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## ESTABLISHMENT AND GROWTH OF THE CARNFORTH IRONWORKS

The Carnforth Haematite (Iron) Company was born in 1864; with registered capital of £100,000 in five hundred £200 shares. There were no local names among the shareholders who were, in the main, business and professional men from Manchester, Birmingham and the North East. Amongst them was Henry Bessemer\* with two shares.

Iron working was not new to the area; the monks of Furness Abbey had worked iron. By the early 19th century Furness was exporting iron-ore (182,000 tons in 1849), and by the 1860's Barrow had the world's largest steel complex with three blast furnaces. Carnforth's works can indeed be seen as a natural growth point for the region's iron industry when new factors, which with hindsight we call the Industrial Revolution, came into play.

During the mid-nineteenth century demands for wrought iron world-wide were becoming insatiable; for buildings, bridges, boats, but above all for railways, especially rails, where Britain was the world's chief supplier.\*\* Everything essential for manufacturing iron either existed at Carnforth in the 1860's, or could be

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\*Henry Bessemer patented in 1856 an economical process by which molten pig iron disturbed by a current of air is turned directly into steel. He was knighted in 1879 (Chambers *Biographical Dictionary*)

\*\* Production of wrought iron in Britain grew from 300,000 tons between 1830 and 1870.

easily brought there by various railway company lines which converged on the area. (i)

- 1) Iron ore plentiful in nearby Furness.
- 2) Good quality coke from the Durham coalfield.
- 3) Limestone used as flux in the furnaces from the Crag.
- 4) Water from the Keer.
- 5) The saltings of Warton and Silverdale made an ideal area for dumping slag.
- 6) A large flat cheap site for the works, in the triangle of land produced by the junction of the railway lines.

A railway line, or tramline as it was called on contemporary maps, was built to run from the works to the Scout Quarry, with a branch out to the tip on the sands. The remains of it can still be traced in the fields and roadside verges alongside the toll road to Crag Foot and out to the sands past the present tip at Cotestones. There were many accidents, especially to children, during the building of this quarry railway link. The accidents frequently involved amputation or surgery under chloroform at the "Lancaster Dispensary". There seems to have been a total absence of some rudimentary safety measures let alone compensation or benefit for the disabled.

In March 1865 the *Lancaster Gazette* reported that the site was a chaotic scene:

*Here a number of huge stones thrown anyhow in a heap...here a steam engine pounding away...masons at work in one quarter, bricklayers in another...*

A Mr Edward Barton was appointed by the owners to oversee the founding of the iron works and the hiring of labour. In May his wife laid the foundation stone of the engine house chimney - 210ft high and 19ft

across at the base, and the town's landmark for some 60 years. Five furnaces were planned at first (and a sixth added later). It was anticipated that there would be employment for 200-500 men. In 1866 two of the furnaces were "blown in" and the first pig-iron produced. - Blowing in meant starting up the furnace with blasts of hot air through the first loading of ore, coke and limestone. It was a serious matter after that to allow the furnace to "blow out" again - the contents could solidify, and the furnace develop cracks and other expensive damage.

In 1867 Edward Barton was appointed Chief Engineer, and was later to become Manager. Although only in his thirties, he was experienced in iron-making techniques from his time in the industry on Teeside and in West Cumbria. Warton Grange, on Sand Lane in Warton, was built for him and his family, and it was his home from 1873.

In the initial phase of establishing an ironworks, there would have been an influx of construction workers. But once established, labour demand would be for skilled and unskilled\* iron workers. Tradition has it that these men came from Dudley - the Dudley/Bilston/Wednesbury area of Staffordshire. Some support is given to this idea, among other things, by the fact that the maps of the times call the Millhead area "Dudley". (ii)

By 1870 four furnaces were each producing 300-400 tons of pig-iron per week, and the decision was made to make steel as well. Two Bessemer converters were installed and in 1873 three plate and rail rolling

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\* We would probably call them semi-skilled now, but they described themselves as "labourers" in census returns.

mills were added. By 1876 the capitalisation of the company had risen to £240,000 in two thousand four hundred £100 shares, 166 of which were held by Bessemer.

In February 1879 however, after 12 years of expansion and prosperity, came the first hint of trouble; the local papers reported a "stoppage" because "*remunerative prices cannot be obtained.*" The plant was idle for some months. There followed a period of ups and downs, with gradually falling prices. The newspapers of 1880-1882 reported regularly that only four, then three of the furnaces were operating.

