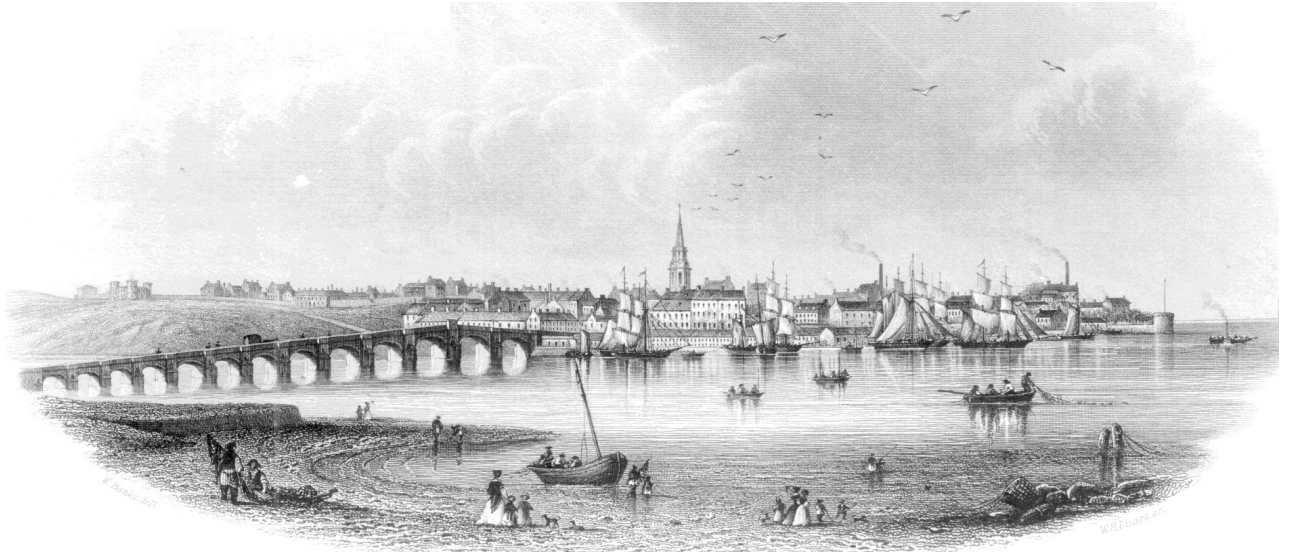


# Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



*NUMBER 53 – February 2007*

## **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2007

Friends AGM in the Guildhall, Berwick at 7pm. Followed by a talk by Chris Burgess, County Archaeologist on Berwick's Prospects for World Heritage Status and Archaeology in the Town- All Welcome.

## **OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES**

## AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Ayton Bowling Clubhouse.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Tues. 27 <sup>th</sup> February	Swords, Loaves and Fishes – A History of Dunbar: Roy Pugh
Tues. 27 <sup>th</sup> March	Working the Land, Harvesting the Forest: Walter Elliot
Tues. 24 <sup>th</sup> April	Visit to Paxton House

## BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wed. 28 <sup>th</sup> February	Dissolution of the Monasteries: Mr.P.Rowett
Wed. 28 <sup>th</sup> March	Fortification of Northumbria: Mr.A.Fendley
Wed. 25 <sup>th</sup> April	History of Berwick Newspapers: Mr.T.Langmack
Wed. 23 <sup>rd</sup> May	Hidden Berwick: Mr.J.Walker
Wed. 27 <sup>th</sup> June	Evening visit to Hulne Abbey: Mr T. Braidford
Wed. 25 <sup>th</sup> July	Evening walk around Alnwick: Mr.A.Ions

## BERWICK – UPON – TWEED HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: The Parish Centre, The Parade Berwick.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wed. 21 <sup>st</sup> February	Snippets from the Archives: Linda Bankier
Wed. 21 <sup>st</sup> March	The Culley Brothers, Agricultural Improvers: Dr Anne Orde
Wed. 18 <sup>th</sup> April	Annual General Meeting, followed by Berwick People and Berwick Stories: Chris Green

### **BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY**

**Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick upon Tweed.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Mon. 5 <sup>th</sup> February	Member's Night: Short talks on Archaeology in Tuscany, the Orkneys; Geophysics for the Bondington Project "Julius Caesar": Jeremy Patterson
Mon. 5 <sup>th</sup> March	
Mon. 2 <sup>nd</sup> April	A.G.M: Lecture to be announced

### **BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: Corn Exchange Melrose**

**Time: 2.30pm**

Sun. 25 <sup>th</sup> February 2007	History of Cavers Church: Jean Muir
Sun. 18 <sup>th</sup> March	The New Hawick Archive: Ian Brown
Sun. 29 <sup>th</sup> April	A Spot Supremely Blessed History of Langholm and Area: Billy Young

## COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Thurs. 1 <sup>st</sup> February	History of Coldstream Burns Club: Mr John Elloitt
Thurs. 1 <sup>st</sup> March	Borders Bits and Pieces: Mr Ian W Landles
Thurs. 5 <sup>th</sup> April	Mellerstain: Mrs Margaret Jeary
Thurs. 3 <sup>rd</sup> May	New Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border: Mr J Walter Elliot

## DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wed. 28 <sup>th</sup> February	Sir Walter Scott: Roderick Scott
Wed. 28 <sup>th</sup> March	The Bondington Project: Professor Alan Brian Chapel
Wed. 25 <sup>th</sup> April	Summer Outing

## GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

**Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wed. 14 <sup>th</sup> February	Annual Dinner
Wed. 14 <sup>th</sup> March	Lord Cochrane: Mr R W C Wheatley

Wed. 11<sup>th</sup> April

AGM and Members' Night

**NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

**Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland**

**Time: 7.30 p.m.**

Wed. 28<sup>th</sup> February

To be decided

Wed. 28<sup>th</sup> March

Subject to be announced: C Baker  
Cresswell

Wed. 25<sup>th</sup> April

Local Archaeology: Sara Rushton

Wed. 23<sup>rd</sup> May

Very Local Railway: Roger Jeremy

Wed. 27<sup>th</sup> June

Outing

**NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY**  
**NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH**

**Venue: Bell View Resource Centre, 33 West Street, Belford**

**Time: 10.00am**

Sat. 20<sup>th</sup> January 2007

Member's Open Forum

Sat. 17<sup>th</sup> March

Dating Old Photographs: Gordon Smith

Sat. 21<sup>st</sup> April

Geordies at Trafalgar: Tony Brown

Sat. 19<sup>th</sup> May

Member's Workshop ( bring along your  
Family Trees, record-keeping, etc)

Sat. 16<sup>th</sup> June

Mary Anne Cotton: Stephanie Yearnshire

A.G.M.

## ARCHIVE NEWS

I know it is a bit belated but Happy New Year. It looks as if this year is going to fly by as quickly as the last one.

As ever, the Record Office has been busy doing various things outside its “public days” with people in the Community. During the summer, I helped some members of the ATC who were working on a project for the West End Residents’ Association. The Cadets were looking at transport in the area and as part of their project, they spent an evening in the Record Office looking at various archives about Berwick and Tweedmouth. We had a great evening and it was interesting to see how much the teenagers enjoyed it. As it was so successful, we hope to repeat it again in the future.

I have also continued to work with schools. Just before Christmas, a class from Chirnside Primary school visited the Record Office to find out about Berwick as a Scottish burgh. We looked at some old maps and some of the Statutes of the Guild and I showed them the strongroom and talked about the importance of looking after archives – they always love my mobile shelving. This visit came about because of my talk to Rotary in October and so it shows the value of talking to groups about the work of the Office – you never know what it will lead to!

Berwick History Society and myself have been involved in various projects over the past year and at the December meeting, Brian Chappell and I talked about the Bondington Project and the Facades of the Fifties.

On the Outreach front, I have also started to do some work with the Berwick U3A. Some of their members are interested in Family History and so I am running some 5 week courses for them. We’ve had a couple of meetings and they have gone very well.

Obviously the day to day work of the Record Office continues – we are kept busy answering enquiries, doing research for people, collecting records and generally helping people to enjoy the history of the area. There is so much we could do but not enough time!

*Linda Bankier*

## **TECHNICAL EDUCATION IN THE BAMBURGH AND SEAHOUSES AREA**

In the past couple of months, on behalf of the Old Parish of Bamburgh Group, I have been looking through the Alnwick newspapers for the 1890s to see what information I could find on education in the Bamburgh and Seahouses area. I found out information about the local schools but I was also interested to see that the County Council had, at that time, a Technical Education Committee who were heavily promoting practical education for those who had already left school. The following are extracts from the Alnwick and County Gazette relating to their activities in the area :

8 Oct. 1892

### **BAMBURGH – TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

The local committee on Technical Education at Bamburgh have completed their arrangements for the ensuing winter. A night school was opened on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> October which promises to be well appreciated. Mr E. Brown, lecturer on poultry to the Northumberland County Council, has arranged to deliver a lecture on poultry keeping on Monday, Oct. 17<sup>th</sup>. A course of practical lessons on cookery is to be given in November to be followed by a series of demonstrations and lectures on laundry work, and those who have already obtained certificates from the St John Ambulance Association, in the first two courses, will enter on the third and final course of instruction. The lecture to be delivered by Mr Brown on Oct. 17<sup>th</sup> is of a most interesting and instructive character, and appears to all classes of the community. It is to be illustrated by the magic lantern, and on the morning following the lecture, Mr Brown has intimated that he will be glad to visit , as far as time will permit, any establishment of poultry keepers, whether farmers or cottagers, and advise on any points in connection with them.

