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Mourholme

Magazine

of Local History

MOURHOLME LOCAL INSTORY SOCIETY

THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE

OF LOCAL HISTORY

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MORECAMBE BAY AND SILVERDALE - MORE LITERARY ASSOCIATIONS J. D. Marshall

The opening of the railway line from Carnforth to Ulverston (1857) brought numerous travellers and settlers on the fringes of Morecambe Bay. One of the most remarkable visitors by rail, one who had a great affection for Silverdale and its district, was the Lancashire dialect writer and topographical author, Edwin Waugh

(1817-1890).

Waugh is perhaps best known for certain dialect poems, like 'Cum Wham to thy Childer an' Me' and 'Besom Ben', and he lived through, and partly created, a great resurgence of dialect writing in his home county. Like many of his fellows, he had to 'addle' a living in ordinary pursuits for much of his life, and until the age of forty, he worked as a journeyman printer, secretary and salesman, chiefly in the environment of industrial Manchester, which he heartily disliked. Like many thousands of intelligent artisans, he had a profound hankering for the countryside, and had, as a young man, been drawn into the exploration of the Lancashire moors. In his first published volume, Lancashire Sketches (1855), he exploits the possibilities of local speech to the full, and, just as interestlingly, he was later enabled to do so in the case of Lonsdale and the Lake Counties, especially when he published a further volume, Rambles in the Lake Country and its Borders (1861).* It will be noticed that this was written soon after the opening of the through coastal railway route. Indeed, the last-mentioned book contains numerous

* My own copy, acquired twenty years ago, has what purports to be Hugh Walpole's book-plate on it. This was much treasured - until a book-dealer casually told me that a whole 'generation' of these Walpole plates were 'manufactured' for sale purposes. So be warned!

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

The Society is named after the Manor of Mourholme, the home of the medieval Lords of Warton. Their seat, Mourholme Castle, stood on the site now covered by Dock Acres Quarry.

* * *

Yearly subscription, £2.50, includes evening lectures and field trips (guest admission 40p), and The Mourholme Magazine of Local History (non-member price 30p).

Application for membership should be made to Mrs J. Chatterley, 173A Main St, Warton, Lancs LA5 9QF.

* * *

Contributions of articles, notes, queries, letters, etc, are invited and should be sent to Mrs N. Thomas, The Gables, Silverdale, Lancs LA5 OTX, Tel 701230.

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references to the railway: 'Before the railway was made, the old way of crossing the sands from Lancaster to Ulverstone must have been very striking...'(p.44); 'the new line of railway from Lancaster to Ulverstone winds by Silverdale, with the grand features of land and sea full in sight'(p.47).

Surely this sounds just like a guide book? Yes, indeed, this is just what Waugh was really writing. He was advertising our quiet corner of England in persuasive style, resting his approach on the new accessibility of the area and the growing taste for travel which was now reaching to the artisans as well as the 'middling' groups in society. He has a highly personal style, loaded, it is true, with the usual Victorian cliches and phrases; but, all the same, it succeeds in being fresh and lively, and one can be sure that he has really looked at the area he is writing about. His evocation of Grange-over-Sands is superb, giving us a picture of the Crown Inn before it had reached its later uninteresting respectability. And, of course, one should never forget that he helped to make our own area popular, or fashionable. Since the great majority of our students of local history are 'offcomers', we must feel some sympathy with Edwin Waugh.