In 1883 a scheme to revive the industry was proposed, that of having a puddling works, employing 150 men. Puddling was an arduous manual operation, stirring and turning molten iron in a reverberatory furnace to convert it into malleable iron. It did not revive the industry, and the following year the paper reported that;

*The company intends to put their large converting plant which has lain idle since its construction to profitable use. It was realised that it was a waste of money sending pig iron from Carnforth to Sheffield to be made into steel.*

The report is quoted just as it stands in the newspaper. It is odd, however, since it seems to imply that, despite the installation of Bessemer Convertors some fourteen years before, the company had never used them, but had continued to send their pig-iron elsewhere for conversion to steel.

By December 1884, plans for re-organising the steel works to produce steel wire were reported. However none of these plans were enough to keep more than 3 of the furnaces alive, and in June 1886 a fourth

was "blown out" and some 40-50 men were given notice. The strike of 1886 saw the works closed completely for a while.

The story of the further decline and the end of the venture will be told later. Meanwhile what was the lot of the 300 or so men who were employed by the company for those first 20 years of growth? A few were local labourers, but most came into the area with skills acquired in other iron and steel works. There were great distinctions between workers in the various stages of iron production. "Fillers" loaded the ore, coke and limestone into barrows which were then raised to the "bell" at the furnace top. Here the "Bridge Stocker" had a gang of "Chargers" who loaded the material into the bell, a cone-shaped canopy which, when lowered, allowed the load to drop into the furnace. 35 cwt of ore, 10 cwt of limestone and 21 cwt of coke were hoisted up for every ton of pig iron produced. The lower furnace was in charge of a "Stock Taker" helped by a "Keeper" who decided when the furnace was ready for tapping, and he in turn had "Helpers" and "Slaggers". Twelve men worked a shift at each furnace. Some of these "men" were 12 year old lads.

In the early days especially, problems of industrial relations were many. The following case (*Lancaster Guardian* March 9th 1867) illustrates the worker-manager divide, as well as the legal system of the times.

Fifteen employees of the company were up before the magistrates for alleged breach of contract.

*...some of them were employed as ore fillers, others as coke fillers, and the remainder as labourers.*

Representatives for the two sides agreed that the case arose over a new method of filling a furnace with mixed

ore which was being tried out. Extra men were put on to help, but about mid-day Williams, the foreman, sent the extra men elsewhere. Those remaining said they could not manage without help.

*...Mr Barton the General Manager, was not at the works, so Williams sent to his home in Warton...according to Williams the men refused even to speak to him; he said that he told them to return to work...even if they could not keep up with the loading it would make no difference to them as they would still get paid. But, he said, the men still ignored him...packed up and left for home*

The men's story was that Williams had just said they could do the work, or take their money and go. They had taken this to mean that they were dismissed. They had not known that only the absent Mr Barton had the power to dismiss anyone. The men themselves did not hear their case since:-

*All these arguments were heard before the men came into court. The magistrate felt the men might be tempted to alter their story to fit the arguments if they were present in court all the time. When the men were brought into court, four of them pleaded guilty. This settled the case rather quickly; the others were also judged guilty. Those who had pleaded guilty were sentenced to seven days hard labour at Lancaster Castle; the others got 21 days.*

The newspapers of the period also gave graphic accounts of the numerous and horrific accidents associated with the iron works. A small sample will suffice. Between 1866 and 1881:- John Barrow, son of Warton's grocer, fell 70 ft from a plank at the top of a furnace; a man was buried alive under 14 tons of sand

in the pit at Robin Hill (sand was used in making the pig-iron beds); William Butler fell while putting coals on a furnace and broke both arms; Thomas Edmondson of the Ironworks Cottages was taken to Lancaster Infirmary after bogies passed over both his legs.

