My husbands mother, Elizabeth Ellen Cowie was born in August 1916 and always lived in the West Pelton, Perkinsville area. She often recalled a school trip in her final year at school, in a “Charabanc” to the Lake District. We have an old copy of the school log recording the outing dated 5th July 1930 as being the 8th annual school trip.

All places of interest are detailed with a potted history commencing in the Durham area through Weardale to Alston. Details of the Hartside pass are well recorded but Mrs Cowie used to reminisce that all the passengers had to alight from the charabanc to lighten the load on the steep incline. Passing Windermere, Rydal Water, Grasmere, and Thirlmere the final destination was Keswick where everyone had tea and a trip on the lake. The pupils arrived home at 11:30, no doubt exhausted.

The log states “a most enjoyable day had been spent”. The cost ? 6d!!

Summary of the school log is below:–

Nevilles Cross – Battle between English and Scots 1346. Scots defeated.

Brancepeth Castle – belonged to the Earl of Warwick
Willington – Mining Centre
Wolsingham – Holiday resort. Iron & Steel works.
Stanhope – Chief Town in Weardale, Holiday centre.
Eastgate/Westgate – In Olden days the entrances to the Bishop of Durhams Hunting Park.
Wearhead – Nearest village to the source of River Wear
Killhope – One of the highest road summits in England. Highest point 2056 ft above sea level.

At base of Killhope the
A Clockmaker of Renown. “John Bolton was unquestionably a genius.” So said an article in the Durham Advertiser of October 1873. Bolton was born in 1761, possibly in Yorkshire, where there is a record of a baptism in 1762, and it is known that he was working in York in 1785. On his gravestone, his wife is named as Margaret. The only relevant record of a marriage that I can find in Northumberland, Durham or Yorkshire is that of a John Bolton with Margaret Prest in Northallerton on November 20th, 1790. It is not known when he came to Chester-le-Street, but he owned a shop in the town in 1812. John Bolton was a nationally renowned clockmaker, producing clocks of all types: long-case (“grandfather”) said to be of “curious composition, often in doggerel verse”. Interestingly, he described himself on his sign-board and in his circulars as “from Chester-le-Street, not London!” Bolton moved to Durham, probably in 1812, and he died there, in Old Elvet, on October 21st, 1821. He is buried in St. Oswald’s churchyard. His epitaph reads:

Ingenious artist few thy clocks, bracket clocks, turret clocks, musical clocks, tavern clocks, table clocks and church clocks. In 1802, he made the clock for the town hall in North Shields; he made the clock for the County Jail in Durham; and in 1818 he simplified and repaired the clock for the church in Corbridge. He was asked to restore the clock in Durham Cathedral, which skill surpass. In works of art, but death has beat at last. Though conquered, yet thy deeds will ever shine. Time can’t destroy a genius large as thine.
Lambton Majority

Lambton on the 19th June 1876. It was returned to Chester-le-Street one hundred and forty years later when it was on show at the Heritage Group’s Exhibition 19th-22nd July 2017 at the Lambton Arms.

Majority Celebrations at Chester-le-Street. The coming of age of Viscount Lambton and his twin brother, the Hon. Frederick William Lambton, sons of the Earl of Durham was celebrated yesterday at Chester-le-Street. The Earl of Durham and his family are abroad and consequently there were no festivities at Lambton castle, excepting a dance last night in the servant’s hall. During the day the church bells at Chester-le-Street were rung and flags displayed in the villages in the district.

