

Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



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[Selected articles]

TRANSPORTATION FROM BERWICK-UPON-TWEED

As part of its privileges under King James I's Charter of 1604, the Borough of Berwick-upon-Tweed was granted the right to hold its own Quarter Sessions Court separate from Northumberland and Durham. The Court, originally presided over by the Justices of the Peace (the Mayor and other members of the Guild) had jurisdiction to deal with criminal cases committed within the town and its liberties. This continued until 1951 when the Court ceased to function.

As well as sentencing criminals to gaol, initially at the Town Hall and latterly at Wallace Green, the Court also had the power to sentence criminals to death or to be transported 'beyond the seas'. On at least two occasions in Berwick's history, the accused were sentenced to death and the sentence actually carried out; Margaret Dryden for the murder of her child in 1758 and Grace Griffin for the murder of her husband in 1823. Normally such sentences would be commuted to a gaol sentence or transportation.

Transportation was a common sentence administered by the Court, usually for hardened criminals or persistent petty thieves. Initially criminals were transported to America and then to Australia, usually for 7 or 14 years. With in Berwick Quarter Sessions records there are over 70 cases of criminals being sentenced to transportation. Among those is the case of James Matthewson.

JAMES MATTHEWSON

James Matthewson, a mason in the town was apprehended at Alnwick on 29th January 1764 and accused of stealing a box from Robert Frazier's house containing, among other things, '3 silver watches; red Cloth purse and one five pounds Scotch Bank Note'. According to his sworn statement Matthewson maintained that a soldier whose name he did not know stole the box while he kept watch outside before they took it back to his 'own lodging room'. Nevertheless Matthewson was put into prison awaiting trial; however, he escaped on 20 February 1764 before being sentenced. He was not recaptured until a year later in Newcastle and eventually he appeared at Court on 17th June 1765. There he was sentenced to be transported to America for 7 years. It was now the Borough's responsibility to convey Matthewson to London where he would be put on a convict ship. On 17th August 1765 Captain Richard Lilly took Matthewson to London on his Tweed Cutter. The ship arrived in London on 23rd August and according to a letter from Joseph Cutting, the Borough's agent there, he escorted Matthewson from the Tweed cutter onto the convict ship 'Justicia' on 24th August 1765 bound for America.

An Inventory of the Box and several Goods stolen by
James Mathewson out of the House of Robert Treason
taken this Twenty Eighth day of January 1764.

a ffine Box

✓ One five pound Scotch Bank Note

✓ Ten Twenty Shilling Scotch Bank Notes

✓ One Guinea

✓ One Crown piece

Two Gold Rings

One Silver Box containing two other Gold Rings and one
Silver Ring

Three Silver Watches

Three large Silver Spoons

Two Silver punch Ladles

Two pair of Silver Shoe buckles and one pair of Silver
Shoe buckles set with Stone, and one pair of Silver
Knee Buckles set with Stone

✓ One other Crown piece

Two Silver Tea Spoons

A green worsted purse

✓ One other worsted green purse with One Shilling in it

a Red Cloth purse

The Silver Mounting for a sword & Sabard in silver

Two pair of Silver Knee Buckles

One pair of Silver Shoe Buttons

One Silver pen

One Silver Thimble

[An Inventory of the Box and Personal Goods stolen by James Matthewson out of the Home of Robert Frasier taken this Twenty-Eighth day of January 1764.

A ffir Bag
One five pound Scotch Bank Note
Ten Twenty Shilling Scotch Bank Notes
One Guinea
One Crown Piece
Twp Gold Rings
One Silver Bag containing two other Gold Rings and one Silver Ring
Three Silver Watches
Three large Silver Spoons
Two Silver Punch Ladles
Two pair of Silver Shoe buckles and one pair of Silver Shoe Buckles set with Stone, and one pair of Silver Knee Buckles set with Stone
One other Crown Piece
Twelve silver Tea Spoons
A Green worsted Purse
Another worsted Green Purse with One Shilling in it
A Red Cloth Purse
The Silver Mounting for a Sword & Scabbard in pieces
Two pair of Silver Knee Buckles
One pair of Silver Sleeve Buttons
One Silver Pen
One Silver Thimble]