The accident that brought the works to a standstill came as late as the 1890's:-

*About midnight on Thursday last occurred at the Carnforth Ironworks the most shocking fatal accident...John Hodgson was following his ordinary work on top of the furnaces, which consisted in charging No.2 furnace. Shortly after midnight Hodgson gave the customary signal to the men in charge of the "bell"...to lower it before Hodgson had tipped his barrow. To the horror and intense grief of his fellow labourers Hodgson fell into the burning furnace and was no more seen. The gases which escape from the furnace would render him insensible and this fact will be some consolation to his sorrowing widow and children, as well as his parents who reside in Warton and are very respectable people...not a particle of the unfortunate man's body remains...*

*Between 1 and 2 a.m (sic) Friday all the men at the Ironworks were hoisted up to the mouth of the furnace, where the Church of England Burial Service was impressively read by Rev. J.H. Fidler, Mr Barton and others being present...work stopped for some hours.*

Carnforth during this time grew rapidly. The total population of Carnforth and Warton rose from 974 to 3,350 (roughly 244% increase). Consequently there was urgent demand for housing. The first company houses were built in Millhead - 20 alongside Warton Rd., called Bessemer Cottages (later demolished to make

way for expansion of the works). The built up area in Warton and Carnforth expanded rapidly as gaps between cottages were filled and the fields were covered with rows of terraced houses. Most of "Dudley" was company owned or sponsored (119 workers' houses were listed for sale when the works were finally dismantled). Elsewhere in Carnforth they were not company property even if company inspired. The period of rapid building lasted well into the 1890's for a decade after the Ironworks had begun to decline such was the momentum of the town's expansion.

The growth was reflected in land prices. The *Lancaster Guardian* for April 11th 1874 comments on this "extraordinary increase", giving as example a sale at Carnforth when a small field purchased for £60 thirty years before realised £350.

Thus there was a great impact on the landscape-townscape and economy of the area. In twenty years the long-settled population saw the arrival of the ironworks, the 210ft chimney, blast furnaces, rapidly built terrace houses, railway lines, slag heaps and all their accompanying dirt, smoke and smells. The quarrying would have added its own specialities to the rural environment. There are many older Warton residents who, when interviewed for the Society's oral history researches, recalled how the sky was lit up by the furnaces and by the wagons of still burning slag as they travelled along the line to the tip on the sands.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*In preparing this article use has been made of notes left to the Society's archives by David Peter, Sylvia Myall and anonymously.*

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BROWFOOT FARM, YEALAND STORRS

Audrey Fishwick

Browfoot Farm lies under the slope of Cringlebarrow wood, to the south of the Silverdale Road where it turns the corner into Yealand Storrs. It is one of the oldest buildings in the area and bears a date stone which reads W/IM 1627. I hope to research further into its earlier history, but I have already started to make records of its twentieth century history. As you will see in these extracts the records refer to a way of life that is already gone.

Browfoot is a tenant farm, the property of the Reynolds' family of Leighton Hall. From the early 1900's the farm was occupied by the Seed family. George, the father, Lizzie\* his wife, the daughter of near neighbours, Mr and Mrs Shaw who lived at Storrs Cottage. There were five children:- Polly, Agnes, Tibby, Jack and Alice.

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\* The writer is the daughter of a cousin of Lizzie's. She was a frequent visitor to the farm and spent most of the war years there.

*Browfoot in world war two.*

The only illumination was by oil lamp and candlelight, and all the cooking was done on the open fire (though there was a fire-side oven for baking). There was one cold tap in the kitchen and hot water had to be obtained by heating on the fire. Sanitation was primitive. At the back of the house (round the side and through the field) was an earth closet. It was not till the present tenants took over in 1960 that a water closet and bathroom were installed.

The family rose at six o'clock. The cows were usually waiting in the pasture and as soon as the yard gates were opened they would loiter into the milking shippon. In winter it would have to be lighted with oil storm-lanterns which were hung on the beams. Hay was thrown down from the barn overhead through pop-holes and landed in the gangway (called the fodder gang) in front of the cows. Milking was done by hand with milkers precariously perched on three-legged stools, leaning with heads and shoulders against the cows' warm bodies, while the milk flowed in a tuneful rhythm into the buckets.

As each bucket was filled it would be taken across to the dairy where it was poured into the cooler. From there it ran into the waiting milk kit (or churn). Three of these were usually filled, then taken on a flat bogie and put on to the stand to wait for the milk lorry to pick them up. The women then washed the dairy (though not till after breakfast - porridge, home-produced bacon that had been kept hanging from hooks in the ceiling, and sweet tea.)

Sheep were kept at Browfoot, about 170 of them. They were no real bother except at lambing time, clipping time and dipping time. Usually men from farms round about came to help with the clipping. They had to be fed. Farms used to vie with each other to see

who could put on the best meal and Browfoot always had a reputation of being one of the best. Huge dishes of hot-pot were made, along with large enamel bowls of creamy rice pudding (baked long and slowly in the oven) and plates of apple pudding. Down the centre of the large living room was a very long table round which sometimes 18 people sat. The meal would be quickly devoured and then back to the clipping again.

