

Investigating the histories of houses in the Grange over Sands area: Where to start and how to progress

Making sense of house histories involves investigating three themes:

Studying the building itself	Finding out about the owners and occupiers	Understanding the connections between the house and the community
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Information about houses can be found:

In the community	Eg: The title deeds, old photographs, oral history
At the Local Studies Libraries (especially Barrow)	Eg: Printed maps, Census, Trade Directories, newspapers on microfilm, old photographs, histories of the communities that have already been written
At the Archive Centres (especially Barrow)	Eg: Printed maps, Enclosure and Tithe maps, the 1910 Valuation, Building plans, Manorial records.
On Line	http://www.bodian.co.uk/old-maps.html (maps, postcards and guides) http://www.oldmapsonline.org/en/Cumbria There are various other old maps sites as well
The National Archives, Kew	The full 1910 Valuation

The arrival of the railway in 1857 was the catalyst for the development of Grange. Although there are older houses, especially in the surrounding communities, the majority of Grange housing post-dates that event and this information sheet focuses on the period since then. Information about communities and occasionally older and more significant houses can be found in:

Antiquarian literature such as:

James Stockdale, *Annals of Cartmel*, 1872.

Recent historical literature

Books about Cumbria:

Individual communities may be in the index, but these books are more valuable as a source for what it was like in Cumbria at specific times in the past. Reading sections of these books will allow you to compare your community with other places, both nearby and more distant. They may allow you to answer the question – was your community typical?

C. M. L. Bouch and G. P. Jones, *The Lake Counties 1500 – 1830*, Manchester, 1961

J. D. Marshall and J. K. Walton, *The Lake Counties from 1830 to the mid-twentieth century*, Manchester, 1981

S. Denyer, *Traditional Buildings and Life in the Lake District*, London, 1991

R. W. Brunskill, *Traditional Buildings of Cumbria*.

J. D. Marshall, *Old Lakeland*, Newton Abbot, 1971 (especially chapter 12)

Barrow Archive Centre has copies of:

Furness year books 1897-1907

Grange Visitor 1889

Mannex Trade Directory 1851, 1866

Barrow and North Lonsdale Directory 1876

L. Aspland, *A Guide to Grange over Sands*, circa 1865 (BLC/P/121 CB Gra).

Grange Library has copies of The Red Book (about Grange)

A good way to begin an investigation is to focus on about a century ago (c1910) and about 150 years ago (c1850-70). Then move on to more recent and, if appropriate, older material. If you have access to the **Title Deeds** of the house you are investigating, then check whether they contain a type written **Abstract of Title**. This is a summary prepared by a solicitor sometime in the past, and provides a short cut to understanding the complexities of title deeds. Otherwise Title Deeds can be very difficult to understand, and if they are old, to read, so you might feel more encouraged to begin an investigation in the following way, and return to the deeds once you have got your eye in.

You need to remember that owners and occupiers of property need not be the same people. Title Deeds focus on owners or tenants (such as customary tenants) who have the right to pass on their tenancy, but many other sources provide information on occupiers.

A century ago (c1910)

Start with the **Census**. You can access the censuses (1841-1911) at www.ancestry.co.uk (free at libraries) and at www.ukcensusonline.com and www.findmypast.co.uk or on microfilm or microfiche at the libraries. The census provides a snapshot of the occupiers of the house on census day in a particular year. It is a superb resource, although there are a few problems you need to be aware of.

But who occupied the house between censuses? Trade Directories (from 1829-1930s) can help you here. They are available in the libraries and record offices. There is a Bulmer's Trade Directory of Furness undated but about 1910.

What more can you learn about the occupants? Their baptisms/marriages and deaths may well be recorded in the parish registers which can be viewed on microfilm in the Archive Centres. [The Cumbria Archive Service *Cumbrian Ancestors* is very useful].

Check out **maps**. The nearest Ordnance Survey maps to 1910 are the Second (c1898) and Third Editions (c1919). These are at a scale of 25":1 mile or 6":1mile.

There is one other source that is a bit more difficult, but if you have a go, extremely useful and worth the effort. This is **The 1910 Valuation**. This information requires a number of documents and is in two locations.

