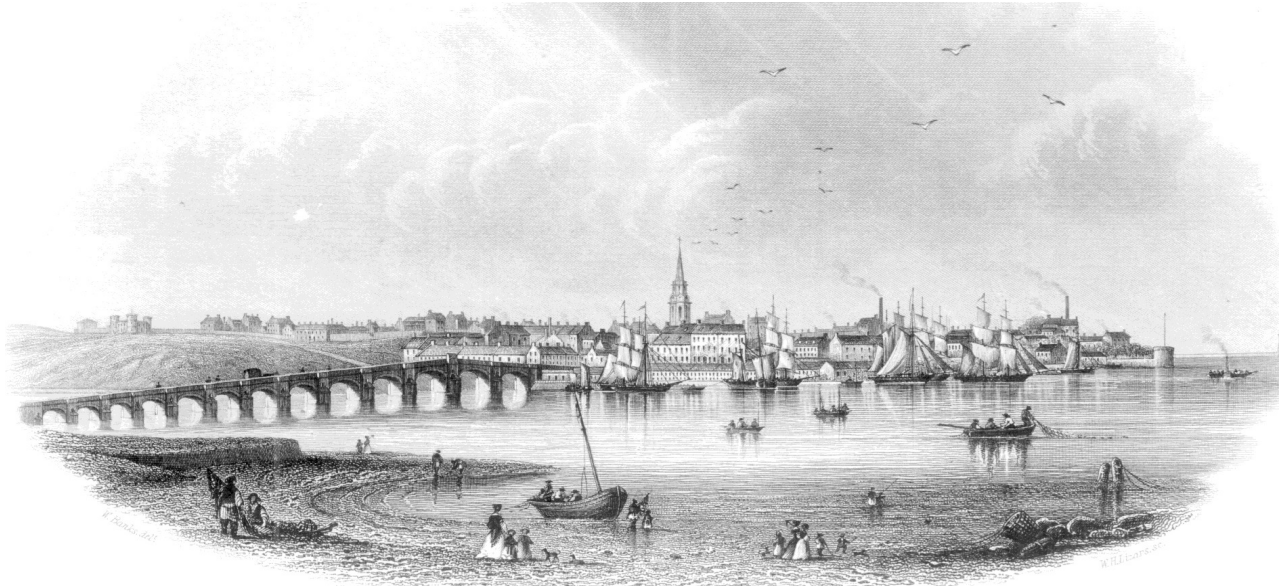


Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 49 January 2006

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friends of Berwick and District Museum and Archives

PAST AND FUTURE EVENTS
by Chris Green and Linda Bankier.

AGM in the **Guildhall** on Thursday 16th March.

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

It's that time of the year again when subscriptions are due. You should find a renewal form enclosed with your newsletter, unless you pay by standing order. Membership of the Friends is great value for money, so if you know anyone else who would like to join, please persuade them to.

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Bowling Clubhouse.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Tues. 31st January

Queen Margaret's Legacy:
Rev. Donald Gaddes.

Tues. 28th February

History of the K.O.S.B.:
Lt. Col. George Wood.

Tues. 28th March.

AGM + Coal Mining in Northumberland:
David Heywood.

Wed. 26th April

Visit to Mellerstain House.

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 25th January.

The Workhouse: Mrs J. Bowen

Wed 22nd February.

-----?: Mr T. Nixon.

Wed 22nd March.

The Life and Posthumous Wanderings of
St Cuthbert: Mr S. Bangs

Wed. 26th April

The Golden Age of Northumbria:
Mrs A. Sweatman.

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: The Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 18th January.

The Dissolution of the Monasteries:
Phil Rowlett

Wed. 15th February.

The Stephensons & The Early Development of
the Railway: Alan Fendley.

Wed. 15th March.

The Conversion of Northumbria: Tom Corfe.

Wed. 19th April.

AGM + Berwick's Medieval Defences; Some
New Thinking: Jim Herbert.

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick upon Tweed.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Mon. 9th January

The Fourth Duke and His Northern Circle:
Dr Colin Shrimpton.

Mon. 6th February.

Picts, Gaels and Scots- What's new?:
Dr Sally Foster.

Mon. 6th March.

(**Note:** Joint meeting with the Civic Society)

Constantine the Great: Jeremy Patterson

Visitors fee £2.00

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thurs. 19th January.