In Rambles in the Lake Country, there are three complete chapters, making a 'Book' on its own near the end of the volume, with 'Silverdale' as the subject. In the opening sentences, Waugh remarks 'I sometimes think it strange that I should have lived so long in Lancashire without hearing of the place before'. Not too surprising, for the author was raised in Rochdale, a very different place, and was a young man when the first railways were built. He goes on to say that 'the life of this retired spot is all rural repose', and he keeps to the theme consistently. He writes of the 'quaint manners, language and peculiar way of life of the inhabitants'. He used the Silverdale station as his starting point, and turned left towards Slackwood and Silverdale Green, but remarks that Silverdale itself is hardly a village; there is only a 'village part ... nearest to the sea, where the two hotels, and the little

hat-full of a post office, with three or four other dwellings, stand within a few yards of one another'. The author asks for 'Mister Fawcett o' th' Victoria Inn', and there was indeed such a place at that time, as well as a post office and grocery - both appear in the Mannex Directory of North Lancashire for 1865. The 'Victoria' was 'a large, plain white-washed building upon high ground', and the author discovers later that his bedroom in the inn was used by the Salford M.P. Joseph Brotherton, a famous campaigner against the Corn Laws. There are other bits of local history: 'This is the table 'at old Lord Derby's steward used to receive his Arnside rents on'.

Waugh, like Mrs Gaskell, looked with fascinated eyes at the awe-inspiring sweep of the tide-empty sands: 'Out towards Lancaster the water was in full sight, bright and smooth as a mirror'. He noted the existence of a solitary cottage known as 'the Bath House'. More strikingly, he noticed a drove of cattle on their may from Kents Bank to the Warton shore, another piece of striking lore, because one does not usually think of the Bay as a drove road! Yet it plainly was one, and, of course, cattle regularly crossed the Solway sands in the same manner.

The landlord later tells him that 'if you'll be up in good time i' th' mornin', you'll see maybe eighty or a hundred fishin' boats in the bay - like a fleet comin' up to tak th' place'. So, the shrimping and other vessels were as numerous as that, even in 1860, before Morecambe had properly appeared.

These evocations of rural peace and quietude were, of course, enjoyed when the Carmforth furnaces had not been built, and when Barrow's first ironworks was only beginning to smear the horizon with its smoke. Meanwhile, it is not likely that Waugh was inventing many, or any, of these observations, because he had a remarkable ear for speech, and he paints pictures of individuals emitting dialect and strange expressions. The impression, much of the time, is of a silence so unearthly that one can hear the sea going out or coming in across the Bay - not something that most of us notice today.

At the same time, it should not be thought that Waugh was so sensitive that he painted scenes different from those of most other people; it was simply that he came from industrial Manchester, where the iron tyres of drays and lurries were beginning to make a frightful noise on the flags of the streets, and where hooters, whistles and buzzers were becoming the rule.

Likewise, Silverdale was very thinly settled; one had to look hard to pick out the houses. We need the assistance of vivid writers to interpret the quality of life and scenery in the past. Local history is not all 'facts' of a down-to-earth kind; it calls for imagination in order that it can be properly understood. We are lucky that Edwin Waugh visited the district when he did.

WARTON CRAG MINES (PART II)

Robert Ashmead and David Peter

Mining in the Nineteenth Century

Much of the following information relating to mining activity on the Crag in the nineteenth century has been derived from two local newspapers, The Lancaster Guardian and The Lancaster Gazette. Selections from the advertisement and comment columns of these two papers are given below, as they illustrate vividly the rapid changes which took place in the fortunes of the several enterprises involved.

1836-1841

1836 An agreement was ma 3 between 'Edward Dawson of Aldeliffe Hall, John Pratchett of Liverpool, and Thomas Cartwright of Llanassa (Flint), Corn Merchant, to mine for copper, iron, ironstone, lead, tin, calomine, fossils, etc., which can be found for under all the enclosed lands of the said E. Dawson, in the parish of Warton for 24 years from Sept last...permission to set up any steam engine etc...One tenth share of all minerals to Edward Dawson.' Barrow Scout Mine was the only one opened on this land with any success.

1837 A lease was made on 14 Feb between R. Gillow of Leighton Hall and four merchants and one gentleman, all Liverpool Trustees of the Warton Crag, Silverdale, and Leighton Mining Company, for 23 years. The mines were reported to be quite rich in copper.

Opened at this time were North Level and Gillow's Shaft of Higher Mine and Laycock's Shaft of Lower Mine.