At dipping time it was the same procedure. Men from other farms helped out - each farm had their own time for these jobs and the other farms fitted in.

Haytime and harvest work was all done with horses; cutting, scaling\*, rowing-up and carting. Browfoot had three; Blossom, Jewel and Flower. They moved at an ambling pace and nothing and nobody could get them to go any faster; but they could keep going all day long and most of the night as well if it was necessary to get the hay in. It usually took two weeks of workable weather i.e. warm and dry to make the hay.

Winter threshing was undertaken by the local contractor, Jack Graves from Silverdale, who arrived with his noisy, smelly monster. Once set in motion it was a horror to go near, with its mass of turning, flaying belts which worked the various parts. It swallowed the corn at one end and coughed out bags of oats and tufts of loose straw at the other. A team of about eight to ten men were needed to keep the work flowing, two or three bringing the sheaves, two on top of the machine feeding it and three or so carrying the bags of oats to the granary, while the remaining men stacked the straw in the barn for winter bedding.

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\*Scaling (or skailing) Turning the hay. The horse drawn machine had a row of wheels with long tines to pick up the hay and toss it in the air to dry.

After work was done for the day each man would enter the back kitchen and have a strip-off wash in the large, shallow stone sink. After much scrubbing with carbolic soap they would emerge all red and shining, with their hair wet and plastered to their heads. Then to sit down at the large table and eat enormous meals. After supper games of cards or dominoes would take place. A large bag of white conical shells would be produced, and each player would be allocated twenty each, and I guarantee no-one at Monte Carlo could be more seriously or dedicatedly determined than these folk to win their neighbour's shells.

In the 1950's modernisation stepped in, in the form of electricity. Tractors became the thing and suddenly life was not quite the same. I particularly missed the horses. Talking to a tractor as you go about the work is not quite the same thing!

In 1959, after Mr Seed's death, the farm was sold up. The sale was on a grey November day. Item after item was sold. Some, like the lovely old brass oil-lamps, stood forlornly about the dust-bins waiting for the rubbish men to take them away. All the furniture was sold, and the animals left one by one. A great heaviness of heart crept over me and I knew life would never be quite the same again.

YEALAND IN 1913: The diary of Helen Escolme of Holmers Farm (now Dykes Farm) in Yealand Conyers.

Further extracts

Robin Greaves

*Helen Escolme was born in the 1890s in Yealand. She married Herbert Nixon, and died soon after the birth of her only child. Her diary was kindly made available by her daughter, Marion Cottier. In the previous three issues of the magazine we followed her from January*

1912 to January 28th 1913: "Killed pig. I got another cold". We continue from there; some shortening has been necessary with this extract.

January 30th, 1913

Ill all day, couldn't go to practice, stormy night. Mother gone to meet Aunty at Manchester. Dad went to station to meet Mother. Mother missed the train. Dad vexed. Johnny went to meet her 10.45, and he missed her.

January 31st.

Still bad with cold...to meet Herbert 7.30, forbidden to go out. H and I had awful quarrel because I asked him to come in, silly creature said he only had second things on. He left without a word, went to the corner, came down again. We became "off" friends again, he said I'd a wretched temper, then went.

February 1st.

In house all day, feel a little better. Went out at 8.30 to see if H had come, disappointed. REVENGE - he had gone to St G's Hall, Kendal.

February 2nd.

Walked church, wet, stayed at Aunt A's for dinner. Walked home, then round Cinderbarrow. Saw H and Fred in field. H came home with me. Said he'd been to pictures last night. Walked church at night, met Tim Crowther on way back, then H. We two went to Stewart's, H got some chockolates, walked home. H & I made up "just a little", but says he won't come again till Sunday.

February 3rd.

I took trap to meet Mary Davison off afternoon train, did shopping, stayed in at night playing cards.

February 4th, 5th, 6th, in every night, H did not come.

February 7th.

Lent service, Borwick, 7 pm, practice later, dreadful night, had to ride without a light.

February 8th.

Alice & Margaret, Pictures at Carnforth. I waited for H - he did not come, went out about every 10 minutes till 10 pm. Saw Tom on low road, had good talk to him about H. I awfully disappointed.

February 9th.

