

# RICH PICKINGS 07

## THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LOW FURNESS HIDDEN LIGHT ASSOCIATION

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

---



### FRESH INSIGHTS INTO THE ALDINGHAM 'MOTTE':

It has been commonly presumed that this was the first 'motte and bailey' castle of Michael le Fleming which he later left to build something more substantial in stone. There has always been a sense that the mount was in fact much older, possibly linked to the Viking era in Furness. Here's a little snippet to test those assumptions!

In the Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian and Archaeological Society Volume 9 for the period 1885-87 there is a report on 'The Two Moated Mounds Liddell and Aldingham' by the Worshipful Chancellor Ferguson FSD in which he quotes Dr. Barker who suggested that the mound was nothing more than a burial mound because 'by the directions of the late Colonel Braddyl of Conishead Priory, a small shaft had been sunk down the centre of the hill from the top and a portion of human bones were brought to light' .

However, **Revd. T. Tolming** who had also been on the 'dig' added that 'we also found bones that had been burnt, also a boar's tusk..

He concluded **'We discovered enough to confirm the opinion we held that it was the ruin of a very ancient sacrificial altar'**

More from Aldingham on the next page.....

## When does graffiti become art?

These little 'boats' were etched into the back pew at St. Cuthbert's Church, Aldingham perhaps during a long sermon.....

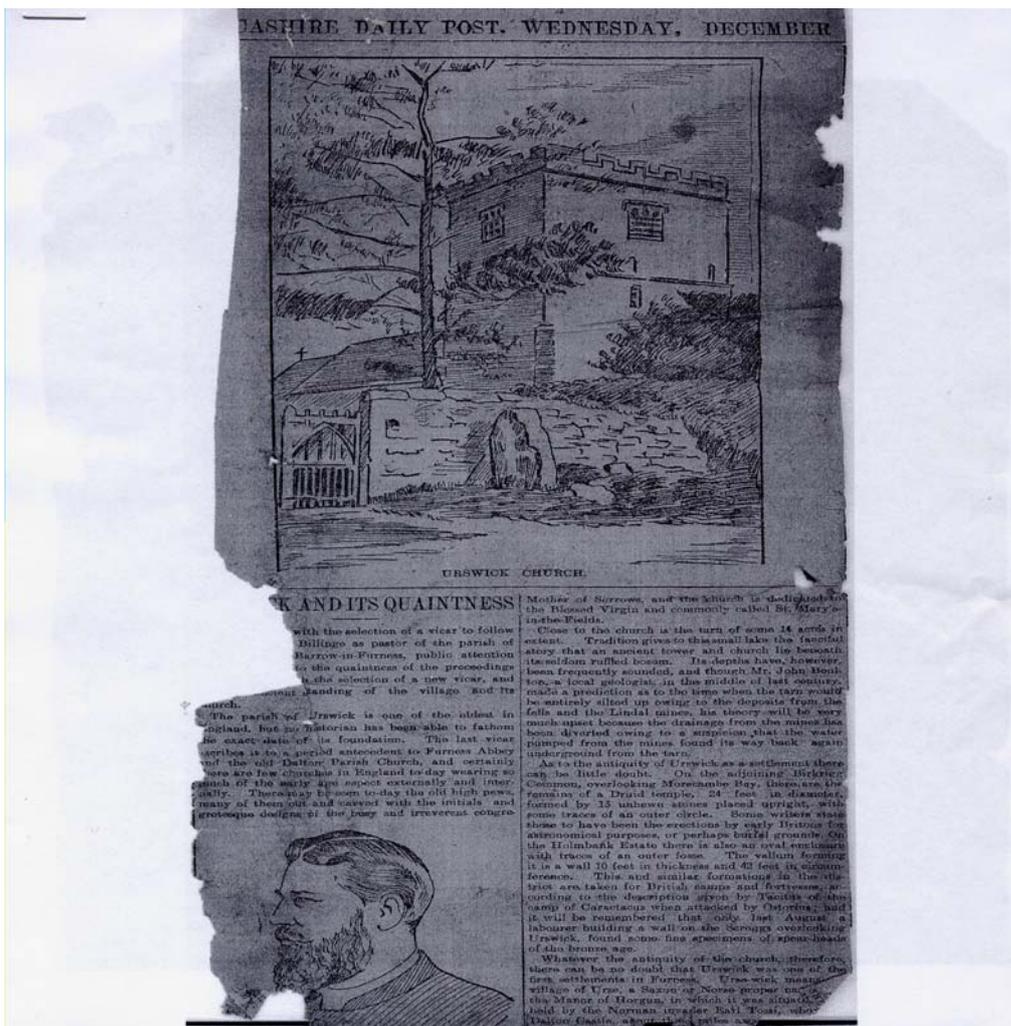
I am led to understand that they are in fact carved to depict the types of boat which sailed up the Bay to Conishead and Bardsea and would assume that they are from the late 1800's or early 1900's (unless a reader can tell us otherwise)....