In the evening between 200 and 300 gentlemen sat down to a dinner, provided by Mr Burn of the Lambton Arms, Chester-le-Street, in a tent erected near the inn. The chair was occupied by Sir Hedworth Williamson, Bart. Whitburn Hall. The vice chairmen were G.E. Forster Esq., Washington, J. Crawford Esq., Lumley and Mr A. McLaren, Offerton. In proposing the toast of the evening the chairman observed that he was sure he was right in thinking that the toast he had to propose would be received with warm and earnest acclamation when they remembered that the Lambton family had not only lived amongst them for a number of generations, but so far as he could discover had during the whole of that long period deserved nothing but what they had received namely, the affection, support and respect of their fellow men and ancestors. (Loud Cheers) In conclusion Sir Hedworth said if their future might be augured from their character and dispositions he felt convinced that the young men whose coming of age they were celebrating (who are officers in the Coldstream Guards) would do honour to their ancestors; he asked them to drink their health’s and the success of Frederick John George Viscount Lambton and the Hon. Frederick William Lambton and might they follow the example of their excellent father and darling mother, and that of the long line of valiant and illustrious ancestors. (Cheers) Long life and prosperity to them with three times three. (Cheers) The Hon. and Rev. John Grey responded. The Chairman next asked the company to drink "Success to the Earl of Durham and his family", which was a toast which would not require much preface from him, because wherever the name of the Earl of Durham was known and in particularly where ever the Earl of Durham himself was known, the integrity of his conduct and his uprightness and his general justness and honesty must recommend him to the respect of all with whom he came in contact. (Cheers) The Rev. J. Grey responded. Subsequently Mr Goddard proposed "Prosperity to the Coal trade" to which Mr Martin responded.

From Durham Advertiser 07/07/1876.
Majority of Earl of Durham’s Sons. A ball was given in Lambton castle on Thursday evening to the tenants on the estate and other friends, on the occasion of the coming of age of Lord Lambton and the Hon. F. Lambton. On Monday, the children connected with the estate were entertained to tea in the beautiful park surrounding the Castle. The day was fine and the woods being in the height of their summer foliage, the young people enjoyed themselves to the full. The reference to "darling mother" refers to Frances Beatrice who had died aged 36 years in January 1871 shortly after her thirteenth confinement and ninth son. She had married the Earl of Durham in 1854. John George Lambton (3rd Earl 1855-1928) succeeded to the earldom in 1879 on
The keeper acts also as a County policeman. There is no register of prisoners. The keeper stated that there was not more than about three prisoners per month, and that few of them stayed more than a day and a night, though he has known a case of a prisoner remaining a week. On the day of my visit the place was empty. The keeper said that the prisoners had coffee and bread for breakfast, bread and cheese generally for dinner, and tea and bread for supper.

I made the following recommendation:
1. The cause of dampness in the wet cell to be, if possible, removed.
2. A register of prisoners to be kept.
3. Matting and rugs to be provided for bedding.
4. Wash hand basins, soap, towels, and combs to be provided.

Bit of a difference to the centrally heated, air conditioned, CCTV monitored Custody Suite of a modern Police Station.

The house referred to is believed to have been in Middle Chare.

The Report by Her Majesty's Inspector of Constabularies following his inspection of Chester-le-Street Police Station, on 21st July, 1846, makes interesting reading:

"Two cells for a lock-up house have lately been formed out of part of an old house, the remainder of the house being used for a County police station, and the dwelling house of a resident keeper and his wife. The situation is in the middle of the village and appears to be unobjectionable. The cells are each ten and a half feet long, and eight feet high, the breadth of one being six feet and the other five feet. Each cell has a small glazed window looking into a yard belonging to the station. There is a provision for warming and ventilating, but the warming does not appear to be effectual. There is a guard bed in each cell, with straw base and rugs for bedding. The place appears to be secure. In one of the cells part of the wall was damp. The keeper and his wife have a respectable appearance, and seem to be properly qualified. The keeper acts also as a County policeman. There is no register of prisoners. The keeper stated that there was not more than about three prisoners per month, and that few of them stayed more than a day and a night, though he has known a case of a prisoner remaining a week. On the day of my visit the place was empty. The keeper said that the prisoners had coffee and bread for breakfast, bread and cheese generally for dinner, and tea and bread for supper.

