

The Life & Times of WILLIAM BALDRY

William Baldry was born in Norfolk in 1828.

In 1854 he married Louise Button at St. Marks Church, Whitechapel, London. William and Louise answered a newspaper advert for a Master at a new school that had opened in Grasmere, Westmorland. William and Louise started their new life, in the Lake District, in 1855.

William Wordsworth had been dead for just 5 years when the Baldrys arrived in the small Lakeland Village of Grasmere. William Baldry taught arithmetic and English. Louise taught sewing to the girls. A year later, William left his teaching job and opened a small stationery business.

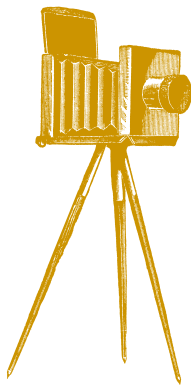
His small shop and photography studio is where you sit now - Baldry's Tearoom. His shop was the beginning of his enthusiasm for the early days of photography.

By 1870 William had become a prominent figure in Grasmere. He was a leading member of the Grasmere Urban Council and of the Lake District Association. Most notably a founding member of the now famous Grasmere Sports.

William introduced cricket to Grasmere in 1856 and was honoured for his efforts by the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VII) when he visited Grasmere in 1857. The football league was not formed until 1888 nor seen to be played till 1892, although rugby was being played in 1871.

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William, with his new found passion for photography, became the official photographer of the sports. He also became the official photographer of the Thirlmere Dam project; the construction of the dam and flooding of Thirlmere village & valley to provide water for the city of Manchester began in 1890. He was there at the beginning and end to photograph the civil dignitaries of Manchester for the opening in February 1894.

William was not a man to scale the heights of the local crags but he would always be seen around the village with his camera. He was a well built, stout man with a magnificent full beard. He was a teetotaler, a regular churchgoer and a devoted husband and father. He had 4 sons and 4 daughters.

The Baldry's home and shop continued to thrive and later became a general store & draper's shop. It became a restaurant and café in 1982 and continues today as Baldry's Tearoom.

William Baldry (the bearded gentleman pictured below) died in 1918 at the age of 90, surviving his wife by 4 years.

