



# Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 40 – SEPTEMBER 2003

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> September 2003

Friends outing to Union of the Crowns 400 event. The Story of Norham Castle.

Friday 26<sup>th</sup> – Sunday 28<sup>th</sup>  
September 2003

The Story of Norham Castle – told by the Spirit of the Castle with light, voices and music. Admission £3.00, English Heritage Members free. Gates open at 7.30 pm

*Strongholds of the Borders – East March* – exhibition in Norham Village Hall by Norham & Ladykirk Local History Society. Open 1 – 7pm

## Other Societies' Lectures

### BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.00 p.m.

Mon. 6<sup>th</sup> October

Lime Trade on Holy Island : Roger Jermy

Mon. 3<sup>rd</sup> November

Talk by Andrew Selkirk, editor of Current Archaeology

Mon. 1<sup>st</sup> December

Annual Project Review ; members' Reports

### BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: The Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup> October

James VI and I : Allan Massie

**(Please Note:** This is a joint meeting with the Civic Society to be held at the King's Arms Hotel.)

Wed. 19<sup>th</sup> November

The Wizard Earl of Northumberland:  
Professor D. Batho.

Wed. 17<sup>th</sup> December.

Women in the Roman North:  
Lindsay Allason Jones.

### DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Duns Social Club, 41 Newton St, Duns.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 24<sup>th</sup> September

Annual General Meeting followed by  
Talk and Presentation by The Borders  
Reivers Search Society with exhibition  
of local finds.

Wed. 29<sup>th</sup> October

Shipwrecks on the Berwickshire Coast:  
George Davidson

Wed.26<sup>th</sup> November

The Royal Company of Archers:  
Alasdair Hutton.

### **GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler. Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 8<sup>th</sup> October

The Culley Brothers-Agricultural  
Improvers: Dr. A. Orde.

Wed. 12<sup>th</sup> November

Some Aspects of Percy History:  
Mr F.T. Dyson.

Wed. 10<sup>th</sup> December

Castles, Bastles, Peels and Hovels :  
Mr. V. Kelly.

### **BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre. Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 24<sup>th</sup> September.

AGM and Members Night.

Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup> October.

The Bondagers: Mrs Diana Iredale.

Wed. 26<sup>th</sup> November.

The Grays of Falloden: Rev. J. Shewan.

Wed. 10<sup>th</sup> December.

Christmas Dinner.

### **COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thurs. 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

World War I: Mr Derick Robertson.

Thurs. 6<sup>th</sup> November.

Union of the Crowns:Derek Sharman  
( **Please Note**: This is a joint meeting with the Cornhill W.I. at the Village  
Hall,Cornhill on Tweed.)

Thurs. 4<sup>th</sup> December.

The Berwickshire News: Mr A.  
Langmack.

### EMBLETON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Church Room, Embleton.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 15<sup>th</sup> October

The Oldest House in Britain: Mr Kristian Peterson.

Wed. 19<sup>th</sup> November

A History of Photography and Old Embleton: Mr George Skipper

### NORHAM & LADYKIRK LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue; Norham Village Hall.

Time; 7.30 p.m.

Mon. 13<sup>th</sup> October

A Country Joiner :Tom Tokely

Mon. 10<sup>th</sup> November

History of Amateur Wireless:  
Oliver Dooley

### NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Parish Hall.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 22<sup>nd</sup> October

AGM plus short talk. Archaeology -  
Life on a dig:Mr Q. Hutchinson.

Wed. 26<sup>th</sup> November

Recollections of World War 1: Alan Findley.

### NORTHUMBERLAND & DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY ( NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND GROUP)

**\*PLEASE NOTE: Meetings will now be held at Black Bull, Lowick. (Unless specified otherwise!)**

Third Saturday in the month.

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Sat. 18<sup>th</sup> October

The Hartley Pit Disaster: David Rogerson.

**(Please note:** This meeting will be held in the Church Hall, St. Paul's, North Sunderland, Seahouses.)

Sat. 15<sup>th</sup> November

The Chillingham Cattle: Mr P. Deakin.

Sat. 13<sup>th</sup> December

Christmas Lunch at the Black Bull,  
Lowick.

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### **Letter from the Chairman.**

At the start of the 1603-1604 Union of the Crowns 400 it was suggested that there should be some sort of permanent memorial. Time has gone on and we now need to give the matter some thought. It is not known at present how much funding there will be but I would appreciate hearing from the membership with ideas about such a memorial. Please let me have your suggestions in writing at 6, Cleet Court, Berwick-upon-Tweed, TD15 1HH. They could also be left for me at the archive or museum.

*Gus Fairburn*

## **ARCHIVE NEWS**

Where has the summer gone to ? I can't believe it is over. Needless to say, the Record Office has been very busy this summer with its regular visitors and a lot of tourists , both from this country and abroad. It is very noticeable that people are coming back to stay in the area after the problems of Foot and Mouth and overseas people not wanting to travel.

Well, what has been happening in the Record Office over the past couple of months ?

Union of the Crowns 400 has obviously played a part in my work recently. In July, we had the Medieval Weekend which was very well supported. I was mainly involved with the Bondington site at the top of Castle Terrace. My group looking at properties in the area in the past 200 years put up their map and asked people to help us date the properties in the Castle Drive/Windsor Crescent and Meadows area. A number of people gave us very valuable information – we are still looking for more as the whole area appears to have been renumbered several times, so if you can help, please contact me. We estimate that about 800 people visited the Bondington exhibition and archaeological dig over the weekend. The dig ( 3 trial trenches) had lasted all week under the auspices of Alan Williams, the archaeologist who was involved with the 21 Castle Terrace site. The three trenches that were excavated proved that this was the site of a

building – the Nunnery of St Leonard which is marked on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey. As well as helping at Bondington, I spent most of Sunday at the Battle of Halidon Hill site at Conundrum. Barbara & Peter Herdman, Wendy Scott, Lorna Suthren and myself were in charge of taking the money for the car park. Barbara looked very impressive in her “Union of the Crowns Cloak “. Unfortunately, we didn’t get a chance to see what was happening up on the site but we heard that it was very enjoyable.

At the moment, we are preparing for our next big weekend at Norham. I am helping the Norham & Ladykirk Local History Society with their display ( see Dates for Your Diary ) which can be seen in the Village Hall between 1pm and 7pm from Friday to Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September. Please come along and see it - if you are coming for the evening event, why not pop along and see the exhibition in the village first ?

Although it is the summer and not always the time of year that I do a lot of education work, I have been involved with a number of schools. In the middle of June, I spent a couple of hours on Holy Island with two primary schools from Yorkshire who were spending a week there finding out about the Island and its history. At the end of the summer term, the High School has an Activities Week and as part of that , one group was looking at tourism. At the beginning of their project, they spent a morning in the office looking at information on tourism in Berwick in the past – they were amazed that the Berwick Advertiser in the 1890s listed the names of all the visitors and where they came from.

I have also been continuing my work with Northumberland College. In the last newsletter, I mentioned that I was about to start a course on the College Bus on Genealogy and the Internet in Etal Village. This ran for 5 weeks in July and was very successful, so I hope to be able to repeat this in other villages.