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The Soldiers Story of WWI cont

In the last edition we explained how Thomas and his brigade were part of the heavy bombardment of the German lines which ceased at 02:50 on the morning of 7 June. The German troops, sensing imminent attack, rushed to their defensive positions, machine guns ready, meanwhile sending up flares to detect British movement towards the ridge. Silence prevailed for the following twenty minutes until, at 03:10, the order was given across the line to detonate the mines, which totalled 600 tons of explosive. Of the 21 mines laid 19 were exploded. The invariable loss of surprise in the use of a preliminary bombardment was entirely offset by the effect of the mines, which blew the crest off the Messines-Wyschaete ridge. Audible in Dublin and by Lloyd George in his Downing Street study, the combined sound of the simultaneous mine explosions comprised the loudest man-made explosion until that point. The lighting up of the sky as the detonations ran across the ridge was likened to a ‘pillar of fire’. The effect of the mine explosions upon the German defenders was devastating. Some 10,000 men were killed during the explosion alone. In its wake nine divisions of infantry advanced under protection of a creeping artillery barrage, tanks and gas attacks from the new Livens projectors which were designed to throw gas canisters directly into the enemy trenches. All initial objectives were taken within three hours. Reserves from General Gough’s Fifth Army and the French First Army under Anthoine reached their own final objectives by mid-afternoon. German troops counter-attacked on 8 June, without success, in fact losing further ground as the attacks were repelled. German counter-attacks continued in diminishing form until 14 June: by this stage the entire Messines salient was in Allied hands. The Messines battle, which greatly boosted morale among the Allies, signified the first time on the Western Front that defensive casualties actually exceeded attacking losses: 25,000 against 17,000. Of the two mines which remained undetonated on 7 June, the details of their precise location were mislaid by the British following the war, to the discomfort of the locals. One of the mines was detonated in a thunderstorm on 17 June 1955: the only casualty was a dead cow. The second mine remains undetected, although in recent years its location is believed to have been pinpointed. No-one has as yet attempted its recovery. For all of July, although the Brigade were regularly on the move, they were mainly around the area of Steentje and were involved in the shelling which preceded the third battle of Ypres. They were at Canal Bank through all of August supporting the offensive but due to the weather conditions of mainly constant rain, very little further progress was made. There were 7 Brigade soldiers killed and a further 46 wounded during the month of August.

Merciful Justices.

At the local Magistrates Court at Chester-le-Street, in November 1918, the presiding Magistrates were Mr. P. Kirkup (Chairman), Mr. G. Doyle, Mr. W. B. Kerrich-Walker and Mr. B. Bolam.

The Chairman of the Bench announced that, “having regard to the unique circumstances in which they were present that day, in the cessation of hostilities, the signing of the Armistice, and in the victory they were rejoicing in, they were prepared to dismiss a number of cases.”
My Grandfather and his Pelton Colliery Appreciation Medal

My grandfather was a stout fellow called William Morley Gardner who was born in Monkwearmouth in the 1891. His forefathers had worked in shipbuilding on the River Wear although it seems he shunned this way of life for reasons unknown. Both his mother and father died when he was very young and he lived with relatives in Sunderland for a number of years. By the time he was 20 in 1911 he was living as a boarder in Lambton Street, Chester-le-Street. His occupation at this time was a coal hewer. Although not confirmed I suspect he was working at Pelton Fell Colliery at this time for reasons that will become clearer later. In 1911 he signs up with the Durham Light Infantry and sees action in the First World War. He is invalided out in 1916. It is understood his gun blew up and he was wounded with shrapnel. Fast forward to 1920 and a newspaper clipping from the Chester le Street Chronicle dated the 30th of July 1920. It seems that the owners of Pelton Colliery had a presentation day at Whitehill Park on this day when upwards of 600 medals were presented by Sir Horace Plunkett to men employed at their collieries who had returned from the war. I have included a couple of photos of my grandfathers silver medal and a transcript of the newspaper article that described the day. It makes for interesting reading giving as it does an insight into the apparent debt of gratitude felt towards the men and the sympathy and help shown to the widows of the fallen by the Colliery owners. As my grandfather had one of the silver medals with his name inscribed on it I think it is safe to presume he was working for Pelton Colliery and was there on the day of the presentation. I have enclosed the article below word for word and it is well worth a read.  

