

More Memories of Lunedale

by Colin Staley

I have many happy memories of Lunedale as it was before the reservoir was built; for many people it is difficult to describe the beauty of the valley now submerged in water. The River Lune flowed down the valley surrounded by streams and woodland.

Even though our family lived at 'Thwaites Farm', I spent the first seven years of my life living at 'Low Wemmergill' with my Grandmother, happy times.

In many ways the heart was taken out of the Dale when the reservoir (Selset) was built, however, I have many happy memories of the school, the chapel and the garage, which was owned by the Raine family; we used to go there to buy sweets and fuel. We also took our bikes to be repaired there.

There were six of us in our family; I have four brothers and one sister. We would often play in the river and we had different names for the different parts of the river.

Looking back our school days were as happy as they could be, as our teacher was quite stern and sometimes frightening! I remember one occasion we were sitting in the class room and Edgar Dent (local farmer) was spreading lime in the field behind the school. I must have been spending more time watching him than listening, so my teacher said if I really wanted to watch him I should go outside; so she sent me out. As I stood outside my father came past and asked me what I was doing, so I explained. He took me back into the school and said to the teacher 'This lad will get his death of cold; he just had his hair cut yesterday.' I was very embarrassed!

We used to walk up to the road next to the chapel to catch the school car to and back from school; the car was driven by Mrs Williamson who lived at Stackholm.

I can remember one or two occasions playing truant. On one occasion myself and two of my brothers and my sister stayed at home 'poorly'. In those days many people made 'prodded' rugs and we proceeded to do some of the rug as Father and Mother had gone to Barnard Castle. So there we were working on the rug when the school Attendance Officer walked into the house and caught us; we had made a miraculous recovery!

I remember that every Christmas we had a school concert, along with games. I can still see Miss Roberts belting the piano keys now! All parents attended.

We used to have a large bonfire on our farm and a lot of the boys and girls in the dale came and joined us, there was a lot of excitement at such events.

I have happy memories of the little chapel we attended, 'Plantation End'. Our Sunday school teacher was Mrs Dent, she was a very kind and patient person. She taught us the truths of the bible, which has stood me in good stead all down the years. I remember the Sunday school anniversaries especially and the Sunday school trips; riding in those old buses to Morecambe or Redcar seemed an awful long way!

Even though our family moved away from Lunedale when I was around 12 years old I still think of Lunedale as my first home and have so many happy memories. Of course there were sad times too but we were happy and content.

When we were small children growing up in the dale we knew many people and remember many 'characters' we admired, to mention a few; Jack Bell at 'Road Head', Joe Raine and Jane Ann at 'Nettlepot', the Bainbridges from Wemmergill Hall, my uncle Bill (Dent) at 'Low Wemmergill' and my uncle Harry at 'Stackholm'. The dale was always full of activity and familiar faces.

So as we look forward to the future of the dale we keep these thoughts and memories in our mind and congratulate the people who have developed Carlbeck School into what it is now; a place at the centre of the dale that will hopefully be at the heart of the Lunedale community for years to come.

Colin Staley