Some of you may be aware that September is Archives Awareness Month where archives throughout the country are trying to make people more aware of their existence and the wealth of information they hold. As there is only me up here, I am limited in what I can do. However, I have promoted some of the things I do as archive events, including Open Doors Day with my tours of the Council Offices and my Family History Courses which start in September.

Finally, during the past couple of months, the Record Office, Museum and Friends have continued to work with PLB, the consultants on the Scoping Study about the relocation of both services. The Consultants have produced a final report which recommends that both services be combined in one building. A report is being taken to one of Berwick Borough’s Committees in September and from there, we will have to see where we go next. If anyone would like to read the report, a copy is available in the Record Office.

## **VOLUNTEERS**

Through the newsletter, I would like to thank all the volunteers who have been working very hard both in the Record Office and at home on various projects for me. I appreciate all the work you do which is making so much of the material more accessible to people. I will definitely need a new office soon to accommodate all the transcripts in my Library !

For those who have been working at home on the 1901 census, I think we have nearly finished transcribing all of the Berwick area. Some of the sections have been checked and are available in the Office – Tweedmouth; Spittal; Belford Parish; Chatton Parish and Wooler . We have created an exact transcript of the returns and also alphabetical indexes. My next home project will be to enter the 1861 census in a database.

## **FAMILY HISTORY**

Family History is becoming very popular and I know that many of our members are tracing their own Family History. It occurred to me that some of you may have bought microfiche, booklets or CD Roms of Family History resources for other parts of the country which you no longer require. If you are looking for a good home for them, I would be happy to take them as they may help other people who use this office. For example, I have been give some census transcripts for the Dumfries area and an index to the 1851 census for Edinburgh. So, any offers will be welcome !

*Linda Bankier*

## **RULES OF THE GARRISON AND TOWN OF BERWICK-UPON-TWEED**

Whilst we were preparing for the first Union of the Crowns event, Derek asked me to find out some information about the Garrison in the town. Amongst the archives, there is volume, entitled the Rules of the Garrison and Town of Berwick covering the period 1560 – 1577. The following are some extracts from the volume. I have kept the original spelling, as it appears. The entries give some insight into the life of a soldier, the uniform they wore and what they were allowed to do.

*Departing of souldiers without lycense*

Allso if there be anie Souldier of this Town take upon him to goe out of this garrison without lycense of the capten and in his absence, of the Marshall and tarrieth ye space of one night or longer. Or ells if he have lycense given to him, and having a sufficient person for Scry and alarme and then tarrieth over that lycense at his owne pleasure; he so offending for to loose for so many daies Double wages that he is retained unto.

*Penaltie for shutting of the gates and safe delivery of the keies*

Allso if the said Porters do not duely daily & nightlye shutt and sparr the gates & wicketes of this town, every man within his chardge, and bringe all and every key & keies thereof, and them delivered unto the captein thereof at due tyme used and accustomed, And in the mornyng if thei fetch not the said keys from the said Captein, the said porter or porters to suffer death and the Mr Porter to be comytted to warde and there to abide untill the Queens Majesty's pleasure be knowen.

*Scotts or other Alians not to enter ye Towne without Lycense*

Allso if the said porters take upon them for to lycense or suffer any Scottes borne person or other aliant, to come within this Towne without they have the Queens safe conduct or Lycense of the Capten: for the first offence to be co... (illegible) to warde by the space of VI daies and the Capten to find at the said porters costes and chardges one other able man ... [illegible]his rowme, and if he do any such thinges estones {?} to be paid out of his Office

*To shutt the gates at every Alarme & to serch all suspicious Lodgings as strawe and faggotes*

Allso if the porters shutt not the Gates at every escry & alarme that shall happen on the day light, or ells to be there pte for that entent, And if the escry & alarme fall upon the nighte, if they endeavor not them selves every of them to goe unto that gate whereas his chardg is ; Or if any foddres or Cart lodes of strawe, Corne, thatch, faggotes, broome or any other gross thinges, such as may not well be seen through without mans eye, be suffered to come within the gates, and be not be by the said porters well serched As to such a Cause appertaineth. They so offending to be *executed*

*Counterfaiting the keies of any of the gates*



Allso if anie person counterfett anie of the keyes that belonge to any of the gates, posternes, Towers or of anie place or places whereas the Queens ordnance or artillerye lieth, he so offendinge to suffer death as a traitor.

*Ransominge of Prisoners openly*

Allso if any Souldier of this garrison have any person and him for favor, love, sufferance or otherwise overseeth him & will not pay his ransome openlye but previly whereby the Captein is or shalbe defrauded of his thirde: Or if any of the said garrison fortune to take any enemy which is A gentleman of Cote armor, and first present not to the Capten, he or they doing otherwise, for to Lose their horses & harnesses and all other their goodes, and their bodies to be at the Capteins pleasure.

*Prisoners to be killed or goe in ye streets without garde*

Allso if there be anie souldier or other that hath any prisoner & killeth him, or suffereth him to goe openly within ye towne upon the day light, without he have with him greate retinew for to wait upon him. And if he tary in ye towne by nighte and be not suerly warded & kept in ye porters prison: he that otherwise findeth him to take him as his prisoner, and his first taker to be quitt of him, and yet he to be punished & set in warde by the space of viii daies

*No souldier to use any vile occupacion*

Allso if there be anie souldier of this towne or garrison Man that occupieth with his owne handes any vile occupacion Or comonly fishing for any white fish or Salmondess: he or thei so offending, for the first faulte to loss a check of xviii d and for the second tyme iii s iiiii d and for the third tyme vi s viiii d to the bridge of Barwick, and for the iiiii th tyme to be put out of Wages

*Every souldier to have a Jacket of white and greene*

Also if there be anie souldier of this garrison that is abled & admitted by the capten to take the Quennes wages, and if they have not a Jacket of the Queens coulors white & grene and yt to weare at all such seasons and tymes as he shall have sommons from the said captein: he or thei having no such Jacket and wear it, for the first defaulte to lose iii daies wages and for one day to be impresoned , and for the second time to be dismissed of wages

*No souldier to use dice or Cardes for money but at Xpmas*

Allso if anie souldier of this garrison either dice or carde for any money or play at tables but for beer,ale or wyne, either by day or by night within this towne, aswell the plaiers as allso the owners of the said Tables, Cardes or dice in whose house they play. They all so offending to be imprisoned by the space of iii daies and whatsoever they have loste and everye penny thereof, to be delivered into the handes of the Capten by sufficient serch as often as the cause shall require, except it be within the xx daies of Xpmas , or ells at any of the gates of the said towne, or within the watch hous or merket place of the Tolebooth, he or they that otherwise doth, that money and every penny thereof to be imploied by the Captens Commaundment to the use of the Queens bridge of the said towne of Barwick.

*Imbeaseling the furniture of the Ordynance*

Allso if any persons of thordinance sell or withdrawe any parcell or parcells of the same, he or they so offendinge to dye for that defaulte

*No souldier to be in the streates without a bill or an ax*

Allso If anie soldier walke or be found in the streates at anye tyme either to the church, merket or from thence, or if he beare not a bill or an ax, he or thei so found for the first tyme to lose 4 d the second time viii d the third time xii d and the fourth time to be put out of wages.

