



Barningham green well over a century ago, shown on a postcard sent from the village by the Milbanks' chauffeur Ernie Holmes on August 28th 1909.

Below, the same view today. The tree in the foreground is now full-grown, the monkey puzzle tree outside The Yews

## Then and now

has vanished, the area around the fountain is grassed over, all those white-washed house fronts have reverted to stone,

and it's been a long time since chickens roamed the green.

The postcard was among old pictures sent to us by Ernie's great-nephew Nick Holmes, who visited Barningham in the summer in search of his relative's roots. What was the mess on the card? See Page 7.



# Archive 56

THE MAGAZINE OF BARNINGHAM LOCAL HISTORY GROUP  
NATIONAL AWARD-WINNING LOCAL HISTORY NEWSLETTER

[www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)



## INSIDE: CHILDHOOD SWEETHEARTS TOGETHER AT LAST



Wartime wishes: a Christmas card from 1917



**NEXT BLHG MEETING: TUESDAY DECEMBER 5th 6pm**

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## Barningham Local History Group

www.barninghamvillage.co.uk

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Group

## Visitors from afar, digital books and a mystery box

**Minutes** of the BLHG meeting held in Barningham Village Hall on Tuesday October 10th 2017:

**Present:** Jon Smith, Margaret Stead, Phil Hunt, John Hay, Neil Turner, June Graham. Mr & Mrs A Watson, Linda Sherwood.

**Apologies:** John Prytherick, C Collingwood, Sheila Wap-pat, Doug Anderson, J H Young, M & D Taylor.

**The minutes** of the last meeting were approved.

**Visits:** Phil showed photographs of both the Auckland Castle and Binchester Roman Fort visits.

**Correspondence:** Jon reported that Marion Lewis' corrections had been looked at with regard to *Archive 55*. A John Lowes had also been in contact to say he is in one of the pictures.

An 1890 Bulmer directory of North Yorkshire had been donated by Doug Anderson to the group.

Jon reported a number of enquiries and visitors from as far away as New Zealand over the last few months. Subjects included Woodside (The Gatehouse), the Long-staff family, Ernest Holmes, Coates, Johnsons, Nelsons, McDonalds and Leonards.

An article by Sir Antony Milbank in *The Field* Magazine needed checking for copyright before reprinting.

**Finance report:** Current account £612. Clock Fund

### minutes

£379. The web provider had been changed, reducing the cost from £60 per year to £12. Consideration needed to be given to the cost of subscriptions for 2018 now that the *Archive* publications were less in number.

**Publications:** Jon reported that all back copies of the *Archive* had now been digitised and were freely available via the website. He planned to digitise some of the group's books but it was agreed that these would not be made freely available as they were a useful source of income.

Linda Sherwood and Jon were congratulated on their new book based on transcriptions of the 1838 Newsham tithe maps.

**Next meetings:** AGM and ordinary meeting on December 5th at 6pm. Annual New Year social at the Milbank Arms on January 7th at 12.30pm.

**Show & Tell:** John Hay had brought along an apothecary chest from about 1860 which led to a fascinating discussion of its contents and their use. One of the bottles was marked Opodeldoc and John challenged members to identify this product and bring the answer to the meeting on January 7th. A prize would be awarded to the first correct answer drawn.

JOHN HAY, Acting Secretary

## Anyone recall the Leonard family?

HAVE any of our readers got Leonards (or Lennards or Lennetts) in their family tree?

Sharon Spencer from Doncaster was in Barningham recently searching for descendants of the Leonard family who lived here from early Victorian days through to the 1930s.

If anyone can help, she'd be pleased to hear from them. Her email: sharon.spencer63@hotmail.co.uk.

## Chris kicks off new series of talks

ANOTHER series of Winter's Tales at Barningham village hall is planned early in the New Year.

The first speaker, booked for the evening of Friday January 26th, will be Chris Lloyd, the man who runs the *Northern Echo's* excellent Memories section. Members will recall his talks on Cockfield Fell and the battle to bring railways to Teesdale.

His topic in January has yet to be decided, but it will again, we're sure, be of much interest to local historians.

## How to access the Archive index

PREVIOUS year-end issues of the *Archive* have included an up-dated version of the newsletter's index, but with only two issues this year it seems a waste of paper to do one just yet.

You can, of course, see and download the current index from our website. If you haven't got access to that, let us know and we'll send you a printed copy.

## from the parish mag

**100 YEARS AGO:** Last year the parishioners of Barningham sent a box containing a cake and cigarettes to each of our soldiers. We are sure it will be the wish to do the same this year, as it cheers the hearts of those serving their country to receive such little reminders of home thoughts. There are many more to send than last year (about 50) and the expense is much more, even the boxes are double the price they were. —December 1917

**95 YEARS AGO:** A beloved parishioner, Mrs Hind of Newsham, has passed away at the advanced age of 89 years. She was the widow of Robert Hind, one of the Churchwardens for about 30 years. It is also with great regret we record the death of Mrs Annie Foreman, daughter of Alfred and the late Mrs Briggall of Scargill, aged 34. She was educated at the Scargill schools and attended all the Mission Room services regularly till her husband, obtaining another position, left the parish. He was one of the gamekeepers when Mr Bell Irving held the sporting rights. We hope our sympathy will be accepted by the husband, left with five little boys. —December 1922

**90 YEARS AGO:** On December 18 at 2.30pm there will be a Children's Service in Church, to which children are invited to bring toys, old and new, which will be sent to a Vicar in the slums of London in time to be given out on Christmas Day. —December 1927

**80 YEARS AGO:** A most

**SAMUEL B. TURNER**  
MOTOR ENGINEER  
**14-Seater Buses**  
**Open & Closed Cars**  
FOR HIRE  
**General Haulage**  
**Est. Free**  
**BARNINGHAM**

*Ad from December 1927*

successful whist drive and dance was held in School, arranged by the young people of the village, and realised a sum of £8 13s 6d for St Dunstan's. This was remarkable in view of the dreadful weather. We heartily congratulate those concerned. —December 1937

**70 YEARS AGO:** We have purchased new lamps for the church. They made their initial appearance most appropriately for the first public visit of our Bishop at the Harvest Festival. —December 1947

**75 YEARS AGO:** As a variant from bats and birds in the belfry, we have had a plague of mice in the organ bellows, entailing a whole day's repair work by the tuner. —December 1952

**50 YEARS AGO:** A word of welcome to Mrs Allen who has been appointed Head Mistress of Ravensworth School, we all hope she will be with us a long time. —December 1967

**25 YEARS AGO:** The annual meeting of the WI was opened by members singing Jerusalem. The Rose Bowl for most competition points for the year was presented to Mrs Felicity Thompson, the runner-up being Mrs Betty Clayton. —December 1992





## Secrets of the castle

Members of the history group pictured on their second outing of the year, a tour of Auckland Castle. With a thousand years of historic connection with England's only prince-bishops, it's one of the most important and best-preserved medieval bishops' palaces in all Europe.