Linda Bankier

EXHIBIT OF MONTH

The Nymphenburg Service

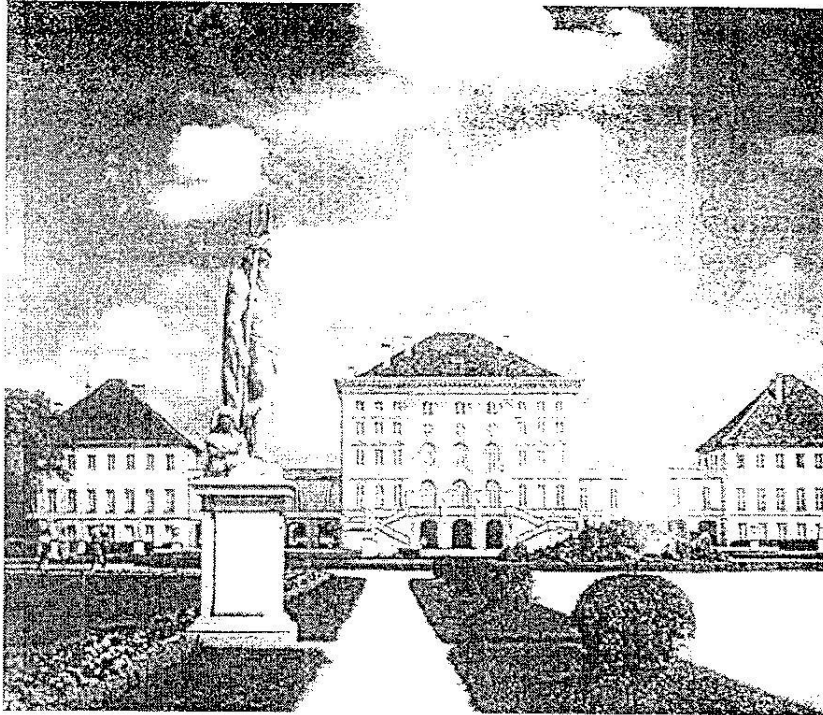
A dinner service of 153 pieces
Nymphenburg factory, near Munich in Bavaria.
Early 20th Century, copying a late 18th Century design
BERMG: 827 to 980

The service arrived in Berwick in 1955 through the good offices of the National Art Collections Fund, who were given the task of dispersing the collection of tour operator Ernest Edward Cook (1865-1955) to over 100 museums and galleries. Each of the items has scenes, of the countryside around Nymphenburg, painted by hand and identified on the back, along with the Nymphenburg mark adapted from the arms of the Elector of Bavaria.

The Palace, just outside Munich was begun in 1662 as a summer villa for Henrietta Adelaide, the wife of Prince Elector of Bavaria Ferdinand Maria. Work ceased at her early death in 1676 and was only resumed by her son in 1702. The gardens, which feature on some of the items, follow the

formal style popularized by Louis XIV at Versailles. The Porcelain Factory was founded in 1747 in the grounds of the Palace. At first it was mainly known for coloured figurines and dinner services with landscape scenes were a later development.

Of particular interest are the scenes of the English garden in Munich shown on many of the pieces. This was created in the 1790's by the American ex-patriot Benjamin Thompson (1753-1814). He was inspired by the example of the great English landscape gardens of Capability Brown and William Chambers. The use of flowing slopes, clumps of trees and other 'natural' features was so very different from the early 18th Century formal gardens at the Nymphenburg Palace. In recognition of his work Thompson was given the title of Count Rumford. His monument still stands at the entrance to the parkland.



Nymphenburg Castle was built in 1664-1674 by Agostino Barelli, as a summer seat for the Bavarian ruling house of Wittelsbach, and extended in 1702-1704 by Antonio Viscardi and in 1715-1728 by Joseph Effner

"IN THE MATTER OF THE DIVISION OF THE MOOR OF TWEEDMOUTH, SPITTLE AND ORD AND OF THE THREAP GROUNDS ADJOINING THERETO"

The year is 1798 and a great change is being mooted. A Bill is to be presented in Parliament to extinguish Common Rights on the Moor (Pasturage and Eatage for a Horse and Cow). The rights on upwards of 700 acres are to be exchanged for designated strips of land, the areas of which will be based on the value of the yearly rental of the Messuage or Tenement carrying the age-old customary common rights. This Enclosure will be the final move in a trend started as far back as the year 1292 A.D. when the Bishop of Durham - "had lately established a Warren (an enclosed acreage for the keeping and hunting of rabbits) at Tweedmouth, where none was before, but where the men of the neighbourhood used to hunt without hinderance".