*No enterprise may be made upon ye enemye but the Captein must be first made prevye to yt*

Allso if any of this garrison shall ride or goe upon any enemies or enterprise either by Sea or land without he shew his purpose before to the Captein; he or they so offending for to be Impresoned , and here to ? [ illegible] the Capteins pleasure.

*Whoso hath chardge of the watch bells must do his dutye therein upon pain of death*

Allso if there be anie Souldier that hath rule of the watchbel And if he make not his due haste and come to the church & strike a generall larme at all such times as the said cause shall clayme Or require by night , he so offending for to suffer death.

*No scotch borne person may be of this garrison*

Allso if any Scotch borne person Chartred or unchartred Present them selves for to be souldiers of this garrison or take upon Him or they for to be of the stand watch, serch watch, scowte Watch or harriage or Scowriage, or ever that he take upon him Or them for to come upon the towne walles , or nigh the ditches of the same, he or they so found or taken to be put to death as traitors.

*No englishman may leade a stranger on the Walles*

Allso if any englishman lead any scotch borne person or aliant upon the walles of the said towne by day light or Within the ditches, he for his so conducting to lose all his gov... and to be banished the towne for ever, and if he do any such Things by night, he to be taken as a traytor

*None may over the towne walls or measure the same deceitfully*

Allso if there be any person that goeth on the towne walles or leapeth over or clymeth upon it by ladder, rope or any other subtile means, either in going unto or in going into said towne by day or by night or that measureth by any deceitfull means the depenes of the wall of the towne, or the widenes or the bredth thereof or caste any Stones of the walles into the diches , either filthe or annoyance, or hath carrieth any stones from the said walle to any his use. That person or persons so doinge to be committed unto ward, and further to abide the Correction of the Captein.

*Linda Bankier*

### **UNION OF THE CROWNS 400 – fabulous weekends**

Two weekends of something new, different and exciting – 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> April saw Bygone Borderlands, Berwick under the Stuarts, re-creation of the visit of James VI/I to Berwick in April 1603 and more; 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May Berwick hosted the King James' Sports and Games, the Border Marches and Falconry at Longridge Towers – what next? I was only sorry that I could not split myself into three or even four because I wanted to see and be part of the Mediaeval Weekend on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July – weekend number 3.

Saturday, 19<sup>th</sup> July, came warm and breezy. Off to the top of Castle Terrace to the site of St. Leonard's Nunnery where the Bondington Group were setting out to reconstruct the outlines of the buildings. A reception tent held an exhibition of plans, photographs and artefacts which showed where everything lay. It was fascinating to learn about a world that lies beneath this area and which time has almost forgotten. There were refreshments too and, delightfully, a children's dig which, I learned later, had been a great success. There were guided tours of the dig which was well under way in this quiet corner.

The archaeologists were working flat out to reveal artefacts and walls which would prove that St. Leonard's Nunnery really did stand there. Afterwards I was

told that proof had indeed been found during the weekend. Over 80 people had been involved in the dig and over 800 people had visited the site.

Also within the field was a small peasant settlement. Apart from the modern tent these people, dressed accurately in costume, were leading an everyday life. I was told they were actually killing chickens for the pot but I did not stay long enough to find out! The man had a display of toys which could have come from Hamleys today but which had their beginnings in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century. A diabolo-type toy helped hand – eye co-ordination for when a child grew to use a sword or bow and arrow. A game of what looked like solitaire was a substitute for the real-life task of planning and winning battles.

Reluctantly we left the site and, after attending to our own 21<sup>st</sup> century lives, we plunged once more into the past. Rain clouds were threatening as we walked along the New Road towards the Castle. An amazing amount of people were to-ing and fro-ing. Derek Sharman was doing a survey and discovered people from Switzerland, the Czech Republic, America and Essex! We reached Tommy the Miller's field just after Jim Herbert's trebuchet had hurled melons at the Castle walls – so we did not see it in action. The soldiery had just finished their fighting – so we did not see that. However, what we did see were battle-weary soldiers from 1333 moving about under the Castle. It was exciting to see these ancient walls peopled by exact replicas of those who lived almost 700 years ago. We moved up the hill towards the encampment (Rent-a-Peasant!) and enjoyed seeing them setting about their daily business. I even saw one woman with several ferrets on leads – no doubt to help find something for the pot later on. It all looked so colourful – and the rain clouds did not fulfil their promise.

So, that was day one and the Sunday dawned, again bright and breezy. This was the day when the Battle of Halidon Hill was to be re-enacted in an upland field above Conundrum Farm. Sadly I was not able to see action because of personal commitments and also because I was helping to extract money from the car owners. However, from those coming down the hill, tired but happy, and also from subsequent conversations, I learnt that yet again the Union of the Crowns 400 had played a blinder. Especially delighted were families who had enjoyed the sound and the spectacle of all that a mediaeval display provides. It was tremendously good value at £3 per car no matter how many people were squashed inside. People appreciated that lack of commercialism – and others appreciated the shuttle 'buses which were used by over 200 folk. What a feelgood factor!

Yes, there are people who moan about the lack of advertisement, transport or what it costs them. Let them moan. Berwick has put on three splendid weekend events over the last six months. Another sixty plus events have been organised by groups and societies under the banner of the Union of the Crowns 400. We should consider ourselves lucky that enough people with talent should be

interested enough to bring to life the unequalled history that lies about us in this wonderful part of the world.

Roll on 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September and the Story of Norham Castle! Another splendid weekend!

*Barbara Herdman*

**UNION OF THE  
CROWNS 400 - PAST  
AND  
FORTHCOMING  
EVENTS**

Berwick stepped back to the Middle Ages during the weekend 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> July for one of the most colourful events of this year's Union of the Crowns 400 programme.

Members of medieval re-enactment societies from all over Scotland and northern England gathered to commemorate the 670<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Great Siege of Berwick and the Battle of Halidon Hill. In Barbara's article, you can read a first hand account of the Siege of Berwick and the dig and exhibition at Bondington. However, for Barbara, Linda and Wendy and the others who didn't get to see what was actually happening on the site, this is my official account of what was going on :

On Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> July, the focus moved to the field of the Battle of Halidon Hill, which guards the approaches to Berwick from the north and along the Tweed Valley.

Several of the groups had set up living history encampments, where visitors were able to talk to the re-enactors and discover more about the daily lives, clothing, food, pastimes and weapons of the soldiers and civilians living in the 14<sup>th</sup> century borderlands. Women camp-followers prepared food and went about their daily routine, while archers introduced visitors to the longbow, the devastating impact of which was first demonstrated at Halidon Hill in 1333.

King Edward III, victor of the Battle of Halidon Hill, was present with his Court in the English encampment.

The encampments of the Scottish army included demonstrations of the skills of medieval craftsmen including a coiner, stamping the type of coins that would have been produced in the Royal Mint in Berwick, fletchers making arrows and an armourer painstakingly hammering iron rings to make a coat of mail.

A highlight of the programme during the afternoon was the tournament featuring armoured knights in combat on foot, in an arena made splendid with colourful

banners and pavilions. As a preliminary to the tournament, there were demonstrations of courtly dance and the arming of a knight before combat. Chris Green devised an interpretive trail, this time to illustrate the context and events of the Battle of Halidon Hill.