Work was suspended in this year on account of water. A steam engine was installed to deal with this, but a severe three month frost hindered the work.

1838 (13 Jan) The sale of the five shares in the Warton Crag. Silverdale, and Leighton Mining Company,

advertised to take place on 15 January at the King's Arms. Lancaster. is postponed.

1840 The company ceased to work.

Adv. (12 Sep): 'Valuable mining materials to be sold by auction at the mines at Warton Cragg, including the undermentioned machinery and materials.

One 14" cylinder condensing high pressure

steam engine, with Boiler.

Two horse whims, one capstan, cast iron pipes for three shafts, anvils, bellows, vices etc.

Twenty tons of red paint.

Apply Captain Nicholas at the mine.'

By way of interest, there were only two miners. both Welshmen.

1860-1881

1860 Interest was again being shown in the mine.

1865 Iron oxide was being extracted. Mr H. Walduck of Manchester was acting as agent. (He was also agent for the Carnforth Haematite Company.)

1869 (3 Nov) 'It is encouraging to know that the efforts of the energetic searchers for iron ore in the neighbourhood of Silverdale and Arnside are meeting with success. The owners of the workings at Silverdale are able to send off several wagon loads per week. At Arnside also a large quantity of iron ore has been found.'

1876 Walduck became sole agent for several small local mining and quarrying companies.

1877 On the death of R. M. Shipman (one of the partners), Walduck became a partner. Thus was formed the Warton and Silverdale Mining Company, with Walduck as managing director. He lived at West Lindeth in Silverdale.

1877 (19 May) The death occurred at Cragg Foot, Warton, of John Patten, iron miner, aged 67 years.

1879 The Warton and Silverdale Mining Company reported £10,000 Capital in 1,000 shares of £10 each, with power to increase to \$20,000. Up to this time. some 2,365 tons of ore had been sold in Silverdale for £18,533 (£8 per ton).

1880 The company ran into debt. Rent was owed to Dawson, and Gillow was suing for damage to property and rent arrears of £147.5s.

1880 (3 Mar) Adv: 'Wanted by the Warton and Silverdale Mining Company at Silverdale near Carnforth a clerk to take charge of books, keep mens' time, and to act as Secretary. Apply by letter stating qualifications and salary to Messrs Boddington and Ball, 1 Princes St. Menchester.'

1881 (19 Feb) 'Crag Foot Mines. Important sale of mining plant and machinery under a distress for Imperial taxes...Plant and machinery, bar and hoop iron, weighing machine, tram rails, grindstone, pump, gearing and rods, iron piping, two cwts blasting powder.

The following week (23 Feb) the sale was cancelled.

1881-1890

1881 (June) A new lease was granted between T.R. Gillow of Leighton and the Warton and Silverdale Mining Company.

(2 Aug) The newspapers reported that the Warton Mining Company with offices at Cragg Foot had been charged with having no lightning conductor on the explosives store, exposure of iron and stone, no exclusion of matches, and not kept free from grit. Mr Walduck, Company Secretary, was fined £2.10.0 on one charge, other charges dismissed.

1883 The recently formed Warton and Silverdale Company did no better than previous ventures, and the Dawson property was sold for £510.

1884 (23 Feb) The papers reported a claim made against Mr H. Walduck under Employers' Liability Act for the balance of wages due to Mr William Armer, miner, at the Paint Mines on Warton Crag. Case adjourned.

There was little activity at the mine due to competition from other cheaper paint manufacturers.

1890 (25 Mar) The company was dissolved.

1891-1894

1891 The mine was reopened by the Warton Mining and Colour Company (Regd. Office, 86 King St, Manchester). The venture was no more successful than the one it replaced. Mr Walduck was still agent, but on his death in June 1892 the company closed down and was disposed of in 1894.

1894 (27 Jan) 'The Warton Mining and Colour Company in liquidation. Auction of the whole of the leasehold interest in Warton Mines producing Warton native Oxide of iron.'