Cycled church morning. Met H at corner, afternoon, short walk. Walked with A & M to church. H met me on Borwick road. H had been footballing previous day and got hurt, so we went on seat, made up for squabble, left me 10 pm,, promising to come on Tuesday.

February 11th.

Took mother & Aunt Mary to Carnforth in trap, they going to Great Aunt Ann's at Morecambe. When I got home, Agnes A came. Did feeding early went in trap to meet Aunt M and Mother 6 pm at station. Went out 7.30, H on Church Lane, went walk round Scott Hill, home 10 pm. H extra, promised to come on Thursday.

February 12th.

Mary & I went shop for toffee. Off again in afternoon - round by Low Road, as two tramps fighting on road. I cycled practice 6.30. Mrs Briggs gave choir good talking to about attendance and things in general. Home alone, awful misty, worst night we have had for fog.

February 16th.

Cycled church morning, Cinderbarrow after dinner. Missed H, sat on gate at cottage. Then H - he

came home with me. Walked church, night, called on Mrs B about anthem, Mr B in jolly mood. After service met H at Borwick, went round by Stewart's. H extra.

February 20th.

Mary, Alice and I on Warton Cragg, lovely walk. Mary keeping nicks [watch] for A and I - good laugh. Went meet H on bike, met at Burton station road. He got awful headache, would not come in. Mother gave him a powder, headache went a little better, and we stayed out till 9.45. We had serious talk about his work - rather upset. He wants to be driver, and I don't, he being disappointed, I gave in. [Herbert worked on the railway.]

February 21st.

Alice, Mary and I to Carnforth, woods way, did shopping, Mother's birthday present. Had fun with Bert Lindsay. M & A silly. Cycled church 7 pm, practice later. Home alone. Mary went to Carnforth with her old blouse dangling under her skirt.

February 22nd.

Took Mary to station in trap, saw Tom Nixon. H playing football at Kirby Lonsdale. 8 pm he came up, after much persuading he came into the house, amused ourselves in the sitting room. Left at 10.30, I set him to the corner.

February 23rd.

Walked church morning, went on seat at 2.30 as appointed. H never came. I went to cott; saw them footballing, H there. Awfully disappointed. They came shortly afterwards, but I rushed straight home - sat for a little on seat, then home for tea. Thought of biking to church - temper - however I walked, got in a better mood by

6.30. Caught H on road, went on Canal Banks round Cinderbarrow. I cross at H for getting S to tell a lie, and did not speak, only when obliged. H in extra mood. Left S at Cinderbarrow. We went on seat at H's wish, when I said I'd not wanted him, he turned cross, and said that should be his last night. He upset me entirely, then went.

February 24th.

Went C-barrow cottages for Gammages book, staying talking. Home alone, thinking all day.

February 25th.

At 7.45 Herbert landed up, and gave me the dearest little watch bracelet, such a beauty. Went walk round Yealand Red. H extra nice, ending up on seat. He's a perfect darling, made up for Sunday and quite cheered me up. Home 10 pm.

February 27th.

I set off on bike to meet H 7 pm, when I got to Church Lane, there he was. Took bikes in shed, went walk on Cinderbarrow Lane. Home 10 pm.

February 28th.

Today I'm 19 years old - an overgrown nipper. Got few pc's, also brooch from Bertie and W, apron and hairslide (Auntie), letter-rack and mousetrap (Reuben), "Our Miss Gibbs" (Mother), and the dearest little watch (Herbert). (Sally forgotten.) 4 pm, quite high tea. Mother made cake, and got in some lovely pears & custard, etc. Cycled to Church & practice 7 pm. Bell started when I on low road, had awful rush. Home alone, awfully dark.

March 1st.

6.30 to meet H, met at Clawthorpe. Went up Yealand, down Snape Lane to Tewitfield shop. H bought chockolates, home by Beckside, rain,

sheltered till train time, 10-45, had awfully serious talk. Mother rather vexed about keeping her up.

March 2nd.

Cycled church morning. Answered birthday letters. Met H at Cinderbarrow, he home with me. Walked church, night, practice after. Met H on Borwick road. Home after 8.45, stayed out till 9 pm, then I got H to come in, had supper and stayed in the s-room to 10.30, when he went - pouring rain, poor fellow. He's a darling.

March 3rd.

Cycled Hale, Oxcliffe's, for chicken, couldn't get. So went to T.Greatorex, got chicken, home 6 pm. Dreadful weather. H not come. Went down Vicarage corner, got cold again.

