



Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 64—December 2009

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 5th March 2010

Friends AGM and Talk by Jim Walker - Berwick Through Time. 7pm start. Venue to be confirmed.

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th May 2010

Facades of The Fifties exhibition in the Guild Hall – details in the next newsletter

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Bowling Clubhouse.

Time:7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 26th January 2010
Tuesday 23rd February
Tuesday 30th March

A Berwickshire Boy : Bryan Webster
Ayton's Churches : Rev Norman Whyte
AGM followed by David of Ninewells,
Chirnside

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 9th December

Hidden Northumberland : Steve Newman
(In The Church Gallery)

Wednesday 27th January 2010

Wednesday 24th February

Berwick Churches : Bernard Shaw
Living with the Hill Forts of the National Park
: Chris Jones

Wednesday 24th March

Wednesday 28th April

Slavery in the North East : John Charlton
Stephenson & railways : Alan Fendley

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time:7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 9th December
Wednesday 20th January 2010

Wilson's Tales of The Borders : Phil Rowett
Prehistoric Archaeology of The Cheviots

Wednesday 17th February

and Milfield : Roger Miket
Berwick Workhouse Project : Linda Bankier
and team

Wednesday 17th March
Wednesday 14th April

The Battle of Flodden : Paul Thompson
AGM 7pm-7.30pm

followed by From Ditch to Bastion,
defending Berwick : Jim Herbert

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick upon Tweed.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 7th December
No Lectures in January 2010
Monday 1st February
Monday 1st March

Members Christmas Night

Wetland Archaeology : Kristian Pedersen
Homes for the Heroes : Jeremy Paterson

BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose

Time: 2.30pm

No Lectures in December
Sunday 28th February 2010

Church Buildings in Galashiels : Tom
Hogg

Sunday 25th April

Clay Family : Trevor Swan

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 10th December

Christmas Social in Eildon Centre
Coldstream

Thursday 14th January 2010

Lord Armstrong at Craigside : Mr Alan
Fendly. This is a joint meeting with
Cornhill W.I.at the Eildon Centre
Coldstream

Thursday 4th February
Thursday 4th March

Piper Laidlaw (VC) : Mr Kevin Laidlaw
AGM at 7pm prompt.
Followed by A Victorian Souvenir

Thursday 1st April

Industry with Coldstream connections :
Mrs Jane Bowen
Cholera and the struggle for clean water
in Berwick-upon-Tweed and
Northumberland: Mr R Hunter

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 27th January 2010

Gunsgreen House : Derek James

Wednesday 24th February

The Rough Wooing : Andrew Spratt

Wednesday 31st March

Breach of Promise Cases : Norrie McLeish

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: The Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 9th December

Farming in Northumberland- A Local

Illustrated History : Roger Manning

Wednesday 13th January 2010

Title to be confirmed : Chris Burgess

(Northumberland County Archaeologist)

Wednesday 10th February

Lives of Kirk Yetholm Gypsies (talk and

DVD) : Tom Tokely

Saturday 20th February

Rock Art Expedition (Roughing Linn,

Goatscrag and Broomridge) led by Kevin

Malloy

Wednesday 10th March

Old Breweries of North Northumberland :

Peter Maule

Wednesday 14th April

Recent Mesolithic & Neolithic Research

in North Northumberland : Clive

Waddington.

Followed by AGM

NORHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time : 7.30 pm

Monday 14th December

A Social Night with a Local Flavour

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 27th January 2010

Rev Dave Herbert plus Party Night

Wednesday 24th February

The Village Farm, past and present : Scott
Smith

Wednesday 24th March

The Other Geordies : Early Settlement of

Wednesday 28th April

Australia: Alan Fendley

Northwards from Craster-archaeology of the

North Northumberland Coast : Harry

Beamish - Archaeologist for the National

Trust, Yorkshire and the North East

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

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

Time: 10.00am

Wednesday 12th December

Christmas Lunch

Saturday 16th January 2010

Members Forum

Saturday 20th February

John Alec and the Minister - language and
superstition in the North Northumberland

Saturday 20th March

Fishing Community: Katrina Porteous

Saturday 17th April

Collingwood's Northumbrians : Tony Barrow

Tracing your military ancestors from WW1

and WW2 : John Sadler

ARCHIVE NEWS

I'm not quite sure where the last couple of months have gone in the Archives. They have been extremely busy and I always think it will be quieter in the winter months!

