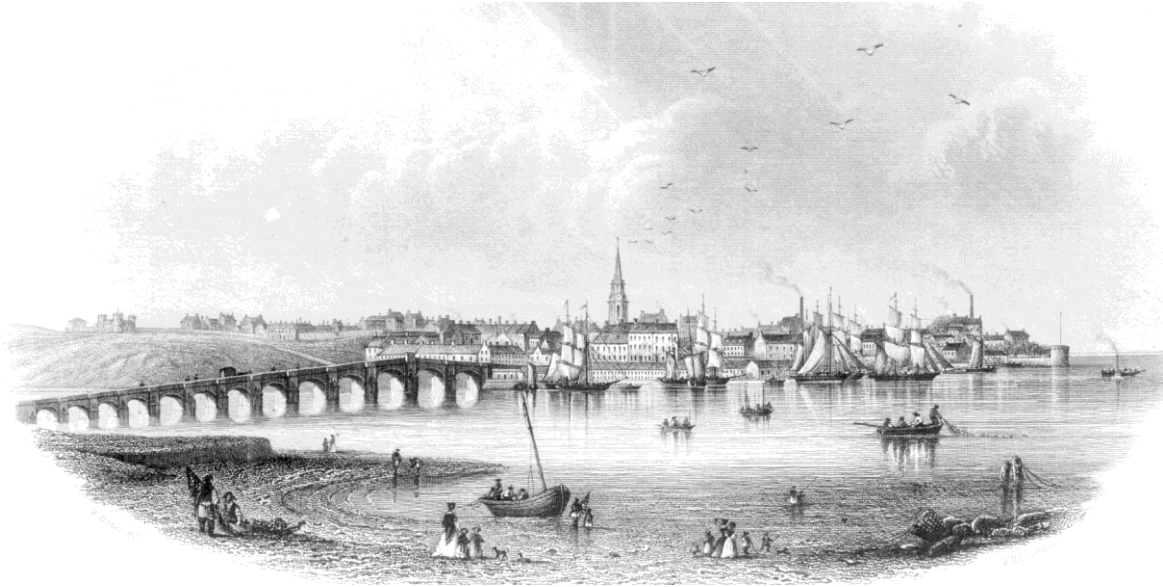




Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 83–SEPTEMBER 2014

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday 26th October

Friends Autumn Lecture: “Portable Antiquities and Treasures in the North East” by Dr Rob Collins. 7pm at the Parish Centre, Berwick.

Tuesday 9th September

“Berwick’s Built Heritage: a History of Berwick’s Buildings through its Archives” by Linda Bankier at Berwick Library - 2pm-3.30pm

Friday 12th September

“19th Century Crime in Berwick” by Linda Bankier. A talk at 3pm at Berwick Magistrate’s Court as part of Heritage Open Days

Saturday 13th September

Tours of the Old Gaol in Wallace Green. First tour at 10.30am and then every half hour until last tour at 1.30pm.

Tuesday 30th September

Berwick Record Office First World War Project: meeting for prospective volunteers at 2pm in Berwick Record Office.

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Community Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 30 th September	Sir Walter Scott and Abbotsford: Hamish Reid
Tuesday 28 th October	Churchill's Secret Army: Bob Thomson
Tuesday 25 th November	The Flodden Transcription Project; Linda Bankier

No Lectures in December

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Meeting Room, Belford Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 24 th September	Balmborough in the reign of George III : Carol Griffiths
Wednesday 29 th October	AGM and Video the River Cruise and Slide show of Belford "Then and Now": Dennis Cromarty
Wednesday 26 th November	Slide show of "Old Anwick": Mr Ions

BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY

Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Saturday 13 th and Sunday 14 th September	Heritage Open Days in Berwick with a special event in the Guildhall on Saturday 13 th .
Wednesday 15 th October	Joint meeting with Berwick History Society. "The Lamps went out"-Sir Edward Grey MP and "The war to end all wars": Mike Fraser.

Wednesday 12th November

A Shakespeare Evening to commemorate
the 450th Anniversary of his birth

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 15th October

The Lights Went Out Sir Edward Grey M.P.
& The War To End All Wars: Michael Fraser

Wednesday 19th November

King James 1V of Scotland (The Flodden
King): Derek Butler

Wednesday 10th December

Crime & Punishment in Berwick: Linda
Bankier

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 6th October

Archaeoastronomy: a brief History:
Professor Clive Ruggles

Monday 3rd November

The Discovery and excavation of previously
unknown Neolithic and early Historic timber
halls, and a bronze age cemetery: Bruce
Glendinning, Lockerbie Academy

Monday 1st December

The origins of metallurgy in Europe: new
insight from Italy: Dr Andrea Dolfini

BORDERS FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Corn Exchange, Melrose

Time: 2.30pm

Sunday 28th September

The Radio Officers' War: Harry Scott

Sunday 26 October

The Hume and Robertson Families of
Gunsgreen: Derek Jones. Meeting held

at the Masonic Hall, Duns.

