

A brief historical over view of Lindale

The earliest people, Mesolithic hunters and fishers, may have reached Lindale by sea, from Morecambe Bay, up the wide shallow Winster inlet until they reached the limestone former sea cliffs of **Brocka** (previously Brockholes) Hill. The county Historical Environment Record for Allithwaite Upper parish records a prehistoric flint scatter for 'Lindale Low Cave', and also notes a saw mill, now destroyed, on Brocka Hill. Many of the local hills, such as Sheepbarrow, are called barrows, and were formerly covered in earthworks or heaps of stones of uncertain age. These are not now thought to be burial grounds.

Castle Head Hill, or Atterpile Castle, a former island in the tidal river Winster, may have been an Iron Age fort, but real evidence is tantalisingly absent. Stockdale, writing in 1870, in the *Annals of Cartmel*, assumed that there was a Roman station at Castle Head. Roman coins have been excavated there, but later 'barbarians' destroyed all trace of Roman civilisation, (Stockdale 1978). A number of Danish coins were also found, but unfortunately the various hoards were dispersed. Other antiquities recorded as found at Castle Head include bones of deer and 'buffalo', beads, ornaments, stones, fossils, coins, and a silver ring.

Historical research for Lindale is difficult. It is a small rural working community where little was written down. Lindale was barely a hamlet in 1066, and is not mentioned in the **Domesday Book**. (Dickinson 1980). It was cut off to the north by steep hills and thick woodland, with only cart and horse tracks. Early records refer to the area as hamlets with small farms growing oats, rye and barley and raising sheep and cattle; it was always too wet for wheat. There was probably some fishing from **Winster House wharf** in Lindale. The Kent estuary was important for shipping, though the channels were shallow and changing. Stockdale notes a mention of '**wreck money**'. The land was ploughed till exhausted, then left some years to recover. Poor people subsisted on oat cakes. It is possible that fevers were prevalent. As late as 1918, Lindale School was closed due to fever. Farming would have been supplemented by working in the local coppiced woodlands and in **stone quarries** for 'slate and flag' on Newton Fell and in Lindale. Fields below Low Newton had ponds used for 'retting' hemp. Stockdale 1980:586 quotes the name of Lindale being derived from 'Lakedale', a Cymric origin, from llyn, a lake.

Lindale **chapel** was probably the first stone building. **George Fox**, founder of the Society of Friends preached there in June 1662. In the 1700s the parish was poor. Several **charities** were started. The Myles Taylor's Charity was set up in 1714 for 'the most poor and necessitous and best deserving people' principally of Lindale.

As the uplands were enclosed from 1800 to 1854 they also were 'improved', by burning and liming to allow ploughing for a hay crop, and bracken was cut for animal bedding. 24 new public roads were also constructed. The dry stone enclosure walls form a characteristic part of local landscape.

Much has been written about Lindale's connections with **John Wilkinson**, 'Iron Master'. Around 1750 Isaac and John Wilkinson were beginning to experiment with smelting iron, at first using a water wheel at Skinner Hill above Lindale's Top House, and later using peat and charcoal at Wilson House. Skinner Hill and Wilson House Bridge are both recorded as Listed Buildings, but nothing remains at Skinner Hill of the Wilkinson water mill or furnace. This was the real birth of the Industrial Revolution, and the first ever iron boat was launched from the parish. John Wilkinson built Castle Head House in 1780 and designed his own iron obelisk which now stands on a small hill in Lindale, and is a Grade II* Listed Building. His iron coffin which may lie in Lindale Church has never been directly identified. Edward Mucklow made some Victorian alterations to Castle Head House which later became a seminary before being bought as a field studies centre.

The **Websters of Eller How** were marble cutters and architects well known in the Kendal area. They designed many houses, bridges, schools and churches, including Lindale Church and School. Eller How was chosen for its remote position in the valley above Lindale. George Webster endeavoured to improve his estate by adding follies, which can be seen on the top of Dixon Heights. The family mausoleum lies in Lindale churchyard, and is a Grade II Listed Building, as is the Church of St Paul, Lindale.

The **school** in Lindale dates from 1759, and there were also several 'Old Dames' Schools', where local ladies taught pupils in their cottages. Fanny Brocklebank's was at The Fold in the centre of the village, and Aggie Akister's opposite the present school. Nellie Rawlinson opened an infant school in 1830 in a cottage on Bell Hill, recorded as pulled down by 1914. Nellie taught in Lindale for 18 years, later in a cottage on Smithy Hill. The cottage between Sunset Cottage and Ivy Cottage was used as a Sunday school in winter, and the original cottage of The Rockeries was a Dames School in 1825.

The history of Lindale has been strongly influenced by the development of roads, and **carriers** were important, travelling to Kendal every week to fetch supplies to sell in the villages. In 1822 the Turnpike Road from Lancaster and Levens to Staveley was built, with a toll bar at Wilson House. The turnpike road wound its way from Lindale's 'Bottom House' up steep rocky slopes, past horse troughs to the 'Top House', past Burnbank Farm to the coaching halt at Low Newton, from where the old road kept at a lower level before climbing to High Newton. The steepness of the road through Lindale was well known, and resulted in frequent accidents to properties and people from runaway vehicles.

An 1851 directory records that Lindale had the Mason's Arms, Commercial (now Lindale) Inn, and Royal Oak. The village had blacksmiths, schoolteachers, grocer, postmaster, and wheelwright, and stonemasons and a shoemaker. 12 farmers were named, most identifiable today. In 1852 the River Winster was redirected into a narrow channel and the Winster Pool was cut off from the sea by the construction of the railway embankment from Milnthorpe to Grange in 1856.

Later directories record full lists of village professions, which now have largely disappeared. Lindale's 'Old Police House', 'Old Coach House' and 'Old Pottery' are now private houses. In

the 1930s the road was widened, and Manor Cottages at Yew Tree Green were demolished. In 1977 the 2.5 mile £4.3m Lindale bypass was completed.

Lindale has three Tree Preservation Orders. The Coronation Tree, a Horse Chestnut, was planted to celebrate the Coronation of King Edward VII, adjacent to the site of Lindale's Corn Mill, which burnt down in the 1960s. It was designated in 1979. In 1981 an Oak Tree was planted on the Recreation Ground to commemorate the Royal Wedding. In 1995, an area of 'amenity woodland of mixed deciduous trees' in the Gill was designated. These trees were thinned in 2015.

More details on Lindale in 2008 are to be found in the Community Plan. The motor trade, haulage and repair service has long been important. Lindale is noted for three large car dealerships, selling 'brand marque' (Audi, BMW, VW) vehicles. Other local employment stems from long established professions such as farming, woodworking, stone walling and building, and in addition there are service industries, small construction firms, plumbing and many self-employed and people working from home. There is a high level of entrepreneurial spirit, seen recently in the construction of Lindale bowling green in 2006. Housing stock in Lindale is limited. In 2006, 64 (19.8%) of the 322 houses in the centre of Lindale were largely vacant, second homes or holiday lets.

Lindale Sports Club was revived for the Millennium and ran annual events such as Sports Day, Bonfire and Christmas tree lighting, and a Christmas lunch together with other social activities in the village hall. It sadly folded in 2014.

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