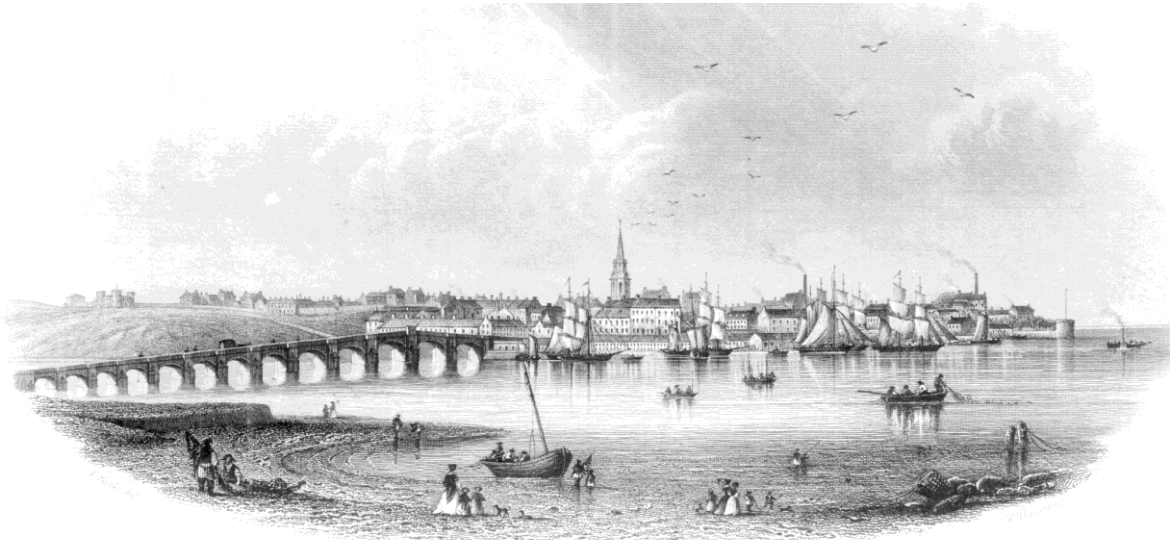


**Friends of Berwick & District
Museum and Archives
Newsletter**



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[Selected articles]

1997 August

BOWSDEN VILLAGE

Recently I gave a talk at Bowsden Village Hall as part of their historical exhibition week to encourage people to use the hall. Whilst doing some research for the talk, I found the following snippets of information which you may find of interest.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 7 Dec. 1822

TO BE LET

for such a number of years as may be agreed upon and entered to on the 12th May, 1823, the FARM at Bowsden containing 517 acres (more or less) of Arable and Pasture Land as at present occupied by MR RICHARD HALL.

The farm is distant only 8 miles from Berwick upon Tweed and there are coals and Limestone on the Premises.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 26 FEBRUARY 1848

MELANCHOLY CASE

On Monday last, an inquest was held at the house of Mr Sanderson, innkeeper of Lowick, before Thomas Adams Russell, Esq., coroner for Northumberland, and a respectable jury, on the body of Mary Hills, aged about 40, wife of Adam Mitchell Hills, of Dryburn Cottage near Bowsden, quarryman. It appeared in evidence, that the deceased on the morning of the preceding day, about half past 8 o'clock, had taken some medicine, and immediately became seriously ill. One of her daughters, about seven years of age, was desired to go and tell Mrs Lumsden living next door, to come to her. Mrs Lumsden immediately went, and on getting into the deceased's house, she found her sitting at the end of the table, supported by her husband; and on the deceased seeing witness, she exclaimed "I have taken poison in the room of salts, and am dying". There was a cup upon the table with some white sediment in it, which the deceased had used. The husband of the deceased, with all speed, proceeded to Lowick, rather more than a mile distant, for medical aid, but before Mr Taylor, the surgeon, arrived, death had put an end to her sufferings. The deceased was a country dress and straw bonnet maker, and usually kept oxalic acid for the purpose of cleaning straw bonnets, and had taken a quantity of that acid instead of salts, there being found in the house, in a sugar basin standing on the top of the drawers, a packet of Epsom salts. Verdict - "Died by taking a quantity of oxalic acid by mistake for salts".