Berwick to the Bield: Jim Walker

Thurs. 2nd February.

Wartime Memories in Kelso:
Billy Pattison.

Thurs. 2nd March.

AGM at 7.00pm sharp.
Upsettlington and Ladykirk (Part 2):
Mrs Eleanor Moffat.

Thurs. 6th April.

Working the Land: Walter Elliot

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed.25th January.

'Berwickshire and the 15': Francis M. Cowe.

Wed.22nd February.

David Hume: Professor G.C.A.Gaskin.

Wed. 29th March.

Queen Margaret's Legacy:
Rev. Donald Geddes.

Wed. 26th April.

Outing...Venue to be confirmed.

EMBLETON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Church Room, Embleton.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 18th January

Social Evening at Olde Ship Hotel,
Seahouses.

Wed. 15th February.

Alnwick Playhouse: Mr S Cowton.

Wed. 15th March.

Northumberland's Industrial Past:
Mr J Almond.

Wed. 19th April.

Belford Union Workhouse and its people:
Mrs J. Bowen.

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 11th January.

Hostmen and Keelmen of Newcastle:
Mr R.W.C. Wheatley

Wed. 8th February

The Annual Dinner.

Wed. 8th March.

"The Kirknewton Magi" Mr R. A.Humphrey.

Wed. 12th April.

A.G.M. and Members Night.

NORHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue; Norham Village Hall.

Time; 7.30 p.m.

Mon. 9th January.

Film night of Local Area: Rev. J. Jackson

Mon. 13th February.

Tracing Your Cross Border Ancestry:
Miss J. Sanderson.

Mon. 13th March.

An Evening by Members.

Mon. 10th April.

The History of Paxton House:
Mr John Malden.

LOWICK HERITAGE GROUP

Tues.10 th January	Northumberland Music: Judith Davidson.
Tues. 14 th February.	Slides of Lowick: Robert Sinton.
Tues. 7 th March.	Flora and Fauna of Lindisfarne: Phil Davey.
Tues 7 th April.	The Yetholm Gypsies: Tom Tokely

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Parish Hall.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wed. 25 th January	Members' Party
Wed 22 nd February.	Mining in Northumberland: Mr Hayward.
Wed. 22 nd March	Chillingham Cattle: Philip Deacon.
Wed. 26 th April.	T.B.A.: Liz Breckons

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

(North Northumberland Group)

Black Bull, Lowick.

Time: 10.00 a.m.

Sat. 21 st January	Open Forum
Sat. 18 th February	Luke's Brae, Coldstream: John H. Elliott
Sat. 18 th March	Unicorns: Roy A. Humphrey.
Sat 15 th April	Last Train to Lindisfarne: Alistair Sinton

ARCHIVE NEWS

Happy New Year to everyone ! Where did last year go ?

In my absence, Ian has been doing a great job in keeping everything ticking over and looking after all the people who use the service.

Outside the office and the public service, the Record Office has been involved in a number of Outreach activities. As I mentioned in the last newsletter, we continued our work with Spittal School on the Spittal at War project. At the beginning of November, we held another very successful week long exhibition in the school which incorporated some of the information and reminiscences that we had collected. As part of the week, the school had a Second World War day where the children and staff all dressed up and had an authentic Second World War meal. We invited people along to this who had helped us and also older people from Spittal. After the meal the children led us in a sing song. The day was a great success with the children and staff all entering into the spirit of it – the caretaker was an ARP warden and a number of the staff were Land Army girls. One of the children's grannies had even knit them a cardigan specially for the occasion !. When the exhibition was finished, it was transferred over to the Gymnasium to join the other exhibitions on the Second World War. That wasn't the end of the project for the Record Office. In December, under Ian's guidance, and with the help of Carole, we held a session in the school on Second World War websites for Mr Curry's class. The children really enjoyed it, particularly trying to turn out the lights in the house when the air raid siren sounded – all with very loud sound effects ! The last part of the project will be finished in January – a children's book on Spittal during the war which has been written by Maureen Raper and illustrated by children from the school. I have enjoyed being involved in the project and learnt a lot. I think one of the best things to come out of the project was that a gentleman whose house had been bombed and destroyed in Sunnyside as a young boy was able to meet and thank the person who rescued him from the property.

