hanged himself, and after a few more occasional records they

become complete for the period 1693 to 1875. The right to appoint coroners in the two liberties can be traced back to 1292, the time ofIsabella de Fortibus and Thomas de Lucy. The coroner for both was then the constable of Cockerrnouth Castle, appointed by Thomas, with Isabella's steward as his assessor. [32] (Appendix 14) The Great Survey of 1578 stated that the coroner must

> *"doe and execute all and whatsoever to the said office belongeth for and conceminge all attachements of the Crowne and likewise of all felonies burglaries theftes murthers manslaughters robberies and of all felonies whatsoever ..."* [33]

The duties of a coroner were thus wider than the conducting of inquests. The Liberty of Cockermouth included the Borough and Manor, the Lordship of Derwentfells and the Lordship of the Five Towns. There are records [34] of many drownings in the Derwent, Cocker and Tom Rudd, even in a horse trough, and often the victims were drunk, though one was crossing the Derwent on an illegal fishing expedition. Causes of death which recur include excessive drinking, being run over by a cart, falling downstairs, house fires, suicides by cutting one's throat or taking arsenic (sometimes when pregnant), fits and the killing of infants. Many verdicts reflect the industries of the time. Subtle changes occur, such as the replacement of the description of 'lunatic' by 'unsound mind', and in the 1850s 'no violence' is added to some verdicts and in the 1860s 'temporary insanity' appears for the first time.

A few of the great number of verdicts are given here because they reflect aspects of life in earlier times

> *1702 5 Dec. Infant daughter of Margaret Linde\L Thrown into river.*
>
> *1727 1 Sept. Thomas Hodgson. Drowned by falling from High Dam Bridge.*
>
> *1729 17 Dec. Lancelot Hudson. Drowned by falling from Cocker Bridge while intoxicated. This gave Richard Baynes, the coroner, the opportunity to comment on the state of the bridge.*
>
> *1750 18 Feb. John Gash, infant. Accidentally smothered in bed. The bedding which had caused the death was confiscated for the deodand.*
>
> *1777 4 June Joseph Dickson. Drowned in cistern at dyehouse.*
>
> *1811 1 Aug. George Wrangham. Drowned in milldam, River Derwent.*
>
> *1828 28 March Thomas Beeby. Drowned himself in water pit at tanyard.*
>
> *1832 5 March James Smith 8 and Josepb Banks 9 : Killed by falling wall in school in Back Lane, the opening day of the General Sunday School. [35]*
>
> *1836 9 Nov. John Mitchell. Found in hayrick at the Woolpack with bruises.*

1840 2 Dec. Fletcher Wilson 41 . Hanged himself in the House of Correction.

1840 24 Sept. Isabella Casson 22. Caught in carding machine at Rubby Banks Woollen Mill.

1842 14 April John McAdam. Natural death at workhouse. Criticism of Loweswater overseers for allowing him to go about semi-naked.

1856 5 July William John Maxwell 30. Injured at the railway station.

1864 15 July John Winder 2. Drowned at Paper Mill. No violence.

1870 7 April Margaret Craig 82. Burnt by clothes catching fire in bed when lighting her pipe."

Chapter 21

Parliamentary representation and taxation

As a borough Cockermouth was in 1295 given the right to send two representatives to Parliament. Supporting an MP was expensive and, after the first pair, the town failed to send any more members until 1640 in the time of Charles I, so that for three and a half centuries it was unrepresented. From that date until 1867 two members were again returned.

Cockermouth not only sent its own MPs but was the centre for the election of county representatives until 1832, an indication of the town's importance. Until the reforms of that year Cumberland had a total of six members - 2 for the county itself, 2 for Carlisle and 2 for Cockermouth, another indication of the town's status.

The Reform Act of 1832 extended the franchise. At the same time boroughs with a population of less than 2000 lost both their members and those between 2000 and 4000 were allowed only one. In an effort to retain two MPs Cockermouth made successful representations in 1832 to bring Brigham, Bridekirk, Papcastle and Eaglesfield into the division, thus increasing the electorate from 166 to 356.

Similar reforms were made in the Second Act of 1867, the voting qualification being lowered and boroughs of up to 10,000 now losing one representative. Cockermouth was one of the towns affected and from now on had only one MP. The process was continued in the Acts of 1884 and 1885 which gave all house-holders the vote and merged towns of less than 10,000 into county divisions. Cockermouth was no longer a division. It became first part of the Cockermouth and Workington Division, then Penrith and Cockermouth and in 1950 was placed in the new Workington Division (Appendix 15).

By the 18th century a parliamentary seat was eagerly sought and candidates would go to almost any lengths of bribery, corruption and expense to be elected. Burgages were bought as a means of obtaining the votes of the tenants. In 1756 Sir lames Lowther bought 134 burgages in Cockermouth for £58,060, at prices ranging from £300 to £650, a large sum for those days. [1] A private memorandum book of the steward of Cockermouth Castle recorded that

> *"A majority of the burghers of Cockermouth having sold their burgages in the year 1756 to Sir James Lowther by means thereof Sir John Mordaunt and Charles Jenkinson, Esq. , [Lowther's nominees] were returned members of Parliament for Cockermouth April3rd. 1761".* [2]

Elections were no twelve hour event. In the county election of 1768, for example, which cost the four candidates between £80,000 and £100,000, voting began in Cockermouth

on 30th March and ended on 20th April, nineteen polling days later. [3] For this period the county was in a state of acrimonious uproar. There had been trouble between lames Lowther and the Duke of Portland about the Forest ofInglewood and the dispute was taken to Parliament who ruled in favour of Lowther. [4] Almost immediately afterwards Parliament was dissolved. Both Lowther and the Duke put up candidates. The result was disputed on technical grounds of qualification to vote and finally a compromise was reached that in future the seats would be shared between the two factions, an arrangement which lasted for 63 years. [5]

Writing of Cockermouth, the Universal British Directory said in 1790

> *"the right hon. the Earl of Lonsdale, now being in possession of the majority of the borough votes, having purchased the greater part of the houses in the borough at a most enormous price, is careful that they are tenanted by such only as will obey his recommendations as implicity as the fourteen hundred colliers he caused to be made in one day freemen of Carlisle."*

The secret ballot was not introduced until 1872 and a voter was completely in the power of his landlord, for details were published after each election, as in this list for Cockermouth (on this occasion including the voting qualification):

> *"in the year 1737 ... one Burgess to serve in Parliament in the place of Sr. Willfrd. Lawson Deced. the Candidates being*
>
> *Richard Davenport Esqr Eldred Curwen Esqr. 1. Mr. Rob. Tubman. A Stable in Kirkgate. 5. Tho. France. The House he lives in. Mr. Wm. Tate .. Posson. of Joss Simpson Butcher. John Fletcher Esqr. A Mill in the River Coker. Posson. of Bayliffe."*
>
> (and so on to 130 names in the first column and 149 in the second.) [6]

The Lowthers (Lonsdales) were not the only family to buy their way into power. There are records of the Earl of Egremont's expenses, such as "Paid Expenses in Solliciting the Votes and entertaining the Freeholders of Great and Little Broughton £23s-6d.", one of a number of entries in 1767. [7] James Lowther controlled nine parliamentary seats - 2 for Westmorland County, 1 for Cumberland County, 2 for Cockermouth, 1 for Appleby, 1 for Carlisle and 2 for Haslemere in Surrey which he had purchased from a London attorney. These MPs. were known in Parliament as "Jemmy's ninepins". On one occasion a Cockermouth member made an extravagant speech in the House of Commons, which brought a sarcastic reply from Mr. Burke, followed by loud and continued cheers. At this moment Mr. Fox entered the House and on asking what the noise was about was told "Oh nothing of consequence, only Burke has knocked down one of Lord Lonsdale's ninepins." [8]

Lowther was quite an active member. In 1775 and again in 1776 he put forward unsuccessful resolutions condemning the use of foreign troops in the dominions without the consent of Parliament and in 1781 was again unsuccessful in two attempts to end the war with America, [9] a matter which affected him personally, for Whitehaven lost half of its 200 ships in the conflict.

Bribery, coercion and violence remained a feature of elections well into the 19th century. One vote was considered so vital that a man might be offered the wiping out of his rent arrears or promised to be made comfortable for life if only he would vote for the right candidate. [10] In 1852 a man was made drunk and taken to Hassness to be hidden until the election was over and another was conveyed to Scotland, pursued by the rival party. [11] On occasion fighting broke out for the actual bodily possession of a voter!

All this was in contrast to the undertaking given by the bailiff that he would accept no reward or gratuity but would return "such Person as shall ... appear to have the majority of legal votes". It was his duty to call the burgesses together to elect Cockermouth's representative, as by the following proclamation:

> *"On Saturday the twenty-seventh day of this instant December at the Moothall in the said Borough at ten of the clock in the forenoon of the same day, then and there to elect one Burgess to Represent the said Borough of Cockermouth in his Majesty's said Parliament in the Room ofPercy Wyndham O'Brien Esq. appointed to a government office. God save the King." 23rd. Deer. 1755 - at three of the clock in the afternoon the above proclamation was made by the above named John Jackson at the Moothall Stairs in Cockermouth afd."* [12]

In more recent times election results were proclaimed in the Public Hall in Station Street and shown nearby on slides in the upper windows of the West Cumberland Times - office at No. 29. [13]

In the twentieth century Cockermouth has been represented by three long-serving Labour members - Tom Cape (born at the Spread Eagle Inn) from 1918 to 1945 in the Cockermouth and Penrith Division and Fred Peart in that and the new Workington Division from 1945 to 1976. Fred Peart served twice as the Minister for Agriculture, then as Lord President of the Council, as Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Commons and later as Lord Privy Seal and Leader of the House of Lords. [14] Dale Campbell-Savours, was elected in 1979, and is now a life peer after his retirement in 2001.

. In the 12th and 13th centuries there was a variety of taxes to provide money for the king. Sometimes these were for a particular purpose, such as the crusades or the marriage of Henry III's sister in 1235. [15] Noutgeld or cornage rent, originally paid in cattle, exempted the payer from military service abroad, while scutage was a payment

in lieu of military service. Carucage (or hidage) and tailage were forms of land taxation. Money was also gained from fines and penalties for favours granted, for assistance in law and as penalties for offences. Another source was the farming out by escheators of lands which had been forfeited or had reverted to the Crown. In all these forms of taxation the more important families in and around Cockermouth would be involved, and the less important too as the lord of the manor recouped some of his losses from his tenants. The earliest record of tax payments made to national funds is the Pipe Rolls or Great Rolls of the Exchequer, annual compilations which registered the revenue passing through the Treasury. The earliest Pipe Roll for Cumberland and Westmorland was for about AD 1130. There was then a gap until 1160, since when the records have been almost unbroken.

In 1332 records of the 'lay subsidies, as the national taxes became known, show 33 inhabitants of Cockermouth as paying a total of £42-16s-lOd., the two highest being £3-13s-9d. by Alan Wythehoures and £3-ls-9d. by Michael de Eilton. 16 people in Papcastle paid altogether £75, £15 of this being from Alan son ofScot. [16] The average tax over Cumberland, which then had a population of between twenty and thirty thousand, was about 3s. a year. [17] The tax was calculated on the value of movable goods possessions of all kinds, including crops, usually assessed when the harvest was just in and stocks at their highest. There were some excepted items armour, riding horses, jewellery, knights' robes, etc. The tax settled after a time at one fifteenth of the value of such goods from people living in the country and one tenth from town dwellers. [18] Begun in 1188 to help with Palestine campaigns, it lasted until 1623 and at its Peak in the 14th century brought the exchequer about £100,000 a year. The method of assessment was that the two or more knights or chief assessors appointed for each county by the king summoned the most capable men in each 'hundred' or sub division of the shire and from them chose twelve, who were sworn in to their task. These twelve then took four men and the reeve or recognised leader from each township and visited every house to assess the value of the goods. [19] There were many other forms of taxation at various times. [20] To name a few - an export tax on wool, first Y2 mark in 1266 but during the Hundred Years' War this Y2 mark plus 40s. on every sack; the hearth tax at 2s. a hearth from 1662-89, with tradesmen and the poor exempted; the window tax first introduced in 1662 to replace the damaged coinage and abolished in 1851; a stamp tax on legal documents, newspapers, etc.; duties on horses - IOs. in 1784 with £2-2s. added if used for racing; taxes on carriers and coach proprietors; and taxes on industry, such as the hat tax of 3d. to 2s. on hats sold and a licence of Ss. a year for those who sold them. Added to these were, and still are, a variety of customs and excise duties, inland revenue and income taxes, purchase and value added taxes, licences for many things and activities, etc. In an of these Cockermouth people were involved and we shall have reason to refer to some of them in greater detail.

Chapter 22

Education

Before the 1870 Act brought compulsory education, academic learning was only for the few. Except for that provided at the old Grammar School the process was largely haphazard, confined to the upper classes and mainly for boys - though not entirely so, for when W. Gell toured the Lakes in 1797 he spent an evening on Crummock Water when

> *"we rowed two of the village maidens and a friend of theirs whose nicer feelings, for she had been educated in Cockermouth, could neither bear the motion of the boat, or the landing on the new island where the grass was not perfectly free from dew".* [I]

Apparently a Cockermouth education had its disadvantages! The survey of religious houses, etc., which Henry VIII had made in 1546 includes the entry

> *"Cockermouthe. A stipendarye in the parishe there used to kepe and teach a grammar schole there and to pray for the soulle of the founder for ever. Rowland Noble, incumbent and master of the said schole, ofthage ofxxxvj yeres, hathe the clere yerely revenue of the same for his salarie ... Cxvj s. (£5.80)"* [2]

In 1676 the free grammar school was built where All Saints Church Rooms now stand, subscribed for by some or all of Philip Lord Wharton, Sir George Fletcher, Sir Richard Graham, Doctor Smith (the Dean but later Bishop of Carlisle), Richard Lowry and Richard Tubman. An inscription over the door ofwhat was an outstandingly good building for the town at that time read

" SCHOL : HUJUS FUND:

JACT: FUERENT XXV DIE

MENSIS MAIJ AN DOM:

MDCLXXVI"

viz: "The foundations of this school were laid on 25th day of the month of May 1676 "[3] (Plate 20).

The Rev. Gaven Noble, assistant master at Appleby, came to Cockermouth as master of this new school, becoming also vicar of All Saints from 1679 to 1691. Part of a tablet in the school, which has been incorporated in the porch of the present church rooms, reads:

"Has aedes pulchras cum postera viderit aetas

Et Lowry et Tubman sit grate utrique Richardo,

Ultima cujus habet superscriptum linen nomen

Hajus erat prima gymnasiarcha scholae.

GAVENUS NOBLE, 1676".

This translates as "When posterity sees this beautiful building give thanks to Lowry, Tubman and Richardo. The first master of the school - Gaven Noble 1676."

However, there must have been some school between the backward look of "used to keep' in 1546 and the opening of 1676. As early as 1554 Henry Fletcher, vicar of Towne-Malling and brother ofWilliam of Cockermouth Hall, left £80 in his will for a schoolmaster at Cockermouth. [4] A list of church possessions in 1673 has several references to endowments and equipment of the school. In 1672 lOs. was paid for "rent of Schoole", suggesting that it used a hired room or possibly met in the church. This was the opinion of a West Cumberland Times leader - "Before 1676, the year the school was built, there was a free grammar school in Cockermouth, which lacked an appropriate habitation". [5] In 1717 the income was £26-15s. per year - £10 from Fletcher Vane, impropriator of the living; £5 from Mrs. Fletcher of Tallentire; £5 from the Duke of Somerset; £5 from house rents; 35s. interest. By 1847 the endowments were £24-3s-1d., including 6s-8d. from Embleton, for the school was the Free School of Cockermouth and Embleton. For some years Lord Lonsdale added another £10 to the tithe money which came via him. [6] In 1869 a national Schools Enquiry Commission reported on endowed grammar schools and went into considerable detail on the running and accommodation of the Cockermouth school, and of the difficulties which confronted the newly appointed master.

> *"The endowment is small. ... Some small payments are made by the churchwardens to the master .. which have amounted to about £ 15 in the last three years. The school had sunk very low when the present master was appointed, and the yard or playground had been appropriated by the inhabitants of the neighbouring cottages. He has, however, begun to raise it in the estimation of the townspeople .... few boys .. but the numbers are increasing .... 15s. per quarter for 'reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, English grammar, and history" for boys under 12 years of age. For boys above that age instruction in the classics ... one guinea a quarter. French, music and drawing are 'extra subjects'. Boys from a distance may be lodged in the town with persons approved by the master ... 8s. per week. The master may take boarders, but at present has no house, none being attached to the school. The school buildings are very old and weather-beaten, but are sufficiently comfortable inside .... This ought to be a good school ... A body of trustees should be chosen out of the magistrates and landowners of the neighbourhood ....." [7]*

The school building was within the church grounds and its whole life very much under church influence, the Bishop of Chester granting "*licence and faculty to teach and instruct Children in the Art of Grammar, Writing, Arithmetick, and other lawful and useful learning in the free School in Cockermouth*", the master to teach the catechism every week in Latin or English and to take the children to church every Sunday and Festival Day. [8]

The hopes of the Commission seem to have been realised to some extent, for in 1875 the local press complained that the school's prize-giving and entertainment held in the large room of the New Auction Company was overcrowded. [9] A press advertisement of the same year stated that the curriculum included preparation for Oxford and Cambridge Local Examinations, Professional and Commercial pursuits and Universities. [10] It was only after two government commissions had reported in the 1860s that the narrow curriculum of all grammar schools began to be broadened, some science, literature and commercial arithmetic gradually being added. In some ways the curriculum of a private girls' school was more related to life, the study of art, music and literature being regarded as a necessary preparation for marriage. The school did have some old boys who made names for themselves - Wordsworth, Fearon Fallows astronomer royal and Fletcher Christian of the 'Bounty' mutiny amongst them. Little seems to have been done to improve the building. As far back as 1828 the Charity Commissioners had described the schoolhouse as "very old and requiring repair", The 1869 report above describes it as old and weatherbeaten and a few months before the 1875 prize giving two boys had fallen through the floor when a rotten beam gave way. [11] A vestry meeting was called in April 1875 to discuss rebuilding but five years later it was still described as "a dilapidated apology for a school". [12] It is significant that about 1880 the town was trying to acquire Wordsworth House from Lord Lonsdale for use as a grammar school. [13] In 1895 the building, already disused and the school apparently ended, was conveyed by the Charity Commissioners to the vicar and churchwardens of All Saints Church, the endowment to be paid to the schoolmaster during his life. There was strong opposition to a suggestion that the endowment be transferred to S1. Bees school, as Cockermouth people still hoped that the grammar school might be revived. [14]

The records of the Senhouse family, who in the 1700s sent their children to Cockermouth School (later generations went to Hawkshead and St. Bees), show that, at least for some periods, there was provision for girls as well as boys. The family accounts for 1735 include £14-5s. for two years boarding and drugs for Billy; £6-19s-3d. for Joe's boarding, books and shoes; and six guineas for boarding Kitty, Joe and Nanny, including the cost of their inoculation. The basic payment was a guinea a year for teaching, with up to a guinea entrance fee for children of 'respectable parents", "the children of the poor nothing but the *cockpenny*". The *'cockpenny'* was 5s. [25p] for a Senhouse in 1750. [15]

Earlier in the century, Bishop Gastrell wrote that "ye curates who teach school have only twelve pence p. quarter, with the addition of *whittlegate* (board in parishioners' homes) and 'harden Sark (a coarse shirt), the right to keep sheep on the common and the *cockpenny* and any other income possible from the schools." Collingwood commented that a schoolmaster in Cumberland had a poor life, possible only to a native! [16]

At the opening of the 19th century there were three types of school - the public schools for the few, giving a classical education and noted for bad discipline; the old endowed grammar schools, such as Cockermouth School, many of which were in a state of decay; and privately run schools catering chiefly for the dissenting middle class, with better discipline and offering a more scientific and more modern education. Also at this time were beginning two systems of schooling which developed side by side throughout the country in the 19th century. The British Schools, run by the free church organisation of the British and Foreign School Society and offering undenominational Bible teaching, were soon followed by the National Schools, developed as a counter-measure by "The National Society for the Education of the Poor according to the Principles of the Church of England" . Cockermouth's British School was in Market Street [17] and, apart from a comment in 1847 that it was well attended, no records appear to exist The National School began in New Street and this we shall consider presently. As the century progressed an increasing number of private schools opened in the town. Jollie in 1811 mentioned three schoolmasters, Parson and White have nine 'academies' in their directory of 1829 and Mannix and Whellan 11 schools in 1847, including the Grammar, British, National and Union (workhouse) schools. At various times there were a day classical and commercial school in Globe Lane, a ladies' boarding and day school in Castlegate, a ladies' seminary in Moorfield House and Mr. J.S.R. Rodham's high-class school for young gentlemen at Weston Lodge in Brigham Road, with accommodation for a limited number of boarders. Moving into the 20th century, Harford School was in the clinic building in Crown Street, then moved to Norham House and later to St. Helen's School, the girls to be seen walking in formation in the town in their brown uniforms. At first only children of professional people were admitted to Harford, but the owners were forced to widen the intake to include those of tradesmen. Fees were at one time £3 a term, with astronomy and Latin amongst the subjects taught.

Returning to the 19th century, the government first showed an interest in education when it made a grant of £20,000 in 1833 to the British and National Societies, both of which used the cheap monitorial system - each child cost about 16s-6d. a year. Parliamentary grants and interest increased, until the unfavourable report of a commission on education resulted in the Education Act of 1870. This act made education compulsory and also legislated for the setting up of school boards to provide primary education where the efforts of the voluntary societies were found to be insufficient. In the next 20 years attendance was quadrupled, absence being punishable by fine from 1876. The immediate result in Cumberland was that the ratio of

38 children to one teacher in 1851 rose to 53 in 1871,[18] but gradually fell during the next 20 years as more teachers were trained. In spite of compulsion a quarter of the county's children still had no regular education, largely because of the growth of industry and the value to parents of their children's earnings. Many who did attend were over-worked, undernourished, badly clothed and too tired to benefit.

Even before the 1870 Act Cumberland seems to have a good record in education, in spite of some short-comings, to judge from marriage statistics. In 1839-45 forty one per cent of those marrying in England and Wales were unable to sign their names in the register, but Cumberland couples did much better than this with 26%, second only to London. The proportion continued to improve - down to 23.4% in 1861 and 21.6% in 1871. [19]

Under the Act a school board of seven members was elected for Cockermouth. [20]

The School Board rate was 3d. in the pound. The clerk was paid a salary of £15 per year with an additional £ 15 for his duties as attendance officer. The Board met fortnightly and one of its first decisions was to take over New Street schools, [2]] from which the National School had recently moved to new premises in Kirkgate. The arrangement was made that the buildings should be used for elementary education from Monday to Friday, for which the Board would pay a nominal rent of Is a year and do all repairs, and that the Vicar and Churchwardens of Christ Church should use them on Saturday and Sunday. However, the New Street premises with their accommodation for 325 proved too small, as places were needed for 230 girls and for a similar number of boys. Additional accommodation had to be found. There were in March 1874 ten private schools in the town, including four dame schools. [22] These ten were asked to make returns of their facilities, etc., which the dame schools with their unsuitable accommodation and inefficient instruction were understandably reluctant to provide. The most hopeful solution to the problem was to use the schools of Miss Harley and Miss Garnett for 50 and 38 girls respectively and the government inspector was asked to visit them, as a result of which they were approved by the Education Department. Also the Board informed the parents of five to seven-year- olds attending dame schools that they must transfer them to efficient elementary schools, but they relented over this as it would have caused hardship to the four women who earned a living this way. Dame schools had one attraction for children over other schools - crowded round the 'dame' in a small room they kept warmer!

The early days of the Board were not without difficulties. Relationships with All Saints National Schools were very strained. The Board paid All Saints 3d. per child per week. The All Saints fee was 4d., but the Board was legally limited to 3d. At meeting after meeting the question arose of the selection of children by All Saints. If a number arrived for admission they chose the brighter and cleaner ones, sending the others to New Street or Fairfield on the pretext that All Saints was full. They were even accused of

expelling dull and dirty children, for the Board schools to take, in order to make room in All Saints for more promising applicants and of simply refusing to admit dirty children when there was room for them.

A further persistent problem was attendance, some scholars being very irregular. Monday was the worst day. Mr. Black, headmaster of New Street, reported 62 absences on a June Monday in 1874 they were helping to herd sheep and cattle at the market. Other factors working against regular attendance were the demands of the farms on which many of the children lived and the lack of boots and decent clothing of the poorer pupils. In July 1876 there were in the town 879 children aged from 5 to 13 and another 438 under five, 658 were boys and 659 girls. The returns showed that 112 were attending All Saints, 211 New Street, 87 Fairfield, 31 Miss Harleys and 27 Miss Gamett's. The efficient private schools of Mr. Haughton, Mr. Rodham, Miss Shaw, Miss Naisbit, Miss Wise and Miss Herd had another 79, while the dame schools of Mrs. Brough, Mrs. Shearman, Miss Wilson and Miss Fletcher had a total of 94. Only 21 children over five were not at school, but against this apparently satisfactory state must be remembered the poor attendance of many who were registered.

These were the days of payment by results and 149 children at New Street were presented for examination in 1875, of whom 133 passed in reading, 90 in writing and 113 in arithmetic. Grants due totalled £l61-6s-ld. The inspector's remarks on the mixed school (above infant age) included:

"... numbers largely increased ... great Improvement.. .evidently been conducted with vigour and ability .. .improvement in arithmetic very marked ...spelling still weak in the second and in lower part of the third standard ... handwriting of the lower standards too small ... Great care should be taken to induce children to come to school with clean hands and faces ... The pupil teachers have done their papers well, and are efficient in their school duties .." [23]

There were also suggestions about improvements to the premises and equipment. At one time this examination of pupils decided whether they could leave at 11 or had to remain until 12 years old, a matter of interest to parents who needed their earnings.

When faced with the problem of accommodation the School Board considered in March 1874 the site of Wilson's hat factory, recently offered to the Local Board of Health, but it was rejected because of the noise of the nearby street and market. Attention was turned to the Fair Field, but the Local Board at first refused to sell as there was doubt about the legality of such a sale. However, a quarter of an acre was sold for a school site for £400, with another £300 being paid for land adjoining for a schoolmistress's house.

The purpose of the latter was that her presence would reduce broken windows and other damage, but the house was finally omitted from the scheme on grounds of economy.

The girls' school was erected at a cost of £1800 in 1875 and formerly opened in April 1876 as "Fairfield Girls Board School" with a fee of 3d. per week including books and apparatus. There were seven applicants for the position of mistress, which carried a salary of £90 per year. There was also an assistant mistress, and a sewing mistress was appointed to teach for 1 Yz hours on each of three days a week for £13 a year.

The boys needed more room and a boys' school was opened on the Fairfield site in 1884, the cost being about £3,300. The boys left New Street and by the end of the year plans had been submitted by the Primitive Methodists for converting the building to a chapel.

The accommodation on the Fairfield site was now 465, but the girls were still short of classroom space in their building and had to sit so near the fires that it was necessary to rotate round the rooms. A public meeting in the Court House on 24 March 1887 decided to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee by buying 550 square yards of land to enlarge the playground of the girls and infants, to enlarge two classrooms and to possibly build a caretaker's house with a cookery room in the basement. [24] A voluntary rate was agreed, but there were difficulties in collecting it so the scheme was passed to the School Board. The house was not built, but the playground and sanitary accommodation were improved, the smaller classroom enlarged and the seating rearranged in the larger one, the extension bearing the words

> *"This school was enlarged in the Jubilee Year of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria. 1887."*

The reference to rearranging seating implies that the seats were fixed and tiered as they were also in the infants school - the ground floor of the 1884 block, of which the boys occupied the upper floor. The buildings had accommodation for 700 children - 250 boys upstairs, 200 infants downstairs and 250 girls in the single-storey block. Average attendances at the turn of the century were 220 boys, 200 girls and 180 infants. [25] (Plate 21).

The area of Fairfield has been gradually nibbled away by the auction mart, school buildings, a car park and a small office block and in 1970 the juniors from Fairfield School began to move into a new building which occupied the remaining area of the once public field, this new school for 320 being completed in February 1971. This development was disputed as it took common land and blocked rights of way, one of which through the school grounds has been restored. Most of the original buildings were taken over by the infants school, with accommodation given as 181. Not until 1977 did the infants acquire indoor toilets. The boys and girls ofjunior age have for long been joined in one school, but the infants still remain separate under their own headmistress.

Meanwhile the National School of All Saints continued. The New Street schools had been built in the 1840s largely through the efforts of Rev. Charles Southey, son of the

poet laureate. At first only partly filled, numbers had increased until a new building became necessary and the Kirkgate school was erected in 1869 for about £2000 on land given by Lord Leconfield. Additional rooms were added on this site, but in 1973 the school moved again, to a new building at the end of Slatefell Drive.

St. Joseph's Roman Catholic School began in premises adjacent to the church in Crown Street in 1877. The first page of the log book reads

> *"1877 May 4th. This school was opened on Monday April 30th. by Annie Couleham (3rd. class) The school apparatus provided at that time consisted of Two sets of Reading Books, Copy Books, Dictation Books, Grammar and Geography Books for Standards II, Ill, IV, with slates, pencils, pens, maps, Reading Sheets, and Form, Colour and Animal Sheets for Infants. About fifty-four children presented themselves for Admission the first morning."* [26]

The school moved to new premises on The Level in 1967 and now has accommodation for about 112 pupils. Until 1959 girls from all schools in the area attended cookery classes in the Fairfield building and the boys had woodwork in a hut on the small plot of ground opposite what was formerly "the gun shop" by Jubilee Bridge. The numbers taking part in the 1887 Jubilee procession [27] and tea show the various school sizes ;

> *Industrial School for boys - 120*
>
> *Workhouse School Flimby - 90*
>
> *Dovenby and Bridekirk - 200*
>
> *St. Josephs - 100*
>
> *All Saints National - 350*
>
> *Fairfield Board - 700*
>
> *Private schools of Miss Harley, Mr. Rodham, etc. - 100*

As far back as 1785 a Vestry meeting record referred to seats in church for children from the Charity and Sunday Schools and in 1809 a school of industry was established to provide education for 30 poor girls. [28] For boys the Cumberland County Industrial School was opened in 1881 by the Home Secretary, Sir William Harcourt. [29] This stood in Grayson Close at the corner of Lorton Road and Strawberry How Road (and still stands as the Cockermouth Grammar School); in 1891 staff and boys totalled 173 . The cost of the building and part of the maintenance grants came from county rates, there being a government grant towards maintenance. Management was by a committee of county councillors, the school being under a superintendent and matron (a husband and wife appointment) and education under a schoolmaster. In addition to general education the boys, sent there by the courts for vagrancy or crime, were taught a trade - tailoring, carpentry, boot and shoe repairing, etc. The school's band was well known.

The upper floor consisted of long dormitories in the front portion and the two wings, with small rooms for staff strategically placed. On the ground floor were the craft rooms, later converted to school laboratories, etc., the laundry for example becoming part of the art . room. The number of Cumberland children in the school decreased and it was closed at the end of March in 1921. The various suggestions for the future use of the premises will be mentioned shortly. Meanwhile developments had been taking place in the country's educational system which affected Cockermouth. In 1902 School Boards were abolished and education passed to council control. Aid was given to old grammar schools and to Anglican and Catholic elementary schools to improve their standards. The leaving age was gradually raised.

Secondary Education

We have seen that the town was reluctant to lose its grammar school at the end of the 19th century. In 1918 a secondary school was proposed as a memorial to E. L. Waugh, for at that time any pupil wishing for more than elementary education had to travel to either Keswick or Workington. The decision regarding the Waugh Fund was that the £1550 raised should be invested in War Bonds, bringing an income of £77-1 Os. a year to be used to provide scholarships for Cockermouth children to attend Workington Grammar School. [31]

When the Industrial School closed in 1921 there were a number of suggestions for the use of the premises. The Cumberland Education Committee said that a teachers' training college was needed in the county. [32] Dr. Morrison, medical officer, had a scheme to use them as an institution for children mentally and physically handicapped; [33] a home for delicate children was required and Cockermouth parents and the staffs of local schools wanted a secondary school, emphasizing that although this would need a penny rate there would be a great saving on fares paid for children attending Workington and Keswick Schools. [34] These schemes were discussed for some years, then finally in 1926 Lord Eustace Percy, President of the Board of Education, approved of conversion to a secondary school and visited the building himself. [35] The County Council postponed conversion because of lack of funds, but in February 1929 approved expenditure of £4000 for adaptation. [36] It was opened later the same year as Cockermouth Secondary School by Canon A. Sutton. with a board of 14 governors and Mr. Macintosh as headmaster.

In its first session the school was awarded five out of the six County Minor Scholarships granted to pupils already attending secondary schools. [37] It opened with 38 pupils, rising to 78 the next year, 250 in 1938 and reaching a peak ofabout 550 in the 1960s. It served Maryport as well as the Cockermouth area until reorganization in Maryport, in 1967, after which there were no further Maryport admissions and the existing Maryport scholars gradually worked out at the top of the school.

Fees in state schools were ended in 1944, the 11+ system of selection for grammar, technical or modem schools came in, and the first comprehensive schools appeared in the late 1940s.

From 1958 secondary education in the town was concentrated in two schools - Derwent School and the Grammar School, although some children travelled to St. Joseph' s Roman Catholic School in Workington.

Consequently Fairfield, All Saints and St. Joseph's became primary schools, losing their older age groups and each, except Fairfield Infants, acquiring new buildings in 1970, 1973 and 1967 respectively. The Derwent School was opened as a secondary modem school in 1958 with 510 places, soon greatly increased by extensions and portable buildings. [30] From 1968 all children transferred from the primary schools to Derwent School at eleven. Those who wished to went to the Grammar School at 13+, parental choice being helped by staff guidance. In 1984 the two schools joined to form one comprehensive school, 'Cockermouth School', It functioned on the two sites while an extensive building programme increased accommodation on Castlegate Drive, opened by Richard Wordsworth on 23rd April 1991. The Strawberry How site finally closed in July 1991. After several further building developments, Cockermouth School in 2006 has some 1400 pupils on roll, with more than 260 in the Sixth Form; it has a very high standing in the country's league tables.

In 2003 the school was awarded Specialist Status in Maths and Computing. This resulted in an additional £700k from the Department for Education and Skills being available for the school over the next four years.

In 2006 the Eco Centre was completed. The 550 sq m building is an exemplar of sustainable design, using a wide variety of recycled materials in its construction and created a teaching facility that is incredibly advanced with 10 teaching pods supported by ICT facilities. In addition, there are four Biomes where it will be possible to replicate various types of ecosystems including arid, alpine and wet climates. This facility will be used not only by the school, but the wider community thanks to a multifunctional teaching space/auditorium with a capacity for 250 people, where it will be possible to stage events such as plays and meetings for larger community groups.

Continuing Education

The industrial revolution brought a desire for literacy and knowledge of science. The Cockermouth Literary and Scientific Society was founded in 1871 to promote the study of literature and science by means of communication, papers and discussions. [38] It held meetings in the Court House. In 1877 art classes were being held on Saturday afternoons in a room of the YMCA, attended by artisans, pupil teachers, etc. [39]

The 1880s saw the formation of the Cockermouth Lecture Society [40] and about the same time (in 1882) the Wordsworth Literary and Scientific Society (known as the

Wordsworth Institute) began. In premises later used as a betting office behind 60 Main Street it arranged lectures and provided classes in elocution, languages and shorthand. later moving about 1921 to Christ Church Rooms. The Institute was run in connection with the South Kensington Museum of Science and Art. [41]

The Cockermouth branch of the Workers' Educational Association [42] was formed in 1923 and in 1939 found a permanent home in the upstairs back room of Regent House in Main Street, formally opened by the Cumberland Director of Education. G.E. Brown, on 2nd December. Classes were held here until the move to the Derwent Centre. The WEA has always sought to provide courses of a serious nature philosophy, politics, economics, comparative religion etc. -as well as more popular study of topics such as local history and nature.

Higham Hall is a residential adult college (since 1975) and is situated in a beautifully restored 19th century Gothic mansion with well tended gardens and spectacular views of Skiddaw and the Northern Fells. Owned and run by Cumbria County Council as a non-profit making organisation, it receives no subsidy and thus is self-financing. Approximately 3000 people enrol each year on 250 courses from one-day Study Sundays and intensive weekends, to week long summer schools. Higham was originally built by railway pioneer, Thomas Hoskins in 1828 as a grand county house but has also seen service as a youth hostel and a girls boarding school.

University of the Third Age (U3A)

A nation-wide development, the Third Age Trust was formed in the UK in 1982; this came from beginnings in France in 1972. The purpose of U3A is to encourage lifelong learning for those no longer in full-time gainful employment. Contrary to popular belief, it does not receive any support from the universities themselves. Members have skills to organise and teach on their own autonomous learning groups -no qualifications are required and none given.

Local groups have formed throughout the country -by February 2006,574 groups with a total of 153,443 members. In addition to groups pursuing learning topics under their own steam, U3A groups generally have monthly meetings with speaker input, coffee morning meetings and visits to places of interest. The Cockermouth group formed in 1998, and in 2006 had over 450 members with at least 26 activity groups operating.

All Saints' Learning Centre started life as a community development centre (CDC) under the Cumbria CREDITS initiative. This is a network of centres across the county aiding community development by providing, initially, training in IT. The original CDC was set up in the front of All Saints' Primary School. From 1997 to 2003, hundreds of learners passed through the Centre developing new skills. In 2003, the Centre moved into a new purpose-built building just across the other side of the car park from the school. The new facility boasts state of the art equipment in an environment that

promotes learning. The architect designed exterior of the building may have raised a few eyebrows but the peace and calm of the interior has earned the admiration of everyone who has been in the place. The new facility has a multi-purpose teaching room with a Dolby Digital sound system and room for up to 24 people in a conference setting, a video conferencing facility and, of course, a comprehensive LT.Training Room with provision for 12 learners. There is also a mini cyber cafe in the reception area and these PCs can be hired on an hour by hour basis. The whole Centre uses 'broadband' technology to access the internet. The new building and equipment was financed by the government via its UK On line initiative.

Adult Education: Cockermouth School houses The Derwent Centre for further education, one of the first (1959) of a considerable number of such centres developed in the county when Gordon S. Bessey was Director of Education. A very wide range of classes and activities is provided by the Centre and many of the societies in the town - choirs, Workers Educational Association, Young Farmers' clubs, etc., etc. - meet there and make use of its facilities. There is also a Youth Club in a separate building. The whole of this community school is normally under the direction of the head teacher, but in practice the running of the Centre is delegated to the Adult Education Tutor and of the Youth Club to the Leader.

Examples of other organisations currently providing lecture series during the winter months are - the Cockermouth Civic Trust, [43] - these usually being on subjects of particular local interest, - the Cumberland Nature Club which at one time used the Bridge Street Rooms, - the West Cumbria Group of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB).

More restricted in membership were ventures such as the reading room opened in 1874 in a Crown Street house for the employees of Derwent Mills. [44] Also back in the 19th century we may note a series of 12 cookery lessons provided in the Public Hall in the spring of 1878. [45]

No survey of continuing education would be complete without considering the outstanding contribution of the Cockermouth Mechanics' Institute. The first such institute, aiming to teach science to working men by means of lectures, was opened in London in 1823 and had 900 at its first lecture a good illustration of the thirst for knowledge! By mid-century there were 700 such institutes.

The Cockermouth MI was formed in November 1845 and the following: year published a booklet [46] containing 50 rules for the running of the Institute and a list of books and periodicals in the library. The library we shall consider in the next chapter, but some of the rules are of interest.

> *"Rule 1. That the Society be called the Cockermouth Mechanics' Institution, the objects of which shall he the diffusion of useful knowledge, in Literature, Science*

> *and the Arts, by means of a Library, a Reading Room, meetings for Discussions on subjects interesting to the members, at which Essays and Original Papers will be read, Lectures, the formation of Classes for studying any useful Science, and whatsoever other means the Society for the time being may deem desirable."*

The annual subscription was 5s.(25p) with 3s.(15p) for ladies and young members, life membership £5 or a gift of property equivalent. Of the 17 officers and committee, ten had to be from the working class. There were rules for the conduct of discussions (no purely theological or political subjects) and lectures, and for the running of the reading room. If six members wanted a class on a particular subject they had to seek the approval of the committee and then select and pay the teacher.

The Institute met in two spacious rooms in the rear of the Savings Bank building (next to the Court House). Robert Benson of St. Helen's, an Attorney, was the first president, until his death in 1858, and is commemorated by a framed memorial of 1860 which is in Cockermouth Library. This also commemorates General Richard Benson, of India and Hassness, who had bequeathed to the Institute his library of over 1000 volumes and a legacy of£100. Joseph William Harris of Broughton, who became president, donated his collection of stuffed birds. Other possessions of the Institute included portraits, maps, a barometer and a timepiece. [47] General Wyndham offered to do anything in his power to further the interests of the Institute and in acknowledgement it was agreed

> "That General Wyndham be solicited to become a 'Life Member' of the Cockermouth Mechanics' Institute and to preside at the approaching anniversary." [48]

The first anniversary, in 1847, was celebrated by a tea in the British School Room, attended by 500 people (surely in relays!). The band played, flowers were given and prints loaned to decorate the room, and the M.P. (E. Horsman) and other local gentry (Dykes, Steel, etc.) were present. The report of activities in the first Year listed lectures on the magnetic telegraph, philosophy, history, political economy, the British constitution and the influence of literature on the mind. [49]

By 1858 the membership of the Institute was over 240. Regular classes were being held in French, arithmetic, writing, etc., as well as all the activities mentioned above. The liveliness of the society is shown by the financial returns for that year - receipts ofjust over £80 and an expenditure of about £83. [50] By the end of the century membership had reached 300.

Playgroups: In 1980 there were three, held in All Saints Rooms, the Methodist Church premises and the Friends' Meeting House, this last now hosting intensive training courses for playgroup staff. There were six groups in the town in 1995.

Formal Further Education

Further education for formal qualifications is centred at the Lakes College West Cumbria at Lillyhall - the original "technical" colleges in Whitehaven and Workington closed in 1999 and 2001 respectively as the West Cumbria College moved to new buildings in 2001 and restyled itself.

Universities

The Universities of Northumbria, Lancaster (via St. Martin's College) and Central Lancashire (UCLAN) have all made inroads into providing university education in Cumbria. UCLAN opened a Lakeland Learning Centre as a training provision for rural businesses at the Lakeland Agricultural Centre [Mitchell's Auction Mart site] in 2003 being an off-shoot of its Newton Rigg Campus at Penrith. Cumbria is now to have its own university based on the Cumbria Institute of the Arts and S1. Martin's College which has campuses in Carlisle, Ambleside and Lancaster. The campuses of UCLAN (the University of Central Lancashire) at Newton Rigg for land-based industries and at Carlisle (originally Northumbria University) for the Carlisle Business School will also transfer to the new university which will operate a network in conjunction with the four FE colleges of the county, the Open University and Lancaster University. The University of Cumbria is planned to be in operation in 2007.

Chapter 24

Libraries and Newspapers

Cockermouth people have been able to borrow books for two hundred years. The first library we know of was housed in the old Grammar School building, founded in 1762 by the associates of the late Dr. Thomas Bray and later augmented by Dr. Kenne, Bishop of Chester. Managed by trustees appointed by the Bishop, it began with 343 volumes, and was described as

> *"intended to be a Lending Library for the Use and Benefit of such Clergymen as shall be nominated thereto by the Trustees".*

The value of books borrowed had to be deposited with the librarian. Those of octavo or quarto size might be kept for three months, folio volumes for six. [1]

The Bray Library was restricted in its membership, but the Cockermouth Book Club founded a little later in 1785 was open to all. There were strict rules - over twenty listed in the 1819 catalogue. [2] The annual subscription was 10s-6d. [52 ½ p], with an admission fee of 2s-6d. [12 ½ p], and all subscribers who did not live in the country had to attend a monthly meeting in the Globe Hotel absence carried a fine of 6d! Any member present might propose the purchase of a book and lots were drawn to determine the first readers of newly acquired volumes. The time allowed for reading was determined by the value of the book - from two days for one worth 6d. or less, to three weeks for one valued at over 8s. Town readers were allowed only one book at a time, but country members might take two and keep them for two weeks ifvalued less than 6s [30p] or three weeks if more expensive. A catalogue of 1819 listed about 450 volumes with a further list of 60 missing, for which subscribers were urged to search in their private libraries! The librarian, at that time Jacob Hilton, was paid Is [5p] a year for each member.' Sometime before 1847 the Book Club changed its name to the Cockermouth Library. [3] Time for reading was now based on date of purchase (new works four days in the town, seven in the country, doubled after the first demands had been met) and a fine of one old penny a day introduced for books overdue. The catalogue listed nearly 600 volumes, and periodicals such as the Edinburgh Review, Blackwood's and Tail's magazines, etc. were available. Thomas Bailey and Son, printers at 73 Main Street, housed the library and were paid 2s. per annum out of each subscription. This was possibly the subscription library of 65 members mentioned as being at Bailey's in 1829. [4]

Jollie records the old library at Jacob Hilton's and the new library at Thomas Bailey's as both existing in 1811, so possibly the two merged some time early in the century.

Control of the library passed to the town council who in December 1898 met trustees of the Savings Bank regarding the hire of two rooms for a public library. The council

allocated £30 for the purchase of books in 1901 and in 1902 were negotiating for the present site. [5] The Carnegie Library opened in 1904, on the site of single storey cottages and part of Messrs. Walker's yard. Gifts from donors, to whom the minutes periodically recorded the committee's gratitude, brought the stock to 3,000 volumes. The bell from the dismantled Waugh clock and other mementoes found their way there. [6] Evening classes were held in the premises and during the war the lower room was an ARP post. In both buildings the town library only opened twice a week in its early days, but it was well used. Until 1932 books were asked for at the counter, but in that year open access was introduced.

The library remained in the control of the UDC and did not become a branch of the County Library, as did most of the Cumberland town libraries. By modern standards it was small and out-of date, restricted to the upper floor. The building was extended in the early 1970s and in the local government reorganisation of 1974 the library entered the western division of the County Library.

The Mechanics Institute had a subscription newsroom where the London and provincial papers and the chief periodicals could be seen. In 1858 there was a newsroom in the Court House, subscription a guinea a year, and there appear to have been others in the town, on which the records are confused. The Institute also had a library with both reference and circulating sections. It began with some 500 books but had grown to 2,300 in 1858, the year in which General Benson made his bequest. There were in 1874 - "4000 volumes of standard works, carefully chosen, on scientific and general literature", but "no work on politics of the day or any subject of polemical divinity". From the beginning the library and reading room were open six evenings a week and the latter also on Sundays from 1 to 9.30 p.m. [5] There were a number of circulating libraries run by booksellers and printers. A bookselling and stationery business, with a circulating library, situated in the Market Place changed hands in 1784. Books could be ordered for purchase from London.

W. Banks, a printer and bookseller also in the Market Place, forbade borrowers from his library to lend them to others - in the interests of his business. Daniel Fidler, printer at 70 Main Street, had the Religious Lending Library of the Cockermouth Religious Tract Society and acted as librarian. The 1839 catalogue listed about 300 volumes. More recently W.H. Smith had a subscription library in Station Street.

Cockermouth for many years depended for its news, as did the rest of Britain, on manuscript news sheets written in London and distributed throughout the country. By the mid-18th century these had been replaced by printed newspapers, having a large proportion of parliamentary news and taxed at 2d. or 3d. a copy by the government in an effort to prevent the circulation of radical newssheets.

The invention of the steam-driven press in 1814 gave a great impetus to newspaper production. The tax rose to 4d, but then fell when new industry needed the advertising, to be abolished completely by Gladstone. The tax on an advertisement, which had been as much as 4s-6d, disappeared completely in 1853. Although papers became more plentiful, Cockermouth's reading rooms continued and increased, one of the new ones at 16 Main Street continuing into the 20th century. [9]

In addition to the national papers Cockermouth was served by a number of local publications. The first of these was 'The Cumberland Pacquet and Ware's Whitehaven Advertiser', established in 1774 and printed by John Ware in Whitehaven. At first it carried much national and foreign news, including official government notices, and local news was scarce. Gradually local news increased and a copy of 'The Pacquet' gives a good picture of life and interests in the late 18th century. The American War features prominently, with lists of prisoners, details of Whitehaven ships lost, notices of deserters and advertisements for naval recruits. One could find enclosure acts, shipping news, coach time-tables, toll gate lettings, sales of timber, apprentices, strayed horses, shares in ships, but above all patent medicines for all possible complaints. From its inception it was available in the London coffee houses where merchants met to do business.

There were a number of short-lived ventures more germane to Cockermouth. 'The Cockermouth Miscellany' was first published (by T. Bailey and Son) on 11 March 1843 for 2d., selling 1100 copies of the first number. [10] It appeared monthly, was characterised by verbosity and long involved sentences, had letters to the editor, but was probably killed after only 12 issues by the duty on paper and the stamp tax, in spite of the price having risen to 2 Y2d. While it lasted it was truly miscellaneous in its news and items.

In 1854 appeared 'The Cockermouth Miscellany and General Advertiser', this time produced by 1. Naisbit, a printer at 53 Market Place. Available for Id. on the first day of each month it did not last long. The following year there was extant the 'Weekly Spectator and Cockermouth Advertiser', published by Daniel Fidler. In 1857 came 'The Cockermouth Magazine and Advertiser' from W.H. Moss, printer and bookseller of 59 Main Street, again a penny and monthly but a step forward on its predecessors as it illustrated the stories.' The Cockermouth Free Press', produced in Station Street and delivered free to all houses,[11] lasted from 1899 to 1918. 'The Cockermouth Daily Press' began on 31 August 1914 and was probably an early war casualty. 'The Maryport News' described itself as including 'The Cockermouth Chronicle' and was first issued in 1885, surviving the war until 1919. The second war was spanned by 'The Cockermouth and District Advertiser', which suspended publication on 24 December 1940 and reappeared on 7 March 1946, but not for long.

Meanwhile a twice-weekly area paper, *'The Whitehaven News'*, began about 1853 and ten years later had a circulation of over 5000. It claimed to serve not only Cockermouth but the whole of Cumberland from Millom to Carlisle with readers in Dublin, Belfast, Cardiff, etc. It survives to this day, but is now a Whitehaven district paper little read in Cockermouth.

Another survivor, closely linked with Cockermouth, is *'The West Cumberland Times and Star'*, a title taken after an amalgamation in 1967, when *'Star'* was added. *'The West Cumberland Times*' first appeared on 21 March 1874, eight pages for one penny, and was described in the first editorial as

> *"specially devoted to the interests of the district of which Cockermouth is the natural centre and which comprises on the one hand the important maritime and manufacturing towns of Maryport and Workington, and on the other the tourist-haunted and classical region of Keswick."*

It was published by Brash Brothers and printed first in an office raised on the ruins of Mr. McQuhae's workshop in Challoner Street, then later in a building in South Street immediately behind the Tithebam Hotel.

In 1876 the firm bought a house and shop at 29 Station Street with direct access to the printing works behind. The shop, office and editorial rooms which this provided were retained until 1976. Since the amalgamation the editorial work has been done in Workington - the printing had already been moved from the town - and all that remains locally is a small office off Crown Street, although the *'Times and Star'* continues to play an important role in Cockermouth life.

In its early days *'The Times'* came out on Saturday in time for dispatch by the earliest trains and an extra market edition with the latest reports was published at noon on Mondays. Then for a considerable time there were two weekly editions on Wednesday and Saturday, but for some years it has again appeared once a week on Friday.

For a long time the paper carried a serial story which would last many weeks, that starting in No. 1 being *'Mayhew the Mill-Spinner, or The Stolen Will*'. The well-known *'Betty Wilson's Cummerland Teals'* first appeared in the Times. There was a certain amount of national news as well as that of local interest and its early numbers had weekly' features such as *'District News'*, *'Local Gossip'*, *'Local Notes'*, '*Agricultural Jottings'* and of course advertisements and local court cases, with national murder trials in very great detail, uninhibited by modem restrictions on the press. From its first year the paper included letters from correspondents.

A related publication was *'Cousin Charley's Magazine'*. The editor of 'The Times' around the turn of the century was Mr. Bleasdale, who included in the paper a children's section written by him using the name *'Cousin Charley'*. The magazine was quite a bold venture,

with stories, puzzles, jokes, anecdotes, how-to-make items, poems, etc., and was well illustrated with photographs of local children, festival queens, etc. Five shilling books were awarded as prizes for various types of contribution. In its Santa Claus Scheme the magazine made a positive effort to help poor children, organising collections of money and clothing to give Christmas parcels to poor and deserving children throughout West Cumberland, from Egremont to Wigton - new stockings, apple, orange, sweets, a Christmas card, to some a complete outfit of clothes. Cousin Charley arranged an annual concert in the Congregational Schoolroom after which the names of the children were called and they received their parcels. In 1900 over 830 pairs of stockings and more than 1000 articles of clothing were distributed, and also in this year tea was provided for 380 poor children in Workington, 260 in Cockermouth, 118 in Maryport and 140 in Whitehaven. [12]

The magazine first appeared in April 1899 and unfortunately had a short life. It cost little (a penny a month for 16 pages) and the regular feature *'Cousin Charley's Chat'* dealt continually with the magazine's financial difficulties and small sales. Incentives were offered to those who gained new readers, but to no avail. Without increased sales it was not viable and to its producer's great regret it finally' disappeared with the issue of December 1901.