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 10 MAY 1928

A free gift sale was held in the Hall on Saturday afternoon. Considering the idea was only mooted three weeks ago, there was a wonderful supply of goods, especially so on the cake and candy and produce stalls. Jumble was not so strong but there were many useful articles forward which were quickly snapped up. Mrs Barber gracefully performed the opening ceremony for which she was thanked by Mrs Craig, and then there was a busy time. The company was not so large as it might have been but seemed to be well provided with the necessary, for in a short time a handsome sum

was raised for the benefit of the Hall funds. In the evening a well attended dance was held, and those present thoroughly enjoyed themselves. Excellent music was provided by Messers Bryson and Co. Scremerston, while Mr T. Easten ably carried out the duties of MC, while Mr R. Scott kept an eye on the financial side. The ladies attending the stalls, and to whom the committee feel very grateful were: Cake and Candy, Mrs Nichol, Miss Lawson and Miss Scott. Produce: Mrs and Miss Barber and Mrs A. Wilson. Jumble: Mrs Crawford, Mrs Jeffrey and Mrs Strother. Tea was served in the Reading Room under the supervision of Mrs Easten and Mrs Ford and was much appreciated, especially by the ladies who had become heated in their pursuit of bargains.

Farm Sales

The Wooler Live Stock Auction Mart Co. Ltd. conducted a sale of farming stock on Saturday at Bowsden Villa on behalf of Mr J. Baptist. The sale comprised 4 store cattle, 4 cows, 2 horses and implements. Implements sold very readily at good prices. The homebred young cattle were a nice lot and made extreme prices. Cows in strong demand at satisfactory prices and horses a good trade. The sale terminated at 6.45 pm. Cattle: heifer, 1 year £20; Cows: 3 yrs £20; 4 yrs £28 15s; 7 yrs £18 10s; 9 yrs £15; store calves £7 7s.

BERWICK JOURNAL, 21 July 1932

Glendale Rural District Council

Bowden Water Supply

The Clerk drew attention to the matter which had arisen at the last meeting in connection with the cutting of the main for Bowsden water. The sub-contractor had applied for extra money for rock cutting. The Clerk said he had looked up the correspondence on the matter and also the specifications laid on the contract. He read the specifications which stated that the contractor had to accept all responsibility for extra cost entailed in removing or cutting any obstruction. The Chairman said there was a claim for an extra £8.

It was agreed that the Council could not meet the extra cost. The Clerk mentioned that any person wishing to take a pipe off the main to go underneath the roadway would have to make the portion under the roadway lead piping. Notices had been put up to this effect in the village of Bowsden.

14 July 1932

Bowsden W. I.

Monthly meeting of the Bowsden W. I. was held on Thursday. Mrs Rea presiding. Mrs Hume, Alnwick gave a demonstration on soft slipper making. She was thanked on the motion of Miss S. Aitchison. Winners of the left hand writing competition were Miss Moffat, Mrs L. Jeffrey. Hostesses were Miss Renton and Mrs Speirs.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 15 October 1959

Bowsden Withdraws from League

Bowsden Football Club are to withdraw from the first division of the North Northumberland League as a protest at the standard of refereeing.

Confirmation came from club officials yesterday, and as soon as a letter is received by the North Northumberland league secretary, the matter will go before a committee meeting.

"We have been informed by telephone that Bowsden are withdrawing" said Mr Jury, the league Secretary.

Already before them is a letter from the man who refereed the Aydon Forest - Bowsden game which sparked off the row.

Bowsden, at home, protested strongly when Ivan Black, one of their players, was ordered off. Two more players, including one of his brothers, had their names taken in the argument which followed. It is understood that Black was given marching orders for bad language - a charge which is being strongly denied by the player and his colleagues.

Yesterday, an official of Bowsden Football Club told the Advertiser - It is quite true. Our club is withdrawing from the league as a protest. Saturday's match finally put the lid on it, but we have been dissatisfied about the refereeing from this particular official for some time. He is the only referee we have had for our home games this season.

As far as this season goes, we are finished.

Before the matter is discussed, statements from players in both teams will be heard. North Northumberland football circles are buzzing with rumours about what happened in Saturday's clash when Bowsden were beaten 4 - 1.

P. S. The final extract about the football team caused great amusement as Ivan Black is still in the area and his wife was at the talk.