Presented in the style of modern TV war reporting with scribes acting as presenters and studio “experts”, and a lively reporter interviewing characters involved in the battle, this cleverly scripted performance illustrated some uncanny parallels between the invasion of Scotland by King Edward III in 1333 and the war in Iraq. With very little opportunity for rehearsal, members of local amateur dramatic societies joined with a large cast of medieval re-enactors to present an effective and entertaining “potted history” of the battle that brought an end to the Great Siege of Berwick and turned the tide of war once more in favour of the English.

An estimated 4,500 people enjoyed the various events staged during the weekend, some travelling considerable distances from central Scotland and southern England to spend the weekend in Berwick.

This weekend ( 26<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> September) sees the final big event of this year with the focus on Norham Castle .:

The massive Norman keep of Norham Castle provides the spectacular backdrop as the spirit of the Castle conjures up the story through a mixture of light, sound and voices.

*Derek Sharman*

### **ASPECTS OF BERWICK'S CULTURAL HISTORY**

## **Walter Scott, Marmion and the Invention of History**

When Derek Sharman invited me to write the script for *The Story of Norham Castle*, the last event in this year's part of the Union of the Crowns 400 festival, he was clear about one thing, that the story should be told from the castle's own perspective. It was an inspired idea that enabled me to avoid the pomposity so often the convention of son-et-lumiere presentations. But it also created a problem. Avoiding a third-person 'objective' documentary approach, with a magniloquent all-knowing voice-over, meant we would have to venture into the unfamiliar waters of first-person autobiographical narrative, swirling with undercurrents of subjectivity and selective amnesia. If called upon to recall its story what would a castle choose to talk about? The solution we came up with might surprise some but, in looking at accounts of the castle's history, it was immediately apparent that Norham's tale, like all historic sites in fact, is as much about myth-making as it is about hard fact. Casting a long shadow over Norham

is Sir Walter Scott and his narrative poem *Marmion: A Tale of Flodden Field* (1808). Scarcely a guidebook or other account of the castle does not mention the work and many of the older books quote its memorable verses about the castle, beginning:-

“Day set on Norham’s castled steep,  
And Tweed’s fair river, broad and deep...”

Critics from Scott’s time to this agreed that his almost cinematic evoking of sunset at Norham followed by the arrival there of Lord Marmion is one of his best pieces of poetry. But though the verse might work well, the poetry is but a part of the whole and in some senses, I believe, almost incidental to Scott’s overall intentions. Only the first canto is set at Norham, thereafter the next five cantos follow Marmion’s journey into Scotland to Edinburgh, then to Tantallon Castle and on to his death, fighting for the English, at the battle of Flodden. A number of other castles get described, as does Lindisfarne Priory. What makes the poem especially interesting is that Marmion, at the centre of the action, is not a conventional chivalric hero but the villain of the piece. He lusts after the wealthy Lady Clare and with the help of a forged letter his rival, Ralph De Wilton, is accused of treason. But Constance de Beverley, a fugitive nun seduced by Marmion, reveals the truth. After Marmion’s death Ralph and Clare are reunited, but poor Constance gets walled up alive on Lindisfarne for breaking her vows. Published in February 1808 the poem was a huge and immediate success, confirming in the public mind Scott’s early promise shown in his previous narrative poem *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (1805). Thousands of copies of the poem were sold within weeks, but some did not join in the universal admiration. The solicitor James Losh, prosecutor of Grace Griffin, writing in 1818 thought Marmion “in parts the most powerful but by no means the most pleasing of the works of this delightful poet”. But at the time the opinion that affected Scott the most was the “sharp review” in the *Edinburgh Review* by its editor Francis Jeffrey which appeared on the very day Jeffrey was due to have dinner with Scott. It is a tribute to Scott’s famous magnanimity that the dinner passed off amiably, though Mrs Scott was less willing to forgive. Jeffrey does say that the opening description of Norham is as fine as anything ever written and that Scott’s description of the battle “carries the reader forward with a more rapid, sustained and lofty movement, than any epic bard that we can at present remember”. But apart from this praise Jeffrey attacks just about every other aspect of the work. Although often dismissed today by scholars as a humourless pedant, Jeffrey’s criticisms do serve to illuminate both Scott’s purpose and peculiar obsessions. Jeffrey begins his attack by criticising the thin material on which the story is based and that there is significant detachment between the characters which are not blended together into one seamless narrative. “There is”, Jeffrey says, “little connected incident in *Marmion* and a great deal too much gratuitous description.” Incidents such as Constance’s behaviour and the forged letter are unworthy of poetical treatment. Constance is in any case “utterly debased” and Marmion himself a “mean and sordid villain”. Others at the time, especially Scott’s friend

the shepherd-poet John Leyden, questioned whether the wicked Marmion was a suitable character around which to construct a noble poem and Scott seriously considered these objections. In the end, he tells us in the introduction to *Marmion* in his *Collected Poems*, he “suffered the tree to lie as it had fallen”. Not content to have a bad word to say about all the characters Jeffrey lays into the plot, which is “clumsy” and “inartificial”. He goes on, “we object to the extreme and monstrous improbability of almost all the incidents which go the composition of this fable”. There are too many coincidences and “the whole story of Marmion seems to us to turn upon a tissue of such incredible accidents.” indeed “..rather too much for our patience.”. Some of this might be explained by the speed with which Scott threw off the poem, the last four cantos being printed as the author wrote them, without any revision. A further clue is in another Jeffrey jibe when he says it “reminds us of the machinery of a bad German novel”. Jeffrey would have been well aware that Scott was much enamoured of German novels, good and bad, also of poems and plays from the burgeoning Romantic intellectual movement, which is now termed ‘Sturm und Drang’ (storm and stress). This is where Scott’s literary career started. His first published work in 1796 was a verse translation of two poems by Gottfried Bürger (1747-94). One of these, ‘Lenore’, had had a huge impact across Europe when it was first published in 1774. It is a terrible tale of a maiden blaspheming against God when her lover dies in the war and then being carried off by death in the guise of her beloved. Scott called his horse ‘Lenore’ and one of the most popular features of *Marmion* is the inserted ballad of Lochinvar (Canto V, xii), which tells of a bride snatched away from the altar by a horseman who is her lover (though still very much alive). Even the galloping rhythm of the verse of ‘Lochinvar’:-

“O, young Lochinvar is come out of the west,  
 Through all the wide Border his steed was the best;  
 And save his good broadsword, he weapons had none,  
 He rode all unarm’d, and he rode all alone.  
 So faithful in love, and so dauntless in war,  
 There never was knight like the young Lochinvar.”

Recalled the onomatopoeic form of Bürger’s ‘Lenore’:-

“Und hurre hurre, hop hop hop!  
 Ging’s fort in sausendem Galop,  
 Das Ross und Reiter schnoben  
 Und Kies und Funken stoben...”

As one scholar put it about Bürger: “the eerie tramp of the ghostly horse...re-echoed in every literature, and to many a young sensitive soul was the revelation of a new world of poetry.” The twenty-something Scott was just so in the 1790s as he devoured the works of the German Romantics, and it was working on a translation of Goethe’s drama *Götz von Berlichingen* (1773) that woke him up to the possibilities of combining traditional ballads with the violent world that lay



behind them. Scott's biographer Lockhart described the medieval knights in the Goethe play as "stern, bloody, and rapacious, but frank, generous, and, after their fashion, courteous", which is pretty close, leaving aside the generous bit, to a description of Marmion. Lockhart indeed said he doubted that, but for the stern Götze and his deeds, Scott would ever have had the idea of becoming an epic poet and novelist chronicling Scottish history. Jeffrey of course was not a young sensitive soul and apart from the German influence there was another bone about the plot he had to pick with Scott. He was especially irritated by the scene of Constance's condemnation (Canto II), which ends with her being walled up alive in:-

"..that dire dungeon, place of doom,  
Of execution too, and tomb.."

