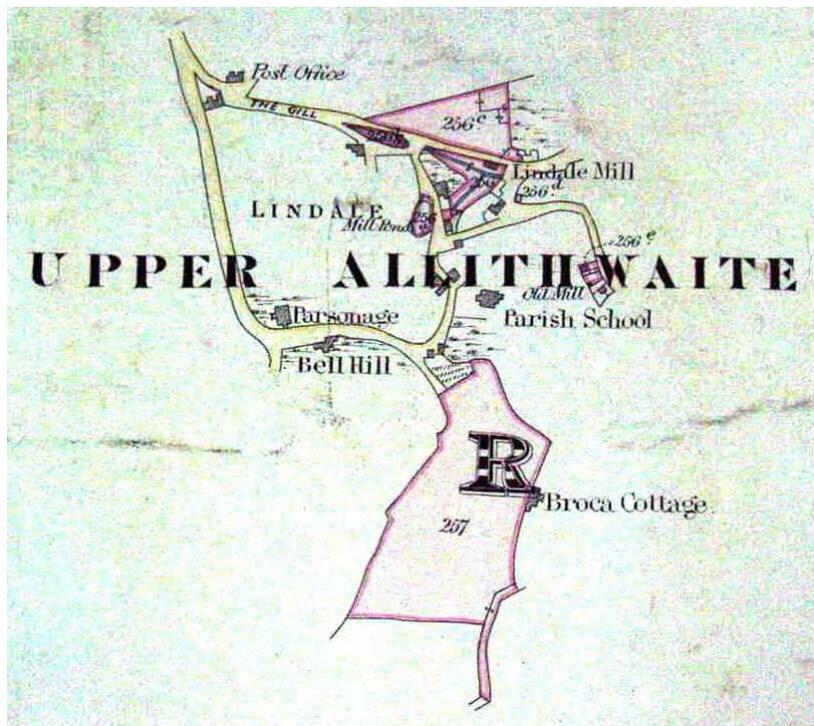


## Lindale's Corn Mill and Mill Pond

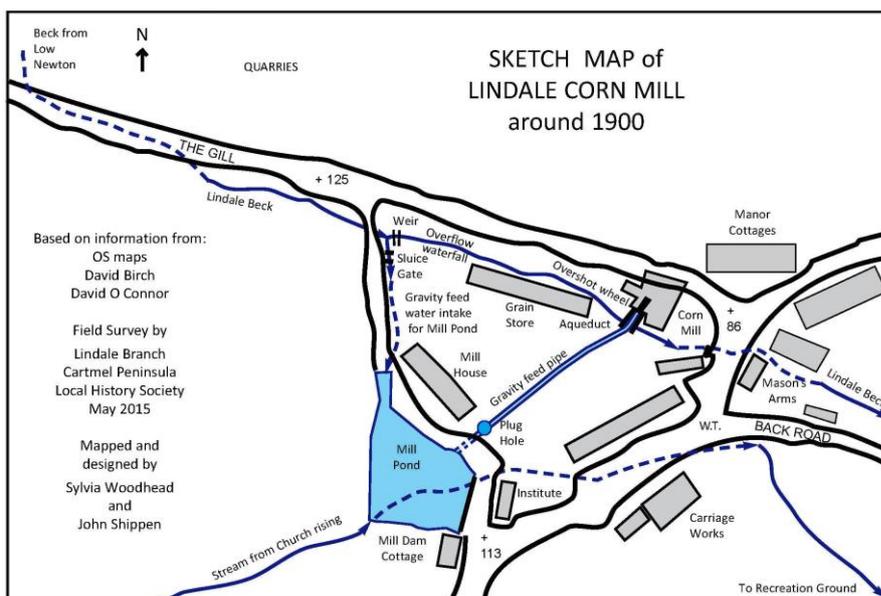
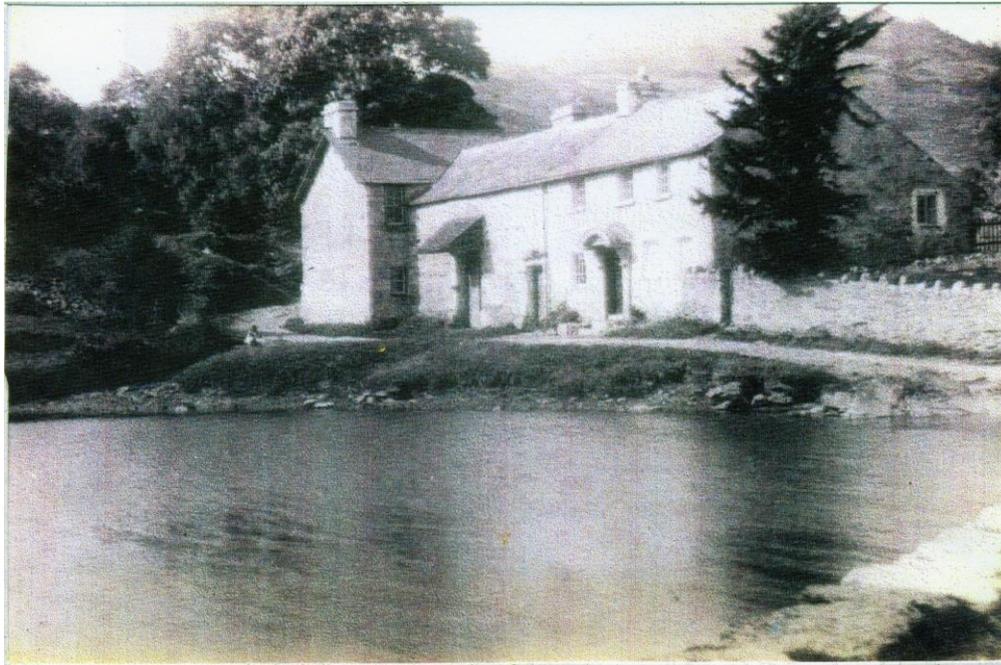
In May 2015, Lindale **residents**, with memories of the Mill, joined members of the CPLHS for a short walk around Lindale's Mill Pond area, to try to plot out the links between the former Corn Mill and Mill Pond, neither of which still survive.