First go to the Archive Centre and ask for the 1910 Valuation map covering Grange over Sands. You will find the map has been annotated in red, and you need to identify the handwritten red number that has been added for your property. This number connects to two books. The first is also in the archive centres and you need to ask for the 1910 Valuation book that goes with the map. Look up the number and you will find a summary of basic information about the owner, occupier, status of the property, size and value.

Second take a trip to The National Archives in Kew (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/). You need to take the red number with you. At Kew there is another book that provides considerable detail about the property, down to the level of number of rooms and what they were all used for. At Kew you need to provide the unique reference for the volume covering your property. To find it visit (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/discovery). Discovery is the name of their catalogue. Search *Grange over Sands IR58*. It will then give you six book number for each book of 100 entries. You need to request the book with your number in it. The full reference will look like: IR58/31560 (through to 31565 depending on which book your property is in).

Photographs: there are extensive collections of photographs in the libraries (and some in the archive centres).

150 years ago (c1850-1870)

The **Census** is available for 1851, 1861 and 1871 (as before). There is also a **Mannex Trade Directory** for 1851, but the 1860s are a bit of a blank. From the 1870s Kelly's Directories start. The parish registers also exist as before. There are also some **Maps** of use. There is the OS 1st Edition at a scale of 25":1 mile or 6":1 mile dating from the 1850s so before the railway. On the 25" maps every field is numbered and the key is in the OS Book of Reference for 1861. Not all these exist but you may be lucky at the record offices and libraries. The Cartmel **Enclosure Map** (parliamentary enclosure) at Kendal AC dates from 1796 so is of use for the older houses and also land use at that time. You need to ensure you get the SCHEDULE with the map as this provides the key to all the numbers on the map. It would also be worth asking at the archive centres if there are any **Estate maps** covering your area of interest .

The **Tithe Map** exists for every community and date from the 1840s so relate to the old communities (eg Allithwaite/ Cartmel). You need to ensure you get the SCHEDULE with the map as this provides the key to all the numbers on the map. Again this may reveal land use before your house was built.

Building plans

From the mid 19th century new properties or alterations to existing buildings had to be approved and some of these planning documents have survived, although often in very poor condition. Those for the Grange area that can be seen are kept at Barrow and Kendal archive offices.

Manor Court Records

These are a useful, but more difficult, source dating from the 16th century to the 1920s. To find out more www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/projects/manorialrecords/index.htm This site provides a lot of valuable background material on manorial records and links you to the manorial documents register at The National Archives. Put in place name (eg Lindale and Hampsfield/Allithwaite/Cartmel) and it will list all records available locally and elsewhere (Grange was not a manor so you have to be creative and think what are the older communities that may have manors). Perhaps start with the manor court records. It is helpful to know the name of the owner or tenant of your house. You will learn about tenancies and maybe the nature of your property. If you enter Hampsfield and Lindale you will find 15 collections from 19th century at Barrow AC; Cartmel, 49 collections from 16th-20th centuries at various archive centres, and Alithwaite only 16th century material at The National Archives.

Probate inventories

It is very difficult to find out how a house was furnished in the past (unless there are photographs) but one way is through using probate inventories. These are lists of a person's possessions created at the time of death. They either exist as a single list, or if you are lucky the inventory has been created room by room. These become less common during the nineteenth century, but if they exist they may be amongst your deeds or in a solicitor's deposit. Those that have been deposited in an archive centre are likely to be at Barrow, Kendal or Preston archive offices. You will need to ask for help from the archivists.

Other sources

For the more recent past:

Oral history may provide you with information about your house and its owners/occupiers from the more recent past – information that otherwise can be quite difficult to discover.

There are other records that are available locally, and although some may be useful to you, they are harder to use and the chance of success is less certain. If you want to go further then it would be a good idea to buy a book on house history:

N.W. Alcock, Old Title Deeds, Chichester, 1986

N. Barratt, Tracing the history of your house, London, 1995 (and subsequent editions)
J. H. Harvey, Sources for the History of Houses, London, 1974
D. Iredale, Discovering This Old House, Princes Risborough, 1968
Dowdy, Miller and Austin, Be Your Own House Detective, London, 1997