Set in secret chambers beneath Lindisfarne Priory it is a full-blooded 'Gothic' episode with grim Abbess and Prioress and a blind Abbott, sitting in judgement on the brave Constance amid guttering candles and black drapes. Jeffrey laments that all these images are "borrowed from Mrs.Radcliffe and her imitators" and "the public, we believe, has now supped full of this sort of horrors.". It is, he says, too cheap for a poet of original imagination. Ann Radcliffe (1764-1823) had started the Gothic craze with *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) and wild and improbable terrors in lonely castles and ruined monasteries became a staple of the genre for a couple more decades after Jeffrey reckoned the public had read enough. Scott hated to be compared to Mrs Radcliffe whom he considered a failure, but was happy to acknowledge the influence and friendship of Matthew Lewis (1775-1818). His novel *The Monk* (1796) set a new standard of lurid horror. There was much outrage on the book's publication with Coleridge calling it "poison for youth, and a provocation for the debuchee". On the other hand Byron and the Marquis de Sade loved it, as did Scott and he became an acolyte of this new literary lion. Lewis for his part encouraged the young poet and secured a publisher for Scott's translation of Goethe, and included other Scott translations in his *Tales of Wonder* (1801). *The Monk* is full of torrid sex and violence, including rape and murder amid rotting corpses, and, a girl imprisoned in a crypt clutching her dead baby and the spectral appearance of a blood-splattered nun. Both these scenes were lovingly recreated in various stage versions which ran to packed houses in London between 1796 and 1812. In walling-up Constance de Beverley on Lindisfarne, Scott tones down Lewis' gore-fest and makes the excesses of the Gothic genre more 'respectable' by appending a note outlying the historical basis for this exemplary punishment for broken vows. He even cites archaeological evidence, a female skeleton discovered in a niche at Coldingham Priory, "which, from the shape of the niche and position of the figure, seemed to be that of an immured nun". Once immortalised by Scott of course Constance de Beverley and the concept of the walled-up nun took on new 'lives' of their own, a quick internet search reveals about a dozen locations around the country currently haunted by the ghosts of walled-up nuns. The City of York has no less than three, one in a pub frequented by lesbians, but that must be a coincidence. The most frequently seen immured

spectre was that supposedly haunting the infamous Borley Rectory. This lady was once spotted reading a book, which, being left open after she had drifted away, was found to be none other than Canto II of *Marmion*. No doubt she was concerned that Scott had got his facts right. Constance de Beverley herself is supposed to haunt Lindisfarne Priory and has been confidently identified at Whitby Abbey, from whence she fled to follow Marmion. Writing in 1908 A.Thomson records that the niche at Coldingham was then known as "Constance's living tomb", though he himself thought the skeleton was more likely to be St Ebba's. Sadly this is not the place to embark upon a detailed study of walled-up nuns, other than to record that variations on Scott's story continue into the modern era with the recent reissue on DVD of the self-proclaimed "nunsploitation epic" *The Sinful Nuns of Saint Valentine* (1973) in which a whole convent gets walled-up. It is likely that the whole idea has more to do with a misunderstanding of the quite widespread and perfectly sober medieval ritual of enclosing volunteer anchoresses than with any freakish DIY punishments for unchaste habits.

Mention of Scott's notes to the poem pulls us abruptly back to the chilly offices of the *Edinburgh Review* because after trashing the characters, plot and style Jeffrey gets to the heart of his criticism with an all out rant about the notes and what caused them. His main objection to the poem, he writes, is the "too vast description of minutiae of dress etc. with which the whole poem is over-run". This in turn requires a forest of notes to explain it all. A little scene-setting is necessary, he concedes, perhaps a description of the main character's appearance, but, he wailed, did we need to know:-

"Last, twenty yeoman, two and two,  
In hosen black, and jerkins blue,  
With falcons broider'd on each breast,  
Attended on their lord's behest." (I, viii, ll.13-16)

And Jeffrey seems to have a point, especially in relation to the notes. You sometimes get the impression that Scott has included a line like:-

"Well was he arm'd from head to heel,  
In mail and plate of Milan steel.."

Just so he can append a note saying "The artists of Milan were famous in the middle ages for their skill in armoury, as appears from the following passage...". He then quotes a whole slab of Froissart on the subject. All this detail just bogged down the story in Jeffrey's view and near the end of his review he has some praise but a stern warning, which is worth quoting at length:-

"Mr.Scott's great talents, and the novelty of the style in which his romances are written, have made even these defects [the detailed descriptions] acceptable to a considerable part of his readers. His genius, seconded by the omnipotence of fashion, has brought chivalry again into temporary favour; but he ought to know, that this is a taste too evidently unnatural to be long prevalent in the modern world. Fine ladies and gentlemen now talk, indeed of donjons, keeps, tabards,

scutcheons, tressures, caps of maintenance, portcullises, wimples and we know not what besides; just as they did in the days of Dr. [Erasmus] Darwin's popularity, of gnomes, sylphs, oxygen, gossimer, polyggnia and polyandria. That fashion, however, passed rapidly away; and if it be now evident to all the world, that Dr. Darwin's obstructed the extension of his fame, and hastened the extinction of his brilliant reputation, by the pedantry and ostentatious learning of his poems. Mr Scott should take care that a different sort of pedantry does not produce the same effects. The world will never be long pleased with what it does not readily understand."

Leaving aside the way-off-the-mark prediction that the fashion for things medieval would soon die out (it only began to wane 100 years after these words were written) Jeffrey's comparison between Erasmus Darwin (1732-1808) and Scott is apt. Darwin wrote in verse for a pedantic purpose, he had scientific theories to get across to the public, and in his time the recognised way to popularise any facts was to put them into verse. Coming up with poetic phrases like "the finny race" was a lot more memorable than just a mention of 'fish'. Today we don't need this sort of didactic poetic imagery as we have TV and film to supply our images and popularise our science, and our history. Ultimately what Scott was about in *Marmion*, his other poems and later his novels, was creating 'TV' images in the mind to popularise history. He needed the descriptions of jerkins to fill out the mental picture; take them away, and the story is thin indeed and absurd. Writing to Robert Surtees (1779-1834), the Durham antiquarian, in April 1808, Scott defends his detailed descriptions saying he always intended to describe things precisely rather than "display my own ingenuity in making an ideal world", if people did not like it he could only plead that: "I, having been an antiquary many years before I thought of being a poet, may be permitted to sacrifice to my original studies, while pursuing those of late date". So it is poetry in the service of antiquarianism rather than poetry for the sake of art. It was indeed Surtees who mainly prompted the writing of the poem by sending Scott a number of traditional ballads. Surtees, Scott tells him in an earlier letter, by calling attention to "these times and topics" is likely "to occasion the world to be troubled with more border minstrelsy". They had previously collaborated on *The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802-3). And so it is that a number of the ballads included in *Marmion* were supplied by Surtees. The notes too were an essential part of the didactic process. In a letter to Mrs Hayman of Blackheath in 1807 Scott writes: "I am just now finishing my romantic poem of *Marmion*, a tale of war and wonder with notes like Noah's ark, an ample receptacle for everything that savours of romantic lore." What we have therefore in *Marmion* is not a simple narrative poem, but a multi-layered educational artefact, with separate levels of complexity nested one within the other. Today this is how websites and CD-ROMs are constructed with drop-down menus to be clicked on to explore ever deeper within the subject. Scott had to rely on different sections of text and footnotes to get the same effect. In all there are six levels of narration going on simultaneously. Leaving aside the first level for a moment, the second level is the plot of *Marmion's* journey from