More recently *'The Cockermouth Post'* appeared in September 1984 and after early difficulties, was taken over by Mrs Mary Macdonald in 1986. Since then it has been published regularly and distributed free, becoming a valued source of information and comment in the town. By 2006, the quality of production had been much improved and the paper was produced by Mr. Michael Craine.

Chapter 24

Charities, friendly societies and medical provision

On the wall ofAll Saints Church we may read

A List of Donations and Bequests to the Poor of Cockermouth

In 1693 Terrywastel Piele gave £20, William Wrial gave £10, unknown person gave £5 *For the Purpose*: *The Interest to be paid to the School master of the Free School Cockermouth*

For the purpose of paying the Interest thereof to the Poor of Cockermouth the following people paid charity: Terrywastel Piele gave £7, unknown gave £25, Lancelot Stockdale gave £45, Barbara Relph gave £50 in 1725, Thomas Littledate gave £50 in 1730, Sir Thomas Pangley gave £50 in 1727, Mary Winder gave £100 in 1789, Deborah Ritson gave £94, Mrs Fletcher gave £100, Mr Glaister gave £2.10 yearly.

For *The Interest to be distributed in Bread every Sunday to Poor Persons frequenting the Church* the following people paid charity: Barbara Relph gave £50 in 1725, Richard Baynes gave £100 in 1771, Miss Hudson gave £50 in 1842, Miss Hudson gave £50 in 1849.

For Six Poor Widows or other unmarried Poor Women above 60 years of Age, who may be in want, to live in. The Interest to be divided amongst the Six Poor Women, and for Repairing the House A Dwelling House in Kirkgate Cockermouth was given by Revd Thomas Leathes in 1760. Also Revd Thomas Leathes gave £100 in 1760, Elizabeth Winder gave £50 in 1775, Elizabeth Leathes gave £100 in 1851.

The above Sums are all invested in Government Stock, three per cent consols, except Miss Winders Charity of£50. which is Secured on the Tolls Authorized to be collected in repairing the Road between Cockermouth and Workington.

This Tablet placed in the Church as a Record of the Charities to the Poor of Cockermouth, was Erected and Presented to the Church-wardens by Joseph Fleming, December 24, 1862

Joseph Bowerbank, John Hird Richard Bateman Joseph Fleming; Churchwardens

...

Such legacies as those listed above must have brought comfort to many during the last 200 years. There was not the provision and organisation for living through bad times which we now have. A bad summer, a failed harvest or a great frost which stopped the waterwheels turning meant for many no work, no fire and little food. It was then that such gifts as the 'Castle money' came to the rescue, the interest on the £2000 which Lord Egremont invested in the new market hall. The way in which this £100 or so was

distributed varied from year to year. In 1839 one recipient had £10, six others £5 each and twenty six £2. [1] In 1866 fifty people were given £] each. In a particularly bad winter some 100 years ago 2000 received Christmas dinner soup from the fund. During his lifetime General Wyndham distributed the money at the castle, with cake and wine. In 1866 it was being taken to homes a few days before Christmas. Later responsibility for the charity passed to the vicars and wardens of All Saints and Christ Church.

Another noticeable charity was the Widow's Hospital. The Rev. Thomas Leathes, rector of Plumbland left the house adjoining the Swan in Kirkgate. at the corner of Mackreth Row, as a residence for six poor widows or unmarried women over 60 years of age. (Fig. 65). As shown above he also bequeathed £100. His daughter Elizabeth Winder added £50 (with first claim for the repair of the premises) and another descendant, Elizabeth Leathes, a further £100 nearly a century later. To these was added on enclosure a small allotment of rather poor land. [2]

Unfortunately the house proved too small to accommodate six women and three had to live elsewhere but benefited financially from the legacy. [3] The house was probably occupied in this way into the 20th century. but was then let, and in 1912 an old man lived there for 2s-6d. per week rent, which was paid into the widows' charity. [4]

In addition to the four 'bread money' charities listed there were another two which brought in £10-8s interest, enabling 4 shillings [20p] to be spent each Sunday for poor widows who were at the service, viz. Elizabeth Todd's gift of £30 and Mary English's £20. [5] Another example of conditions attached was that the income from Richard Baynes's £100 should go to poor people who not only attended service but were not in receipt of parish relief. [6]

The 50 shillings (£2.50p] a year from Joseph Glaister was the income from a Maryport Harbour ticket of £200 which he left in his will in 1773, the money being distributed about Christmas time [7] in amounts of not less than 5s [25p].

Early gifts not on the church list include: [8]

Hugh Potter 1669 £52

Sir Orlando Gee 1691 £50

John Mounsey and small legacies 1766 £100

Unknown 1669 £50

Thomas Littledale 1729 £50

There seems to have been quite early grouping of charities for investment. A Charity Commission enquiry stated

> *"In 1784 the whole of the stock belonging to the poor was £427-12s-7d. That sum was then laid out, with other charity money, in the funds and now forms part ofa sum of£1335-6s-11Y2d. stock 3% consols. [9] A further regrouping of Cockermouth charities has been made recently and the interest is distributed at Christmas."*

A charity of a different nature was that of Lord Wharton

> *"The Minister of Cockermouth receives annually, from trustees of Lord Wharton's Charity, 30 Bibles and a proportionate number of expositions of the catechism, and reward books; and he distributes them according to the directions of the donor, amongst poor persons at Cockermouth."* [10]

In addition to income from legacies left by individuals there have been a number of organisations providing help in kind for the poorer members of the community. These have existed for varying periods, according to the needs of the time. The Infant Clothing Society was formed in 1818; the Samaritan Society in 1825 (this by the Methodists to distribute money - £ 15-18s-7d. amongst 60 poor people in 1827); and the Blanket Society and Dorcas Society both in 1826. In 1875 the 'West Cumberland Times mentioned both the Cockermouth and Papcastle Soup and Coal Fund and the Cockermouth and Papcastle Provident and Clothing Society. The latter was in effect a savings club, ladies collecting weekly in their allotted districts and at the end of the year supplying the depositors with clothing or blankets or returning the money to them. The savings gained interest in the Savings Bank and the advantage was that clothing and blankets cost less through the Society - in 1875, 1414 were ordered from the Cockermouth Tweed Company which went to the members at 20 shillings (£1] a pair. [12]

Sometimes help in kind came from an individual, and sometimes it was abused. 'The Pacquet' carried this report in 1783

> *"Last week, Mr. Wilson, hat manufacturer, in Cockermouth, distributed a large quantity of hats amongst the poor of that place; and while exercised in this laudable munificence, had a number of stuff hats stolen from him by some of the objects who were waiting to receive his bounty."* f13]

In 1878 the Children's Aid Society provided breakfast in the Public Hall for 100 of the most destitute and gave stockings and clogs to those needing them. In the same year the Good Templars were also providing breakfasts for poor children. Three years later a Free Breakfast Committee was formed to arrange Sunday breakfasts. [14] After the first world war a Clog and Stocking Fund was established, which in 1925 supplied 170 pairs ofclogs and 177 pairs of stockings at a cost of £58-1 s 5d., rising to a total of 1169 pairs in 1930, the tenth year of its existence. [15]

Those in a position to help obviously supported such organisations and in times of disaster from storm or flood the whole town co-operated in relief funds. [16] Accident, illness or death in a poor family could also mean disaster. There is no doubt that on such occasions help was often given quietly by doctor, parson or a better-off neighbour, but gradually the idea grew of wage-earners joining together in a 'friendly society' designed to help those of its members in temporary need. The most common form of help was in illness or with funeral expenses. Some of these societies were temperance organisations.

In 1829 Cockermouth had four friendly societies and more started before the end of the century. The Oddfellows' Cocker Lodge, for example, opened in 1857. Just 20 years later it had 75 married and 40 single members, who had contributed over £113 in the previous year, making a total well above £2000 in contributions to that date. The 1877 capital was £591-16s-4d and members received 3% interest in addition to sick and funeral benefits. In 1883 the Lodge was meeting in the Public Hall on every fourth Saturday. [17]

In this year there were also meeting the Freemasons, in their own Masonic Lodge Room in Station Street; the Derwent Lodge of Mechanics in the Bush Inn; and the Forresters in the Joiners' Anns Inn, all monthly; while the Sir Wilfrid Lawson Lodge ofGood Templars were to be found every Wednesday in the Public Hall. [18] There were at various periods Druids, Rechabites and a second lodge of Oddfellows. The Cockermouth Good Intent Sick and Funeral Benefit Society began in 1856. [19] A Temperance Sick and Benefit Society is recorded in the Kelly's directory of 1897 and there was by then a branch in the town of the British Women's Temperance Association. A great day for the temperance friendly societies was the annual temperance demonstration and rally at Bray ton Hall, the home of Sir Wilfred Lawson. 16,000 were there in 1875, including three 'tents' of the Order of Rechabites and fifty lodges of Good Templars. Many travelled by special trains, some of which needed two engines, not only from Cockermouth and Cumberland but from all over southern Scotland and northern England. [20]

A more local affair was a great temperance rally held on Pardshaw Crags on 17 June 1857 at which about 14,000 people were present. Askew says that many slept there, refreshments were available, and several times additional supplies of liquid refreshment had to be sent from Cockermouth brewery to the nearby Bee Hive Inn. [21] A year later a procession of Rechabites, Good Templars and Bands of Hope walked from Cockermouth to the Eaglesfield Quaker Meeting House, where 400 had tea. [22]

A new charity, Cockermouth and Papcastle Recreation Charity, was fonned in 1994 to utilise the proceeds from the sale of the Drill Hall to the Territorial Anny. This money had sat with the Official Custodian of Charities since 1922 and the original trustees had neglected to apply for a scheme to make use of it. The new Charities Act of 1992 obliged the Official Custodian to cease to look after this money and so the funds passed to the

new charity, for which there are eight trustees. The charity makes grants twice a year from income, towards the provision of facilities for recreation or other leisure time occupation for the benefit of the inhabitants of Cockermouth and Papcastle. In its first ten years, some £31,000 had been distributed by 101 grants.

An association of townspeople serving a rather different purpose than sick benefit, etc., was the Cockermouth Borough and District Benefit Building Society, established in 1858 to raise, by the subscriptions of members, a fund enabling members to build or purchase houses. Shares were of £30, each obtainable by paying 1 s (5p) a fortnight. Subscriptions were payable at the monthly meeting in the Society's office on Cocker Bridge. This was on the second Monday and payments had to be made by 9 pm. otherwise fines were imposed, 1 d. per share the first time. 2d. for a second offence, 4d. for a third, 8d. for a fourth, Is-4d, for a fifth. This progression did not continue indefinitely, for a fortnight's warning was then given that the interest accrued (5s. per cent per year) would be offered for sale. [23]

There is also record of a Cockermouth Permanent Building Society, founded in 1864, with an office in the Court House buildings. [24] By 2006, such societies cover a larger area and there have been many amalgamations. Some have become banks (Bradford and Bingley, Northern Rock, Halifax, with its agency in Station Street), leaving the Cumberland Building Society as the only true mutual society in the town. Relative to property, in 1858 there were 17 insurance companies with agents in the town - the Atlas, General Life and Fire. Imperial Fire, Liverpool and London, Minerva, Mutual Life, National Life Stock. Norwich Union Life, Pelican Life, Rock, Royal Farmers', Royal Life and Fire, Royal Insurance, Sun Fire and Life, Union, Unity Fire and Life and Western Life. [25] Unfortunately none of the distinctive plaques of these companies are to be seen on Cockermouth buildings.

Another venture was the Cockermouth Co-operative Society, which after only nine years of existence collapsed at the end of 1875, its initial assets of £600 having dwindled to liabilities of £400. [26]

The friendly societies provided financial help in sickness, but there were in the town very interesting movements to give actual medical care. Before these communal efforts, the people of Cockermouth and the surrounding villages relied upon the apothecary's drugs or traditional herbal remedies and upon the bleeding bandaging and bone-setting of a surgeon who had grown into the job through apprenticeship. The apothecary was probably also a grocer, the surgeon likely to be a barber. In 1858, when the Medical Register was established, only a third of British practitioners were qualified. An apothecary's shop in Market Place was offered for sale in 'The Pacquet' in 1779 and in June of that year the same paper carried an announcement that John Steele, surgeon, apothecary and man-midwife had settled in Cockermouth at a shop below the bridge, and that he had a good assortment of medicines which were entirely fresh. [27] The first

provision of an 'official' medical service was the appointment of a midwife by the church in the 18th century. A memorial in All Saints dated 1772 referred to the "midwife to the Church of Cockermouth". One of her duties was to encourage baptism of the infants she helped to deliver. Then in 1780 came the Amicable Society, whose 22-page booklet of Rules and Regulations', 1810 edition, begins

> *"Health, Peace, & Friendship.*
>
> *As it hath pleased our Omnipotent Creator to afflict us, his Creatures, with divers Diseases and bodily Infirmities, that may incapacitate us to endeavour for or obtain necessary Subsistence; we whose Names are hereunto subscribed, conscious of our Duty to that Supreme Being and his Sacred Laws, do hereby firmly unite ourselves for the mutual Help and Assistance of each other, well knowing the uncertainty of health, and the prudent Necessity of using every Means to alleviate those Troubles and Evils we are incident to, do sincerely resolve to raise a FUND, which shall he applied to the Relief of the Members of this Society. ."*

Meetings were held monthly "at the house of John Richardson, Innholder, known by the sign of the Ship, in Cockermouth".

> *"Every member that does not appear between the hours of seven and nine by the town clock of Cockermouth, or send his club [2d.] and box money, shall, for the first offence, forfeit two pence, for the second night fourpence, and for the third night be excluded from the society."*

No sleeping members here! There were fines too for not being quiet when silence was called by the president, these again on an escalating scale for repeated offences, and members were fined for disorderly behaviour. At the general meeting on the last Wednesday in June all paid 1s-4d [7p] for dinner, 6d [212] to the box and 6d for ale, distant members being excused attendance for Is-6d. Any member living in Cockermouth and receiving benefit at the time of the dinner was not forgotten - he "shall have a sufficient dinner and one quart of ale carried to him".

Benefit could not be claimed before a year's membership. If a member died £5 was paid to his widow or heir. If the wife died first, the member himself received £2 "but no member shall receive such sum for more than one wife'. When the member in turn died the balance of £3 was paid to his heir. All members had to attend funerals, but if they were intoxicated on such an occasion they forfeited Is!

In 1785 the Cockermouth Dispensary was established, providing medical and surgical attendance free to the sick poor of Cockermouth, the Gote and Papcastle. This was made possible by the subscriptions of those better off financially. The 32nd report, in 1817, reveals the serious financial state of the Dispensary and appeals for

subscriptions, partly on the grounds of the danger of disease spreading ifnot dealt with, but also pointing out that

> *"The opulent, by being removed from the dwellings of the poor, can but very imperfectly conceive the misery and wretchedness of a sick family; but their humanity may very materially mitigate their distress which requires only to be witnessed in order to be relieved."*

The report also notes the

> *"gradual and remarkable decline in the frequency and malignancy ofcontagious diseases"*

since the foundation of the Dispensary.

The Dispensary was very aware of its success in this field, as the invitation to subscribers to attend the anniversary meeting in 1814 comments:

> *"Every Subscriber who has made it his business to attend these Annual Meetings has had much pleasure in seeing the beneficial effects produced by this most valuable charity; it has become a means of greatly alleviating the afflictions of the poor, and of making this town and its vicinity, perhaps one of the most healthy in the country.*
>
> *There is no Poor Person or Family but what may have Medical Advice, Medicine, and Attendance, also Inoculations, and in Midwifery cases a Midwife is provided."* [28]

The affairs of the Dispensary were in the hands of a committee which included physicians, surgeons and governors. A subscriber of ten guineas or more became a perpetual governor and it was the governors who had the power to recommend cases for treatment. A five guinea subscription carried the right to five votes at an election and to have ten patients 'on the books'; four guineas the right of four votes and eight patients; and so on, down to half a guinea with one patient on the books. Recommendation for treatment was made on a printed form

> *"..... is recommended as a proper Object of the Dispensary by ..... To the acting Surgeon of Cockermouth Dispensary."*

To ensure that only "the sick and maimed poor" benefited, domestic servants and industrial apprentices were excluded from the scheme unless the master could not afford to pay for their treatment. On the other hand, trivial cases and vaccination did not require recommendation and in accidents, emergencies and epidemics the limit to the number treated was ignored.

As in present practice, patients were required to attend the acting surgeon if possible, but if not recommendations had to reach him by Warn for a visit the same day. One rule

stated that "Every patient, when cured or relieved, must return thanks to the subscriber who recommended him, and also to the acting surgeon."

The following are the statistics for two years, ending late July 1815 and 1816:

	1815	1816
Patients recommended and registered	194	202
Cured	179	178
Relieved	3	5
Dead	4	13
Irregular	1	
Remaining on the books	7	6
Midwifery cases	28	24
Vaccinations	86	111
Trivial cases	94	111
Totals	402	448
Subscriptions etc received	£45-1s-1 ½ d	£36-9-0d
Disbursements	£38-0-0 ½ d	£36-18s-0d
	Profit £7-1s-1d	Loss 9s-0d

As time went by the poor were catered for by the Poor Laws and there was a proposal in 1874 [30] that the Dispensary should become the Cockermouth Provident Dispensary, no longer free but with a small weekly charge of Id. A meeting of the original body, held in the Mechanics' Institute, decided to make the change. The charge for anyone family was limited to 4d per week and in 1876 115 received medical attention. The Provident Dispensary was serving a need up to the last war and the beginning of the National Health Service. (Appendix 16)

Meanwhile there was another development in the medical field. In 1875 a rival organisation known as the "Cockermouth Working Men's Society for the Payment of Doctors' bills" was formed, whose members the doctors of the Provident Society were forbidden to attend. The new body's first annual meeting, held in the Court House in January 1876, reported a membership of 152, of whom 29 were in arrears, so it was obviously a regular subscription society like the new Provident. [31]

The cottage hospital was founded in 1915 and had in 1938 - 14 beds and 2 cots, including 2 private wards. [32] In common with most small hospitals of the time, there was provision for operating. Kelly listed 7 physicians and surgeons as being associated with it in that year. Now it caters chiefly for geriatric patients, with 17 beds.

Before the hospital the town had a nursing home in Harford House, Crown Street,

> *"a small hospital given to the town by Mr. Thomas Williamson, a retired shipbuilder from Workington." [33]*

Straw used to be spread on the roadway to lessen the noise of passing carts. The building later became the school clinic and in addition housed the school dental service, antenatal clinics, chiropody, etc. At one time there was also a tuberculosis dispensary. (Fig. 75)

There was for long concern regarding the poor condition of Harford House and discussion as to whether the clinic should find more suitable accommodation elsewhere in the town. Finally it moved to purpose-built premises adjoining the hospital and opened on this site in 1987. The hospital acquired a dialysis unit for kidney patients in 1982.

The possibility of a medical centre in the town to house the three practices was also voiced from time to time. This was never achieved but in April 1992 the practice in Kirkgate moved to a commodious building which had been part of Derwent Mill, to become 'The Derwent Practice'. The other medical practices in town are in South Street and Fitz Road.

We have seen how the mentally handicapped were treated in the old workhouse. From 1932 there was in Dovenby Hall provision by the county for those with varying degrees of mental illness and in recent years a psychiatric unit existed at the West Cumberland Hospital, Hensingham. Much work has been done in recent years to link the residents at Dovenby with the outside world, equipping them to return to more normal living outside the hospital whenever possible. The policy has led to the establishment of a number of small residential units in the community and Dovenby closed completely in 1997. [See Chapter 29: Industry for its future] In Cockermouth itself such a unit was set up in the former URC building in September 1990, with accommodation for a warden and ten residents.

There are in the town a number of day groups for those with learning difficulties, groups for those with problems (e.g. Chest, Heart and Stroke Association); for the elderly or frail who appreciate a day visiting a centre for company and a cbange, with a meal and transport provided; and Age Concern's drop-in-centre and other activities for the elderly.

In addition to day centres there are a number of residential homes providing a varying degree of independence, but with the benefit of residential wardens: - Abbeyfield, Kirklands, Manor Court, Victoria Court etc.

Chapter 25

Leisure Activities

We regard life a hundred years ago as being more leisurely than today, and so it was if we think of the speed of living. Working hours were, however, longer and a five-day week unheard of, yet we have seen that there was a - considerable amount of time given to further education and various societies. In this chapter we will look further at the ways in which Cockermouth people spent their leisure and sought entertainment, at what has been 'going on' in the town during the last hundred years and at what is happening today.

In addition to the lectures mentioned when considering further education, there have for long been talks connected with church societies in the town. Over 100 years ago Christ Church ran a series of Lent Lectures, presumably of a religious nature, but groups like the Wesley (later Methodist) Guild, the Congregational Christian Endeavour and the Friends' Adult School covered a wider field, as did Toc H which used to meet in the former WEA room in Regent House. The churches provided many societies and activities, and still do - missionary organisations, Bible classes, Band of Hope meetings, Sunday school treats, bell ringers' suppers, choir outings, study groups, prayer groups, etc. Some of these continue to this day: others, such as the Wesleyan Field Club and the Wesleyan Cycling Club, have been superseded.

A number of the more cruel entertainments of earlier days have disappeared. Market Day brought a dancing bear to the town until the 1920s. a huge beer-drinking animal, "all of seven feet", which toured the towns of West Cumberland. [1] The barrel organ monkey was a feature of town life until much later. (Plate 11). Cock-fighting, badger-baiting and bull-baiting were banned by law in 1855, although they lingered on in isolated places. Bull-baiting had a serious purpose in addition to its entertainment value. Baiting was considered to make the beef more tender. Boroughs and market towns were responsible for providing a bull-ring, usually set in a boulder. [2] The Court Leet in 1685 passed the sentence

> *"We amerce: John Laverauke for slaughtering a bull without baiting 3s. 4d."*

and three years later the town was told

> *"Whereas the Burrow is liable to an amercyment for want of a rope and furniture to Bait a Bull withal, we do order and appoint the BaiHffand Bailiffs successively to buy rope rings and what's needful for the same. "[*3]

Cockermouth's otter hounds have been disbanded. The pack, formed about 1830, was kept in a small building to the north of the old railway track near Little Mill. Otter hunting was a summer sport. The ten couples of hounds in the Cockermouth pack in 1938

hunted on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays in the Keswick, Bassenthwaite Lake and Cockermouth areas respectively. [4]

The Beagles, which hunted the hare in winter, were kennelled in Well Field near Windmill Lane [5] and they too have been disbanded.

The local fox-hunting pack, the Melbreak, continues to work the Lorton, Buttermere and Loweswater area. They hunt from mid-September until the end of March and are available for call-out during April if young lambs are being taken. [6] During the season the hounds are kept at Miller Place in the Lorton Valley and at other times find homes with people in the area who take responsibility for exercising them.

Horse-racing was once a feature of town life. In 1681 the Court Leet ruled:

> *"The 3rd. of May we appoint for the running of John Gee, Esq., free gift of a saddle on Harrot ten stone weight".* [7]

There was formerly trotting and a press reference in 1876 describes the Cockermouth Steeplechase as an annual event. [8] Hound-trailing, sheep dog trials and an occasional gymkhana are now held in a field east of Derwent School. In the same place the annual agricultural show took place, a longstanding event, but more recently moved to the Fjtz. In 1849, a prize of 30s was given at the show for "the farmer's manservant who has lived the greatest number of years in one situation to the perfect satisfaction of his employer". It went to Peter Murray, for 50 years at Ribton, and it spoke well for the farmer, Ostle Mordaunt, that the prize for the longest serving woman also went to Ribton, to Margaret Little with over 27 years. Another prize not awarded today was for "the labourer in husbandry who has brought up the greatest number of legitimate children without parish relief'.

The £2 was shared between James Kendal of High Mosser and Matthew Gregg of Gilcrux, who tied with 11 each. [9]

The Cockermouth Agricultural Show is an annual event, while more specialised are the Fur and Feather Society, the Beekeepers' Association, the Gardeners' Society (there was a Flower, Fruit and Vegetable Society back in 1879) and the Anglers' association. Cockermouth residents may fish from Derwent (Gote) Bridge to Double Mills (YHA) at a concession rate of £3 a season.

The pools of the rivers have always been the centres for swimming. Bathing facilities in Harris Park were considered in 1908-9 and 1933 but it was not until 1978 that the town acquired a pool, built on Deer Orchard adjacent to the Drill Hall, now developed as a sports centre. This final success was due to the efforts of a voluntary group, the Swimming Pool Association, which consistently refused to be thwarted by financial difficulties and raised £60,000 towards the total cost of £187,000. Thomas Annstrong Ltd. completed the building in time for Princess Alexandra to open it on 18 May 1978.

The district lends itself to other natural outdoor pursuits such as fell walking and rock climbing. The Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team was fonned in 1953 to cover the Buttermere and Ennerdale valleys. Beginning with very little equipment and unreliable ancient transport, garaged in the Market Hall, the team of some 40 members now has state-of-the art facilities in a new purpose-built building on the Station Road car park adjacent to the new fire station - a move required by the arrival of Sainsbury's supennarket and need for more space. The move in 2002 was substantially funded by Sport England but well supported by local donations. The team now operates with three well equipped vehicles, radio communication and search dogs. The new building received Cockermouth Civic Trust's Award for development in sympathy with the town as a whole.

The running costs are currently about £25,000 per year (team members are unpaid, but the life of equipment is short) are provided by local councils, organisations and individuals as voluntary gifts. In its first 25 years Cockermouth Mountain Rescue Team was called out 233 times to a variety of incidents, from twisted ankles to fatalities, but the current call-out rate was 47 in 2004 alone (in two incidents the casualty was dead, in 20 cases injured). The tragic deaths of two of its members, Jock Thompson and Mike Stephenson, while on a training exercise near Buttennere in 1969, will long be remembered. [10]

Mockerkin Tarn is the local rendezvous for skating on the rare occasions when it is sufficiently frozen - an event of decreasing frequency. But up to about 1950 there was skating on Brown's Tarn opposite Scales Fann on the Brigham road and early in the century on the frog pond, the clay pits in the trees beyond Wyndham House. In 1885 a very severe frost enabled an ice house to be built in Harris Park with blocks cut from the river.

Of other outdoor activities, cycling became popular and fashionable in the 1890s, for women as well as men, and at the turn of the century there was the Cockermouth Cycling Club, in addition to the Wesleyan Club already mentioned. There have been athletic sports on Fairfield, then on school fields, and now the Amateur Sports Association, a very successful club, has acquired its own purpose built track on the former town tip at Tarn Close. The Rugby Club celebrated its centenary in 1977-8 and originally playing at Laithwaite, in the western end of the town, now moved to the fields of the old Grammar School, where a modem club-house has also been built.

There has been a variety of soccer clubs, Deer Orchard being the present one, using the Wakefield Road ground; and the Cockermouth Cricket Club at Sandair was founded in 1823 and is the oldest in the old Cumberland County. One could play bowls (and quoits) at a number of inns and the public green at Town Head is recalled by the Bowling Green Inn in St. Helen's Street - (now gone). The castle bowling green was once open to the public. Now one may bowl on the Croftside green or in Harris Park. Tennis courts

formerly occupied the site of the Methodist Church and the garage in Lorton Street. Cockermouth Golf Club has a course on the hill-top between the Higham road and Embleton, but at one time golf was played below the new Riverdale Estate, on land recently added to the park. There was a pavilion in the centre of this area and" the course could be approached by a footbridge at Rubby Banks Mill. Also out-of-doors were a variety of picnics and works outings. The former involved sports, archery, dancing, bands, etc., and were often held on the Lands with the Earl's permission, perhaps purely a gala day or planned to raise money for some project.

Outings tended to be to the Solway coast. For a short time regattas were held at the northern end of Bassenthwaite Lake, one of the entertainments being to ship horses to the middle of the lake in barges and then leave them to swim for the shore. [11] The first of these shows was in 1780, but they were soon superseded by Joseph Pocklington's great displays on Derwentwater.

The men of the town might spend their spare time in the Volunteers. We have examined in an earlier chapter the methods of raising an army up to the passing of the Militia Act in 1757 which made service compulsory, a subsequent act in 1852 restoring the voluntary basis - hence 'The Volunteers'. They were replaced by the Territorial or Reserve Forces in 1907, by which time the country had a standing army.

Locally we find in the 18th century notice being given in the press for the militia to report for 14 days' training in August. under penalty of£20 fine or six months' imprisonment. [12] The armoury of the local branch of the Cumberland and Westmorland Yeomanry was the small building until recently, used as the Information Centre [Plate 8], from which the men drilled on the neighbouring area now the Riverside Car Park or marched to the Lands below the castle. [13] Then in 1886 came the indoor accommodation of the Drill Hall.

The first records ofa theatre in the town are of productions in the Sun Inn barn near the bottom of Kirkgate. Here Thomas Holecroft, famous actor and literary figure and friend of William Hazlitt and Charles Lamb, played in 1775. [14] A century later there was drama in the Freemasons' Hall and in the Apple Tree Hotel. Travelling companies used to erect their own theatres in Fairfield. Early in the 20th century, in a large wooden structure, 'Peg o'the Pavement', 'The Collier's Dying Child', 'Maria Martin' and other tear-jerkers were played to packed houses. [15]

Biddall's cinematograph exhibition visited F airfield in 1910, the council charging 30s. a week for the two or three weeks it was here. In 1913 the UDC approved a plan for the building ofa picture hall in High Sand Lane. This never materialised and the following year they passed the plans of the Grand Theatre and Cinema Co. Ltd. for the Station Road building. [16]

The silent films were accompanied on the piano for many years by Gladys Duffield, remembered by many for her playing at children's dancing classes. (She walked from Keswick to London in 1913 with the National Non-Militant Women's Suffrage Pilgrimage.) The first 'talkie' screened in Cockermouth was the all-talking, singing and dancing 'Fox Movietone Follies of 1929' on 19 May 1930. Later the same month a cow strayed from the auction and climbed the theatre steps. In 1913 Will Fyfe and Harry Lauder appeared on the stage. Films eventually shared the building with Bingo, then there was Bingo only, until even this finished late in 1978. The Grand Theatre was also used for variety shows and other events put on in the town, including for many years the Grammar School prize-giving.

Groups which have brought music into the life of the town and then ceased to exist include the Cockermouth Operatic Society, the Cockermouth Glee Society, the Tonic Solfa Class and the Cockermouth Male Voice Choir. [17] The Cockermouth Harmonic Society, which continues, presented its 66th concert in the Grand Theatre in 1921, which puts its formation in the middle of the 19th century. On this occasion there were 140 in the orchestra and chorus. Numbers are less now, but it is still an active group and after a winter's practising takes part each year in the Cumberland Rural Choirs performance usually in Carlisle.

The Mechanics Band formed in 1875, was revived in the 1970s after a long lapse. By 1978 the membership had risen to 20 senior and 14 junior players and the band has again become a part of the life of Cockermouth. The town could at one time provide three bands - the Mechanics', Borough and Industrial School. Hardly in the same class, but years ago part of Cockermouth’s entertainment, were the groups of travelling musicians and, before 1914, the German bands to be heard in the streets. [18] Two other recent developments in the musical life of the town must be mentioned. The Castlegate Singers, a ladies' choir formed in 1976 and based on the Derwent Centre, has won considerable repute in a short time and is in demand for concerts in the district. Also at the Centre instrumental teaching is available and many Cockermouth residents now learn the piano, violin, cello, flute, clarinet, etc. The schools Music Centre brings together younger musicians on a Saturday morning.

The revived Band, the Singers and the instrumentalists, together with the 'Music in All Saints' evenings and the long-standing Harmonic, have brought music to a prominent place in the leisure time activities of Cockermouth.

Keep-fit classes are run for both sexes, no new thing, for there were PT classes for young people in the Assembly Rooms before the first war. [19] Sports in different centres in the town include badminton, squash and fencing. Between the wars one could play billiards in the Assembly Rooms, organised by Charnley of Lancaster who had halls in a number of West Cumberland towns. [20]

In 1779 'The Pacquet' announced

> *"COCKERMOUTH ASSEMBLIES. The Next ASSEMBLY at the SUN INN, Cockermouth, will be on Tuesday the 26th. of JANUARY inst. and the other Three Assemblies which finish the Season, will be on the 2nd. and 30th. of March, and 27th. April, being the Tuesdays nearest the Full Moon; which, it is hoped, will he a convenience to the neighbouring Ladies and Gentlemen, who may choose to honour the Assembly with their Presence. Every Endeavour will be used to render the Meeting perfectly agreeable."* [21]

Some activities were restricted in their membership, such as the numerous annual dinners or suppers for employees in mills or shops and the trade associations such as the Grocers' Association. The town's Chamber of Trade was inaugurated at a dinner in 1934. [22] There are clubs of many kinds - British Legion (recently moved from the Skinners Arms in Kirkgate to the Sun in Market Place), Young Farmers, Drivers, etc. Of the political associations, the Conservatives had an office in Station Street and a reading room in Main Street moving to the larger premises at 7 Main Street (formerly a bank and offices) in 1925. The Liberal Association was once based in Market Place and the Labour Party used the former premises of the Boot and Shoe Operatives Union in Lorton Street.

There have been or still are Cubs and Scouts, Brownies and Guides, Boys Brigade and Girls' White Ribbon, and the usual groups found in towns of Rotary etc. One may serve the community of women through the Women's Voluntary Service or by giving time to Oxfam, Save the Children, Age Concern etc. One may serve by joining first-aid classes and associations, as one could as early as 1907 by paying 2s-6d [12 Yzp] for a course taken by Dr. Mitchell.

In the town's large rooms - the Globe Assembly Room, the Freemasons' Hall in Main Street and the Royal Assembly Room, and later the Public Hall - and in a number of smaller centres, there was obviously something to suit all tastes and still is. One could go to a 'penny' reading' of recitations and solos in the schoolroom at Papcastle, listen to the Cockermouth Entertainment Society providing vocal and instrumental entertainment, attend the concerts of the Catch-my-Pal Society in the Bridge Street Rooms, take part in the spelling bees which became popular in the late 1870s, or watch a pantomime. One could help to provide an outing for the workhouse children by attending the Cockermouth Benevolent Society's entertainment. One could from 1883 relax in the Convivial Club or between the wars use one's mind in the League of Nations Union. [23] One may join the Bridge Club or visit the occasional exhibition. In 1936 there was an exhibition of relics and curios in All Saints Rooms [24] and more recently the Civic Trust staged a Wordsworth Exhibition in 1970 and a Bygones Exhibition in 1973 and several times since.

The Civic Trust, formed in 1967 with the aim "to make Cockermouth a better place in which to live, both now and in the future", has a current membership of around 200. In addition to the lecture programme provided each winter, it has a special interest in the character, appearance and development of Cockermouth, working through the councils and the Allerdale Planning Department. Its activities cover a wide field, including the founding of the information office (with the Chamber of Trade) a photographic record of the town, tidying up projects, tree planting and an annual outing for members. It has now taken on the responsibility for updating and publication of the author's books as necessary.

Occasionally a circus would visit Cockermouth - Buffalo Bill's, Bronco Bill's, Smart's, Sanger's have all been. [25] (the last was in 1995). In June 1921 a passing attraction was a visit by Ingham and Little's Aviation Co. who for a few days offered flights from Mr. Elliott's field past the hospital. From lOam until dusk two passengers at a time were taken up for 10s-6d. [52 ½ p] each. [26] Then there were the celebrations - royal events, armistices, etc. - excuses for a town holiday and general enjoyment. 100 years ago there was an annual holiday on the Queen's birthday, but this was a minor event compared with the excitement on 21st June 1887 in honour of her Jubilee.

A committee of ratepayers arranged church services, processions, bands, food and games a concert in the Public Hall and a ball in the Drill Hall. Add to these the firing of a salute, speeches and toasts, bellringing, nuts, Jubilee mugs and medals, bunting and flags and Cockermouth's celebration was complete. [27] Unfortunately the day was sultry and uncomfortable and when late at night thousands assembled in the Castlegate and St. Helen's area to see the fireworks and beacon fires, the latter were hardly visible because of haze and the lightness ofa June evening.

Over the signature of lsaac Mitchell, chairman of the committee, a telegram was sent to the Queen

> *"The inhabitants of Cockermouth. in public meeting assembled, congratulate her Majesty on this day, and wish her long life and happiness."*

Also a Jubilee Anthem, set to the tune of the National Anthem, was written by Rev. J. T. Pollock.

More substantial reminders of the occasion are the two bridges opened in that year -the Quaker Footbridge on Jubilee Day and Waterloo Bridge three days earlier, Also on Jubilee Day the foundation of Victoria Jubilee Bridge was laid.

This day set the pattern for similar events in later years -Victoria's Diamond Jubilee [Plate 31], George V's Silver Jubilee (when floodlighting of the town hall, the war memorial and All Saints tower was an added feature and 'Miss Cockermouth' took a hand in the celebrations), [28] coronations, etc.

A country town never finds a shortage of things to celebrate and, in common with the rest of the country, Cockermouth had hiring fairs, Halloween, young folks' days, etc., which we cannot describe here. Some purely local events are however worth noting. In 1937 a pageant of 2,000 years of the town's history was opened by Sir Hugh Walpole and many people still living took part in one or other of the episodes -the Romans. the Normans, Robert Bruce at Cockermouth Castle, the visit of Mary Queen of Scots, Cockermouth Fair and Election in 1831, T'Shepherds' Meet and the concluding Epilogue. [29]

Wordsworth has given the town opportunities to celebrate. On his birthday, 7 April, in 1896 the band, councillors, M.P. and many townspeople gathered in Harris Park on a dull and showery afternoon for the unveiling of the granite drinking fountain surmounted by the bronze figure of a child, a memorial to the poet and his sister Dorothy. [30] (Plate 30)

In] 950 the town celebrated the centenary of the poet's death, then in 1970 came the 200th anniversary of his birth. A gathering in Wordsworth House was followed by the unveiling of a bust of William on a plot of ground facing the house. This was a gift to the town by Rotary, Round Table and the Lions Club and the unveiling was by the poet's great-great-grandson Lt.-Col. J. G. Wordsworth. (In 1986 the Round Table was responsible for landscaping the surrounding area) In the afternoon primary school children walked from Fairfield to the memorial in the park carrying daffodils which they placed at the foot of the statue, as their predecessors had done over 70 years earlier.

The U.D.C. appealed for money to buy 10,000 daffodil bulbs to plant on the approaches to the town as part of the celebration. The response was sufficient to buy 27,0001 These were planted by school children and are enjoyed every spring. Unfortunately they were not enjoyed on 7 April 1970, for one of three things that went wrong in the commemoration was that the bulbs flowered about three weeks after the birthday. The following year they bloomed a week before the 7th April! The other mishaps were that the BBC filmed the ceremony in the park but the programme appeared on BBC 2 which could not be received in the town at that time; and the Post Office celebrated the event by a commemorative stamp which carried a picture of Grasmere -for which they apologised.

Each year the town has a carnival. At the beginning of the century this was Cousin Charley's Day. There were queens and sports, and the day was rounded off with evening entertainments in the Drill Hall and the Public Hall. [31] In 1901 an added attraction was a balloon. The place which this carnival held in the life of a Cockermouth child is illustrated by the reply given to a schools inspector who asked which were the principal towns and what they were celebrated for, to receive the reply that Carlisle was noted for its mills, Workington for its ironworks, Whitehaven for its collieries, Cleator Moor for its ore mines and Cockermouth for Cousin Charley's Day. [32]

The present-day carnival begins with a Procession. from Fairfield via Lorton Street, Kirkgate and Main Street to the Memorial Gardens (until recently to Sandair) for sports, refreshments, etc.

In the 19th century many Cockermouth people had never been further than ten miles from home, some had never seen the sea. Now this isolation has completely broken down and, with the rest of the country, we holiday near and far. A Cockermouth man, Mr. J. Cook, pioneered the way when in 1905 he arranged the first tour of the Cumberland Travel Association, using the name 'Derwent Allerdale' to avoid confusion with a better known tour operator! He took 35 people from all over the county to Switzerland for a highly successful fortnight's holiday based on Lucerne, so successful that immediately on his return he began planning an autumn tour to the Channel Islands. [33]

Coming to more recent times, the town never misses an opportunity to celebrate. The Wedding of Prince Charles and Diana in July 1981, was an excuse for Main Street dancing, races, etc., and for a bonfire on Skiddaw. Then in the spring of 1989 the town commemorated the bi-centenary of the Mutiny on the Bounty, in which Fletcher Christian, born at nearby Moorland Close, played a leading part. In April 1982 the television programme "It's a Knockout" was staged in the Memorial Gardens and on and in the River Derwent alongside. The European Year of Tourism in 1990 was celebrated by various outdoor events. 'The Carnival continues and since the mid 1980's the Round Table 'Donkey Derby' held on August Bank Holiday Monday has been a regular feature. The Christmas lights have developed from 1985 onwards into a spectacular and much appreciated feature of town life, the 1986 'switch-on' by pop star, David Essex attracting some 10,000 people to Main Street.

Some earlier activities have been revived. Since 1990 there have been occasional visits by a circus. Totally different, the Harmonic Society, founded in 1867, has become active again after a lapse of several years. In 1991 a passion play was staged by local people and is becoming an annual event.

Gatherings which continue include the Agricultural Show, the Gardeners' Society Show, the Fur and Feather Society's Show and Sheep Dog Trials. Amongst societies which continue are Rotary, Round Table and the Lions (with the corresponding ladies' groups), the Soroptomists, Probus and the British Legion. Some of these groups, along with Age Concern, provide outings and entertainments for the elderly and others. Some women belong to Women's Institutes in neighbouring villages.

A number of new societies have been formed in recent years - the Derwent Railway Society (based in Cockermouth), Castlegate Singers, the West Cumberland Lacemakers (based in Cockermouth), a local history group, Cockermouth Music Society, Kirkgate Cinema Club, etc. Outstanding has been the development of the Cockermouth Amateur Dramatics Society (CADS), staging a wide variety of drama

winning county trophies. The first event in the new Kirkgate Centre was their performance of "Much Ado About Nothing" in January 1995.

Considered in Chapter 40 is a completely new kind of leisure activity for the town, resulting from its twinning with Marvejols.

Cycling

More recently there has been a resurgence nationally of cycling and the development of cycleways and cycle routes. Cockermouth is on the national routes developed by Sustrans - the coast to coast routes both directly route pass through the town. The line of the old railway has also been developed as a footpath and cycle route from Low Road to the cemetery and is now called the Greenway.

Chapter 26

Early Christian Sites

Christianity probably first came to Cumberland through members of the Roman army, but it is not until the 7th century that references to the faith occur. At the end of this century the Derwent was adopted as the northern boundary of the great Archdeaconry of Richmond in the Diocese of York and when in 1133 Henry I made Carlisle a see, it became the division between Carlisle and York; then in the 16th century between Carlisle and Chester until Carlisle was extended southwards in 1856. Thus for a long time Bridekirk with Papcastle was in one diocese and Brigham and its chapelry of Cockermouth in another, with little Setmurthv claiming the distinction of being the most northerly chapel in the Chester diocese.

By the early 1200s there were at least 11 monasteries and nunneries in Cumbria, whose story must be sought elsewhere. In 1233 the Dominican or Black Friars settled in Carlisle and there is a tradition that they founded in Cockermouth the hospice of St. Leonard about 1285, hence the reference "*add caput ville versus capeUa sancti Leonardi*." [1]. A hospice was a rest house and place of prayer for travellers, especially before undertaking a dangerous part of a journey. The small building in Spittal Ings referred to as 'the hospice' was in fact an early 19th century industrial building, but it may indicate that the hospice was close by, especially as just south of this site a beck was once crossed by 'Black Friars Bridge' (Fig. 63). A hospice here would be near the crossing of the Derwent or, if the Derwent did once flow through the site of Walker's factory, would be between crossings of the Derwent and Cocker. The old station site was called St. Leonard's and the name is perpetuated in St. Leonard's Close east of the Gote.

At the other end of the town was St. Helen's chapeL This chapel may have been in an early isolated settlement judging from a reference in 1437 to *"unius grangie & j claus iuxta calellam* see Elene". [2]

There were a number of holy wells in the district, including one at St. Helen's St. Anthony's well by the Derwent upstream from the town and the Nun's Well referred to by Wordsworth, on the A66 side of Brigham vicarage. St Ringan's (Ninian's) Well on Fangs Brow, now a drinking trough, was a medicinal spring.

Cockermouth has nothing to show in ancient crosses or grave slabs, but the mother church at Brigham has several examples, as have the churches at Bridekirk, Clifton, Dean, Dearham, Lamplugh etc. The Brigham remains show that there was a church there long before the "*Chaunterie of Seynte Michell within the parische churche of Brigham"* was founded by Thomas de Burgh in the early 14th century. The parish extended from the Marron to Bassenthwaite Lake and from the Derwent to Honister; in

the 12th and 13 th centuries chapels of ease were built in Cockermouth, Buttermere, Embleton, Lorton, Mosser, Setmurthy and Wythop. Lord Lonsdale eventually became patron of Brigham and of all the chapels in the parish. Just outside the mother parish, Isel Church possessed the famous triskele stone, dating from before, possibly well before 900AD. This unique stone, relating to the beginning of Christianity in West Cumbria, was stolen from the church in 1986. The Percy papers mention in 1508 a settlement at Rannerdale, with a chapel dedicated to the Blessed Mary Magdalene, but settlement and chapel have disappeared. [3] Even after the new chapels were erected, burials had to be at the mother church - hence the 'corpse roads' skirting the fells.

Chapter 27

Cockermouth's Early Churches

The Anglican churches

A survey of church possessions ordered in 1552 by Edward VI to check unauthorised spoilation since the survey of Henry VIII makes no mention of Cockermouth, although Brigham and Embleton are included. There is a tradition however, that a church was built by Walde of contemporary with the castle and it has been suggested that William de Fortibus enlarged or rebuilt it about 1220. It was certainly rebuilt in the reign of Edward III (1327-77), but whether this was the second or third on the site is not known. When in 1395 Henry Percy endowed a chantry in the chapel of All Saints the dedication had already been changed from the earlier one of St. Mary. [J] The 14th century building was reputed to have been "the most ancient and beautiful specimen of Gothic architecture in the North of England". [2]

The 1711 Church

The Gothic building was demolished in 1711 except for the tower, which was incorporated in a new church which, judging from prints of the time was very unattractive. One hundred feet long [131m] (the present church is 122 feet) it had a gallery round three sides. Enlargement was already being considered in 1749. A clock and chimes and a new peal of bells were installed in 1777 and interior alterations were made before the end of the century to accommodate the children of the Charity and Sunday Schools. [3]

A subscription was raised in 1817 for a "Gallery to be erected above the Communion Table upon which an Organ be placed and for the better accommodation of the Singers". [4] This may have been a barrel organ similar to one in Bridekirk Old Church which played 14 hymns and psalms, or may have been a proper pipe organ. The sittings were increased to about a thousand.

There are frequent references in the vestry minutes to the maintenance of the fabric roughcasting outside, whitewashing inside, and in 1831 an order to the churchwardens that they "cause the church to be thoroughly cleansed, and use such other means as they may consider to be most advisable for curing the dry rot and stopping the growth of fungus". In 1793 the wardens were told "to procure Iron pipes to be put at the bottom of the present Lead ones on the sides of the Church at a sufficient height to prevent the Lead from being cut away and wasted", so lead was valuable then. About the same time references were made to repairing the 'stairs' leading to the church from the north side.

The 1850 Fire

Then in 1850 disaster struck. To quote from the 'Pacquet' [5]

"On the morning of Friday, the 15th day of November, 1850, the Church at Cockermouth was destroyed by Fire. About half-past one in the morning Police Officer Chapman whilst passing over Cocker Bridge discovered sparks issuing from the Church and he immediately called up several persons and an alarm was instantly spread throughout the town. In a short time an immense concourse of people had assembled round the scene of the conflagration but the fire at that time had attained such a height as to bid defiance to all human exertions.

It is thought the Fire originated in the Steeple End, and from the immense quantity of wood the flames spread with frightful rapidity demolishing the peal of six Bells, the Organ, Church Clock, Chimes, Chandeliers, galleries, pulpit, pews, paintings near the altar, Marble Monuments, everything in short but the bare walls, and these were much injured.

Several of the officials, at great personal risk, rushed into the Church and secured the Register and other books, and these together with the surplices, gown, Pulpit and Reading desk cushions, Church Prayer Book and Bible, and a few private cushions and hooks were the only articles snatched from the devouring elements. A public meeting of the Inhabitants was held the same evening .... a Community of Investigation was appointed ... to inquire into the origin of the Fire and to co-operate with the Churchwardens in taking steps most likely to raise funds for building another Church."

Services were transferred to the General Sunday School, as shown by the record

"Jonathan Denwood. labourer, and Sarah Kelly of Working ton. Banns published for the third time on Sunday, November 17th., in the General Sunday School, the Church having been destroyed by fire the Friday previous." [6]

Fortunately the church plate was saved, for the verger, grandfather of the late Mr. Joseph Mounsey (the grocer at 72 Main Street), was in the habit of taking it home for safety. In Mr. Mounsey's words

"It was undemeath my grandfather'S bed in a baize-lined box. He used to have to be verger and sexton and different things for the church, being a very keen churchman. When the church silver was needed for communion it was carried up there, used, brought back, cleaned and stored."

With one exception the marble monuments were destroyed, including two recording donations to the poor and seven memorial tablets.

Rebuilding

Although the town lost little time in considering rebuilding, in the event the task led to a great deal of dissension. The building committee selected six designs from the many submitted and asked a York architect to make the final choice. Commenting in a full

report on size, cost, appearance, etc., he selected one by Hay of Liverpool, not one of the committee's six. There was immediately trouble because a Mr. Wood on the committee favoured a design submitted by his cousin. The final choice was of a plan by Joseph Clarke of London, with one dissenter - Mr. Wood.

The whole affair seems to have been very acrimonious, probably arising from the need to disturb graves. In 1851 Edward Waugh produced a 26-page printed statement 'To the Ratepayers of Cockermouth' defending himself as secretary of the committee against attacks made on him and stating his and the committee's aims to be a beautiful church, with good accommodation and minimum disturbance of graves and expense. Feeling must have run very high, for he wrote

> *"They talk about desecration of graves - can that be an excuse for their conduct, when by lawless proceedings - followed by a lawless mob - they committed on Thursday last, acts of desecration, compared with which the removal of 100 graves would be mildness itself, and then there was George Cape, brawling for an hour in the graveyard, offering vulgar bets to gentlemen, as ifhe were on a race course."* [7]

There were further complaints after building of incompleted work, reduction ofsittings, etc., which went in 1857 before Chancellor Burton as the 'Cockermouth Church Case'.

THE PRESENT CHURCH

The foundation stone of the present Early English church was laid by Archdeacon Headlam on 28th February 1852 and the completed building consecrated by the Bishop of Chester, Dr. Graham, on 15 June 1854. The church had sittings for 750 and cost £7, 143-12s-7d including £300 for the organ, £600 for the bells and £240 for the clock and chimes. With a total length of 122 feet, it has a nave roof 60 feet high and a spire of about 90 feet surmounting a tower of the same height. The pulpit and font are of Caen stone. The side walls have corbels for the possible addition of galleries.

The east window, inserted in 1853 at a cost of £300 is a Wordsworth memorial, the west window a memorial to Edward Waugh, MP 1880-85. There are other memorial windows and a number of wall tablets and brasses, including those to Mitchells, Thomas Wilson, Andrew Green Thompson and General Sir Henry Wyndham, this last giving a detailed account of his career. A painted board on the NE pier records the town's gratitude to the Earl of Lonsdale for appointing an Assistant Curate. A tablet on the north wall lists charities.

The Lady Chapel dates from 1925, with 1937 alterations. The nails used in 1850-2 to fix the roofing slates having corroded, extensive repairs were carried out in 1979.

THE BELLS AND CLOCK

Originally there were two bells and when a third was added they became known as the great, middle and little bells. The church records for 1672 have "*For mending of the great bell and for beare (beer) for yem that tooke it downe 7s-7d*."

The following year were recorded:

> *Ffor taking the Greater Bell out of the earth and removing the old bell into its frame: 5s-0d*
>
> *To George Jeffrey for a new gudgeon for the old bell and for a locke to the quire doore and other things: 8s-7d*
>
> *To John Atkinson for making ye clock strike on the old bell: 2s-0d*
>
> *To Richard Peirson Geo Peirson and Jo Hudson for drinks and for their ringing 29th. May and 5th. Nov. 3s-6d*
>
> *In 1691 victory celebrations were rung*
>
> *Paid ringers at ye taking of Athlone: 3s-0d*
>
> *Paid ringers at ye taking of Limerick: 4s-0d*
>
> *Paid at ye news of Happy return of ye King to England: 3s-0d*

The existing tower being incorporated in the 1711 building the same bells presumably continued in use until the new peal of 1777. In 1817 "*two of the Bells (the second and third) having some time ago been cracked or received such injury as entirely to spoil their tone and render them useless",* the vestry directed the churchwardens to use money from the church rate to "get them replaced by two other bells ofproper tone and dimensions".