There are several initials, etc. which are more recent.... would like to find out who the 'scribes' were.....

# Now for one or two snippets from URSWICK

A number of newspaper cuttings have come to light for the period around 1906-1910 when much repair and restoration work was going on at Urswick Church. One fascinating article which must have been published around 1902-3 shows a sketch of the church prior to the churchyard extensions being made.



Take note of the large 'marker stone' outside of what was then the main gate; a closer inspection would suggest a carved cross of some antiquity on the face of it; could this be a further clue to the Celtic origins of the site? The search has begun to find this stone- one can't imagine it being removed or broken up entirely.... So watch this space.

The gentleman in the sketch is the Revd. Robert Burden Billinge who was vicar at Urswick from 1878 to 1902.

**Urswick village turns out to carry  
on a centuries-old tradition of rushbearing**



**St. Michael & All Angels September 24th 2006**

# Rampside & its Islands....

## ROA Island (Viking= Ro-ay)

In 1840 Jon Abel Smith, a wealthy London Banker, bought Roa Island with the intention of operating a train ferry from Piel to Fleetwood as a link in a quick rail service between Glasgow & London. The "Causeway" connecting Roa Island to the Concle and a pier from Roa into deep water were completed in 1847. After initial disagreement with the Railway Co. regular ferry services began in May 1848. The service was limited to summer sailings with the openings of the Ulverston-Lancaster Railway in 1859. Furness Railways bought the entire property from Smith after extensive storm damage for £15,000.

Roa Island School - was known as the "open air school", with "delicate" children being sent there in the hope that the sea air would be of benefit. The school and canteen closed in 1988 are now private residences.

Trinity Terrace - was built to provide accommodation for the ten Trinity House Pilots.

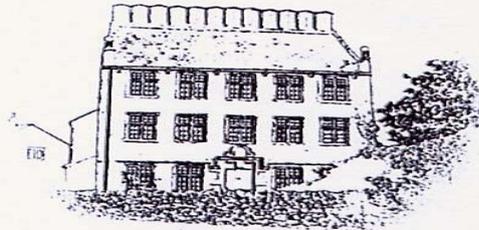
Villa Marina - was built by local ironmaster HW Schneider as a holiday residence. It was bought by the LMS Railway and later leased as a fisheries investigation laboratory. Closed in 1928, with an extension added in 2004, it is now two private residences..

## RAMPSIDE VILLAGE

(named from either:

The flower "Ramsons" commonly wild garlic or "Ramsheyde" from the shape of the land)

Rampside Hall - Queen Elizabeth I granted William Knype "Herbage of Rampside Wood" in 1583 and the Hall was built on the site c. 1588. With its four sides to the Cardinal Points the Hall claims to be not only the oldest inhabited house, but the only grade one listed house in the borough. During the 17th century it was a refuge for missionary priests during the "no popery" period of English history.



The Hall has 14 windows on the front, 10 of which were blocked up to avoid window tax. These were re-opened during renovation in the 1980's. Under the cellar steps, now boarded over, there is a cobble well. The water level rises and falls with the water table level and has, on occasion, flooded the cellar.

## Piel Island

The island was given as part of a land grant for an abbey to local monks by King Stephen in 1127. As Furness Abbey grew there was a need for a safe harbour with a warehouse to keep precious cargoes, such as wool, safe from raiders. The first wooden structure was built c.1212 and was

replaced c.1327 by the current stone "castle". In 1487 Lambert Simnel landed on Piel claiming he was the rightful King of England. With his army of German and Irish mercenaries, he marched towards London, but was captured by the forces of King Henry VII at the Battle of Stoke. After the dissolution of the monasteries Piel was passed to the King.

In 1669 the first Revenue Officers came to Piel as smuggling was becoming a major problem. By 1727 it was such a problem that there were 3 Officers and the Revenue agent at Piel. Records of the time indicate that as many as 250 were anchored in Piel harbour at any one time. The houses were built in the late 1700's for pilots along with the public house The Ship Inn. The landlord of the Inn is known as the "King of Piel". The island is now a war memorial dedicated to the people of Furness.