As many of you are aware, the Record Office does a lot of work outside its normal public days and during the past few months, we have been doing the following :

Mid September is the time for the nationwide Heritage Open Doors and Berwick has taken part for many years. For the past two years, this weekend has coincided with the Berwick Food Festival which has meant that there has been lots going on in Berwick for everyone. This year was no exception and it involved the Record Office in several ways. As usual, I did my tours of the Old Gaol (Council Offices) on the Saturday morning which kept me talking non stop for the morning! They are very successful and attract a mixture of visitors and locals and also a variety of age groups ! However, in addition this year, I had been working closely with the Maltings Youth Theatre Group on their historical street theatre production as part of the Food Heritage Project. This was great fun and well worth doing. This year we had costumes specially made for the teenagers and they looked brilliant. They all had a great time and my daughter, Siobhan, carried on the family tradition of taking part – this year as Reverend Gilly's daughter! The Food Heritage Project will be completed at the end of January and the Record Office has still been helping a lot in the background – there is an educational side to the project and Derek and I are working with a teacher from Berwick, Holy Trinity to create a local educational resource based on food. The resource will be put on the Internet.

We have also continued working on the Stephenson 150 Project although the main events are over. As part of the project, I was very keen for us to record the memories of some of the railway men. At the beginning of December, we got some of them together for a morning and they talked about what they remembered. The recordings will be placed in the Archives and are an extremely valuable resource for the future. This project is coming near its end but it has very successful.

The project with Berwick Library on the Second World War is still ongoing but we will complete it at the end of January. In October, Diane Wright and I visited Hillside and Berwick Nursing Home and ran a reminiscence session using documents from the archives and artefacts from the Museum. We were both a bit nervous about doing this as we hadn't done it before but both sessions went really well. We had a wide variety of people from Land Girls to a Prisoner of War, a lady who had lived and

worked in London during the Blitz and various servicemen. We both learnt a lot from our time with them and we intend to go back and record some of them individually.

Berwick Operatic Society was formed in 1920 and they have a wonderful set of photographs and programmes for the shows they have performed. Over the past couple of months, I have helped them prepare an exhibition on the history of the Society which was shown at the Maltings at the end of October. It was very successful and as a result of it, they have deposited their records here in the Office. The programmes not only tell us who was involved in the productions but also what businesses were around at the time – a very valuable resource as there are very few trade directories post war.

The Record Office has continued to do a lot of education work over the past couple of months thanks to grants from the Museums Libraries and Archives Council (MLA). I did a bit of work last year with Early Years Units (for children aged 3 – 5) in the area and I have been given the chance to do some more. This term I have worked with Longridge Towers and St Cuthberts Roman Catholic School on the topic of families. The children looked at old photographs and became my family tree! I hope to continue doing work with them next term and bringing a class into the archives. Many people think this age group is too young for archives but they can get a lot out of looking at old photographs and talking about families. The National Council on Archives has started a nationwide Archives Pace Setter scheme to recognise innovation in the use of Archives. I applied on behalf of this project and it has been given the first award in the country which is a great achievement for a very small Record Office.

Obviously there have been lots of other things going on in the Archives but I think that is enough for now.

Carole and I thank you for all your support during the Year and wish you all a Merry Christmas and best wishes for 2010.

Linda Bankier

**WILLIAM STEPHENSON,
ENGINE DRIVER**

In Tweedmouth Parish Churchyard, there is a gravestone erected in memory of William Stephenson, engine driver which has come to people's attention because of the Stephenson 150 celebration. The inscription reads as follows :

Sacred to the memory of William Stephenson, engine driver who lost his life on the 2nd day of March 1853 on the Newcastle and Tynemouth Railway by his engine No. 184 running off the line of rails over the embankment at the West End of the Willington viaduct. Aged 32 years. He has left a widow and two children to lament his death. He opened the Newcastle and Berwick railway in July 1847 by taking the first train of passengers from Tweedmouth to Newcastle, he was respected by all his fellow workmen and always obliging to his master. Mary Ann Stephenson daughter of the above died Oct 27th 1853, aged 3 years.