The wardens were also told to

> *"engage a set of proper persons … to undertake the office of Ringers and who shall ring the bells upon all usual occasions and be paid a yearly salary out of the Ch. rate and that six handbells be procured by the Chwardens to be used in instructing the ringers."*

The six 1777 bells were destroyed in the fire and the new church has eight. At one time they played well-known tunes every three hours. [8] Early in the 19th century it was written that when approaching the town "*on the right the old church stands high above the river, with its barn-like walls and square tower, from which come the sweet tones of chimes ringing the air of'Home, Sweet Home'*" [9]. There is a story told of Betty Waif [10] who became lost after dark on Slate Fell. Sitting down to rest she heard the church bells and by their help found her way back to the town. As a thanksgiving and to help others

who might get lost she left a legacy to provide £2 a year to have the bell rung from 7.00 to 7.05 pm. in the darkest quarter of the year, Hallowe'en November 1st to Candlemas February 2nd. When this began is not known, but the evening bell was being rung when Askew wrote in 1866 and still in Bulmer's time of 1883. The eight ringers took a week each. Another tradition is that it was a man who was lost, but Betty is perpetuated in Betty Waifs's Stone, a large boulder on which she was sitting when the bells began to ring. Askew is precise in his location of it - over the stile at the first gate on the right before coming to S1. Helen's Tollgate, a good road over the Annfield estate leads to the stone, which is 26 paces from the gate in the west hedge of a field.

Going back some two hundred years before Betty Waif, the first payment in the churchwardens' book which relates to the 1676 grammar school appears in 1679

> *"Paid to Rd. Peirson for morning bell and for glazening £1-12s."*

The morning bell was rung to call the scholars and by 1690 was known as the scholar bell, for in that year was

> *"paid Richard Pearson for ringing the Scholar Bell for a year £ 1-0s-0d."*

In 1804 we read

> *"Directions for the Clerk. The Church Clock never to be altered but on Sunday mornings and notice of the alteration given to the congregation before the sermon. Directions for the Ringers. A bell to ring at 8 o'clock every Sunday morning by the sexton. At Ten 0'clock the large Bell to call the ringers who are to ring the Bells from a Quarter after Ten for Halfan Hour, when there are to be Chimes until the service commences, then each ringer is to stay Church. No extraordinary ringing on any occasion without leave from me in writing, and the Clerk and Sexton being the only persons who have Keys of the Churchyard to be answerable for any breach of this Order."*

The instruction regarding altering the clock shows that it played an important part in the town's time keeping. It was last restored in 1974 in memory of Gilbert James, a churchwarden from 1951 to 1965.

THE CHURCH SILVER

The church silver, saved from the fire, consists of the following

> *I) A chalice inscribed "This Chalice was ye free gift of Luke Pirry to the Church of Cockermouth. Anno Domini 1639." (Pevsner says it was remade in the 18th, century.) [11]*
>
> *2) A small vessel with a lid "Given for the ufe of the poor sick Communicants in Cockermouth in Cumberland 1734"*

3) A jug or flagon inscribed "The Revd Mr. Thos. Jefferfon Minister. Mr. Thos. Potter, Mr. In Jackfon, Mr. Ed. Pearfon, Mr. Rid Layburn, Church Wardens for the Burrough ofCockermouth. 1740"

4) A paten or dish with "The Revd Mr. Thomas Jefferson Minister. Jos Jackson, Robt. Stainton, John Dunn, John Meals, Church Wardens 1740"

5) A chalice with the same inscription as item 4.

6) A paten inscribed "Thomas Jefferson Minis: Robert Farish : William Shepherd: George Muray : Richard Smith: Church Wardens 1747"

7) A christening basin "The Gift of Mrs. Ann Peele Midwife to the Church of Cockermouth For the use of Baptizing. May 23rd. 1772"

The two early patens have a stem, similar to a cake stand. To them has been added a flat one inscribed "Presented by the Revd Canon Parker to All Saints Church August 1932."

THE LIVINGAND FEES

The Earl of Lonsdale, the impropriator of the living, appointed a vicar or perpetual curate to undertake the church duties. Eventually tithes helped to maintain the priest, but at times clergy had to live by whittlegate - "the valuable privilege of using his knife for a week at any table in the parish". Whether Cockermouth clergy needed to move round the parish we do not know, certainly some in the surrounding villages did so, but on the other hand the living was not sufficient to attract the type who advertised for a living with good hunting and light duties. About 1800 the income was £26-13s-4d. paid by Sir James Lowther as impropriator and £8 from fees. [12]. In 1979 the diocese paid £3500, of which in All Saints parish £1000 came from endowments. All fees are now paid into diocesan funds by the incumbent.

The vestry book recorded the following fees for minister, clerk and sexton respectively in 1792

For marriage by license – minister 2s – clerk 1s

by Banns – minister 1s – clerk 6d

Publishing Banns – minister 6d – clerk 3d

Churching of Women – minister 8d – clerk 4d

Burial of an Adult – minister 10d – clerk 7d – sexton 8d

for an Infant – minister 6d – clerk 5d – sexton 6d

The records of 100 years earlier indicate higher fees for burial in the church than in the churchyard. In 1668 we have

Received ofMrs. Swinbum for Interring of a child in the Chancele – 6s8d

Received of Mrs. Raines for the burieing of her husband in the Church – 3s-4d

In 1979 the total marriage fees (banns, service and certificate) were £19.50. Funerals ranged from £7.00 for a cemetery burial without a service to £15.00 with a church service. The organist charged £5.00 for a wedding and £3.00 for a funeral. By 1995 these had increased to £124.50 for the wedding and £55.00 for the funeral of any type, while the organist's fee was £20.00 for a wedding and £15.00 for a funeral.

INCUMBENTS

There were from time to time difficulties in the church either because there was no incumbent or because he was inefficient. Thus in 1793 we find that although prayers were followed by a sermon on Sunday morning this was not so in the afternoon. The parishioners felt that "the usual service of the Church has of late been neglected" and asked the churchwardens to enquire into the matter, but it was not unti11840 that Lord Lonsdale appointed an Evening Lecturer or Assistant Curate. In 1865 Herbert B. L. Puxley was licensed to the 'perpetual curacy' of Cockermouth and he was followed in 1873 by Eldred Green. instituted to the 'vicarage' of All Saints. It was presumably between these two dates that Cockermouth ceased to be a chapelry of Brigham, probably when Christ Church was opened (1865). (Appendix 17)

CHURCH RATE AND VESTRY DECISIONS

Under an ordinance of 1647 all residents and property owners in a parish had to subscribe

> *"sums of money for and towards the reparation and maintenanee [of the parish church and for] providing books for the said Church or Chappel, and of Bread and Wine to be used at the administration of the Sacrament there, and for repairing the walls and inclosures of the Churchyards or burying places thereunto belonging."*

We have referred several times to this 'cess'. which varied according to the needs - 4d. for example in Cockermouth in 1832, occasionally as high as 8d. but in 1840 only B-1d. The fixing of the rate could be a lengthy business - the meeting lasted eight hours in 1842! In 1668 payments by individuals ranged from 2d. to £1-17s-6d. [13]

The churchwardens' book tells how the money was spent and the following are typical items for 1668:- [14]

Paid

to Lanclot Fforth ofKendall for Souther [solder] and Workmanship £8-0s-0d

to Richard Rainicock for Lead for ye Church £9-0s-0d

for Two loads of Limestone 11d

for repairing one of the bells 1s-0d

to William Haggard for a Roope 2s-6d

to John Atkinson for mending ye clock 1s-6d

for Peates 10s-0d

to Richard Peirson for mending ye Church Windows 7s-9d

to George Jefferey for making a sneck 6d

In the same year the following running expenses were recorded:

Paid

for this booke and other paper 6s-0d

for writing Articles and Sesse bills and other things 3s-6d

to Mrs. Rickarby for washing ye surplas for a year 2s-0d

There were also payments for travelling expenses and fees. The 1668 payments include help to people

Paid to a portugal stranger 2s-0d

More to a distressed stranger 1s-0d

More to a stranger 2s-6d

An entry in the churchwardens book in 1670 lists the possessions of the parish, in addition to the actual fabric of the church and school:

"Delivered over to the New Churchwardens The Records Book. one Church Bible with other utinsalls belonging to the ffree Gramer School of cockermouth.

Imprimis.

4 Servis bookes

1 ould book called Erasmus parafrase.

2 Rentall Bookes belonging to the ffree Gramr Schoole.

1 pUlpit cloth and Quisson. (cushion)

2 Surplases one Linem Cloth

2 Silver cups with Covers

I large puther fflagon.

A copy ofa deed for the payment of five pounds yearly from Mr. (Lancelot) Fletcher ofTallentire to the Schoole (and other deeds).

One spade, a shuffle and a hack, 1 New Reidgester Book, Tow ould Reidgester Bookes ... One handbell, One booke of articles. One book of Canons. One paper Booke with a list of the Stalls in the Church, One chist and two keyes.

2 Dixonaries given by Mr. Peeter Murthwaite for ye use of the Gramer Schoole."

The transfer to the new churchwardens in 1673 added to the list

"the 39 articles of ye Church of England new ... One linen table-cloth with silke fringe and bosses .. One new Coffen and Hearsecloth for public use of ye parish ... 4 boxes for gathering Collections."

The parish now had a publicly owned coffin for the use of poor families.

Throughout the years there are many entries of repairs and replacements (e.g. a new coffin and hearsecloth in 1773-4). An interesting entry in 1673-4 is of "*charges for bringing forth John Bouch the old clarke and for his winding sheete, 6s-6d."* Bolton notes the frequent use of *'bringing forth'* in the records of the Carlisle guilds in bidding members to a funeral.

The responsibility for some articles later passed to the sexton or parish clerk, elected at the Easter Vestry. On retirement he had to hand over to his successor "*the public shroud, the public coffin and. two shuffles"*.

The Vestry took care to ensure that the affairs of the town and church were managed in good order. The churchwardens had to render their annual accounts within four days of the Easter vestry, under penalty of 40s, each, the fines to go to the relief of the poor. On 21st June 1764 the following orders were minuted

"That the bread be bought by the Churchwardens for the communicants.

That the Churchwardens do take care and get the surplisses washed and mended.

That all the wine for the communicants be bought at one house where the Chwardens can get it the best and the cheapest.

That no wine be given to any clergyman to carry home."

In 1784 the £415 in hand was to be invested in public concerns - £280 to the Widows Hospital, £35 to the Grammar School, and seven years later in 1791 it was decided to take proceedings to recover £100 which had been lent to Thomas Rudd from parish funds. In all these affairs the control of premises, churchyard, bells, books, registers, money, etc., was in the hands of the people of the town, either directly through the Vestry meeting which they were entitled to attend or through the churchwardens whom

they elected and who were answerable to the vestry, All inhabitants paid the church rate and all had a right to a seat in the church and to the services of burial, etc., which it provided.

SEATING

Although deeds to property in the town often contained a clause "together with the pew in All Saints numbered ....." this did not grant ownership. The Chancellor of the Diocese emphasised in 1877 the equal right of all to a seat without distinction and the duty of the churchwardens to show no favour, except for a few exceptional claims to certain pews as occupiers and not proprietors. [15]

Seating often presented trouble - people installing seats, selling seats for their own profit or claim and counterclaim, as when Edward Waugh brought a case to the Consistory Court in 1858 that John Rowland, a Cockermouth publican, had intruded himself into pew 39 and removed and tom up cushions, footstools and carpet belonging to Waugh.

SETMURTHY

Burials were difficult when Robert Rickerby was reinstated in the living after the Commonwealth period. He refused interment to some parishioners, although it was illegal for him to do so. We learn that in June 1669

> *"That eminent brother and servant of the [Congregational] Church, Thomas Blethwaite, of Cockermouth, departed this life; the which day he was buried with great solemnity at the burying place belonging to the Quakers in Eaglesfield, he being denied burial by Robert Rickerby in the common burying place at Cockermouth, contrary to law."* [16]

The following month, for the same reason, Henry Birkett was buried in his own garden at Gilgarren. [17] In December the land now known as Sepulchre Close at Town Head was given to the Independent or Congregational Church, but it was not used until 1671. [18] The churchyard was originally unfenced, but on 24 September 1800 the Vestry was

> *"unanimously and decidedly of opinion that it ought to be forthwith enclosed and made close on account of the very great abuses and various depredations which are Committed in the said Churchyard from time to time and at all times, besides the very shameful and nameless practices carried on in the very entrances of this sacred place.'*

With enclosure the grass grew. In 1829 we find a Vestry minute

> *"It was unanimously agreed that the churchyard should be farmed by the Churchwardens for the sum of four pounds per annum. And they are hereby empowered to let the same to cut for hay, and whatever sum is deficient to be*

paid out of the Church Rate. It is the decided opinion of this meeting that no horses, cattle or sheep shall on any account be allowed to pasture in the Churchyard."

More care was obviously being taken of the churchyard. The fenced pathway dates from the rebuilding of the 1850s.

In April 1874 the Vestry decided to spend £20 on trees and shrubs for the churchyard and the reasons given during the discussion include not only that they would "assist in maintaining the sacred character" and be of practical use because the place was so windy that one "cannot put an umbrella up", but the interesting observation of one member that "their roots hasten the process of decay and their leaves absorb the noxious exhalations that arise from the decaying humanity". [19]

Later in the same year it was decided to discontinue Sunday funerals, except when infection required urgent burial. [20] While it was realised that Sunday funerals were economically desirable, as mourners did not need to miss their work, the decision was taken because the crowds who were free to attend on Sundays were doing considerable damage to the shrubs and flowers.

Many of the gravestones commemorate people important in the history of the town, although some inscriptions are badly weathered. [21] The grave of Wordsworth's father is near the south-east corner of the church.

When repairing the Kirkgate churchyard entrance, at the beginning of this century, a mass grave was discovered. The victims of the plague in the earlier centuries are reputed to be buried near Hundith Hill crossroads, but there were outbreaks of cholera in the town in 1832 and 1848. It is recorded that victims of the earlier outbreak were buried in. a row in the churchyard. Was this the grave discovered?

HOLY WATER STOUP

In August 1937 when alterations were being made to Wild's garage in Crown Street an interesting stone block was found built into a wall. [22] Roughly rectangular in shape, carved from grey sandstone with a 12 inch base and a height of 8Yz inches, it was possibly a holy water stoup, a possibility supported by a small incised cross below the brim on the inside, a feature common on altar slabs. The absence of a drainage hole suggests that it was not a font and as there is no sign of attachment to a wall it probably stood on a pillar. It may be 14th century, but its origin is uncertain. It is now in the church.

REGISTERS

From 1538 all parishes were required to keep registers of baptisms, marriages and deaths, but government records did not begin until 1837. All Saints registers are complete from 1632. The first entry was a baptism in September of that year

> *"Margaret, the daughter of Sw in bum of Hewthwaite Hall."*

The first marriage recorded was in October

> *"Hugh, the fonne of John Gibfon with Barbara (?) the daughter of John Dalton."*

CHURCHROOMS

The church rooms across the fenced pathway replaced the old grammar school, being built in 1896-7 at a cost of four to five hundred pounds. [23] The large hall upstairs seats 300 and there is a series of smaller rooms on the ground floor.

A tablet on the outside of the building reads

> *"On this site stood the Grammar School which William Wordsworth, Poet Laureate, attended as a boy. To this school also came Fletcher Christian, Leader of the Mutiny on the Bounty, April 28th. 1788."*

CHRIST CHURCH

Not until 1863-5 was a second Anglican church built in the town, some 30 years after it was first suggested. The foundation stone of Christ Church was laid by Percy Wyndham on 29th July 1863 and the building, designed by Mr. Bruce of Whitehaven was consecrated and opened by Samuel Waldegrave Bishop of Carlisle, on 13th June 1865.A plaque on the chancel wall reads

> *"AD 1865. This Church was erected chiefly by the means and entirely by the exertions of the Revd. H. B. L. Puxley, MA., assistant curate of Cockermouth."*

Puxley was expected to be the first vicar and had much public support, but the appointment went to William Williams, chosen by the bishop and other trustees, to whom - the Earl of Lonsdale had given the patronage. Rev. Puxley's disappointment was lessened when he was appointed to the living of All Saints later in the year. [24]

The church, which cost £4,000 and seats some 800, serves a parish carved out of Brigham (Cockermouth west of the Cocker) and Bridekirk (the Gote area) parishes, it has a number of typical 19th century features - three galleries on iron pillars, long windows in the nave and a plain tower with corner pinnacles. Changes were made in 1873 when the reredos was added and further considerable alterations, including a new doorway, were made in 1933. In 1960, an attractive small side chapel was constructed, as a memorial to those killed in the two world wars. The Christ Church vicarage was

'Lane Head', at the top of Double Mills Lane, built in 1972. It became a private dwelling when the livings were joined.

The east window of"Christ healing the sick" by Heaton Butler and Bayne,

> *"was erected by public subscription in affectionate memory of the later Henry Dodgson MD of this town who died July 10th 1882 aged 49 years."*

Henry Dodgson has a second memorial at the end of the south gallery, a wall tablet erected by members of the Cockermouth Rifle Corps to their Hon. Major. There are a number of other memorial windows and tablets.

Christ Church living was worth £180 in 1883, rose gradually to £380 in 1919 and is now similar to All Saints. The church rooms next to the church were erected in 1880 for £1000, the large hall seating 200 and there being a number of classrooms. [25]

That churchwardens need not be members of the Anglican church is illustrated by the appointment of a Mr. Straughton as a warden of Christ Church in] 876. He was not only an advocate of disestablishment but a Congregationalist and Superintendent of the Congregational Sunday School. Furthermore he was appointed by the casting vote of an Anglican clergyman! [26]

It is interesting to note that in 1938, the population served by the newer parish was considerably greater than that of the older one - 3252 compared with All Saints' 1815. This has since been evened up by the new housing estates east of the Cocker.

UNITED BENEFICE AND TEAM MINISTRY

The two parishes were eventually joined in a 'united benefice' under one vicar usually assisted by a curate. This had been proposed in 1939. Then in 1977, a further development linked All Saints, Christ Church, St Cuthbert's at Embleton and St Margaret's at Wythop under one team ministry. The team at present comprises two priests-in-charge and an honorary curate. A second vicarage was bought - No.l Fern Bank, Cockermouth, replaced by a modem house, 14 Harrot Hill in 1987. A new rectory was built in the grounds of the former one in Lorton Road in the early 1980's. In 2005, Bridekirk Church also became a member of the team ministry.

Chapter27

The Non-Anglican churches

INDEPENDENT/CONGREGATIONAL/UNITED REFORMED

The Independent Church was formed in Cockermouth in 1651, with George Larkham as its first pastor, a post he held for 49 years.

In 1651 just after the end of the Civil War, Robert Rickerby (or Ricardby) was expelled from his living as vicar of All Saints and went to teach at the free school in Crosthwaite. [1] Larkham, still a student at Oxford (and earlier Cambridge) and only 21 years old, was appointed in his place by the Northern Commissioner of the Commonwealth.

On 17 December, 1651 the church-book recorded

> *"We first brake bread in the Public Meeting Place [All Saints Church] at Cockerrnouth,"*

the service being conducted by Thomas Larkham, father of George. George was ordained in 1652 and at the end of his first Year married Dorothy Fletcher of Tallentire Hall, great-great granddaughter of Henry Fletcher of Mary Queen of Scots fame. Membership increased rapidly and a second church was soon formed in Broughton.

With the end of the Protectorate in 1659 and the restoration of the monarchy, Larkham was in turn ejected from All Saints "by the violence of Sir George Fletcher" and Rickerby reinstated. [2] Larkham moved about with his family and spent a time imprisoned for his Puritan principles in York Castle, but the Independent Church continued. Its members met secretly in members' houses, as meetings of more than five persons were forbidden by law except when using the Anglican Prayer Book. They gathered at night, usually at Sister Hutton's Hemshill or at Tallentire Hall The Declaration of Indulgence in 1672 enabled Hemshill to be registered as a church, but meetings ceased to be held there when Sister Hutton died in 1682 and were then usually held in a house at Tallentire which George Larkham had bought in 1669. There were still periods of persecution, but membership nevertheless increased.

In 1687 the Independents opened their first meeting place in Cockermouth since their ejection from All Saints. This was a converted dwelling house on the Sands which was leased to the church. In 1719 a chapel was erected and this was followed in 1735 by the building which later served as schoolroom and church hall. Meanwhile Larkham had died in 1700, aged 70, and been succeeded by John Atkinson under whom the church flourished. Some 400 people came to hear him, drawn from a wide area to this the first Congregational church in Cumberland. Atkinson at first apparently lived in a manse tucked away in a back street, for after the first ten years of his 32 years ministry the church spent £78 on "a front house for him to live in".

Later in the century difficulties arose. A new minister introduced Unitarian teaching which split the congregation, some forming a group further up the town known as the High Meeting, those remaining in the 1735 building becoming known as the Low Meeting. [3] 'Low Meeting' stuck even after the two congregations came together again in 1782 and Bolton used it as recently as 1912. Unfortunately the reunion did not last. Then a very strict minister reduced the membership to 29 (in 1833), but the church later recovered to such an extent that by September 1850 the congregation was able to erect the present Gothic style building in front of the old one. Seating 500 it cost some £2200 and was designed by a Maryport man, Charles Eaglesfield. The business committee concerned with the new Congregational Chapel presented General Wyndham with a lithograph "as a small acknowledgement of their gratitude for his handsome gift of ground and cottages in furtherance of this object". [4]

Special trains ran for the opening and] 600 attended, of whom 700 enjoyed a Cumberland tea. [5] Two weeks later the old church behind was converted into a Sunday School, which at one time had nearly 300 scholars. Thomas Armstrong of the timber firm was at this time a deacon and superintendent of the Sunday School. He died soon after the opening, in 1853, and is commemorated by a plaque in the church.

The manse in Brigham Road was bought in the mid-I 940s, recently replaced by a modem house in Laithwaite Close. Extensive repairs to the church were necessary in the mid-1970s, and plans to remodel the interior were postponed because of the high cost.

In 1972, following the union of most of the Congregational churches in the country with the Presbyterian Church, the Cockermouth church became the United Reformed Church.

In 1990/91 the 1850 church was radically altered. The building was divided horizontally. Upstairs became the church; downstairs are the John Marsh Hall (named after a leading Congregational minister and scholar, whose son was architect for the transformed building), a small chapel, kitchen and toilets, This freed the earlier building behind, which was converted into 'bed-sit' accommodation for some ten people who came from Dovenbv Hospital, to live in the community.

Rickerby refused interment of non-conformists in the churchyard. In 1671 Mrs. Lowry gave a "piece of fair land near to Cockermouth town end" to the Independent Church for a 'burying place' [6] and on May 18th of that year

> *"Sister Margaret Bowes of Cockermouth, being very aged, departed this life, and was buried the next day in the new burial-ground given to the Church at the upper end of the town of Cockermouth. She was the first that was laid there, we not having the liberty, though we have the right, to lay her body in the common burying-place belonging to the Town." [7)*

This plot of ground, near the top end of St. Helen's Street, became known as 'Sepulchre Close' and was later used as allotments.

BAPTIST

A Baptist congregation was founded in Cockermouth by Cromwell's soldiers and met in a building in Waterloo Street behind the present United Reformed Church, later used as a garage. [8] The nearest Baptist church is now that in Little Broughton.

RELIGIOUS SOCIETY OF FRIENDS (QUAKERS)

The first Quaker meeting in the area was held in the open on Pardshaw Crags during the summer months, dividing into four groups to meet in cottages in nearby villages in winter. George Fox visited Pardshaw twice when he was beginning the Quaker movement by drawing together the many groups of 'Seekers' who had broken away from the Orthodox Church.

Fox first came to Cockermouth in 1653, having travelled from the Furness area. [9] He had sent James Lancaster ahead to arrange a meeting at one of John Wilkinson's steeplehouses near Cockermouth. (Fox reserved 'church' for the people, hence 'steeplehouse' for the building.) He arrived to find James Lancaster preaching under a yew tree and was himself persuaded to go into the church to speak. He records that

> *"when I came the pulpit and the house were so full of people that I had much ado to get in; and they that could not get in stood about the walls."* [10]

Larkham was one of his listeners. Fox states that a dozen soldiers were present from Carlisle, but they are more likely to have been from the Cockermouth garrison.

> *"The soldiers were convinced and their wives, and continued with me till the First-day [Sunday]. On the First day I went to Cockermouth steeplehouse in the forenoon ... and when the priest had done I began to speak and the people began to be rude, but the soldiers told them we had broken no law and they were quiet.... And when I had done I passed away about two miles to Brigham to another great steeplehouse of Wilkinson's".* [11]

After a period of imprisonment in Carlisle Castle Fox returned to Brigham in 1653 and spent a whole day arguing with Wilkinson.

Most of Wilkinson's congregation joined the Quakers and Fox wrote that in 1657

> *"he had not past half a dozen left; they still forsook him and came off to Friends. And at last he had so few left that he would come to Pardshaw Crag where Friends had a meeting of several hundreds of people who were all come to sit under the Lord Jesus Christ's teaching; and I went to this Pardshaw Crag meeting, and there he was, and three or four of his followers that were yet left behind came to the meeting, and they were all thoroughly convinced, and after*

> *the meeting was done Priest Wilkinson asked me two or three questions and I satisfied him. And from that time he came among Friends to their meetings, and became an able minister and freely preached the Gospel and turned many to Christ's free teaching."* [12]

Fox's second visit to Pardshaw was in 1663, on his way from Carlisle to Keswick. He "had a large General Meeting and all was quiet and peaceable, and the glorious, powerful presence of the everlasting God was with us", [13] the men paid by the magistrates to stir up trouble having gone to the Quarter Sessions to claim their wages!

'Fox's Pulpit' is formed of two blocks of limestone on the outcrop of the crags facing north. In 1672 the first meeting house was built, a lean-to against an outcrop somewhere above the present building of 1729. It was as an overflow from this Pardshaw meeting that the first meeting house in Cockermouth was erected in Kirkgate.

> *"It pleased ye Lord to add to ye number of his people at ye meeting of Pardshaw that it became very large so yt for ye Accommodation & more conveniency of several ffriends there unto belonging: There was a meeting house provided in Cockermouth in the year 1688 and a meeting settled there in ye 10 mo: of ye same .... "* [14]

The Congregational Church Book records expulsions from membership of those who joined the Quakers at this time, including John Wilkinson who departed "to his great shame and infamy". [15]

The first Kirkgate building was a simple structure with a long burial ground behind, followed in 1781 by a larger building which occupied the full width of the site. Then in 1883 the following minute appeared in the records of the business meeting for the area

> *"We are informed by our Cockermouth representatives that their meeting house is in such a state that they have decided to bring before the Quarterly Meeting [a gathering of all Cumberland] the desirability of building a new one."[*16]

A new one was completed in 1884, costing £1190 with furnishings. Two main rooms seated 100 in each and had a feature common to many Quaker meeting houses - a movable Partition between the two rooms, in this case the upper half rising into the roof loft counterpoised by the lower half sinking below the floor, leaving a division some three feet high.

In 197112, following the discovery of dry' rot, the opportunity was taken to modernise and remodel the premises, at a total cost of £10,000. When panelling was removed areas of 1884 brickwork were found inserted amongst 1781 stonework.

METHODIST

The first Wesleyan Society in Cockermouth was formed in 1763 with 19 members, in the Haworth Round of Yorkshire under Wm. Grimshaw of Haworth as superintendent. Six years later it became part of Whitehaven Circuit, which extended from Penrith to Ulverston and the Isle of Man. [17]

The present Victoria Hall in High Sand Lane was the first Methodist chapel in the town. In 1796 the buildings called the Maltkins in Sandwent, with a garden and yard, were assigned to George Robinson, a Cockermouth cooper. The following year Robinson assigned to Matthew Smith, gentleman of Cockermouth, and other trustees, a newly erected building for worship by the Methodists. [18]

John Wesley (1703-1791), one of the founders of the Methodist Church, is reputed to have preached here, but the dates show that it must have been elsewhere in the town. He records in his journal 19 visits in the period 1751-88, usually on his way to Whitehaven, [19] and wrote of one visit

> *"About eight I began preaching in the market house at Cockermouth. I was surprised to find several of those that are called 'the best of the town' there, and they were all serious and attentive; so we had a solemn parting."*

The Methodists left Sandwent in 1841 for a new building which is now the Town Hall, of a design common to Methodist churches of that period - square, with a gallery round the four sides, the front portion containing the choir and organ, and with a schoolroom below the church. It had seating for 850 and cost £1800. [20] The gallery was later converted into an upper floor by the UDC. The vacated building in High Sand Lane was purchased by the Town Council and opened as the Victoria Hall in 1984, providing a much-needed and well used venue for small gatherings. It is still used by religious groups on Sundays.

In 1810 the Methodist Church split into the Wesleyan and Primitive Methodists and it was the Wesleyans who built this chapel. A comment towards the end of the century was

> *"There cannot be much said in favour of the present Chapel, though itis better than the one in Sand Lane; but the principal objection to the one now worshipped in is that the school under it is dark, cheerless, and difficult to ventilate."* [21]

This view gained increasing support resulting in the opening of the Lorton Street church in 1932. This was the year of Methodist union, when the Wesleyan and Primitive Churches, together with a smaller body of United Methodists (not having a branch in Cockermouth), became the Methodist Church. 'Lorton Street' seats 450 and has a hall

accommodating 300, with a wing of smaller rooms added later. The interior of the church was redesigned in the late 1980s.

When the Wesleyans left High Sand Lane in 1840/1 the Primitive Methodists bought it for £95 worshipping there until they acquired the National School in New Street in 1885. Here, for a total cost of £1300, they had much more room· 400 seats and a Sunday School. [22] 'New Street' remained open after union until shortly after the war, although the churches in the Cockermouth area formed one Methodist circuit in 1937. After its closure the building was used for a time by Millers shoe factory as a training centre for machinists, then in 1982/3 it was converted into six small houses.

The Primitive Methodists for much of their history held annual 'camp meetings', great open air gatherings. In the 1870s such meetings were held next to the auction mart, but they moved later to Harris Park.

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Roman Catholic services were held during the earlier part of last century at the Sun Barn in the yard of the Sun Inn at the lower end of Kirkgate. The building was Cockermouth's theatre in the 16th and 17th centuries. A priest came from Wigton once a month to say mass here. When Prince de JoinviUe and his family, exiled from Orleans, were staying in Keswick in 1846 it was to this room that they came to hear mass. [23]

In 1856 the present Gothic building in Crown Street, St. Joseph's, was opened,. Accommodating 500, it was designed by Thomas Gibson of Newcastle and church and presbytery cost £ 1400. [24] The day school used the adjoining building until the opening of the new one on the Level in 1967, when the older premises came fully into use as a church hall. They were renovated in the early 1990s.

OTHER GROUPS

The High Sand Lane chapel, now the Victoria Hall, has been variously used - by the Salvation Army, as the Victoria Gospel Hall and by the Exclusive Brethren. In 1979 the Plymouth Brethren met in Brougham House in S1. Helen's Street and Jehovah's Witnesses at one time used a building in the yard of the former All Saints School in Kirkgate. There was, a few years ago, a gospel meeting in Irvings Court, off Main Street.

An evangelical group was formed in 1979, known as the King's Church. Having no premises of its own it is at present worshipping on Sunday afternoons, in the United Reformed Church and also holds frequent gatherings in members' homes. In May 1995, the group opened a Christian bookshop in Main Street, which also acts as a drop-in centre for its members.

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

The churches ran Sunday Schools, sometimes very efficiently, providing not only religious instruction but in their early days lessons in reading and writing. The Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School was a good example. In 1845 it published a printed eight-page booklet of rules and regulations dealing with all aspects of the School, superintendents, secretaries, teachers, children, and also the visitors responsible for visiting in each of the six areas into which the town was divided for this purpose. The school committee was appointed annually and the school had to be visited each Sunday by one member of the committee. It opened at 9.05 am. and 2.05 p.m with singing and prayer, not more than four verses of anyone hymn being allowed to be sung. Each child arriving on time received a small ticket, 12 of which were worth a penny and every quarter a reward book to the value of the tickets was given. This meant a maximum of2d. per quarter, but we must remember that this was 1845! There were other Sunday Schools from an early date. Bolton referred in 1912 to the 'centenary' of the Independent Sunday School as having been 'long ago' and the Anglican school was also quite old. The latter met on the ground floor of the old grammar school and like the others, taught reading and writing. [25] The first Sunday School in the country is attributed to Robert Raikes, who opened one in Gloucester in 1780.

On 14 August 1795 the Vestry in Cockermouth ruled that the collection taken after the Sacrament should be used only for the poor and not towards the costs of the Sunday school and that "the said school from this day discontinues unless the inhabitants think proper to subscribe what is sufficient for the support of the School". This was only 15 years after Raikes started, so that Bolton's statement that Sunday schools existed in Cockermouth long before they were general in England may be correct. The Church Sunday School pupils had to attend a public catechising in All Saints Church, filing in from the school through the west tower doorway (the pre-1850 church), with the churchwardens and sidesmen leading, the bells ringing, and the children suitably dressed - "the Charity girls with snowy mob caps and shoulder kerchiefs." [26]

Wordsworth wrote ofthis event

> *"From Little down to Least, in due degree,*
>
> *Around the Pastor, each in new-wrought vest, Each with a vernal posy at his breast,*
>
> *We stood, a trembling, earnest company!*
>
> *With low soft murmer, like a distant bee,*
>
> *Some spake, by thought-perplexing fears betrayed;*
>
> *And some a bold unerring answer made." [27]*

'We stood' because Wordsworth himself said the catechism in this way when he was a boy in the town.

Perhaps the most interesting Sunday School in Cockermouth was the General Sunday School, opened in 1832. It stood in Back Lane (South Street) partly across what is now Station Street, near the Tithe Barn Inn, being demolished to make way for the auction mart and to permit the continuation of Station Street into Station Road. This very commodious building had room for 400 children. Unfortunately tragedy struck on the opening day when the upper floor gave way and brought down part of the staircase wall, killing two scholars. [28]

In 1833 the General Sunday School published a 26-page booklet - its balance sheet and report for the first year. The cover carried a sketch, presumably of the school, and the following appeal to the townspeople

> *"Some of the Friends or Teachers of the General Sunday School beg to say, that they intend waiting upon the Inhabitants of this Town and Neighbourhood in the course of a few days, when they most respectfully and earnestly solieit the patronage and support ofall who are disposed to favour the Institution."*

It was largely through the efforts of the brewer John Richardson that the school was started and he was Superintendent for about 30 years. The committee of 29 members included Rev. Fawcett and Rev. J. Lowther and many names well-known in the political and industrial life of the town.

At the end of the first Year the school had three conductors (presumably assistant superintendents), 53 teachers, 4 monitors, 237 boys and 219 girls. £339-0s-7d. was spent in the first year, £ 160-15s-4d, received, hence the appeal to the town to clear the deficit. The building had cost over £299 and as this first report stated

> *"Through the signal interposition of a gracious Providence, which they will ever devoutly acknowledge, and by His blessing on your liberality, the Teachers and Children are now accommodated with a spacious and suitable building, in a pleasant, dry and healthy situation, in every way admirably adapted to the purpose of its appropriation."*

The report also included the appeal

> *"Pious and steady Teachers, either male or female, who are disposed to assist the children of the poor, by instructing them on the Lord's day, will be welcomed in this school."*

Such instruction would be in writing and reading with a bias towards Bible reading.

The Sunday School was certainly a live and active institution. It met at 9.00 and 2.00 and it was stressed that no one need be absent for want of proper clothes. At 6 pm. on

Sunday a religious service was held for children, parents and friends, and a service for older children and teachers at 8 p.m. on Thursday. There was singing practice on Wednesday evening, a writing class on Thursday, and attendance on Sundays brought the privilege of attending on three evenings a week for general instruction. Pens, ink, paper. etc .. were provided by friends of the school and the 'Society for the support and encouragement of Sunday Schools throughout the British Dominions' gave class books for reading and other instruction. Library books, gifts to the school, might be borrowed for two weeks. Another fringe activity was the formation of sick and funeral societies, which in the first seven years acquired over 80 members.

ADULT SCHOOLS

The Quaker meeting ran an adult school, associated with the nation-wide Adult School movement, and possibly other churches had similar groups for worship and discussion, such as 'Pleasant Sunday Afternoon' gatherings which were popular at one time.

Chapter 29

Industry - General

A major factor in the development of industry in Cockermouth was an abundance of water power. Mannix and Whellan put it briefly in their 1847 directory

> *"Besides being intersected by the Derwent and Cocker rivers, the town is also refreshed by two smaller streams which rise a few miles east, and are a great convenience to the manufacturers of Cockermouth and neighbourhood."* [I]

Water driven mills were built not only along the banks of the Derwent and Cocker, but also on those smaller streams of Tom Rudd and Bitter Becks.

The earliest evidence for water wheels in Cockermouth occurs in St. Bees records [2], which mention a fulling mill in the town in the latter half of the 12th century, and a little later a charter of William de Fortibus refers to fulling mills at Cockermouth and Dearham in the mid-13th century. [3] Davies-Shiel [4] lists 51 such mills in the Lake District by 1328, the first two at Hugill and Staveley from 1135, the third at Cockermouth from 1156, and the last of the 51 at Embleton from 1327. Probably there were corn mills using water at a much earlier date.

Wind power was harnessed in England in the 12th century. The first mills were of the post type, the mill revolving: then came the stationary body with a revolving cap; and finally the brick tower of up to five floors as seen in Cockermouth. [5] Cockermouth with plentiful water, probably had only two.

The use of water has often given rise to difficulties and controversy - the conflicting claims of adjacent mills, as at Rubby Banks; [6] the re-use of water below a mill, perhaps by an industry needing a pure supply; obstruction to navigation by mill dams and the loss of depth below weirs; and interference with long-established irrigation schemes, as in Bassenthwaite in the early 1950s when a beck at the head of the valley was tapped for the Wigton supply. These problems escalated with the industrial development of the 19th century.

Cockermouth's position as a market town has given its industry a bias towards the animal products of wool and leather, although cotton and linen later became important. We have referred to an early fulling mill, and only woollen cloth is 'fulled'. By 1453 there were two such mills, one at least on the Cocker. [7]

The town's industrial development received a boost with the dissolution of the monasteries in 1536-40. They had extensive holdings in Cumbria [8] and upon dissolution the buying and selling of wool, which had been carried on by the monks and their representatives using their own clearing houses, passed to the towns. A dozen Cumbrian religious houses were closed, the nearest to Cockermouth being Calder (in

1536), Holme Cultram and St. Bees (1538), but effects were also felt when houses further away were dispossessed of their lands, for example Fountains of its Borrowdale holdings. There would be a period of readjustment, but the sheep would still be there and shepherds still be needed. It was the more local manufacture and sale of products that brought a new prosperity to places like Cockermouth. The opening up of trading by adventurers such as Raleigh was a further spur to industrial growth. By the end of the 16th century Cockermouth was well established as a market town and its industrial growth had begun.

The chief industries of the town in the period 1640-1700 were listed as woollen weaving and the manufacture of shalloons; hats, many of them probably steeple-crowned; and various types of leather dressing - breeches, gloves and high-topped boots included. [9] From the end of the 16th century there was a falling off in the Lake District woollen trade and many fulling mills changed to bark, sawing, bobbins and paper. [10]

Cockermouth had by this time become a very important commercial centre, partly owing to the activities of mining and quarrying, of which little was to be found near the town but which often took place on land belonging to the castle. Much of the iron and coal mining of West Cumberland was on 'Egremont' land. Eastwards, mining began in Newlands as early as 1230, was developed by Dutch and German miners in the 15th century and then further encouraged by Henry VIII. A thousand local men worked there, of whom an appreciable number must have been from Cockermouth. Many German miners were eventually in the area and they have left us derivatives of their surnames - Parker, Dodgson. Jenkinson, Stoddart, Dickson. etc. [11] In 1699 the Duke of Somerset quarrelled with the Dutch lead smelters and built his own smelter in Newlands

Metal from the Newlands mines was at first stamped in Keswick, but later at Cockermouth Castle, so the trade came this way by pack-horse [12] and the town was involved in the transport of lead and copper to the coastal ports. One factor which led the Earl of Northumberland to join in the Rising of the North arose from his mining activities. Any silver and gold mined was the Queen's by law, but he was annoyed when by a ruling of 1567/8 she also claimed the copper.

Near Cockermouth was a small lead mine north of the Embleton road, where the waste may be seen a little west of the Wheatsheaf Inn. Mineral deposits were scattered throughout the region and there are many records of leases granted for their mining, such as that of 1649 by which the Earl of Northumberland leased the lead mines in Derwentfells to Colonel William Beale and London merchants for ten years, the rent to be one-eighth part of the proceeds. [13]

Reference is made in some of the castle leases to quarrying, and this has been an important feature of the Cockermouth district. There has been small scale quarrying for building on neighbouring hills such as Slate Fell, and further afield Honister Quarry (first

mentioned in 1643) [14] was one of the three important slate quarries in Cumbria, sending stone over a wide area. The smaller quarries are no longer used, but as recently as 1905 the Hay Quarry was leased to John Wren. The large Close Quarry at Embleton worked a sill or flat intrusive sheet of diorite (a granite-like rock). The Cumberland Granite Co. Ltd., which leased it early in this century, ran into difficulties and the lease was assigned to Evelyn R.C. Kerr as liquidator at the end of 1911. But this was not the end of a quarry which 50 years earlier had contributed stone to the building of the nearby railway, on which it had a siding. In 1931 the Embleton Quarry Co. Ltd. decided to spend £20.000 on developments, tunnelling to a lower level. [15] It continued to provide stone for roads until the diorite ran out and it was closed in the early 1950s, at that time being run by the Keswick Granite Co. who owned the Threlkeld Quarry.

West of the town there has been appreciable quarrying of the limestones and grits of Brigham and Broughton. The limestone from the Brigham quarries was mostly for iron smelting at Workington, for which purpose it was transported by a tramway down to the Workington-Cockermouth Railway. Quarrying in the Broughton area goes back to Roman times. To the north Moota Quarry still produces limestone, as did the neighbouring Clints Quarry until it was recently closed because of its proximity to Blindcrake village. Tendley near Eaglesfield is still a source of limestone and Deanscales was re opened temporarily in 1975-6 to provide material for the building of the A66.

Another commodity featuring in castle leases is clay. There is a record dated 1755 recording that Jonathan Potts and George Potts, bricklayers, were getting clay on Cockermouth Common for an annual rent of 30s, payable on Lady Day. [16] On 16th December 1779 an agreement [17] was made between Thomas Benson, acting for George O'Brien, Earl of Egremont, and four Cockermouth men Christopher Osmotherley, John Carter, Thomas Mackreth and John Mackreth, giving them

> *"The Liberty to search for get and raise Clay for making of Bricks and to Burn the Same into Bricks in or upon any Part of the said Earls Commons and Wastes"*

except south of a line from Shatton by Jenkin to Piel Wyke. The lease was to run 21 years, the annual rent being £2.

In 1814 a contract was made by John and Thomas Mackreth with Abraham Mackreth and Robert Smithson for the latter to dig clay near the Town Head for £3-lOs per annum each. [18] Presumably the Mackreths' lease had been renewed and they were sub-letting.

There are a few general features of industry which we will consider briefly before examining in more detail the different products and the individual sites. Mills were owned by the landowners, in this area the castle family, and leased to merchants or millers who quite frequently sublet. The advertisements for the sale of mills which appeared from quite early times related to the sale of the lease and not of the property.

Frequently there was a clause in the contract requiring the lessee to leave the mill at the end of his tenancy in the condition in which he found it. He might wish to change the purpose of a mill when he took possession, as for instance when Little Mill was leased in 1763 to two men who wished to convert it from corn milling to bark crushing for the tanneries. [19] They were bound by the contract to restore the mill to corn at the end of their 21 years' tenancy_

A change in the function of a mill was a fairly common practice and is well illustrated by the account of Rubby Banks Mills in the next chapter. If the demand for a product fell a mill tenant would probably look for something more profitable to make. Consequently we find the changes rung on corn, wool, linen, cotton, thread, leather, hats, paper, bobbins, chums, wood turning, nail making, etc. If it was seen that a new line prospered then other mill-owners in the town would tend to follow, introducing competition which could spark off further changes. The need to change suggests that there was a shortage of money to carry a business through a trade recession.

The church registers and the county directories are a mine of information on occupations and indirectly on industrial development. In 1700 are mentioned bleacher, smith, whitesmith, carrier and excise man. Ten years later we have glover, dyer, tailor, dipper, piper, miller, vulcan (smelter). Then a period of mill building is indicated by the number of joiners and builders recorded, followed by an influx of spinners. By about 1740 Cockermouth was well on the way to being a mill town, as the extended list of occupations shows - millers, tanners, dyers, hatters, glaziers, maltsters, carpenters, blacksmiths, coopers, wheelwrights. two ferrule makers and a pump maker, together with those such as grocers, apothecaries, tobacconists and a barber and wig maker who supplied the needs of the people. In the 1780s the Northern Directory names two firms manufacturing hats (William Johnson and Son and John Robinson and Co.), one flax dressing (Robert Cort and Son), one making thread (Robert Barns), one tanning John Nicholson), one dealing in leather (Hugh Beeby), two mercers and drapers (Richard Radcliffe and John Simpson), merchants and manufacturers (Matthew and Richard Smith), brewers (Miles Ponsonby and Co.), and the supporting grocers, etc. The list is short; only 21 businesses named, and is certainly incomplete.

The Universal British Directory of 1790 gives a much fuller picture of the life and bustle which there must have been in the town at that time. The Directory points out the advantages of Cockermouth over neighbouring towns - its excellent situation for trade and manufacturing, in a surrounding countryside both populous and fertile, with several coal mines and three sea ports within 15 miles, and with a constant and plentiful supply of water. Tanned leather goods were then bringing an annual profit of £14,000 to the town; hats some £7,000; and shalloons and other coarse woollens about £6,000. Some of the best town houses date from this late 18th century period of prosperity. Judging by

the list produced by Parson and White in 1829 the town was now developing rapidly. Space permits only the chief trades to be mentioned:

Tanners:

George Beeby near Kirkgate.

Abraham Hetherington in Castiegate.

John Hodgson in Castlegate.

John Slack in Castlegate.

John Threlkeld near Kirkgate.

Curriers and leather cutters

Jonathan Biglands in Stoddart's Buildings, Bridge End.

George Birkett in St. Helen Street.

John Dodd in the Old Hall.

Joseph Pearson in St. Helen Street.

Sadlers and trunk makers

Thomas Coulthard in Main Street.

Joseph Fletcher in Market Place.

William Grave in Main Street.

George Mulcaster at Cocker Bridge End.

Hat manufacturers

John Hodgson in Kirkgate.

Edward Sancton, jnr., in Market Place.

Thomas Stretch in the Goat.

Thomas Wilson at Cocker Bridge End.

Linen manufacturers

John Elliott (canvas) in St. Helen Street.

William and Jonathan Harris in Main St and Goat Mills.

Cotton manufacturers (check and gingham)

Joseph and Richard Banks in Market Place.

William Black in S1. Helen Street.

Joseph Elliott in Market Place.

William and Jonathan Harris in Main St and Goat Mills.

William Stoddart at Cocker Bridge End.

Woollen manufacturers

(blanketing, collar checks, horse sheeting, kerseys, sagathies, coloured flannels, saddle surges, etc.)

Joseph Grave in Sand Lane.

John Robinson in Main Street.

Edward Sancton and Son in Market Place.

Richard Smith at Cocker Bridge End.

Dyers

Thomas Robinson at Cocker Bridge End.

Joshua Sim in Main Street.

Flax and tow spinners and sewing thread manufacturers

William & Jonathan Harris in Main St and Goat Mills.

Thomas Robinson at Cocker Bridge.

Joshua Wharton in Sand Lane.

Some ofthese locations will indicate the nearest road to the factory or possibly an office.

There were also in 1829 –

7 attornies,

2 auctioneers,

5 bakers and flour dealers,

8 blacksmiths,

13 boot and shoe makers,

3 braziers, plumbers and tinplate workers,

3 brick and tile makers (Thomas Mackreth of Kirkgate, William Mackreth of St. Helen Street and Rt. Smithson of Sand Lane),

7 coopers, turners and chair makers,

5 corn millers,

2 brewers,

4 maltsters,

5 nail makers,

a millwright,

and a host of shopkeepers of many kinds, with joiners, horse furnishers. etc.

In the middle of the century, 1847, Mannix and Whellan wrote

> *"There is a considerable manufactory carried on in hats, which employs about 100 hands; of coarse woollen cloths and shalloons in which about 300 hands are employed; of checks and coarse linens there are about 50 hands; and the leather trade, in various branches, employs about 50 hands. The whole place bears an air of opulence.... the Messrs. J. Harris and Sons alone employ upwards of 200, and their factories were greatly enlarged in 1847."*

The average wage for a man at this time was £10 a year, for a woman £4.

The prosperity of the town in the first half of the century is shown by the population figures, which doubled from 2865 in 1801 to 5775 in 1851.

A summary of the locations of trades, etc., listed in 1847 shows a heavy bias still towards the eastern end of the town. Main Street had 135, Market Place 72, St. Helen's Street 45, Kirkgate 27, Castle St. 14, Crown St. 14, Market S1. 12, Challoner St. 10, the Gote 9, Skinner Street and Sand Lane each 3, Cocker Lane, New St., Waterloo St., Old Brewery, South St. 2 and Cocker Went, Old Hall, Jackson's Yard and Sullart Street 1. Forty years later, in 1883, [20] there is a decrease in the traditional industries only four tanners (Henry Dodd in Kirkgate, Peter and Joseph Fletcher at the Castle Tannery, the Robertson brothers in S1. Helen's Street and Jos. and Thomas Threlkeld also in S1. Helen's Street); Fitz Mill and Derwent Mill manufacturing thread; and only two woollen cloth manufacturers, W. Brown and Co. Ltd. at the Tweed Mill and George Tinker in Rubby Banks. This was offset by other developments. There were now three agricultural implement firms - Haughton and Thompson in South Street, William Robinson at the Fairfield implement works and Joseph Herbert in the Derwent Foundry. The rope and twine maker was still in Kirkgate.

Farmers and carriers were served by six blacksmiths, and there was the usual range of craftsmen in the building, joinery and ironmongery trades. Tailors and drapers were up to 31, hairdressers to 6 and milliners to 11. There were 36 inns and hotels and 3 coffee houses, including the Whitehaven Cocoa and Coffee Tavern Co. Ltd. which provided refreshments at the railway station. A confectionery works had also started in the town.

In addition to its own manufacturing activities Cockermouth controlled the trade of a wide area.

The Court Leet ruled in 1660

> *"That what cattle should be imported at Workington, Whitehaven and Allenfoot, the owners thereof may pay to the officers of our sd. Burrough for every horse 6d for every ox cow and heifer 4d a piece and for every sheep id. Similarly for tarr herring (4d a barrell), beefe, lead (6d per hundred) and coales (4d per Tunn)."* [21]

In 1781 the trustees for Whitehaven port included the Cockermouth MP and John Wordsworth and the officials for Whitehaven and Harrington ports swore their oaths at Cockermouth. [22] The statement by Daniel Defoe in his account of a tour of Britain in the 1720s "that vessels of good burthern sailed up to Cockermouth" is another instance of a writer being misled by the town's name. Norman Nicholson doubts whether Defoe ever visited the town and describes him as an accomplished liar with a vivid imagination.

Almost every village had a corn mill, and most a fulling mill, for people must not only be fed but clothed. The making of woollen cloth was one of the earliest of industries and wool itself was of great importance. The ransom paid to Austria for Richard the Lionheart about 1190 was in wool, of which Kendal contributed two sacks. [23J While fulling was done in a mill (as early as 1156 in Cockermouth). spinning and weaving were carried on in the homes of the people, the former by women and children, the latter by the men. The 'fulling of cloth, giving it thickness and 'body', was originally achieved by placing it in troughs of soapy water and walking on it with bare feet in a walk or waulk mill, thus converting the loose weaving into a thick felted mass, tightening the weave and making the product warmer and more resistant to water. Later the pounding was done by water powered hammers. The soap was made in this area from potash, obtained by burning bracken, and this was an organised subsidiary industry. [24]

'Packmen' collected fleeces and brought them to the central warehouses of the organising 'clothiers', where they were weighed and sorted by 'fellmongers', 'spullars' and 'sorters'. Women and children in their homes then carded and spun hanks of thread, about 540 yards in length. The male 'websters' or 'weavers' produced 'pieces' 1 yard by 20 (later 40) yards. The 'bowchers' or 'bowkers' cleaned the cloth, the 'dyers or 'dysters' coloured it, usually blue in the Cockermouth area, then following fixing and fulling it was stretched by tenterers' or 'listers' by hanging it on rows of poles in tenter fields. Various processes produced different finishes, before the cloth was sold through the agency of the 'chapmen'. A clothier would have quite a large work-force, usually at least 100, possibly 1000.

The 'spinning galleries' found further south in Cumbria (possibly used for washing and drying rather than spinning) are not a feature of Cockermouth. but weavers' cottages are

to be seen. These often have an additional row of windows close to those of the first storey to give additional light to the looms kept on the upper floor. The row known as Teetotal Lane, backing on to the United Reformed Church premises, was considered to have been weavers' property and other examples occur in the town, often modified when home weaving ceased.

