

A LITTLE MORE HISTORY

Skinburness Marsh

The Marsh covers about 1,100 acres and for grazing purposes is divided into 400 stints. Some farms sold around Silloth have the right to a certain number of stints on the Marsh, depending on their size, for grazing their beasts; though some stints are available separate from those attached to a farm.

SKINBURNESS & CALVO MARSHES RULES & REGULATIONS 1885

"Those with interests in the marsh, having the use of a number of stints for grazing purposes, formed a Committee of Management annually.

Stints were allocated annually for use from 20th May to 14th November, when all cattle were to be cleared:-

Horses needed 2 stints each; all other large beasts 1 stint; (Horses were grazed on the Marsh up to 1950)

Two ewes and their followers (no more than 4) 1 stint;

Four Geld Sheep 1 stint;

Four head of sheep or lambs to be considered a full stint after 1st August;

All Tups, including Tup lambs to be removed from Marshes on or before 1st August.

Heavy penalties, in way of fines, will be levied if the above is not complied with.

The Committee will appoint a Herdsman to tend the beasts and are empowered to use whatever treatment they thought necessary to ensure the health of the beasts.

There are many strict rules about changing what beasts were put on the marsh and moving them around the marsh. No swine or geese are allowed on the Marsh."

The rules have not changed even today and the Marsh Committee is made up only from present stint-holders.

During 1899-1901 this large tract of land was used as a training ground for the Royal Artillery. On 29th May 1899, three batteries of 200 men and 180 horses arrived from Newcastle for 10 days manoeuvring. It was anticipated that if the test was satisfactory Silloth would become a camp of exercise in the future. But I can find no further record of use until the Second World War when targets were set up, static, and mobile along a railway at Grune Point, for use by the Airforce based at Silloth.

A block house built for sea defence during the Second World War on the end of Grune Point was due for demolition but was made into a Memorial Cairn to the Lifeboatmen who lost their lives in 1956.

Skinburness Hotel

For a long time at Skinburness stood a low-built and rather 'quaint' Inn, 'The Dukes Head'. In all probability this name had been given some time after 1745 to honour the Duke of Cumberland, and it's original sign scrapped, for it was a common thing to change the name of an inn after a campaign.

'The Dukes Head' came into the property market in the late 1800's and was bought by Mr Edwin Hodge Banks of Highmoor, Wigton.

Quote from 'A History of Wigton' -

'The Dukes Head was demolished, the original building once standing where the West Wing now stands. Ferguson the Carlisle Architect, drew plans for a commodious hotel to occupy the site. Beaty's of Carlisle were the builders; Pearsons of Wigton the joiners; John Parker Carrick of Wigton was responsible for painting etc. The tiling of the roof was by Joseph Fell of Wigton; plumbing by Thomsons of Carlisle; Haden and Co., Manchester, supplied the heating apparatus and fittings; Edmundson & Co., London, the gas and electric fittings. The splendid fireproof floors were laid by Horman & Rogers, Manchester, and the marble mosaic was the handicraft of Diespeker & Co.; both these latter firms had done similar work at the Kildare Hotel, Wigton. The up-to-date stable fittings were supplied by Musgrave & Co., Belfast and London. (Older residents still living in Silloth can remember clearly the horse drawn cabs used to collect visitors from the railway station).

Everything had to be the best, and soon facing the sea was a well-designed building of Bilton red brick, roofed with red Broseley tiles, built at a cost of £22,000. The rear of the hotel was approached by a newly laid road and carriageway.

It was first lighted with oil-gas and it had electric bells in each room. The power of electricity was in it's infancy in the eighties (1880s). Heating was by a hot water system.

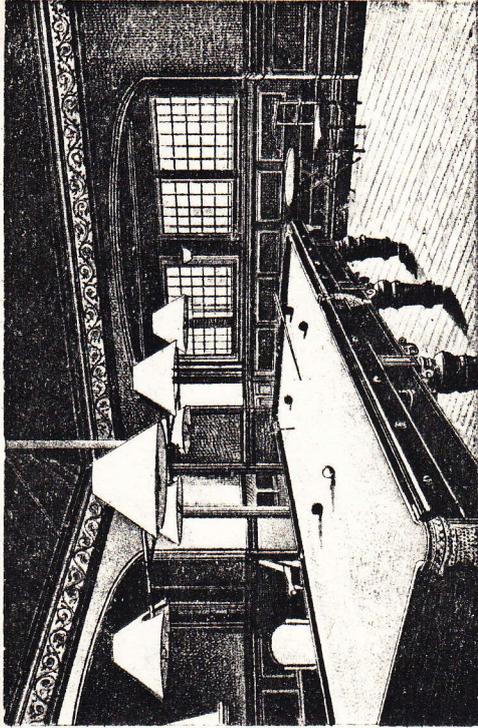
Furnished throughout by Maples of London, all wood furniture being black or Canadian walnut. The billiard room was of solid oak blocks bedded in cement.