## Baxters and Bunters, Taskers and Tuckers

SOME surnames based on occupations are easily explained — Thatcher and Miller, for example, Carter and Smith.

Others are more of a mystery. History group member June Graham came across a list of unusual ones which she thought might be useful to anyone ploughing through old documents.

Here's a selection:

Ackerman: *oxherd*  
 Baxter: *baker (often femaie)*  
 Barker: *tanner*  
 Bunter: *rag and bone man*  
 Cadger: *carrier or pedlar*

### what's in a name?

Caffler: *rag and bone man*  
 Chambermaker: *boot maker*  
 Copeman: *dealer, receiver*  
 Cordwainer: *shoemaker*  
 Costermonger: *apple seller*  
 Couper: *cattle dealer*  
 Currier: *leather dresser*  
 Cursitor: *court clerk*  
 Dexter: *dyer*  
 Elliman: *oil man*  
 Fletcher: *arrow maker*  
 Frobisher: *armour polisher*  
 Furner: *baker*  
 Gaffman: *bailiff*  
 Greive: *foreman*

Higgler: *itinerant dealer*  
 Hillier: *slater*  
 Jagger: *fish pedlar*  
 Kempster: *wool comber*  
 Lavender: *washerwoman*  
 Lister: *dyer*  
 Lorimer: *maker of spurs*  
 Malender: *farmer*  
 Pikeman: *miller's assistant*  
 Rippier: *fishmonger*  
 Scrivener: *clerk*  
 Swaller: *miller*  
 Tasker: *reaper*  
 Tucker: *fuller*  
 Webster: *weaver*  
 Whitster: *clothes bleacher*  
 Whittawer: *saddler*

## Linda wins trophy for second year running

THIS year's Archive Award, presented by Barningham Local History Group for the best local history project, went to Linda Sherwood — the second year running she has taken the trophy.

Her 'Looking Through the Window' project, a study of the Johnson family with a particular reference to both the stained glass window and the inscription on the font in Barningham Church regarding John Edward Johnson, was described by judge Anthony Hughes from the North Yorkshire County Records Office as "a well-researched and detailed study using a number of primary sources from deeds and wills to tithe maps".

Johnson does not appear in the local parish records but was in fact closely connected



to our area and, in modern terms, a millionaire. Linda bought a book with her prize money — a study of lunatic asylums including the Bedlam/Bethlem Hospital which figured in her research.

Highly recommended for their projects were:

John Hay for "an interesting account of a pottery company, using a ledger as a starting point for investigations... a good example of how one source can be util-

ised as the basis of a wider study";

Phil Hunt for "a detailed study of Nor Beck, covering geology, geography, ecology... a strong entry with very good use of photographs";

Ann Orton for "an interesting study of the Barningham Reading Room minute book, a good example of the valuable information that can be gleaned from a document of this sort"; and

Jon Smith for his "lively and readable account of the colourful life of Harry Milbank, utilising newspaper articles and other sources to follow him across Europe".

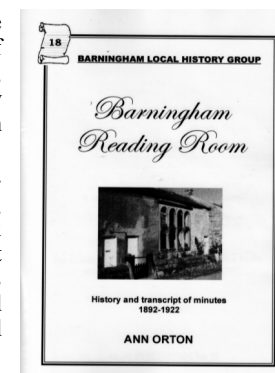
Deadline for the 2018 awards is August 26th — start work on those projects now!

## Our latest book: the Reading Room history and minutes

ANN Orton's Archive Awards project, a history of Barningham Reading Room, is now available as a history group book — our eighteenth publication.

It tells the story of the village's first Reading Room, established in 1864 by Sussex Milbank, and its successor, set up in 1892, offering villagers a variety of newspapers and magazines, a library and games area.

The book also includes Ann's painstaking transcription of the Reading Room Committee's minutes from 1892 to 1922. They reveal much about life here a century



ago — not all of it good!

Copies are available from the history group, £8 to members, £10 non-members.

## Join us at our New Year social

BARNINGHAM Local History Group invites members and friends to join us at our annual New Year social gathering.

The get-together will be in the Milbank Arms on Sunday January 7th from 12.30pm. Neil promises his usual warm welcome.

In view of the current uncertainty about the future of the Milbank Arms, this could be our last chance to get together there for some time, and it would be gratifying to see as many people as possible making the effort to attend.

See you there?



History group visitors at Binchester, guide Gordon Henderson, and, below, part of the site.



## Fascinating trip back to Roman days

THE first of the history group's summer visits was to Binchester (Vinovia or Vinovium), a Roman fort and settlement probably established around AD 79 to guard the crossing of the Wear by Dere Street.

An extensive civilian settlement (vicus) existed outside the fort, the remains of which are buried under Binchester Hall Farm. The southern part of the fort is now beneath Binchester Hall.

The remains of the fort have been known to historians since the 16th century. In 1552, John Leland noted that Roman coins had been uncovered in nearby fields, and a bath house was found in 1815 when a farm cart fell into part of a hypocaust.

The first archaeological excavations took place between around 1880 and others have followed ever since. Channel 4's Time Team visited the site in 2007. Despite having picked a cold and



Excavations at Binchester

damp summer evening with disappointingly low light levels, we had an informative visit under the guidance of Gordon Henderson.

The original bathhouse excavation is within a permanent building and we had a close-up experience of the hypocaust. Outside is an excavated section of Dere Street. Across a field the

newer bath-house excavation is housed under scaffolding and plastic sheeting. This is a much bigger area but still only a fraction of the original building.

It's a very impressive site and well worth a further visit. The dozen or so of us there had a stimulating and informative evening.

PHIL HUNT

for agricultural purposes, although some is still marked as marshy on the OS.

A series of drainage ditches connect with the Smallways Beck and it looks as though the line of the beck has been straightened as it make the connection. Nearby, an area is named Van Die-man's land. Does this relate to the water engineer?

Also in the vicinity, just to the east of the beck, is a controversial slurry lagoon. The beck near here has suffered serious pollution in recent years, with significant loss of fish and other aquatic species.

As the beck collects the drainage scheme it bears to the east, gains the name of Hutton Beck, passes Hutton Hall, and then heads for Hutton Magna, passing it on its northern edge. To the east of the village street the beck is constrained by low walls and has well-spaced trees on both banks.

It is bordered for some 100 metres by a private road serving three houses, then is off between the fields. Footpaths run roughly parallel to the north and south, but the only public access is just north of Foxclose Plantation, where a path crosses the beck.

From the borders of Forcett Park the beck then skirts the southern edge of Eppeby village, passes through the hamlet of Carlton, where it turns southeast, collects tribute from Mary Wild Beck and, as Aldbrough Beck, divides Aldbrough St. John

### nor beck trail

in two, being crossed by a bridge far more elegant than any met so far.

The beck turns to the north-east and reaches the Roman Dere Street at Wath Urn Bridge. The only hint I can find to a meaning for this odd name is a reference in Samuel Tymms' 1837 book *The Family Topographer* to two Roman urns being found in a cairn at Barton. A nearby farmstead is called Watherne.