There was a weaving settlement in the Sullart Street area, separate from the main town. The tythe map shows three weaving shops here in 1840.

The change from domestic to mill manufacture was gradual. Carding was the next process after fulling to be centralised, followed by spinning. Eventually almost everything was done in three- or four- storeyed textile mills, although there were still some 'outworkers' late in 19th century.

The branches of the woollen industry have given us many surnames and also left their mark in the names of inns in the town such as the Woolpack in Market Place and the Weavers Arms in Main Street, demolished to make Bridge Street.

There was a widespread demand for wool from the northern counties, especially for working class clothing, and in competing with richer wool-producing areas Cockermouth had the advantage of cheap water power. This was supplemented by steam towards the end of the 19th century, but some mills, such as Rubby Banks, remained water driven.

Like most industries, the wool trade had its good and bad periods. In the latter half of the 14th century there was a boom - production of broadcloth in the country trebled and exports went up ninefold. The latter were organised through the 'staple' a merchant guild based in Calais (a British possession) which controlled all trade to the continent except to Italy. [25] There was frequent legislation affecting wool. Edward III placed a 33.33% tax on the staple trade to boost home manufacture and to make money.

Cockermouth (in the wool trade second only to Kendal in Cumbria) and the north as a whole found it difficult to pay the admission fees to the staplers' guild and the staplers, who had a monopoly, would not trouble to come so far north, so in 1618 the northern brokers petitioned the Privy Council for permission to trade with other towns free of the Council's ruling on minimum prices. After a second petition permission was granted the following year for free trading in the three northern counties. [26] Kendal and Cockermouth made some recovery, but many farms suited only to sheep rearing had by then been abandoned and fulling mills vacated or converted to other uses.

Cumbrian wool had a decline in the 16th century. A number of factors were responsible for this the plague, competition from Spain and competition from the midlands and south of England, where the sheep produced finer wool and there were not the difficulties of collecting fleeces from remote hill farms. Cumbrian wool was described

as being suitable only for "frizes [thick, rough woollen garments of lasting quality], cottons [imitation in wool of continental fustians, that is coarse, twilled fabrics woven to give diagonal lines] and coarsest cloth, [27] but there was nevertheless demand for it both at home and abroad. To boost the trade nationally statutes were passed compelling burial in wool (1667) and the wearing of woollen clothes, as that of 1571 which stated

> *"Every person above the age of six years (except maidens, ladies and gentlewomen; and lords, knights and gentlemen of twenty marks a year) shall wear upon the Sabbath and holiday, upon their head, one cap of woolknit, thicked and dressed in England, on pain of 3s. 4d. a day. "[*28]

The prices paid locally in 1730 are found in the records of Humphrey Senhouse's sales. [29] In that year he sold to Joseph Westray, a searge weaver at Cockermouth, 30 stone at 5s-0d per stone (l4lbs), of which half "was my own sheep wool, the other half of the bought-in wool", so Humphrey Senhouse was apparently doing some wool 'brogging'. He also supplied 'mug wool' to Joseph Rothery, a Cockermouth felt maker and to George Sancton, of the Ship Inn, Cockermouth, at 5s-0d. "County wool" was then fetching 3s-6d. a stone.

Linen and cotton manufactures were never domestic industries as was wool, but they played a large part in the working life of Cockermouth as we shall see when we consider individual mills.

The effect of the introduction of more advanced machinery on textile manufacture and the work force is shown by a letter dated 16th November 1781 written by Richard Radc1iffe of Cockermouth to his friend Humpbrey Senhouse of Netherhall. [30] Radcliffe was a substantial linen-draper, mercier and clothier dealing in woollens, haberdashery and millinery, but obviously becoming interested in cotton, of which Senhouse's brother William, Surveyor-General of Barbados, was shipping ever increasing quantities to England.

> *"It will give you great pleasure", wrote Radcliffe, "to hear a new manufactory is establishing here that probably will be of great consequence to the future prosperity of the place - cotton spinning and manufactory on a new plan, that do as much and evener and truer as many hands can do in the same space of time, and in time we hope to have many loombs employed. The shuttles have springs to them and weave much quicker than the old method. We have two machines for carding wool that go by water; one of these only cards, the other cards, roves (that is opens the cotton), spins, winds, twists and compleates it ready for weaving, and this machine, attended by only two people, will do a great Quantity of work in a day. The first inventor of this great improvement in the Mechanical and manufactoring branch is one Alkright who was a Barber in Manchester*

> *fourteen years ago and had not creditt for 5s. He is now worth 3 hundred thousand pounds and employs a great many thousand persons of all ages from four years old upwards and [have no doubt annually returns from 2 to 3 hundred thousand pounds [a] year. Mr. Smith, myself and three men from Manchester are att present the partys concerned, butt as in time a very considerable sum of money may be employed wee may take other Partners, of which already we have the offer of many."*

This was only some six years after the invention of Arkwright's spinning jenny, so this feature of the industrial revolution reached Cockermouth quickly. Probably Radcliffe was hoping that Senhouse would join him in this new venture. Possibly he was already financially worried, in spite of his enthusiasm. At the end of 1781 there was a great fall in wool prices, part of a trading recession wider than the wool trade.

On 24th February 1784 the 'Pacquet' announced Radcliffe's bankruptcy and in May he wrote to Senhouse

> *"Last Tuesday I gave up the little I was possessed of and underwent my examination for bankruptcy, having lost upwards of £10,000 sustained in a thirty years' adverse trade and no prospect of better times."[*31]

In July the 'Pacquet' carried an announcement from Kirkpatrick and Johnstone, mercers and drapers of Cockermouth, that they had taken a house opposite the Appletree to sell Radcliffe's remaining stock at 25% below cost price. [32] Radcliffe told Senhouse that after his affairs were settled he wished to take lodgings in "your rising and much improving town of Maryport."

Radcliffe's bankruptcy was only one of several in Cockermouth around the turn of the century. The reasons were various - loss of trade because of the war with America and its secession in 1782; a woollen trade suffering from the imports of cotton; the unsettling of the economy by the Napoleonic wars; perhaps in Radcliffe's case over-investment in Arkwright's water frame; and the failure of the Lakeland cotton industry to compete with the growing production of Lancashire and Paisley. When peace came in 1815 the many Cumberland weavers were desperate. Southey wrote from Keswick in 1816 that "The whole fabric of social order in this country is in great danger." The average wage for a man was 5s. [25p] a week, with working days of about 14 hours, and in May a strike in Carlisle spread to Cockermouth. The MP for the borough, Curwen, tried to obtain help for weavers to emigrate.

Allied to the manufacture of various textiles was the dying trade, developing to an appreciable extent in Cockermouth in the middle and late 1700s. Different colours were obtained by secret recipes using local plants, tree barks, etc. From about 1820 textile firms tended to have their own dye works instead of sending out the cloth to specialist dyers.

Cockermouth's greatest linen firm began in the town in the early 19th century, the hat trade about 100 years earlier, and both will be considered in the next chapter. We may however note here a trade related to hat manufacture, that of rabbit dealing. Humphrey Senhouse, whose wool sales were mentioned above, was also interested in rabbits. He had contracts with Cockermouth, Carlisle and Whitehaven and the family records give details of the trade. In 1729 and 1730 Benjamin Drape of Cockermouth agreed to take "all the rabbits he [Senhouse] shall deliver at Bd, per couple" In 1730 Netherhall sold 863 couple and consumed 80 couple at the hall and, to make up these numbers,

Senhouse received some from his neighbours and some from his son-in-law Christian. There is a record of Joseph Plaskett's wife selling 300 couple at Cockermouth in 1734 and receiving 13s. payment. The rabbits were conveyed in panniers on horses, 40 couple making up a load. Senhouse provided the horses and the carrier was at one time paid Y4d. a couple for the Maryport-Cockermouth journey and Y:zd. a couple for Maryport-Whitehaven. [33]

A further industry which arose in the town because of its position in the centre of an agricultural area was tanning. As with wool. Cockermouth came second in importance to Kendal for Cumbria. Hides from the district were supplemented by imports from Ireland. In addition to a plentiful supply of water, Cockermouth had ready to hand two other essentials of the industry - lime and bark.

The hides were immersed in quick lime to remove the hairs, then washed and scraped to remove the fat and grease, and re-immersed in baths of dog or hen manure in which the acid counteracted the lime and the sinews began to swell and thicken into leather fibres. These processes caused river pollution and gave rise to complaints from dyers, wool washers, etc., who wished to use the water further downstream. Finally the hides were placed in tanks of tanning juices, preferably solutions of shredded or minced bark from oak, ash, birch or hazel trees, oak being the best. From about 1600 coppicing was used to produce these young barks, the trees being cut on a 15 to 25 year cycle. [34]

A tannery might have as many as 50 pits of bark solution, in varying strengths and of varying age. The tanks were usually cubic of from 4 to 6 ft. The hides went first into the old and mellow solutions, being moved on each fortnight into stronger, and the process finished at different stages for different leathers. That intended for clog soles for example could spend two years travelling through 50 pits. There were many allied trades. Curriers prepared leather for different purposes, slitting or shaving it to produce a product thin enough for clothes, or smoothing it with oil, or using ridged boards to give a grain finish for belts and harness.

Cordwainers used dressed leather to make breeches, gloves, shoes and boots, high-topped boots being a speciality. Saddlers and harness-makers catered for horses. Right

at the beginning of leather manufacture, before the tanners, came the skinners, commemorated for example in Skinner Street

A notice of sale appeared in the 'Pacquet' in January 1777 and again seven months later for a tan yard at Cockermouth which had 34 pits, 2 dying lofts, rooms below, bark mill, scouring house, beam house and office, with all utensils and a quantity of oak bark if required. "Fairly situated, well watered and nigh the Market Place". [35] This tannery had its own bark mill.

The leather searchers ensured that there was no cheating, checking that poor leather was not made to look like higher quality. A Court Leet record of 1688 stated

> *"We amerce Robert Fisher of Beck Wythop 6s-8d. for carrying away tanned leather being not sufficiently tanned according to the statute and after the same was seized by the sworn searchers."* [36]

All tanning in the town has now ceased, although there were tanneries until well into the 20th century, and with the tanning have gone the related trades. There is little demand for harness, and leather clothes and footwear are now factory produced.

Cockermouth early developed a trade in fish, not only for local needs but sending salmon as far as London. The value placed upon fishing rigbts is shown by the charge for the Derwent fishing in 1437 - 20 marks (£13-6s-8d.), as much as the rent for 340 acres of grassland in Cockermouth Parks. [37]

Iron smelting existed in Roman and pre-Roman times, dependent on the use of charcoal in bloomeries, so named from the Anglo-Saxon word for a lump of iron. Such sites abound in the Lake District, sometimes perpetuated in names such as cinder and scaw referring to slag. There was a bloomery on the shores of Crummock Water, below the aptly named Cinderdale Common, and a Bloomery Beck flows through Isel, while within Cockermouth itself Cockermouth School stands on Cinder Hill. Eventually the small bloomeries gave way to larger concerns where spades, nails, tools and farm machinery were made. Forges and foundries existed in Cockermouth and there was a scheme for considerable development at Double Mills which we will examine in the next chapter. Then blast furnaces were invented and the iron and steel industry of West Cumberland and other places in Britain replaced the forges and foundries of the small towns.

Coppiced trees and full grown trees provided timber for a number of Cockermouth industries, usually after the bark had been removed for the tanners. Bobbins were in great demand, a large textile mill using hundreds of thousands at a time. Timber was needed by the town's coopers, basket makers, wheelwrights, wood turners, etc. Timber could be used in paper-making, but rags were earlier used for this purpose, not only from the local textile mills but even imported, as the following 'Pacquet' advertisement of July 1776 shows

"To be sold, the Stock in Trade and Utensils belonging to a Press-Paper-Mill, situate near Cockermouth",

with two glazing machines, dwelling houses at the site for workmen, ground for a cow and commons adjoining. The premises are described as in good repair and a note states that foreign rags may be imported on easy terms. [38]

The domestic system of manufacture has been described in connection with the wool trade. Within the town a practice developed of having large craft shops or mills with workers' cottages adjacent. An excellent example of this remains intact in Banks' Court at the foot of Castlegate. What had been the long garden of a large house facing on to Market Place was used for woollen manufacture, a mill being built down one side of the garden and cottages down the other, a small piece of land remaining at the far end for drying cloth. In this court some of the cottages are still occupied. A similar arrangement formerly existed behind Castle Vaults in Castlegate and there were more such yards in the town.

Radcliffe mentioned four-year-old children working in the mills. They helped in home industry as soon as they were able, but their employment became a vital feature of mill organisation. There is not space to examine this in detail, but we may note that Davies-Shiel and Marshall describe child labour as being particularly bad in the bobbin mills where there were many pauper 'apprentices', underfed, underclothed, overworked and untrained. [39] The four factory acts of 1802-1830 related only to the cotton industry and then the 1833 act extended provisions to all textile mills except silk. The four inspectors appointed (for the whole country) reported to Parliament and the act consequently ruled that no child under nine should work in a textile factory, those of9 to 13 not more than 12 hours a day and 48 a week and the 13 to 18 group not more than 12 and 69. No child was to work between 8.30 pm. and 5.30 am.

However, it was difficult to enforce such regulations with only four inspectors and easy to forge a child's age before registrations of births became compulsory in 1837. Cockermouth factories were doubtless as bad as those elsewhere. Conditions gradually improved but it was not until 1891 that the minimum age for factory work was raised to eleven. Not only were the children's hours of work long and of sleep short, but pay was poor and working conditions unhealthy in the extreme.

To conclude this chapter on industry in general: In the late 17th century there was a shortage of small coinage throughout England and many persons of standing, usually manufacturers, issued tokens which had value in a restricted area. Cumberland had fewer of these than any other English county, as the small value Scottish bodies were used. [40] Cockermouth had only three issues, each of them farthing tokens. One in the 1660s came from Anthony Bouch, who owned land adjoining Laithwaite known as Bouch Fields and who was entitled to bear arms. In addition to having his initials and

the date the token was inscribed "I am for publique use. Good in Cockermouth." Another bore the name of Leo Scott on one side and "I am for better change" on the other. Leonard Scott's marriage to Cetteryn (Catherine) Cape was registered at All Saints on 10 June 1656. The third had "Thomas Watson 64" on one side and "In: Cockermouth - T.I.W." on the reverse. Thomas Watson appears on a Cockermouth Castle rent roll for the period.

No doubt Cockermouth millworkers were paid partly in goods or in tokens which could be spent only in the tommy-shops in which the employers had an interest, until the Truck Act of 1831 ruled that artificers were to be paid wholly in coin, a ruling extended in 1887 to all manual workers except domestic servants and farm workers.

There is no guildhall in Cockermouth. That in Carlisle, built in the 14th century and recently restored, was the meeting place of the eight guilds of merchants, weavers, tailors, butchers, shoemakers, skinners and glovers, tanners and smiths (working in various metals). The regulation and protection of industry provided by the guilds and the restrictive apprenticeship system established as early as the 13th century would presumably be in force in Cockermouth, the commercial centre of a wide area of the county, until a royal statute of 1562 took away many of the guilds' privileges but left the apprenticeship system. [41]

Chapter 30

Industrial sites along the Cocker

Just within the town boundary stands Simonscales Mill, now converted into dwellings. It is marked as a paper mill on a map of 1775 and is probably that leased to John Brougham in 1772, described as having been recently made into a paper milL Later it changed to bobbin production, making a wide range of bobbins, reels, spindles, pulleys, etc., not only for local mills but for the textile mills of Lancashire and Yorkshire. This trade reached its peak in the Lake District about 1850-70. Simonscales was auctioned as a bobbin mill at the Globe in 1881, the property having water power, bobbin mill, dwelling house, five cottages and 12 acres of land. [1] The wood along the opposite bank of the Cocker is Bobbin Mill Plantation.

On the outskirts of the town is Double Mills, traditionally so called because another mill once stood on the opposite bank. If so this second building could only have been Wood or Badgkin Mill, across and lower down the river, and a more likely origin for the name is the existence of two wheels in separate channels, both fed by a race from a weir upstream, the Sal Dam. A length of substantial walling is all that remains of this weir. Wood Mill is referred to in 1478 as "newly situated opposite the corn mill", [2] which places the origin of Double Mills before this date. It remained a corn mill for over 400 years. A drying kiln once stood on the higher side and there are still the mill house and outbuildings on the lower.

There was a period when the mill was the centre of much activity which almost changed its character. In 1741 the Duke of Somerset leased it as a corn mill to John Fearon for 21 years at an annual rent of £16. [3] The Duke's successor, Charles Wyndham, visited the works of the Low Mill Edge Tool Company in Egremont. He was impressed and thought "such works must be for the good of the County". In April 1754 the firm approached the Earl, saying they understood John Fearon wished to resign his lease and "that situation being very convenient for our Iron Forge, we are very desirous to have a lease of the said mills for sixty three years with liberty to build Iron Works on the common adjacent". [4]

A letter towards the end of the following year refers to the Earl's agreement to this and points out that

> *"it will be necessary to give us leave to pull down, alter and rebuild, and make enlargements on the adjacent Common; and highten and inlarge the weers, and to lengthen, widen and deepen the Mill race or races - as we shall find necessary for the obtaining a sufficient fall of water to carrie on the works, and to build store houses and other conveniences on the adjacent Common".* [5]

The Company further asked leave to proceed without waiting for the completion of the legal arrangements.

By the following June all was set for the development of an iron forge on the site, with a large mill pool to power the trip hammers, bellows, etc. Then suddenly for some reason the whole proposal fell through. Barepot ironworks near Workington was built about 1762 and the name of the negotiator involved was the same, so it is possible that this replaced the Cockermouth scheme.

Fearon had already left, but he returned and the mill continued to grind corn under a succession of lessees, who usually took it for 21 years. We quote the list of equipment signed as belonging to the landlord when George Hodgson took the mill in 1814. - [6]

Two Water Wheels

Wheat Mill, cogg Wheel and Trunnels

Dressing Machine

Barley Mill for Skilling Barley

Pitt Wheel and Trunnels

Mill Tackle for raising Stones and ropes

Sack Tackle.

One pair of Wheat Stones

Dressing Mill and Card Wheel

Hopper and hopper Stangs and crubbs

One pair of Gray Stones

Machine and two arks

Band wheel for Machine

At the end of this ten-year lease Hodgson made a proposal to rent at £90, almost twice the previous rent, "the Earl of Egremont agreeing to expend the sum of £200 in building a Dwelling House and Stables and in purchasing a pair of French Burr Mill Stones and putting up a Barley Mill".

French stones were made from several pieces of coarse flint quarried near Epernon and bound by iron hoops which, when used as the top stone, split open the ears and 'shelled' the grain from the husks. They now stand against the bank by the mill.

A lease of 1860 includes not only the mill, warehouse, dwelling house, etc., but Simonscales Wood (on the slopes of Cocker Brows) and fourteen acres in five closes adjoining the mill premises.

The metal rims of the two wheels remain alongside the mill. An offer of £5 was made for them in 1942 but the Council (now owners of the mill) refused to sell. The stone channels have slots in which boards were inserted to divert the flow.

In 1900 the mill was marked on maps as 'Disused'. Two years later the UDC bought it for £600 to use as an isolation hospital, to obtain electricity by water power or as the basis of a recreation ground. [7] None of these plans materialised and it was eventually let to the Youth Hostels Association, Cockermouth UDC being the first council in the country to help the YHA in this way. It was opened on 13 April 1933 in the presence of E. S1. J. Catchpool, national secretary of the newly formed association, and Richard W. Hall, a Cockermouth enthusiast. In the early days the warden lived in a nearby house (the Council divided the mill house into two, but it has recently reverted to one dwelling). There is now a resident warden. There is accommodation for 28 and this attractive hostel becomes increasingly popular.

The new water main of the 1960s crosses the river here, to pass through the lower part of the park and climb to the upper side of Railway Terrace and the lower end ofFem Bank.

On the opposite side of the river to Double Mills, just above the footbridge, stood a small mill which was probably the fulling mill of 1578 which was in Moor Closes [8] and, as we have seen, mentioned in the Minister's Accounts of 1478. It was not mentioned in a list of 1437/8, which puts its construction in the period 1437 to 1478.

An indenture drawn up between Sir Henry Fletcher and Andrew Green, dated 1830, refers to

> *"All that Fulling and Spinning Mill and premises ... at Badgkin ... in a certain close ... called Leather Mill Field but formerly known by the name of Badgkins Close which sd. premises were lately occupied by Mrs. Beeby and used by her as a spinning and carding mill"*

In 1832 Andrew Green leased it to Jonah Fleming, a cooper, and William Fisher, an ironmonger, for a period of 14 years for £3 a year - a rent indicative of the small size of the premises. The following notice of letting referred to this mill

> *"Leather Mill to let.*
>
> *To be let by proposal & may be entered upon at Cand' 1848 all that Water Mill situate & being on the Banks of the River Cocker in the Township of Cockermouth in the County of Cumbd, called the Leather Mill and now or lately used as a Saw Mill & Forge for the making of Siciles and Edge Tools & in the Occupation of Mr. Joseph Fleming." [*9]

This is another example of a lease not being auctioned but granted on the basis of offers made. Joseph Fleming may have been a relation of or the same person as Jonah of the

1832 letting. The two lessees of 1832 had combined in running a saw mill and forge, both wood and iron being required in the manufacture of sickles and edge tools.

When the first OS map appeared in 1863 the mill is labelled 'Wood Mill (Bobbin)', so it may have been let for bobbin making in 1848.

Thus this small building was at different times used for leather, spinning and carding, wood sawing and tool making, and bobbin manufacture. The cutting into the rock for the race and wheel pit may be clearly seen from the footbridge and a little stone walling remains beneath the turf. Travelling down stream through the lower part of Harris Park we reach the remains of 'Tinker's Dam' and the site of Rubby Banks Mills. Two 3-storey mills stood on the flat land between the houses and the river and in the boundary wall of this area may be traced mill doors and windows. The last of the buildings were demolished in 1971, being unused and dangerous, the weir having been breached earlier.

The two mills had parallel wheel pits, one of which still contained the wheel at the time of demolition, and the tops of the arched channels may just be seen above the levelling of the site.

There is a record of Ribbey Banck Milnes (the early spelling varied, Ruby being common) being leased by the Earl of Northumberland to Thomas Fletcher, a Cockermouth merchant, in 1596, the lease to run for three lives at an annual rent of £7. When Thomas Dodgson leased it in 1714 he erected a corn mill nine yards square, using £5 worth of timber. Two mills now stood on the site and in the successive leases and sub-lettings it is often difficult to determine which of the two is involved.

However, in 1759 the Earl leased Rubybank water corn mill to Thomas Smith, dyer, for 21 years at £16 10s. and eight years later there was a lease of the Ruby Bank fulling mill and mill premises lately erected adjoining the water corn mill to Thomas Smith, dyer, Mary Barnes of Cockermouth, widow and Daniel Barnes of Crookdale, miller. Depending on the interpretation of 'lately' this may signify recent rebuilding and/or extension of the earlier mill. We also have evidence that Thomas Smith was now a lessee of the whole complex. The first member of the Smith family noted, in the 1750s, was Matthew, who had property elsewhere. His son Thomas I came to Cockermouth and it was to him that the lease was granted in 1759 for 21 years, with Permission to build anything required.

He let the corn mill for £20 a year and either he or his son Thomas II (who succeeded him) built a fulling mill, for a later lease of 1783, by the Earl to the cousins Richard and Matthew Smith, described Rubby Bank Mill as formerly held by Henry and Thomas Dodgson and late by Thomas Smith father of the said Richard and refers to "all that fulling Mill lately erected near the Water Corn Mill by the said Thomas Smith".

Richard succeeded to the business when his father died, about 1760. The two cousins probably had, in addition to Rubby Banks, property extending from South Street (then Back Lane) along the river to Main Street, including Cocker Bridge and Croft Mills. They were engaged in woollen manufacture and dyeing.

It was with Richard, and possibly also Matthew, that Richard Radcliffe became involved in promoting the installation of one of Richard Arkwright's water frames in the mill in 1781. [10] This was to manufacture cotton thread. In the same year came the great fall in wool prices and difficulties in the West Indian and American trade in which the men were involved via Whitehaven. The next few years were hard times. From 1783 to 1788 the greater proportion of deaths in Cockermouth were registered as 'paupers', a term eventually applied to 75% of deaths recorded. This implied a slump. Radcliffe was one of several mill-owners who went bankrupt, but Richard Smith kept going and it has been suggested that he was unscrupulous in his business methods. There is a record of him manufacturing shalloons in 1790, at which time he had over 300 employees. [11]

When the lease expired in 1801 the mill was let to Richard Smith for a further 21 years at a rent of £80, a four-fold increase on 1759. This was presumably for the fulling mill only, for the corn mill was let in 1802 to Joseph Wilkinson who sublet to Richard Burgess for £80 a year. Wilkinson was given permission to build over the race but found he could not do so because of Smith's large fulling mill and the backing up of water from Smith's wheel presented a further difficulty. He complained to the Earl, from whom Smith held his lease, and in his complaint referred to Smith as spinning and carding worsted. [12]

Richard Smith seems to have been a very difficult person with whom to have dealings. Wilkinson complained about interference with access, using water which should have gone to the corn mill, and the effect of Smith's building activities. It is not clear whether he demolished all the fulling mill or whether by his rebuilding he had virtually erected a third mill on the site and was fulling, carding and spinning in adjacent premises. One tenant, Daniel Dunglinson, appears to have left in disgust about 1810 and rebuilt Little Mill. In 1821 Smith was paying £80 rent for the site and re couping this by sub-letting the corn mill for the same amount.

The lease for the mills expiring in 1821, they were advertised for sale and a castle record shows the difficulties created by the sitting tenant, now 69 years old and owing the Earl two years' rent.

> *"It is apprehended that Smith keeps people back from making an offer for the Corn Mill, giving out that he means to take both Mills, and then to alter the Mills, so as to make the Corn Mill worth little or nothing."*

His son Thomas offered £60 a year for 21 years, but father refused to do business with him. There followed a period of confusion regarding tenancy and responsibility for repairs. In October 1822 Smith was given notice to quit. In November the Earl's agent

ordered him to put the whole property "into complete and perfect repair". [13] No progress was made and further confusion was produced by Lord Egremont agreeing to sell the property to Andrew Green, who already had the neighbouring land. Son Thomas was apparently the only one to make an offer, for on 5th May 1823 was recorded

> *"Thomas Smith refuses to pay any more Rent than he has already offered. The Mill was advertised for several weeks successively last autumn 12 month. I do not think there will be any use in advertising it again. Something should be done as the Mill is in a very bad state of repair and I am afraid that the length of time that has elapsed from Lady Day 1822 will go a long way to exonerate Rd. Smith, and it is clear that he will do nothing until he is compelled. A Notice has been served on him to repair it a long time ago, but he eontends that he had nothing to do with the building after Lady Day." [*14]

On the 16th. of the same month the writer further reported

> *"I have seen Thos. Smith and his Mother about this Mill Richd. the Father is in good circumstances, but quite in his dotage. Thos has promised to pay the Arrear of Rent and put the Mill in Repair, but says that he cannot offer more than £60 - but if he continues tenant from year to year and puts the Premises into Repair I see no objection to it."*

On into the next year - 19th April 1824.

> *"I am still of opinion that Mr. Green is better without the Mills. They must however either be sold or an action must be commenced agst. the Extrix of Richd Smith, for I believe there is very great doubt whether the Rubby Banks Mill will not tumble down before the Winter."*

So while the buildings continued to decay argument continued as to who should have the lease and, if Thomas Smith, whether he should get away with a rent as low as £60. Richard had obviously died by April 1824.

Then on 1st November 1824 Richard's widow was threatened with legal action unless the mills were repaired, the estimates being £129-12s-0d. for work by Thomas Mackreth and £14-10s-6d. for work by William Cape. [15] Thomas moved in and repaired the property, at a cost of£160, but he does not appear to have stayed long. Andrew Green did finally buy the premises, for in 1827 he leased to Jeremiah or Joshua Wharton, linen manufacturer in Waterloo Street,

> *"all that Mess (uage) Ten(ement) or Dwelling House and Flax Mill with the Stove Dry House, Heckling Lofts and other Appurts thereto belonging and adjoining sit. and being at Rubby Banks nr Cockermth afsd with the Liberty ofusing one half of the Water of the River Cocker for carrying the Wheel of this Mill (the other being reserved for the use of the Spinning Carding and Fulling Mill adjoining)."* [16]

In the same year Green leased to Edward and John Sancton, woollen manufacturers and sub tenants of Graves in Waterloo Street, the spinning, carding and fulling mill with the stove dry house appurtenances and half the water. So there were two textile mills in operation, the corn mill having been converted to flax. There is mention in these agreements of the tenter field across the footbridge over the Cocker.

In 1844 Andrew Green leased to Thomas Wilson, hat manufacturer, the newly erected mill called Rubby Banks lately a flax mill with a store or drying house, the rent to be £35 per year. Again 'new ly erected', this was possibly recent rebuilding, major repairs or even Thomas Smith's repairs of nearly 20 years earlier. Did Wilson go there while his factory near Cocker Bridge was being built? Certainly his stay was short, for from about 1847 Wharton and Peile are recorded as having the whole mills, carrying on fulling and linen, thread, woollen cloth and hat manufacture. [17] Their occupation lasted until the mid-1890s (from 1827 in one mill) and they probably succeeded in keeping going so much longer than many other mill owners because of their diversity of interests.

In 1893 half the complex was let to George Tinker. He manufactured coverings, skirting and collar checks, plaidings, tweeds, blankets and rugs. He would make up customers' own wool or produce rag carpeting from their own rags. In this he used string warp and rag weft for lengths 4Yz feet [1350mm] wide. He also made coarse woollen druggetting for floor covering. At the turn of the century George Tinker advertised that he was to be found on Mondays at No. 9 stall in the New Market. [18] Patterns of his products could be had on application. Although he left the mill in 1920, at the time of demolition 50 years later it was still referred to as 'Tinker's Mill'.

In 1920 Joseph Messenger worked in the premises as a cooper, wood turner and pattern maker. He was followed by Hartley, another wood turner producing rollers, hay rakes, stools, dolly sticks, etc. This business was continued by his son Oswald Hartley who added wooden bowls to the list of products. Latterly the wheel drove a dynamo to power the mill and the mill house. From 1963 the building was used for a short time by a Bassenthwaite timber merchant. [20]

Between Rubby Banks and the railway arch stands Railway Terrace, a row of six houses erected in 1882. Cockermouth's waterworks once occupied this walled site. (Figs. 70 & 72.)

On this same bank, mid-way between Victoria Bridge and Quaker Bridge, Wood's 1832 map marks Sim's dyeworks, a site now occupied by houses numbered 7 and 8. The same map shows Sim as having a house on Main Street, directly opposite to the Globe, with a long garden running down to the Cocker. In 1832 there was no building on the river bank here, but a small one is shown in 1863. The following advertisement suggests that Sim left the site further upstream for either the bottom of his garden or elsewhere in the town

"Dyehouse and Premises to Let.

To be let and may be entered immediately all that Dyehouse with the Drying Room Store Room Tenter Ground etc. Premises situate on the Banks of the River Cocker late in the occupation of Mr. Joshua Sim. Furr Parties. apply to Mr. Bragg Solr. Cockermouth who will receive offers of rent for the same. Cockermouth. Nov 91841." [21]

Certainly Sim was successful in business and able to buy woollen mills in Thornthwaite and Braithwaite for his two sons, but they went bankrupt and Joshua sold all his property to pay their debts. [22]

On the left bank below Quaker Bridge stands the former Croft Mill, now converted into flats. A lower building on the northern end housed the mill engine and at the time of conversion, although the interior had been cleared, there were still high on the walls the brackets which had supported the shafting for belt-driving the machinery. An interesting feature is the roof ridge, pointed in the normal way at the town end but broadening to a flat width of two or three feet at the upstream end. On maps Croft is always referred to as 'woollen', but this was probably varied from time to time.

Just below Croft Mill was Cocker Bridge (End) Mill, extending to Main Street where the Midland Bank now stands. From the opposite side of the river may be seen bricked-up windows and doorways in a long stretch of wall which once formed part of this mill.

On the right bank of the river the Town Hall occupies the site of Sanderson's woollen mill. The riverside car park was the mill's drying ground and on the terrace below the churchyard was a row of ten cottages known as Mount Pleasant. Ruined buildings and sheds littered the area until it was cleaned up and landscaped by the UDC in the 1970s, happily retaining the archway as a reminder of earlier industry. (Plates 15, & 16.) Where the road curves round to enter the riverside car park, and built right up to Cocker Bridge, was one of Cockermouth's most famous industries - Thomas Wilson's hat factory. (Fig. 44.) The first hatters probably came to Cockermouth in the early 1700s. The Wilson family moved from Belfast to Carlisle and on to Cockermouth, where Thomas was born in 1791. He succeeded to and developed his father's business, being helped by many journeymen hatmakers who came from Lancashire about 1841 when times were bad. [23] At its peak the factory produced about 4000 hats a week, some of which were probably exported to America from Whitehaven.

Writing in 1866 John Askew said "the splendid and thriving business which he has created has passed away with him; the workmen whom he employed have long since left Cumberland to seek labour in other places; the extensive premises which during his lifetime were a hive of industry are now a deserted wreck." In 1883 Bulman wrote [24] of the mill as tenantless and the trade as having fled. Ideas for the use of the empty buildings were mentioned in an earlier chapter.

Thomas Wilson was held in high regard in his native town. He was a principal promoter of the Cumberland Union Bank and built Grecian Villa as his family home. [25] He contributed liberally to the rebuilding of All Saints Church after the fire and a wall tablet therein has the inscription

> *"In memory of Thomas Wilson, hat manufacturer, ofthis town, who, left to his own resources in early life, by a steady course of diligence, integrity, and enterprise, largely extended the trade and industrial employment of the town, and raised himself to an affluent and honourable position in Society. Died January 28th. 1857, aged 65 years .... "*

There were other buildings in the town where hats were at times manufactured and, judging from Senhouse's rabbit sales, the industry was in being early in the 18th. century.

Below Cocker Bridge John Stoddart's cotton mill was on the right bank, occupying probably more than one building. One which remains, marked 'Vinegar Hill' on the 1863 OS map, has '1. & M. S. 1800' carved over a doorway and is now used by the brewery.

Below Stoddart's was the Old Brewery and then the Old Brewery Tannery, now both replaced by modern brewery buildings, and beyond them the iron foundry and the windmill. There was also a tannery on the bank of the Derwent.

The Cocker turned wheels on the right bank and was then deflected by a weir across to the wheel of a churn factory on the left bank. From the footbridge may be seen the stone support for the axle. This building fronted on to High Sand Lane. Also in High Sand Lane was the cooper's where the barrels for the brewery were made, being trundled over 'Barrel Bridge'.

The windmill is in an unusual situation - on the banks of two rivers which could easily provide water power. Its most likely use was crushing bark for the neighbouring tanneries, but it may have milled corn ~__J-/ originally. Certainly the building has been adapted. A..... pitched roof was substituted for a movable cap and windows were added at some time. The upper bin floor has a trimmed opening for the main drive from the windshaft. [26] The mill, some 25 feet high, was brick built instead of the usual sandstone and an oil painting in the vestry of All Saints Church shows it with six sails.

The windmill collapsed and was then scheduled for total demolition in the early 2000's. Adjacent to the windmill was a foundry and Foundry House stands by the footbridge. A girder over a doorway in the foundry building has on it 'COCKERMOUTH 1874'. The business was run by W. and 1. Herbert. A severe fire in 1877 destroyed sets of engine patterns, but three drawings which have recently come to light show that the products were quite ambitious. That they got beyond the drawing stage is proved by an old photograph of a brewery wagon which matches one of the diagrams. [27]

In 1875 Messrs. Herbert, described as of 'Derwent Foundry', supplied a new hot water heating system for All Saints Church. A bell for Grasmere Church was cast in Cockermouth in 1809. [28] This was too early for Herbert's foundry and where the bell was made is unknown.

The foundry passed from the Herberts to the Noble brothers and the Noble Engineering Works was still extant in 1938. They were agricultural blacksmiths but also produced grates, gully covers, etc. When the business was advertised in 1930 it was described as having a blacksmith's workshop, gas engine, steam hammer, drill, loose tools and two warehouses. [29] After the engineering business the premises were used for coach body work and upholstery.

Beer has been brewed on the same site below the castle walls for 150 years. Malt beer was at one time an important drink. In Dorset, for instance, farm workers were allowed a gallon a day and it is reasonable to assume that there would be a similar demand in the fields around Cockermouth. Inns tended to have their own malthouses, but an independent maltster was often a wealthy and important member of the community.

Near enough to the Cocker to be included in this chapter is the old malthouse in South Street, built on a garden by Joseph Clementson in 1810 and still standing. It was described in an 1843 transfer as a malthouse and maltkiln with all equipment. [30]

The Castle Brewery benefits from the purity of the water obtained from the brewery's own well which goes down to a depth of 70 feet. The present Jennings Brothers Ltd. was registered as a limited company in 1887 when it acquired the business of brewers and maltsters carried on by the Jennings family in Cockermouth and Lorton employing about 100 men. The founders of the company were three members of the family, but there are no links today. At its foundation the new company had two breweries, three maltings and 16 licensed houses. In 1921 it amalgamated with four West Cumberland breweries and five years later absorbed the Keswick brewery of Faulders. In the first half of the 1970s over half a million pounds were spent on improving 89 public houses spread within a radius of 30 miles from Cockermouth. The malt remains after extraction go to local farmers as cattle feed and hop remains are sent to Dovenby Hall Hospital for use as fertiliser. [31]

Like many other Cumbrian breweries have been taken over by major concerns, but Jennings is proud of still being a local brewery, employing local people and catering for local consumption. [But see Chapter 40]

Chapter 31

Industrial sites on Tom Rudd and Bitter Becks

We turn to a consideration of the industries which thrived along the banks of the two streams which were "a great convenience to the manufacturers". Tom Rudd Beck, rising in the low fells south of Embleton, flows through the cemetery and under the former railway, then immediately passes the ruins of two tanneries. Wood's 1832 map records that the upstream building belonged to George Beeby at this date (it was extended before the t863 OS map) and the downstream tannery to Joshua Threlkeld. In Beeby's building could be seen, until demolished in 1979, the culvert which took the race from the Beck and the mill house with ornamented door pillars. One or both of these buildings were known as High Tom Rudd Tannery or Long Croft Tannery. A licence was granted in 1906 to In. Johnston of Skinner Street to carry on the offensive trade of gut scraper at Long Croft Tannery, Windmill Lane. [1]

Cockermouth's second windmill stood on Windmill Lane at the corner of the roadway to the tanneries. (Fig. 34). All traces have disappeared but its position is shown on early maps. The earliest known reference to it was in 1823 [2] and an article in the Carlisle Journal in 1829 stated that the Cockermouth Independent Chapel (now the United Reformed Church) possessed Ha powerful and fine toned organ built by Mr. Mark Hall, a poor man who resides at the Windmill, near this town". [3] Bolton commented in 1912 that the windmill "will be remembered by many of middle age in the town". [4]

Across Tom Rudd from the two tanneries stands Little Mill. This was probably the corn mill referred to in the pre-I215 charter of Alice de Rumelli and the fulling mill of the Minister's Accounts of 1437/8. By the 1578 survey it was the "corn mill on the Lord's waste", near Long Croft (the old name for Windmill Lane). There are numerous references to it during the next 300 years.

The lease of Little Mill was often linked with other matters. Thus when it was let in 1667, for 21 years at a rent of £12, there was reference to small tithes, parcels of demesne land, stints, small tolls and the office of Scavenger.

In 1763 came a change, when the mill was leased to a tanner for grinding bark. It continued as a bark mill until Daniel Dunglinson moved in, tired of his difficulties at Rubby Banks. He took it for 28 years at £17 a year, and although the previous tenants should have restored it for corn, it was Dunglinson who agreed to demolish and rebuild the premises. John Mackreth's estimate for the mason's work was £321. A further £20 was spent on clearing the old building and sinking the tail race and £40 was deducted for old materials reused. In addition there was the millwright's estimate of£315 for wheels and machinery. Shortly afterwards, in 1814, another £205 was spent on two new waterwheels and repairs to buildings and the floodgate. [6]

Unfortunately Dunglinson ran into difficulties and an inventory was made (including crops growing near the house) for distraint, the total value being £71-4s. This was in 1824 and presumably he remained, for it was not until 1828 that the mill was re-let, not by auction but in the light of proposals made for the "Earl's Water Corn Mill Little Mill at Head of Kirkgate" with the house and closes. It went to an Ambleside miller, Thomas Townson, for £60 a year. but he proved an unsatisfactory tenant and as his seven-year lease was ending he was told by the Lord's agent, Robert Benson, that unless he put the buildings and equipment into good condition proceedings would be taken against him. [7] He stayed on another two years and was then followed by a succession of millers and flour merchants. The mill is shown as disused on 1923 and 1938 maps, but became a saw mill. The large mill pond is filled in and grassed, and has now been used for modem dwellings. The mill stands derelict. As 'farmer' of the tolls the lessee of Little Mill used to keep a boar for the benefit of the town. In 1754 a statement was made by John Meales, then nearly 70 years old, that he remembered

> *"Thomas Stoddart who was fanner of the Little Mill and Tolls in Cockermouth about 60 years ago; and that the said Thomas kept a Boar, and commonly received the Tyth Piggs from the Inhabitants of Cockermouth. their usual method oftything was, for the Owner of the Piggs to take one out of the whole, and then Stoddart had his choice of the remaining number."* [8]

Later a shilling might be paid instead of the pig and another record, dated 1 752, said that one pig was taken out of every litter of ten and that for smaller litters a proportionate money payment was made. [9] The same record also said that no boar had been kept for some time.

Below Little Mill stands Low Tom Rudd Tannery, now converted into dwellings. Looking down from Lorton Road one may see the blocked-in recesses of the former louvered openings which were a feature of tanneries and the large garden area once filled with pits. An early nineteenth century map names it as Mr. Atkinson's tannery, Wood's map as John Threlkeld's.

Passing under Lorton Road into Skinner Street we are, as the name implies, in an area of skinneries and small tanneries, one of which was still operating in 1914.

The small building which until recently spanned the beck a little lower down was powered by a water wheel beneath the floor. Marked 'Mill John Threlkeld' on the 1832 map it was probably used as a tannery, at one time crushed bark for the nearby tanneries of Skinner Street and more recently was used for a portable buildings and fencing business. For many years it was a warehouse for the shoe making business of the Rydiard family. Joseph Rydiard began business on Cocker Bridge in 1850, his son George crossing the road to build the shop in 1864 on the site of a lower building which had been the street frontage of Wilson's hat factory. John F. Rydiard followed his father

in the business and when he died in 1941 it was continued for the fourth generation by his daughter and her husband, Nora and John Quail, until it passed out of the family in 1972. The firm is a good example of Cockermouth's self-sufficiency, for, although no shoes are made on the premises today, there was until 1939 a staff producing not only shoes but a very hard-wearing brand of farm boots. [10]

Between Tom Rudd Beck and tbe railway once stood the large mill of the Cockermouth Tweed Company - hence 'Tweed Mill Lane'. The building was erected in 1872-4 at a cost of £36,000 and the 120 feet high chimney became a landmark. The ground floor was the warehouse and above it were fulling, scouring and drying machines, a hydraulic press and carding and twisting rooms, with 40 looms in the weaving room on the top floor. Other features were a Glover's gas meter for 200 lights, a lift with a patent safety brake, steam piping for winter heating and a patent coal economiser, similar to one recently installed in Harris's linen mill and which was to save its cost in 18 months. There were also a dyehouse and a scouring house. Water was brought by a 315 feet drift from the Cocker to a reservoir measuring 100 by 48 by 12feet. [11] The mill produced rugs and blankets, including imitations of leopard and tiger skins. The business was not a success. Already in the general depression of 1877 employees were being dismissed [12] and in 1883, less than ten years after completion, the mill was sold to William Brown and Company of Selkirk for £6,000. [13] At its peak between three and four hundred people were employed. By 1897 the premises were known as the Atlas Works [14] and occupied by A. and H. Rea, manufacturing confectioners.

Then in January 1913 they were leased by a syndicate newly formed to manufacture cycle cars, under the management of J. A. Forrester, son of a local coach-builder. There was a growing demand for these small three or four wheeled cars with motor cycle features and the Cockermouth firm planned to produce two models. 'The Cycle Car' of August 1913 commented

> *"Far away in the little town of Cockermouth, on the West Coast of Cumberland, an old tweed mill has been converted into an up-to-date cycle-car manufacturing works, and is now engaged in turning out two cycle cars of unusual design. The first is chain-driven with an 8 h.p. J.A.P. gearbox by a Coventry silent chain and thence the rear axle ... The clutch is of the internal cone type, lined with Ferodo, and fitted on the primary shaft. The brakes are of the external band type, one being operated by a side lever, the other by a foot pedal, and both working on the rear wheels .... the whole machine sells for 122 guineas." [£128]* [15]

The second model, of 6-8 h.p., was air-cooled and had a specially designed Sturmey Archer gearbox giving three forward speeds and reverse and sold for 97 guineas.(£102)

This new Cockermouth industry was presumably killed by the outbreak of war in 1914. As far as is known no 'Cumbria' car survives, only one wire-spoked wheel and it is not known whether this was made in the tweed mill or supplied from elsewhere. [16]

The mill was demolished about 1918, many of the slates, etc., being bought by the Council. [17] One block of single storey buildings was left and has been used for storage by a number of firms in the town Sealby Bros., grocers of Station Street, were there by 1925 [18] and in recent years Leslie Cleeland, furnishers of Main Street, have used it as a warehouse. The Angle American Oil Co. Ltd. and the Shell Oil Company have both had petrol stores in the tweed mill grounds, with a railway siding for tanker wagons. [19] Since they left, the area has been used by coal merchants, builders and agricultural machinery suppliers.

The first industrial site on the Cocker's other tributary, Bitter Beck, was a brick works in the wood to the east of Wyndham House. The 'frog pond' formed by the diggings was a favourite skating rink until filled in by refuse from the castle. [20] Just above the town St. Helen's Tannery stood on the Beck. This is thought to be a very early tannery site, possibly that known to be in Cockermouth in the 12th century. Certainly the stream was referred to as 'Sketirbek' in about 1442, a name given to it because of its polluted state from the tanning processes.· Until recently two buildings remained, with the typical slatted 'windows', but one was destroyed in February 1975 when four boys were playing cards by candlelight amongst the hay stored there. [21] The remaining building is in reasonable condition, though not the original 15th century structure, brickwork indicating a much later date.

There are the remains of a dam upstream and drainage holes in the bank of the beck which took waste from the tannery yard. The resulting name of 'Skitter' was eventually changed to the more respectable 'Bitter'.

Just below the new footbridge from St. Helen's Street are the remains of a small mill which was powered by the beck. This may have been a corn mill or may have been connected with the tannery.

The 1839 tithe map shows three weaving shops in the upper part of St. Relen's Street, but these would have no connection with the beck and the next large industrial site was probably the hat factory at the outflow into the Cocker.

Chapter 32

Industrial Sites along the Derwent

The highest link with industry on the Derwent was the weir at Ladyboat, to which we shall refer presently. There was a proposal in 1797 for a thread mill in this area below the castle and a draft agreement [1] was drawn up between Thomas Benson, the Earl's agent, and Daniel Mowbray and James Davenport, both Newcastle merchants, with John and Joseph Bank, linen manufacturers of Cockermouth. The four men were promised

> “a good and sufficient lease of a certain piece or parcel of land part of the Earl's lands at Cockermouth aforesaid called the Little Horse Close and the Lands, not exceeding in the whole thirty yards square, at the south end of the said Closes. With liberty to erect and build thereon Houses Mills and other works for the Dressing and Spinning of flax and tow .... with liberty to erect and make a Water Wear in the sd. River Derwent and cut and make a sufficient Water Race or Watercourse therefrom .... "

and then a channel as near the south end as possible to convey the water back to the Derwent. The scheme was never implemented.

Next was the tannery on the Derwent bank below the castle. Beyond the Cocker outlet the angled building of what was originally Wharton's linen mill still stands, facing on to Waterloo Street and backing on to the Derwent whence it was powered. Wharton and Banks later went to Simonscales Mill At the far end of Waterloo Street was the former Graves's woollen mill. Both mills were built in the 1820s and had wheels,in a race which ran along this bank of the river, culverted in places as shown in old photographs and paintings (Plate 12). Graves's building had a feature common to industrial buildings in the town of this period - a small pointed window high in the gable end, seen in both gables of this mill, in the 'hospice' of Spittle lng, in Croft Mill until its recent conversion into flats and elsewhere in the town.

On the other side of the Derwent is an industrial area which has developed in recent times from the first mill building of 1834. The Quaker family of Harris began linen manufacture in Cockermouth in Low Gote Mill early last century and built Derwent Mill for their expanding business in 1834, enlarging it considerably in 1847 and 1855. (Plate 15) The 'hospice' building near Low Gote was erected in the firm's early days for drying flax (it appears on the 1832 map) and a compulsory purchase order made by the County Council in 1975 has ensured its preservation. Harris embroidery thread, produced in over 200 different shades, became famous. The firm also wove linen and at times employed 800 people. Bolton's book of 1912 carries an advertisement for Harris Linen, Harris Flax and Silk Cloth, Harris Cumbrian Embroidery Silks, Harris Flax Embroidery

Thread and Harris Art Embroideries. An advertisement on the back of Mate's Guide reads

> *"Visitors to Cockermouth should inspect the Art Embroidery Show Rooms at Jno. Harris and Sons, Ltd., Derwent Mills. Admission is free to Showrooms. Visitors can be shown through the Flax Spinning and Weaving Mill at a charge of 6d. [2 Ylp1each. Specimens of the beautiful embroidery made in the workrooms may be seen and purchased . nobody should omit this item on a visit to the town."*

The fast dyes won a wide reputation. A stall of Harris Art Linens embroidered in thin flax threads won a gold medal in Manchester and 'Derwent' shot dress linens were included in the trouseau of Princess Maud of Wales. There were showrooms in Old Bond Street in London, King Street in Manchester, Corporation Street in Birmingham and also in Paris. [2]

Unfortunately the firm closed following the depression of the early 1930s. They are said to have solved the problem of mixing artificial silk with other materials in weaving fabrics [3] and could probably have weathered the difficulties. In 1934 a new company 'Jonathan Harris and Sons (Cockermouth) Ltd.' was formed to manufacture linen in part of the mill and the thread business sold to Henry Campbell and Co. of Belfast. [4] However, the firm ended a little later, paying about 18s. in the £ and selling the factory for £ 1000. [5]

There is mention of a new industry in the building in 1937, employing some 60 girls, [6] but it was early in the war that the premises were fully used again when Millers (Great Yarmouth) Ltd. brought their footwear machinery and about 200 key operatives from the east coast. This evacuation became permanent and the firm once employed 1100 in the Cockermouth factory and the branches it opened in Workington, Frizington and Egremont. About 40,000 pairs of sandals, boots and ladies' and children's shoes were produced each week, being sold in bulk to many of the well-known retailers. Manufacture was very labour intensive, a pair of shoes passing through as many as 150 processes. The firm catered for majority needs, not for specialised fittings, and had its own design section and pattern department, the former in close contact with leading fashion centres on the continent. [7]

A number of smaller concerns developed in the vicinity of Derwent Mill.

After swinging round the Sandair field the Derwent comes back to just below Low Gote Mills. William Jackson wrote in 1878

> *"It may well be that the well-known mill called 'Goat Mill' dates from this period a very respectable age of seven centuries, but I am much disposed to ascribe it to an origin eight centuries earlier, and to believe that we have here a mill occupying the very site of a predecessor, which ground corn for the garrison of the*

neighbouring Roman fort The name of Goat... is. it seems, the equivalent of the Icelandic 'gioto', a drain; technically 'goit', the channel which takes the water from the mill wheel back to the parent stream." [8]

The term may have a wider meaning covering the whole of a mill race. Its use in Cockermouth is variously spelt 'goat' and 'gote'.

A half mile leat left the Derwent at Ladyboat above the castle and passed along the river side of Derwent Mills. Portions of its stone-lined channel and sluice gates may still be seen. Elizabeth I is said to have granted permission for its width to be doubled and certainly it existed before 1700. [9] If there was a water mill at Low Gote in pre-Norman times it may have been powered directly from the Derwent if the tradition is correct that the river once followed a course along the foot of Mickle Brow to the present channel west of this mill.

Low Gote comprised two mills. The lower one was demolished and the upper converted into dwellings in 1978. [10). The restored water wheel of the upper mill remains and until demolition the axle of the lower mill wheel projected through the wall and the derelict building still contained bevelled cogs and connecting shafts.

A mill was built here for corn in 1609, rebuilt for textiles in 1779 and reverted to corn in 1858. The two mills were probably of different dates. A map dated 1727 [11] labels them 'Logwood mill. Wheat mill. Corn mill.' Wood shows them both as flax mills in 1832, the upper one belonging to Thos. Mawson and the lower to Jona. Harris, who was here until 1847. The first OS map (1863) labels the whole area, including High Gote across the main road, as 'Goat Mills (Corn)'.