March 5th.

Took Gammages book back to C-barrow cott. Stormy night, H did not come again, got letter from him. Mother and A went to Captain Bagot's funeral. [Sir Josceline Fitzroy Bagot of Levens, now colonel, died 1913; MP for Kendal.]

March 6th.

To Carnforth, meet Sally off 5.39 train, walked level way. Wilf N passed us cycling with a girl. To Borwick, Lent service 7 pm - out of practice 9.30. Mrs B sent a metronome for me. Slept with S, had good talk.

March 7th.

Off on bike to see C. Bagot's grave at Heversham, heaps of photographers and crowds of people, a trainload steamed in when I passed the station. About 5 ft all round the grave covered with flowers. H never turned up. 3 goose eggs from Parkside, broke one coming home. Tea and rush to

see 6.11 at Burton station, but H not on it (football at Burneside). Met later in Church Lane, short walk, both tired. Home 10.30 - dreadful. Had splendid time though, Herbert extra crushing - the darling.

#### March 9th.

Awful wet morning, cycled to church, in house all afternoon. H on work, firing at Milnthorpe. Walked church at night, good choir, practice later. Awful windy and dark, walked by road, never met H. At hill bottom got dizzy and faint, mother horned physic into me. Later, playing on piano. I wonder why H didn't come.

#### March 10th.

Sally with Mother to sale at Warton. While playing songs, Herbert came, I went out and found him round corner. Dad had given him a fright. Mother got H to come in - had overalls on, grumbled. I played and sang for him till 10 pm, when he went. Raining. S and I had long serious talk till 2 a.m. Sally completely dished up, [Siam] had been unkind, poor lass.

#### March 11th.

Drove S to station, lovely drive home. Cycled, met H at Clawthorpe, went walk. Herbert said awful horrid things and I vexed.

#### March 14th.

Cycled church 6.30, practice later. Pouring wet. Late out of practice, turned out lovely night. H absent. I've been weighed, 9 stone 2 lbs.

#### March 15th.

To Fallowfields for afternoon. Wet after tea, set off to meet H, met at Hilderstone, he came off 7.45. H distant. I disappointed (quarrel brewing). A little more pleasant by the time we

reached Holmere farm. H sulky, was going soon, but I couldn't stand it no longer, so he gave in and finished the night beautifully, he going by the Whip.

#### March 16th.

Cycled church morning, splendid choir (Joey horrid). Showers and cold. After dinner to C-barrow to meet H. We went walk on mosses to look for violets. Left him 4 pm after talk with mother over orchard wall. H again said he'd been caught. Walked to church, splendid choir, anthem practice till 8.15, Joey in horrid mood, got vexed over anthem, the beastly thing and perfectly horrid. Met H at Borwick, walked round to Stewart's, H got sweets, back by Becketts. H got cross at something I said and commenced to sulk till we nearly home, then we had another burst up. I got splitting headache. Came shower, stayed in shed till 10.10, when the dear old hubby went.

#### March 17th.

Washed and churned morning, going to commence cleaning.

#### March 18th.

Started cleaning dairy and pantry. To Lilly Wood afternoon, called for Minnie Lund. Minnie put on - I nearly did some damage trying to look serious, the poor flapper awful boring. Lots of folk in wood, got good few lilies and violets. 7.30 Herbert came, went round Brick Beck, gave him all M's news, home 10 pm. Polling day in Kendal. [By-election caused by death of Sir Josceline.]

#### March 19th.

I actually got up soon, terribly excited. Scurried through piles of work. At 9 set off for Kendal. Showers, awful windy. Kendal at 10.20, just missed declaration 10.15. Tons of folk. Tory

member Col. Weston won, 581 majority, horrid disappointed. Left bike, then got threaded among crush. Col & Mrs W to C. club in a car, Cs cheered, Ls boomed, a terrible noise, policemen by the score. When Col W went, all seemed to turn Blues and every Yellow who came, they mobbed them. All best shops barricaded - enjoyed it fine. To shop and got song and papers, then Braithwaite's cafe and excellent feast. To No. 24, passed Mr GN at door. Mrs GN pressed me, so I had more dinner with P. Mrs GN extra pleasant. Leslie and I to look at garden and dog's grave. To station, L made me known to all station's officials. Nasty surprise at a doorway, just about blue us to pieces. Back to 24, then 5.45 to meet H from work, saw on station. H in overalls - looks champion. Back to 24, tea. H & I played draughts, L, F & I played Donkey. 8.00 H & I left for home, windy, puncture at Holme Park and had to walk. Tired. Home 10.30 after most enjoyable day. Mother vexed because I not been to practice, Borwick.