He wasn't related to the Stephensons but it is interesting that he was the first engine driver to take passengers from Tweedmouth to Newcastle. His death was in very tragic circumstances and my volunteer, Kevin Graham, found the following article in the Berwick Advertiser about the accident :

Berwick Advertiser 5 March 1853

Fatal Railway Accident, and Narrow Escape of a Train – Great consternation was excited in Newcastle on Wednesday afternoon, by a report which became current shortly before five o'clock; that an entire train on the railway line between that town and Tynemouth had been precipitated over the lofty bridge at Willington; which must necessarily involve a fearful loss of life and amount of injury. In a short time the anxious suspense which had prevailed was removed by the intelligence that the catastrophe was far less serious; but at the same time it was found that one life had been lost, that two men had been injured, and that passengers, though they only suffered from the concussion, had a very narrow escape from being hurled, not indeed over the bridge above-mentioned, but down the high embankment at a little distance from it. It appears that the train which leaves Tynemouth at four o'clock for Newcastle, had come safely over Willington-bridge, and had passed the point near the cabin which stands by the side of the railway, when, from some cause as yet unknown, the engine got off the rails. From a subsequent careful inspection of the place we found that the first appearance of the engine having left the track was nearly opposite the cabin. It had then run on for forty or fifty yards, gradually

tending, while traversing the distance, towards the south side of the railway, till at length it went over and down the embankment, which is there of considerable height, dragging the tender and luggage van into the field below. As the engine, tender and van went over, the coupling chains fortunately broke, and the passenger carriages, instead of being drawn off after them, as might naturally have occurred, were left detached, The first carriage only being off the rails, and after running from 200 to 300 yards along the sleepers, which, on this line, are horizontal, they stopped. Meantime William Stephenson, the engine-driver, John Laverick, the stoker, and John Walton, the guard, were carried over into the field below. As soon as assistance could be procured, it was found that the poor fellow Stephenson was quite dead. The tender had fallen upon, and crushed him. One of his arms was cut off, and he was otherwise frightfully mutilated. Laverick was also severely crushed by the tender, and had two ribs broken. He has been removed to the infirmary, and is likely to recover. He can give no account of the accident. Walton, who was thrown to a considerable distance, was stunned, but is not much injured. On coming to himself he could reveal nothing of the affair, except that he had found himself suddenly going from his place. Mr R. H. Haggie was cut in the face, a lady was hurt in the mouth, and some others were slightly bruised and shaken. The deceased lived at Tweedmouth, and has left a wife and child. He had come from that place with the engine No 104, which usually runs on the trunk line of the York, Newcastle and Berwick Railway, and had been sent on the Tynemouth line in consequence of the usual engine not being ready. He had been on the line before, though usually not employed upon it. On Thursday, at one o'clock, S. Reed Esq., the coroner, went down to the place, and a jury having been empanelled, and the body identified, the inquest was adjourned for a week.

SPITTAL SCHOOL

1908-2008

As many of you will know, the Record Office helped Spittal School with its centenary celebrations which finally finished at the end of this year with the publication of the book on the history of the School. The book consists of extracts from the school log book, former pupils and teachers' personal memories and the Centenary year. It costs £4.99 and can be purchased from the Record Office – if you purchase it from here, we get the income !

**FREE FAMILY HISTORY COURSES
IN THE
BERWICK RECORD OFFICE**

The Record Office has been given some money by the Government's Transformation Fund to do some work on informal Adult Learning. As part of this, the Record Office is offering the following FREE courses and assistance from January to March :

FAMILY HISTORY FOR BEGINNERS COURSE – a 5 week course in the Record Office on Mondays, 10 – 12, starting **Monday 11th January**

FAMILY HISTORY AND THE INTERNET - a 5 week course in the Library on Tuesdays, 10 -12 starting **Tuesday 2nd March**.

READING OLD DOCUMENTS - a 3 hour workshop in the Record Office on learning how to read old documents from 10 – 1 on **Friday 22nd January**.