29 Oct. 1892

### **NORTH SUNDERLAND – TECHNICAL EDUCATION**

During the present week a highly interesting and instructive course of lectures on the “habits of fish” have been given in the Drill Hall by Mr Gregg Wilson, under the auspices of the Northumberland County Council. The lectures were, of course, specially intended for fishermen, but so attractively has the lecturer handled the

subject and so effectively has it been illustrated by excellent lantern views, that a very large number of the non fishing population have been eager to attend to gain acquaintance with the ways and history of the denizens of the deep. The fishermen, who have given careful attention to the lectures will be sure to find practical benefit in their calling. This is the great aim of Technical Education.

12 Nov. 1892

#### BAMBURGH – TECHNICAL EDUCATION

The Technical Education Committee of the County Council of Northumberland have awarded two of the scholarships offered by them to girls for technical training in dairy work and cookery to Sarah Marshall and Sarah Margaret Sinton both pupils of Bamburgh Village School. There were 10 scholarships of the value of £10 each offered to girls in Northumberland this year. The Bamburgh Local Committee sent five candidates and are therefore highly gratified at the satisfactory result of the examination. The successful candidates will shortly proceed for a period of training to the Dairy Institution or the Migratory Dairy School.

26 Nov. 1892

#### BAMBURGH – COOKERY

During the past fortnight a most excellent course of lessons in practical cookery, has been given at the Bamburgh centre by Miss Raitt, cookery instructress to the Northumberland County Council. The lessons were highly appreciated, and were well attended. During her stay in Bamburgh, Miss Raitt kindly gave two demonstrations in advanced and plain cookery. Large audiences gathered on each occasion, and were highly pleased with the deft and neat manipulation of the lecturer. The thanks of the committee are due to the trustees of the late Lord Crewe for allowing them the use of the spacious room in which the lessons were given; to Miss Bowman, the matron at the castle, for kindly permitting them to occupy the room, though hereby inconveniencing herself., and to Mr J.Hutchinson of Bamburgh Hall for conveying goods to and from the station free of charge.

17 June 1893

#### NORTH SUNDERLAND – TECHNICAL EDUCATION



On Wednesday evening a meeting of the District Technical Education Committee was held in the Girl's School. Only three members were present, so that very little business could be done. It was, however decided to ask the organising secretary, Mr Charles Williams, to address a public meeting on some early date, with the object of awakening more general and practical interest in the County technical education scheme....As there does not appear to be any possibility of holding a night school during next winter, it was decided to try and arrange for courses of illustrated lectures in some of the following subjects : Practical cookery, laundry work, dressmaking, poultry keeping, carpentry, and the principles of agriculture. All the first three subjects will prove of undoubted practical utility to the "canny" young wives that are to be, while their swains should each be able to suit his own particular bent from the last three.

28 Oct. 1893

#### NORTH SUNDERLAND – LAUNDRY WORK

The attendance at the evening demonstrations in laundry work has considerably increased, the average reaching fully 50. The pupils finish their course on Friday next, when an examination will be held. What increase per cent in value should be quoted on the marriage market in favour of the ten boxom damsels who have qualified themselves in this essential art and branch of home-making? Would be benedicts, keep your eyes on them, they are warranted to do up "dickeys" to perfection.

10 March 1894

#### NORTH SUNDERLAND – TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Last Thursday evening, Professor Greig Wilson delivered a highly interesting and instructive lecture on "Crabs" at the Drill Hall. There was a fairly good gathering, the majority of the audience, as would naturally be expected, being fishermen. The lecturer treated his subject in an able manner, and illustrated his remarks by an excellent display of lantern views so that an intelligent interest was maintained throughout the whole course of the address. At the close, Mr James Ewing, an ardent

advocate of technical education, proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer. The motion was heartily responded to by the company.

*Linda Bankier*

## **FRIENDS AGM NOTICE**

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The Friends AGM will be held on **Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> March at 7pm** in the Guildhall, Berwick. You should find most of the AGM papers enclosed with this newsletter. After the AGM, there will be a talk by Chris Burgess, County Archaeologist on Berwick's Prospects for World Heritage Status and archaeology in the Town. Please come along - guests welcome too!

## **MUSEUM NEWS**

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

#### **THE LOST BERWICK PROVERB**

The recent 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Act of Union passed with very little notice in the media or indeed museums. In Berwick Museum we did put out the full text of the treaty in a small temporary 'In the News' display, which was mainly prompted by the arrival of a BBC Scotland TV crew. They asked me whether the Union had been a

'good thing' for Berwick. Despite some misgivings back in 1707, I think in the long run it was, as the expansion of a tax-free trading hinterland established Berwick as an important port. The fine Georgian buildings are evidence of the wealth that accumulated in the town throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century. But with every benefit there is often another side to the story, and eventually the expansion of the national intellectual perspective to include Scotland did rob Berwick of its very own proverb. It is, I think, well and truly lost, nobody I've mentioned it to has heard of it before. If any Friends have, prior to this I'd been interested to know. As stated on page 257 of John Ray's *A Compleat Collection of English Proverbs* (1737) it is as follows:-

"From Berwick to Dover, three hundred miles over"

He explains "that is, from one end of the land to another, parallel to that Scripture expression: From Dan to Beersheba". The Biblical phrase appears first in *Judges* (20.1) "Then all the children of Israel went out, and the congregation was gathered together as one man, from Dan even to Beersheba". The phrase turns up another eight times in the Old Testament in the books of *Samuel*, *Kings* and *Chronicles* and when the kingdom of Israel was divided the formula became "from Geba to Beersheba" or "from Beersheba to Mount Ephraim". Finally on the Israelites return from exile we have "from Beersheba to the valley of Hinnom". In all these cases the formula gives a quick phrase for the whole of the kingdom. The same is true for Berwick to Dover but there is the added "three hundred miles over" a useful mnemonic for the distance involved.

