

# THE VILLAGER



## **Editorial:**

My thanks to everyone who has submitted words & photos for the last couple of issues. Your efforts have been greatly appreciated. We have been through the first stage of a Global Pandemic Lockdown and almost all of us are still here, generally both happy & healthy. I am sure there will be a few more bridges to cross before we start to return to something like the “normal lives” we lived until March 2020 - but we have shown how we can, will and do all pull together in times of crisis. I am sure we have each seen numerous instances of help and kindness to our neighbours, possibly to ourselves, and my thanks go out to everyone for their positive and helpful contribution to our effort to support neighbours through Covid 10.

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## **THE SCORDALE MINES OF WILLIAM WHARTON:**

I am most grateful for the following story told to me by Ruth Wharton who, together with her husband Gordon, has recently moved to Granary House, Hilton.

Ruth's Grandfather, William Wharton, left school at 12 and trained as a stonemason. He served as a Sapper in World War 1 and on his return from the front he became a Quarryman. In the early 1920's William was Manager of a quarry in Wensleydale.

Young William was now married to Elsie and living in Kirkby Stephen. He saw an opportunity to acquire the Mining Rights for Scordale and acquired these around 1920. William cycled from Kirkby Stephen to his working home, the mine office, at the foot of Dowscar on a Sunday evening or Monday morning. During the week William lived on the fell, according to his daughter Dot, eating Trout & Rabbit.

William began to employ local labour, including Tommy Tinckler and Jack & Tommy Anderson. The work was hard and the profit small. In the mid 1930's William was woken in his Miners Cottage by a fierce snowstorm. He became so concerned that he set off to walk to Hilton for shelter but before he reached his goal the Cottage was swept away by the storm and never restored. William then acquired Townhead Cottage at the top of Hilton Village to allow him to continue his work. Profits remained poor and Elsie's hairdressing earnings were an essential part of the family's income.



The product mined by William was Barytes, a naturally occurring Barium Sulphate Mineral. It's uses included being a filler for paint and being used in creating Atomic Bricks. As the Second World War approached William saw an opportunity in Longfell mine. The price of Barytes was increasing steeply and William built his own access road to the mine from the A66 whilst adding 3 x 7 ton Guy Trucks, 2 compressors and a team of 40 men. As war broke out the Defence Ministry wanted to close the mine but the Ministry of Supply wanted the Barytes as sources were scarce. Eventually a deal was struck allowing miners access to the mine in the morning & evening but requiring them to stay underground throughout the working day. Shortly after the end of the war William sold the successful mine and by 1950 William & Elsie's daughter Dot had moved to Manchester & our story comes to an end.

## **Chief Medical Officer slams Hilton residents for quarantine failure.**

No not coronavirus; this was in 1903. Dr Craven the Westmorland Chief Medical Officer presented his Annual Report to the County Council for the previous year. His report was summarised in an article in the Penrith Observer of 18 August 1903 and stated:

*In sanitary matters Westmorland stood best of any County in England, the death rate being only 12 per 1000 while the average for England was decidedly higher. During 1902 the district had shown a wonderful immunity from infectious diseases, with the exception of an unfortunate outbreak at Hilton where there had been some shameful negligence and no attempt to prevent the spread of disease.*

Dr Craven was referring to reports he had presented to East Westmorland District Council in November 1902 (and reported in the Penrith Observer of November 25<sup>th</sup> 1902). He reported then that Mr Lancaster, the schoolmaster became ill after visiting several relatives and the doctor had sent him to hospital along with his sister. Despite the fact that his sister had been ill for three weeks and knowing that scarlet fever was present in the village they had failed to take any precautions or to notify the medical authorities. The Sanitary Inspector visited the schoolmaster's house and reported that the house and the children were in such a filthy condition that it amounted to technical cruelty to the children. The inspector found other sick children in the village which the schoolmaster knew about but had failed to act.

The Sanitary inspector visited Hilton again later in the month. He said that Mr Lancaster had seen him visit another house and then locked the door of his own house and would not answer when he knocked.

Dr Craven was quoted in the Penrith Observer as saying:

*This was the sort of negligence they had to put up with from beginning to end. The schoolmaster, an educated man, failed to take any precaution and even though his own child was suffering he failed to notify it.*

The Chief Medical Officer continued to worry about the Hilton residents and in April 1937 he reported another health scare and instructed the Murton Parish Council to put notices on all notice boards reminding residents that they should not dispose of dead poultry, cats and dogs in the beck. Whatever the health scare might have been it was not specifically mentioned in his report.

The above contrasts with the exemplary behaviour and demeanour of the current Hilton residents.

John & Carolyn Sykes reporting from lockdown in plague-hit Barrow-in-Furness

## **RECIPIES:**

Allison Caldwell

### **Flat bread** this makes 2

100g natural yoghurt (I use greek)  
100g SR Flour

Mix together either with a dough hook in a processor or with a fork in a bowl.

It should come together in a soft dough. If the dough is sticky add a little flour, if too stiff a little milk.