FAMILY HISTORY AND THE INTERNET – a 3 hour workshop in the Library on how to use the Internet for Family History from 9.30 to 12.30 on **Friday 5th February**.

GETTING STARTED IN FAMILY HISTORY - a 3 hour workshop in the Record Office on getting started in Family History from 9.30 to 12.30 on **Saturday 6th March**

READING OLD DOCUMENTS 2 – a 3 hour workshop in the Record Office on learning to read old documents from 10 – 1 on **Friday 19th March**

FAMILY HISTORY SURGERIES – the Record Office will be running a number of Family History Surgeries in the Record Office and at Berwick Library where you can book a half hour slot with the Archivist to discuss any Family History problems. Dates and times available from the Record Office

MENTOR POST – from now until the end of March, the Record Office has a **FAMILY HISTORY MENTOR** who can help you with research and guide you to resources when you are in the Record Office. This service is available on **Wednesdays and Thursdays**, 9.30 to 1.00 and 2.00 to 4.00. Wendy Scott is our mentor and is very knowledgeable about Family History and so please use this service while we can provide it. It's not only for those with North Northumberland ancestors and you don't need to make an appointment.

All these courses and services are **FREE** and so, please do make use of them. You need to book the Courses, Workshops and Surgeries in advance by telephoning (01289) 301865 or e-mailing lbankier@woodhorn.org.uk . If anyone wants any further information, just get in touch.

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

The museum at the Barracks has had a successful season, with visitor numbers very slightly up on last year – the busiest day was in September on the Sunday of the Food Festival weekend, when there were 309 visitors, though we had a few days in August when visitors exceeded the 200 mark.

The museum had 3 staff on secondment from Woodhorn – Lorna Winn, Laura Keating & Joe Bamborough. Elona Wells, who is a student from Newcastle University's Museum Studies course, also worked at Berwick in the early part of the season for 2 days a week as part of her work placement. All four played a major part in getting the exhibitions up and running, in addition to carrying out more mundane front of house duties. Elona has volunteered to help over the winter. Sue Handoll, a member of the Friends, volunteered for front of house duties most weeks, and Victoria Ross volunteered for cataloguing duties over the summer.

We had good news from the MLA, with a recommendation for an extension of the museum's provisional accredited status, to run for a further 12 months. This means

that we now need to show our good intentions by making a start on our forward plans and collections policies!

The museum's summer exhibition "*By the Seaside*" opened on 17th June. It was well received by visitors, who were particularly taken with the paintings of Frank Watson Wood. The swimwear on display (courtesy of Priscilla Elias & Naomi Kenny of the Underwear Project) brought back lots of memories to our older visitors in particular – not all of them fond in the case of the hand-knitted items!

The "Icons of the Steam Age" exhibition opened to the public on 9th September, running concurrently with a slightly altered "Beside the Seaside" exhibition until the museum closed for the season on October 4th. An extra ground floor gallery was opened up to house this exhibition, and much elbow grease was expended in clearing the gallery, then cleaning and altering the paintwork from black to white. The Institution of Civil Engineers and the Robert Stephenson Trust were exceptionally helpful with this exhibition by loaning us a huge selection of pictures for the exhibition. The exhibition would not have been nearly as successful without the support of local people, in particular Mr Clifford Crook for the loan of his Terence Cuneo print "Giants Refreshed" as well as other railway memorabilia; Mr David Anderson for the loan of a Brian Lancaster print; Mr Sandy Wright for the loan of a ticket machine once used on Berwick Station.

Now that we are closed for the season, work is in progress on sorting out the office space on the ground floor of the building, and at the same time reorganising the picture store on the top floor of the building. Once this has been done, we will be looking to make a start on reorganising the Berwickshire Naturalists' History Society's library, in order to free up some valuable space and also to redistribute more evenly the weight of the books on the fragile 18th century floors. I must say it has been a difficult task moving the books out of the office, as I have found lots of interesting items which I would like to stop and read! If there are any willing volunteers out there who would like to come and list the books, please do get in touch.

We are hoping to restore the back staircase to use, and reopen the small exhibition space there by the end of the season – some of you might know it as the wardrobe room – lots of our visitors seem to remember it well!