Interestingly for 18<sup>th</sup> century handbooks there is a difference of opinion as to from which places to take the measure of England. William Mather's *The Young Man's Companion* (1727), exactly contemporary with John Ray, has Berwick to Portsmouth, "about 320 miles" as a measure of length and from Dover to Lands-End, 270 miles, as to width. *The Athenian Oracle* (1728) has Berwick to Lands-End 386 miles, with Sandwich to Lands-End, 279. The mathematician Benjamin Martin in volumes published 1759-64 repeats these measurements adding Berwick to Sandwich at 280 miles, and *The Female Miscellany* (1770-71) copies him exactly. John Fransham's *The Entertaining Traveller* (1767) has Berwick to the Isle of Wight, "about 330 miles", and Sandwich to Lands-End, 270. Taylor's *General Genteel Preceptor* (1797) also measures from Berwick to the Isle of Wight but makes it 360 miles, with 305 miles from Dover to Lands-End. Robert Gentleman's *The Young Scholar's Pocket Companion* (1797) agrees on the length to the IoW but reduces the width to 285 miles. Frederick Barlow's *Complete English Dictionary* (1772-73) weighs in with 400

miles from Berwick to Chichester, with 370 miles from Dover to the highly pedantic Sennen, the parish that includes Lands-End.

Finally *The Complete Young Man's Companion* (1800) imagines a triangle from South Foreland to Berwick, 345 miles, from Berwick to Lands-End, 425 miles and from there back to South Foreland, 340. For comparison *The World Pictorial Gazetteer* (1934) has Berwick to the Lizard, 430 miles and 370 miles from Land's End to Lowestoft. A modern Ordnance Survey road atlas has a chart showing it is 409 miles from Berwick to Dover by road.

Of course for those who want to give an impression of the whole country 'From Berwick to Dover' will do and this we can trace up and down the 18<sup>th</sup> century in many variations. One of the more notable occurs in the justification for a sermon by one Michel Humfrey (1649/50-1722). In January 1703 he held forth about the shedding of the "innocent blood of King Charles the Martyr" despite the nationwide objections of puritans or as he put "the great and plausible cry, buccinated about by the Hireling-Amyntor, and by other both ancient and modern Oliverians..from Dan to Beersheba, from Berwick to Dover". The marvellous word 'buccinated' by the way is 'trumpeted' from the muscle used to play the instrument. One reference, later published in Berwick, is Matthew Prior's variation of the full proverb in 1725:-

"Quoth Matthew, I know, that from Berwick to Dover  
You have sold all our premises over and over.  
And now if your Buyers and Sellers agree,  
You may throw all our Acres into the South-Sea".

*Rhapsodies* (1766), an anonymous satire on politics has "Boroughs from Dover down to Berwick void/ Have ne-er by splendid Promises decoy'd." and Edward Thompson in 1769 reckons toasts to "Sweet Willy Shakespeare and gay David Garrick" should be drunk from "old Dublin to Warwick" and "from dull Dover to Berwick". As with the handbooks there are a number of alternative places cited apart from Dover to embrace the whole country. A book of advice to Army officers from 1787 (perhaps available at the Barracks?) advises NCOs to help young officers by saying to the men that the officer "is heir to a very large estate in some country between Cornwall and Berwick but you forget the name". The creditability this will give to the officer is worth the "white lie". A satirical poem about women in the form of a mock patent allows them to rage "From Oxford to London, from Worcester to Warwick/ From Deal to St Ives, and from Portland to Berwick"; while a poem against the game laws in 1797 decries the claiming of exclusive fishing rights in all the streams "Twixt Berwick and Penzance". The same places are cited in the often reprinted *Traveller's Song* "All

cities, and most market-towns have been in/ Twixt Berwick-upon-Tweed and Penzance". One rare reference, by James Kershaw, published in Manchester in 1781, calls for Methodism to spread throughout Scotland "From Orkney Isles to Berwick upon Tweed/ Send forth thy grace, and send it Lord with speed." Looking back earlier than the 18<sup>th</sup> century we begin to see the imprecise origins of the proverb, one of the *Pindaric Odes* of Cowley (1618-67) has a man riding "To Dover, Berwick, or the Cornish Mount" and in the tales of the heroes Guy of Warwick and Robin Hood we find them throughout the country. One traditional song about many heroes says:

From Dover to Berwick,  
And nations throughout,  
Brave Guy of Warwick,  
That champion stout:  
With his warlike behaviour,  
Thro' the world he did stray;  
To win his Phyllis' favour  
Love will found out the way.

