

Kirkby Lonsdale & District Civic Society Newsletter - Spring 2016

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Report of Annual General Meeting held on March 14th 2016

The Chairman welcomed 50 members and guests to the meeting and outlined the activities of the past year.

The autumn course 'Life in Victorian NW England' delivered by Dr Mike Winstanley had attracted a record 48 attendees. Attendance at the Winter Talks was 24% higher than in 2014, and membership was unchanged.

Reviewing Planning Applications and commenting where necessary remained a key activity of the committee. A website (www.kirkbylonsdalecivicsociety.org) had been set up and was being used and members were asked to suggest further improvements. The establishment of a 'Heritage Competition' for small local projects which broadly supported the aims and objectives of the Society had been set up with £5000 to implement the best ideas. The award was finally split between an 'oral history' video capturing the recollections of elderly residents, and an interpretation board to be placed in St Mary's

churchyard remembering a former occupant, Margaret Llewellyn Davies, who was a driving force for women's rights in the early twentieth century.

The Treasurer reported a satisfactory year. Income was higher across all categories, but the cost of projects resulted in a small overspend of £750 in the year, but which still ended with reserves of £9680. The accounts and the report to the Charity Commission were adopted by the members. The External Examiner Mr Terry Simpkin was thanked for his work and elected in that role for a further year.

The existing officers were re-elected for the next twelve months, with the exception of Pat France, who retired after more than 20 years on the committee, and was thanked by the chairman for all her hard work and presented with a farewell gift. Margaret Bunch and Peter Yorke, who had been co-opted during the year, were also elected to the committee.

The final talk of the series was 'Lakeland Architecture Through the Centuries' by the ever-popular Andy Lowe. The evening ended convivially with drinks and nibbles.

Listing Kirkby Lonsdale Institute (now Lunesdale Hall)

Many people wonder why this attractive building is not listed. In 2005 SLDC's Conservation Officer submitted a case for listing it to English Heritage on behalf of the management committee. Dating from 1895 the building ('in a loose arts and craft style with Queen Anne Revival elements') has a largely unaltered interior with ornate stone fireplaces, panelled doors and architraves, and an exposed roof of deep arched braced collared trusses, king posts, and ogee-shaped angle bracing. The building was conceived by a Wigan architect, and later completed by W.E.V. Crompton who prepared the final design. Crompton came to prominence in the 1890s designing a series of buildings in towns in the north-west including Wigan and Southport. He subsequently designed for the Duke of Bedford's Covent Garden estate, and was later appointed the principle architect for Barclay's Bank in London. A number of Crompton's buildings were added to the statutory list in the 1990s as their architectural significance became more widely appreciated. The Institute building can be seen as heralding the beginning of this architect's mature style and therefore assume even greater significance. Unfortunately the Secretary of State didn't agree with this analysis, and I quote his reply in full:

This late Victorian Institute contains some elements of high quality design and construction including fine timberwork to the hall's roof. Despite having been subjected to some late twentieth century modification the building remains an interesting example of its type. However, in a national context, the period within which the Institute was built produced many buildings of exceptionally good quality, competently designed and remaining in substantial numbers in both urban and rural locations.

Although the respected architect W.E.V. Crompton was responsible for completing the building, Kirkby Lonsdale Institute is not wholly his creation, thus any significance an association with Crompton would have given the building is lessened.

As such this building, despite its obvious local significance and being an interesting and well-constructed example of its type, is not of sufficient special architectural and historic interest to merit listing within the national context.

Being listed would have given greater protection against unsuitable development, so it was well worth a try. The present Trustees take good care of this fine building, but who knows what the future holds?

Geology and Landscape in the Rainbow Parish by *Ken Humphris and Peter Stockdale*

We are fortunate to live in an area of such varied natural beauty as the Rainbow Parish, with its rugged fell tops, bare limestone pavement, rounded hills and lush river valley. The shape of the hills, the type of farming, and the presence of mines or quarries give clues about what lies beneath, but if we understand a bit more about the geology it is surprising how much more we can see in our landscape. A little research also reveals surprising things that aren't so obvious to the casual observer.