High Gote, often referred to as "Harkness's", spans the race, the course of which may be seen between the mill and the main road. At times it was a textile mill, but corn was usually the business here and the Harkness family were millers of flour and grain, roasters of barley for brewing, and suppliers of feeding stuffs for cattle, sheep, pigs and poultry. [12] There is a reference to the mill in 1786 and it worked until 1969. Most of the premises here are now used by a road haulage firm.

The hamlet of 'The Gote' which grew in this area from the early 19th century was an isolated community separated from the town by fields, in one of which flax was spread to dry. 'Bleach House' near High Gote Mill is a reminder of this practice. The inhabitants of the Gote found work not only in the various Gote mills but also in the Fitz Mill complex across the Derwent. A variety of activities took place in the Fitz Mills, which belonged to the Senhouse family. Wood gives nothing beyond 'Fitz Mill. Capt. Senhouse' in 1832 and the first OS map 30 years later marks it 'Flax'. A map shows a corn mill in 1774. [13]

In 1883 Richard Senhouse leased [14] to Allan Banks of Cockermouth the cottage, garden, dye house, drying loft, bleaching house, bleaching green and out offices at Fitz

Thread Mill for £1-4s 8d. a month. The mill and engine house were not included. In March 1893 Banks was given notice to quit and the following year the premises were leased to a syndicate for "manufacturing woollen goods and the spinning of carpet and other yams". In the agreement (which did not include the bed of the Derwent and its fish and gravel) everything was listed in the greatest detail, even the number of wooden props supporting the floors. The document refers to the old mill, new mill, boiler house, engine house, dye house, store room, thread shop, old store room and old cottage. [15]

The syndicate, the Fitz Mill Co. Woollen Spinners, insured their part of the premises (some parts were empty) for £1100, paying a premium of £18-2s-0d. The policy mentions two and three storey buildings containing a willying house (one willy machine and one testing machine); rooms for carding, scribbling, mule spinning, reeling and twisting; wool, shoddy and cow hair stores; a dwelling house; a gearing house; a steam engine house; water wheel; etc. [16]

The venture was apparently very short-lived, the insurance premiums telling the story. In July 1895 the policy described the mill as "silent and at rest", the premium being reduced to £2-15s-0d. In August 1896 the policy stated the "mill being silent it is also empty" and the premium was down to £1-7s-6d. On a map of 1900 it was labelled 'disused' and three years later part of the upper floor was being used by Wilkinson Jennings as a paper store. [17]

The salmon pass at the Fitz was designed by Thomas Rook, who became an important man in the fisheries office on Cocker Bridge. [18] The mill is said to have made an interesting contribution to town life when, for a special occasion, one of the wheels generated electricity which lit fairy lights in Main Street. [19]

The new factory of James Walker and Company Limited manufactures seals and gaskets for liquids and gases under pressure, used in industry, shipping and domestic appliances, and also produces insulators for transformers. The products are basically of rubber and rubber-proofed fabric, but several other components are used. James Walker began his business in a London railway arch about 1880, mainly concerned with marine steam engines, and moved to Woking after the first world war. Marine work predominated during the wars, but the water, gas, oil and electricity services are now the firm's main concern. The Cockermouth branch was opened in mid-1969, in a building designed for another firm which withdrew before completion of the premises. It is interesting to note that the angle at which the building stands was decided with a view to frontage on to the Cockermouth bypass, which at that time was expected to run north of the town instead of along the present A66 line.

There have been several extensions of the factory from 1974 onwards, including new offices in 1975. In 1979 the work-force was about 300, only six of whom had come with the firm from the south of England. This was made up of 250 in the factory and 50 in the

offices, 200 men and 100 women, of whom 60% lived in Cockermouth. In 1995 there are about 350 employees. The firm is currently installing new machinery with new technology. It celebrated its centenary in 1982, the official opening of the new building by Harold Wilson, M.P., being a far cry from the founder's first efforts in a railway arch. 'James Walker' now has factories in Australia, America, France, Belgium, Holland and Spain. On the Cockermouth site particular interest has been shown in maintaining the background of trees and in preserving a rich natural flora found in the factory grounds. [20].

Chapter 33

Industry and commerce away from the rivers

There were a number of industrial and commercial concerns in the heart of the town away from the river banks. One of the largest was the timber firm of Thomas Armstrong Limited. The first Thomas Armstrong set up as a joiner, cabinet maker, etc., at 18 Main Street about 1800. When he died in 1853 his son John carried on until accidentally killed on the Moota road in 1873, when John's son, another Thomas, inherited the business. It was now in South Street. An 1885 advertisement describes the firm as sawmillers, timber and saw merchants, explosives agents and undertakers, and they had at that time about 60 employees, some of whom lived in Sawmill Cottages which stood in the South Street yard. At one time 40 to 50 horses were stabled in various places in the town, used for dragging timber in the woods or in teams of four hauling the log lorries. In 1930 the firm was reconstructed as Thomas Armstrong Ltd., a private company with a share capital of £250,000.

In 1860 the South Street premises had a chimney for the steam engine. This engine was replaced by a Tangye gas engine in 1914 which in turn gave place to electrical power about 40 years later. In Cockermouth the firm also used the Low Road Station and a number of other sites in the town.

Although most of the timber formerly went to the pits or the railway, Armstrong's has played a more intimate part in the life of the town. Elm and oak were used for coffins; alder and birch were favoured for clog soles by the town's cloggers; firewood could be collected on Saturdays; and a boy could always have a cricket bat cut to size, known, from its lack of same, as a 'spring ante'.

Because of its growth the firm was divided into six subsidiary companies which cover joinery, plumbing, central heating, timber, heavy goods vehicles and related equipment, concrete and building blocks- this last mainly in the north-east of the country where house building was developed by Armstrong's after the second war but later discontinued. [1]

There are, and have been, a number of joinery and building firms in the town. They are too many to list but we may note in particular the various members of the Mackreth family who were also brickmakers. They are commemorated in Mackreth Row off Kirkgate. An interesting development was the co-operation of Bolton (stonework), Robinson (joinery) and Hesketh Fletcher (plumbing) in keeping their men occupied during severe frosts, when it had been customary for all building work to stop. Bolton set his men to dressing stone at the Brigham quarries and Palmer Robinson's joiners made window frames and doors which were stored for later use. [2] Brick and stone were at first used only around windows and doors, until dressed stone from Brigham and other

quarries became more readily available. The expert can tell from the grain and colour from which sources the stone of Cockermouth buildings was procured.

The first brick houses were in Walker Street, followed after the first war by Kirkbank and Castlegate Drive. There have been other timber-based activities in the town. Swill baskets were made in Butts Fold [3] early this century and chairs, mangle rollers and barrels were manufactured by different firms in High Sand Lane.

Within a short distance from the town are the various plantations of Thornthwaite Forest, one of the earliest of state forests, dating from the first planting on Whinlatter in 1920. In addition to large areas in Thomthwaite and Whinlatter, this forest also has plantations along the west side of Bassenthwaite Lake, on Dodd Fell to the east of the lake, and further north in the Watch Hill, Setmurthy and Castle Inn areas.

There has been a considerable number of blacksmiths in the town - South Street, Challoner Street, Si. Helen's Street, Main Street (the Conservative Club site), two in Crown Street, etc. Alongside No. 27 Crown Street may still be seen the metal saucer on which wooden cart wheels were laid while the heated metal rims were placed round them and then doused with cold water to contract the rims on to the wheels. (Fig. 50).

Most villages had their own blacksmith and Fisher and Co. of Station street (now Firn's) was one of the firms supplying their requirements - bars of iron, nails, etc. [4] Horse traders supplied farmers, shopkeepers and families with their needs and Joseph Tolson of New Street was a coach builder who could supply all types of conveyance, or second-hand carts, hand-carts, dog carts, gigs, waggonets, and elegant traps and digbies for the aristocrats could all be obtained here, together with accessories such as carriage lamps and waterproof aprons, and the firm advertised an anti-candle burner using paraffin which would fit any carriage lamp. [5]

Self-sufficiency extended to the clothes of the townspeople and their neighbours in the surrounding villages. We have referred to footwear being hand made in the town. Most people wore clogs and a number of clog shops were kept busy making and repairing, that near the Mayo statue of John Huddleston, a pleasant-natured member of the council as well as a good clogger, being recognised as a meeting place for collecting and dispensing news. [6]

There were at one time as many as 60 tailors in the town, attached to such firms as 1. W. Bowe, W. Clarke, J. Cooper, 1. C. W. Drummond, W. Elliott, P. W. Fletcher, Renwick and T. Smailes. [7] The tailors of each firm not only worked in the tailor workshops (that belonging to Fletcher still stands behind what was the shop, on the bank of the Cocker) but went round the villages and farms taking orders or doing work on the spot. A man could spend a whole morning at a house such as Ise1 Hall taking orders and measurements for the family and staff. [8] Clothes were often 'turned' to get further wear from the materiaL Tailoring was very varied, ranging from working clothes to

coachmen's liveries and the suits of the gentry, and in an effort to raise their standard of living the Cockermouth tailors went on strike in 1877 for a rise of 3s.(l5p) a week. [9]

There were in the town a number of major concerns which have disappeared, such as John Robinson's mill off Challoner Street where he made blankets, duffles, plaidings, druggets, trimmings, checks, etc.; hat manufacture in Birkett's Buildings; [10] and the making of ropes in the 'walk' leading off the bottom corner of Kirkgate square and now a right-of-way to St Helen s Street or the ropewalk which extended along the backs of the Station Street shops on the west side.

On the other hand there has developed in the town the West Cumberland Farmers' Trading Society Ltd., started early in the century by a group of farmers joining together to buy feeding stuffs in bulk. The first branch was opened in Cockermouth in 1922 (plans for the present building were approved in 1938) and by 1932 the Society had nine branches. Various other societies have since been absorbed. In 1976 sales passed the £100 million mark at over £114 million, more than a million pounds being paid to members in interest and trading bonus, bringing the total paid back to members in the firm's 65 years to some £14 million. [11]

Not only was there much more noise and smoke in Cockermouth in comparatively recent times, but some trades produced distinctive and pervading smells. On certain days the town was flooded with the aroma of roasting coffee or smoking hams, farmers bringing in their bacon for curing either to full-time bacon curers or to grocers who cured as a side-line. [12] Not all smells were so pleasant. Knackers, bone boilers and gut scrapers were scattered throughout the town, licences being issued for premises in Strickett's Yard off Main Street, Waterloo Street, S1. Helen's Street, etc., as recently as the 1910's. [13]

Candles were made by some of the grocers, such as Chris Mayson in the Market Place and Josiah Hall at 22 Main Street, where there was a candle factory behind the shop. The wicks were dipped in tallow and hung on a three-tiered revolving frame, similar to a modern postcard rack. They were sold by Josiah Hall in 3 pound bundles, many of them going to iron ore miners in Frizington, who used nuts off railway wagons as holders. [14] Isaac Fletcher (later Mounseys) sold candles to the castle. If a candle went out it was sold back to the shop, it being considered unlucky to relight it. [15]

Another trade which has left the town is clock-making. Lott Barwise was well known for his clocks in the latter half of the 18th century and in 1847 the directory lists four makers - Anthony Fumess in 38 Main Street, George Graham at 85 Main Street, M. Mitchell at 44 Market Place and Joseph Thompson at 112 Main Street. [16]

Hidden away in the yards and lanes of the town were many other activities important in their day. Mrs. Burgess starched collars in Crown Yard. [17] There were two communal bakehouses, heated by wood, where the family loaves, with their distinguishing marks,

could be baked in long ovens for prices from 2Y2d. to 4Y2d. according to the quantity. Mrs. Johns.on managed one bakehouse early in the 20th century at the top of the Crown Inn yard and Mrs Tinniswood had the other half way up Mark's Lane by Barclay's Bank. [18] In a passage which ran down to the river near St. Joseph's School, Alex McAdam employed more than 20 men on hand looms making 'carpets' from discarded garments cut into lengths. [19] Also somewhere in the town a six-week training course could be taken, qualifying for domestic service. At the end of the course the girls were given a black dress, black shoes, two aprons and two caps, value one guinea. [20]

It is fascinating to study the advertisements in an old guide book or bazaar programme. Through them one may gain an impression of life in an earlier day or of the enthusiasm with which an invention was received that today we take for granted. H. Fawcett and Son at their Mantle Showrooms guaranteed that all ladies' garments were fitted with the Patent Princess of Wales Ventilator which effectively prevented the gathering of damp. [21] John B. Banks of Market Place (a firm still there), had in 1895 the latest improvements in Domestic Economy and Comfort - the asbestos curfew *[sic]*, the Bissell carpet sweeper, the Progress potato peeler, the Dorman sewing machine and all the hundred and one things included in General, Furnishing and Builders' Ironmongery, while their electric bells and speaking tubes incorporated 'Improved principles'. [22]

Sometimes an advertiser was carried away by enthusiasm for his products, as when J. L. Yeowart of Cocker Bridge described his firm as the largest drapery establishment in Cumberland and exhorted people to see his windows for special value in millinery. "Follow the crowds, for the crowd follows the Cheapest Market. I will not allow anyone to undersell me. Sooner give the goods away." [23]

We conclude this chapter with a brief reference to banks in the town. The first was the Carlisle City and District Bank on the north side of Market Place, now an angling supplies shop, but in recent times a grocery shop and then *'The Granary Wholefoods shop*'. The strong-room door at the back of the shop and the steps down to the small room with its racks for deed boxes were fortunately preserved during extensive reconstruction in 1977-8 necessitated by dry rot.

In early days a number of tradesmen acted as bankers in addition to running their normal businesses and issued their own bank notes. [24]

The aim of the 'Cockermouth Bank for Savings' was

> *"to encourage individuals of the Labouring Class, in Cockermouth, and the neighbourhood, to save a portion of their earnings, and to secure the same at interest, by making small deposits therein from time to time, as may suit the convenience of the parties."*

This could be done at first between 6 and 7 p.m. on Saturdays. The bank was not intended for large deposits. Not more than £30 could be paid in anyone year and the accounts were limited to £150. When interest had raised this to £200 no more was added. Charitable and friendly societies might deposit £100 a year, with a limit of £300 exclusive of interest. Membership was extended to married women and miners and interest was paid at 3%. Various amalgamations with other savings banks have taken place, and the Cockermouth branch is now in the Lloyds TSB Bank.

Late in the 19th century the town also had branches of the Cumberland Union Bank and the Midland Bank. By 1910 there was also the London Joint Stock Bank. The Westminster Bank and the District Bank were in Station Street by 1925 and the National Provincial opened a branch on the corner of High Sand Lane in 1927. The exact titles changed from time to time as amalgamations took place and the most recent groupings have reduced the town's banks to four - National Westminster, HSBC (ex-Midland), Barclays and Lloyds TSB.

Chapter 34

The early road system and the turnpikes

When the Cockermouth area drifted back into isolation after the Romans left, the roads from Papcastle deteriorated to such an extent that today their very existence, though surmised, cannot always be proved on the ground and of those definitely located long stretches tie beneath fields. For centuries there were only local inter-village tracks, then routes to Norman castles or between monasteries and their sheep-rearing areas. The 14th-century Bodleian map shows no roads within the Lake District, the Shap route being the nearest, and Speed in 1610 has no roads at all. John Ogilby in 1675 has four Cumbrian roads, on two of which Cockermouth lies, so it had again become a road junction.

From the many 18th-century maps, some of them highly inaccurate in their placing of villages and lakes, we may broadly conclude that there was a road eastwards round the foot of Bassenthwaite Lake, one NE to Carlisle (on some maps via Plumbland), another W and one SW to Egremont. Only at the end of the century does the Lorton-Whinlatter road appear, to supersede the Ouse Bridge route as the way to Keswick.

Essential supplies which could not be produced locally and such commodities as wool and ore were moved by packhorse, a traffic which had become highly organised by the mid-18th century. The horses followed regular routes, strengthened with stone where necessary, and provided with bridges having low parapets which would not foul the loads. Of some 230 horses passing in and out of Kendal each week, one 'gang' of 15 came to Cockermouth and possibly other gangs would cpme this way. [1] The Pack Horse Inn was next to the Globe Hotel, but a number of inns were used as halts or termini for packhorse trains.

This adjustable and reliable, though slow, form of transport was still remembered when William Dickinson wrote in 1853

> *"...only yeomen and the larger occupiers could boast carts; the produce of the farms, hay, corn and peat, being brought in on railed sledges and the more portable articles on pack horses. Coal and lime were conveyed by the last method across the miry moors and commons ... and many persons now living remember the very common use of the pack horse both as the general carrier from town to town and the vehicle in transit for grain to the mill or market, and for manure, etc., on the farm."* [2]

The 'clog carts' which were superseding pack horses by the end of the 18th century were poor affairs, with solid wheels fixed to rotating axles -single horse for local use, two horse for longer journeys. [3]

In 1783 Thomas Jackson extended his Kendal-Cockermouth carrying business to Workington and Whitehaven, a two or three day delivery service ran twice a week. [4] A few years later there were services to Workington and Maryport twice a week and to Whitehaven three times, all returning the same day, and two Carlisle-Whitehaven services spent one of the two nights en route in Cockermouth, Joseph Blaire using the Ship and Wilfred Robinson 'inning' at the Packhorse. Samuel Norman ran a carrying service to Keswick three days a week, leaving his own house, the George and Dragon, at 3 a.m. and calling at the Globe, and the Globe was also the halt for a Kendal-Whitehaven service twice a week.

Carrying charges were determined by the Justices of the Peace and from Cockermouth were

> *Cockermouth to Newcastle - 84 miles – 6 ¾ d per stone – 9s-2 ½ d per pack*
>
> *Cockermouth to Carlisle - 28 miles – 2 ¼ d per stone – 3s-0 ¾ d per pack*
>
> *Cockermouth to Whitehaven - 13 miles – 1 d per stone – 1s-5 d per pack*
>
> *Cockermouth to Penrith - 30 miles – 2 ½ d per stone – 3s-3 ¾ d per pack*
>
> *Cockermouth to Kendal - 44 miles – 3 ½ d per stone – 4s-9 ½ d per pack*
>
> *A pack was more than seven pounds. The penalty for overcharging was £5 "to be levied by Distress and Sale of his or their Goods". [5]*

In the carrier services of the early 19th century, for horses, wagons or both, the King's Arms, the Black Bull and the Tip Inn (probably the Tup, later the Crown) were starting points. As the wagon routes became more metalled, cattle were increasingly moved along drove roads. Slowly moving herds, covering some 12 to 15 miles a day, came from the great Scottish fairs to be fattened on the Cumbrian plains or on their way further south, or after fattening converged on the Cumbrian markets for resale. When these roads were fenced they had wide grass verges, and may often be recognised by these, as on the Lorton road.

Before the advent of rail and then cattle wagon transport, resting pastures were spaced and here blacksmiths would work throughout the night to shoe the cattle if they had to travel along metalled roads. [6] The great fairs were a part of the droving system and were great agricultural and social events, held three times a year. Rosley, near Wigton, was very important in this area, being the destination of the drove roads which passed through or near Cockermouth from the south-west. The site was of 40 acres (the Hope and Anchor Inn now stands on it), purposely chosen to be central and away from populated areas to give the necessary space, for in addition to the needs of the cattle there had to be room for people to camp and for the necessary stalls of food, etc. [7]

Marshall writes

> *"The great fairs .. attracted circuses, potters or gypsies in their hundreds, yet more hundreds of self-styled judges of horseflesh or sheep or cattle, young girls showing off the latest styles or searching for husbands, housewives selling eggs or gingerbread, members of the quality rubbing shoulders with ruffians, labourers in search ofjobs, drovers from Inverness, and scores of farmers disposing of surplus grain or wintered stock or fat cattle. They were, before the age ofrailways, social occasions of a very special character."* [8]

Rosley would attract Cockermouth people for business and pleasure.

To return to ordinary roads, the parish was responsible for those within its boundary and parishioners had to work on them for six days a year without pay. Any inhabitant who owned a cart and at least three horses had to send a horse team. [lO] Work was directed by the parish surveyor, one of the local landowners appointed for a year - also unpaid. This system continued until an act of 1835 gave parish vestries power to levy rates for road maintenance and payment of qualified surveyors, then in 1862 parishes were grouped into highway districts for greater efficiency. One of the greatest causes of complaint was the use made of main roads by through traffic which made no contribution to maintenance, a complaint heard continuously until the institution of 'trunk roads'.

Cockermouth tried to get some help in 1748 when it based a petition on the experiences in the 1745 rising. Cannons were moved from Whitehaven to the end of the turnpike at Bridgefoot, but had then to be dismantled and carried by packhorse for three days to reach Carlisle.

Cockermouth asked that the military road being made between Newcastle and Carlisle, in consequence of the difficulties of moving troops in the same rising, should be "brought on from Carlisle ... over Darwent Bridge in this Town and so to Bridgefoot ... but the crisis had passed and no help came. [11]

Immediate responsibility for the most important roads passed from the parishes with the formation of turnpikes, first organised by justices of the peace but soon to become the concern of turnpike trustees. Road users contributed to road upkeep and improvements by tolls paid when passing through gates placed at intervals. Parishes still had the ultimate responsibility (and still maintained minor roads), but the trusts were to be short-term means of improvement. Each new turnpike necessitated a parliamentary bill. Two acts for London areas in the late 17th. century were the first of 50 before 1750 and another 1600 by 1790. [12] Whitehaven Turnpike Trust was set up in 1739 (by 1746 their roads were "equal to the best turnpikes around London" [13] and there were another 15 trusts in Cumbria by the end of the century. [14] The Quarter Sessions at Cockermouth in 1777 had little business except for road bills, "it being now

the general opinion of the people, that the first opening to the improvement of a country, so far back in husbandry as this, is good roads". [15]

An appeal of 1755 for investment in the proposed Cockermouth-Kendal turnpike stresses in considerable detail the many advantages -movement of travellers, cattle and a long list of merchandise, the linking of the ports via Cockermouth with the rest of England, greater intercourse between the two towns, etc., and hopes that in particular the Egremonts, Lowthers, Penningtons, etc., will support the venture. Proposals included

> *"the Tolls collected at Each Gate be a penny every day, for a Single Horse and so in proportion for other Cattle, Carts, and other Carriages, with half Tolls for Coals .... one Gate be placed near Curgate in going out of Cockermouth towards Whinlatter the Commissioners intrusted with the Execution of the said Act be, for Cumberland, the Bailiffs of Cockermouth, ... together with such persons duely qualified as shall agree to Lend Fifty pounds or upwards at the Interest of 4 pct. on the Credit of the Tolls ... That Provision be made in the same Act, for repairing all Branches contiguous to the same road ...."* [16]

A turnpike committee contained 50 to 1 00 trustees who must own land worth at least £1 00 a year, so they were landowners or professional men. The newly-formed Cockermouth-Carlisle Trust in 1824 included six Lowthers and a Musgrave, Graham, Curwen and Senhouse. The financial support and the co-operation of such people in allowing land for improvements was vital, but the actual administration was largely in the hands of solicitors in the towns along the road. Often families were associated with a trust over a long period - the clerk of the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust from 1803 to 1857 was a member of the Fisher family. [17]

As trusts were envisaged as temporary, a renewal act was needed every 21 years, an expensive business and responsible for some 25% of the debts incurred.

Although administered locally, trusts were subject to national controls, such as the number of gates permitted on a length of road, the number of payments that could be demanded of one vehicle in a day and the rates chargeable for different categories. Early trusts were much concerned with the weight of loads and the width of wheels and made regulations governing both. Sometimes weighing machines were installed. A minimum width for wheels was stipulated, with higher charges for narrow ones because of the greater damage they caused to the road surface.

A trust was often responsible for roads other than the one between the two towns named in its title. Thus the Cockermouth-Maryport Trust controlled 42 miles, six times the distance between the two places and including the Maryport-Allonby-Wigton road. The Cockermouth-Penrith Trust had over 60 miles, twice the distance between the towns. The average mileage of the 24 Cumbrian trusts was 24.66, [18] so obviously in

contrast to distances such as 42 and 60 miles some bodies controlled quite short lengths. Trusts were reluctant to amalgamate and there was often overlap of interests, but families such as the Senhouses and Lowthers with a financial interest in a number of turnpikes were a unifying influence. Sometimes trusts had a clerk in common, which helped towards unity, an example being the clerkships of Edward Steel and Edward Waugh to the Cockermouth-Carlisle, Cockermouth W orkington and Cockermouth-Maryport Trusts over a period of 30 years. [19]

The five trusts serving Cockermouth were the Cockermouth-Workington (formed in 1753), Cockermouth-Keswick-Kendal (1761, but divided in 1824 when the Ambleside Trust became responsible for the southern section), Cockermouth-Carlisle (1824), Cockermouth-Maryport (1825) and Cockermouth- Heskett- Penrith (1761).

Considering in detail the Cockermouth-Maryport road, we may note that the Act required not only Cockermouth solicitors (Steel and Son) but London parliamentary agents (Benson and Rose). The trust, which included the names Lowther, Vane, Dykes, Fletcher, Senhouse and Spedding, had to meet within 14 days of the passing of the act, which it did in the Globe. Tolls were fixed at

Horse, etc., drawing coach. etc - 4d

Horse, etc., drawing wagon, etc.

If wheels not less than 4 ½ inches - ½ d

If wheels narrower than 4 ½ inches - 2d

Horse, etc., not drawing - 1d

Horse, etc., drawing empty or laden lime for manuring - 1d

Drove of oxen, cows or neat cattle – 10d per score (in proportion for less)

Drove of pigs, hogs, calves, sheep, lambs – 5d per score (in proportion for less)

At any gate, the toll needed to be paid only once a day and on the Cockermouth-Maryport section horses, carriages, etc., need pay at only one gate. with the exception of vehicles hired for profit. The rights of the Senhouse (Ellenborough) and Dykes (Dovenby) families to have wagon ways crossing the road are safeguarded, but the flange rails must be between road level and % of an inch (19 mm). below it. [20]

The period of the trusts coincided broadly with the time of enclosure and the Enclosure Commission had an interest in the re-alignment of roads and in the planning of new roads over enclosed commons. There was no difficulty about using common land, but when private land was taken due notice had to be given and compensation paid, while the garden and land immediately round a house could not be interfered with. [21]

The actual widening, straightening, planning of gradients and surfacing of old roads and the creation of entirely new stretches was a skilled task. The two best-known specialists, Thomas Telford and John Louden McAdam, were both active in Cumbria. Telford was the more costly but did a good job, avoiding steep gradients and using a broken covering, made convex for drainage, on a finn foundation of large stone. McAdam being cheaper was much in demand, but for the lower price he used less foundation. He is first heard of locally when the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust asked him to recommend a surveyor in 1823, but he was probably involved earlier than this. During the 1820s and 1830s he advised at least eight Cumbrian trusts and had so much work in Cumbria that he took a house in Keswick. Both men appointed sub-surveyors as they were also busy in other parts of the country, but in 1824 McAdam was personally responsible for ten miles of new road between Keswick and Penrith and four miles between Keswick and Cockermouth. [22]

The work of both men was criticised. It was said that the large stones on McAdam's roads lamed the horses, but a Liverpool writer said his roads were good for draught horses and carriages, though

> *"For human beings in dry weather they are almost beyond endurance; for they are one continual cloud of dust, blinding to the eyes, filling the nostrils, going down the mouth and throat by quantities to suffocation and completely ruinous to all decent clothing. Houses by the road are inundated with dust, and all cleanliness destroyed and useless. The fields are so covered on each side, according as the wind blows, that they are of much less value an acre than those more distant from it."* [23]

An example of development of an existing road was the improvement at Cockermouth Town Head, along St. Helen's Street. The surveyor of the Cockermouth-Heskitt road was told in 1786 to demolish the wall at this point and to widen and ditch the road, cost not to exceed £30. The work was done for £25 and the surveyors were granted a turnpike ticket

> *"for the sum of twenty-five pounds at 4W% interest to be issuing out of the tolls arising from the Turnpike road leading from Heskitt by Ewes Bridge to Cockermouth"*

Not all proposed turnpike plans reached fruition and frequently a number of alternative routes were considered, such as the Cockermouth-Wigton plan of 1808. The advantages of the route were the avoidance of the steep Gote Brow and the high land of Moota, so often wet and misty; shortening of the distance by two miles; and the use of common land for part of the way. [24] The road was not built and the present road was turnpiked in 1824. (Fig.66)

Before the making of the Belle Vue junction, at the time of enclosure, the Carlisle road forked right immediately beyond the entrance to Hames Hall (a length of track still remains here) to join the present road at the lay-by by the entrance to Wood Hall.

Another change near the town was the re alignment of the Embleton road, the former route now being a public footpath (Fig. 67).

There was an even earlier road to Embleton. In 1810 a dispute arose regarding a right of way which resulted in a case coming before the assizes at Carlisle, William Scott v Benson and others. The defendant's plan of the area concerned, where his carts used a track which the plaintiff claimed they were not entitled to use, indicates 'a very ancient road to Embleton'. This continued due east from Long Croft Lane (now Windmill Lane), following a course a little way up the south side of Slate Fell above the old railway track. It is still possible to locate sections below the Fell. How 'ancient' the road was we cannot say - certainly it must have existed long before the days of turnpikes.

We have seen that the early route to Keswick was via Ouse Bridge and along the eastern side of Bassenthwaite Lake and that later the Whinlatter route became the main road. Proposals for the completion of the road along the western side of the Lake were put forward in 1825. [25] There were three sections to be made, the nearest being from Close to Dubwath, avoiding the climb over the end of the hill towards Higham.

It became increasingly clear that a trust needed an efficient full-time surveyor if the roads were to be well built and if the standards laid down by the Commissioners for new roads in enclosure areas, and inspected by them during construction, were to be attained. A salary such as the £15 for the surveyor of the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust in 1807 would not attract a full-time competent man as would the same trust's £110 fifty years later. The officials connected with the Cockermouth roads included a number of well known names, as the list shows. (Appendix 18). For the trustees themselves, there was little to do once improvements had been made; just occasional appointments and the routine task of letting the tolls. This is reflected in the fact that in 20 years from 1804 to 1824 meetings of the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust were adjourned 50 times for lack of a quorum. [26]

A trust had two sources of income. investment and tolls. Landowners were in general interested the Earl of Lonsdale had over £4,000 in the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust although he had little if any property along it and only used it to travel between Lowther and Whitehaven. On the other hand, many local churches, charities, etc., invested small amounts. The Trustees of Lorton School and the Trustees of Keswick Dissenting House each had £100 in the same trust, and the Trustees of the Cockermouth Dispensary invested £50. In the Cockermouth-Workington Trust the church-wardens of both Cockermouth and Brigham had £50. As private investors died their holdings passed to their heirs, often "to persons totally unconnected with the County". [27]

The second aspect of financial income was the collecting of tolls. Because of the difficulty of ensuring that a tollgate keeper handed over all his takings the gates tended more and more to be let by auction, at a sum which did not indicate how much would be taken at any particular gate in a year but which would be sufficiently below the takings to give the collector a reasonable profit.

Every year in November and December notice was given in the press of the auctioning of tolls for the following year and, as some guide to prospective purchasers, the last letting figure was given. Thus in 1777 the Cumberland Pacquet [28] contained notice of the auctioning at the House of John Meals, Innholder, Cockermouth, of the Kirkgate Turnpike Tolls, the income from which had averaged £80 a year over the last three years. Kirkgate Toll was let for £81 and Town Head Gate for £55 in 1783. [29] The auctions were held in varying inns but eventually settled in the Court House.

The following were the amounts paid for the four years 1875 to 1878 for two Cockermouth gates:-

Cockermouth and Carlisle Road Gote Gate: 1875 £250 – 1876 288 – 1877 316 – 1878 328

Cockermouth and Workington Road Fitz Gate: 1875 £102 – 1876 83 – 1877 82 – 1878 81

The amounts paid for toll gates indicate facts, such as the probability here that the traffic along the Gote road was about four times that on the Workington road in 1878, but they also pose questions which only a knowledge of very local history can answer. Was the drop in the use of the Fitz Gate connected with quarrying?

Local gates of the Cockermouth-Penrith Trust were Kirkgate, Whinlatter, Cockermouth Town Head and, probably replacing this, St. Helens. A minute of 1768 refers to the turnpike road "from Hesket by Ewes Bridge to Cockermouth and from thence by Lorton over Whinlatter to Keswick". [31]

In the period when roads were improving and railway competition had not developed, traffic naturally increased. The 1820s and 1830s saw a great increase in the number of coaches and better roads brought other social benefits, -quicker news from the rest of the country, a greater spread of new ideas and of education, markets more accessible, and of course an increase in trade. In the reverse direction countrymen were tempted to the cities by the tales told. Toll receipts went up and up. Then came the railways. Already by 1838, at the very beginning of the railway era, all the Cumbrian trusts except two were in debt to a total of over £135,000. [32] Cockermouth-Penrith owed £13,740. Then receipts fell as the railway network spread. The lease of Bridgefoot Gate averaged £70 in 1875-8; one hundred years earlier in 1782 it was let for £162. [33]

It was the opinion of trustees that the railways would last only a short time and that their competition was a temporary setback. Expecting better times, in 1823 the Cockermouth-Workington Trust was paying off its debt at only 1 % per year and the

Cockermouth-Penrith and Cockermouth Maryport Trusts as a matter of policy always gave priority to repairs over repayment of debts. Then in 1849 it was made compulsory for all trusts to pay 5% into a sinking fund, with the result that when the Cumbrian trusts came to an end only three were still in debt. [34]

Short distances and frequent users always presented problems. Complaints were made about the re-siting of gates to intercept more traffic to the new railways, which used the roads as feeder routes, but if the gates were put in the right positions the tolls benefitted by such developments.

On the other hand, roads could be crowded with carts of coal and lime, heavy loads which damaged the surface and yet paid nothing because of the positions of the gates. Trustees complained too about tolls being evaded by the use of side roads and were anxious to bring such roads under their jurisdiction. When it was eventually realised that the railways had come to stay and that long road journeys were largely finished, the trusts sought to compensate for losses by developing their role as feeders to the railways. However the fall in receipts was not reversed and steps were taken to dissolve the trusts.

Those for the roads from Cockermouth to Workington, Keswick and Carlisle were wound up in 1883 and that to Maryport in 1885. The Whitehaven Trust had already gone in 1870 [35]

So ended an era of 150 years of road development around Cockermouth. The return of the roads to the local councils placed a heavy burden on them until 1878. The 'Highways and Locomotives Amendment Act' then ruled that all roads dis-turnpiked since 1870 should be designated 'main roads' for which the county should bear half the cost of maintenance, the local council sharing the other half with central government. Unfortunately Cumberland was slow to implement the act and the Quarter Sessions decided that the county would only take over responsibility for roads which were in good condition in the opinion of the county surveyor and which carried a large volume of non-local traffic. In 1879 only Alston and Whitehaven met the qualifications, but there was a rush to improve the ex turnpikes and by 1890 the county had taken over most of them. [36] They then extended their responsibility and of the 508Y2 miles of main road which the county managed in 1900 some 206 miles had never been turnpiked. [37] The county already had responsibility for a large number of bridges and was now able to integrate bridge and road maintenance.

Local councils still had their problems. In 1899 Cockermouth Rural District Council asked for county help in maintaining the Honister road, a very expensive stretch carrying heavy seasonal traffic, but the request was refused. [38]

Chapter 35

Coach, train and bus services

As turnpike roads improved, the increase in speeds of the traffic using them was spectacular. The time of the Carlisle-London coach journey was reduced from nine days to three in the 40 years from 1734. The present Al remained the popular route to the south and Cockermouth travellers went via Penrith and Brough.

At the end of the century three coaches a day left the Bull and Mouth in Aldersgate Street, London, for Cockermouth -7 a.m., 1 p.m. and 7 p.m., presumably going on to Whitehaven. [1] Some hotels, notably the Globe and the Sun, became coaching inns.

> *"At the Globe Hotel - the hotel for setting down passengers and changing horses - the ostlers are waiting with four slender horses in harness ....Presently the coach is seen coming over the bridge and down the street at the rate often miles an hour, the guard meanwhile playing on his bugle the air of"The Girl I left behind me."* [2]

Denwood records that as the coaches came into the town via S1. Helen's street, they at one time picked up an old man near the tannery who sat by the driver blowing a horn as warning of danger and arrival. [3] On a winter's evening one may stand in the dimness of S1. Helen's Street and imagine the clatter of hooves and the strident note of the horn, the Sun becoming a hive of activity as porters and stable boys rushed out.

There were a number of coach services to or through Cockermouth in the latter half of the 18th century. A six-seater coach did the journey from Whitehaven in three hours, the return fare being 3s. 6d., quite high considering money values 200 years ago. There was "commodious and expeditious travelling" between Whitehaven and Penrith by diligence (a French-type public coach), halting at the Sun. In 1811 Cockermouth was served by the 'Good Intent' light post-coach (coaches were named, as were railway engines in later times) running between Kendal and Whitehaven three times a week and the 'Volunteer' between Penrith and Whitehaven also on three days, both services using the Globe. In 1822 a Keswick tanner began a Keswick-Cockermouth service via Whinlatter. [4]

A number of gigs (light two-wheeled carriages) left Cockermouth for neighbouring towns, including Carlisle and Whitehaven. [5] The town's commercial links with the port were very strong and the provision of so many services between the two is evidence of this.

In 1849 there was a daily coach from Windermere station to Keswick, Cockermouth, etc. By this time transport could be hired, Riggs of Windermere charging £ 1 a day for a

single horse vehicle, plus 6d. an hour or 5s. a day for the driver. In Cockermouth horses and carriages could be obtained at the Globe and the Sun. [6]

Stage coach travel was expensive. Coaches were heavily taxed, usually by a scale based on the number of passengers, but for one ten-year period on the number of horses. In the 1830s a coach carrying 9 to 12 people paid duty of 21;2d. per mile and companies were paying additional costs of as much as 11 s 6d. a month for every mile of their services. [7] There were additional taxes on hired vehicles. Rival proprietors undercut one another until unprofitable fares forced them to seek agreement. Competition in reducing journey times led to serious accidents, until safety in itself became a means of attracting custom, so that we find a Lancaster owner advertising "Superior traveling ... by the following Mails and Newly-Invented Safety Coaches" - the 11 routes listed including the 'Royal Telegraph' to Whitehaven by Cockermouth. [8]

This advertisement referred to 'mails'. A complex system of carrying letters developed, the post office contracting with stage coach proprietors. Innkeepers were responsible for changes of horses and often also for the provision of branch coach services from the main routes in their area. Mail coaches were in demand by passengers because of their greater speed. The first regular mail coach service from Whitehaven via Cockermouth and Dunmail Raise to Kendal started in] 822, [9] but there had been similar services elsewhere in the country for nearly 100 years, increasing in speed as wheel restrictions were removed and lighter frames and narrower wheels cut the time of journeys.

Although mail coaches were exempt from turnpike tolls they were taxed more heavily than stage coaches and the cost of sending letters was very high. In 1840 (the year in which Rowland Hill began his penny post) a single sheet letter sent from Carlisle to Glasgow, Manchester, York or Edinburgh cost 9d., to London Is-ld.(5'l'2p) [10] and the charge from Cockermouth would be similar. Consequently many illegally used the carrier service, much slower but cheaper. Figures for Cockermouth are not available, but it was estimated that in the middle of last century only one out of every six letters leaving Manchester was sent by legitimate means, while from Glasgow the proportion was as low as one in ten.

Another development as the condition of the highways improved was the increase in the number of private carriages, which at the beginning of the 19th century were still sufficiently rare in Cumbria for Dorothy Words worth to write "Today a chaise passed".

Coach proprietors greatly resented the uneven taxation, especially when the competition of railways was added to that of coastal steamers and canal packets. In 1837 the duty per passenger per mile was by water nil, by rail 0.12Sd., by stage coach 0.2Sd. and by mail coach 0.7Sd. Cockermouth people would take advantage of the coastal sailings (steam was introduced in 1826/7) between Liverpool and Glasgow, calling at Whitehaven, Harrington, Workington, Maryport, Port Carlisle. Annan,

Dumfries, etc. Ships were often quicker than coaches, especially to places across the Solway, and in good weather more comfortable. In 1843 the Liverpool-Glasgow service carried 60,000 passengers. [11]

A price war developed between coaches and steamers. Whitehaven to Liverpool by sea was 15s first class (7Sp) and lOs-6d. (S2lhp) second class in 1821, which forced coach fares down to 17s (8Sp) inside and 13s (6Sp) outside from 24s.(£1.20) and 17s (8Sp). Cockermouth people had the additional cost of the journey to the coast for sea travel. It is interesting to note that even after the introduction of rail travel, Black's Lake District Guide recommended the sea route from Liverpool as being quicker, and by the mid-1850s it cost only 6s with a cabin or 3s (15p) on deck as far as Whitehaven. There were also weekly sailings from this port to Douglas, Ramsey, Dublin and Belfast. [12]

Inland water travel was also a possibility. A Cockermouth man wishing to visit Lancashire might take the coach to Kendal and then transfer to the packet service on the Kendal-Lancaster Preston Canal, for this daily service cost only 4s by cabin and 6s by fore cabin from Kendal to Preston, exactly half the outside and inside coach fares. The journey of 14 hours was eventually reduced to 7, comparable with the coach time, and refreshments were available on board. The packet continued until 1849. [13]

The extension of the railway northwards from Lancaster to Carlisle in 1846 would have as little effect on Cockermouth as the first Cumbrian line, the Carlisle-Newcastle of 1838. But in 1846 these lines were linked to the area by the completion of the Carlisle-Maryport route, soon extended southwards by the Whitehaven Junction Railway. The complex network which developed in West Cumberland is a study in itself and we will consider only the Cockermouth area.

In December 1844 a prospectus for a line from Cockermouth to W orkington was adopted, to link the town not only with the Cumbrian ports but by existing lines with the rest of the country.

> *"Another object, and the one from which the principal Revenue is expected, is to open out more extensively the Valuable Lime and Coal Fields through which the Railway will pass. These Minerals are already worked to a considerable extent. .. and it is confidently expected ... the present consumption, especially for Shipment, will be materially increased."*

A yearly revenue of £10,000 from freight and mineral traffic, with 100% increase in coal and lime exports, and £1000 from passenger traffic was forecast. [14]

An easy line to build, the task was completed in 20 months and the opening took place on 28th April 1847. Various connections were made from mines and quarries, including a tramway from Brigham limestone quarries, and in 1863 a link was opened from Derwent Junction in Workington to the harbour. At the Cockermouth end the line

tenninated west of the town at what became known as the Low Station or St. Leonard's. The rails have gone and the site became used by industry, but some of the station buildings and the loading bays for coal carts remained until about 1990. The coal and iron industries of West Cumberland needed a link with other parts of the country, especially County Durham, shorter than the detours via Carlisle or Barrow. Thus we find a suggestion for linking the Cockermouth line with the rail system further east, a scheme whose supporters included the Stockton and Darlington Railway and the north-east steel interests.

On 3rd August 1846, before the Cockermouth-Workington line was completed, royal assent was given for such a link to be built within five years. The act stated that the "Cockermouth and Workington Extension Railway"

> *"shall commence by a junction with the Cockermouth and Workington Railway, in the township of Cockermouth, and shall pass thence, from, in, through or into ... Papcastle, Brigham, Bridekirk, Dovenby, Hames Hill, Setmurthy, Isell, Isell Old Park, Bassenthwaite, Underskiddaw, Crosthwaite and Keswick, or some of them.*

It was thought that the eastern side of Bassenthwaite Lake would provide more traffic than the west. [15]

The act went into great detail, with the rates for carrying a wide variety of merchandise. The three classes of passenger would pay 3d., 2d. or Id. per mile and their luggage limits were to be 150, 100 and 60 pounds. The share capital was fixed at £200,000. Although there were some well known names amongst the directors, the line was never started. A petition sent to Parliament by General Wyndham argued that a route via Embleton would be shorter and cheaper, that the proposed route would destroy much beauty and injure many landowners, and that

> *"by following the line along the Derwent would pass under the Walls of your Petitioner's sd. Residence at Cockerm. Castle being distt. from the Walls of his sd. Castle no more than 500 yards and thby. by the Noise and Smoke render the same totally unfit for his Occupation". [16]*

On 1 st August 1861 the Cockermouth, Keswick and Penrith Railway was granted powers to build its line. [17] The existing Cockermouth station was to become a joint holding, but it was finally decided to build a new passenger station nearer the town centre (Plate 27), the old one becoming a goods station. The 1 in 70 gradient joining the two was carried over the Workington road by 12 arches and an iron girder bridge (rebuilt in the late 1930s and demolished at the end of 1982). Three high stone and brick arches spanned the Cocker, rebuilt in the present rectangular and concrete form when repairs in the mid-1940s revealed that the original brickwork was in a very dangerous state. The railway necessitated changes in Fairfield and the road pattern. The cost of the 31 miles was about £270,000 and after 214 years' work (picks, shovels and barrows) the line

opened for freight on 4th November 1864 and for passengers on 2nd January 1865. Ten years later the track was relaid with steel rails, new block system signalling was introduced and subways were constructed in Cockermouth and,Keswick stations. [18]

The CKP was always primarily a mineral line, carrying pig-iron to County Durham and bringing furnace coke, which could not be satisfactorily produced from local coal. Thus the depression in the West Cumberland iron trade of 1873/4, when nearly half the furnaces were out of blast, reduced receipts from £23,000 to £19,000. The line was dependent on a short length of the Lancaster-Carlisle near Penrith for its connection with the Eden Valley line of the North Eastern. The London and North Western obtained control of the L-C. and when the CKP was short of capital the LNWR and the NE gained control by each investing £25,000, the LNWR taking over passenger traffic and the NE controlling freight. The LNWR took a perpetual lease of the Cockermouth-Workington and the Workington Junction companies in 1866, paying a fixed dividend of 10%. [19]

The CKP carried a variety of freight - lime from Brigham and Flusco for steel, stone from Embleton and Threlkeld, slate from Honister, cattle from Cockermouth and Troutbeck, both of which had extensive cattle pens at the station. There were a number of sidings, for example at Embleton quarry and eventually to the oil depots near Cockermouth station. Three coke trains a day ran in each direction, until a method of mixing Cumberland and Durham coal for coke reduced this traffic by half. When better coke ovens were built at Lowca and Whitehaven the trade slumped further until the last coke train ran in 1925.

The Marron Valley line, opened mainly for ore in 1866, had to some extent affected Cockermouth, but the opening in the following year of the Derwent Branch of the Maryport-Carlisle Railway had a greater impact on the town. This branch ran from Brigham to Bulgill, one of its features being a private station for the Dykes family of Dovenby Hall, and provided rail access from Cockermouth to Maryport, with reversals at both Brigham and Bulgill. An embankment indicates the former river crossing at Brigham. An advertisement of 1912 stated "The Maryport and Carlisle Railway forms the Best and Most Direct Route from Scotland and North-Eastern to Cockermouth" and extolled the benefits of using this line to reach the Lake District in general. The Maryport-Carlisle was granted running rights over the C.-W. track from Brigham to Cockermouth, where the Bulgill trains used the loop line beyond the island platform, and from Brigham to the station at Marron Junction.

After 20 years running, when a pattern would have been established, there were five passenger trains westwards from Cockermouth, with two on Sunday, and the CKP opened with three each way. rising to eight by 1939. A memorable London link was the summer-time Lakes Express from West Cumberland to Euston, which combined with a Windermere section at Oxenholme. In 1955 its times were 8.59 from Cockermouth, arriving Euston at 17.05, and 11.50 from Euston reaching the town at 20.02. The CKP

carried an average of 70,000 passengers a year in its first six years, rising to a peak of 482,000 in 1913. [20] It still ran eight trains in the early 1960s, about half continuing from Penrith to Carlisle. Cockermouth received about six Derwent Branch trains a day, some of which ran through from Carlisle. Passenger traffic was boosted by special trains for hiring days, when two or three extra booking offices were opened at the station and provision made for the trunks of workers seeking a change of farm; [21] by school and workhouse outings; and by excursion fares. On a summer Saturday after the first war one could go to Keswick on the 1.55 pm. for 2s. [lOp] return. Sunday evening excursions from Whitehaven, Workington and Cockermouth to Bassenthwaite Lake and Keswick were certainly popular, for on 5th August 1934 seven trains were required to carry the passengers! [22]

Another popular outing was to take the train out and walk back, and the Cockermouth road is said to have sometimes been black with people on a Sunday evening who had paid 3d. [1 ~p] on the train to Embleton or 5d. [2p] to Bassenthwaite Lake. [23] This line eastwards was never as prosperous as the western link. The C-W. dividend was 61;2% in the mid-1860s, then the fixed 10% under the LNWR, while CKP paid 3%% in 1870 3. This was very low compared with 12%% by the Maryport-Carlisle. The CKP had high running costs, with two steep gradients (one in Embleton) and dividend was down to 2~% in 1921 and] ~% the following year. [24] Then in the 1923 grouping all the lines in this area were placed in the LMS and it was this company which provided from Crewe the special light engines of the 1940s known as 'Cauliflowers', from the distant appearance of Britannia painted on them.

They were needed because of the danger of subsidence caused by old mine workings between Cockermouth and Workington. [25]

In a bid to retain diminishing passenger traffic, occasioned by the greater convenience of bus stops and the increase in private transport, steam was replaced by multiple-unit diesels on the Penrith Workington line on 3rd January 1955. Nevertheless the section from Workington to Keswick closed to passenger traffic in April 1966, after just over 100 years, the remainder of the line east of Keswick struggling on until 1972. Goods traffic had ceased in June 1965. Steam traction had been retained for freight and for the Lakes Express, diesel engines presumably being too heavy for the line.

The last train was signalled out of Cockermouth by Signalman J. C. Carruthers, 47 years with the CKP (more than half in the Cockermouth box, and never absent or late for duty). In his later years there he had dealt with a daily traffic of some six passenger trains in each direction, with an additional six or seven westwards to Bulgill, plus the regular mineral and freight trains. Between these he had to fit in the pick-up goods train making a leisurely journey from station to station and on market days cattle trains from the CKP, from the Furness Railway area and from the Maryport and Carlisle.

In the 1850s the coach proprietors tried to prevent a Cockermouth-Keswick rail link by reducing the coach fare to Is Od. [5p] below the expected rail fare. Failing in this they came to supplement the railway by serving the valleys from Troutbeck, Keswick and Cockermouth. In Cockermouth transport was provided from the station to the Appletree and Globe Hotels and until the railway closed the Cockermouth-Buttermere bus service made a detour to the station. Railways reduced prices- Brampton coal was Is-6d. [7~p] a ton in Carlisle after the Newcastle line opened, a drop from 8s Od [40p] [26] Then with the improvement of road transport the process was reversed and it became more convenient and cheaper to move people, cattle and goods by road. Bus services replaced rail. The Whitehaven Motor Services Co. ran its first service in 1912 and in 1921, having become the Cumberland Motor Services Ltd., introduced a daily service from Cockermouth to Dearham and Maryport, much quicker than the roundabout rail service with its two reversals. [27] Against this competition the Derwent Branch struggled on until 1935. The same company provided a service to Keswick from July of that year, but it finished, presumably for the winter, at the end of September.

In August 1921 the Workington Motor Service Co. (which used Smith Bros. in Market Place as its Cockermouth station) advertised Sunday charabanc excursions from Workington and Cockermouth to Bowness, at 10s. 6d. return from Cockermouth - quite a sum in those days. [28]

In November a third company, C. Matthews of Cockermouth, began an hourly service to Workington in the Little Green Bus. [29] It was not until the Marron Valley line closed to passengers in 1931 (mineral traffic continued until 1954) that a Cockermouth-Lamplugh bus was introduced.

In 1980 the one bus company in the area (CMS) faced difficulties similar to those of the railways 50 years ago and many services were only maintained with the help of subsidies. There were eight services from the town. Two of these provided an hourly service on the Workington-Keswick route and another an hourly service to Maryport. The remainder were less frequent. even to the extent of only three days a week on one service and Monday market buses only on another.

In 1930 the question of a bus station for the town arose and was still being debated in 1979. In that year the Council asked the CMS to erect a station, but they refused, claiming that traffic was insufficient. [30] In the 1930s the town learned that Wordsworth House had been purchased by the CMS to be replaced by a bus station. In 1936 the UDC had considered a scheme for a bus station in Lorton Street. [31] The final plan was for a station in the Main Street I Sullart Street corner, but the cost was not justified and the idea was abandoned in 1977. The restriction to bus parking of areas on both sides of the widest part of Main Street has proved adequate. Regrettably the town lost its waiting room and parcels office at 51 Main Street near the Mayo statue in the early 1970s.

Over a number of years there was a deterioration in bus services but the last few years have seen improvements, Two are of particular interest. As a result of the efforts of the then chairman of the Civic Trust, T.C. Hughes, the X5 through service from Workington to Penrith, with some buses going on to Langwathby to connect with the Carlisle-Settle railway, has run for the last two years. In the town itself Cumberland Motor Services have introduced a service every hour to four different areas on the outskirts. Several villages are now connected to the town by private companies, some only once a week, but a few have no public transport.