The beck here is very overgrown and full of weed. It has now acquired its final name, Clow Beck. Most of its other names relate to the locations it flows by, but, although there is a Clowbeck farm, there does not seem to be any habitation or manor of Clow.

From the bridge the beck curves south before cutting back into the grounds of

Brettanby Manor, where it is crossed by an elegant bridge and has been formed into a large fish pond, terminating in a weir. Just past the manor the beck is joined by Barton Beck and eventually goes under the A1(M). It curves round to reach the old Great North Road at Willow Bridge, which is in the dip just north of the garage and next to the turning that runs, like the beck, through the grounds of Jolby Manor and down to Croft.

There the beck seems, even in a wet summer, quite reduced when it finally reaches its end. It maybe forms a delta, but the only outlet that is visible in this heavily wooded place seems little more than a ditch entering the much more majestic Tees.

● *The full version of Phil's Nor Beck story can be seen on our website — go to the Landscape page and click on the link.*



End of the trail: the Clow Beck meets the Tees

falls a couple of metres to join Kyloe.

The aqueduct (sadly a plastic pipe on wood supports rather than an elegant masonry job) flow is culverted for about 500 metres until it flows into the "skating pond" which feeds the water-garden at Barningham Park, a pond not obvious from the village but is at the top of the field with the artificial stone circle beside the village hall.

From the water-garden it is culverted, re-appears in the walled garden opposite the Milbank Arms, is culverted again and emerges after going under the Newsham Road close to Barningham House Farm. The modern OS map shows it running down to the east of Mill Hill Farm and entering Nor Beck.

Back to Kyloe Beck: below the water-splash its bed is often dry as the flow disappears into the limestone, reappearing further on. But in flood the beck can overtop its banks and start filling the ravine. The late Sir Anthony Milbank found a young brown trout stranded on the grass one morning after a heavy downpour.

Towards the northern edge of the open moor the beck goes under the moor road to Haythwaite and then within yards under the Scargill road. Both crossings are marked as fords on the 1854 OS, but have since been bridged. Although the beck is now in enclosed pasture land it keeps the form of a youthful hill beck as it en-

## nor beck trail

counters the steepest gradients in its life, falling around 40 metres in half a mile.

On reaching the Barningham to Greta Bridge Road the beck encounters two bridges — the old glebe bridge and the newer road bridge — within yards. (Why two? See *Archive 22*).

The beck here is a steady stream, small enough to leap across. Soon after a narrow pipe emanates from a concrete slab on the southern bank, the outfall from Barningham's sewage works. The beck passes Mill Hill Farm, too far above to have benefitted from a water-driven wheel; perhaps it was a wind-mill or a horse gin.

The beck has now left the area of permanent pasture and the fields are mostly arable from here on. There's a plank bridge allowing tractor access to the fields on the northern bank, but no public access until, having crossed the 1974 county boundary into North Yorkshire and now named Dyson Beck, it

reaches Wetlands Lane and Newsham Lodge.

There are several private footbridges in the grounds of private houses here but the bridle-way that runs due north to Green Brough on the A66 crosses the beck by a good pack-horse bridge.

Two fields further on it goes under Dyson Bridge, and makes a sharp turn north to enter the grounds of a private dwelling; here the beck has been closely channelled between stone walls and drops picturesquely over a weir or two.

The beck then goes under the old Scotch Corner to Brough Road, just west of Smallways Inn, runs through a paddock flowing under what the 2005 OS map calls Smallways New Bridge, and then a further bridge, built circa 2007 for the new east-bound carriageway.

Now named Smallways Beck, the stream crosses back into County Durham and enters what was a post-glacial lake.

In recent times the area from here to Thorpe in the west has clearly been drained



*The glebe bridge looking south. The road bridge is to the right*



*Ernie Holmes, pictured somewhere in Barningham in, we guess, the 1920s.. Any idea whereabouts, or the make of the car?*

## Uncle Ernie, one of the first chauffeurs

NICK and Kathy Holmes, of Cheam in Surrey, arrived in Barningham during the summer looking for information about Nick's great-uncle Ernest Holmes.

Ernest — Uncle Ernie to his family — was Sir Frederick Milbank's chauffeur in the early days of motoring and was his batman during World War One. At the end of the conflict he moved here with the Milbanks to become their chauffeur at Barningham Park. Ernie's wife Gertrude worked as a cook at the hall.

They lived at first in part of Heath House, moved to School House (now one of the Reading Room Cottages) in the 1930s, left in 1942 for Wales (with the Milbanks?) before returning here after the war and taking up residence again in Barningham,

### uncle ernie

eventually back at Heath House. They moved from there to a house then called Garden Cottage (can anyone identify its name now?) not long before Ernie's death in 1968 at the age of 85. Gertrude had died two years earlier. Both are buried in the village churchyard.

Nick and Kathy, who had visited Barningham in the 1960s, re-discovered Heath House and spent a morning there looking round, reliving memories, and poring through history group records with house owner (and *Archive* editor) Jon Smith.

"We really enjoyed seeing Barningham again after many years," Nick wrote in an email to Jon afterwards. "I found reviving my memories surprisingly emotive." Later

he sent us a letter with his memories of Ernie. Here's part of it:

I first heard about 'Uncle' Ernie in the 1960s when my father was helping with his affairs. Ernie was in fact Dad's uncle so he was my great uncle. At the time he lived with his wife Gert in Heath House.

Mum, Dad and I came up to Barningham to see Ernie after Gert died in 1966. We stayed at the The Rectory on a couple of occasions and also at the A66 Motel.

I recall Ernie talking about his early motoring experiences; my favourite memory is of him telling us about a winter journey across the moors. With the snow blowing in their faces, he had turned to Gert and asked "Wouldn't it be a good idea if we got one of those cars with



*Two photos among many Nick Holmes found when sorting out Ernie's belongings: above, a grouse shoot at Barningham, dated August 14th 1921 with a note on the bag recording "Bag—456"; below, a mystery picture of a car crash, probably in France as the words "Carte Postale" are printed on the back. Date sometime around 1920?*



### uncle ernie

a windscreen?" I am now the lucky owner of some of the car clocks which came out of early cars Ernie had driven.

On one of our visits to Barningham Ernie explained that Heath House had recently been connected to main drainage — there was a trench across the back garden to prove it. He took us up to

his bedroom and there in all its glory, slap bang in the centre of the room was his new flushing toilet. On another occasion we assisted with Ernie's house move. The agent had arranged for him to move to a smaller property at the lower end of

the village, Garden Cottage. Ernie explained that we would have to do something with his car. We didn't know he had a car.

He sent Dad and me down the narrow track at the side of Heath House and round the back to a very small stone shed in the corner of the garden. Inside was a tiny

ous bed, and stops near an old quarry. It may be that it goes down a sink hole to re-appear in Primrose Gill.

However, where the map shows a divide there is a stream route that continues to the north side of East Langbrough, with a very similar bed to that before the divide. This meets the Kyloe Beck near the water-splash, with some being diverted to feed the Barningham Park water-garden. I suspect the whole route of Osmaril Gill has been adapted to this end, probably in the nineteenth century.