In *Robin Hood's Garland*, a late version of the story which includes Henry VIII and Queen Catherine, we have Robin leaving Sherwood and going to Yorkshire then on to Newcastle and Berwick. "Now Robin Hood made not long stay/ To Carlisle town went he". Later in the poem Little John encounters a band of fake friars who say they have brethren in London, Coventry, "Berwick and Dover, and all the world over". This is close to 'From Berwick to Dover/ Three hundred miles over' but it is impossible at the moment to tell which comes first. One possibility is that the miles are not land miles, where the true distances are a lot over three hundred but are nautical miles (longer than land miles) which might mean the original proverb was a piece of sea captain's lore to remind them of the distance between the two ports. Certainly one of the earliest variations cites two ports, William Dunbar's account of how he wanted to be a Friar. He says he has made good cheer in "every lusty town and place/ of all England from Berwick to Calice,". The earliest literary reference to Berwick as a measure for England seems to be Chaucer writing of the Pardoner "But of his craft, from Berwik into Ware/ Ne was ther swich another pardoner". (*Canterbury Tales*, Prologue, 694-5)

But if the precise origin of the proverb is uncertain there is no doubt that writers followed Chaucer's lead making Berwick not just the ultimate stopping point of England but, by association as a metaphorical far point of civilization, beyond which there is horror and darkness. In Shakespeare's *Henry VI, Part 2* (1590/91), the

confidence-trickster Saunder Simpcox and his wife are condemned to be whipped through every market town in England till they reach Berwick “from whence they came”. Clearly for a 16<sup>th</sup> century London audience Berwickers are almost as bad as Scots. But at least Berwick’s remoteness did make it the worthy target of a quest. Ben Jonson’s *Epigram* 134 about notable journeys includes “he that backward went to Berwick, or which/ Did dance the famous Morris into Norwich”. The latter is a reference to Will Kemp’s famous dance-athon which really happened, so it may well be that there was someone who did walk to Berwick backwards for a bet. Jonson himself walked from London to Edinburgh and back in 1618, being more than a little irritated that he was upstaged by John Taylor, a humble Thames waterman and amateur poet who also set out to walk to Edinburgh. The two both passed through Berwick but ironically it is only the lesser-known poem of the journey, Taylor’s *Penniless Pilgrimage* that has survived.

These real journeys may live on in the works of other authors later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In a novel by Thomas Brown (1663-1704) one of the characters declares his love by saying his willing to “crawl upon all fours to Berwick upon Tweed, or travel to Rome and convert the Pope”. Instead his intended says as “you are none of the cleanliest Men in the World” perhaps you could just wash your hair and put on a clean shirt? In Colley Cibber’s play *The Rival Fools* (1709) a character very amused at a pedantic ritual exclaims “Well, now could I walk bare-foot to Berwick and back again, and laugh at this jest all the way without baiting.” Even long after the Act of Union getting to Berwick is still taken as a metaphor for making an effort as with Nathaniel Cotton’s *Visions in Verse* (1751):-

“The waking World has long agreed,  
That Bagshot’s not the Road to Tweed:  
And he who Berwick seeks thro’ Stains,  
Shall have his Labour for his Pains”.

And it was remote enough for the family of one Williamson, a saddler, who when scandal enveloped them in London fled to Berwick to live, they hoped, in obscurity. Of course for southerners it was Scotland that was mostly the problem. The anonymous *Adventures of an Author* (1767) refers to “the fatal northern side of the Tweed” and that “the reputation of an author in these critical days, so greatly depend upon his having been lucky enough to be brought forth on this side of Berwick”. Berwick was thus an intermediate zone, which is made explicit in John Moore’s novel *Mordaunt* (1800), the title character being “one of the most accomplished men in England, to which you said that she might have added Scotland, (as for Berwick-

upon-Tweed I leave it out of the argument as a neutral)". Even so the (southern) notion that Berwick is a remote outpost almost beyond civilisation dies hard. What might be the last recorded instance may well be a TV interview with Anthony Burgess (1917-93) when he was discussing the controversy around his novel of gang violence *A Clockwork Orange* (1962). He said that press coverage of violent incidents supposedly copying his novel had reached such a point that, I quote from memory, "If a nun gets raped in Berwick-upon-Tweed – it's my fault". So where did the Berwick Proverb go? Just like those in the Bible were adapted to changing circumstances so the expression of distance has changed. It is only partly due to the opening up of Scotland after the Union that eroded the Berwick proverb, the fatal blow was given by that great North Briton Sir Walter Scott when he coined the words 'From John O'Groat's house to the Land's End'.