Chapter 36

Houses and public buildings

For centuries Cockermouth's only stone building was the castle. Other homes were built on a wooden frame, the walls of wattle and daub, clay or turf and the roofs of turf, rushes or heather. Gradually cobbles taken from the rivers and fields replaced other walling materials and these are often revealed when cottages are modernised, but thatching persisted. As late as 1820 Main Street had a row of low thatched cottages from the Railway Hotel to the King's Anns Inn and the Appletree Inn was a thatched tavern. [1]

As roads were improved, especially that westwards from the town, it became easier to obtain quarried stone which hitherto had been used only for window and door surrounds. There was much rebuilding and new building in the 18th century and many of the details are of interest. When 72 Kirkgate was recently restored it was found beneath the rendering that this house of 1729 had been erected on a foundation of large boulders. The curving outwards of the base of an otherwise vertical wall indicates other examples of this type of construction in Kirkgate.

Before the industrial development of the town there was plenty of space as this typical advertisement from a 'Pacquet' of 1783 indicates:

> *"To be sold ... at the House of Mr. Jonathan Wood, the Sign of the George and Dragon, Cockermouth ... A house and Shop, well situate for Business, in the Market-place, at the lower End of Castle Street, and in good Repair, now in the Possession of Mr. Wise, Surgeon; with a Stable, Hay-loft, and Wash-house, near Derwent Side. Also at the same Time will be Sold a Garden, pleasantly situate upon the Edge of the River Derwent, on which is built a handsome Summer House, commanding a very pleasing and extensive Prospect up and down the River, and the Country about."*[2]

Advertisements of this period indicate the attractiveness of houses in this area, with gardens on the Derwent or the Cocker, and sometimes with a pew in the church. The rent payable to the Earl was about one or two shillings, with a 999 years lease.

Quite often houses possessed stables, cart-houses, barns or brew-houses. A group of houses with malthouses and other premises in Kitty Went (Challoner Street) was offered in 1779. Round the corner in Back Lane there was a farmon the Derby Terrace area, [3] with open land around it on this southern limit of the town.

When more housing became necessary the smaller dwellings erected were sometimes of the 'back-to-back' type, outward facing houses having a common rear wall with no back windows and no rear access. Some of these were demolished when the end of

Sullart Street was widened in 1965, and the 1863 OS map shows others in the town (Fig. 75).

With the growth of industry a profusion of small dwellings grew up behind the houses facing on to Main Street, Market Place, St. Helen's Street and Kirkgate. Many of these 'yards' were named after the owners of the houses. Several have been demolished or incorporated into other buildings, but a number illustrating varying types of development remain - the long garden development of Banks's Court (Fig. 5 I), the grouping round a central yard or more open development as behind the eastern side of Kirkgate square. Such houses often had poor light and poor sanitation, with a communal pump and privies in the yard, probably no damp course and walls only one brick thick.

There had been, however, some very pleasing development in the town just prior to the industrial period. Many of the most attractive houses date from the 18th century, built largely of freestone but often incorporating cobbles. Kirkgate provides examples of good Georgian building large houses for the affluent on the eastern side of the square, smaller dwellings on the west. Attractive domestic architecture of this period may be seen in St., Helen's Street, Challoner Street, etc., with the typical plain rectangular windows (an occasional bow window) and interesting doorways. One may enter an unpretentious house with a narrow frontage, in say St. Helen's Street, to be surprised by a spacious arched hall and a curving staircase.

Other groups of larger houses occur in the Market Place, especially on the north side, and in Castlegate, said to be the favourite place for people of fortune, in spite of its gradient and containing many genteel houses. (Plates 22, 24). The town was described in 1790 as being irregular but having many modem and well-built houses. [4] These were now spreading westwards towards Derwent Bridge.

The Mackreths and others introduced brick for building, at first for surrounds in place of stone, but soon for complete structures. Like cobbled walls, brickwork was frequently rendered, a practice still followed today. One feature which has remained constant during the growth of the town is the building line fixed by the first burgage buildings. The holders of these plots of land, who enjoyed full municipal rights within the borough, could sell or subdivide their burgages. The castle records list many sales in the 1700s, such as:

> *A Barn and Stable near the Wash at Town Head. 31 January 1752. £151.*
>
> *A Barn in Kittywent. 10 November 1753. £1 00*
>
> *The Malt Kiln and Great Garden at Cockerside formerly Relfes.*
>
> *New Market House on back of town.*
>
> *A Shop at the West End of Cocker Bridge.*

A House at the Townend below Bridge.

A yearly rent was payable by the owner of the burgage (Appendix 19).

Court roll entries show how burgages were divided and re-divided as they were bequeathed to descendants, e.g.:

1522 ¼ of a burgage in the west part of Cockermouth lies in decay.

1524 A jury found that James Chaloner formerly a chaloner of Cockermouth has willed to Henry Chaloner his son half a burgage there lying in a street called Ketywent. [Later to become Challoner Street.]

The burgage plots usually comprised a house on the street with a garden or garth behind. Outhouses and workshops were often built behind the house, with byres and stables at the end of the plot, many of these extra buildings converted to dwellings in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. The burgage plans in the castle records are usually difficult to locate today because their position is given only by naming the owners of neighbouring properties.

More recent terraced development than the Georgian rows of Kirkgate and St. He1en's Street includes the New Street estate, built in 1856-7 twenty five years after the land had been acquired by the Cockermouth and West Cumberland Benefit Building Society for £530. [5] Details show that this was once an attractive area, and recent deterioration of the houses has been reversed. It was popular with Irish workers at Hams's mill and, partly because of its situation at the low end of the town and the smell from the adjacent gasworks, acquired a bad reputation. Residents objected to comments frequently made at council meetings and critics were successfully quietened when at a meeting in 1916 a councillor pointed out that a greater proportion of men called up for the army from this estate passed medically as Al than from any other area of the town. [6]

Housing in the Moor and Lamplugh Road area was a gradual development. [7] The 1863 OS map shows part of Mountain View, Cromwell Terrace on Fitz Road, Derwent View (Harrot House) and Evening Hill Farm. Fern Bank dates from the 1860s and parts of Brigham Road, Mayo Street and Henry Street (named after Henry Norman who owned the land) were developed before the end of the century. The UDC, through the North Eastern Housing Association, built in the 1930s, clearing some old parts of the town. Parkside Avenue was completed in the early 1950s.

At the other end of the town, the ribbon development of Castlegate Drive took place in the 1920s. Wordsworth Terrace and Fell View terraces were the first development off the top of Kirkgate, in about 1900. The council built the Windmill Lane estate, as far as Waste Lane in the late 1930s; the Slate Fell section followed after the second war, the Highfield estate in the 1970s and the Gable Avenue estate in 1980s and 1990s.

A 1900 map shows a few houses in Victoria Road, but no Sunnyside. Lorton Street's terrace Ash Grove came in 1889, soon after the opening of the bridge, and Sunnyside and more of Victoria Road were probably built about the same time. A Bumley firm built the Kirkbank houses in 1921 for £716 each. [8]

Since the war the town has spread appreciably by private housing estates on the outskirts - Park Lane (the old name for Isel Road), Rose Lane, Evening Hill, Towers Lane, Riverdale and the A66 end of Brigham Road, a large development, Marvejols Park, south-west of the town, Tweedmill, Parklands, Derwentside and Laithwaite Close. Very little land scheduled for housing now remains within the town and restoration and infilling in the town centre is being undertaken.

There have been small in-fill developments in recent years in the Windmill Lane, and St, Helen's Street areas and Bridge St areas. In the western part of the town several blocks of flats have been built - Wordsworth Court, the Fallows, Fletcher Close, Derwent Court, Horsman Court. The main building of Derwent Mill has also been converted to flats.

Included in a number of changes along Main Street are the demolition of Teetotal Lane and Its replacement by the Irene Court flats in 1989; the restoration of Cockton' s Yard, which gained a national Civic Trust award and was opened by Lord Montague of Beaulieu, chairman of English Heritage, on 5th March 1987; the development of Victoria Court accommodation for the elderly, a Council scheme on disused burgage plots dating from 1983.

In 1985 the New Street estate became Cockermouth's first general improvement area, with the aim of removing industry and upgrading the housing. At one time last century almost 6000 people were crowded into the central area, bounded approximately by South Street and the Derwent.

There was no development in the Gote except in the immediate neighbourhood of High and Low Gote Mills when the 1727 map was prepared. but 100 years later Wood shows housing along both sides of the road. He also includes 'Derwent Place on Sale" a row of houses on Sandair which never materialised. Since the last war the Wakefield Road estate has increased the size of the Gote community.

In 1972 there were 689 local authority houses (excluding those sold) and 1674 private houses, a total of 2363 of which 1211 were pre-war. The council's property included 62 elderly people's bungalows and flats. 233 houses in the town were sub-standard, 106 of them unoccupied. There was a waiting list of 187 residents and 94 non-residents.

The authorities have for some time attempted to restrict the size of the town, a very difficult policy to enforce when it has so much attraction for the retired and for workers in West Cumbrian industry willing to commute. This has led to the infilling of vacant plots and the erection of flats. Eight blocks of flats have been built at the western end of

the town in the last few years, adding to the Victoria Court development of 1983 and other early developments. Smaller schemes have been the restoration of property in such places as Cockton's Yard in 1986/7 and Banks Court in the early 1980s.

Conservation areas have been extended to keep the character of the town and due regard has to be given to legislation such as the 1971 Town and Country Planning Act, the 1974 Town and Country Amenities Act and the various local, district and county plans. Buildings throughout the country considered to be of particular value because of their architecture, construction, historical association or contribution to a group of buildings are "Listed" now under the control of English Heritage; this means tight controls on what the owner may do with the building. Listed Buildings are classified in two grades: Grade 1, buildings of outstanding interest, includes only the Castle and Wordsworth House in Cockermouth. Grade 2, buildings of special interest which warrant every effort being made to preserve them, has most of the properties in Castlegate, the Market Place and Kirkgate; considerable sections of st. Helen's Street and Main Street; Grecian Villa, Harford House, Kirkby House and the Trout Hotel in Crown Street; Challoner House and nos. 24, 26 and 28 in South Street; and Hames Hall, South Lodge and Bridge End House. The former Croft Mill and the cottages adjoining are included, as are All Saints Church (with the gate piers of the Kirkgate entrance), Christ Church, the United Reformed Church and School and the Victoria Hall. Industrial buildings include the older part of Derwent Mills, the Hospice, Low Gote Mill and the High Gote Mill complex, and the windmill and adjoining premises at the mouth of the Cocker. The Town Hall, Derwent Bridge and Cocker Bridge are listed. The following inns are included Globe, former Pack Horse, Black Bull, Brown Cow, Huntsman, Wordsworth and Bush in Main Street; Allerdale Court, Ship and Sun in Market Place; and Swan in Kirkgate. In 2003, the Civic Trust succeeded in getting the old Grammar School Buildings listed in case the developer who had applied for conversion to housing, chose to demolish the buildings. The listing quoted

> *"An extensive and well-preserved purpose-built industrial school of 1881, one of the most complete survivals of this specialist form of training school, and one of the less well-known aspects of the School Board system of the late CI9."*

The inns of Cockermouth were for long the centres of trade and commerce, as some names indicate Packhorse, Weavers' Arms, etc. They provided meeting places for farmers and dealers and were the centres for auctions and sales. The larger became posting and coaching inns, today catering for visitors and touring coach parties. By contrast there were many beer houses where the labourers met, often out of sight off the main streets, perhaps merely converted and unnamed cottages.

Not until 1872 was any control exercised over drinking, when a closing time of midnight was imposed in the town and some inns were closed down when it was considered there were too many in close proximity.

An advertisement offering for sale the Swan, in the heart of the Corn Market, is a good example of how extensive a good inn could be - a three-storeyed house, stables, hay chambers, cow house, brewhouse, dove cote, a good pump in the yard and four sittings in a church pew. [9]

As coaching developed so did the facilities of some of the inns. John Y ounghusband moved in 1777 from the George to the Queen's Head "about the centre of the town" and there provided beds, stabling, a neat post chaise and able horses for hire. By 1790 three inns stood out - the Globe, the Sun and the George and Dragon; and by the middle of the 19th century the Globe, Sun and Appletree were regarded as the most important.

Research [10] into the inns and beer houses of the town undertaken in 1973 listed 28 that had ceased to exist as such. Several others had changed their names.

Beginning in the Market Place area, the Shoulder of Mutton was demolished when the Market Hall was built and replaced by the Plough Inn in Market Street. The Market Hall itself was erected on land belonging to the Albion (formerly the Three Tuns) which was next door to the Sun Inn, still standing at the corner of Kirkgate and once the headquarters of the British Legion. The Greyhound (previously the George) was on the south side, near the market bell, and part of the old hall behind it became the Old Hall Inn. Further along was the Joiners Arms and beyond it the Woolpack Inn next to the Wheatsheaf at the corner of Market Street, later Luchini's shop and cafe demolished in 1973. On the north side of the Market Place were the Ship (closed and looking in a sorry state with an uncertain future) and next door the Old Buck (earlier the George and Dragon), and on this side the Allerdale Court Hotel of 1973 must now be added. There were thus about ten inns in the short length of Market Place.

Moving eastwards from Market Place, St. Helen's Street had first the Crown and Mitre (now flats) on the left and the Red Lion two doors up from Kirkgate on the right; then the Grey Goat (earlier the Goat) which is still there, but about to close and far up on the left hand side the Royal Oak with the Bowling Green three doors beyond it, now demolished and replaced by houses.

Travelling up Kirkgate there were the Grapes just on the lower side of the churchyard and opposite to it the Skinners Arms (recently the British Legion Club, then also the headquarters of the town's Rugby Club, and now restored as the 'Bitter End' inn) with the White Hart next door to it. The Golden Lion stood above the church gate, the coffee house a little beyond it, and the Swan past Mackreth Row. In the top corner of the cobbled square, Stag House, with a stag depicted in white cobbles on its frontage, may have been a public house at one time. Up the Lorton road Rose Cottage, almost opposite Strawberry How road, was once an inn.

In the other direction from Market Place were the White Ox at the bottom of Castlegate, the Castle Spirit Vaults and, behind Percy House, the Spread Eagle Inn, birthplace of Thomas Cape who became MP for Cockermouth and Workington.

An interesting feature of the Spread Eagle, demolished in 1970, was that the public right-of-way of Brewery Lane cut through one corner of the building.

Moving westwards along the southern side of Main Street we pass the Black Bull and then the Globe Hotel at the corner of Challoner Street, both still active and the latter recently restored, then the former Packhorse adjoining the Globe. The Brown Cow still stands on the corner of Station Street, then Hunters' (until recently the Huntsman, once the Unicorn), the Wordsworth Hotel (until recently the Appletree) and the Bush, all three still in existence. Next came the Spur Inn, the Bluebell (now Cleeland's shop) and the Crown Inn (formerly the Tup or Ram) next to Norham House cottage, all ofwhich have closed. The Wordsworth Tavern (earlier the Hope and Anchor) was demolished when Sullart Street was widened.

Just beyond, Grecian Villa became the Manor Court hotel at the end of 1989 (in 1995 the Old Court Hotel, a reference to the time when the town courts were held in the courtroom behind the main building.) On the other side of Crown Street, near Derwent Bridge, was until 1986 the Railway Inn (now flats), reminding us of the station which was once close by.

In the roads off Crown and Main Streets were the Lowther Arms in the Gote (recently converted into houses), and once the Goat Inn opposite to it; the Otter Hound was in High Sand Lane next to the passageway to the Victoria Hall; the Lamb in Challoner Street, stood out into the present roadway and was demolished when the Croftside flats were erected, and also in Challoner Street the Anchor Inn.

Station Street has the Tythebarn ,the last public house to be built in the town and the Rampant Bull which closed in 2002, reappearing with the same name at the Lakeland Agricultural Centre.

On the car park near the Town Hall stood the Hatters, so named from Wilson's hat factory nearby. In low buildings opposite the old Tourist Information Centre (Plate 8), behind the main factory, rabbit fur was treated to make velour and the workmen resorted to the Hatters to clear the dust and fur from their throats.

The majority of the actual buildings of the 28 inns recorded as closed still stand, converted mostly into shops, a few into houses. All the existing inns are in the town centre - there is not one on the several estates which have been built around the old town. There were about three old type coffee houses in the town, [11] including the one at 22 Kirkgate recently rescued from decay and converted into a house. In addition to the inns of Cockermouth there have been a varying number of cafes over the years. In

the mid-1980s it was possible to have morning coffee at some 25 locations in the town inns and cafes.

A number of new cafes supplementing existing shops were short-lived, but at least one of the old-established cafes was among the closures. This was the Armstrongs' Central Cafe, originating at the bottom of Castlegate, then opened in Bridge Street about 1920 and near the Mayo Monument from 1933 to 1990. Colin Armstrong remembers as a boy taking twelve loaves every week to All Saints Church for distribution to the poor as one of the charities.

Among new developments may be mentioned 'The Office', a club which occupied for the period 1985-92 the premises in South Street where the West Cumberland Times was printed until its amalgamation in 1976. A number of restaurants have opened in Main Street (including the 'Cheers' Bistro in what were 10siah Hall's grocery premises), 'Riverside' (in the Old Court House), two Indian restaurants (one in the King's Arms Lane development, where is also the 'Poet's Corner', and one replacing the Courtyard Cafe at No.72, which regrettably closed).

Norham House cafe occupies premises, once used as a school. 'Over the Top' in the former grocer's shop in Kirkgate square deserves mention, as does 'Quince and Medlar' at the top of Castlegate. The latter, in the seven years since it was opened, has been Vegetarian Restaurant of the Year in 1989 and 1991 and runner-up for the award in 1988, 1990 and 1992. In 1993 this national prize was discontinued!

We will now consider some of the individual buildings in the town.

The Old Hall

The Hall is not mentioned in a castle roll of Elizabethan times, which suggests that it may have been fairly new at the time of Mary's visit. Nevertheless it was demolished early in the 17th century, possibly because of the growing prosperity of the Fletchers and their desire for a more imposing home. It is thought that the kitchen was the only part of the earlier building to be incorporated in the new, but this did not prevent subsequent visitors being shown the room in which Mary slept! Three rooms on an upper floor were pointed out as the ante-room, reception room and bedroom used by the Queen.

The northern front had an open quadrangle about 60 by 30 feet (I8m x 9m), with a bay in the centre. The middle of the building was of three storeys, the wings probably two. (Plate 7). As was customary, the ground floor was low and the principal rooms were on the first floor, approached by steps to an outside entrance. The windows had three or four lights. On the southern or garden side there were no wings and a stair projected instead of a bay, leading to the garden which extended 96 feet across the then open beck to the churchyard wall, across the site of the present car park and 'market hall'.

[12] One can imagine this attractive house set in its garden with the stream running through (Plate 6).

This was not to last. The Fletchers left and the Hall was neglected for many years. That it was divided up at an early date is proved by an announcement in 1776 of a sale at the Sign of the Sun of "All those dwelling houses, shops and gardens behind same extending to church yard known by name Old Hall situate in street called St. Hollins", the property of Lyonel Wright Fletcher. [13] It had thus become a medley of shops and dwellings, and eventually an inn, but nevertheless some of the main features survived until demolition - the magnificent stone staircase 512 feet (I 650mm) wide, the carved south doorway and the attractive windows (though some of them bricked up) in walls 712 feet thick. [14] The Hall became very shut in by the Market Place shops on the north and a clutter of small buildings to the south, so that its presence was unknown to many people.

In 1937 the Council decided to re-house the tenants under a slum clearance scheme and then to demolish it, unless it was converted into a museum. [15] However it lingered on until 1973 when the Bitter Beck scheme cleared away the buildings which had screened the south and many really saw it for the first time. A decision to demolish brought counter efforts to restore it, but it was finally decided to clear the site. The original building had been drastically altered, even floor levels being changed; the SW corner was leaning badly; and much damage had been done during the empty years. Even if the necessary £100,000 had been spent on it, rebuilding would have had to be so thorough that little of the original would have been left. Regretfully, as the town brought out its cameras to record its newly discovered past glory, Cockermouth lost what might have been one of its greatest architectural assets. [16]

A tablet which was on the north face stands in a plinth on the car park to record that "On the 17th. May, 1568, there came to this house as a guest ofHenry Fletcher, Esq., Mary Queen of Scots, on her journey from Workington to Carlisle",

The South Side of the Market Place

Although not a single building, this group may be considered as a feature of the Old Hall area. Between 1967 and 1975 the UDC and Allerdale DC bought nos. 9-31, Market Place, for clearance and in 1973 demolished nos. 25-31 on safety grounds. There was a scheme put forward by the town's Chamber. of Trade to erect a block of shops and flats on the site. Opposition to the intrusion of a modern building into this area and the contrast it would present to the north side of Market Place led to a public enquiry being held in 1974, opposition aroused by the town's Civic Trust with the support of the Georgian Society and the Victorian Society. The Secretary of State ruled that the group must not be demolished as they were not past restoration and, while not individually outstanding, formed an important part of the town as a whole. [17]

Allerdale Council inherited the problem of how to restore the property. [18] Uniform floor levels behind a preserved facade would have entailed floors cutting across some windows and in any case such drastic clearance of the rear proved impossible because of the rubble construction of the facade. The Council consequently decided to reconstruct a mixture of shops and flats, there being a need for flats in the town centre, hoping at the same time to set an example on the possibilities of restoration ofsemi-derelict property.

Finance was a problem, but the Department of the Environment made a 50% grant. The final cost of conversion averaged about £10,000 per flat (of which Allerdale paid £6,500), slightly less than equivalent accommodation being newly built elsewhere.

Because of the danger of further deterioration a quick start was made in November 1976, Messrs. 10hnston and Wright, chartered architects of Carlisle, and a London engineer being asked for advice and Thomas Armstrong being awarded the contract.

The period of discovery which now began cannot be related in detail, but some of the more interesting features may be noted. No 17 was a house of the mid to late 1600s and had originally been exposed on three sides, as proved by windows found in the side walling.

Rain had been pouring through the roof into this property for some eight years and the dry rot fungus was so extensive that the planners had great difficulty in finding what was there and deciding how to start. No 15 appeared to have been part of the 15th century hall. No.l1 had been detached and this, with Nos 21 and 23, was of the mid-17th century, No 9 up to a hundred years older. The last to be built was No 19 in the late 1700s or early 1800s, nicknamed 'Sparrow Hall'. Windows in the neighbouring side walls show that it was erected in a passageway, having a street frontage of only 8 feet, narrowing backwards to 6 feet width and a spiral staircase. No. 9 was once the Greyhound Inn, no. 17 the White Ox and Joiners Arms, while behind no. 1'5 was a bacon house with hooks in the ceilings and a winch that swung out to lift the carcasses.

The four-storey end house appears to have had something similar in the large rear opening (now containing a smaller window but with the original size framed) on the top floor.

Original features, in addition to the facade, have been preserved where possible - 17th century roof trusses, stone window frames, ornate plaster ceilings, etc. The tying of the front and rear rubble walls presented difficulties in the high end house and steel rods were inserted. A further problem was that the main rooms are at the front and north-facing, so glazed screening has been used to gain sunlight from the rear. The three wings built out from the back provide support for the older structures, as well as additional accommodation. Their design has been varied and enclosing walls give some privacy from the car park. Finally much consideration was given to the colour scheme, an effort

being made to keep to Cockermouth tradition and yet to incorporate sufficient variety to provide interest.

Wordsworth House

This fine house was built on the site of two of a row of three cottages by Joshua Lucock when High Sheriff of the county in 1745-6, as recorded in the lintel over the back door. The third cottage still adjoins the house. Pevsner describes it as a "swagger house" for such a town as Cockermouth. [19] (Plate 13).

The three smaller houses had been built about 1670 and later sold to the agent for the Duke of Somerset. In 1761 Sir James Lowther's agent, John Robinson, bought Lucock's house, the same Robinson whose rapid political manoeuvring gave rise to the saying "As quick as you can say Jack Robinson". From him it passed to the Lowthers in 1765. [20]

John Wordsworth came to Cockermouth in 1764 as agent to the Lowthers, living in a house on the north side of Market Place near Castlegate. [21] When he married Anne Cooks on of Penrith in 1766 he moved into what was to become 'Wordsworth House' and here their four sons and one daughter were born.

A meeting of the Cockermouth Library Authority in October 1937 was concerned that, except for the All Saints window and the park fountain, the town had no memorial to the poet and a public meeting was called to consider the matter. A committee of 30 was appointed from a well-attended gathering and at its first meeting this committee learned that Wordsworth House was for sale and decided to raise money to purchase it. [22] The National Trust agreed to take over the house when Cockermouth had bought it. The response to the appeal for £2000 was at first good, but donations then decreased and were still far short of the target when the committee learned with dismay that Cumberland Motor Services Limited had bought the property in order to demolish it and replace it with a bus station. Reports of the situation on the radio and in the press brought a response from an unknown benefactress which raised the total above the required sum and when the CMS learned how anxious the town was to acquire the house the company generously agreed to resell it. £ 1625 was paid to the bus company and some £900 spent on repairs before it was handed over to the Trust in October 1938, just a year after the library meeting. On 3rd June 1939 the house was opened as a Wordsworth memorial. [23]

For many years the custodian lived in the house, just part of it being shown to summer visitors. However, interest grew to such an extent that changes were made in 1979. In twelve years visitor numbers increased from 1500 to 15800 in 1978, [24] an impossible number for the tenants to show round their home. (In 1995 the number of visitors has risen to around 20000) The custodian now lives in a flat in one of the remaining cottages and all the rooms in the adjoining house are open to the public. The old harness room has become a 'National Trust' shop with a shop front being installed onto Main Street. In

1999,the National Trust decided on a major refit of the House and after four years of planning and eight months work, the house re-opened in 2004 with historic and reproduction furnishings carefully researched, as close as possible to a Georgian manor in the style that W ordsworth would have known in the 1770's. The refit cost £1 million, funded from Heritage Lottery, Rural Regeneration Cumbria and the European Regional Development Fund.

Although young William was encouraged by his father to read, his mother allowed him to run wild and enjoy his surroundings, which certainly made an impression on him during his first eight years. The large walled garden behind the house leads to a terrace walk beyond which the Derwent flows and from which the castle may be seen. (Plate 14).

"When he had left the mountains and received

On his smooth breast the shadow ofthose towers

That yet survive, a shattered monument

Of feudal sway, the bright blue river passed

Along the margin of our terraced walk;

*A tempting playmate whom we dearly loved." [*25]

The race on this side of the Derwent which powered the Waterloo Street mills would not be made when William was a child, and he must refer to the Gote Mills race beyond the river when he writes

"Oh, many a time have I, a five years' child,

In the small mill race severed from his stream, ...

..... . Made one long bathing ofa summer's day!" [26]

From here could be seen "distant Skiddaw's lofty height" and beyond the race was the path over Mickle Brow, clearly visible from the terrace, on which the 'Prelude' has the lines

"Who doth not love to follow with his eye

The windings of a public way!

.....a disappearing line,

One daily present to my eyes, that crossed

The naked summit of a far off hill

Beyond the limits that my feet had trod, ..."

Percy House

Percy House, on the castle side of Cocker bridge, was built by Henry Percy, the ninth earl. [27] This low building, with a modem slated roof, is now divided into two shops and one must view it from the back or from inside to realise its antiquity. It was at one time the home of the Percy bailiff. In an upstairs room is a carved plaster ceiling, with the date 1598 (Fig 77). Above the fireplace are the arms of the earl surrounded by a garter. He had been elected a knight on 23rd April 1593 to a stall vacant through the death of his wife's step-father, Robert Dudley. [28]

The property has been restored by the present owner, under the guidance of English Heritage, The ceiling which was beginning to fall, has been repaired and stabilised. Whilst the restoration was being carried out a Tudor fireplace was discovered and will be reinstated.

Allerdale Court Hotel

Large 18th century houses on the north side of Market Place became the Allerdale Court Hotel in August 1973. The alterations of the house and of Herbert's Court behind it uncovered interesting features - a magnificent stone fireplace, massive beams and solid oak panelling, but perhaps most interesting of all, the crest of the Fletchers. The house once belonged to the Old Hall family and was the home of Paul Fletcher in the early 1700s. [29]

The Court House

In 1751 John Walker, gentleman, made an indenture granting to John Wallas, tailor, "all that free burgage house and tenement of him John Walker with the appurtenances thereunto belonging situate lying and being at the West End ofCockerbridge .... being the yearly free Burgage Rent of three Pence. [30]

The building was a tailor's shop until Cocker Bridge was rebuilt in 1828, when, to widen the approach road, it was bought and demolished. Not all the site was needed for the roadway. It so happened that at this time there was dissatisfaction with the state of the Moot Hall and Cockermouth saw a use for the vacant land. The land was surveyed and valued and a town meeting agreed to offer the county £100 for the vacant plot.

> *"And that if the consent of the Earl of Egremont ... could be obtained for the removal and taking away of his Court which stands in the middle of the main street of Cockermouth aforesaid above the Bridge in which he holds his Courts Baron and other Courts and in which also the Quarter Sessions of the Peace for the County have heretofore been held at Christmas, then it was proposed and agreed to erect a sufficient Court House and other Buildings upon the said Piece of Ground and to all the County the use of such Court House upon all occasions which might be required."*

The Earl did agree, provided he could also hold in the new building the courts of Derwent Fells and the five towns. The Moot Hall was demolished and the materials used in the new "convenient and commodious Court House with Offices and Buildings suitable thereto", with a frontage of almost 40 feet and stretching backwards for 74 feet. (Plate 25)

£1500 was raised by issuing shares of £25 which were purchased by 36 shareholders, including Thomas Wilson hat manufacturer, John Hodgson tanner, A. Hetherington tanner, Joseph Clementson maltster, John Wharton cooper, Joshua Sim dyer and Thomas Bailey bookseller. The contractors were paid £885, the architect £35, and £56 was spent on interior fittings, the court furniture being made to fit the building.

When the Savings Bank had been built adjoining it was written that the "convenient Court House, or Town-Hall, Bank and Newsroom ...form one handsome range of white freestone buildings." 'Town Hall' is a reference to the fact that the 'council' of the town met in a first-floor front room. When the court moved to Grecian Villa, although the front of the building continued to be used as offices, the court-room itself deteriorated rapidly. The property was rescued by a private purchaser, Mr. W. Jackson, who renovated it, making a restaurant in the basement and shops and flats in the front portion. The court-room is now used for the display and sale of a variety of antiques. On the front of the building is the plate from 'Neddy', the clock which stood at the junction of Main Street and Station Street. (Plate 26). It reads:

> *In memory of Edward Waugh, Esquire, the last representative in Parliament of the ancient Borough of*
>
> *Cockermouth*
>
> *Erected by subscription 1893."*

A tablet below explains

> *"The above plate was attached to the Edward Waugh Memorial Clock, removed from Main Street Aug 1932."*

The Savings Bank Building

The first savings bank was established in 1810 by Rev. Dr. Henry Duncan in Ruthwell village across the Solway, where he was minister. The movement spread and the Cockermouth bank was formed in 1818. The Savings Bank building was erected adjoining the Court House in 1846, on the site of a public house. (Plate 25).

A distinctive feature is the clock, made by Christopher Tatham, a clock and watch maker of Main Street, the cost of £70 8s. being met by public subscription. [31] There was disagreement as to whether the new clock should be lit from the lamp rate and at a vestry meeting a poll was demanded. The result was that the clock was lit at the town's

expense until the erection of the Waugh Memorial Clock made this unnecessary. It has had several periods of inactivity, but was restored again a few years ago.

After the Bank left the building for premises further along Main Street the building continued to be used as offices. The Bank had always shared these premises, notably with the Mechanics Institute in earlier days.

Norham House

Norham House is built on land which was sold by John Potter of Workington to his sister in 1724 for £63. [32] The following year the present house was erected by Thomas Potter. He was in the cloth trade (a decoration over a fireplace at the back of the house has his initials and three rams), but he also had interests in the lead and copper mines of Braithwaite. In 1745 the house was sold to John Christian of the Isle of Man, a member of the family of Ewanrigg Hall. Fletcher Christian of 'Mutiny on the Bounty' fame was grandson of the Fletchers who lived in Norham. It was sold again in 1766, this time to the Earl of Lonsdale, then to a Mrs. Peill of Islington whose family owned it for a considerable time. In the 1920s it was used as a girls' school and was eventually bought by the Post Office who intended replacing it by a telephone exchange. Fortunately the house was saved and restored, the telephone exchange being built behind it, and now serves as solicitors' offices.

The Fitz

As early as 1620, there is a record [33] of Edward Savile of Howley, Yorkshire, whose stepmother was a Pennington ofMuncaster, selling the messuage called 'le Fitt' or 'le Fittes'. 'Le Fitt' was sold again in 1627 to Henry Dalton, whose son, also Henry, married Elizabeth Bromfield of Hames Hill, a house which formerly stood just above Belle Vue roundabout. After her husband's death Elizabeth married Patricius Senhouse, a younger son of John Senhouse of Maryport, and they moved to Hames in 1670-1. Patricius and Humphrey became family names of the Senhouses.

The last owner and tenant of the Fitz, Mr. H. P. Senhouse, wrote: [34]

> *"Early in the nineteenth century the mortgage of the Fitz was paid off but they lived at Bridge End. Humphrey II (Senhouse) died in 1839 and his son Humphrey III, my great-great-grandfather, at once began work on this house, although, alas, he did not long survive."*

The name of the architect is unknown. Hames is supposed to have been demolished to provide materials. The stone is said to have come from near Carlisle and it is not unlike that used for the gateway of Crofton Hall. The design is very simple and has affinities with several other houses, such as Greenhill near Wigton and Ehen Hall, Cleator."

Mr Senhouse sold the house in 1990 and left the area.

God's Providence House

The upper end of Kirkgate, now the rockery corner, was once almost closed by houses and an inn forming 'God's Providence Yard', property demolished in 1860 for the new road towards Lorton. (Fig. 65). On the door-lintel of one house was carved "God's Providence is my Inheritance, 1659". (35]

Traditionally this was the only house in Cockermouth to escape the plague. It was demolished by John Bolton's father when the new Lorton road was made in 1862-4.

The Public Hall

An important building which has disappeared was the Public Hall in Station Street, erected 1874-6. (Plate 26). Built by a limited company, with £3000 in £1 shares, it served the town for lectures, meetings, dances and cinema shows. No intoxicants were allowed to be sold and the hall was used by the Good Templars and other temperance societies. [36]

At first the sale of shares was slow because of the possibility of a town hall being built on the hat factory site, but the Station Street hall did proceed. Besides shops flanking the entrance it was well-equipped with ticket office, stage, kitchen, etc. [37]

The hall was renovated and modernised in 1931 but ceased to be used in the 1950s. It was demolished in 1974 to make way for the new National Westminster Bank building.

Another room in the town suitable for large gatherings was the Royal Assembly Room, behind the Royal Hotel which became Wild's Garage in Crown Street, now converted to Anderson Court offices. Some other inns had smaller 'assembly' rooms.

The "Hospice"

In 1975, Cumbria County Council issued the St Leonards Hospice Compulsory Purchase Order and took over the property for preservation. This small building, 33½ feet by 17 feet, thus became public property. Of two storeys, it is built of rough squared sandstone with dressed quoins and surrounds to the openings. [38] The fact that the 'windows' appear to have been shuttered rather than glazed supports the opinion that it dates from 1810-1820 as a flax drying shed - "an interesting piece of industrial archaeology and relating to the former textile industry of Cockermouth". [39] It was used as a joinery store in 1971 and when taken over was in a very bad condition. The Council partially restored the building and temporarily blocked the openings to ensure preservation. (Fig. 63). In 1985, with the addition of some adjacent land and a better approach, it was converted into St Leonards House.

The Globe Hotel

Probably the Globe (Plate 17) was initially a single-storey thatched building with a smithy adjoining it in Kitty Went. It was rebuilt in 1750. At first 2s. a Year was paid to the

Earl ofEgremont, but from 1828 dues went to the Earl of Lonsdale. [40] Improvements were carried out over the years, especially in provision for horses and coaches. Once the inn would be crowded with commercial travellers. Horse buses met every train and barrows were sent to the station for the drapers' big skips. The last modernisation was in 1977-8. A plaque on the front of the building reads

> *"R. L. Stevenson, poet and novelist, stayed at this hotel on his visit to Cockermouth in 1871. Also John Dalton, 1766-1844, discoverer of the atomic theory, made this hotel his habitat during his frequent visits to Cockermouth. "*

Stevenson wrote of his visit, he having just come from Scotland

> *"I was lighting my pipe as I stepped out of the inn, and did not raise my head until I was fairly in the street. When I did so it flashed upon me that I was in England; the evening sunlight lit up English houses, English faces, an English confonnation of street - as it were, an English atmosphere blew against my face."*

Grecian Villa

Grecian Villa was built about 1847 by Thomas Wilson, the hat manufacturer, who lived there until his death ten years later. In 1910, after being empty for a few years, it was bought by the Board of Guardians and it was they who added the Board Room. The Rural District Council moved there in about 1930 and stayed 20 years. The Inspector of Weights and Measures and the Registrar of Births, etc., were also tenants. The house was then the HQ of the Cumbrian Fire Service until 1986, since when it has been an hotel, first the Grecian Villa but now the Manor Court.

Holmewood and other large houses

Holmewood was built in 1866 by Joseph Brown (who also built nearby Oakhurst), a business man very active in the life of Cockermouth. [41] It continued as a residence until purchased as offices for the Cockermouth Rural District Council which moved here from Grecian Villa and when local government was reorganised in 1974 it became the executive HQ of Allerdale District Council. The RDC had bought Fairfield House to move into, but the war prevented this. (The house was the food office for the duration.) After the war it was considered inadequate, hence the move to Holmewood and the sale of Fairfield House. In 1987 there were ambitious plans to concentrate several of Allerdale's departments at Holmewood, a £4.8 million scheme of building and conversion. There was much controversy regarding this plan and finally the new HQ was developed in Workington, Allerdale vacating Holmewood in 1991. The house was sold the following year for £455,000 to become a privately-run residential home.

There are a number of substantial residences in the town - 18th century dwellings such as Brougham House and Manor House in St. Helen's Street, Challoner House and Tye House at opposite ends of Challoner Street; Hames Hall (early 19th century), Bridge

End House and South Lodge (1831); and comparatively recent buildings such as Wyndham House and Elmhurst.

Chapter 37

Roads and bridges within the town

There have been many changes in the names of roads in the town centre and in this summary we travel westwards along the spine of Cockermouth, noting the side roads as we pass.

'Sanct Elyns Gaitt' appeared in 1540 (Capella Sancte Elene as early as 1342) and by 1578 we have St. Helen Street. 'Butts Fold' on the south of S1. Helen's Street (Fig. 45) possibly owes its name to the time when crossbow practice was compulsory on holy days, but may mean an awkward and unploughable bit of land, from 'butt', the old word for such a piece. The Butts Fold public path was closed by the UDC in 1922 because it was in a bad state and there was no money for its repair, but it has recently been reopened and linked with a new right of way by the old rope walk into Kirkgate square.

'Kirkgatestreete', the 'church road', derived from the Norse 'kirkja' and 'gata'. 'Kirkgate' was once the name not only of the present road but applied also to Skinner Street, Scarwell Brow and the road to Little Mill, the land beyond being Kirkgate Common. Eastwards from Holly Square at the top of the present Kirkgate ran Long Croft, now Windmill Lane, connecting with Waste Lane, Bellbrigg and the very ancient road to Embleton.

'Ye Merket Place' of 1578 was sometimes referred to as 'High Street' [1] Castlegate was 'Castle Street' in 1737 and other early references. All this area of the town was also known as 'Above Bridge'. Park Lane above the castle, derived from Cockermouth Parks, was changed to Isel Road fairly recently.

'Below Bridge' became 'Main Street'. The yards off Main Street, Market Place and S1. Relen's Street were usually named after their owners, Birbeck Went originated from Joseph Birbeck and Strickett's Court from Joseph Strickett, and Wilson's Court, Bank's Court and Irving Court are similar examples. A change of owner sometimes led to a change of name. Denton' s Court derived from Charles Denton about 1800, but later became Herbert's Court until changed to Allerdale Court some twenty years ago.

Examples still remain of development in the industrial revolution of the late 18th. and early 19th. centuries when several owners of the large Main Street houses built a row of workers' dwellings down their long burgage plots. Some remain almost unaltered, e.g. Banks Court; others have been developed, such as Cockton's Yard and the Old King's Arms Lane; yet others have been demolished, as Lindsay's Court.

The modern Challoner Street was Chandler Lane in 1775, Globe Went in 1800 and Chaloner Lane or Kitty Went in 1832.'Kitty' was slang for the lock-up or goal, 'went' Middle English for a passageway or path. At the end of Challoner Street was Back Lane

or Cross Went, now South Street, the southern limit of the town. This provided a route from the Long Croft area to the west, by-passing the town centre. (Fig. 40).

The bank of the Derwent was for long known as 'The Sands', open land at one time also extending 'above Cocker foot' along the bank of the Cocker. [2] Waterloo Street was still referred to as 'on t'Sand' in 1912. [3] By 1775 development along Sand Went (High Sand Lane) had begun to spread round the corner and by 1832 both sides of Waterloo Street were built up. Property on the south side was often at the foot of the Main Street gardens and in some cases property in the two streets still has the same owner. Wood has on his 1832 map Sand Went, High Sand (Waterloo Street) and Sullard Sand Went (Low Sand Lane, once a way to Graves Mill from Main Street). In 1737 it was Sullerd Sand, in 1785 Sulloth Sand and in 1811 Sulwath Sand Went. [4] The second syllable probably derives from 'vao', a ford, presumably the crossing of the beck from the F airfield tarn which crossed Main Street to enter the Derwent here.

On the other side of the main road Sullart (earlier Sullert and Sulwarth) Went led to Back Lane. [5] Sullart Street is shown as Gallowbarrow on a map of 1800. The name appears as 'Gallabargh' in 1578, from the OE 'be(o)rg' for hill, later modified to 'barrow'. [6] The way to the gallows on the hill was past the present Highways Depot to Lamplugh Road, Gallowbarrow Brae on the 1863 OS map.

Unfortunately the OS map of 1900 marked this as Sullart Street, from Main Street to the railway, with Gallowbarrow passing Fairfield Schools, since when there has been confusion of the two names. Originally Below Bridge (1775). Street below the Bridge (1840) and Main Street (1832) covered the length from Cocker Bridge to Derwent Bridge, but Crown Street had appeared as the name of the western section by 1863. Crown Street was once known as 'Scratgate'. [7]

Station Street is a comparatively recent thoroughfare, not opened through until the 1860s and developed by the New Street Company as an approach to the new station. It was originally blocked by buildings along Back Lane (including the General Sunday School). (Fig. 49). In 1875 the editor of the West Cumberland Times was enthusiastic about the noble auction marts, the elegant shops and the new public hall then being built. He gave his opinion that when completed Station Street would be "one of the prettiest streets to be found in any country town", marred only by an old barn used as a warehouse still standing at the top end. [8] Not all would agree with a later editor's view of W. H. Smith's new shop (in 1979 Cumberland House) when due to be opened in 1927

> *"It is in the Elizabethan style of architecture which is peculiarly appropriate to an old to\\,l1 like Cockermouth. It is in distinct contrast to the other premises in Station Street, which are of the severe Victorian order."[*9]

When Earl of Egremont, George O'Brien gave land for the New Road to link the top of Castlegate with the tollbar at St. Helen's. [10] There was an earlier track along this line,

from the castle to the bridleway from the top of St. Helen's Street over Watch Hill to Ise!. In 1866 Askew commented

> *"The new road from the top of Castle Street to Sti. Helen's gate is the chief promenade, being fully three quarters of a mile in length."*

Still known as the New Road in 1912, it is now Castlegate Drive and 'New Road' has passed to that which runs from Station Road by the West Cumberland Farmers depot to the Cocker - and formerly to Rubby Banks mill

Main Street once had an appreciable slope, the natural fall of the land towards the Derwent. The footpaths were raised and widened in 1925 and until the 1960s there were stepped kerbs along the wide portion by the Mayo monument. There is a pavement two feet below the present level of the yard behind No. 72 on the north side, [11] showing that the building and paving level has been raised appreciably over the years.

The roadway used to be surfaced with stones from the Derwent, worked down by the cart wheels. In 1874 the local press stressed the need for the footpaths to be flagged, commenting that they were "roomy but gainfully rugged". The inevitable objection of cost arose - it would cost £96 to flag from Station Street to the statue and rates were already excessive at 2s-2d. However, a start was made on this portion late in 1874.

There were other obstructions in Main Street besides the hiring fairs. The editor of the 'Times' wrote in 1874

> *"At Cockermouth the corners of our most erowded thoroughfares may be blocked all day long by groups of gaping idlers, without fear of molestation from the guardians of order, while the pavements of Cockermouth are diligently kept free of little girls with skipping ropes. I think our police might properly transfer some of their attention from the little innocents at their hannless play to the lazy loungers at Station Street corner ... [he then digresses to point out that as skipping uses all muscles, produces symmetry of fonn and buoyant healthfulness it should be encouraged.] ... But I can find no possible excuse for the idle groups who habitually block our street corners. They are not, artistically speaking, ornamental objects, and am sure the quoins of that excellent hostelry, the Brown Cow, are finn enough without any support of theirs."*

This was the West Cumberland Time's first year and it was apparently being taken seriously, for a fortnight after the above comments were written four men were in court for obstructing the Main Street footpath at Sullart Street corner and forcing churchgoers on to the road! [12]

Waste Lane and Bellbrigg Lonning, mentioned above, formed a route from the eastern end of the town to Embleton and Lorton. (Fig. 67). Now covered by housing estates, it is difficult to imagine it some 70 years ago when Bolton wrote

> *"The present footpath from the Waste Lane to the Windmill Lane goes in just over the beck and winds along the brow overlooking the beck and the orchards, and it strikes the Butts Fold path at right angles. There is no prettier little bit around Cockermouth than this footpath along Bitter Beck when the fruit trees are in blossom and the old hawthorn hedges full ofmay, but it is terribly neglected by the town's authorities!"* [13]

Waste Lane and Windmill Lane were improved in the 1850s and the latter widened when the new Lorton Road was made. The rockery at the Kirkgate corner was made in 1938 on the site of a demolished building. Also on this side of the town, there was dispute about the maintenance of Simonscales Lane (or Papermill Road) and at an enquiry in 1844 one witness referred to a turning from this road which led steeply down to Simonscales Wath across the Cocker, a route used by carts and pedestrians and across which he had brought lime from Eaglesfield. [14] It required the construction of the A66 to take the macadam surface another third of the way along Simonscales Lane.

The road to the south-west from the town was once Kittyson Lane, now between two sections of the auction mart, which was marked 'Road to Egremont' on the 1775 map. There were considerable alterations to the road pattern in this area when the railway was built.

In the first half of the 19th. century] 5 of the town's 17 streets and lanes were passable by carriages. A system of street cleaning began as a town concern when the Lord of the Manor appointed a scavenger, possibly in the 17th century, an appointment which was linked with the lease of Little Mill. The task was considerable when sheep, cattle and horses stood in the streets for sale. The dung and refuse was the property of the lord. The scavenger was responsible for the scraping of the streets and the refuse thus collected was left in heaps, sometimes for days, until collected for the lord. Similarly house ordure was sold to farmers and, until rules were laid down for its collection, might lie in the streets for a day or more.

From an early date owners and occupiers had to repair their frontages. In 1689 the Court Leet ruled

> *"that every freeholder, tenant and inhabitant within Cockermouth from Cocker Bridge to the head of the town shall before Michaelmas next sufficiently mend their fronts before every one of their doors and so to the middle of the street - one adjoining another by paving of the same, and we do appoint Mr. Rich. Lowry and Mr. Tolson to begin to pave and repair their said fronts accordingly before 21st. March next, and that they the next adjoining shall so pave mend and repair their said fronts accordingly within that time under a penalty of £1-19s-11 ½ d."*

This was a very clear instruction, with a definite time limit, and the highest penalty that the court could impose and recover. Having begun with the east of the town an order

was made in 1692 for the rest, so that the whole was completed in 1693. This was followed up the next year by a Court Leet byelaw

> *"That all the pavement within the borough that hath been lately paved be weekly by every owner thereof and particularly on Saturday nights be made clean sub poena 1s."*

It was a continuous problem to keep the streets free of rubbish and obstruction

> *1677 "It is put in pain that Phillipp Standley remove his stones from the head of Kitty Went sub poena 6s-8d" [According to the church cess list Standley was a freeholder of substance]*
>
> *1689 We order that H. Curwen, Esq., and Mr. Lowthcr or their fanners or tenants do keep clean and weekly cleanse the lane between the King's highway & the stone bridge at the foot of Church stairs."*
>
> *1691 "It is put in pain that Thomas France shall not lie any manure in Gallowbarrow sub poena 6s-8d."*
>
> *1692 "It is put in pain that no butcher or tanner or any other p'son doe lye any beast or sheep skins or any noysome thing which brings dirt or filth thereto under the Town Moote Hall or Stairs sub poena 3s-4d."*

This was not only a problem of the 17th. century. A vestry of 7th August 1856 resolved

> *"that a Committee to consist of 12 persons be appointed the Nuisance Removal Committee for Cockermouth to carry into execution the powers of the Nuisance Removal and disease Prevention Acts." Also "that John Adams be appointed the Sanitary Inspector at a salary of 5 shillings per week from this day for the space of two months, and that he be directed to purchase Lime and whitewash brushes to lend to poor persons to whitewash their houses."*

Whitewashing was not done solely for appearance but to eliminate pests and infection, and incidentally to increase light in houses crowded in narrow courts and yards.

1813 saw a new measure introduced, the "letting to repair the Streets belonging to the Township of Cockermouth for the term of seven years". Eleven years later the Vestry considered appointing a surveyor and John Benson, the largest landowner in the town and a man with practical knowledge of draining and roadmaking, agreed to be assistant surveyor for a few months without salary. Then in 1826 an assistant surveyor was appointed at a salary of 15s. per week. [15] Road maintenance became more and more important during last century as reflected in the costs of the county council for road and bridge repairs - £465,000 for the whole of the period 1839-75, but up to £29,000 for one year in 1890. [16] By this time the first cars were appearing, some with iron studded wheels to prevent skidding, a device which tore up the surfaces. [17] Council minutes of

the early 1900s record three claims by motorists for damage done to their vehicles by tar spraying in Castlegate and in 1912 eight council workmen were paid 5s. each to replace their clogs destroyed in tarring roads. [18]

At the turn of the century more roads were being paved - High Sand Lane and Market Street at about 6d. per yard; Fitz Road, indicating housing development; and in 1925 Main Street reconstructed. Gravel for road work early last century came from Brewery Field, now Kirkbank. The period 1930-5 was one of major road activity, including a consideration of Rubby Banks in 1932, one of a number of occasions when its adoption as a town road has been turned down.

On 28th March 1887 a meeting was held at the Globe to consider planting trees in the town centre. Subscriptions totalling £71-16s. were received and Peter Bum, a nurseryman, was appointed to supply and plant 100 lime trees, to provide soil and manure, and to renew the pavement and fix guards for £45, the iron guards for the young trees to be supplied by W. Robinson of Fairfield ironworks for £32-lOs. [19] They were planted early in November that year. Complaints were made in 1909 that they were over-pruned and from 1920 onwards pruning was left to the discretion of the cemetery curator, at that time Mr. Kirkbride. [20] Cockermouth was very incensed when in 1987 Allerdale D.C. drastically pruned the trees in Main Street, choosing a half-term holiday when the town was full of visitors.

About 1979 the last three of some twelve trees in Station Street were felled, being considered an obstruction to traffic, Recently parking bays have been made and a limited number of trees planted.

The first street lighting was by oil. Then eleven men were appointed as inspectors and in 1834

> *"It was resolved that the Inspectors shall be authorised to light the Town with Gas for the next three years for an expense not to exceed the sum of Eighty-four pounds in each year. And that the number of lights shall be not less in number than at present and continue as long lighted."*

At a meeting three years later to consider the amount allowed the inspectors it was

> *"resolved that the Town shall be lighted, and that the Gas Company be paid the sum of one hundred and thirty pounds for 62 lamps to be kept lighted until the hour of four 0'clock in the morning for the next three years to commence from this day."* [21]

In 1845 it was decided

> *"that henceforth during the remainder of the contracts with the Gas Company the Lamps be kept lighted until daylight except during moonlight, and that the*

rate of fourpence in the pound upon houses and of one penny upon land be now agreed to upon the above conditions."

The next year they reverted to dusk until four o'clock. [22]

For many years there had been talk of a by-pass for Cockermouth. The main road through the town was taken over as a trunk road, the A66 being extended westwards from Penrith to Workington. This was a help to ratepayers as the increasing volume of industrial traffic passing through the town to and from West Cumberland made maintenance heavy. Trunk road status did not however solve the problem of congestion, especially that of the Castle gate bottleneck where lorries cannot pass one another. The first by-pass scheme was for a route north of the town and we have seen that the position of Walker's factory was determined by the suggested road line. Largely on economic grounds, especially the cost of overcoming the steep rise east of the Derwent, a southern route was decided upon. A detailed line was fixed by the beginning of 1971. [23] There were objections to the upgrading of a road through the National Park and arguments were put forward for the development of a route using the Carlisle road and passing through Sebergham. A public enquiry was held and the scheme for the present route upheld.