There have been a number of interesting new acquisitions–

Mrs Stella Straker-Wilson has given the museum a small brass box embossed with Princess Mary's image. This once contained a 1914 Christmas present for her father, WW1 medical officer Steve Smith, who later became a chemist in Berwick. Sadly, the cigarettes and chocolate have long since been eaten!

Mr and Mrs Fred Kennington have donated some commemorative royal china ware, some linen items and some lead toy battleships.

Mrs Elizabeth Light and her family are about to donate a very beautiful and extensively researched 1840s wedding dress, which belonged to their ancestor Isabella Robertson.

We have had a couple of special visitors recently. The New EH Chair Person, Baroness Andrews visited the Barracks back in August. She was shown around the Clock Block as well as the rest of the Barracks, and visited the Granary Project on a tour of the town. As a result of her visit, EH are to produce a new guide for teachers' use on her recommendation. The BBC's "Politics Show" visited in December to film a feature about a possible Scottish Referendum with Sir Alan Beith MP and Mrs Christine Graham MSP.

Looking forward to next year, we aim to hold an exhibition of the works of Frank Watson Wood, whose paintings have been much admired by visitors throughout this season. We have lots of examples of the artist's work in storage here at the museum, but we would welcome additional loans if any of the Friends knows of any good examples of Wood's work.

For the latter part of the season we are planning a costume exhibition. The museum has a small but interesting collection of costumes which have not been on exhibition before. Putting on the exhibition will give us an opportunity to research the items more fully.

We are planning a small "taster" exhibition at the end of the season centred on an exciting forthcoming donation; a collection of around 100 watercolours and drawings, mainly by Andrew Wallace, is shortly to arrive from abroad. Watch this space...

Anne Moore

MUSEUM GUIDES WANTED

The Friends propose to run guided tours in Berwick Borough Museum and Art Gallery next year between April and September. The tours will probably start at 11 a.m. on Thursdays. The Friends Committee is looking for volunteers to act as guides. If you are interested in becoming a guide, please phone Peter Maule (01289 331768) for further details.

Peter Maule

AN UNSATISFACTORY SCHOOLMASTER

In January 1841, the Berwick Board of Guardians appointed George Logan of Ayton as schoolmaster for the Workhouse School, which served both the children within the Workhouse and those of the outdoor poor in Berwick. For the next two and a half years, all seemed to run smoothly, but in the latter part of 1843, doubts began to be raised about his work. In November, 1843, the then Chairman of the Board of Guardians, Alexander Robertson, carried out his own inspection of the school and noted in his report that while *'the three upper classes read and spelled very creditably'* the pupils showed little understanding of their work, and he thought that there had been too much concentration of rote learning. Although discipline and attention were good, he was concerned by some abruptness in Logan's manner and *'a too frequent exhibition of the cane'*. There is, however, no record of any action being taken by the Board as a result of this report.

By April 1845, the visiting Guardians were recording in the Visitors' Book that they were not entirely satisfied with the children's progress in the 3Rs, and also raising concerns about the cleanliness of the outdoor poor. Again, however, there is no record of action taken save writing a comment in the Visitors' Book.

Matters took a more serious turn, however, on May 20, 1845, when an eight year old boy, John Sanderson, appeared before the Board of Guardians with badly ulcerated hands, which, he said, were the result of a punishment given by Logan. The Guardians ordered the Medical Officer to examine the boy and the Workhouse Committee to enquire further into the matter, reporting back to the Board at the

meeting on 3 June. At that meeting, quite a complicated story emerged, but again one where the dilatoriness of the adults involved was a feature.