*Chris Green*

## **CHARLES DICKENS AND THE CORN EXCHANGE**

On 9 November 1861 an advertisement appeared on the front page of the Berwick Advertiser. It said, 'For One Night Only. Mr Charles Dickens will read at the Corn Exchange, Berwick on Monday evening, November 25, at 8 o'clock his Christmas Carol and The trial from Pickwick. The time occupied by his reading will be two hours and twenty minutes. Reserved seats, 4 shillings; area, two shillings, back seats, one shilling. Tickets to be had of Mr Henderson, bookseller, High Street and Western Lane, Berwick, where a plan of the stalls may be seen.'

We know that Charles Dickens stayed at the King's Arms Hotel in Hide Hill in 1858 and again in 1861 and that he gave a reading there in 1861, but not in the Corn Exchange as advertised. So what happened?

The advertisement in the Berwick Advertiser was repeated on 16 and 23 November indicating that everything was all right.

Then on 30 November, five days after the reading, a review of the event was published in the Berwick Advertiser. In the article the following sentence appears: 'The readings took place in the King's Arms Assembly room and not in the Corn Exchange as had been advertised, the reason for this change being the inconvenient echo for which the Corn Exchange is so noted, and which would have made the

evening's entertainment, if given in the latter place, a comparative blank to many of the audience.'

This seems to be the first time 'the inconvenient echo, for which the Corn Exchange is so noted' is mentioned, and nothing appears to have been said about it in connection with concerts and other activities having been held at the building. We even know that in June 1858 Mr R. Ross's instrumental band of musicians had tested the effect of the sound in the hall, 'and the result was in every respect highly gratifying.' (Berwick Advertiser, June 5, Local News, p.3), it goes on 'Mr Ross in being asked his opinion, stated that the room for the purpose of a concert appeared to him faultless.'

So why did Dickens not give his reading in the new Corn Exchange, which was larger, newer and seemed to have served the audiences well on many other occasions ?

Thirteen years after Dickens refused to give his readings in the Corn Exchange an article appeared in the Berwick Advertiser, February 3, 1874 (Local News, p.3, column 4) prompted by the publication of the third volume of Forster's *Life of Dickens*. The article is called 'Dickens' Opinion of the Corn Exchange, and in it is quoted what Dickens wrote one hour before he was to appear at the Corn Exchange: 'As odd and out-of-the-way place to be at, it appears to me, as ever was seen, and such a ridiculous room designed for me to read in! An immense Corn Exchange, made of glass and iron, round, dome-topped, lofty, utterly absurd for any such purpose, and full of thundering echoes, with a little lofty crow's-nest of a stone gallery, breast-high deep in the wall into which it was designed to put me. I instantly struck of course, and said I would either read in a room attached to this house (a very snug one, capable of holding 500 people), or not at all. Terrified local agents glowered and fell prostrate, and my men took the primitive accommodation in hand. Ever since, I am alarmed to add, the people (who besought to honour of the visit) have been coming in numbers quite irreconcilable with the appearance of the plea, and what is to be the end I do not know.'

We, of course know, but what we do not know is whether Dickens' refusal to perform at the Corn Exchange was a case of a grumpy old man who did not want to go outside and walk a hundred yards or so down the road from his comfortable hotel because of bad weather, or a genuine concern for his audience, notwithstanding Mr Ross's praise of the Corn Exchange as being near perfect as regards performing music.



If anybody reading this has ever been to an event at the Corn Exchange and can remember anything about the acoustics they might be able to answer the question.

*Lars Rose*

## **LOWRY AND BERWICK**

### **BERWICK AND ITS LOWRY CONNECTION**

Somewhere in her mid twenty's and in the early 1960's, little did Marjorie Ellison think that when she took on a temporary job as a receptionist at the Castle Hotel in Castlegate, Berwick that she was embarking on a career that would last her the rest of her working life and take her to most countries in the world. From the humble beginnings of the Castle Hotel Marjorie went to sea on cruise liners and for a very long time was purser on a number of liners owned by P & O.

Marjorie, who is the daughter of the late Sgt Wilf and Mabel Ellison lived across the road from the Castle Hotel and six months work in between jobs was just what she wanted. She was however disappointed when she was given the afternoon shifts to work. Being young she had her eyes on all the young farmers who came to the hotel in the evening, but this was not to be. Instead her afternoons consisted of being chatted up by an elderly gentleman who insisted on doing sketches of her on Castle Hotel note paper. Unfortunately most of the sketches which she was not impressed with, went in the bin. The elderly gentleman turned out to be no other than L.S. Lowry. She did keep three drawings, but over the course of time, they too were lost, probably accidentally thrown out.

This of course has been a thorn in Marjorie's side for a long time now, only to be made worse by an earlier receptionist at the Castle, who had been given the same treatment by Mr Lowry selling her drawing sometime ago for the princely sum of £8000.00

As well as doing portraits of Marjorie, the drawings which numbered about twenty included sketches of the New Road and Berwick Railway Station

However there has been a silver lining at the end of the road, so to speak. Marjorie is a fan of Rolf Harris, who is following the Lowry Trail and he has interviewed her and

she is appearing on Rolf's programme which is due to be screened sometime at the end of February/ beginning of March. There was some coverage of his visit to Berwick in the Advertiser and I am sure that the programme will be well advertised.