Near Wash Beck another beck starts and runs east. This is Gordale Gill, and after crossing the moor road it flows into an artificial lake beside Cowclose House.

This tarn covers approximately four acres and is fed by clear peaty moorland run-off water by two small becks, Gordale Gill and another that drains the Rowley intake but seems un-named. It seems to be known both as Barningham Hill Tarn and Cowclose Lake among the fly-fishing community using the lake, which incorporates a nesting island used by black-headed gulls and a sand martin nesting wall; geese are also present. Indigenous brown trout have colonised the lake.

The outlet from the lake is un-named on the OS, but I suspect it is Primrose Gill and must combine with Osmaril Gill that crossed the road near Moorcock Farm.

From this point the beck leaves the open moor and crosses the Cowclose Allotment and goes under the road to Scargill before threading



*Kyloe Beck water-splash, aqueduct in the background*

### nor beck trail

its way through an old quarry (referred to in p4, above) and entering Primrose Gill Plantation.

It's still a sluggish ditch in summer but clearly has power in winter. At one point it is undermining beds of Three Yard Limestone where other slabs that have been toppled by the beck.

The plantation ends near the lime kilns beside Low Lane and the beck is just across the track from these structures. Much is hidden by foliage, but the sluggish summer beck is there. We will pick it up again where it meets Kyloe Beck.

Probably the best-known and attractive beck on Barningham Moor is the water-splash on the track up to Carter House and the Helwith Road. There seems to be no name for this beck on OS maps, but I have come across the name Kyloe Beck. This must relate to Kyloe Castle, named on the 1854 OS as a sheepfold. Kyloe is a name for a breed

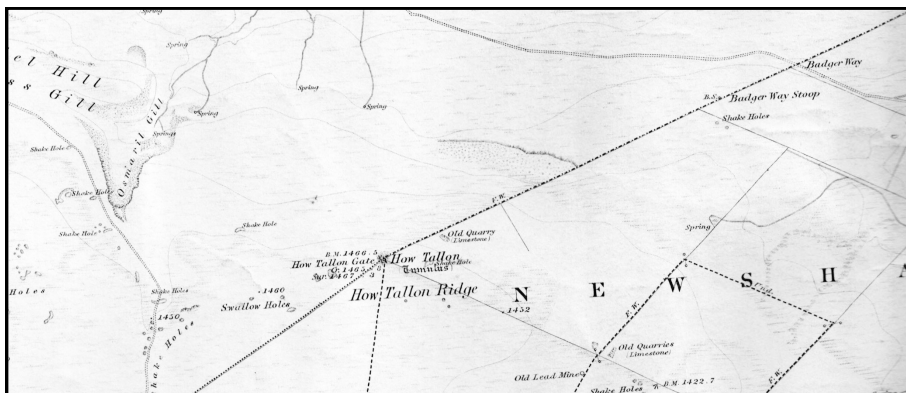
of Scottish cattle, and it seems reasonable to surmise that this stock shelter existed on land grazed by Kyloes and that the local sense of humour made this their castle.

Kyloe Beck rises in a marshy patch of moor not far from the old railway box-car close by Cathay Stoop. Several sources combine and cross the Carter House track where it dips down before Cathay Stoop and then it goes under the wall of the 1807 enclosures, presumably to provide water in the field where Kyloe Castle stands.

As shown on the 1895 OS, it then goes under another wall into the adjacent field and then cascades down the hillside before going back out onto the open moor.

From here it runs in a narrow, shallow valley which in summer is full of bracken, hiding the narrow beck. Just before the watersplash it is joined by another, unnamed stream from the west. Their joining has been managed in recent years with part of the flow being diverted into an aqueduct while the remainder





Where it all begins: Osmaril Gill, west of How Tallon, as shown on the 1856 OS map

## How Tallon to Tees: the Nor Beck trail

IN Barningham we all know the Nor Beck; it's the stream that runs beneath the dog-leg bridge on the road to Greta Bridge. It is our beck, and it takes away our effluent from the treatment works below Barningham House farm.

But it becomes Hutton Beck as it flows through Hutton Magna and has many different names on its course to the Tees.

I recently came across a reference to Aldbrough Beck, "rising near Eppleby" and thought, "No! that is our Nor Beck and it rises on Barningham Moor."

Searching the Ordnance Survey map I can locate 13 springs on Barningham Moor that feed our Nor Beck. Among them is Osmaril Gill under Eel Hill, a bit to the west of How Tallon cairn on Barningham Moor. It's an atmospheric place in a deep valley that, I'm sure, is a collapsed cave hollowed out by the springs in the limestone. Nearby is a seven-stone circle and a number of

*PHIL HUNT's Archive Award entry was a profile of Nor Beck, looking at its history, geography, geology and ecology. This is an abridged excerpt*

### nor beck trail

pieces of rock art. Stan Beckensall, the expert in this field, describes it as "a special place in the landscape". He refers to it as Osmonds Gill, but the OS clearly names it Osmaril. Gill is a northern landscape term, from the Old Norse *gil* meaning 'deep glen'.

Osmaril and its associated springs run diagonally to the north-east. The springs rising

around Scale Knoll run northwards and then become Gill Beck and head for the Greta near Scargill.

Osmaril picks up other springs on the moor heading north-east. Whether it is following its natural route is not clear and warrants further investigation. Following its route across the moor there were a number of spots where I expected it to turn north as the ground fell away towards the moor road, but it stayed within its bed. The OS suggests that the beck now divides; the landscape suggests that one branch turns north-ish in the direction of Moorcock Farm, in a ravine much deeper than its previ-



Part of the stone circle south of Osmaril Gill

### uncle ernie

(weren't they all?) Austin 7. I believe it was sold to the vicar for £50. [The shed is now part of Dove Cottage — Ed].

'Uncle' Ernie died in 1968 aged 85. My fiancée (as she was then) Kathy and I came to the village to help Dad sort his uncle's things. We are delighted to be reminded of Ernie when we use his sandwich plates and we also still have some cushions from a put-u-up bed from Garden Cottage.

We had been very lucky to have received, just before our marriage, a small bequest when Uncle Ernie died, as had a number of other great nephews and nieces. He and Gert had obviously been very careful with money: his net estate in April 1968 was £5,753 of which £1755 was spread between fifteen stocks and shares and £3650 was in savings accounts. As the estate chauffeur he had done well, hadn't he?

In July this year Kathy and I decided that while holidaying for a few days in Askrigg that we really should make a 'pilgrimage' to Barningham.

We called in at the church and were delighted to be able to refer to the 'directory' of graves (the history group's *Where Lyeth Ye Bodies*) which led us straight to the gravestones of Gert and Ernie. So, almost 50 years after we were last in Barningham we had a nostalgic stroll around the village.