- Sanderson seems originally to have complained to the inmate in charge of the children, Mrs. Joy, about his sore hands. She confirmed that, when she had examined his hands, she found marks of blows across the backs of the fingers of both hands, and, although originally she did not know how they had been caused, she had since heard it was the effect of the schoolmaster striking the boy.
- Andrew Henderson, the Medical Officer, had first examined Sanderson's hands on the 16th of April, when they were so swollen, he could not identify the cause, but ordered their treatment by poultice. When he next saw the boy, he found distinct weals on the backs of the hands as if caused by a cane.
- One of the boy inmates, John Henderson, aged 13, had been asked by Mrs. Joy to look at Sanderson's hands, and had told her that it was due to Mr. Logan caning Sanderson. He had not seen this instance, but previously had seen Logan take Sanderson by the wrists and cane him over the back of the hands.
- Logan himself had been interviewed and denied customarily punishing boys on the back of the hands, although admitted that on this occasion it might have happened accidentally.

At the Board Meeting the Guardians formally interviewed Logan, who denied flogging children and asked for the evidence of other children to be heard. As a result three other boys were brought before the Guardians.

- John Edgar, aged 12, stated that although the master did take hold of boys by the wrist, he had never seen him strike them on the back of the hands.
- William Bennett, aged 11, stated that he had seen Sanderson being hit on the back of the hands with the cane by the master. Bennett had not been in the room at the time, but had heard Sanderson yell and had looked, (where from is not made clear). The master had hit him and Joseph Atkinson in the same way, and that the master deliberately turned the hand to hit the back. The master also used the tawse (strap) and hit children where he could.
- Joseph Atkinson said that he had been in the sick ward when the incident occurred. He denied that he had been beaten on the backs of his hands, but said he had seen two other children beaten in this way.

The Guardians then deferred further action until their next meeting on 17 June. In the meantime, on June 10th, the new Chairman of the Guardians, Alexander Smith of Norham visited the school for two hours together with one of the Clerks and Mr.

Atkinson, the Relieving Officer. Smith, too, was unimpressed: there was too little attention paid to the children's understanding of what they read, and their spelling was poor, comments which he too noted in the Visitors' Book.

At the meeting on the 17th, the Board came to the conclusion that while the evidence that Logan regularly punished children by beating the backs of their hands and fingers was weak, they were satisfied that he had done so in Sanderson's case, and that there were other instances of his being '*hasty and intemperate*' in punishing children. They also took into account '*his lack of attention to several of his duties and his general deportment*', and requested that the Commission request his resignation, or, if Logan refused, dismiss him.

To his credit, the Assistant Secretary to the Poor Law Commission, William Golden Lumley, took prompt action, and on 27th June a letter was sent requesting Logan's immediate resignation. Logan duly resigned, but he did not go entirely quietly. On July 4, he wrote on his own behalf to the Commission, and, although admitting to harming Sanderson, he made a number of allegations.

- He was not allowed to hear the accusation against him, and adds that previously, the boy had been brought before the Board of Guardians on a charge of insulting the teacher and stirring up the other boys;
- an opportunity to question the boy's monitor was not taken;
- he was blamed for acting against the General Workhouse Rules, but had never seen a copy of these rules; and
- on a previous occasion Alexander Smith had ordered him to flog three boys for running away, and raises the issue of the inconsistency of the Chairman's attitude.

Logan's accusations were not addressed. The Workhouse School was doubtless the better for his departure, but the whole incident does not show the Board of Guardians in a particularly commendable light.

Jan Bowen

EXTRACT FROM THE TIMES

Extract from The Times of Wednesday 17th August, 1932

Letter to the editor from Colonel Gerard F. T. Leather, Middleton Hall, Belford, Northumberland, re Dogs in Church

In the Cheviot Hills the shepherds often take their collies to church. On being ordered to 'clap down' the dogs prepare for an hour or so of boredom by going to sleep. However, the familiar 'And now' that wakes so many of us out of a pleasant dose, has an electrical effect on the dogs, who indicate by a series of barks their delight that the weekly penance is over. So disturbing is this to the congregation that the minister has to devise various methods of dispersing his congregation in order to keep the good news from the dogs up to the last moment.

Jan Bowen

**EARL'S HEIR SHOT DEAD
"FAMILY OF TRAGEDY"**

The Argus Newspaper – Melbourne, Victoria, Australia – 6 February 1941

Viscount Lambton, 20-year-old son and heir of the Earl of Durham, was found shot dead to-day on the lawn in front of the family home, Fenton House, near Wooler, Northumberland.