As a matter of interest, Marjorie's father, Wilf was a Police Sergeant at Berwick for a number of years. One of his many claims to fame was that he shot out the tyres of some armed robbers escaping from justice in the 1950's. That could be another story.

*Keith Wills*

## **RAILWAY CONVICTIONS**

Whilst going through the convictions for Berwick Quarter and Petty Sessions Court, Irene Budworth, one of the Archive volunteers found the following two relating to the evasion of fares – these must be our earliest references to “fare dodging” in this area

### **Conviction of James Winterem**

County of the Borough and

Town of Berwick Upon Tweed Council } ***Be it remembered***

————— that on the tenth day of  
September in the year of Our Lord One Thousand eight hundred and forty six at the parish of Berwick upon Tweed in the County of Berwick and Town aforesaid **James Winterem** is convicted before me Thomas Hogarth Esquire Mayor one of her Majesty's Justices of the peace for the County of the Borough and Town aforesaid. For that he the said James Winterem on the ninth day of September instant at the Parish of Berwick Upon Tweed aforesaid did ride on a carriage belonging to the North British Railway Company without having previously paid the fare with intent to defray the said Company contrary to the “ North British Railway” Act. And I the said Justice adjudge the said James Winterem for his said offence to forfeit and pay the sum of One Shilling together with the sum of five shillings for costs to be paid according to the statute in that case made and provided.

Given under my hand and seal the day and year first above written.H.

***T. Hogarth***  
***Mayor***

## Conviction of Charles Robertson

County of the Borough and

Town of Berwick Upon Tweed Council } ***Be it remembered***

\_\_\_\_\_ that on the fourth day of May in the year of Our Lord One Thousand eight hundred and forty seven at the Parish of Berwick Upon Tweed in the County of the Borough and Town aforesaid ***Charles Robertson*** is convicted before me Henry George Charles Clarke Esquire one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the County of the Borough and Town aforesaid. For that he the said Charles Robertson on the third day of May instant having paid his fare as a passenger by the North British Railway for a certain distance to wit from Dunbar to Cockburnspath did knowingly and wilfully proceed in a carriage of the said Company beyond the said distance without previously paying the additional fare for the additional distance and with intent to avoid payment thereof contrary to "The North British Railway Act". And I do hereby declare and adjudge that the said Charles Robertson hath forfeited for the said offence the sum of two shillings and sixpence. To be distributed as by the said Act is directed and also the sum of eight shillings for costs.

Given under my hand and seal the day and year first above written. H.

***H.G.C. Clarke***

*Irene Budworth*

## **SNIPPETS FROM THE EDINBURGH AND NEWCASTLE NEWSPAPERS**

During a trip to the British Library Newspaper Library at Colindale in London, I found the following snippets from 18<sup>th</sup> century newspapers which you may find interesting :

**1699**

His grace the Duke of Hamilton having been abroad these several years, and lately married in England to the Heiress of the Lord Gerad of Bromly, in his coming home with his Duchess, was honourably entertained at Berwick, being Complemented by the Governour and saluted by discharge by Cannon at his coming in and going out; and their Graces were met and Complemented at the Border by about 400 Noblemen

and gentlemen, and by the Nobility and Gentry of every place as they came along the Road hither from Berwick, and by the Magistrates of this City ( Edinburgh) ... accompanied with a vast many noblemen and gentlemen on horseback, besides a train of coaches.

### **The Scots Courant**

**June 29<sup>th</sup> 1711**

Yesterday the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards under command o the Duke of Northumberland marched through the City (London) to Hide Park ..viewed by Her Majesty-They were all newly cloth'd and made a very handsome appearance.

**Sept 25<sup>th</sup> 1711**

Lost of the 24<sup>th</sup> inst between Bockenfield and Cawsey-park-Bridge on the road from Felton to Morpeth, in the County of Northumberland, a Wallet, in which was 20L in a leather-bag, Six pound wrapped in Paper, and For pound in another Paper, with some Parcels: They that have found it are desired to give Notice to Mr John Robson, Currier, in the Groat-Market in Newcastle upon Tine, or to Mr Ralph Pye in Morpeth, or to John Fincle carrier, in Alnwick, and they shall have two Guineas reward.

**September 29<sup>th</sup> 1711**

Shields. Our Coast Northward, between this place and Scotland, is so full of Privateers, that Ships dare not stir out without Convoy.

### **Newcastle Courant**

**Dec 29 1711**

London. On Saturday the 22d Instant, came on the Election of a Member of parliament for the Town of Berwick upon Tweed, the Candidates were Richard Hempden, Esq; and William Ord, Esqr; and the Poll stood thus, Mr Hempdon 130, Mr Ord 77.