I noticed that there were no



One of Ernie's car clocks which, says Nick, "we have always understood were at one time in Sir Frederick's cars"

longer sheep grazing on the hill opposite The Rectory. We were delighted to be able to make ourselves known to the present occupants of Heath House — Sheila and Jon made us most welcome and very kindly showed us around. It was great to be able to chat with Jon who of course has the history of the area at his finger tips.

For us southerners it is really pleasing to have through Ernie the connection we have with Barningham and its history.

● The 1909 postcard on the back cover of this Archive was sent by Ernie to his brother Dick. On the back he'd written: "Just off to see the much talked of meeting of the waters. Rivers Tees and Greta. Shall be home on Saturday next. Let's have a card to say when you are coming and if I'm to make arrangements. P.S. We get letters here at 9am only."

● Do you remember the Holmes? Let us know.

## History Group Publications

**Where Lyeth Ye Bodies\*** Guide to Barningham church, graveyard map, memorials and burials.

**Barningham Baptisms\*** Listed by date, name and parents. Vol 1: 1500-1800; Vol 2: 1800-1950.

**Barningham Brides\*** All marriages 1580-1950, listed by date, groom and bride.

**Counted\*** A-Z of census returns 1841-1911, arranged so that families can be tracked through 70 years. Vol 1: Barningham, Scargill, Hope; Vol 2: Newsham, New Forest. Vol 3: Brignall, Rokeby. Vol 4: Dalton, Gayles & Kirby Hill.

**Jam Letch & Jingle Potts\*** Barningham farms, fields, owners & occupiers in 1838.

**Short Butts & Sandy Bottom\*** Newsham farms fields, owners & occupiers in 1841.

**A Child of Hope\*\*** Journal of Mary Martin, born 1847 on a local farm.

**A Fleeting Shadow\*** The diaries of young Newsham schoolmaster James Coates, 1784-85.

**A Farmer's Boy\*** Memoirs of life in the area in mid-Victorian days.

**Aback to Yuvvin\*\*** 1849 Glossary of Teesdale words & customs.

**Barningham Vestry Minutes 1869-1894, Parish Minutes 1894-1931\*\*** Transcripts of meetings, history, index and names.

**The Archive\*\*\*** Group newsletter. Back issues available.

**Barningham Memories 1 & 2\*** DVDs of cine film of Barningham in the 1960/70s.

\* £10 each + £1.50 p&p

\*\* £5 each + £1.50 p&p

\*\*\* £2 each + £1 p&p

Discounts for group members.

We can also supply copies of **As Time Passed By**, a history of Barningham by Merryne Watson.

More information on our website:

[www.barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://www.barninghamvillage.co.uk)





### letters & emails

## Is that me with the hose 70 years ago?

HISTORY group member Peter Lowes of Middleton-in-Teesdale emailed to say his sister Christine thinks he was the small boy with the hosepipe pictured on the front of the last *Archive*.

"I'm not too sure about that," he says, "but I did have fair hair very young. It would have been about 1948 if it was me."

He also thinks he can identify the lady in the centre-page photo of a Hutton Magna school outing as Elsie Glasper. The dog in the same picture, he says, was called Pat, and the clergyman in the other photo was not the Rev Arthur Close, as we surmised, but Father Donovan.

John Hay in Barningham agrees, and adds that the photo was probably taken around 1921.

John adds that the Hutton Magna garage we featured was owned by John and Mary Jackson, who can just be made out standing beside it in the photo.



Elsie, Pat, and Father Donovan

## Vicar who knew the real Wackford Squeers

THE Rev Arthur Wilfred Mills Close was Vicar of Hutton Magna for 32 years.

He was born at Newton-le-Willows, near Bedale, where his father, the Rev Robert Close, was curate at Patrick Brompton. Educated at Richmond School, Rossall School and Jesus College Cambridge, he was ordained in 1880, his first curacy being at Kirkby Ravensworth, where his father was vicar. On his father's death Mr Close went to Settle as curate and later to Giggleswick before becoming vicar of Hutton Magna in 1890. While there he was chairman of the Parish Council and

*MARIAN LEWIS of Hutton Magna knows all about the Rev Close. She sent us this potted biography.*

read the Proclamations of the Accession of King Edward VII and King George.

He had a great love of Teesdale and Swaledale and knew every part of them and many of the people who lived there. Delving into history of the Dales villages was his pastime after retiring to live Darlington in 1922. He wrote many articles about local people and events of the past.

The church at Hutton Magna has a great deal to

thank him for. He documented copies of church registers and gave several things to the church. His initials are on two brass plaques he put in the church in memory of two nine-year-old choristers. His great joy was to see the Lych Gate memorial completed before he retired.

In old age he never tired of talking about early incidents in his life. One memorable occasion was in 1895 when, in consequence of heavy snowdrifts, the usual postal service became impossible and he added the duties of village postman to those of

## A very rare example... what was left of it

KEN Longstaff also sent us this photo of a remarkable vehicle his father William owned some 40 years ago.

It had started life as a four-seater Hampton open tourer, built in 1924 by the Hampton Engineering Company of Stroud, and its discovery at the Longstaffs' farm in 1978 created quite a stir in motor-ing circles.

Hamptons were rare, so rare that at the time only one road-worthy example existed anywhere in the world, owned by an Alastair Monro in Surrey.

William had bought his car — registration number HN 4091 — just after the second world war, and although it had only 3,000 miles on the clock he decided to shorten the chassis, remove the bodywork and wings, and turn it into a small tractor for towing grass-cutting equipment. Eventually it stopped running and it was



William Longstaff, left, with Mr and Mrs Monro and the Hampton tractor conversion after its discovery

### hampton tractor

dumped behind piles of junk in an old smithy William owned in Marske, where it remained, rotting away, for

nine years until he decided to get rid of it.

Who might be interested? Son Ken called Mr Monro in Surrey, and he was on his way up the A1 to buy it at the first opportunity.

"It looked rather forlorn but in fact had had hardly any use," Mr Monro told *Old Motor* magazine later. "First gear was worn, but second, third and top had had no use whatsoever."

The car was towed back to Surrey. Mr Monro died not long after, and the vehicle was offered for sale. Does it still exist?

● *Founded in 1912, the Hampton Engineering Company made about 1,100 cars, of which only five are thought to survive today. The company went bankrupt in 1933.*



Alastair Monro towing the Hampton down south



mond. The couple's address was Brompton on Swale.

However, a Joseph was in the electoral rolls only up to 2009 and I discovered, via the crematorium, that a Joseph was cremated 8 August 2008. (I think I found out when speaking to a member running a nursing home that Joseph had two children whom she could name.)

Similarly, I found that Joyce was only there until 2009 and, according to her daughter, was buried in Bolton on Swale cemetery a few days before Christmas in 2010. Again using the electoral registers, I found where the son and his wife were living and they were very pleased to give details of his sister who lives in Blackpool. She helped in the laying of the ashes.

That is when everything changed. They questioned why I thought their father Joseph Hull was the son of Ernest and I explained it was because I thought Ernest was Eleanor's childhood sweetheart and I thought it highly unlikely that she would have become pregnant so soon after Ernest's death.