Norham to Flodden. This is the frame for the third, the detailed descriptions of castles, flags, costumes, and so on. The journey framework is also the opportunity for the fourth level, the ballads. On all possible occasions throughout the poem, minstrels are singing, letting Scott tell more tales about other heroes, such as Lochinvar. Apart from these inserted stand-alone tales within the tale, part of the second level is constructed from fourth level fragments. For example soon after leaving Norham, Marmion goes out on a night ride for no reason at all, except to allow Scott to include the story of Thomas the Rhymer's foray to fairyland. The fifth level are Scott's notes explaining things, which contain the sixth level, extensive verbatim quotes from source materials which often take us far from Scotland. Given these levels of complexity it is not surprising that the poem is a bit confused, but each level is essential if Scott is to achieve his aim of popularising history. Nor is this poem unusual in Scott's output, all his poems and novels have their multiple levels, including extensive notes. Right at the end of his life he was struggling to complete a vast collected edition of his works, slowing the whole process down, by endlessly revising and adding to the notes to all the novels. It was as though he wanted to transcribe the entire contents of his historical library as annotations to his own writings. With all this effort going into the historical background to the poem it is appropriate to ask, what is the nature of the history over which Scott is labouring so much? There are, it has to be said, a few odd things about the history in this poem. The ballads that Surtees sent in and which Scott gratefully included in the epic were not old or traditional at all, but Surtees' own invention. Others are Scott's invention. Then there are the chronological distortions. The Norman Lindisfarne Priory is described as "In Saxon strength that Abbey frown'd.." and:-

"On the deep walls, the heathen Dane  
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain.." (II, x, 9-10)

The Danes had long since gone when the existing Priory was built, and there was never a convent on the island in Saxon times or after. Sir David Lydsay (1486-1555) appears as a character as Lyon-King of Arms, 16 years before he obtained that office. And there is Marmion himself. There was a historical Marmion, but he arrived at Norham in 1320 not 1513. These are more than just slips, they are deliberate, Scott knows the history perfectly well. He loved the poetry of Lydsay so he included him as a character, pointing out his error in the notes and saying "I am uncertain if I abuse poetical license...At any rate, I am not the first who has been guilty of the anachronism." About the Lindisfarne nuns he wrote to Surtees in February 1807 that though there were nuns at Whitby and, he thinks, Lindisfarne "I suspect I am bringing them down too late by several centuries, this, however, I shall not greatly mind." In the poem's published notes, he has corrected himself stating "The nunnery on Holy Island is altogether fictitious. Indeed, St Cuthbert was unlikely to permit such an establishment...he certainly hated the whole female sex". Marmion too is not the historical Marmion, who was on a heroic quest to do some mighty deed at the "most dangerous place in England." That 14<sup>th</sup> Century knight was soon involved in a dangerous

skirmish just outside the walls of Norham. Scott's *Marmion* is far less heroic and all is peaceful around the castle. The original source for *Marmion*'s true story, the *Scalacronica* written by one of the Governor's of Norham, Thomas Grey, was not directly available in print in Scott's time, but the notes reveal he knew about *Marmion* from both Bishop Percy's *The Hermit of Warkworth* and the antiquary Leland, whose account he quotes at great length.. Scott says cheerfully "I have not, therefore created a new family, but only revived the titles of an old one in an imaginary personage".

And so it goes on, the more you look the more it becomes apparent that Scott knows the true history, then sets out to deliberately distort it. This is partly so he can point out his own mistakes, and thereby his own learning, in the elaborate notes. This dialogue between Scott the historian and Scott the poet is completely consistent with his whimsical game of concealing his authorship of the *Waverley* novels long after everybody had guessed it was him, and even publishing reviews pointing out the faults in the works of the "Author of *Waverley*". The distortions and invention of history in *Marmion* are also connected to the first level of the poem, which I have avoided mentioning till now: the six introductory epistles to each Canto. These long poems are addressed to friends and, apart from the first in praise of Nelson, Pitt and Fox, are mostly autobiographical being set in the seasons that he is writing the poem. The first level engages with the contemporary world of 1807-8 and it is this world that he needs to appreciate the work. What he is striving for is a historical truth that is "True to history without being true to fact." Poetical, and later novelistic, liberties are essential to avoid, as he noted in the dedication to *Ivanhoe*, "the repulsive dryness of mere antiquity..". Like a film-maker Scott wants his contemporary audience to empathise with characters in the past whose "affections and feelings must have borne the same general proportion to our own". Also like a film-maker, "It is necessary..", he says in the dedication to *Waverley*, "...for exciting interest of any kind, that the subject assumed should be, as it were translated into the manners, as well as the language, of the age we live in".

So finally if Scott has got his technique right, what message should his audience take away from *Marmion*? Certainly not one of overbearing Scottish pride. Jeffrey writes dismissively that: "There is scarcely one trait of true Scottish nationality or patriotism introduced into the whole poem". Scott himself clearly did not set out to write a 'patriotic' or 'nationalist' poem, noting in a letter a year earlier "I am not at all afraid of my patriotism being the sufferer in the course of the tale....we may [say] with Francis I that at Flodden, 'all was lost but our honour', an exception which includes everything that is desirable for a poet".

Making the dishonourable villain fight on the English side does at least tip the scales of honour in favour of the Scots, and, on the face of it, Scott does give a high chivalric motive for James IV's starting the war. As Scott tells it James IV invades England because the Queen of France sent him a love-letter:-

"And charged him, as her knight and love,  
For her to break a lance...

.....

And thus, for France's Queen he drest  
His manly limbs in mailéd vest;" (V, x)

But in doing so he is ignoring the his councillors warnings and abandoning:-

"His own Queen Margaret, who, in Lithgow's bower,  
All lonely sat, and wept the weary hour."

James IV's chivalry is misplaced and leads to disaster, just as Marmion, betrayer of chivalric values, also comes to grief. Neither of them are heroes. As if to rub it in that the ultimate message of the poem is un-heroic, Scott describes Marmion's magnificent tomb, with sculpted effigy, in Lichfield Cathedral, but includes a twist:-

"The spoilers stripp'd and gash'd the slain,  
And thus their corpses were mista'en;  
And thus, in the proud Baron's tomb,  
The lowly woodsman took the room." (VI, xxxvi, 28-31)

It is an un-heroic fate that chimes well with Thomas Gray's account of the real Marmion's foray before Norham. "The knight mounted a beautiful charger, spurred forward and charged into the midst of the enemy. Who struck him down, wounded him in the face, and dragged him out of the saddle to the ground". The garrison had to turn out to rescue him, a whole castle put in danger because one knight wanted to make a name for himself. Gray, a matter-of-fact professional soldier, had little time for chivalric dash. Scott admired it, but knew that its age was over. In most of his historical novels, it the process of change that he depicts, the successful characters are those that adapt to the new conditions and do not cling to old ideals and outmoded ways of thinking. Medieval chivalry was wonderful, but its time had gone. As Scott wrote on the subject in the *Encyclopedia Britannica*: "We can now only look back on it as beautiful and fantastic piece of frostwork, which has dissolved in the beams of the sun!".