Lindale has long been an **industrial village**. John Wilkinson and his father Isaac used the hydro- power of the Lindale Beck to power what was probably the first iron furnace in the country, originally sited at Skinner Hill at the top of Lindale Hill. Neither the foundry nor the water mill at Skinner Hill now survives, but an iron catch on a gate nearby might be an intriguing relic.

The **Lindale Beck** rises near High Newton, and falls steeply along its short course through Lindale, to join the tidal River Winster at Castle Head. There may have been several **mills** in Lindale in the past. **A map** showing 'Partition of the Rawlinson Estates 1860' marks Lindale Mill and also 'Old Mill' down the steep gill, which local people call Lindale Gill (as opposed to the main Lindale Hill which is usually referred to as the Gill). Lindale Mill, part of the Rawlinson Estates is clearly shown with **two water sources**; the Lindale Beck coming down parallel to The Gill, as at present and another channel from the Mill Pond, (See plan). **Lindale Mill** stood adjacent to the main road through Lindale, a dominant position, and may have been a Manorial Corn Mill (Davies-Shiel 1978, p59). Manor Cottages, now demolished, formerly stood across the road from the Mill. The 1829 Directory records John Parker as corn miller at Lindale.



It appears that water from the Lindale Beck was diverted into the **Mill Pond** from just above the present **weir** by a deep channel fitted with a sluice gate. This channel was much deeper in the past. Only the overflow water continued over the waterfall and down Lindale Beck, past the Mill. This former water inlet is clearly seen on an old, but unfortunately undated, photo of the Mill Pond. The Mill Pond as shown is surrounded by a stone wall, and the road was much narrower. The stone slab 'The Scaurs' can be seen on this photo, and also the **Mill House**. John Chamley was the Lindale miller. 'Chamley' was shown as the name of milling families in the area south of Windermere in Cumbria on a map by Davies-Shiel (1978, p98).



Local people have fond **memories** of playing in Lindale's Mill Pond. BB recalls a lovely pond with clear water, and two streams running in, one a limestone stream from the church, the other a 'slate' stream from the beck. They used to get jam jars full of sticklebacks. DB remembers catching minnows. LM played in the Mill Dam. Children dared each other to jump over the deep hole of the 'Plughole'. There were moorhens, and they went fishing for tadpoles. AC played in and around the Mill Pond. She enjoyed skating in winter. She thought it was lovely.