Sunday 30 November

Beggars, Thieves and Prostitutes: Mary
Craig

No Lectures in December

BOWSDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Bowsden Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 6th October

The Trials and Tribulations of Luke Moody,
Tenant of Bowsden West Farm in the early
19th century - dramatized account led by
Julie Gibb.

Monday 3rd November

To be confirmed

Monday 1st December

The Flodden Transcription Project : Linda
Bankier and volunteers

CHIRNSIDE HISTORY GROUP

Venue: Community Centre

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 15th September

In defiance of the Law Smuggling in
Berwickshire: Derek Jones

Monday 20th October

Roads and Travel in Berwickshire 1750-
1900: David McLean. THIS MEETING WILL
BE HELD IN THE CHURCH HALL

November and December dates to be confirmed

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Eildon Centre, Coldstream.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 2 nd October	Lady Margaret Douglas(Harbottle Castle): Elizabeth Watson
Thursday 6 th November	Field Marshall Earl Haig: John Smith
Thursday 4 th December	Womens' Suffrage and the Borders: Gordon MacDonald
Thursday 11 th December	Social and Members' Night

DUNSE HISTORY SOCIETY

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

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 24 th September	The Yetholm Gypsies: Tom Tokely
Wednesday 29 th October	The War Memorials of Berwickshire: Kenneth McLean
Wednesday 3 rd December	A Tale of Two Castles, Wark and Norham: Chris Burgess

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 10 th September	North East Airfields-Aviation History 1910-2003: Alan Fendley
Wednesday 8 th October	Biddlestone Chapel and the Selby Family: Tony Henfry
Saturday 11 th October	Outing to Biddlestone Chapel-guided by Tony Henfry
Wednesday 12 th November	The Lindisfarne Gospels: its making and meaning: Sarah Whitehead
Wednesday 10 th December	Equal on the Turf-Our Horseracing Heritage: Charlie Brown

LOWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Lowick Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 8 th September	AGM and Lowick and the Pilgrim Trail : John Daniels
Monday 13 th October	King Arthur : Michael Thomson
Monday 10 th November	Lowick's Two War Memorials : Tony Brown
Monday 8 th December	Belgian Refugees at Lowick and Bowsden : Julie Gibb

NORHAM HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time : 7.30 pm

Monday 13 th October	Thirteen Years in a Nuclear Bunker: Anthony Chessell
Monday 14 th November	Letters from a Soldier : Marjorie Hume & Martha Andrews
Monday 8 th December	Social Evening

NORTH SUNDERLAND & SEAHOUSES LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, North Sunderland

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Please contact the secretary for details of talks

NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM FAMILY HISTORY SOCIETY

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND BRANCH

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

Time: 10.00am

Saturday 20 th September	Hatches, Matches, dispatches; what do
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Saturday 18th October certificates tell us?: Anthea Lang
Saturday 15th November Members Forum
Voices of Stannington Sanatorium: Liz
O'Donnell

No lectures in December

TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Crookham Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Wednesday 1st October "Bannockburn" James IV Memorial Lecture:
Dr Tony Pollard. **THIS LECTURE IS IN
ETAL VILLAGE HALL**

Wednesday 5th November World War One: Roberta Goldwater

Wednesday 3 December "The Maya-Children of the Corn": Maria
Chester

ARCHIVE NEWS

The time to write this newsletter seems to have come around very quickly. I hope you have all had a good summer and enjoyed the lovely weather. The Record Office has been very busy with various things over the past couple of months – Carole and I are never stuck for a job to do. The following is some of the things that we have been involved in.

As expected, a lot of our work has centred around the First World War and its commemoration which has led to us working with various groups. We started a Project with Tweedmouth Middle School earlier on in the year and it culminated at the beginning of July with a performance by the Maltings Youth Theatre based on the children's creative writing and research in the archives which was written up by Anne Coburn into a short play. It was very cleverly done and was based on the experiences of a couple of local families during the War. Hopefully it can be performed again. In addition, we have also supported Armed Forces Day and the local organisations involved in it. As part of that, we

helped create an exhibition on Berwick in 1914, looking at both the Home and War Front. It was interesting to see how quickly Berwick became involved. The exhibition was well attended and parts of it were used again at the Red Cross Open Day at Mindrum Gardens and the service held by the Legion to mark the centenary of the outbreak of war. In June, the Record Office also contributed a presentation on First World War sources to a workshop run by Northumberland County Council for North Northumberland community groups which was really well attended. The workshop was the first event to be held in the newly refurbished Education Room in the Museum. In the next few months, the Record Office will start to run a volunteer project specifically looking at the Archives and what we hold relating to the War – see later article – and this topic will continue to play a major part in our work over the next few years.