They were sure that Eleanor was made pregnant by a landowner who lived not far from where my father farmed at Kersey Green on Barningham Moor. [Ken names the man: to avoid unnecessary embarrassment to his descendants we'll call him Mr X — Ed]. The fact that Eleanor appears to have done so I find difficult to understand and also why up to eleven women were also prepared to

## graveyard riddle



**John Longstaff, Ernest's father and Ken's grandfather, pictured at Holgate**

have a child by him, and that his wife does not appear to have objected. Mr X paid maintenance for his children at ten shillings a week each even though he was married. A possible conclusion is that these women did it for money.

Joseph's children believe that Mrs X was unable to have children and it was they who told me that their father was fathered by this landowner.

They also told me that Mr X paid maintenance for Joseph their father and wanted to adopt him. I now believe this is the correct Joseph Hull, born in Richmond in July 1923.

Eleanor went on to marry

Thomas Arthur Cooper in Darlington in December 1931 and they appear in the 1939 register. He had previously married Mary Robinson in 1921 at Richmond and had a child, Norman L Cooper, born 24 October 1923. Mary died 1930 aged 26. Thomas, born 1 July 1899, died on Teesside in March 1972.

Joseph's daughter has recently told me she did not know that Mr X was her grandfather until she was in her late twenties. Nothing was mentioned by Eleanor about her first love. Only when she was dying did she tell her granddaughter where she wanted to be buried.

Joseph's daughter now wishes that she had put a headstone on Eleanor's grave. She only put her in Barningham churchyard as Eleanor wished to be with Ernest, the man she wanted to be with all her life.

If she knows where Eleanor and Ernest are buried I will pay for a plaque or small headstone and we could put a photo of them on the plaque when she finds a photo. The exact place may not be important.

The missing link at the moment is how and where did Ernest and Eleanor meet. Was it at school or did they work for the same employer ie Mr X?

For the record, I, of course, had help in this research from Joseph's son and his wife and Joseph's daughter, who have given permission for this document.

vicar, carrying the mails from Ovington to Hutton Magna for a fortnight.

He knew Fanny Squeers of Dickens' *Nicholas Nickleby*. The man to whom Dickens gave the name Wackford Squeers was a schoolmaster called Shaw of Bowes and Fanny was his daughter. Mr Close had often talked with her.

He also knew "Kitty" Heslop, who worked under Shaw at Dotheboys Hall. Heslop ended his days in Kirkby Hill Hospital and Mr Close, when curate of Kirkby Ravensworth, frequently had conversations with him about Shaw.

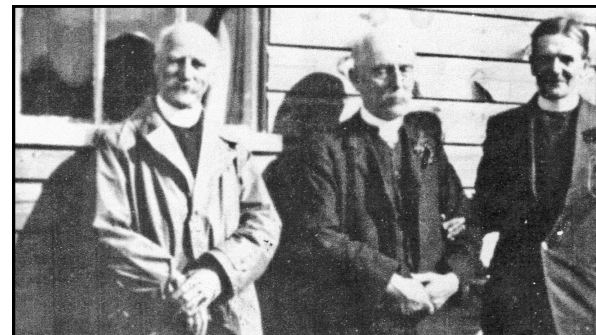
After retiring Mr Close became a regular visitor to Darlington hospitals, did voluntary work for local clergy, and wrote a book called *Travel and Transport in Olden Days* which was printed in the Darlington & Stockton Times in 1928.

He married Fanny Hewitt Walker, daughter of Dr Walker of Aldbrough St John, at Stanwick in 1887.

They had two sons -- Robert, an army lieutenant killed in the First World War, and Victor, who went to live in Folkestone — and had one grandson, Robert, who also became a vicar.

His wife died in 1926, aged 62. Mr Close died in 1936, aged 80. Both are buried in Hutton Magna, and his photo hangs in the church vestry.

His son Victor gave the Bishop's chair and server's chair to the church in memory of his parents. A plaque



**Three reverend gentlemen pictured at the wedding of Elizabeth Hind and Herbert Sayers in Hutton Magna, 1928: the Rev Stuart of Brignall, the Rev Close, and the Rev Hutchinson of Wycliffe.**

## letters & emails

in church reads 'In grateful remembrance of Arthur Wilfred Mills Close Vicar 1890-1922. Fanny Hewitt his wife. This tablet was placed here by the parishioners of Hutton Magna'.

## Looking for links to the Coates

ARE you able to give me any help in my family research?

My name is Simon Coates and I have found that my great-great-great-grandfather Christopher Coates was baptised at Barningham in 1770.

His brother Henry was baptised at Bowes in 1762, became a farmer in Scargill, married Christiana Waistell at Barningham in 1792, and had a large family, many baptised at Barningham.

Their father was William Coates who married Mary Thompson at Bowes in 1759 but I know nothing more about William. On Henry 1762's wife, Christian, I

found that she was baptised in 1769 at Brough. Her parents were Jeffery and Mary.

She married Joseph Johnson (farmer) at Barningham in 1827 and had a daughter Christiana baptised in 1803. They moved to Cleasby and had at least one son there. There was also a daughter named Margaret born around 1805 (possibly baptised at Bowes) who never married and farmed at Scargill with her brother Charles Hanby Coates.

They both moved to Howden Hill about 1861. She helped prove Charles Hanby's will together with Henry Coates (brother) and Joseph Johnson of Cleasby (farmer and son of Christiana).

I am interested in the Hanby name because Charles Coates 1815 had the second name Hanby. He died in Horncastle in 1862 but was buried at Bowes.

I suspect that Christopher 1801 was a son of Henry 1762 but have found no baptism record. There is a report (from memory in the *Teessdale Mercury*) saying that

Christopher died of a heart attack while dining with friends at Mr Ellwood's eating house in Darlington in 1857. He also had a daughter named Christiana. He farmed at Moor House farm near Brigg-nall.

I would be grateful for any pointers you can give me. I would like to plan a trip to the area later on to see the places my ancestors came from.

SIMON COATES

Fleet, Hampshire  
simontcoates@hotmail.com

● *There have been a lot of Coates in this area over the years. None of those Simon mentions are in our burials list but there are baptism records for William and Mary's children Henry (born 1762), Hannah (1765), George (1767) Christopher (1770) and John (1771); also for Henry and Christiana's children William (1794), George (1795), Henry (1796), Mary (1799), Christopher (1801), John (1806), Jeffrey (1807), Jane (1811) and Charles (1815).*

*There's no record of Christian's parents (that's how her name appears throughout) but there may be a link to a Jeffrey Waistell (1781) and Hanby Waistell (1788) both sons of Jeffrey and Mary Waistell of Scargill and going much further back, to a Mary Waistell born 1655, daughter of a Jeafrey Waistell (mother unknown). The name Jeffrey runs through several generations, down to Henry's son born 1807.*

*A John Waistal (that's how it was spelt in the register)*

## letters & emails

*was born to Hanby and Jane Waistell in 1814; Hanby's recorded as a farmer from Scargill.*

*Our lists of marriages include Henry and Christian's in 1792, Mary Waistell of Barningham to Miles Alderson in 1797, and Margaret Waistill (sic) of Barningham to Arkengarthdale miner William Martin in 1801. There are a dozen marriages of brides called Coates between 1620 and 1902, including one of a Mary Coates (Henry's daughter?) to George Thompson in 1824.*

*There are still Waistells living nearby in the Barnard Castle area.*

*A Barningham farmer called Joseph Hanby appears in documents dated 1689 which suggests some family link as Hanby is used as a first name in 1788.*

*There are no Coates in the 1673 Hearth Tax lists for Barningham, but many in the lists for adjoining Arken-garthdale, and it might be worth Simon digging into local records for that area.*

*We've sent all this information and more to him. — Ed.*

## I want to trace the Thompsons

I HAVE recently traced my father's family from South Australia to Barningham. He would love to know more about them and the area, as previously we were "stuck"

in London for about twenty years! I would like to become a member of your group and purchase a number of your booklets and probably every back issue of your newsletter.