1894 (3 Feb) 'Warton mines for auction in Manchester last Friday. Only one bid...withdrawn...believe negotiating sale privately.'

Thus ended a period of spasmodic mining activity on Warton Crag spread over 150 years.

* * *

ANNOUNCEMENTS

A REMINDER

THE MOURHOLME MAGAZINE OF LOCAL HISTORY

VOL II, No 3

Spring 1984

THE HOUSES OF WARTON AND ITS NEIGHBOURING PARISHES

Have you written your article yet? Would you like some help? Won't you contribute?

Don't forget!

Deadline: 1 February 1984

* * *

INVITATION TO NEW MEMBERS

Research into local history is one of the objectives of the MLHS, and the Society pursues an active research programme.

Any member, new or old, interested in joining our research group is cordially invited to attend our next meeting on 13 January.

Experienced or just starting, come join us.

Please ring Mrs N. Thomas, 701230, for details.

* *

COMING EVENTS

MLHS THURSDAY EVENING LECTURES

12 Jan 1984 Sharpe, Paley and Austin: A Neglected

Architectural Firm

Mr James Price

9 Feb 1984 Quakerism in the Northwest Mrs E. V. Foulds

7.30 at Hyning Hall, Warton Guest admission 40p

* * *

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Members may have noticed that Dr Winchester's course, The Northern English Countryside, 1580-1980 (details on opposite page), conflicts with our monthly Thursday evening lectures.

Dr Winchester has tried, very kindly but unsuccessfully, to reschedule his course. He proposes instead to schedule no meetings on Mourholme nights, making the time up in field trips to be arranged with the class.

Although this plan resolves the long-term conflict, it leaves the problem of 12 January, the first meeting of Dr Winchester's class and our January lecture, unsolved. As an imperfect compromise, we suggest that members wishing to attend both events do the following: come to the MLHS lecture, but before the 12th let any member of the Committee know that you want to enrol in Dr Winchester's course. This information will be passed on to him on the night, enabling him to estimate the size of the class and insuring that you will be counted.

* * *

COMING EVENTS

COURSES OF INTEREST TO LOCAL HISTORIANS

The Later Prehistory of Northwest England

Mr Tom Clare
10 Lectures
Tuesdays, 17 Jan, 7.30-9.00
St Leonard's House, St Leonardgate, Lancaster
£9.50

Man and the Lakeland Landscape

Dr William Rollinson 10 Meetings Tuesdays, 10 Jan, 2.30-4.00 Gaskell Hall, Silverdale £9.50

The Northern English Countryside, 1580-1980

Dr Angus Winchester 10 Meetings including field trips Thursdays, 12 Jan, 7.30-9.00 Old School, Yealand Conyers £9.50

Offered by the University of Liverpool, Institute of Extension Studies

Enrol at 1st meeting of the course Reduced fees for pensioners and students

* * *

NOTES AND QUERIES

NOW WE SHALL NEVER KNOW (See D. Holmes's article, 'The Castles of the Barony of Kendal', MMLH II-1)

The succinct article on the castles of the Barony of Kendal raised again the question of whether Mourholme was of timber or stone. Whilst it is possible some of the stonework reported at earlier times - and sometimes attributed to Roman docks. etc - belonged to the medieval structure, no solid evidence was found in the salvage reconnaisance undertaken in 1974. This is, however, not surprising; the portion of the presumed site then remaining being too small to be an indicator of anything other than rubbish pit. Rather than be convinced that the building was wholly of timber, I believe the evidence does not allow us to say what materials were used. One possible clue is, however, the apparent smoothness of the ridge on which Hallsteads barn stood prior to the commencement of quarrying. The barn is thought to have stood on the site of the castle and the smooth character of the ground not usually what we would have expected if the site had once been a substantial masonry structure. But we should not forget that half timbered buildings usually require light masonry and that the rebuilding of many manor houses in stone in the 14th century and after allow the suspicion of a late use of timber 'fortifications' in the area.