A few basic principles

- The timescales are so huge as to be hard to comprehend; the earth is 4.6 billion years old but most of what is described here has happened in the last 500 million years or so.
- The surface of the earth is a fragmented shell, only a few tens of kilometres thick, the bits of which are in constant (although very slow) movement relative to the north and south poles, and to each other. Movement of these 'tectonic plates' as they are called, can explain much of what has happened - for example colliding plates can buckle or fold the rock, or form vast mountain chains like the Himalayas.
- Sea levels have intermittently varied because of plate movements, or because of an increased/decreased amount of ice as the climate changed.
- Several periods of intense cold have occurred when vast amounts of ice (kilometers thick) accumulated. Subsequent warming and melting led to movement of ice, which became an important shaper of our landscape. In places the melting and movement of glaciers sometimes scoured deep channels, or left behind small egg-shaped hills of debris called drumlins. We can only really see the result of the last of these glacial periods which began about 80,000 years ago and came to an end only about 10,000 years ago - a tiny 'blink' in geological time.
- All of "our" rocks (those in the Rainbow Parish) were formed from underwater sediments, derived from either the erosion of older rocks or from shells of marine creatures. As sediment built up it was compressed by its own weight to form hard layers. Different sediments - stones, gravel, sand or mud - resulted in different sorts of rock.

In a nutshell

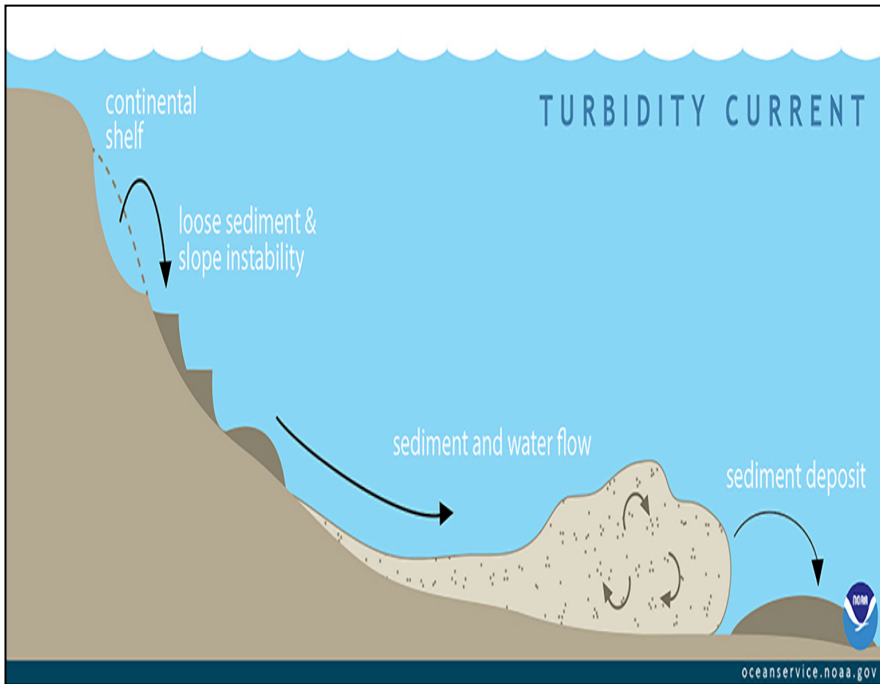
The Earth's crust below Kirkby Lonsdale is about 30 kilometres thick: the older underlying bedrock, which we can't see, is a complex mix of metamorphic rock (changed by heat and pressure) overlain by various sedimentary rocks, (formed by compaction of layer upon layer of deposits of small particles) into both of which igneous rocks (cooled molten rock) have intruded. Upon this bedrock, multiple layers have been deposited, uplifted, folded and eroded many times, fractured, and scoured by ice, and these later processes make the landscape we see today.

The unfolding story

450-500 mya (million years ago), the **Ordovician** period, north and south Britain were at a position south of the equator on different plates separated by an ocean (called the Iapetus). Plate movement resulted in intense volcanic activity in what is now the Lake District, which deposited a range of igneous rocks mixed with deep-water sediments. Over time this was compressed to form the slates and flags that lie unseen beneath much of the Rainbow Parish.

400-450 mya, the **Silurian** period, was the key time for us. Plate movement brought north and south Britain together, the whole landmass moved further north, and the collision caused buckling and forced the land upwards to form high mountains. Britain was still near to the edge of the landmass, and erosion/deposition of this high ground over time deposited fragments in river deltas and on the ocean floor that subsequently formed the chief rock type found in the Lune valley namely greywacke, which comprises sandy particles in a very fine matrix. According to the normal laws of sedimentation, gravel, sand and mud should not be laid down together, but in greywacke they are. It's now thought that either submarine avalanches or strong turbidity currents can churn sediments comprising fine and not so fine particles resulting in slurries, which are then deposited. As is the case for us, deposits of greywacke are often found on the edges of the continental shelves.