The Mill Pond outlet, locally known as the '**Plughole**', was initially an open channel about 6 feet deep, with water going into a nearly horizontal pipe behind the houses and coming to the cliffs behind the Mill. (Others report an open wooden channel). The pipes (there were two at one time, joined together) of about two foot diameter crossed, at a considerable height, over the Lindale Beck, and emptied into the overshot water wheel, which lay at right angles to the Lindale Beck. This pipe was always full of water when the Mill Pond was in existence and was closed by a sluice gate near the Mill. The sluice gate was opened each morning to operate the water wheel. The 'Plughole' is now filled in, and is a garage approach.

The **Mill Pond** was also fed by a stream rising beneath the north west corner of the Lindale church. A spring exists here today, rising from the limestone above and never drying out. The course of this stream can be glimpsed approaching the Mill Pond. The mill pond feeder stream now runs at the back of No 1 Mill Pond, and under No 2 Mill Pond, the two houses built on the infilled Mill Pond. The stream has a spectacular waterfall, in the garden on the north side of the Institute, and probably flows under School Hill, as water is heard here, across under the village hall car park and down the gill, where Mill House and Mill Garth record the location of Lindale's Old Mill. The stream emerges on the Recreation Ground and joins the other branch of the Lindale Beck. Its course is now largely in underground culverts.

There is no sign of Lindale's **Corn Mill**, and very few photographs can be found. One is displayed in Lindale's heritage area in Lindale 'Square'. A Coronation Chestnut Tree was planted in 1902 quite close to the east side of the Mill. The tree is now a clue to the Mill's former location. The Mill had two storeys. The mill wheel, an **overshot water wheel** with wooden buckets and a cast iron rim, lay inside the Mill at its western and upper end, inside a lean-to construction. This 'outshut' was designed to keep the wheel dry, that is to stop the wood from warping. The wheel could not be seen from outside. A brick pillar at Coronation Cottages (formerly Mill Cottages), recently cleared of encroaching ivy, shows the height of the former water wheel. Its diameter is estimated as 30 feet. The water wheel was **slow to start**, and young boys used to help start by climbing on to the wheel.

Lindale Corn Mill crushed and rolled oats. It was originally Pye's Farm Feeds. It was later sold to a local farmer (Abel Ward). He imported Canadian wheat from Liverpool and supplied farmers. There was a drying room with a fire and boiler underneath. Davies -Shiel (p66) comments that many corn mills had drying kilns which also worked as township bread ovens

and thus were placed centrally. What may have been a possible communal bread oven can be glimpsed in the wall of Coronation Cottages in Lindale Square.

In 1967 Lindale Mill burned down. It had been used for storing car tyres. It was later demolished, and later still the area was redesigned and is now a heritage area. Many questions remain and will probably never be answered. It remains interesting to wander around Lindale pondering on lost aspects of its past.

Mike Davies -Shiel starts his book *Watermills of Cumbria* with the 'incident' at Lindale. He heard the sad news of the fire at Lindale Mill one Sunday tea time in 1967. He 'photographed it in the rain that evening', and records that 'in less than 20 minutes on Monday morning a bulldozer with a power winch had pulled it down and flattened the ruins'. None of the clues to past watermills that he describes in his book still remain at Lindale, making the detection task even harder. The photographs that he took of Lindale Mill are not in the book. Davies-Shiel describes 8 types of water course patterns for Cumbrian watermills. Lindale's mill doesn't quite accord with any. It is nearest to Type 6a (p20), for a mill on a head race below a weir. He notes that only a few mills had water races that crossed their beck on an aqueduct, though many of the waterwheels were shut away inside lean-to sheds, as at Lindale. He notes that overshot wheels have been in use since Roman times. They are the most powerful, with a theoretical efficiency of 80%. They require a long headrace to steady the water level. They work on a weight x distance system, that is the weight of the water dropping through a vertical height (not the speed of flow). Lindale's Mill was further unusual in being separate from the Mill House, which fronted on to the Mill Pond.

## References

M. Davies-Shiel *Watermills of Cumbria* 1978 Dalesman Books

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*Sylvia Woodhead* October 2015