A maid discovered the body when she was taking down the blackout curtains. It is understood that a double-barrel shotgun was found beside the dead youth, one barrel having been fired. The new heir is his brother, Anthony Claud Frederick, born in 1922.

Tragedy has followed the family through many generations. Within the past four years three of its members have died suddenly. Two cousins of the present earl died tragically, one of them, Mr. Gervase Lambton, was lost at sea in 1937 between Port Sudan and Aden on his way to Kenya.

A year later Mr D'Arcy Lambton was killed and his wife seriously injured in a car smash on the Oxford-Worcester road.

PUTTING FLESH ON THE BONES

It was one of those days when I had searched at Woodhorn in vain for an entry of an ancestor in the parish registers. Desperate to find a mention I started browsing through the shelves for any index no matter how remote the connection. I noticed a file of Coroner's Inquests taken from The Alnwick Mercury. Quickly skimming through it my eye was caught by the following:

Virtue Moffatt widow of Belford aged 60 years. Date of Inquest 15 August 1869*

Killed by lightning.

Unfortunately no report of the inquest was available. Interested to know more about Virtue and her sad end I searched in the census and found her living in the High Street, Belford in 1841 with her two children. In 1851 she was listed as a widow, living with her sister, Grace Hogg, who ran a grocery business. By 1861 she had taken over the business.

The circumstances of her death were obviously unusual but I was unable to find out any more until the Nineteenth century British Newspapers Online website became available. I discovered from The Newcastle Courant that Virtue had accompanied the three children of George Gibson and their nurse, Mary Ann Goodwell, to Budle on a sea bathing visit. By mid afternoon a storm was raging in dreadful fury. Virtue was struck by an electric spark while she was standing in the water about to bath one of the children. Her body was taken to the nearby Blacksmith's Arms.

The children would have been aged 4, 3 and 1 at the time. Mary Ann Goodwell was 18 and Virtue has no connection with my family but the story serves to illustrate how fascinating the facts may be behind a simple index entry. One wonders about the effect of this traumatic incident upon the nurse and children.

*The index records the year as 1869 but the death record and Newcastle Courant state 1868. This explains why I was unable to find any mention in local newspapers of August 1869.

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

Berwick Advertiser, 26th May 1865

THE FAIR

For some weeks past the shops and houses of many of our tradesmen have undergone a thorough cleansing and painting, as is customary, preparatory to the annual fair which begins today. Since Wednesday several vendors of china, earthenware, hardware, etc, have taken up stances in the High Street, and up to the time of our going to press much bustle has been apparent among them in preparing to show their goods to the best advantage. A market for the sale of cattle and sheep will be held this morning of which we will give a report in our second edition. The usual procession by the Mayor and the other members of the Town Council will take place at noon. Should the weather continue favourable a large influx of country people may be expected, and we have no doubt, from the arrangements made, they will find ample means to supply their wants.

Berwick Advertiser, 26th May 1865

FREEMASONRY IN BERWICK

We understand that the brethren of the St David's Lodge of Free masons (393, Berwick) have it in contemplation to erect a Masonic hall, with suitable offices, and are now considering in what part of the town the most suitable site can be procured. We are glad that there is some life amongst the members of the St David's Lodge, and there can be no doubt that they will receive the support of the public when their plans matured. We observe that at the annual election of annuitants of the Royal Benevolent Lodge of England, which was held in London on Friday last, Brother John Thompson, master seaman, Tweedmouth, was a successful candidate, having obtained 9634 votes. Of twenty candidates, the highest obtained 11,794 votes, and the lowest 3981 votes. Mr Thompson stood seventh on the list, thus showing the high esteem in which he is held by his brethren of the mystic craft.

Berwick Advertiser, 2nd June 1865

DEATH OF WILLIAM DARLING

Mr William Darling, the father of the late Grace H Darling, died at Bamburgh on Sunday morning last. A correspondent, announcing the melancholy event says: "Mr Darling was not only a brave but also a good man, and his death will be deeply felt by all who had the pleasure of his acquaintance. Of singularly quiet and unobtrusive habits, it was only when surrounded by his more intimate friends that he would make any allusion to those various deeds of daring in which from time to time he happened to have been engaged. The wreck of the Forfarshire, and the noble rescue by himself and his daughter of nine of the shipwrecked persons, brought his name and that of his daughter Grace under public notice. All classes vied with each other in their endeavour to give expression both by word and action to those sentiments of admiration which their heroic conduct justly elicited; and the Royal Humane Society awarded them, in like manner, their honorary gold medal, accompanying each medallion with a suitable address.