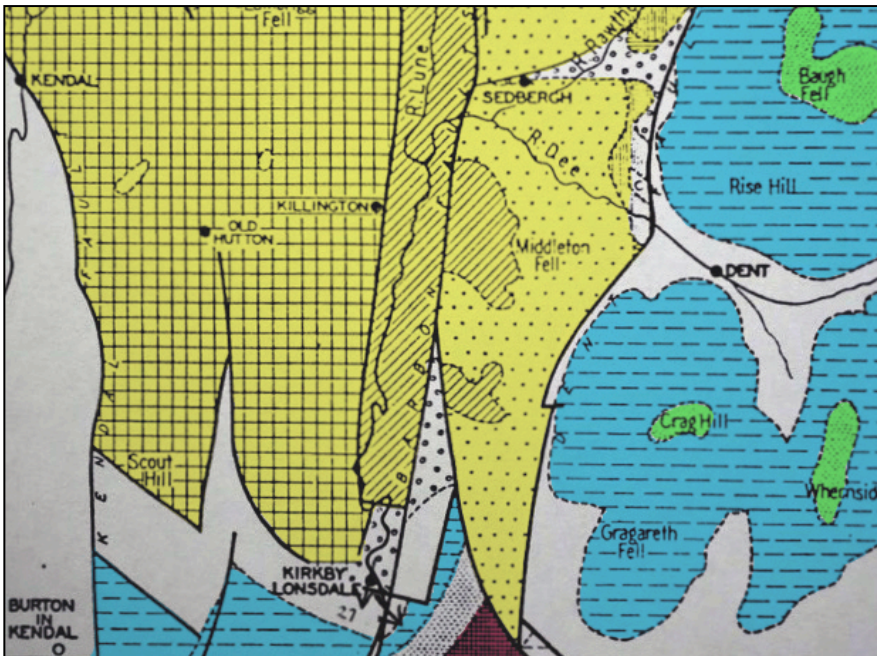
Greywacke, which is a smooth material usually grey or grey-green in colour, is used in many of the drystone walls in the parish, and many of the older rubble-walled barns and houses. St Peter's Church in Mansergh is built entirely from it. Anyone who has tried will know it is not an ideal walling



Schematic showing how underwater events can lead to the deposit of sediments containing different sized particles as in the 'Greywacke' which is widely distributed in our area.

material as it does not cleave in clean line but tends to break into irregular pieces. It is however very tough and hard-wearing.

The next geological period, 350-400 mya, called **Devonian**, is a damp squib for us. Whilst our continental plate continued to drift northwards, most of our parish was well inland and mostly above



Simplified map of surface geology including the Rainbow Parish

CARBONIFEROUS		SILURIAN		ORDOVICIAN	
	COAL MEASURES		KIRKBY MOOR FLAGS		ASHGILLIAN
	MILLSTONE GRIT		BANNISDALE SLATES		IGNEOUS ROCKS
	YOREDALE BEDS		CONISTON GRIT		
	MAIN LIMESTONE		CONISTON FLAGS		
	BASEMENT CONGLOMERATE		STOCKDALE SHALES		

MAIN FAULTS SHOWN BY CONTINUOUS THICK LINES

sea level at this time. There are no visible sedimentary deposits from this period: they have either been eroded or buried.

And so we come to the **Carboniferous** period, 290-350 mya, and here things get interesting. By now we have drifted further north to straddle the equator, and a global rise in sea levels finds most of our parish (and large chunks of Britain as a whole) covered at times by a warm shallow sea (the Rheic ocean), containing many calcium-rich lifeforms (corals and small marine creatures). The remains of these accumulated on the seabed, sometimes mixed with sediments, and over time became compressed to yield various types of limestone that consist mainly of calcium carbonate. Some of these contain the well-preserved fossils of a wide range of such creatures and even their tracks and trails can sometimes be seen.

Examination of most sedimentary rocks where they outcrop reveals individual beds separated by crack lines or bedding planes, which represent pauses in the processes of deposition. Plate movement can cause vertical cracks or joints through these bedding planes. Calcium carbonate is slightly soluble in acidic rain (acidic because of dissolved carbon dioxide) and this can give rise to the criss-cross pattern,



Fossils including brachiopod and graptolite found in Urswick limestone sample from Tearnside

of clints and grykes seen in exposed areas of limestone pavement.

Water getting in through joints, and into the bedding planes, can over time excavate a subterranean hole by dissolving the limestone so that eventually the surface layer of soil and vegetation collapses producing sinkholes. Often these occur in lines that follow the course of the underground water flow beneath. Large-scale dissolution of material can result in the formation of caves and potholes, and the most extensive network of these in Britain, totaling nearly 90km in length, is the 'Three Counties

The Limestone pavement at Hutton Roof Crags is unusual for being on a steep incline



System' which can be accessed just beyond Bullpot Farm in Casterton. The numerous lime kilns in the Rainbow parish, always sited close to an outcropping of the rock, are a sure sign of the presence of limestone. The ones in the photograph below are at Aygill near Bullpot.