But first some 130 freeholders and copyholders must sign as to whether they are agreeable or not.

Letters go to and from among the major freeholders. William Greive of East Ord writes to Sir Carnaby Haggerston who as the Lord of the Manor of Norham holds rights in the Threap Land.

Queries Would the Bench of Bishops vote against the Bill concerned that their rights to the Corn Tithe might be affected?

Should a notice be put on the door of Tweedmouth Church or was it still legally a Chapel of Holy Island? This door would be more difficult to get at for the purpose.

What would happen to the clay and clay pits for the Brick kiln on the Moor? What about the underlying mineral rights and the right to take building stone and who would own the Common Wells?

Would the sale of the 'After Eatage' be enough to cover legal expenses and could it be used for this purpose?

The gipsies and vagabonds would be forced to move from Spittal if there was no free land there; they might migrate to Ord or Norham. More letters are addressed to the Clerk in Parliament to ensure as to procedure; visits are made to London to follow them up.

Someone has to make a rough list and several fair copies of all townfolk with entitlement and then personally collect a signature from everyone concerned. Did each signature need a witness to make it legal?

Difficulties arise and much time is taken up and the deadline date for the Bill is rapidly approaching.

Some ownerships are in question in spite of the evidence to be found in the Court Books of Tweedmouth Manor which have been kept in Berwick since 1657. The Royalties of Tweedmouth and Spittle had been purchased from the Earl of Suffolk by the Mayor and Burgesses of Berwick. They paid £570 and this should be "in a Great Black Box put up in the Town Chest". The 10 Manor Court Rolls, 10 Suit Rolls and the Old and the New Book of Enrolment still exist. Dating from 1612 onwards they have been handed down from steward to steward and before that they had been kept by former Lords of the Manor time out of.

Who are the Trustees of Tweedmouth Dissenting Meeting House?

Widow Fleming has married James Johnston: Mrs Kerr's heir is her granddaughter who has married the Rev. Thomas Wood and they live at Rochdale. James Murray's heir is Thomas Weatherly until a certain debt is paid and then half of his property will go to John Chisholm and the other half will be divided between the 3 daughters of Thomas Murray. Ann Jack has died and Matthew Smith is married to her daughter; her two sons, Hume and William, went East and are presumed dead. The heirs of Charles Lambert are in India; Thomas Gilchrist receives their rents but has only a letter of authorisation - can he sign on their behalf? What about the Poor House on Blakewell Green?

When asked to sign:-

Elizabeth Steavenson says "the Common may be divided very well without her signature".

Elizabeth Weatherly said her property was not worth signing for.

John Short said the same.

Hudson Jeffreys was called on several times. He promised to sign but always put it off to a future day and evaded signing.

George Pearson lives in America. Margaret McDonald, his mother, has the management of his property and signed on his behalf.

James Ormiston lives in Inverness, about 200 miles from Berwick. He was wrote to but returned no answer.

John Coulter would give no reason for his refusal to sign but just said "No, I won't".

Thomas Brown was sometime dead. His widow lives at Plymouth Dock and was wrote to by her tenant. The answer he received was that if he would inform her what part of the Common she would get then she might sign but not otherwise.

Andrew Yule signed but came back afterwards to withdraw his consent and gave as a reason that his wife was dissatisfied with what he had done.

Alexander Thompson said the Common was better as it was.

George Hogg would give no reason for his refusal but said he would do as Mr Pearson did.

About Stephen Waite; witness saw his wife who said he was a Pilot on board a Gun Boat then lying at Holy Isle, that she would acquaint him with the business. Witness went after to Holy Isle to endeavour to see him but found he had sailed.

Ralph York was very ill in bed but said he would think about it.