Although the Spittal project has taken up a lot of all our time, the Record Office has been involved in other projects as well. In November NEMLAC (North East Museums, Libraries and Archives Council) organised a School Gate event at Tweedmouth Middle School. We went along with other heritage organisations to make the children more aware of what we all could offer. Carole and I went along with various activities, including find your house on an old map; identify the old postcards and Family Tree sheets for the children to complete. We saw every pupil in the school in a 1 ½ hour period which kept us on our toes. It was a challenge but well worth doing.

Finally, we have also been working with the Greenses Committee and Holy Trinity First School providing them with information on their area during the Victorian period. This will be used in the classroom and also to produce an interpretative board near a Fishermen's seat in the Greenses area.

Linda Bankier

VOLUNTEER NEEDED

The next edition of the newsletter will be our 50th and so we hope to produce a special one to mark the occasion. As the newsletters have contained so many useful and interesting articles, we thought it would be appropriate to produce an index to the series. We are looking for a volunteer to do this – copies of all the newsletters can be provided so that you can do this at home. If you are interested, please contact Chris Green at the Museum (01289 301869).

CAN YOU HELP ?

I received this picture by e-mail from Claire Grey who is researching the Greys of Milfield. She is trying to identify the building in the photograph. Can anyone help ?

Claire found it in a scrap book with cuttings from about 1830 to 1920. She thought it could have been taken in the 1880s or 1890s and could be of the Glendale Hounds since both her grandfather, George and her great grandfather George Annett Grey were masters of the foxhounds. If anyone can identify the building or shed any light on the photo, please e-mail me on lb@berwick-upon-tweed.gov.uk or write to the Record Office.

I hope we can help Claire in some way.



In Search of James MacBraire

At the end of last year, the Record Office received an enquiry about a person of some importance in Canadian history. John F. O'Mara wrote to us on behalf of the Benevolent Irish Society of St. John's Newfoundland, which is celebrating its 200th anniversary in 2006. He was looking for any information about James MacBraire, one of the founders of this historic charitable and fraternal organization. According to Mr. O'Mara, when MacBraire left Newfoundland in 1817, he settled in Berwick-upon-Tweed, where he died on 24 March 1832.

My interest aroused, I did an Internet search for James MacBraire, and was impressed to find a full record for him in the Dictionary of Canadian Biography Online (www.biographi.ca/EN/). Sure enough it stated that he died on the 24th March in Berwick-upon-Tweed, England. There was also an entry for him in the Canadian Encyclopedia (www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com), which gives the same date and place of death.

My initial response was to check Linda's index cards of previous enquiries, to see if there had already been any research conducted about Mr MacBraith. I discovered that back in February 2000 an enquiry had been received from a Mr Long, also from Newfoundland, who was searching for MacBraith's will from 1832 (he didn't give a date of death). At that time, a search of the Durham Diocesan Wills had been undertaken, but no record of Mr MacBraith's will had been found. Furthermore, a search of the Berwick Holy Trinity burial records showed that there was no record of anybody of that name being buried in the town in 1832. The only person buried that year, whose name was even vaguely similar, was James McBurnie. He had been buried on 2 April, and given that MacBraith had apparently died a week before then, one possible explanation (which, given the lack of any other leads to follow, had to at least be considered) was that this could in fact be the same person. McBurnie was a gunsmith in Berwick (examples of whose work still survive) raising the intriguing possibility that he might actually be the person with the connection to Newfoundland.

I checked the Berwick Advertiser from that period to see if it could shed any further light on the matter. I found the death notice for McBurnie in the 31st March edition of the newspaper:

On the 28th instant, after a long and painful illness, which he bore with remarkable fortitude, Mr James McBurnie long known as a celebrated gun-maker in this place. Among the many painful deaths we are called upon to record the present has occasioned more than ordinary interest. During the long period which Mr McBurnie has been in business he has endeared himself to all ranks and conditions by his kind and obliging manners, his evenness of temper and sterling rectitude of conduct. As an artist Mr McBurnie has occupied no inconsiderable place among the members of that profession – as a father he was uniformly dutiful and affectionate – as a friend steady and faithful – as a member of society consistent and honourable – and as a christian pious without ostentation. Mr M.B will long be remembered in Berwick by his numerous friends and acquaintances.