Tom Clare

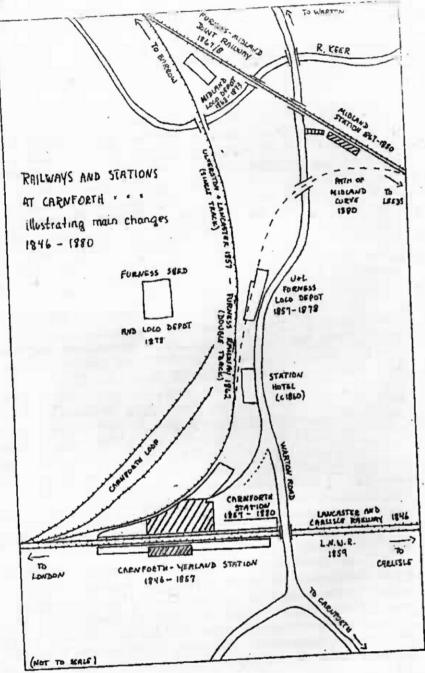
CARNFORTH'S FORGOTTEN STATIONS

Ian Wilson

Today when one walks into many of British Rail's stations, it is not hard to get the feel of past glory. Carnforth Station is no exception; one has just to walk through the entrance arch to see that the main line platforms have been cut back and that the building itself is rapidly decaying. It is not hard to imagine the time not so long ago when London express trains stopped here while hundreds of people moved around the platforms in the heyday of railways. Go back a little further in time, however, and one would find only a tiny halt, and indeed it is possible that Carnforth may never have had a station at all in the beginning.

By June 1840 a network of railways had come north from London to reach Lancaster. However, after this point there was disagreement about the course the line should take to Scotland. The favoured course at the time was one proposed by Joseph Locke in 1835. He envisaged a line going up the Lune Valley via Kirkby Lonsdale and onto Tebay before descending to Penrith and Carlisle. A second route was put forward by Job Bintley under the insistance of parties in Kendal. He proposed a line running through Carnforth to Kendal and up Longsleddale before tunneling through to Hawswater and onto Penrith. A third route was put forward by George Stephenson. He suggested a barrage carrying the railway over Morecambe Bay, another over the Duddon, the line then following the coast to Carlisle, thus avoiding any high ground.

These three and other proposals were put before a Royal Commission which was set up to examine railway routes between England and Scotland. The Commission rejected the coastal line as being too long, while it foresaw difficulties in tunneling under Longsleddale as Bintley had suggested. However, it suggested that the southern half of Bintley's line could be linked with the



northern half of Locke's line, and this was the course that was finally adopted.

Parliamentary approval for the line was given on 6 June 1844, and work started before the end of the month. The Lancaster and Carlisle Railway Company had envisaged a single line. Demand for their shares was so great, however, that money problems vanished and a double track was built. The line opened to Kendal on 21 September 1846 and on to Carlisle on 17 December.

In 1846 Carnforth was a small village mainly built along the present North Road. It would be logical for the company to provide a station for the community as one of its 'smaller' stops on the way to Carlisle. The station was named Carnforth-Yealand, indicating the unimportant nature of the village. There has been some doubt over the actual site of the first station; however, an early O.S. map shows it to have been on the site of the present day main line platforms, just south of Warton Road Bridge. Why the station should have been called Carnforth-Yealand instead of the more logical Carnforth-Warton Station is probably lost in history. The station consisted of two platforms with the station building being on the Carnforth side of the line, probably just south of the present day ticket office. An 1850 timetable shows that just two up (to London) trains (10:30, 5:24) and two down (from London) trains (11:14, 1:51) stopped at the station with no trains stopping on Sundays. Indeed if it were not for events going on elsewhere at the time, that could have been the history of the station, opened 1846 and no doubt closed around 1970 if not before.