March 20th.

Tired after yesterday. H at 7.45, met at Clawthorpe. Short walk, showery, home 10 pm. H in good mood.

March 21st

Good Friday. Church 10.30, good choir. 2 pm practice. Then walked on Canal round C-barrow, met H, he came home. Lantern lecture 7.30, I cycled, had to play - good lecture. H met me, had good talk sheltering in Yealand church porch. Home 10.20. Mother vexed about late hours, H a darling.

March 22nd.

Cycled Milnthorpe for goose eggs. Cycled to Holme to see Rugby match. Eton Moor beat Holme. H

came, we went on field, I got a fright or two, H laughed. Cycled home, pouring. I went post letter, 7, met H at gate. Put bike in shed, went post, still raining, sheltered in shed till 10 pm. H very silly and I worse. Fancy being down every day this week, making up for London week.

March 23rd.

Splendid choir, morning service, had Jackson's Te Deum, and anthem Come ye Saints. Went grand. Uncle Isaac came after dinner, 2.45 I went round Burton road, on canal. H came back with me, the silly creature admiring my "tremendous" figure. Home to tea 5 pm. Cycled to church 6.30. Singing splendid, anthem Mag and Nunc went grand, full choir. Met H on low road, put bikes in shed, went short walk, then on seat... H said awfully nice things before I went in at 10 pm.

365 AND A BIT

C.E.A. Burnham.

The true tale of how an Emperor and later a Pope wrestled with the Bit.

On one of his campaigns Julius Caesar found his legions experiencing winter conditions when, according to the calendar, it should have been high summer. The blame for the mishap is laid solely on the calendar, which at that time had a year of exactly 365 days. But the time taken by our Earth to describe one circuit of the Sun is more nearly 364 $\frac{1}{4}$ . (Not that Caesar would have expressed it in this way!) So that the calendar was slow by about a quarter of a day each year. This discrepancy of about six hours, negligible in the short term, accumulated over a long period, producing errors of months, seasons... Nature's year has 365 plus a-

certain-bit days. Failure to allow for the Bit would disrupt our pattern of life.

Caesar brought into operation a revised calendar - the Julian Calendar - in which an extra day was added every fourth year. This extra day became February 29th. Why February? The Roman year began with March (as did our own year till the mid-eighteenth century). So February was the twelfth month; the extra day was added at the end of the calendar.

Now the period of the Earth's rotation about the Sun is not precisely 365 $\frac{1}{4}$  days; more accurately it is 365.2422...days. The all important Bit is 0.2422..., and the Julian Bit (0.25) is too large by 0.0078 or so years. Caesar's calendar created too many leap years; eight too many in a thousand or so years. By 1500 A.D. it was eleven days out of phase and in 1583 A.D. Pope Gregory XIII replaced it by the Gregorian Calendar.

Recall that we (i.e. Pope Gregory) aim to reduce Caesar's Bit of 0.25 by 0.0078. This we attempt by making changes to the Julian Calendar:-

i) We decree that the exact centuries - 1700 A.D., 1800 A.D - shall not now count as leap years; but,

ii) We retain leap-year status for those centuries which are multiples of 400, i.e. 1600, 2000, 2,400. Caesar's addition of one day every four years produced a Bit of 0.25.

Pope Gregory's amendment (i) - a removal of one day every hundred years (i.e. 0.01 of a day per year), together with his amendment (ii) (the addition of 1/400th (0.0025) of a day per year, brought the attempt to 0.25 - 0.01 + 0.0025, i.e. 0.2425.

Not quite there! We aimed at 0.2422.

But that is where our present Gregorian calendar now stands - a calendar year of 365.2425 days, with an error of the order of 0.0003 - three days in ten-thousand years.