However, in the following week's newspaper, I also found a very brief mention of James MacBraith's death – which had occurred four days earlier, on 24th March. These were certainly two different people, but the nature of their death notices suggested that it was McBurnie, and not MacBraith who was the bigger 'celebrity'. Why, I wondered, were there apparently no other references to the time MacBraith had spent in Berwick, or even any record of his burial?

The answer was actually to be found in MacBraith's brief death notice in the Advertiser, which stated simply: *At Tweedhill on the 24th ult., James Macbraire, Esq., aged 70.* Tweedhill – just over the border into Scotland. So the entries in the Canadian Biography and Encyclopedia were wrong in stating that he had died in Berwick. In fact, there is no evidence that MacBraith ever settled in Berwick, or indeed has any links at all to the town – which is a great pity given the significant part he played in Canadian history. Unless, of course, somebody reading this article knows different...

Ian Johnston

MUSEUM NEWS

Last year turned out to be a much busier year than we expected, as the level of grants was at an all-time high enabling us to do a lot of extra things that have not been possible for many years. As some may recall there was a major crisis in the Council's funding in 2000 which meant we lost our budget for exhibitions, amongst other things. This, added to the need to find extra space for our stores when we were evicted by English Heritage from one of the buildings we had been occupying on the site, has meant that our ability to stage exhibitions has been very limited. In 2005 however two large grants from the North East Regional Museums hub

and the Imperial War Museum enabled us to put on a number of exhibitions and events on a grander scale than before.

The first project, part of the national **SeaBritain** celebrations, concerned Berwick's maritime heritage. This was represented by a joint exhibition with the Civic Society at the Main Guard, a summer exhibition based on Dr. George Johnston's investigations into marine biology, the *Eve of Trafalgar* weekend, *The Fight for the Fish*, a silent film on the Victorian fishing industry with pupils from Tweedmouth West school (premiered at the Berwick Film Festival), the Trafalgar Day concert in the Guildhall, and, Jim Walker's *Odyssey: A Photographic Journey* in the Gymnasium Gallery. Nearly all these events were highly successful, though the making of the film proved far more time-consuming than we had planned which meant the time available for putting up the Dr. Johnston exhibition was halved and what was seen in July and August was only half what should have been there. Added to this there were continuous technical problems with the paddle-wheel exhibit. So that was unfortunate, but by far and away the highlight of the exhibition programme was Jim Walker's triumphant return to the Gymnasium Gallery. This was his three previous exhibitions rolled into one and in all 2338 people saw the show during its run in October, not usually considered the best time for exhibitions. So effective was the show that English Heritage has been convinced to modify its policy, a bit, on the Gymnasium to allow in other things than the 'cutting-edge' contemporary art that has occupied the space for a decade now.

The second big grant was part of the national **Their Past Your Future** project to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the ending of the Second War. This was unusual in that we were effectively paid to stage a touring exhibition from the Imperial War Museum and then given a lot more money to stage events around the exhibition. Again the main locale was the Gymnasium Gallery in November and December, an even less promising time, but 665 still turned up, including 230 for our Home Front Weekend on 26/27th November. One of the conditions was that we had to add our own local display to the touring show and this was in two parts, a series of panels compiled by the Museum based on Phil Rowett's research and the *Spittal at War* show that Linda Bankier first showed at Spittal First School and then kindly agreed to transplant to the Gymnasium. During the run of the exhibition Chrissi Cairn, our education worker, has been busily doing drama activities based on war themes with schools throughout the Borough. At the time of writing (13th Jan) we are in the final stages of preparation for a play on Berwick at war staged at the Maltings on 2nd – 5th February. Entitled *The House of the Haunted Memories: A Tale of Berwick and the War* and written by myself, this takes some of the facts and memories of the great conflict in Berwick and reworks them into a sometimes strange story of a personal journey of discovery by a 21st Century TV executive. It is not a conventional drama-documentary such as we have seen now so often on TV, but rather explores the nature of what is 'history' and 'memory'.

The last part of the Second War project will be the publication in March of a booklet on *Berwick at War* based on research by Phil Rowett and Derek Sharman and supplemented by some of the reminiscences gathered during the year.