Jane Taylor is very uncertain to be found. Witness called twice at her house which was locked up, her being a suspicious character and generally travelling the Country.

Mr Tamison the like. He is a person being lately taken up at Spittle for breaking, has never been seen since and is supposed to have gone off the country for a time.

Henry Wilson said he would sign "no such way".

John Laverock was a Master of Mr Selby's Mercawell of Billingsgate, Fishing Smack. Application having been made at his house to know where he was, we was informed he had just sailed for Aberdeen.

John Fullerton lives at Ewart, 20 miles from Berwick. He is an idiot and from his being in that state no satisfaction could have been got from him - application therefore deemed unnecessary.

At James Nelson's his wife refused to inform us where he was to be found.

Robert Curry said he thought it would be hurting the Poor of the place to divide the Moor.

George Chisholm has no objection but is determined to have nothing to do with it.

Eventually most of the signatures whether for or against were 'assigned' on a fair copy and it was rushed to London in time.

After that came the task of measuring all properties and the drawing out of many plans to substantiate all claims.

About 190 of these plans, together with the Enclosure Act, Schedule, Map and Book of Letters can be consulted in the Berwick Record Office.

Joyce Stone

And, finally, in a more light-hearted manner, a selection of once in a lifetime and not to be missed some 1850's privatised railway journeys:-

NOTICE

THE COMMITTEE of the BERWICK TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY
Beg to announce to the Public, that they have completed their arrangements for
A PLEASURE TRIP TO EDINBURGH on FRIDAY the 28th instant:-

Fares there and back - First Class, 8s 6d; Second, 6s 6d; Third 4s 6d - and Half these Fares
additional to those who remain till the following day.

The Train will leave the Berwick Station at 6 o'clock Morning
and return from Edinburgh at 7 o'clock Evening.

N.B. - The train will stop at Ayton, Reston, and Grant's House.

GREAT NORTHERN RAILWAY ALTERATION AND ACCELERATION OF TRAINS

On and after the 2nd September, the following Trains will run between
Berwick and London, and London and Berwick:-

UP
11.20 a.m. Express
reaching London at 10 p.m.
1.15 p.m. Mail, reaching
London at 2.15 a.m.

DOWN
9.15 a.m. Express
reaching Berwick at 7.30 p.m.
11.00 a.m., 1st and 2nd Class,
reaching Berwick at 2.00 a.m.

SUNDAY

From London at 7.00 a.m. reaching Berwick at 2.0 a.m.

CHEAP TRIP TO EDINBURGH

THE DIRECTORS of the BERWICK YEARLY BENEFIT SOCIETIES
have made arrangements for a PLEASURE EXCURSION to EDINBURGH,
on FRIDAY the 18th instant

FARES THERE AND BACK:-

First Class, 7s 6d., Second do, 5s 6d., Third do, 4s
Children 3 and under 12 years of age, Half Price.

The Train will leave the Berwick Terminus in the morning
precisely at Six o'clock; and will leave Edinburgh at
Half-past Seven in the Evening.

CHEAP TRIP BY RAILWAY OF THE VALE OF THE TWEED To DRYBURGH, MELROSE, ABBOTSFORD AND GALASHIELS

under the superintendence of the
BERWICK TOTAL ABSTINENCE SOCIETY
On MONDAY, June 30, 1851

The Train will leave Tweedmouth Station at Seven a.m.
stopping at Velvet Hall, Norham and Cornhill, to take
up Passengers; returning from Galashiels at Six p.m.

YORK, NEWCASTLE AND BERWICK RAILWAY NOTICE

NORTHUMBERLAND AGRICULTURAL SHOW AT BELFORD

A SPECIAL TRAIN will leave Kelso Station on TUESDAY 10th August at 9 a.m.
arriving at Belford in time for the opening of the Show Yard to the public
at 11.0 a.m., returning from Belford at 8.45 p.m.

FARES FOR RETURN TICKETS

	First Class	Covd Carriages
From Kelso and Stations to Cornhill	6s 6d	5s
From Norham and Stations to Scremerston	Ordinary 1 st and 2 nd Class Return Fares	

Passengers from Scremerston will return from Belford
by the ordinary Train at 8.57 p.m.