The fact that this did not happen was due to events taking place on the Furness peninsula. In 1846 the Furness Railway Company opened a line from Kirkby in Furness to the then tiny hamlet of Barrow with a branch to Dalton. The Dalton line was extended in 1851 to Lindal and then onto the then biggest town on the peninsula, Ulverston. However, the final link from Ulverston to Carnforth was independently constructed by the Ulverston and Lancaster Railway Company. Carnforth was the logical point of junction with the Lancaster and Carlisle.

The line was opened on 1 September 1857.

The coming of the Ulverston and Lancaster meant drastic changes for the small Carnforth-Yealand station. To show its new importance, 'Yealand' was dropped from its name, and as 'Carnforth Station' it now rivalled Oxenholme and Penrith as the most important station between Lancaster and Carlisle. A new platform had to be built to a commodate U & L traffic, which took the form of a triangle between the main line north and the curving new line to the west, with a new station building on that platform. A small loco depot was built just northwest of the station beside Warton Road, while a number of loop lines were built between the main line and the Ulverston line for goods traffic. The line to Ulverston was at this time only a single track.

Two years later in 1859 a new name app at Carnforth Station, that of the mighty London and North Western Railway, the 'premier line'. That year the L.N.W.R. had leased the profitable Lancaster and Carlisle, which itself had previously leased the Lancaster and Preston Junction Railway and the independent Kendal and Windermere Line. Three years after the L.N.W.R. came to Carnforth, the Furness F ilway arrived by absorbing the Ulverston and Lancaster in 1862. The following year the Furness doubled the line between Carnforth and Ulverston, though no new platform was added to Carnforth Station. During this time the L.N.W.R. built its own loco depot south of the station.

The next development at Carnforth started in the 1850's when a large deposit of haematite, an iron relatively free from phosphorus used in steel making, was discovered at Park just outside Dalton in Furness. This resulted in an increased rail traffic for the Furness, particularly to Yorkshire. Trains bound from Furness to the east, however, had to reverse at Lancaster Castle before going along the single track to join the east-west lines of the Midland Company at Green Ayre.

In 1861 the Furness and Midland proposed a new line to cut out this roundabout route, the new line to go from Carnforth to the Midland line at Wennington. The line was opened to a point just east of Warton Road on

6 June 1867 with the stretch from there across Warton Road and the Keer opened on 1 July 1868. However, as trains from the east would need to reverse down the Furness line to reach Carnforth Station, a new station was opened just east of Warton Road. The steps which can still be seen between the two RR bridges on Warton Road lead up to the site of this station. All trains over this line were run by the Midland, which built a loco depot just north of the Keer in the 'V' between the new line and the Furness line to the main station. Only five years later, however, the Midland found these facilities too small and the present Midland shed was built just east of the A6.

The separate Midland station lasted only a short time. Plans were made to build a curve from the Midland line crossing Warton Road and continuing on into the main station. The Furness shed, however, stood in the way, so in 1878 a new shed and loco depot were built on the site of the present shed occupied by Steamtown. The obstructing shed was demolished and the curve opened on 2 August 1880, the Midland station then being closed.

The arrival of the Midland at the main station coincided with its rebuilding in a grand manner and taking on a much more familiar look. The building which now holds the ticket office was built, with the platform being extended north under Warton Road Bridge. A bay platform was provided just south of the ticket office buildings. A large train shed was provided covering the bay line and two parallel sidings. The north wall of this can still be seen jutting out into the station car park. A canopy ran the length of the main line platform from its southern end to the end of the buildings just south of the bridge. The triangle shaped middle platform was built with two prongs, one going aside the main line, the other following the Furness curve. The Midland bay, which still can be seen, was at its northern end. The buildings which now stand on this platform were built then. No second Furness platform was built. however; up and down Furness trains still operated from the single centre platform. A large, over-all roof in Gothic style covered the Furness lines and Midland bay.