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

EXHIBIT OF THE MONTH

Dance Tunes

Transcribed by John Hall, Spittal, c.1916

Manuscript Score, 43pp BERMG: 1996.9.1

Of all subjects covered by museums, the performing arts are usually the least represented. The performances themselves are fleeting and the performers themselves often had little thought for

preserving the evidence of their craft once they have finished with it. So it was with this month's exhibit, which was saved from a bonfire on Spittal seafront and donated to the museum earlier in the year. The transcriber, John Hall, was himself a fiddler whose violin was also rescued from the flames and is now in a private collection. He would have made the collection for his own use at dances and other entertainments at the turn of the Century. We have a precise date and authorship as one tune is inscribed "wrote Christmas Morning 1916 Pipe tune arr. by John Hall, Spittal", though the collection might have taken some time to compile. It was clearly well used as many of the pages are stained and one heavily stained page has had to be reattached with a gummed label.

There are 45 tunes in the manuscript comprising 19 hornpipes; 4 strathspeys; 3 reels; 3 polkas; 2 waltzes and 14 other folk tunes with titles that do not specify the dance. The hornpipe gets its name from the "horn pipe" used by shepherds, and the step-dance associated with the music was traditionally a piece of solo virtuosity, the best known being the "Sailor's hornpipe" though originally the dance had nothing to do with the sea. The earliest printed hornpipes are all in English sources though there are Scottish manuscript examples from 1692. In 1832 the Duke of Northumberland's piper was convinced the hornpipe had originated in the Borders. Reels and Strathspeys are more certainly of wholly Scottish origin, with the Strathspey, a slower dance than the Reel, traditionally originating with the Browns of Kincardine in the 18th C.

By contrast the Austrian Waltz became known in Britain only after 1815, when it was disapproved of, and the Polish Polka swept through Europe in the 1840's.

The chronological range of the tunes seems to reflect the range of the dance forms. Most of the named tunes seem to have been current in the late 18th Century with some like "Auld Robin Gray"; "My Nannie O"; and "Roslin Castle" having words added at that time by Burns and other poets. "The Rights of Man Hornpipe" also must be associated with Thomas Paine's then notorious book of that title, published in 1791-2. The Strathspeys though seem to be later in date as they are associated with whiskey that only appeared later such as Glenlivet (legal from 1824) and Talisker (1830). A tune like the "Victoria Waltz" could have been penned at anytime between 1837 and 1901 but perhaps some Jubilee connection is implied.

The composers of most pieces will be unknown, though some may be discovered with more detailed research, but only a few seem to have been written locally. "Hills Hornpipe" is marked "By Hills" but who he was is unknown. One of the Strathspeys is noted as "By antine of Kelso", is this perhaps one of the Ballantyne family of Kelso, early publisher of Walter Scott? Evidence of other local compositions are titles like "The Castlegate Hornpipe" and "Tweed Silvery Stream is Flowing".

Musically these are simple lively tunes which John Hall seems to have copied faithfully from the originals. The only difference from the printed piano versions we have been able to check is an overall transcription upwards by 6 notes, consistent with works intended for the fiddle. In some piano versions there are also many elaborations that are missing in Hall's arrangement.

As for the context in which the book was used we can only guess at this time. It may be that this was the same John Hall who was landlord at the Red Lion in Spittal in 1914 and on until 1924, certainly that would be a good starting point for a search of contemporary newspapers that might very well turn up a report of some dance or gathering at which he entertained his customers. In the meantime the manuscript is on show, together with a recording of "The Castlegate Hornpipe" as part of our "Sounds and Stories" exhibition until 20th September.

The Castle Gate Hornpipe

Handwritten musical score for 'The Castle Gate Hornpipe'. The score consists of six staves of music. The first staff begins with a treble clef and a common time signature. The music is written in a style characteristic of 18th-century manuscript notation. The second staff continues the melody. The third staff includes the annotation 'See Black & White Hornpipe' written above the notes. The fourth staff features a triplet of eighth notes, indicated by a '3' above the notes. The fifth staff continues the piece. The sixth staff concludes with the annotation 'See Stenuous Hornpipe' written below the notes. The manuscript shows signs of age, with some ink bleed-through and staining.

Handwritten musical notation at the top of the page, including a treble clef and several notes.

Sounds and Stories

Our summer exhibition "Sounds & Stories" has now been running for over a month and is proving enormously popular. Families regularly tell us how much they enjoy exploring the Story Maze. This exhibition has been something of an experiment in not just sound relating to exhibitions, with some 20 separate sound systems going simultaneously, but also in terms of an 'evolutionary exhibition' with sections being added once the show has started as a result of public involvement. The prime part of this is Max Hague's sound sculpture, part of which was finished for the opening, but the majority of the external decoration was only intended to be created by a school's workshop held in conjunction with the Maltings. This was very successful and under Max's guidance, the children created an amazing variety of shapes and musical forms all of which have been now added to the sculpture.