The Cockermouth section, by Tarmac Ltd., was opened without ceremony on 25th June 1976, the length on the Workington side of Fitz Cottage the following spring and the portion eastwards to Braithwaite a little later in June 1977. [24] The route of the old CKP Railway was used for much of the way.

The construction was quite an event in the life of the town. For a time traffic problems were made worse by convoys of lorries passing along Main Street carrying slag from the steel works at Workington to road building east of Cockermouth. Some 400,000 tonnes of material were brought from this source and from quarries and a very much larger quantity moved along the length of the road from cuttings to embankments. [25] The building of the three-span bridge over the Cocker aroused much interest. A caravan village arose on the Lamplugh road and its residents will be remembered by many for the bonfire and firework display to which the town was invited on 5th November 1975, held on the beginnings of the approach to the Cocker bridge on the new road.

The 35 miles ofA66 improvement from near Workington to near Penrith were estimated to cost £30 million. It is interesting to note that in 1931 a by-pass scheme for Keswick was shelved, a road which would then have cost £26,000.

The new roadway has not only benefited West Cumbrian industry and relieved Cockermouth and Keswick of congestion which was reaching breaking point, but it has made Cockermouth accessible to an increasing number ofvisitors by linking the town by a fast route to the M6 motorway.

A further road development is the Papcastle diversion, built to relieve the congestion at the Derwent Bridge corner, the wear and tear of heavy loads on the bridge and to avoid Gote Brow by connecting the A66 at the Fitz Cottage junction west of the town via a new bridge over the Derwent and a road west of Pap castle and north of Belle Vue to the Carlisle road by the entrance to Wood HalL Begun in December 1989 it was completed in June 1991.

In spite of the by-pass and the link road traffic in the town centre remains heavy. Some alleviation has been provided by the recent making of a mini-roundabout at the Sullart Street corner by Wordsworth House, thus considerably reducing queues in Sullart Street of traffic wishing to enter Main Street or Crown Street. Further changes occurred arising from the arrival of Sainsbury's supermarket in 2002. The scheme included Station St one-way southwards, traffic lights at the junction of Station St and Lorton Road, and at the top of Gallowbarrow, traffic-calming humps in Gallowbarrow/Sullart St., three pedestrian crossings in Main Street. Initially there were problems especially for delivery lorries finding themselves directed up Lorton St and then trying to come down Kirkgate - damage to the properties exiting onto Market Place occurred on several occasions. There is also now a weight restriction for the town, which means that loaded HGV should not be passing through it unless delivering in town. Disc parking was introduced in September 1991, and in 2004, traffic wardens - appeared under the control of Allerdale Borough Council. Their strict application of the rules with an automatic £30 fine has led to much disgruntlement and many a visitor saying he will never return to the town.

The town has coped well with some Main Street upheavals. The main sewers were laid about 1866. Investigation showed that they were worn out and now needed to be of much greater capacity. They were renewed in 1987-9 and a system of sinking shafts connected by underground tunnels (complete with railways!) ensured minimum interference with surface traffic, The cost was about £2 million. The sewage works were extended in 1986-7 at a further cost of £1.5 million. Another unusual interference with normal town centre life was the filming in 1991 of Melvyn Bragg's 'A Time to Dance', centred on the Midland Bank and the clock-tower former Savings Bank building opposite. In addition to the confusion of visitors when 'Midland' occasionally disappeared and became the 'Cumbria Bank', the town was concerned that Main Street was emptied for filming, with the result that in the final product Cockermouth appeared deserted.

Fitz cottage, demolished when the new A66 was constructed, was the toll house west of the town. Another turnpike cottage also demolished was at the foot of Gote Brow. East of the town the gate at Town Head in St. Helen's Street was later moved out to the junction of the Higham and Embleton roads and became St. Helen's Gate, while that

which stood in Kirkgate by the Friends' Meeting House was moved out to just on the town side of Rose Lane on the Lorton road, retaining the name Kirkgate.

At a town meeting in October 1975 [26] twenty footpaths within the town boundary were listed. Some fifteen additions to the definitive footpath map of routes regularly used by the public were suggested. Concern was expressed about the loss of use of three former rights of way. Until the building of Fairfield Junior School there had been three gates into and two paths across the Fairfield. The right of the Urban District Council to have sold the land was challenged

> *"It was never theirs to sell. It was always used as a public drying place and as a playing field. There were gates at each end of the path, which were never locked and it was used by the public as their right for as long as anyone can remember."* [27]

The gates had been locked at one time. In 1905 the gate on to Kittyson Lonning was opened and locked by the park keeper as he went to and from the park and another gate into the field was locked at 5.30 on weekdays and 1.00 on Saturday. [28] One Fairfield path is about to be restored, from the car park through the school grounds on to Sullart Street.

A second loss was the right of way from Tweedmill Lane past the remaining buildings of the tweed mill and under the railway bridge to link with the riverside path. There are varying theories as to when this path was closed. As far back as 1901 the UDC decided there was no right of way and when seven years later an approach was made to them by the Cockermouth Visitors' Association they upheld that decision. [29]

Thirdly, it was once possible to walk along much of the town bank of the Derwent, a bank much widened now by gravel from dredging. This new land has been appropriated and fenced by some property owners. The possibility of reopening this path is being investigated.

Another lost right of way went from Quaker Bridge below Croft Mill to the archway under the Midland Bank. The bank erected a gate which they sometimes locked, then it remained locked and the route was permanently closed. [30]

In the 1970s the Civic Trust considered the opening of a right-of-way along the former railway track from the eastern end of the cemetery to Fitz Cottage (now the junction of Low Road and the Papcastle link road), where there was a triangle of land by the river suitable for a picnic area. Unfortunately the Trust failed to make any progress with British Rail. Responsibility for road bridges over the track was a major problem. Then in 1990 came hope when the projected path appeared in the South Allerdale Plan. With the involvement of the authorities came power, money and expertise. The West Cumbria Groundwork Trust was asked to make a feasibility study and following this,

with their own staff and the help of volunteers, they had by 1994 produced the Cockermouth Greenway. This is a high-grade walkway and cycleway, with several access points and provision for wheelchairs and prams. An outstanding feature is the railway viaduct over the Cocker, the views up and down the river now opened up, where before the bridge walls were too high to see over, and with two mosaics depicting life in Cockermouth. Unfortunately the development of Lloyds Motors on the Low Road curtailed the western end, but the existing length is much used, both for pleasure and for shorter and traffic-free access to the town from surrounding housing estates.

As we turn to a consideration of the bridges in the town we may note first two very simple ones on the approaches to the church. Skitter Beck (so named from the Old Norse for filth, 'skit', and later renamed Bitter Beck) was still an open stream in 1775. [31] Until early last century the beck was forded at the lower end of Kirkgate, the road being very narrow and much lower than at present. Pedestrians used a wooden footbridge continued as a raised causeway as far as the church gate. [32]

This was repairable by the Vestry, as witness a minute of 1744

> *"We, the Surveyors of the Highways and vestry now present, do agree that the street called the Causeway and Kirkgate be paved."*

The other crossing of the beck which led to the church was a footbridge at the bottom of the Church Steps, later buried beneath Church Brow. Market Street, leading to the Brow, was sometimes known as Church Street. Both crossings were frequently referred to in vestry minutes.

Not until 1879 did Cumberland appoint its first road surveyor. In 1881 he took over the county bridge roads (the 100 yard stretches) and by 1887 had also taken responsibility for most of the bridges, so that highways and bridges at last came under one control.

The 1832 map shows the Kirkgate end of the length of bee-x from here to the Cocker culverted and by the tithe map of 1840 it was covered all the way to the river. Responsibility for bridges was increasingly taken over by the county, roads and minor bridges being left with the towns and parishes. In 1665 the county had 32, including Derwent, Cocker, Ouse, Isel, Deepe (Scale Hill) and Lorton in this area. The number rose to 141 public bridges by 1753 [33] The 'undertaker', later the bridgemaster, was responsible for the bridge and 100 yards of roadway on each side. As wheeled traffic increased their maintenance became more important and the King's Bench Court ruled in 1795 that they should be made wide enough for carriages to use them.

Cocker Bridge was rebuilt in 1828, at a cost of £2,600 which included the expense of removing houses to widen the approaches. The old bridge was about 15 feet wide with low parapets and so steeply humped that it was possible to build the present one underneath it. When ready for completion by the insertion of the key stone the Cocker

rose and brought down the new masonry, but after a further attempt the bridge was completed and the old one on top blown up to remove it.

> *"Samuel Fletcher, landlord of the White Ox, father to the present Mrs. Rowlands, of the Spur Inn, was the last foot passenger."* [34]

John Bolton relates that his father had seen the mail coach cross the Cocker at Cass Bay, the wath at the foot of Cocker Went or Cass Bay Brow where Quaker Bridge was later erected. It may have been during the rebuilding of Cocker Bridge that the mail used this route. 'Cass Bay' is a term applied to the whole of this stretch of river, which possibly originated in the widening at the ford by the water extending up the slopes, especially into South Street.

The footbridge which replaced this crossing, known variously as Cocker Lane Footbridge, Jubilee Footbridge, but usually now as Quaker Bridge, was opened on 21st June 1887, Jubilee Day, less than three weeks after the laying of the foundation stone on 2nd June. The cost was £129-6s-3d. [35] -Josiah Hall, one of the Quakers largely responsible for the bridge, opened it immediately after the laying of the foundation stone of Victoria Bridge, pointing out that the Local Board had turned down the plans two years earlier but had since changed that decision. The bridge was replaced by the existing new one in 1984.

The ford at this point was only closed in the 1930s. When the council first proposed this there was some opposition, but a request from 12 residents in nearby property that it be closed for safety resulted in it being fenced off. [36]

The Victoria Jubilee Bridge just mentioned provided a much needed access to the station and the auction mart from across the river without having to use the narrow lower end of Kirkgate and the congested area of Market Place and Cocker Bridge, although traders in those areas objected to the opening up of the new route. [37] A public meeting in the Court House, resulting from a letter in the West Cumberland Times, decided to proceed with the scheme at an estimated cost of £1,130. The actual cost was higher than this figure. The foundation stone was laid by Mrs. Waugh, using the customary silver trowel, and Jubilee coins of 2s-6d., Is. and 6d. were placed in a cavity. [38] The bridge was built by Lister, McCartney and Lister of Cockermouth.

Still further up the Cocker, a footbridge crossed the river from Rubby Banks Mill. This was a private bridge which gave access to the mill's tenter field. It was also used by golfers going to the course which existed on the eastern side of the river before the Embleton course was opened.

On 29th March 1973 Councillor Roy Potts, chairman of the UDC, opened Double Mills footbridge, [39] a graceful and much-used link between the two sides of the Cocker. The UDC had considered a bridge in the neighbourhood of Rubby Banks in 1946 and the

Cockermouth and District Angling Association asked for one as far back as 1922. This £20,000 structure carries water, power and sewerage services to the new estates, gives access to the housing developments east of the river, enables those on the west to use the riverside path to Lorton and links the two sections of Harris Park.

At the foot of the Cocker the first Waterloo Bridge was opened on 18th June 1887, the 72nd. anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. Early maps show roads leading down to the river on both sides at this point, so there was presumably a wath or ford. This structure, costing £288, most of which was subscribed by the Castle Brewery, was strong and plain, a utilitarian erection enabling commerce to cross from one side to the other - barrels from the cooper in High Sand Lane to the brewery (hence the popular name • Barrel Bridge') and later the buses from the County Garage on the Castle side to and from their loading points in Main Street. Lister, McCartney and Lister again did the masonry and W. and J. Herbert, whose foundry adjoined the site, the ironwork. The bridge was opened by Mrs. Mitchell from a carriage standing in the middle of the bridge. This new link, one of three Cocker bridges started or completed in 1887, was a help to trade in this area and a benefit to many of the 70 men who worked on the castle side of the river. [40] The stanchions of the bridge had brewery barrels in relief on them. In 1896 the bridge was severely damaged by floods, but the brewery paid for repairs and strengthening done by Herberts. [41] In 1918 floods brought down a tree which broke the brewery end and repairs took a year. During floods at August Bank Holiday weekend in 1938 a tree lodged against the centre support of the bridge and debris and flood water built up until most of it was carried away. The remains of the central support may be seen when the river is low. The tender of Dorman Long of Middlesborough to demolish the remains and erect a new bridge for £2325 was accepted in August 1939, [42] but the outbreak of war prevented rebuilding. After a long interval the present narrower footbridge was opened by the head boy of Derwent School in April 1963. The Cumberland Engineering Company of Whitehaven cleared the old remains, put in new stone abutments and erected the bridge. This was completed on a Friday. During the weekend the Cocker washed the supports away. Consequently the stonework on each side was raised another 18 inches and the bridge, retrieved from the river, re-erected at a higher level. [43]

Travelling down the Derwent, a metal footbridge of two arches covering 195 feet, opened in 1875, was solely for the use of Harris's employees, but it became a route much used by the general public. It was renewed in 1981.Lastly, Derwent Bridge is one of the two oldest in the town. Preceded probably by a Roman bridge below Papcastle, it is not known how many have been built on this site; possibly four, for there was one in the 14th. century. The immediate predecessor of the present bridge was only some 10 or 12 feet wide. [44] Probably there was an earlier one of pack horse type, too narrow for wheeled vehicles. When the river is very low old foundations and wooden stakes may be seen. In about 1822 the two-arch bridge was erected at a cost of £3,000 [45] and when

the river was cleared of gravel in 1936 to lessen the risk of flooding in the Gote area the chance was taken to increase the flow under the bridge by building three square arches to take flood water at the north end. Ironically the town had a serious flood two years later, but conditions in the Gote were better than they would have been before 1936. [46]

Two aspects of traffic control in the town persist. The town now has pedestrian crossings(first considered by the UDC in 1934 and deferred) - usually very well observed by motorists, and traffic lights. Complaints are heard regarding parking difficulties and car park charges, but 60 years ago, when there were no car parks, it was suggested that there should be no street parking at all, that Fairfield should be used and that a charge be made of Is (5p). There was immediate reaction - Market days only, short stops to be allowed in the streets, etc. [47]

A feature of the town plan prepared by Johnston and Wright was the construction of a relief road within the town to run southwards from Derwent Bridge and curve round using the old railway line to the top of Station Road, thence by the existing Lorton Street and Victoria Road to the top of Kirkgate from where a new road would follow a route behind the Quaker Meeting House and across St. Helen's Street to some way up Castle gate Drive. Main Street would be closed to traffic near its western end and Castlegate would become a pedestrian way. Nothing has been done to implement this plan.

Chapter 38

Population

Until the national census began in 1801 reliable population figures are impossible to ascertain. We know that there were some 160 names in Cockermouth in 1215, and that the population rose during the 12th, 13th and 15th centuries, with declines in the mid-14th and 16th centuries. [1] Fluctuations were caused by economic factors, by outbreaks of plague, etc.

In 1641 Cockermouth had 256 adult males, from which we can estimate a population of just under a thousand. There were 235 houses in the town in 1714, but an estimate of the population cannot be made from this figure as houses frequently held more than one family, as in 1801 when 690 families lived in 417 houses. [2] By 1785 the population had risen to 2652 in 663 families.

From 1801 figures are more definite:

1801- 2865 1851- 5775 1901- 5355 1951- 5203

The doubling of population in the first half of last century followed a national trend. Recent figures show greater growth in Cockermouth than in Cumberland:

1951 – population 5203

1956 – population 5310 increase of 2.1% - the County increased by 1.2%

1961 – population 5810 increase of 9.4% - the County increased by 2.2%

1966 – population 6140 increase of 5.7% - the County increased by 1.5%

1971 – population 6350 increase of 3.4% - the County increased by 2.2%

2003 – population 8270 increase of 30.2%

The change in the Rural District around Cockermouth has been very drastic, 19,530 in 1950 falling by almost half to 10,866 in 1962, partly because of boundary changes. [3]

The drift from the area is no new development. Over 100,000 people left the county in the period 1841-91, partly offset by Irish immigrants, and in 1877 the press commented that over 100 born and bred in Cockermouth left every year to work elsewhere. [4]

The registers of Cockermouth began in 1632, those of Lorton in 1538, Brigham 1563 and Embleton 1625. At times entries included a man's trade or his status - bachelor, gentleman, yeoman, etc., and are thus a useful source of infonnation, and fairly reliable conclusions may also be drawn from the figures for baptisms, etc.

The following figures [5] give some idea of the growth in population

1636-46 - 414 baptisms - 121 marriages - 272 burials

1781-91 - 685 baptisms - 175 marriages – 663 burials

1842 - 143 baptisms - 32 marriages - 128 burials

Added to these must be an estimate of the number of dissenters who did not use the church and in doing so account must be taken of the dates of dissenting movements. Quakerism, for example, would affect the second and third lines above but not the first. It is estimated that about 1800 there were 30 Quaker families in the town and some 120 other dissenting families, so that the register figures are about 25% too low. [6]

The average number of baptisms for the period 1783 to 1802 was 69 per year, which, applying the correcting factor of 25%, gives a birth rate of about 30 per 1000. The sex ratio was 106 males to every 100 females. This may be compared with the 1968 figure for Cockermouth of 16.6 (ratio 104 to 100) and for Cumberland of 15.1, the lowest ever recorded for the county. [7]

Illegitimate births appear to have always been high in Cumberland. Over the years 1842 to 1872 they hovered round 11%, while the figure for England fell from 6.7% in 1842 to 5.9% in 1872. There was then a drop for the ten years 1879-89, about 8% for the county compared with about 5% for the country, [8] but this trend did not continue. Even in earlier times there was little difficulty in ascertaining illegitimacy figures, as illustrated by a register of deaths entry of 27th March 1800

> *'James, a bastard ofold Murgatroyd's, 1 year."*

The reason for the county's high rate cannot have been farmservice, for Devon with similar arrangements had a very low rate. Nor did the system of indoor service appear to be the cause, for Norfolk with no living-in custom had a high illegitimacy rate. Mixed working in houses and fields may have been an important factor. Figures dropped when the railways opened and people left hiring fairs earlier to catch the last trains. [9]

Turning from birth to death, in spite of the conditions at the time of the Cockermouth Improvement Bill and in spite of outbreaks of typhoid, etc., we seem to have fared well compared with other parts of the country. Mannix and Whellan supported their comment of 1847 that

> *"Although this town is in a low situation, and at the confluence of two rivers, it is, nevertheless, exceedingly healthy, as is evident from the bills of mortality" [*10]

with the fact that of the 114 districts into which the country was divided for record purposes the lowest mortality rates were in Anglesey, Cockermouth and the Isle of Wight. [11]

Nevertheless infant deaths were very high by present standards. In the early years of the 18th century one in four died before the age of two, some years being abnormally high,

e.g. 61 infants in 1731 compared with 96 adults and 48 in 1736 compared with 82, [12] probably reflecting epidemics. In the years 1874-5-6 26.1% of the total deaths in the district of the Cockermouth Union Rural Sanitary Authority were of children under one year old, compared with 24% for England and Wales for the period 1861-70. In the same periods 41.9% died under five compared with the national 41.1%. On the other hand, having survived childhood some people lived reasonably long lives - in 1811, 1 in 10 of those dying and 1 in 62 of the population were over 90. [13]

In the late 1700s and early 1800s it was usual to give the cause of death in the register entry and these throw some light on life at the time. In the middle 20 years of the 18th century, for example, 'poverty' was a very frequent cause, but as the mills were built and industry developed in the later years of the century this entry almost disappeared, for more work meant more food.

The causes of death in 1770 have been researched [14] and compared with 1970, as in the following table:

> *Degenerative Diseases (Chronic heart, lung and kidney disease, etc.) was stated as the cause of death in 43% of deaths in 1770 and 63% of deaths in 1970*
>
> *Disease due to infections was stated as the cause of death in 39% of deaths in 1770 and 4% of deaths in 1970*
>
> *Malignant Disease was not stated as the cause of any death in 1770 but as the cause of death in 18% of deaths in 1970*
>
> *Accidental Death was stated as the cause of death in 2% of deaths in 1770 and 4% of deaths in 1970*

Malignant diseases were not recognised as such at the earlier date and many who died from this cause would be placed in other categories. In 1770 the maternal mortality rate was about 10 per 1000 births, compared with the figure for today of between 0.1 and 0.2. [15]

Overall the death rate has been more than halved in two hundred years. The rate for the period 1784-1802 was 27.2 per 1000. In 1970 it was 12.6 for Cockermouth and 12.4 for the county.

The most dreaded killer was plague in its various forms. Black Death is estimated to have killed 1Yz of the country's 4 million people in 1349. Of these 2,500 were in Kendal [16] and, with plague so near, it is unlikely that Cockermouth escaped. A few years later, in 1361, there was an outbreak in the Carlisle area which was probably the Black Death and plague ravaged Cumberland in 1598. [18] There would almost certainly be other epidemics of which we have no record.

The outbreak about which we really have some knowledge is that which broke out in Cockermouth in 1647, although it is not known whether it was bubonic plague, spotted fever or enteric. 191 of the population of about 2,000 died in that year of what Rev. Robert Rickerby called "the visitation".

The burial figures for this period are [19]

1640 38 burials

1641 36 burials

1642 20 burials

1643 20 burials

1644 20 burials

1645 23 burials

1646 26 burials

1647 191 burials from plague, 8 from other causes

The entries read

"The Visitation began in Cockermouth July 3rd. 1647 whereof and in wch tyme these dyed:

(1) Isabell ye wife of Xtopher Fletcher was buried July 3rd. day.

(2) Thomas Bolton July 6th. day.

(3) Katherine ye wife of Vaile July 11th. day.

(4) Michael Bunt(e)inge July 18th. day."

For the remaining 187 there are no dates, just names and relationships, such as

Numbers 81-87 Frances Benson, Lucy his wife, Margarett Willm.Biggrigge, Jane Benson their servants.

Numbers 163-168 John Dalton, Agnes his wife, Henry, Willm., Isabell and Anne his children.

Three or four deaths in a family were common and seven families were completely wiped out. The pressure of events at times prevented the keeping ofproper records. The Rev. R. Rickerby wrote

"By reason of the Sickness and the Seige diverse baptisms were neglected to be registered in due course but as many as gave in their children's names are set down ...."

It is difficult for us to realise the atmosphere in the town in a time of plague. Defoe described the conditions in London during an outbreak and the weeping and depression in Cockermouth would be similar. Life in the town would be more or less at a standstill. The dead would be collected and buried uncoffined in a pit. When produce had to be

bought from outside the town it and the money would be exchanged on open land, the coins being placed in water by the purchasers to be picked up by the sellers. There are traditions that the burial place was somewhere on the river bank or in a field at Round Close Hill. [20]

Askew records an outbreak in 1659 when 197 died in four months, but this may be a confusion of the 1647 outbreak with the date in the carving on the lintel of God's Providence House. There were later epidemics ,in the town in 1731 and 1736-7.

Three or four hundred years ago there was no one name characteristic of the town, as in some of the villages [22] but from the town's registers Davies-Shiel has extracted some interesting figures. In 1634 and 1635 there were no new names recorded, but there were 38 in 1636 and 18 or 19 in each of the following three years. By the 1660s they had fallen to 1 or 2 a year. These new entrants often came from far afield - Cornwall, East Anglia, London, the Midlands, etc. The numbers would presumably be greater than those given, for a name would only appear in the register for a birth, marriage or death and not all newcomers would immediately appear for one of these reasons. This influx coincides with the development of mining activities in the surrounding area.

Surnames were often associated with the place of residence of a family. The Bassenthwaites of Bassenthwaite became extinct in Edward II's reign, the Dovenbys of Dovenby in Henry Ill's. The Hughthwaites of Hughthwaite and the Tallentires of Tallentire had died out by 1500. The Eaglesfields of Eaglesfield had gone by about the mid-16th century, the elder of the heiresses marrying Humphrey Senhouse of Nether hall. [23]

Chapter 39

Famous individuals

A surprising number of men and women born in or near to Cockermouth have achieved fame in a wide variety of fields. In the space available it is impossible to do more than mention briefly some of these, leaving the reader to refer to full biographies of the better known.

William Wordsworth (1770-1850)

On entering the town we are greeted by the sign 'Cockermouth : Birthplace of William and Dorothy Wordsworth' and the poet is the first to come to mind when thinking of Cockermouth' s famous sons. [1] On the death of his mother when he was eight William was sent to Hawkshead School and it was here that he wrote his first verses as a school task. Of Hawkshead he said "One of the ushers taught me more Latin in a fortnight than I had learnt the two preceding years at Cockermouth." In 1787 he entered St. John's College, Cambridge, graduating four years later. An enthusiastic republican, he toured France about the time of the revolution, returning home in 1792 and leaving behind Annette Vallon to have their daughter Caroline. There is strong evidence that he would have brought Annette to England but for the outbreak of war with France.

He lived in the Isle of Wight, with little money, and in order to become independent of his relatives' charity decided to study law and meanwhile to keep himself by writing political articles for the press. However, his friend Raisley Calvert died in 1795 and left him £900 to cultivate his poetical talents, whereupon William gave up law and went to live with his sister Dorothy in Somerset. It was here that he began his friendship with Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Together they produced 'Lyrical Ballads' in 1798, which was not a financial success. He also wrote 'The Prelude' about this time, an autobiographical work which contains many of his references to Cockermouth but was not published until after his death. After touring Germany he and Dorothy moved to Grasmere in the last year of the century. In his successive homes of Dove Cottage, Grasmere Rectory, Allan Bank and Rydal Mount, William continued to write, becoming increasingly involved in the group of poets known as the Lakes School. His struggles against poverty and adverse criticism were helped by his appointment in 1813 as distributor of stamps for Westmorland at £500 a year and by an increasing recognition of and demand for his work. He had, in 1802, married Mary Hutchinson of Penrith and they had five children in the next eight years. Dorothy continued to live with the family. Increasing recognition brought financial rewards - an annuity of £100 from Sir George Beaumont to pay for a yearly tour and £800 from Lord Lonsdale to enable him to buy a small estate at Patterdale. Durham and Oxford made him an honorary D.C.L. in 1838 and 1839; he became poet laureate in 1843 when Southey died, an appointment which carried a pension of £300 for life; and about this time he resigned his post as stamp

distributor in favour of his son. William died on 23rd April 1850 and is buried, with other members of his family, in Grasmere churchyard.

The eldest son, John, became vicar of Brigham in 1834 and his son, another John, followed him there. The local press reported that the younger John was fined £1 in 1874 for correcting a Sunday School boy for misbehaviour with the aid of an umbrella. [2] During his life William continued to visit Cockermouth, especially while his son was at Brigham, and in a letter of 1807 Dorothy wrote

> *"Wand M. have just returned. Tbey were at Coekermouth our native place you know, and the terraced walk that you have heard me speak of many a time, with the privet hedge, is still full of roses as it was thirty years ago."*

He still visited the house where he was born and took an active interest in the affairs of the town, such as an unsuccessful scheme to provide a new church in 1836. Several of his writings express his affection for Cockermouth.

> *" .....what benefit I owed*
>
> *To thee and those domains of rural peace,*
>
> *Where to the sense ofbeauty first my heart*
>
> *Was opened, ... "*

Earl Mayo (1822-1872)

Standing prominently in the middle of Main Street is the statue of Richard South well Bourke, the sixth Earl of Mayo, but known for most of his life (until his father died in 1867) by the courtesy title of Lord Naas. [3] He was the eldest often in a Protestant family, born on 21st February 1822, and said to be descended from William Fitzadelm de Borgo who governed Ireland in 1066.

He was an accomplished rider, a clever shot and a good swimmer. In politics a moderate conservative, he served in Parliament for 20 years - 1847-52 for Kildare, 1852-7 for Coleraine and 1857-68 for Cockermouth, following here Henry Wyndham who transferred to be MP for the western area of the county.

Lord Mayo held office in the Derby and Disraeli governments, being Chief Secretary for Ireland in 1852, 1858-9 and 1866-8. His policies were conciliatory, especially in Ireland, and Queen Victoria spoke highly of him and his work when he died in 1872. He was very active in relieving the Irish famine of 1847.

His representation of Cockermouth resulted from the link he formed when on 31 st October 1849 he married Blanche Julia Wyndham, the third surviving daughter of the first Lord Leconfield. They had seven children.

In 1869 Mayo was appointed Viceroy and Governor-General of India, a governorship which was soon brought to an abrupt end by assassination. On 8th February 1872 he inspected the convict prison near Port Blair in the Andaman Islands. He had been heavily guarded all day, but leaving after dark he was stabbed when on the pier and fell into the water. On being helped out he remarked "I don't think I am much hurt", but died shortly afterwards. His assassin, Shere Ali, was a native of the Kyber Pass area, serving a sentence for murder, and said God had ordered him to kill the enemy of his country. The Indian Government paid an annual pension of £1000 to the Countess, to which the British Parliament added another annual £1000, and India awarded £20,000 to the children.

The statue is reputed to be a good representation of the Earl in his viceroy's robes. The figure is nine feet high, carved from a solid block of Sicilian marble by W. & T. Wills of London, and the pedestal on which it stands is twelve feet. The cost of £800 was raised by public subscription.

The unveiling was planned for the first week in June 1875, but there was a long controversy regarding the site. One plan was to place it at the corner of Station Street and Main Street, narrowing the footpaths on the corner to allow more room round the statue. There was a suggestion to place it on the old bowling green at the castle, but this was not seriously considered. A position in the widest part of Main Street was finally chosen, £30 being spent on making it wider still by curving the footpath parallel to the houses on the south side. [4]

In May it was reported that the statue was finished and ready for erection and that lifting gear would be brought to the site in mid-August. Then early on a Thursday morning in July word passed round the town that the statue was up. Crowds flocked to Main Street from all over the town to discover a white image of George III surmounting the granite pedestal - an old ship's figurehead borrowed from a Cockermouth garden! The true Mayo arrived by rail on 13 August, was hoisted up on the 16th and unveiled by Lord Napier and Ettrick on the 19th. [5] (Plate 18).

The unveiling was made the occasion of a town celebration, [6] beginning with a procession from the Market Place. Lord Napier was supported by other dignitaries, who with subscribers to the fund occupied stands erected in the street, and by several thousand townspeople. A public lunch in the Agricultural Hall was presided over by the Earl of Lonsdale. Later in the day there was tea for 1300 children on the Castle Lands at 5 p.m. and dancing on the bowling green from 4 p.m., with Chinese lanterns lending a festive air. To ensure that everything proceeded smoothly, 30 extra police were drafted into the town for the day!

'Mayo' was run into a number of times over the years, but never so violently as early one morning in 1964 when two tankers were racing through the town and one hit the statue.

Mayo fell to the ground and broke into several pieces and every block of masonry except the lowest was displaced by the force of the impact. The statue was put together and re-erected, but not without the odd voice that now was the chance to remove a traffic hazard to some other site. Miraculously, the tanker driver lived. (Plate 19).

John Dalton (1766-1844)

As Deborah Dalton lay in a humble Eaglesfield cottage giving birth to a son [7] in 1766 she little thought that 78 years later 40,000 people would file past his coffin. Deborah came to Eaglesfield from Caldbeck when she married (at Pardshaw) Joseph Dalton, whose grandparents had been first generation Quakers.

Joseph came of yeoman stock and was a home weaver; Deborah, a woman of character and energy, augmented the income by selling paper, ink and quills in the porch of the cottage. They had six children, three of whom reached maturity.

The boys received their first education from their father, John later going to John Fletcher's school in Pardshaw meeting house premises. When Fletcher discontinued his school Dalton opened one in Eaglesfield when twelve or thirteen years old, first in a bam, then in his home and finally in the Eaglesfield meeting house. The weekly school pence brought him about 5s. a week and he augmented this by selling paper, etc. John attracted the attention of an able Eaglesfield Quaker Elihu Robinson, who gave him further lessons in mathematics and instilled in him a life-long interest in meteorology. A cousin had a school in Kendal, in which he was helped by John's older brother Jonathan. John gave up his school after about two years and turned to farming, but when the cousin died and Jonathan took over the Kendal school he left farming to become assistant to his brother. He was now about 16. In Kendal he formed a close friendship with John Gough, a blind Quaker scholar immortalised by Wordsworth in 'The Excursion', a man versed in Greek, Latin, French, mathematics, chemistry, medicine and philosophy. In addition to teaching in the school, Dalton gave public lectures on natural philosophy, kept meteorological records, contributed articles to magazines and carried out observations on his own body. He thought of training in medicine to earn more money, but while hesitating because of the length of the Edinburgh course he successfully answered an advertisement for a teacher of mathematics and philosophy at the Manchester New College. He moved in 1792, now aged 26, and lived at first in rooms over the college library. Six years later he left the college staff to undertake research in chemistry, supporting himself by private teaching. He made many friendships with leading scientists and was offered several tempting and lucrative posts, but these he always refused in order to pursue his own work. He gave numerous lectures [8] including 116 papers to the Manchester Literary and Philosophical Society, of which he was secretary, vice-president and, for the last 27 years of his life, president.

It was to this Society that he made the first communications of his atomic theory, for which he is best remembered. To the same Society he related his researches into his

own colour blindness, a disease for long known as 'Daltonism'. His eyes, which he left for rese~rch, are among the Dalton relics of Dalton College, founded by Quakers as a hall of residence in Manchester University.

Dalton never married, although he was chivalrous to women and formed a number of warm friendships. He always retained his Cumberland accent, had a deep gruff voice, was blunt and outspoken but kind and helpful, lived very simply and never forgot his friends of early years. He enjoyed nature and music. He climbed Helvellyn over 30 times, the last time when he was 70, making observations and collecting samples of air at different heights. In 1844 the Lit. and Phil. made him a presentation for his zeal and perserverance in making over 200,000 meteorological observations in some 52 years. He was now in failing health and died eight days later.

Manchester Quakers made efforts to give Dalton the simple funeral he would have liked, but the city insisted on a public one. 40,000 people filed past his body as it lay in Manchester Town Hall, where there is a mural painting of him collecting marsh gas and his statue is in the main entrance. The funeral procession of a hundred carriages stretched for a mile.

Many anecdotes could be told of this very colourful character. One typical of his honesty and kindness relates to a student who had missed one lecture of a course but asked for a certificate of full attendance. John refused to issue it, but added "if thou wilt come tomorrow I will go over the lecture thou hast missed".

He refused a knighthood because he would not bow to any man, even the king, but he did accept honorary degrees from England and the continent and was a Fellow of the Royal Society, which granted him its gold medal. William IV awarded him a pension of £150, increased in 1836 to £300 a year. When presented to William IV he wore his scarlet doctor's gown instead of court dress and sword (but it would not appear scarlet to John, more a bottle green). Visiting Eaglesfield some time after this presentation (he often returned to Cumberland, as the plaque outside the Globe Hotel testifies) John Fletcher asked him about his visit to St. James's.

John told him that the King had said "Ah! Dr. Dalton, how are you getting on in Manchester?", a reference to the Battle ofPeterloo; to which he replied "Well, I don't know,just middlin' I think". A horrified Fletcher said "Why, John, thou hardly showed court manners in addressing the king in such common parlance". "Mebbe sae" replied John, "but what can ye sae to sichlike fowk?".

Fletcher Christian (1764 - c.1794?)

Fletcher Christian [9] was born on 25th September 1764 and travelled to Brigham School by pony before entering the Free Grammar School at Cockermouth. His birthplace, Moorland Close, is more than 300 years old, the house and farm buildings

enclosed within a wall for defence and entered through an arched gateway which once had strong folding doors.

Fletcher went to sea when quite young and at the end of 1787 was appointed chief mate on the Bounty, under its captain William Bligh, a man of similar age. The ship was fitted out by the British government to go to Tahiti to collect bread fruit trees and take them to the West Indian colonies. Arriving at Tahiti in October 1788 they were ready to leave six months later with 1015 plants, but the crew had become demoralised by the long stay in such a luxurious island and angered by Bligh's treatment of them. Christian suffered most abusive insults from the captain one day and determined to leave the ship by raft during the night, trusting to be carried to land. He was unable to put his plan into effect and the following day, 28th April 1789, when 24 days out from Tahiti, a quarter of the crew mutinied. This was a quick decision of minutes only and Bligh and 18 of the crew were set adrift in the ship's launch, in which they travelled 3,600 miles before landing at Timor on 14th June.

The mutineers returned to Tahiti where most wished to stay, but Christian was anxious to leave to avoid punishment by the government. Eventually Christian and some of the men and their Tahitian wives settled on Pitcairn, a small island 2 ½ by 1 ¼ miles.

Meanwhile 14 of the mutineers who had stayed initially on Tahiti when the others left for Pitcairn were arrested by the navy after Bligh had reported the events on his return to England, but only three were executed as the rest escaped. Bligh led a further expedition for bread fruit trees, this time successfully, and in 1806 became Governor of New South Wales, where his continued tyranny resulted in him being deposed and arrested two years later.

What did happen to Christian? One theory is that he was killed with others after four years on the island. Another that he was seen in Devonport and visited his family in Cumberland about] 808, but this is very doubtful. What is certain is that descendants of the mutineers visit Moorland Close today, anxious to see the leader's birthplace.

Fearon Fallows (1788 -1831)

A cottage in Low Sand Lane, facing the side of Words worth House, has a tablet which reads

> *"In this house, in the year 1788, was born Fearon Fallows, MA., F.R.S., late fellow of St. John's College, Cambridge. H. M. Astronomer. Died at the Cape of Good Hope, 25th. July 1831."* [10]

In this cottage father John Fallows wove shalloons for a living. When Fearon was only five he astounded his father by his powers of calculation. After attending school in Brigham he worked at home, helping in the family weaving, until at 19 or 20 he became assistant master at Plumbland School.

Fearon's ability, especially in algebra, attracted the attention of clergy and gentry in the neighbourhood and they subscribed to enable him to matriculate and enter St John's in 1808. Here he was a contemporary of Palmerston, Herschel and Playfair. He obtained his RA. when 24, being third wrangler, following Herschel as first and Peacock, later Dean of Ely, as second. For two years he had a mathematics lectureship in Corpus Christi College. He was a Fellow ofSt. John's and in 1818 became Moderator (the principal examiner in mathematics) in the University.

Fearon was appointed director of an observatory to be built at the Cape of Good Hope and set sail in May 1821 with his wife, Mary Ann Hervey, the eldest daughter of the vicar of Bridekirk. He directed the building of the observatory and incorporated a small chapel where he held a service each Sunday. He suffered from sunstroke, scarlatina and dropsy and latterly was carried in a blanket from his bed into the observatory.

In spite of his early death Fallows made a considerable contribution to astronomy, cataloguing the principal fixed stars seen from the Cape and listing 142 new ones. In Askew's opinion,

> *"As a mathematician and general scholar, Fallows was the greatest man Cockermouth has produced. His knowledge ofalgebra approached the marvellous."* [11]

Dr. John Walker (1759-1830)

Approximately on the site of the Conservative Club in Main Street there was at one time a blacksmith's shop where, on 31 July 1759, was born John Walker. [12] After attending the Free Grammar School he helped in his father's smithy for five years, then went to Dublin. He had become interested in engraving and in the period 1780-3 did several plates for the Hibemian Magazine. Part of his time in Dublin was spent in running a school, but he also travelled widely to prepare a geography and universal gazetteer. This was published before John was thirty and ran through six editions in twenty years. He accompanied Sir Ralph Abercromby on his Egyptian expedition.

Walker moved to London before the end of the century because it was cheaper to print books there, and now the whole pattern of his life changed. In 1799 he qualified as a doctor at Guy's Hospital and became interested in vaccination. For the rest of his life he was a keen supporter of Jenner's campaign. Admitted to the College of Physicians, Walker was for 17 years Director of the National Vaccine Board, of which Jenner was president, and with a colleague introduced vaccination in the near east.

A simple, earnest man, direct in his thought and with liberal ideas, he associated with the Quakers and adopted Quaker dress; but he never officially joined Friends because he was not certain that his faith was sound. He was one of the pioneers against slavery and worked also to arouse public opinion against the Indian practice of sacrificing widows on their husbands' funeral pyres.

John Walker died on 23rd June 1830, a "great apostle and martyr in the cause of vaccination".

Abraham Fletcher (1714 - 1792)

In 1714 was born Abraham Fletcher, [13] one of seven children of a Little Broughton pipe maker. His education was short - three weeks, when he was very young - and he became a pipe-maker like his father. Becoming dissatisfied with pipe-making he began to educate himself, retiring in the evening to a tiny room above the porch of the house. He married when young and both his wife and his family were very opposed to Abraham's interest in learning. This was not because his family suffered, for he never neglected his manual work, and indeed his wife Mary, a woman who talked a lot, thought little and smoked a clay pipe, changed her attitude when she realised there might be more money in teaching than in pipe-making.

Abraham first mastered reading and writing, then turned his attention to arithmetic. He progressed so well that he became the village schoolmaster when 30. His studies included the writings of herbalists and his knowledge of botany made him the village doctor, with a fame far beyond Broughton for the power of his remedies, kept in bowls and bottles or hanging from the beams of his home. From botany he went on to astrology and acquired a further reputation for telling the future by studying the stars.

It was, however, in mathematics that Fletcher really made his mark. In 1753 his "Universal Measurer: the Theory of Measuring in all its various uses, whether artificers' works, gauging, surveying or mining" was printed in Whitehaven. This 600 page volume was described by another mathematician, John Howard, as "the largest and best collection of mathematical knowledge ... that has hitherto appeared in the English language". Nine years later followed "The Universal Measurer and Mechanic, a work equally useful to the Gentleman, Tradesman, and Mechanic, with copperplates" .

Fletcher died when 78, having achieved wide fame as a mathematician and renown in his own county as 'doctor' and astrologer. He was buried in the Baptist burial ground in the village where he had been born, leaving savings of £4000, a very large sum for those days.

Edward Waugh and Neddy

Edward Waugh was Cockermouth's last member of Parliament while the town remained a separate constituency. He is remembered less for his parliamentary work than for 'Neddy', the clock erected in his honour at the junction of Main Street and Station Street.

The Waugh Memorial Fund was opened to honour the town's solicitor and last M.P. and in January 1893 purchased land west of the Congregational Church, extending from Main Street to the Derwent, for £450 and it was hoped the council would erect a library

here. The library did not materialise until the turn of the century, and meanwhile a scheme was put forward for a memorial

clock. [14] There were delays because of arguments about the site - should it be placed in the Market Place or at Station Street corner, where the council were concerned that it might interfere with the town sewer ! In April the committee decided to go ahead with the clock scheme although the site was not yet fixed, ordering from W Potts and Sons of Leeds a 40 feet high column [12 m], the clock to have faces 4 feet by 3 feet [1.2 m x 0.9m] and a two-hundredweight bell to strike the hours, the whole to be in iron, bronze and gold. A wooden structure was erected on the Main Street site to give some idea of the project. Eventually the memorial was erected here and 'Neddy' became one of Cockermouth's most prominent features.

However, as the motor age advanced Neddy became a traffic hazard, especially as it was not centrally placed in Main Street which made it more difficult: for cars to get round it.

In May 1932 the Council decided the clock must come down and two months later suggested a new public clock. [15] By late August Neddy had gone, the dials and movement sold to a Leeds man for a mere £4-10s. The Council decided to fix the explanatory plaque from the clock to the front of the Court House and to place the bell and a large photograph of Neddy in the library.

James Duffield (1835 -)

A man who found his way to this area as owner of Tallentire Hall was born at Tipton in 1835, one of the fifteen children of a poor banksman who earned 3s. or 3s-6d. [18p] a day at a colliery near Dudley. James Duffield [16] had no schooling, working in the coal pits or ironstone mines of the Earl of Dudley until he was 16, starting when seven as door-boy diverting the air in the mines. He had several accidents, sometimes being insensible for days at a time, and in a period of nine months his father and four older brothers were all killed at work, leaving James the eldest of the family. When 20 he married, signed the pledge, and began to educate himself by attending Mechanics Institute classes. After several years in Staffordshire and Sheffield Duffield became a puddler at Cammell and Coo's new forge, rising to night foreman when only 26 years of age, and five years later to day manager in the armour plate mills and puddling forge. After a further five years, now 36, he was chosen from 40 as manager of the new Dronfield Steelworks which achieved a reputation for Bessemer steel rails. He decided on Workington as a suitable site for the firm with its access to ore, harbour and railways and transferred the whole undertaking from Yorkshire.

Duffield was a well-respected and much-loved man in the fifteen years he spent at Tallentire, serving on the Workington Town Council, as County Councillor and as Chief Magistrate

The Denwood Family

The first member of the Denwood family [17] to settle in Cockermouth is reputed to have come in 1745 from Charles Edward's rebel army. The first written record is of John Denwood, Dainwood or Danewood being buried at All Saints on 27th April 1786. The well known members of the family have been John (1845-1890), Jonathan M. (1869-1933), John (1871-1917) and Ernest R. Denwood. (d. 1950s).

The first John had a chequered career. Born in a two-roomed cottage in Skinner Street, since replaced, he was an only son. For a time he played leads in Shakespeare, etc., with a group of strolling players in northern England and southern Scotland, but the company was unsuccessful and John returned to Cockermouth to work as a tailor. He was a generous man and soon got through his money_ In the early 1870s he went to Barrow, hoping to find work in the growing shipbuilding town, and later tried London, Bradford, etc. Very poor, he tramped back to Cockermouth ill-shod and ill-fed (a threepenny loaf lasted him three days) with only a few coppers in his pocket.

He was seriously ill, but recovered sufficiently to try to find work in Texas in the early 1880s with his friend John Conkey, but work was hard to come by and he was often unwell so eventually returned home again. Then improvement came. He found work in Bumley, where he was happy and decided to take his family. However, returning to Cockermouth he died from paralysis of the spine and was buried near Tom Rudd Beck in the cemetery.

John left behind a number of writings - in 1869 his 'Poems on various subjects', printed by Isaac Evening of 59 Main Street and sold for Is.;'Boggle Willy's Adventures between Cockermouth and Lorton' in 1877; 'The Cumbrian Brothers or How we raise the Revenue' in 1885; and 'Curnbrian Carols and other poems'. Many local places and characters featured in his poems, especially the first volume from which some verses from 'Kirkgate Brow Boggle' are given

"Twas on a stonny night.

(True is the tale I tell),

Young Bella got a dreadful fright

While going to Scarr Well.

O'er Kirkgate Brow she had to pass,

All, save the stonn, was still,

And, Oh! she got a fright, poor lass,

When just on Kirkgate Hill."

The next few verses tell ofher fear, ofher flight home and ofher father's dash from the house armed with cobble stones to deal with the cause ofher terror.

"In vain he list'ning search'd around;

But soon the tempest's howl

Arous'd a horrid whistling sound

That shook his very soul.

He thought the noise came from the dike,

Or bushes on the wall;

His courage fail'd, and, coward-like,

He let the cobbles fall.

His flesh, now shudd'ring, crept with fear,

For oh! he thought of death;

And dreading that the ghost would hear,

He scarce durst draw his breath.

A while he silent, trembling stood,

Then, desp'rate, made a rush;

The' quaking terror chill'd his blood,

He grasped the thorny bush.

And with the bush he grasp'd the host,

But oh! it made him roar;

He nigh his right hand fingers lost,

And smeared himself with gore.

For he a broken bottle snatch'd,

That lay across a bough;

The gusty winds the neck hole atch'd,

And loudly whistled through."

Memoirs of this John Denwood were published by his son E. R. Denwood as 'The Cumbrian Caroller' in 1936.

Jonathan is remembered for the novel 'Red Ike' written in collaboration with S. Fowler Wright. It brought him fame when he was suffering a long illness after a hard life. The second John wrote dialect poems and the Cumbrian dialect was the chief interest of Emest R. Denwood.

Joseph Faulder (1730 1816) and the Cockermouth School of Portrait Painters

Joseph Faulder, who was to become the 'father' of the Cockermouth School of Portrait Painters, [18] was born in a house adjoining the King's Arms Inn. He was described as

> *"a man of much local celebrity as a portrait painter, mathematician and philosopher; his remarkable attainments being all self-acquired. He is stated to have been a most excellent person both socially and morally; but on the mysteries of a future state and the immortality of the soul, he was strangely sceptical"* [19]

Faulder's nephew Joseph Sutton was born 32 years later in the same house as his uncle, who taught him to paint and encouraged him to go to London and study at the Royal Academy. This he did, and on his return and after his marriage, moved to Rogerscale where he built himself a painting-house in a delightful situation on the banks of the Cocker. He became a member of the Royal Academy and one of his best known studies is 'The Blind Beggar of Bethnal Green and his Daughter'. So great was the demand for portraits by him that at one time he employed six apprentices George Sheffield, Robert Taylor, Robert Hird, Thomas Scarrow, John Lewthwaite and Mr. Askew. Two of these exhibited at the Royal Academy and George Sheffield studied in its school.

The Cockermouth School was an unusual development in such an isolated situation. It existed from about 1760 to 1840 and included in its group Faulder (1730-1816), Sutton (1762-1843), Taylor (about 1811-1870), Lewthwaite (active 1830-1866), Scarrow (active 1831-3) and Sheffield (1800 1852).

Surprising is the fact that most of the group were Quakers, at a time when painting and other arts were frowned upon in the Society of Friends. The births of Joseph Sutton's parents are in the Quaker records, also their marriage at Cockermouth and Joseph Faulder's birth. One of Sutton's portraits was of George Fox, founder of the Friends, but as Fox died in 1690 this cannot have been from life.

Writers and Poets

In addition to those already mentioned there have been others from the Cockermouth area known for their writings. O.S.Macdonell, who married a member of the Harris family and retired from abroad to Papcastle, wrote two novels with local settings- 'Thorston Hall' and 'George Ashbury'. Robert Barnes, born in the town in 1782 and a connection of the Denwood family, published a book of verse. Isaac Wilkinson (1753-1836) was born at the eastern end of South Street. A classmate of Fletcher Christian and a cousin of E. R. Denwood's paternal grandmother, he was also a poet. His birthplace was in a narrow court near the Cocker, approached through a massive wooden door which led to John Pearson's woollen mill. [20] At the former Blue Bell Inn in Main Street was born about 1777 John Whitelock, who became a clergyman and wrote both prose and poetry. [21] John Fell was born in the town in 1735. He rose to become an eminent dissenting minister and wrote on a variety of topics, including English grammar and the idolatry of Greece and Rome. [22] From outside the town came Thomas Tickell (1685-1740), born in Bridekirk Vicarage. He entered Queen's College. Oxford, when 15 and was a fellow at 23. He served under his friend Addison as an under-secretary of state. He also wrote poems. [23] John Hudson, born at Routenbeck in the first house on the right from the Pheasant Inn, entered Queen's at 14, became a classical scholar, author and Doctor of Divinity, and when he died in 1719 aged 57 was principal of St. Mary's Hall. He is buried in the chancel of St. Mary's Church at Oxford. [24]

Born in Wigton in 1795 and dying in Tasmania in 1886, John Woodcock Graves, writer of 'De yer Ken John Peel', was believed to have lived with his uncle, when a young man at the 'The Lamb' in Challoner Street However, it appears that the 'Lamb' was occupied by the 'Grave' family and not the 'Graves'. In Woodcock Graves own biographical notes, he refers to living in the inn, opposite Joseph Faulder, (of the Cockermouth School of Painters) and it therefore seems likely that he resided in Main Street. Short visits to the town were paid by William Harrison Ainsworth, who spent a week at the Appletree in 1848, [26] and Hall Caine, who had many holidays in a house opposite the Globe. [27] Robert Louis Stevenson describes his stay at Globe in his 'Essays of Travel'. [28]

Industrialists

Most of the industrial leaders of Cockermouth have already been mentioned. We may add Isaac Fletcher of Tarn Bank near Greysouthen, much involved in the iron and coal trades, but also an astronomer and historian and finding time to be a Liberal M.P. and to serve as first president of the Cockermouth Scientific and Literary Society. He wrote in 1876 the first study of industrial archaeology, 'The Archaeology of the West Cumberland Coal Trade'. [29]

Extending the term 'industry' to agriculture, William Dickinson who was born near Mockerkin invented the Cumberland clod-crusher. He was a writer, botanist and geologist. [30]

On the other side of Cockermouth, Whistling Syke near Broughton was built in 1708 by a potter who was related to Josiah Wedgwood. [31]

Miscellaneous

A number of local men and women travelled far in the early days of Quakerism [32] James Dickinson of Greentrees near Randlecross visited Ireland twelve times, America twice and also Germany and Holland for the Society of Friends. He died in 1749 aged 82 and was buried in Eaglesfield Burial Ground, having been a Quaker 'minister' years. John Burnyeat, born at Crabtree Beck by Loweswater in 1631, although little educated, travelled in Great for Britain, the 64 West Indies, America, and Ireland where he died in 1690. William Graham, a native of Mockerkin, was described by Jonathan Harris as "One of the greatest scholars in England". Educated at St. Bees, he was a mathematician and also mastered eight languages, yet he lived very simply as head of Dean School. [33]

The town and villages had their share of colourful characters, outstanding amongst whom was Salathiel Court, born in Papcastle at the end of the 17th. century and described by Askew as a joker, wastrel, painter and illegal marrier, following a strange and wild career. [34]

Rather outside our area Robert Eaglesfield was bom at Allerby, but he enters the story of Cockermouth as the founder of Queen's College, Oxford, in which several Cockermouth boys have become students. Eaglesfield Scholarships are granted to students from the county. Robert became rector of Brough and confessor to Queen Phillippa, and it was in her honour that he named the college he founded. [35]

Recent 'Characters'

In the early part of this century a number of colourful characters travelled round Cockerrnouth and the villages selling their wares. Such was Mrs. Allan, a "grand old lady well known and respected". She was pure Romany and for a silver coin would tell fortunes, but this was not her real trade. Mrs. Allan was virtually a travelling bazaar, for in a huge basket balanced on a flat cap she took to the villagers ribbons, lace, dusters, towels, tapes, threads, elastic, baking tins, etc. [36]

'Dearham Mary' who lived in the Gote hawked rubbing stone for marking steps and stone floors with fancy designs. [37]

'Freddy Cairns' was well known in West Cumberland. His jingle ran

> *"Gather up your rags and bones, gather up, gather up,*

For your windmills they will fly,

Take you up into the sky.