Large sinkhole at Aygill caused by slow underground dissolution of limestone, leading to surface collapse

But the Carboniferous period is not just about limestone. As Britain at this time was not at the centre of a landmass, eroded debris was washed down from higher ground to the ocean to form deltas, which over time became compressed to form the shales and gritstones typical of the Pennines. Warming of the climate enabled these humid deltas to support swamps and tropical rainforests, the fossilized debris from which would eventually be compressed to form coal seams, hence the name 'Carboniferous'.

Evidence of simple coal mining can be found in various places, most noticeably on Barbon Low Fell, where the remains of bellpits can still be seen. They are shown on the OS map, but difficult to photograph. Some of the coal won there came by cart to the A683 by way of Collier's Lane in Casterton.

With changing climate, and hence varying sea levels over tens of millions of years, deposition of the different types of material was repeated many times over, to produce the very irregular alternating layers of gritstone/shale/limestone/coal now known as the Yoredale Series. This comprises much of the high ground of the Rainbow parish to the east, including Cragg Hill, and similar geology extended east to Whernside and most of the high ground of the 3-Peaks area beyond. It also occurs in an arc around the South East side of Kirkby Lonsdale extending to Hutton Roof, as shown in the simplified diagram on page 3.

Towards the end of the carboniferous period continuing plate movements caused uplift and faulting throughout Yorkshire Dales and into our parish. The mid-Craven fault roughly follows the A65 through

Limekilns at Aygill near Bullpot in Casterton, with the raw material all around



Kirkby Lonsdale, one side of which was uplifted and subsequent erosion/glaciation exposed extensive limestone outcropping, whilst to the north of the road is the poorer pasture associated with the older Silurian rocks.

The major Dent fault runs roughly north from Cowan Bridge following the line of Easegill and Aygill until it meets, and then follows, Barbon Beck to the head of Barbondale. The differentiation between the Silurian rocks on the rounded northern side of Barbon Beck, encompassing Calf Top, and the exposed carboniferous/Yoredale scenery of the southern side with its better drained greener pastures and potholes, is very marked, and can be seen from close examination of the photograph below.

At one point where a drystone wall crosses the beck, the walling stones change from greywacke to limestone at the crossing point. Barbondale has also been glaciated so that the relative importance of glaciation/other erosion is hard to determine.

At the head of Barbondale, as it turns the corner left into lower Dentdale, is a corrie - Scar Bottom - formed by the movement of the remnant of a glacier towards the end of the last ice age, which was less than 10,000 years ago. The Rainbow Parish also has some drumlins near Preston Patrick, and St



The road through Upper Barbondale separates the Yoredale scenery on the right from the Silurian on the left

Patrick's church appears to sit atop one of them. There is no definitive theory of how drumlins were formed but it is accepted that they comprise debris resulting from glacier movement, and that the elongated shape indicates the glacier's direction of travel, which must have been roughly north-south. Between Kirkby Lonsdale and Kendal there are many excellent examples of drumlins, for example alongside stretches of the A65.

The 300 million years since the Carboniferous period, is broken down by geologists into a number of periods - Permian, Triassic, Jurassic, Cretaceous etc - during which Britain has continued its gradual drift northwards.

In the Rainbow Parish, continent building and erosion must have continued throughout this time, but there is no visible evidence, except from the repeated glaciation, whose impact on the landscape was described earlier.

Conclusions

Within a few miles of Kirkby Lonsdale's Market Square, we have scenery that results from deposits of volcanic ash, overlain with debris from the erosion of mountains which were probably as high as the Himalayas are today, and from the squashed remains of innumerable sea creatures. The land we see today has been at times deep under, and at others high above the sea, sometimes covered with kilometers-thick ice, and then scoured by melting glaciers. Some geologists believe we have now entered a new geological age; one in which the impact of man's activities is becoming a factor on the surface of the earth. Only time will tell!

The authors, who are enthusiastic amateurs but not geologists, are indebted to Claire Millington and Jean Slee-Smith who are, for help with this article. Any remaining errors are attributable to the authors alone.