**April 30<sup>th</sup> 1712**

A plate of Ten Pound Price is to be Runn for on Hoblerlaw edge, near Alnwick in the County of Northumberland, ( the usual Course) by any Horse Gelding or Mare, of Thirty Pound Price on Tuesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> Day of June 1712. Every Horse , Gelding or Mare that is Runn for the same must be entred with Mr Richard Grieve, one of the Chamberlaines of Alnwick, 20 days, and kept within the burough of Alnwick 14 Days before the Course, both Inclusive, and Pay down upon the Entry Forty Shillings.

### **Monday May 24<sup>th</sup>-Tuesday May 25<sup>th</sup> 1725**

On Tuesday the 15 June will be run for on the usual course on Berwick Bounds, 3 heats.4 miles to a heat, a purse of 15 guineas by any horse, mare, or gelding, which has not won above the value of £20 in money or plate, each horse to carry 10 stone including bridle and saddle. The horse to be shown and entered at Mr Geo Temple's in Berwick on Sat 12<sup>th</sup> June before 6 o'clock in the evening and to be kept in Town from Thursday before the race. Each horse to pay 1 guinea for entrance. Four horse to run or no Course.

On Wednesday June 16<sup>th</sup> will be run for a plate of 10g value by Galloways, 14 hands high. 3 heats carrying 10 stone inc bridle and saddle, each horse etc to make the usual allowances as in all Galloway plates and paying ½ guinea entrance...kept in town at Richard Ord's in Berwick...

Thursday June 17 for a Punch Bowl given by the Corporation, full value 20 guineas.. a horse never won above £30 in money or plate – usual course Berwick Bounds.3 heats/ 4 miles to a heat.10 stone inc B&S, to be entered at Town Clerk's Office on Monday 14 June before 6(pm)

To be kept in town from Thursday. 1 guinea entrance. 4 horses to enter or no course.

### **November 23-30 1725**

These are to certify all whom it may concern, that it is informed that the Pacquet which went from this place [Edinburgh] Saturday night last, being the 20<sup>th</sup> inst, was lost between Berwick and Belford. A most diligent Search has been made but neither the Boy, the Horse, not the Pacquet have been yet heard of. The Boy after passing Goswick having a part of the sands to ride which divide the Holy island from the Mainland, it is supposed he has missed his way, and rode toward the sea, where he and his Horse have both perished.

**January 14 1731**

Account from Berwick of an escape and retaking of that famous rogue Josuah Deans, who twice broken out of the Cannongate. (Someone) had conveyed to him a hand vice wrapped in a blanket. (Hearing of this) the room was searched but nothing found save the irons on his legs ought to have been better rivetted (next day they) found he had escaped. And a search was made in every the least suspected place in town. At 4pm the servant of the Mayor (got) intelligence of him 5 miles out of town. At 4pm the 8 miles and he is now again in Berwick gaol.

*Kath Tansley*

## **SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER**

*Over the years, Muriel Fraser has provided us with a wonderful and amusing collection of snippets from the Berwick Advertiser which she has found whilst collating information about ships sailings to and from Berwick. Unfortunately Muriel is no longer able to do this for us any more because of her health and so I'm sure we would all like to thank her for her contribution. Carole Pringle, the Archives Assistant has agreed to take it over so that it can still be a regular feature.*

SATURDAY JANUARY 4, 1862

GLENDAL PATENT STARCH. USED IN THE ROYAL LAUNDRY

THE LADIES are respectfully informed that this starch is EXCLUSIVELY USED IN THE ROYAL LAUNDRY, and her Majesty's Laundress says, that although she has tried Wheaten, Rice, and other Powder Starches, she has found none of them equal to the GLENFIELD, which is the finest starch she ever used. When you ask for

GLENFIELD PATENT STARCH, see that you get it, as inferior kinds are often substituted.

WOTHERSPOON & CO., GLASGOW and LONDON

SATURDAY JANUARY 11, 1862

EXTRAORDINARY SURGICAL OPERATION.

A paper was recently read by Mr Nunneley of Leeds, surgeon, before the Royal Medical and Chirurgical Society, London, on a remarkable case in which that a gentle man had successfully removed the entire tongue, for cancer of the organ, and restored the patient to comfort and apparent health. But what will, perhaps, still more surprise some people is that he can talk without even a stump or a bit of the root of the tongue. He can pronounce every letter of the alphabet, many of them perfectly (all the vowels), most of them distinctly. The three there is the most difficulty in are K, Q, and T, which are difficult and indistinct in the order they are named, K being much more than T. In conversation he can be readily understood if not hurried or excited.

*Leeds Intelligence.*

SATURDAY FEBRUARY 15, 1862

LARGE HALLIBUT

A splendid specimen of the above fish was exhibited in the shop of Ralph Holmes, fishmonger, Bridge Street, on Tuesday. It weighed 10½ stones; length, from snout to tail, 6 feet; and girth 6 feet 9 inches. It was caught at Holy Island on Monday by one of the boat's crews who fish for Mr Holmes.

*Carole Pringle*

Hopefully in the next newsletter, Chris and I will print a list of items that the Museum and Archives Service sell to the Public - time and space permitting.

*Linda Bankier*