The first landlord of the hotel was named Waller, but it was on too palatial a scale for those days because until the beginning of the twentieth century, Skinburness was an insignificant hamlet consisting of a few fishermen's cottages and a farm or two. In fact very little different from the days when it was the favourite haunt of smugglers, Scotch Whiskey being the chief illicit commodity.'

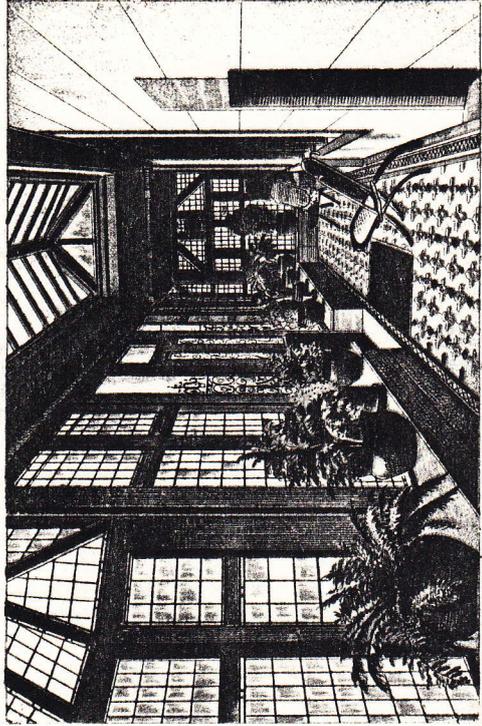
The Hotel remained in private hands until it was taken over, with all other pubs and hotels in the area, by the Government in 1916, and remained part of the Carlisle & District State Management scheme until it was sold in 1971, back into private hands. The wood panelled ceiling in the main bar is to be preserved in tact under an official Conservancy Order.

Skinburness Hotel - Early 1900's

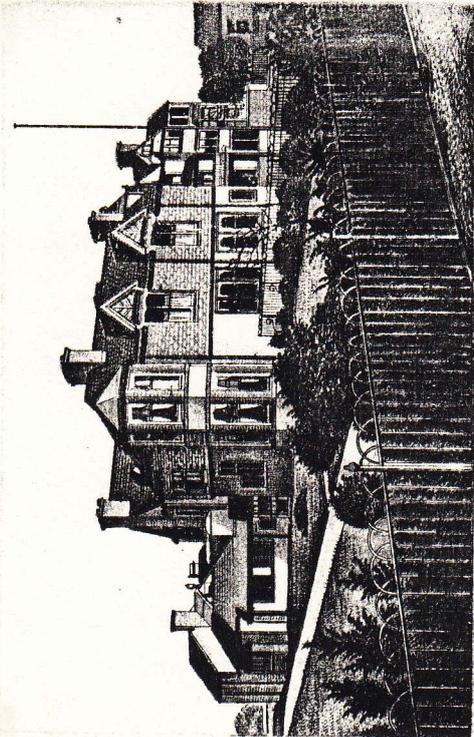




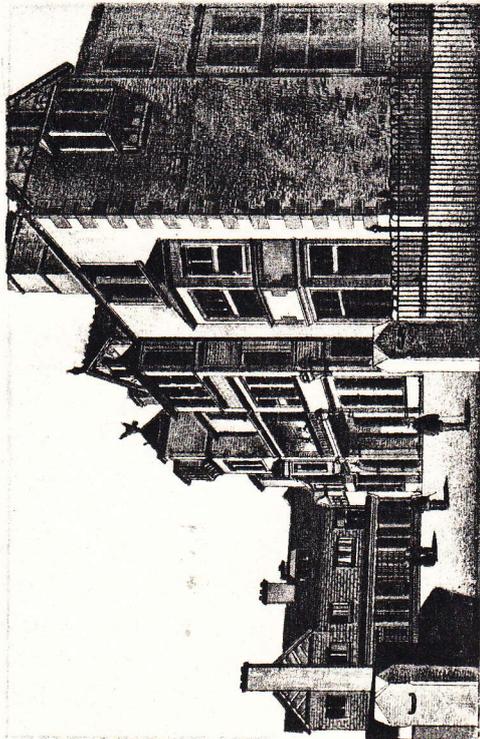
MARINE HOTEL SKINBURNESS - BILLIARD ROOM.



MARINE HOTEL SKINBURNESS - CORRIDOR.



MARINE HOTEL SKINBURNESS WEST VIEW.



MARINE HOTEL SKINBURNESS SOUTH VIEW.