A large wall for this was built on the site of the present down Furness platform. The siding against this wall inside the shed was given the name of 'Snatchems'.

The station stayed unaltered until the days of the London, Midland, & Scottish Railway at the 1923 grouping. In 1925 the L.M.S. closed the Furness shed, as three sheds for the now one company was considered extravagant.

The next changes to the station occurred during 1939-1940. The overall roof was demolished, while a new platform for down Furness trains was finally added. Shortly after this, the station was used for the station scene in the film 'Brief Encounter'.

In 1935 the Furness shed was demolished and work started on a new shed and loco depot, which exist today as 'Steamtown'. The depot included an ashplant and the huge coaling tower which still dominates the town. It was opened in 1945 and at the time was the most modern in Europe. Once the new depot was opened, the old L.N.W.R. shed could be domolished, while the Midland sheds were sold to a private firm.

The station stayed the same for the next twenty years, surviving the 1963 Beeching cuts. The onset of deiselisation and electrification, however, had drastic effects on Carnforth. Steam locos operated out of Carnforth until the end of steam on BR in August 1968. On 31 March 1969 BR closed the loco depot, but by then Steamtown had been born and now flourishes on the depot site.

Meanwhile the station itself came under scrutiny in the interests of speed. The main line platforms were closed and partly demolished. The canopy on the ticket office platform was also demolished. In 1973 electrification work started, resulting in the southern approaches being changed. Electric trains started running from May 1974.

Since then the remaining parts of the station have been tidied up and a glass screen added to shield passengers from the main line. Both Barrow and Leeds trains now stop at the Furness platforms, while the Midland Bay is rarely if ever used. The station is still moderately busy, most trains attracting a reasonable number of passengers. During summer months the station

gets a boost by the steam specials running either to Ravenglass or York, these always attracting a large crowd.

The station should remain open for the foreseeable future, though rumours circulate from time to time about the closure of either the Barrow or Leeds line. And who knows? BR may even one day reopen the main line platforms. At the moment, however, one can only dream about that.

NOTES

Works consulted:

David Joy, A Guide to Steamtown.

, Railways of Lake Counties.

, Railways of Lancashire.

K. Entwhistle, A History of Bolton le Sands.
Ordnance Survey Maps: 1st Edition Lancashire 6", c1848
and c1865.

DOCUMENTS

A LETTER FROM AMERICA, 1748

The following letter is one of the documents belonging to the Quakers of the Yealand Meeting. Thomas Cum ings went to America in 1728 and settled in Chester, Pennsylvania, a few miles south of Philadelphia on the Delaware River. He is writing to his cousin Edward Cummings of 'Hilderstone nr Yealand'.

(The original letter was almost entirely without punctuation. I have punctuated this transcript to make it easier to read and, I hope, grasp the sense of the letter. The last three paragraphs here were one paragraph in the original. Some explanatory notes follow.)

Chester on Delawar 1st mo, the 23d, 1747/8

'Dear & Loving Couzin

I Could not well Omitt this Oppertunity by our Dear Friend & Neighbour Jane Hoskins (who is Comeing to visit you in these troublesom times) of Aquainting thee that I and my Family is in a good State of health at present, I hopeing she may finde thee and thine In the Same Enjoyment tho I must own & I doubt not but thou findes it that Age Creeps on apace & brings its Common Attendents along with it, yeat I have been & Still am favoured beyond most Considering my Weakly Constitution. My wife has been often ayling but I hope is now Growing more harty, tho fatt & heavy. I Question not but Ere now thou must have heard that Brother Enoch & Sister Ann is both dead Sometime agoe so that I have none on this Side of the water but the young offspring of my Brothers & Sisters who the Near & Dear to me yeat Seems Somewhat removed from that Nearness that Appeared amongst us of the Elder Stock; & when I look over the Seas towards you I finde my Self much In the Same Circumstances & I seem like one left after the Vintage to be Gleaned up in time, for which I hope to wait with patience. May those favours Conduce to the leading me on into a more & Intimate Union in Spirrit with the Divine Goodness which

'is the Center of all out happyness.