Chris Green

FUTURE OF BERWICK MUSEUM

At the Culture and Heritage Sector Board meeting of the Berwick Borough Local Strategic Partnership held on 22nd November 2005 Chris Green, in his capacity as Museum Curator, drew attention to his concern about the long-term future of the Borough Museum Service. Following a SIMALTO public consultation involving a sample of Berwick residents, the Resources, Efficiency and Effectiveness sub-committee of the Borough Council had proposed closure of the Museum at the end of March 2006. On hearing this, those present expressed the

feelings one might expect from a group of people dedicated to preserving and sharing all that is good about Berwick's historical heritage. On behalf of the BBLSP the Sector Board stated its willingness to participate in and, if necessary, to initiate whatever action is appropriate to secure an efficient, high quality Borough-wide Heritage Service.

As a learning exercise and an opportunity to consider opinions a group of Board representatives met with Chris. The Sector Board shares with Chris an awareness that there is a need to improve the Museum (Heritage) Service within the Borough and that there are alternatives to what exists at present. A review of the present service should be the first step to providing an improved Borough-wide service. A review that can only realistically be carried out whilst the service is operational.

The Sector Board is convinced that Berwick and the Borough, has a future and that future lies principally, but not totally, in making constructive use of its past-its historical heritage. A comprehensive community led Borough-wide Heritage Service is essential for this contribution to Berwick's regeneration.

Bernard Shaw. Chair BBLSP Culture and Heritage Sector Board.

ASPECTS OF BERWICK'S CULTURAL HISTORY

SHELDON SLAUGHTERED

One of the new ways of access to local history is through the online digitalisation of printed works. I have already recounted some of my findings from such sources in previous issues of the *Newsletter*, and recently I discovered the **Internet Library of Early Journals** which has, amongst others, full text versions of the 19th-century *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and *Notes and Queries*. *Notes and Queries* has thrown up fascinating details of two lost 19th century Berwick playwrights which I shall be following up, while *Blackwood's* is revealed as containing a forthright review of *The Minstrelsy of the English Border* compiled by Berwick's own hack playwright and thespian Frederick Sheldon. Published by Longmans in London in 1847, Sheldon's book attempts to do for English ballads what Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border* (1802/3) did for Scots ballads. Sheldon promised great discoveries, noting in the preface that despite Sir Walter's diligence ballads did escape his notice and now may be found "in the recollection of many a sun-browned shepherd, or the weather-beaten brains of ancient hinds, or eldern women; or the well thumbbed and nearly illegible leaves of some old book or pamphlet of songs, snugly resting on the pot head". As Scott before him, Sheldon reworked some of the original material to fit in with the literary taste of the time and, like Scott, wrote a number of original pieces. Unfortunately Sheldon was not quite as good a poet as Scott and the anonymous *Blackwood's* reviewer was quick to point this out, quoting Sheldon's ballad of *Seton's Sons*:-

"Seton he gaspiti and he girded,
And shewed his teeth fae whyte,
His e'en were glaikit like a man's
That's strycken wi' affryghte.

Quo he 'Lord Percy, dinna thynk
I speak you lugs to blow,
But let him spare my twa brave sonnes
And at his feet I'll fa'."

Blackwood's asks "admirers of the ancient ballad – what do you say to that? There is the fine old Scots dialect in all its purity with a vengeance! In what part of the island such a jargon is spoken, we are fortunately at present unaware". It was, apparently, neither old nor current in the slums of Glasgow, in fact "we protest that we never met with any thing so cacophonous as this. It is impossible, however, to deny Mrs Sheldon the merit of pure originality". This, the reviewer said, was typical, and he dismissed the other 12 poems by Sheldon with the line "we presume that few will thirst for another draught from this pitcherful of the Border Helicon". The reviewer then moves on to the remodelled poems. Sheldon's version of Halidon Hill "dates back to the respectable antiquity of 1827" and has "magnificent stanzas" such as:-
 "Thou art a bragging piece of clay,
 Sae fyrstwife prove thy threat
 Loud geckit Trummall as he cried
 I'll mak' thee haggish meat"