Berwick Advertiser, 7th July 1865

ELECTION

There has been a lull in our local election proceedings since our last, at least as far as regards external indications. The two liberal candidates, Mr Marjoribanks and Mr Mitchell, issued each a handbill on Saturday, thanking the electors, in effect, for the encouragement and the promises of support which they had received, and intimating that they would be absent in London for a few days. Mr Mitchell returned yesterday, and Mr Marjoribanks is expected this morning. The two gentlemen have been absent nearly a week – a fact which may be taken as a sign that both are satisfied with the progress which they made in their canvass up to Saturday last. Mr Cargill returned to Berwick in the beginning of the week; and Mr Hubback, we believe, has been little absent since the commencement of his canvass. Each party seems to be sanguine of success; but it is certain that two of the candidates must be disappointed. It would be idle to indulge in predictions. It will be more to the purpose to remind the Liberals and the Conservative agents are unwearied, energetic, and skilful in their efforts on behalf of their candidates, and that they can be successfully counteracted only by such loyal, energetic, and judicious efforts on the liberal side as may give adequate expression at the polling booths to that intelligent Liberalism which is undoubtedly the predominating political principle among electors. It would not be enough that one Liberal and one Conservative should be returned: that would, for all practical purposes of legislation, be nearly equivalent to the temporary

disfranchisement of the borough. The reputation of the constituency is involved in the issue, and we call upon the electors to prove themselves worthy of the trust reposed in them. The Liberals can be satisfied with nothing less than the election of two Liberal candidates, and we hope that in this they will not be disappointed. It is expected that the writs will be received in most places on Friday (today). According to the nomination for our borough will take place on Tuesday first, and the polling on Wednesday.

Berwick Advertiser, 14th July 1865

SENTENCE OF DEATH

The Lord-Justice Clerk, addressing the prisoner said: Edward William Pritchard, you have been found guilty by the unanimous verdict of the jury of the two murders charged against you and the verdict proceeds upon evidence which I believe leaves no reasonable man the slightest room of doubt. You are aware that upon such a verdict one sentence only can be pronounced. (The prisoner bowed) You must be condemned to suffer the last penalty of the law. (The prisoner again bowed). It is neither my duty nor my inclination to say one word which should have the effect of aggravating your position. Let me only remind you that you have but a short time to live, and I beseech you to take advantage of it. The Lord Justice Clerk then formally sentenced the prisoner to be executed at Glasgow, on the 28th inst, between the hours of eight and ten o'clock.

Berwick Advertiser, 28th July 1865

A DOG SAVED BY THE QUEEN

A few months back, while the 2nd Regiment of Life Guards were quartered in the cavalry at Spital, near Windsor, an order was issued for the destruction of all dogs in the barracks. On the morning of the day on which the canine friends of the troopers were to be destroyed Her Majesty made an inspection of the Windsor garrison, and while passing through the quarters of the 2nd Life Guards, accompanied by the colonel of the Regiment, was much attracted by the appearance of a small and very pretty terrier dog named "Dick," belonging to Corporal Woodhouse, one of the bandsmen. The Queen paused, caressed the little dog, and spoke to it. This saved its life, for the colonel gave orders that it should be allowed to live, while the rest of the dogs were killed in accordance with the edict that had gone forth. Dick is now the favourite of the regiment, and is honoured with a collar decorated with the

regimental buttons, and on the plate of which are some unquestionable doggerel lines narrating how the animal's life was saved.

Carole Pringle

FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

Friends subscriptions for 2010 are due at the beginning of January. If you wish to set up a standing order for paying your subscription, we have enclosed a standing order form which you should return to your bank. Renewal forms will be sent out at the beginning of January.



*MERRY CHRISTMAS TO ALL THE
FRIENDS.....*

..... *AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR*