Benjamin Bispham & his Good wife is Removed to Mount Holly at a Greater Distance from us then formerly So that we Can Seldom hear from them, but I know not but they are both well. I believe he has Got a Considerable Estate, tho I Can hardly be perswaded he is got to a better place for Getting money then where he was. He thinks he is and I wish it may prove So.

Couzin John Cumming is out of his time, is a good workman I hope likely to Do well. At present he has taken a tour towards New York. His Brother Thomas is not yeat free but is in health So far as I know.

We In this part of the world have hitherto been very much favoured with peace dureing this Jangling Warr. What this Summer may prove I Cannot foresee. We are very much Threatened with an Invasion, the for what I Can hardly tell. Here is no Great Stock of plunder to Invite them Excepting provision that is plenty here & Scarce with them, but then they have the Oppertunity of taking our Bread & flower at Sea. & that they do not let Slipp, for our Merchants has Suffered a pretty deal: & If they Should undertake to Ruin the Countery & Render us Incapable to Raise it for them or Carry it out, that would be to their Detriment & they must Suffer want, for if they had the Country they Could not raise it them-Selves So that I am In hopes they will let us alone. Execpt Some Stragleing Privateers that may do Some Damage here & there where the(y) fall upon the Inabitants about the Borders of the Sea & River.

Our People (many of them) Seems Uneasie for the Citty of Philadelphia & has proposed to Raise forts & Batterys (tho I think friends keep Clear) but nothing yeat I think is done towards it, at least of any Consequence, and In Order to Strengthen themselves Many have Entered into an Association for mutual defence & Exercises themSelves at Sell times and has Chosen Captains & Other Officers who has Got Commissions. But I think very few under the Notis of friends has Signed the Association & None that I know of undertakes to Exercise themselves, but the rest has formed themselves Into Companys to a Considerable Nomber, & tho I think they

'Can do no Good, from the manner of their Establishment, yeat I fear they may do hurt from the knowledge & union of their Strength, in Altering our Assembly by Governing in Elections. I believe heretofore by all that knew us we were looked on as a peaceble harmles people, but If this Go on we are likely to make another Sort of figure &, like Swizerland, become a Colony of Souldiers, without peace; or Some Other Event hapen .(to?). Stop our Career. I pray God may defend us from our Enemy & from .(our?)Selves & When I Consider how for a few Righteous persons he would .(have?). spared Sodom, I have Some hopes he will Spare us for his Peoples Sa.(ke?). If not it is our duty patiently to Endure, knowing this, that the no afliction be Joyous for the present, yeat there may be in it an Exceeding Weight of Glory.

I hope Thomas Gawthorp is arrived Ere this. Pray remember my & my wives kinde Love to him & to John Griffeths & his Companion, honest Old Peter, when they Come your way, & If Ebenezer Large Should be your way after this Comes to hand, Give my Dear Love to him. Likewise Remember mine & my wives Kinde Love to William Backhouse, John Lancaster, Sister Jennet Barrow & Sister Elling Cummings & all their familys. To her that was Ruth Robinson and Sibball Russel, if Living, to Thomas. Beakbain & family and to all our Other Friends, Relations & Aquaintence as If Named & Especially to thy Self, thy wife & Sone, a Large Share of the Best Respects of thy Assured Loving & Wellwishing Friends

Thomas Cummings & Alice Cummings'

^{&#}x27;Mount Holly', about 100 miles west of Chester.

^{&#}x27;out of his time', finished his apprenticeship, unlike his brother who is 'not yet free'.

^{&#}x27;this Jangling Warr', 'King George's War'(1745-8), the Colonial arm of Europe's War of the Austrian Succession. The French did not invade and the Treaty of Aachen ended hostilities until 1754.

^{&#}x27;Sell times', favorable or proper times.