Put onto a highly floured surface and form into a ball.

Split into 2. Start to flatten to make a flat round shape. I use a rolling pin.

Heat a heavy based frying pan or griddle.

When hot put dough on the pan. The dough will start to cook.

After 2 minutes turn over. Bread should be cooked with dark spots.

Serve.

### **Pancakes** makes 5/6

2 eggs  
40g plain flour  
30ml milk  
1 tsp vanilla extract  
1 tsp baking powder.

Separate eggs. Whisk whites till stiff peaks.

Mix yolks with vanilla extract and milk.

Sieve in flour and baking powder.

Mix till you have a smooth batter.

Fold in whites till well mixed.

Heat a heavy based frying pan or flat griddle.

When hot drop in 2 spoonfuls of mix. Repeat to fit 3 in pan.

Cook until the top starts to form bubbles.

Turn to cook other side



Jackie Watkinson:

A very quick recipe for lock down. You will have most of the ingredients:

Scoop ice cream  
Hot coffee  
Crunchie bar

Smash the crunchie bar whilst still in the packet  
Put ice cream into a dish  
Sprinkle the crunchie bar on to and pour the coffee over.  
Eat with enjoyment

**CLIFFORD LINGARD: one of Hilton's evacuees.**

Hopefully, this link will get you to Christine & John Sykes video with Clifford:

[https://www.dropbox.com/s/2jhqdajwrzv30e/  
Hilton%20Evacuee.mp4?dl=0](https://www.dropbox.com/s/2jhqdajwrzv30e/Hilton%20Evacuee.mp4?dl=0)

## **WELCOME TO OUR PARISH:**

I invite all newcomers to offer a quick hello to us all & let us know who they are, where they have been, how they ended up with us etc. This time it's Fiona & Andrew Robinson from Brackenber:

Fiona writes:

Andrew and I moved to Brackenber just before the lockdown started in February, so have had plenty of time to get unpacked and sorted out, do some decorating and gardening and get to know our neighbours who have been great and very welcoming – social distancing rules allowing!

I am originally from Wiltshire and moved up North when we got married. A lifelong interest in horses has, much to Andrew's relief, been replaced with dogs! I have worked as a legal secretary, medical secretary and in land and estate management and more recently been house/dog/horse sitting for people whilst they go on holiday. Andrew has spent a lot of time competing and training spaniels for competitions, but is now concentrating on wildlife photography and fishing! We have lived in North Yorkshire for most of the last 30 or so years, starting in the North York Moors and then moving to Wensleydale. We had been looking for a house for a while and thought Brackenber Gate suited us well – we know the area and have friends here, we both enjoy walking, I enjoy cycling and am learning all the time about the garden and doing research on plants.



## How to create a bedding plant design: Tina Longstaff

With your bedding plants chosen and a bed or border selected, think about how they'll look when planted. I recommend that you:

Place taller plants, such as ornamental tobacco (*Nicotiana*) or cosmos at the back of beds and borders, graduating to shorter bedding plants at the front such as petunias, marigolds and pansies.

Plant in groups for a statement block of colour or drifts between perennials and shrubs, rather than as individuals.

### How to plant up bedding plants in beds and borders

#### Step 1

Water the bedding plants well while still in their original tray or container. This gives them time to absorb the water as the bed or border is prepared.

#### Step 2

Prepare the site by turning over the soil with a garden fork or spade. This will aerate it and help to break up any compacted lumps, providing a better structure for roots to grow into and allow for better drainage.

Remove weeds by hand as you go, or with a hoe, and take out any large stones.

#### Step 3

Mix in a generous load of multi-purpose compost (about a bucket per square metre) and a soil improver or manure. This will enrich the soil with nutrients to help keep your plants healthy.

Fork the compost deeply so that the roots of your new plants will grow down into it in search of moisture and nutrients.

#### Step 4

Use a trowel to dig a hole a little bigger than the pot or container the plant will be removed from.

Bedding needs to be planted at the same depth as it's in the pot or tray, making sure the top of the root ball is level with the soil surface. Check the hole is the right depth and add or remove soil from the bottom of the planting hole as necessary.

### Step 5

Carefully push the plant up out from its tray or pot and handle by its root ball or leaves.

Lower the plant into the prepared plot.

### Step 6

Use your hands to gently fill any gaps around the plant using more compost or surrounding soil, so that the plant is well supported whilst roots remain below the surface of the soil.

### Step 7

Water in using a watering can. Give the plant a good drink watering only the soil around the plant, not the leaves.

### Step 8

Water regularly – this could be twice a day in the heat of summer (especially plants in pots or hanging baskets).

The foliage of many bedding plants acts as an umbrella, so even after rain; always check the soil around the plant to see if it still needs watering.

### Step 9

Deadhead old flower heads as soon as they fade to stop your bedding plants wasting energy-producing seeds. This will encourage more new flowers and prolong your floral display.

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***Thanks to everyone for the copy & support. The deadline for the next issue of The Villager will be September 25th 2020.***