My father's ancestor is Henry Thompson, son of John and Ann who was christened in St Michael and All Angels Church on 25th May 1699.

I have a lot of information about them that has been available online but the more you find out, the more exciting and confusing it becomes.

JEANETTE ROBINS

Brisbane, Australia

jeanetterobins16@gmail.com

● *The 1699 marriage is in our records and there are a great many other Thompsons, Tomsons, Thomsons and Tompsons mentioned down the years, plenty to keep Jeanette busy! —Ed.*

## The McDonalds: I'm loving it!

FIRST of all I would like to say how wonderful your website is. The work done by the group is an example of how things should be done but rarely are.

I have family connections to Barningham (and the wider district) and now have time to research more fully into that part of my family. To say they were a colourful lot would be an understatement.

So that I am not repeating work I would like to purchase your publication

# Together at last in a Barningham grave

*Do childhood sweethearts lie reunited in Barningham churchyard? KEN LONGSTAFF has been investigating*

MY story started with an article in the book *Here Lyeth Ye Bodies*, produced by Barningham Local History Group, in which I came across a footnote saying that in 1993 Eleanor Cooper's ashes had been interred in the Barningham grave of Ernest Longstaff, who died aged 16 in 1922.

Since Ernest was my uncle I put in a possible explanation in *Archive 55* which said the link could be to my cousin Gwendolene Longstaff (now dead) who married an Edwin Cooper.

*Archive* editor Jon Smith asked "Was Eleanor Edwin's sister, making her Ernest's niece?". My response was 'No' since Eleanor was born 1905 and Edwin 1925, adding

that Ernest was the son of John Longstaff and Christiana Hetherington of Banks Farm, Barningham, and Holgate Farm.

My father, George William Longstaff, was Ernest's brother. According to him, Ernest died after lifting a heavy weight onto a cart and had a heart attack.

Eleanor, I discovered, was born Eleanor Hull, whose family is shown on the 1911 census living at Ingleton. Her father was Oliver Hull, age 27, a colliery worker of Burnt Houses, Cockfield; her mother Alice, 28, from Middleton Eleanor was then aged six with a brother John Joseph, five, and sisters Dora, two, and eight-month-old Linda.

Further research through contact with Darlington Cre-



**Ernest Longstaff (centre) with brothers Herbert, George and Christopher, pictured in about 1910**

## graveyard riddle

matorium showed that Eleanor Hull/ Cooper died in Richmond. Her death certificate showed that she was born 20 November 1904 at Staindrop and she was the widow of Thomas Arthur Cooper, a retired insurance agent.

The informant was Joyce Hull, her daughter-in-law living at Brompton on Swale, Richmond, Yorkshire. It was she who placed Eleanor's ashes in Ernest's grave, having been left instructions by Eleanor.

This I discovered when I got in touch with Joyce's children, having found them in the electoral registers. Richmond Council was able to tell me that the address was for the village of Scor-

ton and from this information, directory enquiries was able to find their telephone number.

When looking at the births of Eleanor Hull/Cooper and Ernest Longstaff rather than the deaths, — Ernest was born 1905, died in 1922, and Eleanor was born 1904, died in 1993 — I came to the conclusion that they were probably childhood sweethearts.

Then I discovered that Eleanor had had an illegitimate child, Joseph Hull, whom I assumed was Ernest's. Following this discovery I looked for a Joseph Hull born near Staindrop circa 1921-1922 and found a Joseph Hull born September 1919 in Auckland.

A Joseph Hull married a Joyce Dixon in 1944 in Rich-



## stalking

stocks, Fred instigated a widespread programme of vermin control. He also constructed two stalking tracks in the deer forest, introduced rabbits to the property (he loved shooting rabbits) and built a couple of stalking bothies.

His best year for grouse was 1855 when 1,281 birds were shot. On his best day, 7 September 1859, he shot 207 grouse, walked-up to his own gun over Gordon setters on what was known as the Neutral Ground – an incredible feat given the shotguns of the period.

His Ardvourlie Castle Fishing Book, 1864, gives an idea of how prolific the rivers, lochs and lochans were in those days. On 22 August 1864 he and his brother caught three salmon and 70 sea-trout on Loch Washamit and, on Loch Langavat, 30 sea-trout to one rod. The salmon were fairly small and hard to catch. Brown trout in the lochans were easy. There was hardly a day during those months when he wasn't out fishing, grouse-shooting or stalking. His love of the latter came when he moved into Ardvourlie.

He became exceedingly good at it and developed an uncanny relationship with his head gillie, Murdoch McCaulay, killing a record bag of 57 stags in 1869 and, in 1870, 18 stags in one day with 18 shots. On Larggrath he shot a 14-pointer – the largest stag shot there up to that time. His

gamebook for the period ends in 1870 with the wistful line “last of the Lewis” and how much it must have hurt him to have to leave his idea of paradise. His lease had run out and he was suffering increasingly from the effects of gout, which dogged him for the rest of his life.

● *Sir Anthony, who died last year, went to the Hebrides himself in the 1980s to retrace his great-great-great-grand-father's footsteps, but armed with a camera instead of a gun. Our thanks to the Milbank family for permission to reprint this article.*

## Historic records project is looking for volunteers

DURHAM County's Heritage Landscape and Design Team are looking for volunteers to work on their Historic Environment Record project.

The HER is a database of all known archaeology and other historic environment features (like buildings, parks and gardens, and find spots) in Co. Durham and Darlington. It includes digital mapping and hard copy collections of reports, aerial photographs and books.

HERs are used to support planning, inform management of sites by landowners, and for research.

Volunteers to work at County Hall in Durham are required on Mondays and

## Digi-Archives now online

WE'VE at last conquered the technology to digitalise all 56 issues of *The Archive*, and they're available to download (free!) from our website [barninghamvillage.co.uk](http://barninghamvillage.co.uk).

You'll find the digi-links in the list of *Archive* contents on the website's Publications page.

A few images haven't reproduced too well, but hard copies of back issues are still available if you want them (£1 for members, £2 non-members).

