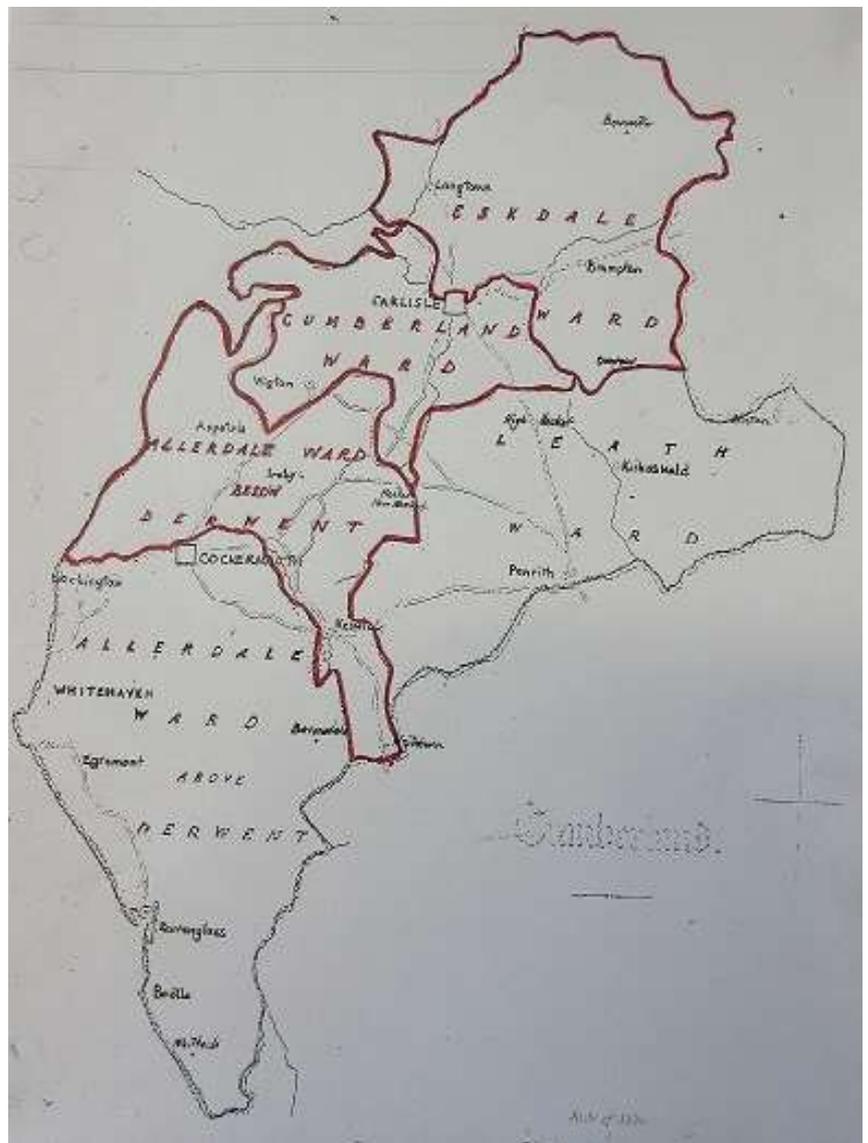


Quarter Sessions

The Cumberland Militia Ballot Lists 1797-1831 (incomplete series)

The militia were a defensive force of able-bodied men balloted from the lists compiled annually. The returns survive for three of the five wards of Cumberland (outlined in red). They list men aged 18-45 years (some years 18-30) giving details of name, age, occupation and the number of dependent children. In some years those obviously exempt are not listed.

They can be very useful to the family historian as they list most of the heads of households prior to the census. It is also possible to trace the movements of individuals from parish to parish. Some returns contain further information on physical infirmities and poverty. Each parish had several township lists and all of these should be looked at for a specific parish.



How to locate these records

Transcriptions on the shelves

Carlisle City 1797 transcribed and indexed

Bewcastle Parish transcribed 1797-1831 (shelf 1.115)

The lists for 1806 for all three wards have been transcribed and indexed (complete by end of 2016)

Quarter Sessions Q/MIL for all of the ballot papers boxed by year and ward (note some are individually boxed in a separate location).

The main series covers the periods 1806-13, 1817-28 & 1831

Militia Liable Books Q/MIL

Those men who were not exempt were recorded in these books. They detail those chosen and whether they served, were served by a substitute, absconded or paid a fine.

They survive for the following years.

Cumberland Ward, 1797, 1802, 1803, 1807-12, 1813-19, 1820-2, 1823-6, 1827-9 & 1831

Eskdale Ward, 1797, 1802, 1803, 1813-19, 1820-3, 1824-6, 1827-9, & 1831

Allerdale below Derwent Ward, 1811, 1813-19, 1820-3, 1824-6, 1827-9 & 1831

There are further militia records in many other collections, which can be identified through our online catalogue (CASCAT).

1812 Militia Lists

Unusually in 1812 there are two sets of militia ballot papers, an early list from April and a late list from November. Surprisingly the correlation between the lists is not as strong as one might have anticipated and a significant number of individuals appear on only one list although the majority do appear on both. It may be an indication that the movement of the population was more common than we might expect although distances may be relatively small.

Therefore it is quite possible for an individual to appear in one return on the early list and in another on the late list so do be aware that it may not indicate two individuals. Those recorded on the late list do not appear on the early list; however those on the early list may or may not appear on the late list. Only discrepancies of information have been recorded for those on the early list, not their failure to appear at all.

The ballot at this time included only men aged 18-30 years and there was only interest in the children of poor men that might provide them with an exemption from liability.

In this year the Militia Book for Cumberland Ward, QMil/1/12 has also survived and I have incorporated any further information that it contains.

1812 was a momentous year for the population of this country. Britain was still involved in the Peninsular War with France and by June had begun a war with the United States requiring further additions to its military. At home the Luddites were continuing to attack and smash machinery as part of civil unrest and the Prime Minister Spencer Perceval was assassinated in the House of Commons in May 1812.