Says *Blackwood's* "Yes, reader – you may well stare! – but such is absolutely the rubbish which has been shot from the press". He has a go at another poem and concludes "the other remodelments are trash". Finally the reviewer braces himself to consider the 16 'authentic ballads', noting that "the man who can bestow upon us at the present time 16 authentic and hitherto unknown ballads is indeed a public benefactor!" Of course it does not quite work out like that. Of Sheldon's version of the *Laidley Worm*, written by the Rev Lambe in the 18th. Century, he says "we are coolly asked to believe this stuff was written in the 14th. Century" and "intrinsicly it is so bad, that Mr Sheldon himself might have written it in a moment of extraordinary inspiration". Of *The Outlandish Knight* he says Sheldon's "belief in the ignorance and gullibility of the public must indeed be unbounded, if he expected to pass off without discovery a vamped version of *May Collean*...and seldom, indeed, have we met with a case of more palpable cribbage". He proves the point by printing the two side by side. Sheldon's main crime is, the reviewer asserts, ignorance of other ballad editions. "Notwithstanding the glibness of his preface, and the scraps of antique information he is constantly parading, Mr Sheldon absolutely knows less about ballad poetry than any writer who has yet approached the subject". And so it goes on. The version of *Johnny Faa* "is certainly the worst that we have seen" and Sheldon's additions are "utterly loathsome and vulgar" and "really we do not think that we ever read anything in print so intensely abominable as this". Finally the reviewer has to conclude "we have no intention of wading through much more of Sheldon's lucubrations – nor is it necessary, as, after a close examination, we cannot discover one single ancient ballad which is new to us in the whole collection". So is Sheldon's work as worthless as the outraged *Blackwood's* reviewer asserts? At the time one review did call the book "a valuable contribution to our stock of ballad literature" but this was a rare opinion. In January 1851 in *Notes and Queries* Dr.E.F.Rimbault raises most of the same issues that *Blackwood's* had picked up, noting that though Sheldon speaks of Ritson and Percy "as if he were acquainted with their work, it is very evident that he had not looked into their content". Rimbault agrees that most of the stuff Sheldon prints are versions of already well known ballads, and a correspondent to *Notes and Queries*, one 'Emun', writes in March 1851: "I was exceedingly glad to see Mr Sheldon's "valuable contribution" in the hands of Dr Rimbault and thought the treatment it received no better than it deserved". So thumbs down for Sheldon from the Victorian reviewers, but in their condemnation is the confirmation that *The Minstrelsy* has a great interest that they could not see. Again and again both reviewers say the ballads are terrible because they are not the pure originals from ancient manuscripts but versions Sheldon gathered from actual singers. Sheldon's *The Laird of Roslin's Daughter* is dismissed by Rimbault as a "wretched version of *Captain Wedderburn's courtship*", but it was, Sheldon noted, related to him by a "lady of Berwick-upon-Tweed who used to sing it in her childhood....she never remembers having seen it in print and that she learnt it from her nurse". That this was a shortened version of a more famous ballad that often appeared in print, is now not the point; what Sheldon has preserved is rare evidence of how a ballad is modified and transmitted by oral tradition. Likewise what so

upset the Blackwood's man about Sheldon's version of *Johnny Faa* was the idea "of the beautiful Lady Cassilis who eloped with a belted knight being reduced to the level of a hedge-trouper and interchanging caresses with a caird!" But this was transcribed by Sheldon from repeated singings by Willie Faa of Kirk Yetholm, a descendant of the subject of the ballad. Crude it may have been, but authentic to the oral tradition it certainly was. Other ballads that particularly outraged Blackwood's are especially fascinating today. Sheldon's version of *John le Sprigge* is described by *Blackwood's* as "unmitigated trash" and "it is rather too much that ditties still redolent of ardent spirits, and distinctly traceable in their authorship to a drunken horse-couper in Hawick, should be presented as genuine Border ballads". But this today is fascinating, as is *Loudon's Jock's Courtship* which Sheldon got from Sandy Pringle, an old drover in Kelso, who the Blackwood's man also apparently knew and condemned as "the beast who composed this was...acquainted with every nauseous close in the old town of Edinburgh and frequently found at full length upon the bridge in a state of brutal intoxication". What better man to recount a tale of sex and violence amid the low lifers of the Borders? Half-way through the violent Jock is in bed with a "bonnie girl" he has picked up on the high brig in Edinburgh, the town guard come calling to catch out fornicators:-

"'What the deil sall we do now?' quo Jock in a hezzy,
'They'll hae us to the Tollbooth for houghing our lane'
'Hoot Billie, not sae', replyit the wanton,
'Just swear yere my gudeman, and swith they are gane'"

And so Jock claims to be her husband, the guard leaves and in the morning she keeps him to his swearing before witnesses that he was her husband. He tries to get out of it, but