Tuesdays. Available slots are morning, afternoon, or a full day. Travel expenses can be reimbursed.

The volunteer work is desk-based enhancement of computer records using digital and hard copy sources of information.

You need to be basically computer-literate (though training will be given), willing to commit to a minimum of 12 days volunteering (this can be done in half-day slots) and interested in archaeology.

For more information, contact Nick Boldrini, the county's Historic Environment Record Officer, at [archaeology@durham.gov.uk](mailto:archaeology@durham.gov.uk) telephone 03000 267008.

## Phil and John booked for talks

BARNINGHAM history group chair Phil Hunt and fellow member John Hay have both been booked to give talks to the Bishop Auckland U3A history group in the New Year.

## letters & emails

*Where Lyeth Ye Bodies* plus a number of back issues of *The Archive*.

The McDonalds in *Archive* 32 are part of my family — as far as I can tell all the McDonalds / MacDonalds / Donalds (and all sorts of other variants) in Teesdale from about 1750 to 1850 (at least) are related. There is also a link to the Barningham Lee family and others.

Kevin Ferguson (who wrote the letter published in *Archive* 32) and I share a common ancestor in Alexander MacDonald, my 5xgreat-grandfather). I wonder if Kevin has had DNA testing, if so it would be interesting to see how his results compare to mine (and my father's).

I came to a stop with the paternal line with the marriage of the above Alexander MacDonald and Ann Raine in 1750 (Kirkby Ravensworth) so am now tracing sideways so to speak.

HELEN PEARSON, Kelso  
[helenmpearson@yahoo.com](mailto:helenmpearson@yahoo.com)

## New Zealanders seek Coles

HELLO Hello Hello from New Zealand!

My grandmother was a Cole. I myself was born in Yorkshire, we emigrated to New Zealand back in 1966. I have an older sister living in Hebden Bridge.

I was so excited yesterday to find the Barningham Local History Group newsletters

online with so much information, stories and photos relative to the Cole family of Newsham and Smallways. I am hoping to visit Yorkshire next year and will certainly be retracing the ancestors' footsteps and hopefully connecting with family.

In the meantime I wonder if you can help me work out who is who. Not surprisingly my Thomases and Williams got all mixed up. The line of descent going back is:

Patricia Reynolds (me) born 1958, Halifax; Denis Reynolds (1930, Halifax); Alice Cole (1905, Yeadon); Ben Cole (1870, Leeds); Thomas Cole (1847, Tollerton); Thomas Cole (1811 Kirkby-moorside).

I'm lost after that. Who were his father and mother? How far back do your Coles go? Where are we related?

Any information or photos would be greatly appreciated.

TRISH TAHU, New Zealand  
[trishtahu@hotmail.com](mailto:trishtahu@hotmail.com)

● *A trawl through the history group records revealed that the Thomas Cole born in 1811 had a son called Ben, born 1851, who moved north and took over Smallways Inn in the early 1900s. Many of his descendants still live in this area, distant cousins of Trish in New Zealand. We've sent her details and put her in touch with history group member Barbara Matley in Cheshire, who has extensive records of the Coles and has*

*organised family reunions at Smallways. —Ed.*

## Yet more from New Zealand

WALKING in the footsteps of my forebears, my son and I are visiting Barningham, Kirkby, Gilmonby, Neasham soon and I am hoping we could meet with a member of the Barningham history group for guidance in our search.

My family names were Johnson and Nelson but it has been a bit difficult obtaining info when we are at the other ends of the earth — New Zealand — next stop the South Pole!!

I have some certificates etc but need help at this stage. We plan to visit graves and churches that our families attended/married to pay our respects, although I understand that Newsham Hall school, where a Johnson schoolmaster taught, is long gone.

COLLEEN RUSSO  
Auckland, New Zealand  
[colleenruso@gmail.com](mailto:colleenruso@gmail.com)

● *We met Colleen and son Shaun when they arrived in Barningham in October, and spent a morning delving into history group files. We managed to track back through various Johnsons and Nelsons as far as Marmaduke Johnson, buried in Barningham in 1794. We then sent our visitors off to meet Linda Sherwood in Gayles, our Johnson family expert. —Ed.*



*A group of stalkers creep towards deer at the top of a ridge*

MY interest in stalking in the Outer Hebrides was aroused by photographs taken by my great-great-grandmother, Alexina Milbank, in the early 1850s with a Kodak camera.

Photography was the latest craze to hit the Victorians and she hastened to take stylised images with her new purchase.

My rascally great-great-grandfather, Frederick Milbank, had taken a lease in 1851 on Ath-

line, a 9,000-acre estate on the edge of Loch Seaforth on the east coast of Lewis. She photographed him stalking in the Outer Hebrides with his ponies and gillies; her family in long, flowing skirts and petticoats at the water's edge; deer with their antlers silhouetted against the sky; a widow outside her "black house" and many others.



*A shooting party ready to set out on another day's stalking*

## Victorian deer-stalkers, by pioneer photographer Alexina

*Sir Anthony Milbank wrote this article for The Field magazine about his ancestor Sir Frederick Milbank's deer-stalking exploits in the Outer Hebrides in mid-Victorian days, illustrated with photographs taken by Sir Frederick's wife Alexina.*

Grandfather Fred would take Sir James Matheson's new steamer service up from Glasgow to Stornoway, then proceed by horse and carriage the 25 miles across to the edge of Loch Sea-

forth to the lodge looking down towards the Minch on the bounds of Harris and Lewis. With him would often come his family, together with their head nurse, Celery, and headkeeper, Birt-whistle. Once there, they would stay throughout the months of August to November.

At his leisure Grandfather Fred was able to walk-up grouse, snipe and woodcock as well as fish in the sea lochs and lochans until he was obliged to return reluctantly to his Parliamentary duties. He was Liberal MP for Richmondshire in North Yorkshire for more than 25 years.

In 1863 he began to widen his tenure when stalking in the Outer Hebrides, proceeding over the boundary into Harris by arrange-

ment with his friendly neighbour. In 1865 he acquired the lease of 25,000 acres on the eastern edge of the vast Amhuinnsudhe deer forest and a newly built "state of the art" shooting lodge, Ardvour-lie Castle.

He bought a small yacht, the Heather Bell, that enabled him to sail to Seaforth Island or to the park on the other side of the loch, visit Scalpay sea lochs or even the Shiant Islands. He now had access to the deer forests and sheep grounds of Harris and Morsgail and to Lochs Langavat and Ruavidh, their myriad enticing, deep lochans and few spate rivers.

Fred's skills with a gun and fishing rod were legendary. I have his gamebook with me here, scrupulously filled in at the end of every day.

Grouse, woodcock, a few snipe – just he and a friend walking for miles, covering the ground with



*Lady Alexina? If so, it must be one of the world's first selfies*

pointers or setters. What heaven they must have been in. Remarks are few but illuminating: "Capital day's sport"; "40 snipe – very good"; "102 grouse – only 105 shots"; "8 ptarmigan – splendid day". To improve the grouse



*After the kill: hunters examine the body of a stag*