*Chris Green*

#### **Further Reading**

In addition to editions of Marmion and Lockhart's biographys I have found most useful the following:-

Devlin, D.D. *The Author of Waverley: A Critical Study of Walter Scott* (1971)

Gray, T. *Scalacronica: The Reigns of Edward I, Edward II & Edward III*  
(translated H.Maxwell) (Glasgow, 1907)

Haydon, J.O.(ed) *Walter Scott: The Criticial Heritage* (1970) (pp.35-51: for Jeffrey review)

Scott, W. *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (Ed.H.J.C.Grierson) (1932-37) vols.1 & 2

Wilson, A.N. *The Laird of Abbotsford: A View of Sir Walter Scott* (1980)

## **THE BAILIFFS' COURT IN THE REIGN OF ELIZABETH I**

The Borough archives throw relatively little light on the life of Berwick in the Tudor period but amongst the most interesting survivals are the reports of the proceedings of the Bailiffs' Court in the 1590s.

Although the Court seems to have reported annually only a few records survive. The four bailiffs took evidence on a variety of matters from the burgesses, garrison men, and stallingers (a group of residents with traditional rights over such matters as grazing in the common fields). A list of names added at the end of some of the records presumably represents those who were heard by the court and might number over 50. They seem to have been drawn principally from the more senior members of the community, including a number of the aldermen, whilst in the only complete record (1594) their foreman was the Town Clerk.

The reports varied somewhat from year to year in their organisation and show some evidence of a deliberate development of the proceedings. In 1593 the report was organised on the basis solely of the streets reported on but in 1594 there were added to this section nearly 100 more general complaints, and by 1598 a further separate section was included covering allegations of moral behaviour. The contents always included the identification of Scots residents, those who were not attending church regularly, those who brewed or sold ale, those who baked bread or kept bakehouses for common use, local problems over pavements, dunghills and water supply, and those whose conduct or condition constituted a social problem. It is only this last area that is dealt with here.

The Court itself appears not to have had any jurisdiction over these matters but simply drew them to the attention of other authorities like the magistrates, mayor and counsel, or the governor. Often the Court recorded that an allegation was only a suspicion, as with Edward Harvey's wife mentioned below and some of their suspicions may therefore have been no more than malicious gossip or prejudice. Sometimes girls were named as needing further inquiry simply because they had no evident means of support. Some of the Court's subjects may therefore have been named on a basis of no more than malicious gossip or prejudice.

In some cases an individual might be named in several contexts. Thus in 1593 Thomas Hoggart, a resident of Castlegate, kept “a disordered house not fitt to be suffered”, supplied with ale brewed by his wife, whilst the street outside his house was broken and needed repair. The next year things were no better. The court found that his house entertained “Scots Minstrells and manye other lewde and disordered companye continuallye where they use gamyng at Cards, and sundry other rogedly exercises” including during church services on the Sabbath. The street was still unrepaired. Nearby was the alehouse of Edward Harvey “where doe resort Scotesh shepherds, tinkers roags, and other disordered and unlawfull company”; they spent their time in the same way as at Thomas Hoggart’s with the added complaint that Harvey’s wife “hath bene always wonderfully suspected to be a pryve harlot”. Harvey also offended the court by buying up goods from the Scots who visited his house before they reached the market.

Castlegate was an especially problematic area. It lay outside the newly constructed walls and was evidently less easily controlled than the area within. There lived a number of women who made their living by usury and as pawnbrokers, charging allegedly excessive rates of interest, as well as other deplorable traits; Agnes Norton was a “very badd disordered woman” and Widow Basford “a very badd and disordered harlot”.

Another problem area was the Ness where there were, in 1593, several notorious scolds who stirred up dissension among their neighbours, two widows who were “of evill disposition and lewde behaviour in drawing men” into their company, and Michael Beach’s wife whose behaviour was similar; she was also accused of receiving stolen goods. Robert Reavely also lived there. He was married and the father of five children, and his wife kept an alehouse. In 1594 he was accused of having fathered a child by a Scots woman and in 1598 he had got Robert Webber’s servant with child, whilst his own maid had had to leave the town pregnant.

Another problem that concerned the court was that of animals, notably the swine, ducks, and geese that were kept in the streets. Dogs were also a pest, which “keepe suche howlinge and barkings especially on the nyght tyme that it is pitye to be suffered.” They felt that the only dogs that should be allowed were spaniels and greyhounds, used for retrieving or hunting game, and these should be kept under restraint. “The executioner hathe been accustomed to goe with his clubb daylye & especiallye on the nighte for killinge all dogges” and the Court regretted that this custom had been allowed to lapse so that now there was “an unreasonable companye of dogges”. Particular concern was evident in 1593 over Humphrey Fletcher’s mastiff that “dothe bite children and breaks down the garthern dykes of the negebours”. Whether the executioner was sent with his club to sort the problem out is not recorded.



There were many in the town by the end of Elizabeth's reign who were strongly presbyterian in their sympathies and puritanical in their moral outlook. This is reflected in the interest shown in church attendance ("John Clerke's wife hath not ben at church these twoe or three yeares") and the opening of alehouses on the Sabbath. The Court also condemned those who went up to the church but did not attend the service but spent their time "walkinge abroad on the rampiers(ramparts) & in the churcheyarde". The churchwardens were asked to patrol the alehouses and stop the walkers on Sundays. The captains of the garrison were asked to instruct their soldiers to attend church, especially on Sundays (it is evident that there were also services during the week). The schoolmasters, who used the church for classes, were to stop their children playing or keeping misrule about the churchyard, "which is pity to be suffered".

Given the strength of Puritanism it is not surprising that the court complained that "children are suffered to run abroad & make cryinge & misrule in the strete in the evenings. It is a thing not comelye nor lawfull in this place.....Also there are sundrye youths in the towne & others that will come abroad in the nyghte tyme & make a great revel & misrule upp & downe the towne, & playe many badd and lewde partes".

It is hardly surprising that the Court made its first general recommendation in 1594 on the issue of the number of alehouses and urged that this should be reduced through more stringent licensing accompanied by the use of sureties for their conduct without "the usinge of unlawfull games, and also for the maintenance of good order within their houses".

The tension between the puritanism of Berwick's establishment and the conduct of the population as a whole was to last for over 150 years. One is reminded of Sir Toby Belch's robust challenge to Malvolio in "Twelfth Night"- 'Dost thou think that because thou art virtuous there shall be no more cakes and ale?'. The town was never to have serious social problems but its economy depended on a thriving market and for most of the time a sizeable garrison. Alehouses were an essential part of the community and the presence of a sex-trade unavoidable in practice. Other problems were also to endure- the presence of animals roaming the street, unruly youths and (no doubt) noisy children's games.