**Dave Gardner**

**PRESENTATION OF MEDALS.**

**GIFT TO SIR HORACE PLUNKETT.**

Whitehill Park, Chester-le-Street, was on Saturday the scene of an occasion which will be memorable in the minds of the workers at the Pelton Collieries, when upwards of 600 silver medals were presented by Sir Horace Plunkett to the men employed at the Collieries who had returned from the war. I have included a couple of photos of my grandfathers silver medal and a transcript of the newspaper article that described the day. It makes for interesting reading giving as it does an insight into the apparent debt of gratitude felt towards

The proceedings were presided over by Mr. Henry Armstrong, the agent to the colliery, who was supported by the Right Honourable Sir Horace Plunkett, Lieutenant Colonel Preston, secretary to the Company, Mr. Guy Armstrong colliery manager; Mr. John Spry, surveyor to the colliery; and

Mr. George Trotter, secretary to the presentation committee.

A guard of honour was furnished for Sir Horace Plunkett and those accompanying him, by Boy Scouts belonging to the district under Scoutmasters T. Johnson and J. Dixon.

The Chairman said it was his privilege and a very pleasant duty to introduce to them Sir Horace Plunkett, chairman of the Owners of the Pelton Collieries, and who would make the presentation of medals on behalf of the owner. He (the Chairman) had heard it said on some occasions and sometimes what had been said was right - that those who had come back after fighting their country’s cause in the war, had not been adequately recognised, and more often than that their services had been forgotten when the war came to an end. He was however, glad to say that so far as Pelton was concerned that that was not the case. He knew the interest that Pelton
man suffered the result of his services during the war. They had admired a men’s services and given every sympathetic consideration to the afflicted and bereaved. They were at present erecting cottages in the Garden City so that the lives of the widows of their employees lost in the war should be happy and comfortable. They would he was sure, agree with him that they had not forgotten anyone and that all that had been done was the outcome of the owners’ sympathy with those who had worked at the colliery. (Applause).

Sir Horace Plunkett said it was quite true that the relationship between the owners of Pelton Colliery and their employees had always been friendly. He hoped that employers and employees would co-operate in trying to lessen the sufferings incidental to the war.

Pelton had a splendid record. As many as 686 went out from this small community in response to the call. They have alas to mourn 107 who had made the supreme sacrifice.

Thirty-five had gained distinction. The company, hoped not only to provide dwellings for the widows, but also to do their share in solving the housing problem. The proposed memorial was a matter for the men. The company had given a contribution, but were prepared to increase that when the scheme was complete. They recognised that their obligations to the men were never greater than it was at present. The proceedings, which were very enjoyable, closed with a magnificent display of fireworks, which was witnessed by a concourse of several thousand people. A charge for admission to the grounds will be handed to the St. Dunstan’s Homes for Blinded Soldiers and Sailors, and this amounted to £106.

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Postcard sent from Chester-le-Street to Ferryhill.

Dear Mary I received your card and it was very nice. You will think I am a long time of writing. I should have wrote before but I have been bad for three weeks but now I am getting a bit better. I hope that you like the place and are enjoying yourself. When you come through don’t forget to call. From your loving companion Annie
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We’re on the web www.Chesterlestreethistory.org

Next Newsletter
Wednesday

Wednesday 6th December
Contributions required by
Wednesday 23rd November

Don’t forget to keep sending me your contributions for future editions of the newsletter. Any subjects, stories, memories etc will be of interest to the readers. If you have contributed but not seen your article yet, please be patient it will appear shortly. E Mail to brian.k.pirrie@btopenworld.com or hand written to any group member.

Events Diary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Every Tuesday until December.</td>
<td>10:00-12:00</td>
<td>Drop In Session All Welcome</td>
<td>Salvation Army Citadel Low Chare, Chester le Street.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed 20th Sept AGM</td>
<td>19:00-21:00</td>
<td>Members Only. Speaker Julian Harrop Collieries Project completion Speaker Noel Adamson New Project Discussion</td>
<td>Ch-le-St Library</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Another postcard from Chester le Street from Dorothy’s collection.

This one is From mother with her best love to her son Bob

From Home sweet Home comes my love and a kiss, And a prayer for your safety as well, And the reason I’m sending a message like this Is my heart’s deep affection to tell.