Gather up, gather up." [38]

The windmills were toy ones given in exchange for rags and bones.

E. R. Denwood recalls a character of an earlier time held up as a warning to children in his childhood that if they misbehaved "Drummer Robin will come". Of 'Robin' the church register records

> *"Robert Atkinson, of Lamplugh, late of this place, skinner, who for a period of 40 years or upwards beat a drum about this town, morning and evening, for which he acquired the familiar appellation of Drummer Robin, by which he will long be remembered by the inhabitants, died July 4th. 1800."*

He was remembered a hundred years later as a threat to the naughty!

In contrast a great favourite with both boys and girls was Jimmy Millington [39] who would relate his major exploits to an enthralled audience. On one occasion he was asked to play football for a Derwent Street team against one from St. Helen's Street. The match took place in Deer Orchard. Jimmy kicked the ball with such force that it was lost over the Drill Hall. Some time later, according to Jimmy, if was found lodged inside All Saints Clock!

Chapter 40

Recent years to 2006

Seeking to update a volume completed in 1979 the author had been amazed at the changes and developments in the following sixteen years, Where possible these had been inserted in the relevant parts of the original text. Some new material however did not fit into the earlier pattem in tourism, twinning, the Civic Trust and the Kirkgate Centre, sport, the town festival, new entertainments and leisure pursuits, etc. These had been grouped in sections in this chapter. This approach has been continued in this 2006 update. Much more could be written about all of them, but economy demands constraint. There is constant change in change on Cockermouth, indicative of a vibrant community.

TOURISM AND MUSEUMS

For many years Cockermouth did not favour the development of tourism, not wishing to have problems of crowding, traffic, etc. experienced by towns nearer the centre of the Lake District. With the loss of employment, such as that provided by Miller's shoe factory for many years, this attitude has changed and since the 1990s great efforts are made to bring people to the town and to provide for them when they get here. Many of these provisions are of course of benefit also to the residents.

In 1985 the Brewery had plans far advanced for a museum of brewing and of the local history of the brewery area of the town, to be housed in Foundry House and the windmill. The plans did not reach fruition as the use of the various buildings was changed. However there are regular guided tours of the brewery. The offices were also moved from the row of former houses which was then demolished. The distribution department of Jennings moved to a new site on the coast, considerably relieving the pressure on this congested area. In 2005, Jennings was bought by Wolverhampton and Dudley Breweries, and despite assurances about the future, worries about the consequences of a takeover were inevitably around.

Nearby in Banks Court a doll museum opened in 1985. It soon left Cockermouth for the south of the country but by then it had been joined in 1986 by Rod Moore's toy museum which continued as the Cumberland Toy and Model Museum, extending from the old warehouse into the former joiner's premises (before that a mineral water factory). In 1995 it received national acclaim with the 'museum on a shoestring award' but sadly closed in 2005 when the proprietor was unable to raise additional funds to cover even running costs. Also nearby is the Castlegate Gallery of contemporary fine art and sculpture, housed in the Georgian Castlegate House opposite the castle entrance, started in 1987 by Mike and Chris Wadsworth. Visitors come from a very wide area to visit the continually changing exhibitions, many not seen at provincial galleries. Also at this end of the town a Heritage Museum for the town is being developed in the new

Kirkgate Centre; and the Tourist Office puts on small exhibitions. At the other end of the town is D.R.Winkworth's Printing House Museum opened in 1993 with an outstanding collection of printing presses and related artifacts. In Harford House, the former clinic, Mr and Mrs Creighton had a mineral museum and shop from 1991, but closed it in 2003 to depart for New Zealand.

Allerdale [Borough Council] planners left the town hall in November 1991. The following year the Town Council moved the Tourist Office into the ground floor from the cramped conditions of the former armoury just below on the riverside. In this attractive and spacious centre it is still possible to see the gallery and pillars of the 1841 church.

FESTIVALS

In August 1981 D.R. Winkworth organised a week-long Wordsworth Festival, which continued in following years as a broader literary festival. From 1985 to 1989 organisation passed to the town's Civic Trust and the programme was again broadened, to include (in addition to lectures) music, drama, craft demonstrations, exhibitions, town tours and castle visits. Then Mr. Winkworth again directed the programmes with the help of many individuals and groups in the town and since 1993 the overall planning has been undertaken by the Town Clerk. Attendance at lectures in the early years was disappointingly low. To remedy this various times were. tried in July, August and September and a further experiment was to spread the week's events over two weeks. Now it has settled to a July festival with a wide range of events, strong involvement in the events by much of the town and a better response to what is offered. In April 2005, to mark the re-opening ofWords worth House as a Georgian experience, a Georgian Fair was held in the town in abysmal weather.

Its success nevertheless led to the repeat of this in 2006, when the weather was good; it is intended to run this as a two-yearly event, out of phase with the highly successful Whitehaven Maritime Festival.

SPORT

There have been a number of improvements and changes in the town's sports facilities in recent years. After much effort the running track at Tarn Close on the Lorton road was opened in 1980. Cockermouth Rugby Union Club moved from their Laithwaite ground to the playing field of the former grammar school, opposite Tarn Close. The swimming pool was opened by Princess Alexandra in May 1978, the climax to the efforts of a group of enthusiasts who raised much of the cost. The sports centre in the nearby drill hall was initiated in 1979, with extensions to the facilities in 1985-7. It now includes a climbing wall opened in 1991 by Chris Bonnington. The Cockermouth Cricket Club leased Sandair from 1823 until 1989, when the club was able to purchase the 5-acre field for £25,000.

Three Cockermouth sports clubs celebrated their centenaries in the mid 1990s -Croft Bowling, Harris Park Bowling and the Golf Club, The Rugby Club was '100' in 1977.

There have been notable achievements recently by individuals living in Cockermouth or strongly associated with the town through their families. In 1983 Adrian and Richard Crane raised about £40,000 for Intermediate Technology by running in the Himalayas. Martin Rush represented his country in the walking event at the Barcelona Olympics. Several swimmers have continued the town's high level of success in competitive events.

Recently instituted communal events include a marathon, from 1981 onwards and included in the national sports league events since 1991. The first quadrathon was held in 1981, drawing entries from all over Britain.

In 1993 an exchange of land was suggested, freeing the Wakefield Road football ground for building and replacing it with land at the eastern end of the Derwent Mill land. Amid much confusion and misunderstanding as to which land was involved public opinion led to rejection of the idea.

INDUSTRY

At the beginning of this chapter mention was made of changes in the town's industry since 1980. By 1995 the major employers left are James Walker and Co. Ltd., Walker Bros. builders' merchants, Jennings Brewery and Mitchell's Auction Co. Millers (shoe factory) closed in July 1990 dismissing the last of a diminishing workforce, in spite of an order worth £2.73 million from Russia less than a year earlier. The famous Fred Dibnah felled the mill chimney on 7th November 1992, to his regret, but it was not used and nobody wished to pay for its upkeep.

Thomas Armstrong, timber merchants, vacated their large town centre timber yard and the old station site on Low Road in the late 1980s, moving to more spacious accommodation in Flimby.

James Walker continues, with a progressive forward-looking policy. Jennings Brewery also continues to thrive, with structural alterations in 1995. Lilliput Lane, makers of small model houses, etc., based in Penrith, had a branch on the Derwent Mill site from 1986 to 1991, then concentrated their West Cumbria activity in the Workington branch, which itself closed in 2005. JEM Patchworks, a small concern in St. Helen's Street producing embroidery kits, etc., closed at the end of 1982. Alan Dawson took his metalwork business from the Lamplugh Road / A66 junction to the coast to become the renowned Shepley Dawson company, having appreciable business with the middle east. A short distance from the town the Broughton Moor Arms Depot, which drew some of its labour from Cockermouth, has now closed. After much debate, consultation and fight for funding, an ambitious scheme has been adopted for it as the Derwent Forest Park. If the £25 million required can be found, an exciting leisure facility will emerge.

On the positive side English Estates opened the Lakeland Business Park on the Lamplugh road in 1987, providing small units for high tech businesses. The former grammar school became the Strawberry How Business Park in 1992 but has since become a .housing development mainly using the existing buildings, and the Derwent Business Park near the Derwent Mill followed in 1994.

M-Sport: Dovenby Hall and all its grounds were purchased in 1998 by Malcolm Wilson, a local man who had been the 1994 British Rally champion. The run-down buildings were restored and new engineering facilities developed for the company, M-Sport to run its business of preparing rally cars for the Ford Motor Company for world-wide rallying. With a work-force approaching 200 and a turn over into tens of millions, this company is now a major employer in the area as well as having rescued the estate from decline. The venture received a Civic Trust award for development in sympathy with the area in 2001.

Two final items related to industry. The cottage once connected with the windmill which stood in Windmill Lane was controversially demolished in 1992 to open up the entrance to a housing estate and, more recently, the Job Centre crossed Station Street to new premises next to Mitchell's furniture sale rooms.

SHOPPING

Changes in the occupancy of shops are frequent. Many tenancies are short-lived. Occasionally an old-established firm disappears, such as Rydiards shoe shop, now moved by its new owners to a nearby site in Main Street. Huddarts newsagents, forced to move next door by the 1938 flood, has now crossed the road to the former Rydiard premises. Even the post office moved in 1994 from Station Street to opposite the Globe Hotel. The post office has had four locations in the last eleven years [see Chapter 19]. (Cockermouth lost its own postmark in 1990 with much complaint, to be included in "Cumbria, Dumfries and Galloway".)

There have been several new developments in recent years. In 1986 "Limelighting" adapted much of the Grand Theatre for the sale of lights and related fittings and happily retained in the conversion features of the former theatre. "Luchini's Lane" became the Old King's Arms Lane in 1987, an attractive two-storey shopping development. On the south side of Main Street the closing of Armstrong's timber yard left the way open for a further development - Lowther Went, a shopping precinct approached through the former Bush Hotel yard, with Walter Wilson's super-market and car park, opened in 1988. Both the Old Kings Arms Lane and Lowther Went developments were given awards by Cockermouth Civic Trust for buildings in sympathy with the town as a whole and a number of new shop fronts have received similar recognition, including Lindsay in Station Street, Fellside Sports near Cocker Bridge, Opus III and Heal's opticians.

In January 1995 a public enquiry was held into four applications for super-market developments on four sites either vacant or likely to become vacant - the old station site

(Armstrong's) on Low Road, the Rugby Union field, the County Highways yard and Mitchell's cattle auction buildings. Eventually no doubt helped by a massive (8000) petition, the verdict went in favour of Sainsbury's but progress had to await Mitchell's vacating the site (a decision deferred yet again by worries over the impact of the foot-and-mouth crisis of200l). The old buildings were demolished, the materials were re-used to keep something of the original character, and the new store opened in March 2002. After this, Waiter Willson's declined and was taken over by the Co-op; subsequently these premises were opened by Wilkinsons (hardware and general goods). Another supermarket, Aldi, opened in 1998 on the site vacated by Thomas Armstrong's DIY operation which moved down the road to re-open as the Lakes Home Centre, later sold to Lister's of Workington.

No.35 Market Place, near Cocker Bridge. was until 1953 Ellwood's 'filling station'. The petrol delivery arm swung out from the shop front to the car parked on the narrow roadway. The repairs garage was hidden away near the brewery. In 1991-2 the business moved to the spacious Fairfield Service Station in Station Road. It is no longer owned by the original family.

The Sheep and Wool Centre, built at the A66 Oakhurst roundabout to act as a gateway for visitors to the Western Lake District, has exhibitions, accommodation, cafe and shop.

On Wakefield Road the old MAFF buildings were vacated and redeveloped as the Millfield Veterinary Clinic.

THE CIVIC TRUSTAND THE KIRKGATE CENTRE

The Civic Trust has continued its programme of lectures, interest in planning and town affairs, coach outings, exhibitions (bygones and others).

Pre-Easter litter sweeps continued until 1988 but when Allerdale Council increased its street cleaning these were no longer necessary, so such activity has been in specific areas - tidying up the Double Mills area in Environment Week 1992 to enable features on the site to be seen and 'cleaning' the Greenway in 1995. Other recent practical activities have included rebuilding a collapsed stone wall at the confluence of the rivers and clearing brambles, etc., in National Environment Week 1991.

Allerdale Council responded to the Trust's request to repair the fence at the brewery end of the site, going further by tipping soil to level this end of the area and then grassing it. In the following year, 1992, with the help of a grant and work by the Groundwork Trust, Venture Scouts and others, the wall of the old rope walk opposite the Kirkgate Centre was repaired and the Council contributed by upgrading the footpath to Butts Fold, erecting lights and planting trees. The Trust's outstanding contribution to the life of the town is the Kirkgate Centre. In 1990 Allerdale Council announced plans to demolish the former All Saints School, virtually unused since 1973. The Trust, with other groups in the

town, had for long been concerned at the lack of a hall larger than the Victoria Hall and saw this building as a possible solution. Peter Colley, a member of The Trust's executive with much experience in planning, produced plans for converting the premises, a conversion which he was later to supervise. A crowded public meeting in 1990 was enthusiastic in support. Negotiations dragged on but after many difficulties between the Trust and the Councils, recourse to the Town and Country Planning Act of 1971 and narrow avoidance of a public enquiry, the Trust bought the building for just £5. The enthusiastic Trust secretary, Barbara Colley, obtained gifts, grants from local and national sources, sponsorship, etc. The first grant was for £30,000, followed before the end of 1994 by an additional £170,000. A group to run the Centre was formed, holding its first meeting as the Kirkgate Centre Trust on 14 September 1992. The Civic Trust, on whose monthly agenda 'All Saints' seemed to have featured for a very long time, handed over the building in March 1993 - again for £5! As mentioned elsewhere, the first event on the premises was "Much Ado About Nowt" presented by the CADS in January 1995, since when the building has housed a wide variety of activities. The upper floor of the Jennings Hall, seating 160, is completed, with lift access for the disabled. The lower floor in 1995 still needs money for display cabinets and other museum fittings, as well as material illustrating the history of the town.

TWINNING

In 1983 Cockermouth twinned with Marvejols in the Lozere region of southern France, the agreement being signed on 27 October of that year. This date is celebrated by alternating visits by town officials and others to Marvejols and Cockermouth. The twinning scheme has been a great success, due largely to the enthusiasm of the town clerk, A.D.Bertram. In spite of the great distance between the two towns, in the twenty-plus years since twinning began there have been over 9,000 interchange visits, Some of these have been individuals on holiday, others have travelled in groups October anniversary, choirs, sports teams, schools, cyclists (sponsored Cockermouth to Marvejols in 1992), etc. There are about ten group exchanges each year. Students have found jobs in Marvejols, the French have planted trees and bulbs in Cockermouth and contributed items to Cockermouth Festival, A Cockermouth Corner was opened in Marvejols in October 1993, In Cockermouth a new housing estate to the south-west of the town has been named Marvejols Park.

In 1991 the town was awarded a European Diploma by the Council of Europe and also received a Commemorative Certificate under the Royal Mail International's Twin Town Award Scheme. In the following year, 1992, the town was given a Flag of Honour. On 24 August 1995 representatives of the Council of Europe visited Cockermouth to award a Plaque of Honour in recognition of its efforts for European Unity, Only ten such plaques had been awarded in the rest of Europe and Cockermouth's was the only one in England. The only higher award is the Europe Prize, just one a year, and indeed in 2000,

Cockermouth won this Europe Prize. Awarded since 1955, only three British areas have won it Coventry in 1955, Devon in 1976 and Leamington Spa in 1984.

We may note here the great increase over the last few years in the number of overseas visitors to the town, many ofthem attracted by Wordsworth House.

Chapter 41

The future

What of the future? Certain trends in the likely development of Cockermouth in the next few decades may be discerned.

The first is a great awareness of the town's history - the quality of many of its buildings and the attractiveness of its position and general plan. The formation of the Civic Trust (as the Civic Society) in 1967 was an indication of this, as was the decision of the Urban District Council in May 1972 to seek the help of experts "in determining appropriate planning policies for the future, whether in the form of improvement, redevelopment or clearance" in the central area of the town. Messrs. 10hnston and Wright, chartered architects of Carlisle, produced a full report on the area which, with its photographs, plans, charts and imaginary drawings of development, repays study in detail. One of the outstanding changes which resulted from this report was the rejuvenation of the Waterloo Street area instead of its total demolition. The awareness of the town's value is seen also in the formation of conservation and special conservation areas covering most of Cockermouth except the new estates. Secondly, the town's future is viewed in a larger context. It is influenced by the National Park Plan, recently published, since the Park borders on the town, but is more fully involved in the structure plans for West Cumbria and for Cumbria. There is growing opinion that the town should not extend indefinitely- that housing should be limited to infilling, restoration and the development of a few sites within its present boundaries and that industrial development should be limited and 'light'. These plans are outlined in the draft Cockermouth District Plan issued by Allerdale District Council in March 1978.

Thirdly, tourism is a growing feature of the life of Cockermouth to be provided for and welcomed, but not allowed to get out of control. The completion of the A66 link to the M6 motorway has brought an appreciable increase in the number of visitors to the town. In 1978 the Information Centre had 10,000 enquirers, in 1994 there were 21,231.

The ever-present problem is to preserve as much as possible of a town with a history as interesting and exciting as that we have been considering while at the same time providing for the needs of those living in the present.

In 2006, the Cockermouth Partnership, a local group seeking to improve the economic, social and cultural well-being of the area, sees great potential in what has been called the "Market Place Area". This is under "The Market Towns Initiative" and the regeneration process is managed by a Project Manager. The Partnership have prioritised the area's improvement through a range of consultation events and focus groups over recent years from 2000 and aim to build on the existing character and strengths to increase the cultural, leisure and shopping appeal, attract more visitors and local people and add value to the local environment and economy. This will be achieved through a variety of as-yet unconfirmed projects, from business support to building developments, public art, improved public realm and signage.

Currently at the planning stage, over £1 million of investment has been earmarked for this project and over half of that total has been pledged by the North West Regional Development Agency for 2007-08. It will therefore have a significant impact. There have been many opportunities for local people to engage with the planning of future development.

The vision for the Market Place area is one of economic prosperity, a vibrant social and cultural scene and an enhanced aesthetic aspect. Developments will involve local businesses and residents, consider existing assets and respect the traditional and rural values of the population, but adapt them so as to enhance social, environmental and economic wellbeing. The regenerated area should play an integral role in Cockermouth's development as a successful commercial and tourist centre.

History of Cockermouth

APPENDIX 3 – 1300-1854 Officials Of The Castle Estates

The following are amongst those having custody of the castle between 1300 and 1323, either in their own right or for the

Crown:

Thomas de Richmond

John de Sancto Johanne

Crown - John de Kirkeby

Piers Gaveston

Crown - Gilbert de Culwen

Crown - Robert de Layburne (twice)

Edmund de Malo Lacu

Thomas de Richmond

Crown - Robert de Layburne

Andrew de Harcla

The Records Office, Carlisle Castle, has extracted from the castle records officials for the following posts and periods, with some gaps:

Receiver 1441/2 - 1558/9

Feodary 1500/1 - 1588/9

Bailiff of Derwentfells 1437/8 - 1594, 1640 - 1800

Bailiff of Five Towns 1437/8 - 1596, 1640 - 1800

Bailiff of Allerdale 1437/8 - 1597.

The Records Office has similarly produced the following list of agents or stewards of the Cumberland Estate, acting under Petworth or London. Routine matters were supervised by a local official, sometimes the bailiff of Derwentfells who often lived at the castle.

c. 1591 - 1619 Sir Wilfrid Lawson occurs prominently.

c. 1633 - 1661 Hugh Potter.

1702 onwards Thomas Beach, the agent in the north, appointed as his Cumberland deputy

1702 Joseph Relfe

probably 1713 John Muncaster

1725 John Christian, first local agent proper.

(Agents were attorneys in 18th. and early 19th. centuries.)

Agents c. 1725 - 1745 John Christian of Underigg. (d. 1745)

1745 - 1748 Thomas Simpson of Penrith.

1748 - 1750 Ewan Christian of Underigg when Simpson lost agency under Algernon, Duke of Somerset.

c. 1750 - 1758 Thomas Simpson, restored by Earl of Egremont. Ill-health 1758.

1758 - 1778 Robert Baynes of Cockermouth, first Cockermouth resident agent. Ill-health 1778.

1778 - 1807 Thomas Benson, son-in-law and partner of Baynes. d. 1807.

1807 - 1816 Robert Benson, son of Thomas. Ill-health 1816.

1816 - 1830 Nathaniel Nicholson, former partner of Robert Benson. d. 1830.

1830 - 1836 Robert Benson, nephew of Robert. Dismissed 1836.

1836 - 1854 William Bragg.

APPENDIX 4 – 1640-1800 Bailiffs Of Cockermouth

Elected by burgesses. From Michaelmas of year preceding date shown.

1640 John Johnson	1642 Henry Stevenson	1650 James Bouch
1651 William Wood	1652 George Langton	1653 Henry Rawlins
1654 William Bowman	1655 Henry Fisher	1656 John Peile
1657 Robert Webster	1658 John Willis	1659 Thomas France
1660 William Uriell	1661 Rowland Benson	1662 Thomas Crosthwaite
1663 John Peirson	1664 John Peile	1665 Richard Uriell
1666 Leonard Scott	1667 Thomas Watson	1668 John Dodgson
1669 Thomas France	1670 Michael Hodgson	1671 Richard Peirson
1672 Luke Johnson	1673 Joseph Westray	1674 Thomas Peele
1675 Michael Todd	1676 William Lancaster	1677 Philip Stanley
1678 Edward Bowman	1679 Philip Stanley	1680 Joseph Westray yr.
1681 Mungo Rothery	1682 James Todd	1683 Nicholas Plaskett
1684 John Todd	1685 John Clocker	1686 Frands Benson
1687 John Clocker	1688 Robert Langton	1689 George France
1690 Thomas France yr.	1691 Michael JOhnson	1692 Terewastel Peile
1693 James Todd	1694 Thomas Walker	1695 John Clocker
1696 Simon Washington	1697 Michael Todd	1698 Thomas Atkinson
1699 Thomas France	1700 William Peile	1701 John Lund
1702 Michael Hodgson	1703 Henry Fisher	1704 Robert Gregg
1705 John Moore	1706 John Ritson	1707 John English
1708 John Peile	1709 Richard Johnson	1711 John rnman
1710 Thomas Labom	1712 John Watson	1713 William Watson
1714 James France	1715 Joseph Thompson	1716 John Wallas
1717 Thomas France	1718 Jonathan Pape	1719 John Fisher
1720 Robert Gregg	1721 John Peile yr.	1722 Christopher Fearon
1723 William Meals	1724 Thomas Watson	1725 Daniel Dickinson
1726 Joseph Noble	1727 Thomas Halloway	1728 John Watson
1729 John Wood	1730 John Watson	1731 Thomas Grindal
1732 John Peile	1733 Richard Baynes	1734 Thomas Walker
1735 Humphrey France	1736 John Porter	1737 Thomas Potter
1738 George Topping	1739 Joseph Pearson	1740 Rowland Wilkinson
1741 Joseph Jackson	1742 George Birkett	1743 Joseph Dixon
1744 Wilfrid Clementson	1745 Isaac Whitelock	1746 Caleb Bowes
1747 Thomas Halloway	1748 John Lucock	1749 John Peile
1750 Richard Tubman	1751 Joseph Thompson	1752 Robert Baynes
1753 William Thompson	1754 Wilfrid Clementson	1755 Robert Peile
1756 John Jackson	1757-1763 (odd years) Joseph Dixon	1758-1788 (even years) John Lucock
1765-1781 (odd years) John Wordsworth	1785-1793 (odd years) John Thompson	1790 Robert Yarker
1792,1794,1797,1799 William Sisson	1796-1800 (even years) Rev. John Wheatley	

APPENDIX 5 1830 Vestry selection

First Select Vestry, 1830.

Rev. John Benson	William Wood	Abraham Hetherington
Abraham Robinson	Joshua Sim	John Stamper
Edward Sancton	Thomas Matthews	
John Slack	Isaac Brown jnr.	

1833, replacing three of above, were added

John Steel	Stephen Green	Joseph Wise
Joseph Priestman	George Sanderson	

APPENDIX 6 1864 Cockermouth Local Board of Health

Successful candidates at the first Cockermouth Local Board of Health election, 1864

Jonathan Mitchell (441 votes)	John Bumett (440)
Thomas Drane (428)	Joseph Brown (393)
John Walker (388)	John Pearson (376)
Horace B. Wyndham (359)	David Rapley (352)
Jos. Bowerbank (336)	John Jenkinson snr. (310)
John Rowland (304)	John Armstrong (286)

APPENDIX 7 1897 Cockermouth Urban District Council

Members of Cockermouth Urban District Council 1897.

Joseph Straughton (chairman)	Robert Mitchell
John Bolton	William Stephenson
Josiah Hall	H. P. Senhouse (vice-chairman)
John B. Jennings	John Fleming

Joseph Hugh Jefferson

William McQuhae

John Soulsby

Joseph Threlkeld

APPENDIX 8 1938 Cockermouth Urban District Council

Members of Cockermouth Urban District Council 1938.

John Conkey (chairman)

William J. Bewsher

William D. Dickson

John Huddleston

John Kellett

Edward J. R. Long

Francis Henry Mason (vice)

Arnold Chicken

Miss Ethel Gunn

Mrs. Johnston

John William Limon

Thomas Sealby

Urban District Council officials in 1938: Clerk Albert Edward Sutor

Treasurer Vemon J. Turver (Midland Bank)

Medical Officer of Health Charles A. Mason

Surveyor William Nichol

Gas Manager A. F. Young

Collector H. D. Kirkbride

APPENDIX 9 1894–1973 Chairmen of the Urban District Council

The chairmen of the Urban District Council

1894-1901	Joseph Straughton
1901-2	Robert Mitchell
1902-3	Josiah Hall
1903-4	John Bolton
1904-5	John Fleming
1905-6	James R. Bleasdale
1906-7	Josiah Hall
1907-8	John Fearon
1908-1911	William Stephenson
1911-2	Frank W. James
1912-4	Joseph Collins

1914-5	James R. Bleasdale
1915-7	Waiter S. Scott
1917-9	James R. B1easdale
1919-1921	Frank W. James
1921-2	Walter S. Scott
1956-7	Samuel Bewley
1957-8	Frank W. Williamson
1958-9	John B. Bainbridge
1959-1960	Joseph A. Slater
1960-1	Maurice L. Oglethorpe
1961-2	George Rook
1962-3	Clarence R. Potts
1963-4	Walter Hall
1964-5	John B. Richardson
1922-5	Frank W. James
1925-6	William Mitchell
1926-9	John H. Pears
1929-1931	James W. Brandwood
1931-3	John H. Pears
1933-9	John Conkey
1939-1943	John W. Limon
1943-5	1. R. Long
1945-6	John Conkey
1946-8	Amold Chicken
1948-50	Thomas Sealby
1950-1	John D. Soulsby
1951-2	John B. Richardson
1952-4	W. Gilbert F. James
1954-5	Thomas Sealby
1955-6	Arnold Chicken
1965-6	Amold Chicken
1966-7	John J. Bainbridge
1967-8	George W. Todhunter
1968-9	George T. Benson
1969-1970	J. Ralph Luchini
1970-1	Roger Hannah
1971-2	1. Alan Large
1972-3	Clarence R. Potts
1973-4	Raymond D. Williamson

APPENDIX 10 1974 Urban District Council members

The members of the last Council when the urban district ceased to exist on 3! March 1974 were

G. T. Benson	R. Stewardson	R. Hannah
S. E. Foster	J. R. Luchini	C. R. Potts
J. A. Large	F. E. Rushton	T. W. Smith
J. B. Richardson	R. D. Williamson	H. M. Huck

APPENDIX 11 1306 Charges on goods

'Pontage' charged on goods entering or leaving the town, 1306.

Each load of grain or malt	¼ d
Each horse, mare, ox or cow	½ d
Each horse hide, ox hide, salt (fresh) or tan	¼ d
Five 'bacons'	½ d
Ten hams	½ d
Ten sheep, goats or pigs	1 d
Ten fleeces	½ d
Hundred of sheepskins or goatskins	1 d
Hundred of lambskins, kids, hares, rabbits, foxes, cats or squirrels.	½ d
Hundred 'greywork'	6 d
Quarter of salt	¼ d
Load of cloth	½ d
Each whole cloth worth 40s.	½ d
Cartload of trussed cloth	3 d
Hundred of worsted cloth	2 d
Hundred of linen	½ d
Hundred of Aylesham linen	1 d
Each 'chief de sendal' (thin, rich silk material)	1 d
Each other sendal	½ d
Hundred of salt cod or hard fish	2 d
Cartload of sea fish	4 d
Load of seafish	½ d
Each salmon	¼ d
Dozen of lampreys	1 d
Thousand of herrings	¼ d
Load of ashes	½ d
Load of honey	1 d
Each sack of wool	2 d
Cartload of bark, weekly	1 d
Hundred of avoirdupois (merchandise sold by weight)	1 d
Wey (large measure of 200 to 300 lbs.) of lard or grease	1 d
Quarter of woad	2 d
Two thousand onions or garlic	½ d
Bale of shoe leather	3 d
Hundred of boards	½ d
One millstone	½ d
Hundred faggots	¼ d
Hundred turves	¼ d
Cartload of brushwood or timber weekly	½ d
Hundred of tin, brass or copper	2 d
Load of oat flour	¼ d

APPENDIX 12 1660 Market Rates

Market rates laid down by the Court Leet 1660.

> *"for every bushel of corn or grain brought to our market OY2d. per bushell and for every load or pack which comes through or within the liberties of our Burrough 2d. For every ox steer cow or heifer killed by any butcher not free in our Burrough and sold within the Town or Burrough 4d. per head and for every sheep and calf so killed and sold 1 d. per head. All narrow country cloth wch comes to our markett to be sold the same to be sealed and therefore to pay ½ d. for every yard."*

APPENDIX 13 1883 1938 1979 Magistrates

1883 magistrates.

Green-Thompson of Bridekirk, chairman.

Senhouse (Fitz)

Browne (Tallentire Hall)

Sewell (Brandling Gill)

Robinson (South Lodge)

Alexander (The Oaks)

Dykes (Dovenby Hall)

Senhouse (Hames Hall)

Fisher (Wood Hall)

Fletcher (Brigham Hill)

Hoskins (Higham)

Reed (Hassness)

Bain (Bridge End)

Wilson (Broughton Grange)

1938 magistrates

Stanley-Dodgson (chairman)

G. F. Fisher

C. H. Hawkins

J. H. Pears

Miss E. W. Sewell

C. F. Watson

W. U. Armstrong

T. W. Hams

M. E. Highton

R.Rigg

Canon A. Sutton

1979 magistrates

Mrs. R. M. Wingate (chairman)

Mrs. A. Mackay

W. Jackson

Miss J. Robinson

Dr. E. B. Hird

L. Blackwood

W. Cooper

J. E. Musgrave

Mrs. B. A. Gratton

F. E. Gregory

APPENDIX 14 1693-1910 Coroners for Cockermouth and Egremont

Coroners for Cockermouth and Egremont before the separation of the liberties.

c.1693-1713	Joseph Relph
c. 1713-?	John Muncaster
1736-1746	Richard Baynes
1746-1771	Robert Baynes
1772-1807	Thomas Benson
1807 -1816	Robert Benson
1816-1824	Henry Teshmaker Thompson
1825-1857	William Bragg
1857-1875	Dr. Henry Bell

For Cockermouth only

1875-1910	JosephHayton
1875-1879	John McKelvie
1880-1901	John Webster
1901-1907	George Falcon
1907-1910	George A. L. Skerry, who continued as County Coroner after 1910.

APPENDIX 15 1717-1880 Members of Parliament for Cockermouth

The list of M.P.s. for Cockermouth while still a separate constituency. The letters T and W denote Tory and Whig, although party divisions were less strict than now, groupings of the two being possible on some issues.

1717	Percy Seymour, vice Nicholas Letchmere (to an office)
1721	Anthony Lowther, vice Percy Seymour dcd.
1722	Thomas Pengelly, Wilfrid Lawson
1726-7	William Finch, vice Thomas Pengelly (to an office)
1727	William Finch, Wilfrid Lawson
1734	William Finch, Wilfrid Lawson
1737-8	Eldred Curwen, vice Wilfrid Lawson dcd.
1741	William Finch, John Mordaunt of Hants.
1747	Charles Wyndham of Westminster, John Mordaunt, William Finch vice Charles Wyndham (to serve for Taunton)
1754	Percy Wyndham O'Brien of Essex, John Mordaunt
1761	John Mordaunt, Charles Jenkinson
1767	John Elliott, vice Charles Jenkinson (to an office)
1768	George Macartney, Charles Jenkinson, George Johnstone, vice Charles Jenkinson (to serve for Appleby)
1769	James Lowther, vice George Macartney (Chiltern Hundreds)
1774	George Johnstone, Fletcher Norton
1775	Ralph Gowland, vice George Johnstone (to serve for Appleby), James Adair, vice Fletcher Norton (to serve for Carlisle)
1780	John Lowther, T John Baynes Garforth T
1784	John Lowther, T James Clarke Satterthwaite T
1786	Humphrey Senhouse, T vice John Lowther (Chiltern Hundreds)
1790	John Anstruther T of Lincoln's Inn, John Baynes Garforth T of Yorkshire
1796	John Baynes Garforth, T Edward Burrow T
1800	Walter Spencer Stanhope, T vice Edward Borrow dcd.
1802	Robert Ward, T James Graham T
1805	George Steward, T vice James Graham (to stewardship in Berks.)
1806	John Lowther, T James Graham T
1807	Thomas Hamilton, T vice John Lowther (to serve for Cumberland)
1807	John Lowther T of Swillington, James Graham T of Edmond Castle, John Osborn T of Beds. Vice John Lowther (to serve for Cumberland)
1808	William Lowther T vice John Osborn (Chiltern Hundreds)
1812	William Lowther T John Lowther, T Augustus John Foster T of Killarney vice John Lowther (to serve for Cumberland)
1813	Thomas Wallace T of Canton Hall vice William Lowther (to an office)
1816	John Henry LowtherT of Swillington vice Augustus John Foster (Chiltern Hundreds)
1818	John Henry Lowther, T John BeckettT of Lincs.
1820	John Beckett, T John Henry Lowther T
1821	William Wilson Carus Wilson T vice John Beckett (Chiltern Hundreds)

1826	Randolph Stewart, T William W. C. Wilson T
1827	Lawrence Peel T vice William W. C. Wilson (to stewardship in Berks.)
1830	Randolf Steward, T Philip Pleydell Bouverie W
1831	John Henry Lowther, T James Scarhett T
1833	Fretcheville Lawson Ballantine Dykes W of Dovenby Hall, Henry Aglion by Aglionby W of Newbiggin Hall
1835	Henry A. Aglionby W, F. L. Ballantine Dykes W
1836	Edward Horsman W of Edinburgh vice F. L. B. Dykes (Chiltern Hundreds)
1837	Henry A. Aglionby W Edward Horsman W
1841	Henry A. Aglionby, W Edward Horsman W
1847	Henry A. Aglionby, W Edward Horsman W
1852	Henry Wyndham, T Henry A. Aglionby W
1854	John Steel W vice Henry A. Aglionby dcd.
1857	John Steel, W Richard Southwell Bourke (Lord Naas) T
1859	John Steel W Richard S. Bourke T
1865	John Steel, W Richard S. Bourke T
1868	Andrew Green Thompson, T vice John Steel dcd.
1868	Isaac Fletcher W of Tarnbank
1874	Isaac Fletcher W
1879	William Fletcher of Brigham Hill vice Isaac Fletcher dcd.
1880	Edward Waugh.

This list omits a few re-elections ofserving members after they had been appointed to a government office.

APPENDIX 16 1910 1938 Cockermouth Provident Dispensary

Cockermouth Provident Dispensary.

1910 Medical officers - Drs. Govan, Graham, Hutchinson and Neave.

1938 Centre - 7 Market Place

Medical officers - Drs. Abraham, Ellis and Govan.

Secretary J. W. Boyd.

Treasurer- V. J. Turner.

APPENDIX 17 pre 1679-1977 Incumbents of All Saints Church

Incumbents of All Saints Church.

?	Peter Hudson
pre-Civil War	Robert Ricardby (Rickerby)
Commonwealth	George Larkham
after Commonwealth	Robert Ricardby
1679	Gawen Noble
1691	Peter Gregory
1705 (?)	Thomas Jefferson
1768	?
1774-8	Services provided by Churchwardens
1778	Joseph Gilbanks
1795	John Wheatley
1809	Edward Fawcett
1865	Herbert Lavallin Puxley
1874	Eldred Green
1881	William Hasall Parker
1935	Robert Waddington Crook
1955-7	Vacancy
1957	Peter Charles Eliot
1962	William Edward Augustus Pugh
1971	Vemon Douglas Clarke
1974	John L. R. Crawley
1977	Team ministry John L. R. Crawley Colin S. Fuller

APPENDIX 18 1792-1883 Turnpike officials

Turnpike officials

Cockermouth Carlisle

Clerk Edward Steel 1853-80

Edward Waugh 1880-83

Cockermouth-Maryport

Clerk Edward Steel 1854-65

Edward Waugh 1865-83

Cockermouth Penrith

Clerk John Fisher 1803-26

1. W. Fisher 1826-32

Richard Fisher 1852-

Treasurer John Fisher 1803-23

Jonathan Otley 1823-26

W James 1826-42

G. Hebson 1842

Surveyor Timothy Todburster 1792-1807

Samuel Culling 1807-18

John Fisher 1818-35

George Watson 1835

Cockermouth Workington

Clerk John Fisher 1799-1804

Joseph Steel 1804-64

Edward Waugh 1864-82

R. Broatch 1882-83

APPENDIX 19 1894-5

Burgage Rents

Examples from the 120 properties which Lord Lonsdale held in Cockermouth in 1894-5.

Bailey's exors. Main Street : 3s

J. B. Banks : s + 1s+ 1s

Brash, Challoner Street : 2d

Teetotal Lane property : 1s

Carlisle, County and District Bank, Cocker Bridge : 1s

Grecian Villa (John Dodgson) : 2d

Jennings 'Old Brewery' : 4d

Hope and Anchor, Bush and Wheatsheaf : each 6d

Blue Bell : 5s

Ship and George and Dragon : each 2s

Public Hall : 4d

New Market Company : 2s

Savings Bank, Cocker Bridge : 1s

Rope Walk, etc., Kirkgate : 2s

Local Board, late Wilson, Cocker Bridge : 6d

Rydiard, late Wilson, Cocker Bridge : 6d

APPENDIX 20 1840 Electors'Lists.

Electors'Lists. 1 December 1840

217 entitled to vote within the borough "in respect of Property occupied within the Township of Cockermouth". Following are a selection of special interest:

Bailey, Thomas,jnr.	Shop and printing office	Main Street
Bell, John	House, garden and smith's shop	Main Street
Benson, Robert	Office	Brewery Yard, Market Place
Birkett, John	Weaving shops and warehouse	Gallowbarrow Lane
Burnett, John	House and smithy	Kirkgate
Bushby, William	Maltkiln	Back Lane
Cape, William	Timber yard and buildings	Main Street
Clark, John	Hat shops	Main Street
Fisher, John, jnr.	Tannery and buildings	Long Croft Lane
France, William	House and weaving shops	Gallowbarrow
Grave, Joseph	Weaving shop and warehouse	Sand Went
Harris, Jonathan	Weaving shops	Holmes's Yard
Hodgson, John	House and brewery	Main Street
McAdam, Robert	House, cellar and weaving shops	Kirkgate
Mackreth, William	House and brickkilns	T ownhead
Pickering, John	House, mill and land	Double Mills
Richardson, John, jnr.	Tannery and buildings	Brewery Lane
Richardson, John	House and brewery	Old Brewery
Robinson, Thomas	House and dyehouses	Stoddart's Yard
Smith, Richard	House and factory	Globe Lane and Cocker Side
Swinburn, Joseph	Maltkiln	S1. Helen's Street
Threlkeld, Joseph	House, garden and tanyard	S1. Helen's Street and Long Croft Lane
Wharton, Joshua	Thread manufactory	Rubby Banks Mill

The 1865 electors' list includes:

Armstrong, John	House, shop, timber yard	South Street
Bateman, Richard	Skinyard and buildings	73 Kirkgate head
Fleming, Joseph	House and spirit vaults	Castle Street
Herbert, Joseph and William	Foundry	Brewery Lane

Hewitson, Robert	House and smithy	Derwent Street
Huddart, Jonathan	Smithy, byre and land	Crown Street
Armstrong, John	House, shop, timber yard	South Street

APPENDIX 21 Old Forms Of Sheep Counting

The old forms of sheep counting found in the Lakeland valleys, including the Cockermouth area and with variations from valley to valley, are very similar to numerals used in old Welsh, Cornish and Breton. The Borrowdale version gives the numbers one to ten as yan, tyan, tethera, methera, pimp, sethera, lethera, hovera, dovera and dick; and Eskdale, on the other side of us, has yaena, taena, teddera, meddera, pimp, hofa, lofa, seckera, leckera and dec. 'Yan' or 'tin' with slight variations represents 'one' in various Lakeland valleys and in Old Welsh, Cornish and Breton; likewise pimp', 'pemp' or 'pymp is five and 'dick', 'dee' or 'dek' is ten. [5]

It has been said that, judging by place names, Aethelfrith, king ofNorthumbria AD 593-616, could have ridden from the Solway to the Mersey through Anglian-held territory. He would not have gone through the mountainous dome or the central valleys, for here, except for a few in Borrowdale, Anglian names do not occur. The invaders favoured crops rather than sheep and consequently liked the loams and boulder clays below abqut 250 feet. They brought with them a heavy plough drawn by oxen, which ploughed a deep furrow on land which was too heavy for the implements of the British before them.

Glossary History of Cockermouth

acre	2.47 acres = I hectare
alienation	transfer of ownership
amerce	fine
appurtenance	a right, privilege, minor property belonging to a major holding and being passed on with it
ashlar	dressed or squared hewn stone
assart	clear land to bring under cultivation
assess	decide amount of tax (= cess, sess)
assize	ordinance regulating weight and price ofan article for general consumption, e.g. price ofbread and ale with reference to the price ofgrain
bailiwick	jurisdiction, district
barony	land held from the king or other superior in return for military or other honourable service
burgage	freehold property (land or tenement) held of the lord in a borough
burgess	holder ofa burgage: inhabitant ofa borough possessing fill municipal rights
bushel	8 gallons, 36.37 litres (dry measure)
Candlemas	2 February, Purification of the Virgin Mary
cartulary	collection of records charters, etc. Lucy Cartulary in Cockermouth Castle contains copies of documents of 12th-14th centuries relating to the family estates in Cumberland, Northumberland, Lincolnshire and Ireland.
carucage	tax on a carucate - the amount of land a team of oxen could plough in a season
cess	tax (sess)
chaloner	maker of chalons (shalloons)
charter	rights and liberties granted by the Crown in perpetuity
cockpenny	customary payment to a schoolmaster at Shrovetide, originally for expenses of cock-fight
co-parcener	one who shares an inheritance equally with others
cornage	form of rent dependent on the number of horned cattle
costomal, costumal	written collation or abstract of customs of a manor
court baron	dealt with land transfers, inheritances, rents, etc.
court leet	a court which the lord of the manor was empowered to hold for minor infractions of the law and for legislation
customary tenant	having to pay customs or dues to the lord of the manor, could not be evicted
d.	old penny of pre-1971. 12d.=1 shilling. 240d=£1

demesne	land used by the lord of the manor himself; later meaning the land immediately attached to the mansion - pleasure gardens, home farm, etc.
deodand	living or inanimate possession causing a death, given to God as expiatory offering, through the lord for conversion to pious use, e.g. alms
dower	whole or part of a man's estate to which his widow had a right for her lifetime
enfeoff	to invest with a fief, to put in possession of
escheat; escheator	to revert to the Crown; officer responsible for such lands
estovers	necessities allowed by law, e.g. wood from landlord's estate to repair houses, hedges, implements, etc.
farm	take or hold at a fixed rate for a term (lease): to grant certain rights for a return
farthing	¼ of a pre-1971 penny
fee, fief	estate in land held on condition of homage and service to a superior
feet of fines	*'fines'* = finished, final. Mostly conveyances of land, final between two parties, all claims of others being settled. Written three times, second below first, then third at foot on back, and filed with others – hence '*feet of fines*' .
feoffee	feudal tenant, holding land by legal writ
ferm	lease (farm)
fine	money paid by new tenant to landlord on change of tenancy - transfer fee. From final, because paid only once.
franchise	immunity or privilege, the district over which it extends
frankpledge	system whereby every member of a tithing (township) is answerable for the conduct of; or damage done by, any other member
free	without obligation of rent or service
free chace	free chase
freehold	indefinite lease, passed on to heir
gallows	right to erect gallows
geld	tribute or tax paid to Crown by land holders
haybote	right to take timber to repair fences
hidage	tax to exchequer for every hide of land
hold in chief	tenancy by perpetual ground rent
honour	several manors held by one baron
housebote	right to take timber to repair a house
hundred	subdivision ofcounty, having 0~1l court impropriator holder ofa benefice
in capite	land held directly from the Crown
infangthief	right of lord of manor to try and to punish a thief caught within his manor
Lady Day	25 March, a quarter-day

Lammas	1 August, Harvest Festival
letters	grants by Crown in answer to a petition, usually limited to the lifetime of petitioner
liberty	rights granted to a subject by the sovereign: a person's property or domain
manor	smaller feudal unit than barony, including the mansion and the manor land -the lord's demesne smaller feudal unit than barony, including the mansion and the manor land -the lord's demesne and land occupied by some of his tenants from whom he has the right to exact fees and fines and on which he has certain rights
mark	13s. 4d. £2/3
Martinmas	11 November, Feast of St. Martin
messuage	dwelling house with land and outbuildings
Michaelmas	29 September, Feast of St. Michael
moiety, moity	a half; or one of two parts into which divided moot meeting for regulating affairs
motte and bailey	mound (partly or wholly artificial) and large courtyard outside castle proper, palisaded and containing stables, stores, workshops, etc.
noutgeld	cornage
overseer	officer appointed annually for certain duties
pannage	pasturing swine in forest
parcel ofland	piece of land, especially of manor or estate
patent rolls	documents conferring privileges, rights, offices, etc. pillory right to erect a pillory
pipe roll	annual compilation of revenue passing through the treasury, rolled up like a pipe
pontage	toll for crossing a bridge, hence for entering a town
put in pain	Fined = amerced
s.	pre-1971 shilling. Is. = 12d. 20s. = £1
scutage	money paid to Crown by feudal landowner in lieu of personal service, usually military
seisin	legal possession
serf	one in condition of servitude, distinguished from slavery in that the service due to the master is more or less limited by law or custom
shalloons	closely woven woollen material, used mostly for linings
slipe	polish, strip
statesman	yeoman farmer of own small estate of£ 1 0 to £50 per annum: a holding from the lord of the manor on customary tenure
tallage	tax levied on feudal dependents by superior tenant at will tenant who holds at will or pleasure of the owner
tithe	usually a tax of one-tenth. Great tithes- corn, hay, wood; small - other things from the ground herbs, fruit; mixed - nourished by ground - animals, cheese, etc
toft	site of house and outbuildings with attached land

tumsman	representative of a parish, e.g. at court
vestry	business meeting of assembly of parishioners
viii	feudal territorial division, formed of a number of dwellings naturally drawn together (tithing, township, civil parish)
villein	class of feudal serf - peasant occupier or cultivator entirely subject to a lord
warren	land enclosed for breeding game and rabbits: 'free warren', the right to hunt them
whittlegate	the privilege of using one's knife (whittle) for a week at a time at any table in the parish

References and Bibliography

The abbreviations given are those used in the references which follow.

AW	Researches of Dr. Angus L. Winchester.
B	T. Bulmer and Co. : History, Topography and Directory of West Cumberland (1883). (Used Askew frequently.)
Bew	The late Mr. James Bewley of Station Street, Cockermouth.
C	John F. Curwen: 'Cockermouth Castle', NS 11.
CA	Cockermouth Advertiser.
CCM	Cousin Charley's Magazine, 1899-1901.
CCT	John F. Curwen: 'Castles and Towers of Cumberland and Westmorland', NS 13.
CF	Clare Fell: Early Settlement in the Lake Counties (Dalesman, 1972).
CP	Cumberland Pacquet.
CR	Records in Cockermouth Castle and the County Records Office, Carlisle.
CW	'To Lieutenant-Gen. Henry Wyndham, Colonel of the 11th. Prince Albert's Own Hussars, these Sketches of Cockermouth Castle in the County ofCumberland are respectively Dedicated by his nephew, Charles Wyndham.' Notes accompanying the sketches.
DSM	Michael Davies-Shiel and J.D. Marshall: Industrial Archaeology in the Lake Counties (David and Charles, 1969 edition).
EHS	E.H. Shackleton: Lakeland Geology (Dalesman).
ERD	E.R. Denwood: 'A Walk Around Old-time Cockermouth' in the Cockermouth and District Advertiser, 1946.
GEM	G.E. Mingay: Rural Life in Victorian England (Book Club Associates, 1976).
GMT	G.M. Trevelyan: Illustrated English Social History 1,2,3,4 (Penguin, 1964 edition).
GPC	Minutes of the General Purposes Committee of Cockermouth Urban District Council.
JA	John Askew: A Guide to the Interesting Places in and around Cockermouth with an account of its Remarkable Men and Local Traditions (1866). Edited and revised by Thomas Thompson, 1872. (Published by Isaac Evening, 22 Station Street.)
JAD	J. Adair: A Quaker Lover (S.W Partridge and Co., before 1846).
JB	John Bolton: Wordsworth's Birthplace, being the parochial history and local government of the ancient borough of Cockermouth John Fletcher, 'Free Press' Office, Cockermouth, 1912).
JDM	J.D. Marshall: Old Lakeland (David and Charles, 1971).
JGB	J. Gorton Brooker: A collection of newspaper cuttings, mostly from Cumberland News and West Cumberland Times,
JJB	J.J. Bagley: Historical Interpretation 1,2 (Penguin, 1965).

JW	Johnston and Wright: Cockermouth - a Report on the Central Area. Prepared for the UDC, 1974.
JWM	Mr. J.W Mounsey of Main Street, Cockermouth.
LAW	L.A. Williams: Road Transport in Cumbria in the Nineteenth Century (Alien and Unwin, 1975).
LL	Daniel Lysons and Samuel Lysons: Magna Britannia; being a concise topographical account of the several counties of Great Britain (Cadell and Davies, 1816).
M	Mate's illustrated Guide to Cockermouth, probably 1905.
McA	Mr. Quinten McAdam of Distington.
MDS	M. Davies-Shiel: Lectures on Cockermouth, 1971-2.
MR	R. Millward and A. Robinson: The Lake District (Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1970).
MW	Mannix and Whelan: History, Gazetteer and Directory of Cumberland (1847).
NS	Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society, New Series - 1901 to date, the figure denoting the year of publication.
OS	Transactions of the CWAAS, Old Series. Volumes 1 to 16 cover the years 1875 to 1900.
P	H.L. Peacock: A History of Modem Britain (Heinemann, 1968).
Pev	N. Pevsner: Cumber land and Westmorland in the Buildings of England series (Penguin, 1967).
PW	Parson and White: Directory of Cumberland, Westmorland, Furness and Cartmel (1829).
NB	J. Nicholson and R. Bum: History and Antiquities of West Cumberland, vol. 11(1777).
RB	Robin Birley: Civilians on the Roman Frontier (F. Graham, 1973).
RE	Robert Emlin: A History of Cumbria (Dalesman, 1973).
RGC	R.G. Collingwood: 'Report on the Excavations at Papcastle 1912', NSI2.
RSF	R.S. Ferguson: A History of Cumberland (1890).
S	Steinberg and Evans: Steinberg's Dictionary 0 British History (Arnold).
UBD	The Universal British Directory (1790).
UDC	Minutes of Cockermouth Urban District Council.
WB	M. Davies-Shiel: Wool is my Bread or the Early Woollen Industry in Kendal from c.975-1575 AD (1975).
WCT	West Cumberland Times, later the West Cumberland Times and Star.
Wes	Official Handbook of the Grand Bazaar, representing Old Cockermouth, held in the Drill Hall, 27, 28, 29 March 1895. Wesleyan Methodist Church.
WGC	WG. Collingwood: Lake District History (Titus Wilson, 1925).
WJ	William Jackson: 'Cockermouth Castle', OS4.

WR	William Rollinson: A History of Man in the Lake District (Dent, 1967).

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