1900 A.D was not a leap-year. 2000 A.D will be.

The Gregorian Calendar was not accepted in 1582 by everyone. In England the change was not made until the mid-eighteenth century. The accumulated error of 11 days was rectified by Act of Parliament of 1751:-

*"Wednesday 2nd September 1752 shall be followed by Thursday 14th September 1752"*

New Year's Day was established:-

*"The Computation of the year now begins on the first day of January."*

ROBERT TAYLOR OF SILVERDALE

John Bolton

The survey of *The Mociety of the Manner of Silverdale in Warton*, made on August 10th, 1563 (N. Thomas 'Silverdale in 1563' *Mourholme Magazine* III, 3, 1985.) records that a Robert Taylor lived at a tenement called *Stanhawe* at what is now Silverdale Green. The tenement probably encompassed about half of what was then the Green. Mrs Thomas wrote *Stanhawe must have been at the Green, and probably encompassed about half of what was then the Green. It was very soon to be divided into four smaller holdings.* In John Lucas's *History of the parish of Warton*, compiled between 1710 and 1740, he records:-

*...the following Inscription which is found on a Monument in the East Wall of the Chancel of St. Botolph's, Aldgate, in London;*

Here lieth buried the Corps of Robert Taylor of Silverdale, in the Parish of Warton, in the County of Lancaster, Gentleman: the Father of John Taylor Citizen and Draper of London, and of the Parish Beere-Brewer: he departed this life about the age of 80 years, the 15th day of February An: Dom: 1577

John Lucas continues:-

*Robert Taylor who was one of the Sheriffs of London and Middlesex was grandson to this Robert Taylor.*

Was the monument in St Botolph's to the Robert Taylor of Stamshawe? And was, perhaps, the division of the Stamshawe property soon after 1563 occasioned by his leaving Silverdale to spend the last years of his life with his successful son, and his even more illustrious grandson in London? If this was so, it is perhaps the closest Silverdale has been to having a "Dick Whittington".

#### NOTES AND QUERIES

*St Bees' Man - some problems of a well preserved corpse.*

On March 12th 1992 Mr John Todd spoke to the Society about the finding of St Bees man. For those who were unable to be present here is a brief summary of the talk.

A team of archaeologists found burials below the site of the ruined chancel aisle of St Bees priory in

1980. The most interesting burial was in a well-made tomb in front of the altar site. There were two bodies. One was a skeleton, probably a woman. The other was sealed in lead sheeting, held with iron clamps. There was a hole in the lead sheeting near the feet. The body within was wrapped in two pieces of linen and tied with twine. The linen was coated with beeswax. It exuded an extraordinary smell, not offensive, but very strong indeed and sweet.

The body was that of a slightly bald man with a small beard and a moustache. He had been in the prime of life and in good general health. Preservation of the corpse was such that the arm could be flexed and the skin of the palm, where it was untouched by the beeswax, almost normal in appearance. A bunch of hair (not his) was tied under the chin. A post-mortem examination showed multiple injuries: a dislocated lower jaw, a broken collar-bone, cracked ribs and bleeding into the lung cavity (the blood still liquid) as from a penetrating wound. The pathologist likened the injuries to a road traffic accident. He could have fallen from a horse, whether or not in a fight.

Identification was difficult, but the site of the tomb showed the man had been important. The second body was probably that of his wife, buried in an extension of the tomb. He had died in the years between the building of the aisle (1300) and its collapse in 1539. The shattered remains of tomb effigies, one having a shield with a "fretty" charge, gave clues. A drawing of the tombs, made when Sir William Dugdale, Norroy King of Arms, was visiting the area in 1665, showed the fretty shield and indicated armour dated to about 1360-1380. Six families in the region had fretty arms. One of the more likely men was Anthony Lucy, last of his name. He went on a crusade in 1365 and died abroad in 1367. He had probably been with the Teutonic Knights in eastern Europe.

This is probably a unique case. There are records suggesting that similar burials have been found in the past, but none have had full post-mortem examination as this one has. Investigations continue. The lead in which the corpse was wrapped is not apparently English, and enquiries have gone as far as Poland. A pollen analysis of the beeswax might help show where that originated, but there is a doubt whether enough beeswax was retained to allow this.

The body was reinterred - in the lead sheeting, but unsealed - and there was a service based on that devised for the crew of the ship, the Mary Rose.

#### *The Lancaster Work House*

Mrs Jean Chatterley is researching the history of the Lancaster Work House. She is hoping there might be old photograph's of the site on Wyresdale Road which might include the building. It survived till the 1950's. Can you help?

#### *Houses*

Browfoot Farm. Is anyone else researching the history of their house? If so would they be prepared to let the Mourholme magazine print any of their findings? Such local information is exactly what a local history magazine needs.