"Till at last he took hame the braw lass he had bedded,
Quo he 'I may well tak the use o'mine ain'
And mony braw fellows and winsome young lasses,
Begot from this marriage in the countra' remain"

Blackwood's man is forced to admit that "no doubt the ditty is graphic in its way", but if a medieval minstrel had come out with it he would have been "cheaply let off with a month's solitary imprisonment on a diet of bread and water". The reviewers had a pre-conceived notion that only highly polished ballads from literary sources were valid as 'authentic'. Sheldon shared in this belief but, through ignorance of the published material, thought his singers were giving him the unvarnished ancient originals. Ironically his very ignorance makes his work now all the more valuable, as what he has preserved (give or take his own 'improvements') is something of the authentic voice of an oral tradition as it existed in the rural borders of the 1840s - probably a lot more gutsy and 'authentic' than all the misty medievalist versions read out in the literary salons frequented by contributors to *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* and *Notes and Queries*.

Chris Green

Sources

Internet Library of Early Journals is at www.bodley.ox.ac.uk/ilej; Frederick Sheldon's *The Minstrelsy of the English Border* (1847) is in the library of the Berwickshire Naturalists Club and can be consulted by request in Berwick Record Office.

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

March 27th 1852

TWEED VIADUCT

EXTENSIVE SALE OF WOOD, RAILWAY PLANT AND MATERIALS.

These will be sold by Public Auction at TWEEDMOUTH on THURSDAY 1st of APRIL next, and the following day or days as may be required. The WHOLE of the Remainder of the PLANT used in construction of this Bridge, and Adjacent works, including Temporary Rails and Sleepers, Waggon, Bogies, Travelling Job Cranes, Benches, Malleable and Cast Iron Pumps, Chains, Carts and Gears, Steam Engines, Saw Mill, Mortar Mill, Hydraulic Presses and Engine Waggon; Together with 5,000 cubic feet of Memel Timber, upwards of 10,000 cubic feet of Elm, and a large quantity of Ashler Stone, Cement, Grease, etc, and several valuable Draught Horses.

The Sale will commence each day at 11 o'clock forenoon precisely. Refreshments on the Ground. Catalogues may be obtained from Mr McKay, Contractor, Mr Thos. PROSSER, Central Station, Newcastle, MR JOHN EMBLETON, Broomhouse, the Auctioneer; or from G. MARSHALL, Solicitor, Berwick upon Tweed.

Berwick 10th March 1852

November 12th 1853

TILE WORKS TO LET

To be LET and may be entered into immediately. THOSE TILE WORKS at MOUNT HOOLEY in the parish of Kyloe, County of Northumberland. The CLAY is found to be of the very best description for the manufacture of Draining Pipes of any size. Considerable quantities of these pipes are likely to be required for the Drainage of Land at Haggerston Estate. Proposals in writing will be recede by Mr Thomas Main at Haggerston Mead up till the 19th inst.

Haggerston Nov 5th 1853

December 3rd 1853

OVERCOATS ! Ditto READY MADE of FIRST CLASS MATERIAL and WORKMANSHIP

Blue Pilot Top Coats	16s – 30s	Cloth & Venetian Paletot Overcoats from 25s
Blue Beaver Top Coats	25s – 40s	Black & Blue frieze overcoats From 21s
Brown & Black Top Coats	20s – 40s	Boys' and Childrens' Top Coats

Drab Pilot & Kersey Top Coats 21s – 63s
Black, Brown & Blue Witney from 20s
Mixed Witney Top Coats 18s – 35s
Melton Cloth Top Coats all from 25s
Colours

Reversible Windproof coats
every quality and colour
Plain Alpaca and Cambric Coats
Oilskin Coats & Leggings

THOMAS HUBBOCK & CO. CLOTHIERS & HAT MANUFACTURERS, HIGH STREET,
BERWICK.

Nov. 29th 1853

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

The Next Newsletter you receive will be our **50th Edition** so with your help we could make it the best one yet! It will certainly be different as it is going to shrink to a less bulky booklet which we hope will reduce postage costs!

Any **interesting stories, items, events, letters or queries** for the newsletter will be most appreciated. You may give them to Linda or send them by E-mail to lb@berwick-upon-tweed.gov.uk or by post c/o. Records Office, Wallace Green, Berwick upon Tweed, TD15 1ED. My new E-mail address is ygallagher@tiscali.co.uk

Yvonne Gallagher
Hon. Editor