*David Brenchley*

**EXTRACTS FROM BERWICK JOURNAL - 15 FEBRUARY 1862**

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Surrounding district, that he has COMMENCED the  
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STREET, nearly opposite the Post Office; and hopes,  
by strict attention to all Orders entrusted to him, and  
moderate charges, to merit a share of their favours.

*PICTURES, LOOKING GLASSES, &c*  
*CLEANED OR RE-GILDED*

Berwick, Feb., 1862

Road to Spittal - our attention has again been called to the state of this road, to which nothing has yet been done on the way of repairs. We understand that although part of the road is private property, the Harbour Commissioners are bound to keep the whole of it in repair, and now that their attention has been called to it, we hope they will at once remedy the evil complained of.

BANKHILL - The desolate appearance of the one-half of the Bankhill looks so ill in comparison with the other, that it suggests to us the propriety of reminding the public of the necessity of having a subscription list opened at the Banks or other places, for the purpose of having it made somewhat decent before summer visitors come to shame us.

BERWICK SHIPPING COMPANY - One of the London traders (the Teviot) got neaped on Saturday last, her advertised time of sailing, and did not depart till Monday. This was owing to an unforeseen and sudden change of the tide. There is a rumour afloat that the company intend purchasing screw steamers in place of the clippers, which, of course, will be disposed of. If this is done with the intention of competing with the railway, we are afraid it will be a hopeless task. A much better speculation would probably be to open a trade to Holland, the Hans Towns, or the Baltic, where railways would be innocuous as a "Carriers Cart".

#### SUCCESS OF THE TONIC SOL-FA NOTATION

The Rev John Curwen, of Plaistow, inventor of this now celebrated system of notation has secured space in the Great Exhibition for setting forth the modulator and other sol-fa publications. He will also advertise and explain the system in the three catalogues of the Exhibition. It is also gratifying to him to know from returns

from 713 teachers up to the close of 1861, 150,000 persons were under tuition in different parts of the world. Mr Patterson, of Wallace Green Church, has, we understand, over 200 pupils at present in Berwick and neighbourhood, to whom he is giving lessons in this system. A "public night" will be given on Friday evening, and at the close of the course, a monster meeting of his classes will take place.

#### BIRTHS AND DEATHS IN BERWICK -

From the Registrar General's quarterly return of births and deaths we learn that in the Berwick district during the quarter ending December 31, there were 100 births and 91 deaths. The deaths are 12 above the average of five corresponding quarters; 22 occurred from scarletina. The numbers for the year were - Births 468; deaths 380. The numbers for the preceding years were we understand:-

	Births	Deaths
1857	440	316
1858	457	337
1859	457	292
1860	469	257
Average number for the four years	455	300
The numbers for 1861 therefore were	<u>468</u>	<u>330</u>
	13	30 above the

average for the last four years. The same return tells us that of the 91 deaths, more than one half were of children aged five years and under. Glasgow is held up as affording a frightful example of infant mortality, the percentage being no less than 50, but what will our municipal rulers think of the fact that in Berwick - at our own doors - the percentage was nearly as high? In the district of All Saints, Newcastle, the Registrar says:- "Scarletina has prevailed, and has been exceedingly fatal among children born in this district within the last autumn quarter, and I have only received about 200 certificates of successful vaccination within the same period." The Registrar of Longbenton says:- "The deaths are very numerous, 44 of which have been from Scarletina, which has been very fatal throughout the district, but chiefly at Walker and Dudley Colliery." The Alnwick Registrar remarks:- "Deaths 14 above the average of fair corresponding quarters. There were 28 from Scarletina in this quarter."

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NATURAL HISTORY  
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 OR IF YOU HAVE ANY THOUGHTS OF  
 MARRYING.

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OR IF YOU DON'T INTEND TO MARRY AT  
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Wendy Scott

Below is a poem found in the Spittal news by Michael Cullen :

### **The Streaker**

*The Streaker of Sea Road's a disgrace  
His identity no one can trace  
On August the 10<sup>th</sup>,  
He ran its full length,  
But nobody looked at his face.*

## SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

August 10<sup>th</sup>, 1839

### BAMBURGH

There has been this week placed in the Chancel of Bamburgh Church, a very handsome monument, by Sir W Chantry, to perpetuate the memory of that portion of the Sharp family who have been connected with the Parish. It stands 13 feet high by 6 feet in breadth; engraved thereon is a very correct likeness of the late Dr Sharp, formerly one of Lord Crewe's Trustees, also a full sized female figure, supposed to represent Faith. Altogether it is a most beautiful piece of workmanship.

April 11<sup>th</sup>, 1840

TO BE LET. 600 ROODS OF QUICK SOD DYKES, at HOLBORN for which Estimates will be taken in by Mr BAILEY of HAZELRIGG, who will give the dimensions and other particulars. Hazelrigg 25<sup>th</sup> February, 1840.

April 18<sup>th</sup>, 1840

### WOOLER GYMNASTIC GAMES

ITEM 8. Wrestling for a splendid BELT. 17 entered and were paired off in the following manner:-

Anthony Dagg and Robert Percy - Percy thrown.  
William Davison and Thomas Renwick - Renwick down.  
B. Shield and A. Gillholm - Gillholm down.  
Walter Davison and R. Curle - Curle down.  
Isaac Ramsay and George Davison - Davison down.  
George Murray and W. Curry - Curry down.  
Peter Hornsby and A. Riddell - Riddell down.  
John Elliot and Hugh Wood - Wood down.  
James Hall ---

2<sup>nd</sup> Round -

A Dag and James Hall - Hall down.  
John Elliot and William Harrison - Harrison down.  
Peter Hornsby and R. Shell - Shell down.  
William Davison and G. Murray - Murray down.  
James Ramsay ---

3<sup>rd</sup> Round –

Anthony Dag and Isaac Ramsay - Ramsay down.  
Peter Hornsby and John Elliot - Elliot down.  
Anthony Dag and William Davison - Davison down.  
Anthony Dag and P. Hornsby - Hornsby down.  
Won easily by DAG.

We are sorry to say the Wrestling was very indifferent, the parties all seeming afraid of DAG, who is a stout man. The spirit shown was any but creditable to competitors, and we hope the next meeting, the want of true spirit may not be so apparent in the manly Old English Exercise .. The Games were finished with a Sack Race for a purse of Silver, which was a source of much fun and merriment.

*Muriel Fraser*

### **Letter from the Editor.**

This week I made contact, through the Internet, with a lady who shares my great, great grandparents. It was very exciting as we compared notes and details of our respective families. My side of the family seemed very ordinary whilst hers boasted sword-swallowers, mediums, high divers and underwater acrobats. (Pity the Medium did not for-see her son's untimely death at the hand of an Arab in Palestine!!) Surely with all those family historians amongst us we can find some interesting **stories, people** or **events**, which can be used in **our** newsletter. They will be most appreciated. You may give them to Linda or send them by E-mail to [gallagher@ukonline.co.uk](mailto:gallagher@ukonline.co.uk) or by post c/o. Records Office, Wallace Green, Berwick upon Tweed.

Yvonne Gallagher  
Hon. Editor