Scar Bottom, near the junction of Barbondale and Dentdale, is a corrie formed by a retreating melting glacier

Rounded drumlins near Preston Patrick, composed of debris left behind by moving glaciers



Local Curiosities

The Fairbank 'Hole'

During Easter 1975 a large circular hole, 19 ft across and between 6 and 8 ft deep suddenly appeared just behind the wall at the edge of the road, in what is now the garden of 58 Fairgarth Drive. It was spiral lined with coursed stone which was roughly dressed and mortared. The sudden appearance was due to the collapse of its roof, the stones from which lay in the bottom of the hole. One theory was that the chamber was the remains of an ice-house, but searches of old maps, landowners deeds and Tithe Commission plans yielded no evidence. Eventually one Civic Society member, Major Skipwith, found an old but undated plan showing the line of pipes originally laid for conveying water to the town. At a point on the map roughly corresponding to the site of the hole was found faintly penciled in the word 'receiver'. Civic Society members cleared the hole and took detailed measurements and photographs. Finally a 3 1/2 inch cast iron pipe was found with a lead-caulked spigot and socket joint, which was taken as confirmation that this receiver had indeed been a holding vessel for the town's original water supply.

Help Wanted

The committee is looking for some help with hand-delivering this quarterly newsletter. If you live in Kirkby Lonsdale, Biggins, or Barbon and are able to deliver a small number of Newsletters in your local area, then please contact the Secretary. Every little helps.



Planning Matters

SL/2015/1185 - Land off A683 adjacent to Devil's Bridge. We objected strongly to this application to convert the agricultural site in the field just off the A683 into two houses. The proposed buildings by virtue of their scale and position in an open setting beyond the established 'edge of development' would cause significant harm to the intrinsic beauty of the countryside, and appear to contradict a number of planning laws. Within five months the site will lie within a National Park. Damaging the setting of the Grade1-listed Devil's Bridge (100m from the curtilage, and about 250m from the proposed buildings) is also a concern.

SL/2015/1199 Fell Garth Farm, Casterton. We supported the conversion of this barn into a dwelling as it seems a good use for a somewhat dilapidated building. As a traditional bank barn, the existing double, full-height entrance on the north side facing the road is distinctive, and we asked whether the new building could retain this feature.

SL/2016/0016 - Casterton School, Conversion of Former Boarding School to 20 dwellings. Whilst supporting this sympathetic conversion we asked whether the plans could include involve safe walking routes within, and from the site, and suggested some other minor changes.

Rainbow Parish Place Names

Fierce debate often accompanies discussion of the origins of place names. This is not surprising as many settlements are ancient, and names may be based on Old English, Old Norse, personal names and so on. There is sometimes no consensus on the origin of a name, just a number of possibilities. The derivations of some of the names of the parishes in the Rainbow Parish are no exception, and the Editor has in some cases chosen the one he prefers.

Barbon

Likely derived from the Old English words for a beaver and a stream. It could also mean 'Bear stream' but bears were hunted to extinction in England in the 10th century, beavers not until some 600 years later.

Casterton

Probably means 'Roman site farm/settlement'. No settlement remains are known, but it is situated not far from a Roman road.

Hutton Roof

'Hill-spur farm/settlement', from the Old English meaning a sharply projecting piece of ground. The origin of Roof is uncertain, but may refer to someone named Rolf connected with the place.

Kirkby Lonsdale

More certain than most, and derived from Old Norse, this means 'Settlement with a church in the valley of the (river) Lune'.

Lupton

Derived from Old English this translates as 'farm/settlement of someone called Hluppa'.

Middleton

In Old English means 'Middle farm/settlement'. Presumably 'middle' means between Kirkby and Sedbergh?

Mansergh

Another personal name here, the name deriving from the Old Norse word for a shieling or summer pasture, associated with a person or family called Mann.

Audrey Phillips is collecting derivations of more local place names in the Rainbow Parish and it is hoped to include these in a future newsletter.

Editor: Dr Ken Humphris The views expressed are those of the Editor and do not necessarily reflect those of the Civic Society Committee as a whole. The Editor would be delighted to receive comments or articles from members of the Society for inclusion in the newsletter. Registered Charity No. 502315	Committee Chairman Dr Ken Humphris Lowgill, High Casterton, LA62SD Tel: 015242 71983 Secretary Mrs Sue Pelter The Garden House, 12 Mill Brow, Kirkby onsdale, LA6 2AT Tel: 015242 73824 Ms Lynne Seignot Tel: 015242 74390	Membership Secretary Mrs Judith Manifold Tel: 015242 73457 Treasurer Mr David Dalgoutte Delph cottage Jingling Lane Kirkby Lonsdale LA6 2AW Mrs Audrey Phillips Tel: 015242 72514	Mr Peter Stockdale Tel: 015242 76443 Mr Tom Felix Tel: 015242 72248 Ms Margaret Bunch Tel: 015242 76494 Mr Peter Yorke Tel: 015242 76420 Mr Mike Marczynski Tel: 15242 71200
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