The Flodden Project has continued to keep me very occupied. The transcribers are working their way through a mid 16th century document called the Laws of the Marches and then will start working on early 16th accounts for the repair of Norham Castle. We have turned up some really interesting information. As well as the transcription part of the Project, I have also been working with Jane Miller and Chris Burgess on education based activities. In mid June, we held the “Big Dig” for schools which combined archaeology and archives. Over 5 days we worked with various school and community groups on the Ford Moss site, near Ford Village introducing them to archaeology and the importance of finding out the background to a site through archive research. The children got the opportunity to try their hand at digging out test pits, cleaning their finds, having a guided tour of the site and finding out about the people who lived there through studying census returns. This was a great but exhausting experience which the children really enjoyed – we learnt a lot too about the site which was a former colliery and village which is not apparent now. We hope to repeat the event next year, building on what we have learnt this year.

As well as these two projects, work has started on the Manorial Documents Register Project. This is a Northumberland Archives project in partnership with the National Archives which will eventually lead to the inclusion of Northumberland manorial records on the National Archives database. This will take us about two years but is a very worthwhile project from our point of view. It also means that I get the chance to catalogue and check original records which is often a luxury in my job today. It’s a challenge as it also includes researching the history of the descent of manors but an exciting and worthwhile one.

Preparations are also continuing for the Berwick 900 Project next year. The programme of events has been put together and we are now looking for funding for various elements of it. Unfortunately we have been unsuccessful in our initial bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund

in relation to the Our Families Project but we have been asked to resubmit which still gives us hope. Fingers crossed that our resubmission is successful as it is an exciting project and one which will benefit the town. A copy of the programme of events and weekends can be found on the Berwick 900 website and a flier will be included with the next newsletter. Watch this space !

Those who live in Berwick will be aware that the Tweeddale Press will be moving out of their building in the next couple of months. In preparation for this, the Berwick Record Office has been undertaking a lot of work in the building, boxing up all their negatives and hard copies of the newspapers post 1900. This has been a very physical and tiring job which wouldn't have been possible without the help and support of our two young volunteers, Graham Robson and Cameron Robertson. Thanks to their efforts, all the volumes and negatives have been moved to the Record Office. Although the main series of negatives starts in 1965, we have found a couple of boxes of glass plates which predate this. Cameron has been looking through these and found some interesting ones, including the images which appeared in the 1958 150th anniversary supplement. We will need to do a lot more work on this collection but it is early days yet. In the meantime, we are continuing our work on the Photocentre Collection, identifying photographs and repackaging the colour negatives. We are now working on the 6th box of negatives which doesn't sound as if we have achieved much but as we have repackaged over 1100 envelopes, each containing at least 12 negatives, that comes to about 16,500 individual negatives which is a lot ! We still have lots to do but at least we are making progress.

That's all for now.

Linda Bankier

THE FIRST VISIT OF THE MARCHIONESS OF WATERFORD TO FORD

The third Marquis of Waterford became the owner of the Ford Estate in 1827 following the death of his mother, Susanna, wife of the second Marquis of Waterford. She was the

daughter of Sarah Hussey Delaval. In 1842, Henry, the third Marquis married Louisa Stuart who became known as the Marchioness of Waterford. In September 1842, shortly after their marriage, he brought his new bride over from Ireland to Northumberland to see his estate and the following reports appeared in the newspaper about their visit. Louisa obviously fell in love with the estate and the area as on his death in 1859, Henry left his Ford Estate to his wife during her lifetime. On her death in 1891, it reverted back to the Waterford family with whom it remained until it was sold to the Joicey family.

Berwick Advertiser, September 1842

Etal, Sept 23 – Lord and Lady Frederick Fitzclarence and family are expected to return from Bruntsfield House, near Edinburgh, to their residence at Etal House, tomorrow. The Marquis and Marchioness of Waterford arrived at their seat at Ford Castle on a short visit, on the evening of Saturday last. This joyous event, which had been for sometime expected, and for which due preparations had been made, was signalled by an immense fire on the top of the hill immediately to the east of Ford, as well as by others on some of the neighbouring heights. In the early part of the week, the noble Lord and the Marchioness, together with David Stuart, and J.C. Blackden, Esquires, his Lordship's agents, with that courtesy and kindness for which they are remarkable, visited most of the residents and inspected the houses etc in Ford village and other places on the estate – their visits yesterday (Thursday) including amongst places that of Ford Forge, where the extensive spade manufactory of Messers Thomas Black and Son, and the carding and dyeing establishment of the Messers Town occupied a good deal of their attention. After a minute inspection of some of the various processes in each, the Noble Marquis intimated to Mr Black his desire to witness the process of manufacturing a spade, an article for which he understood Ford Forge had long been celebrated – which desire was immediately acceded to, a spade of first rate workmanship having been begun and finished in the presence of the party, who departed highly gratified, - the Marquis taking the newly made spade along with him in his carriage, after giving a gratuity of half a sovereign to each of the workmen by whom it was manufactured; and generously presenting a couple of sovereigns more amongst the establishment in general, in order to enable them to drink the health of his Lordship and that of his amiable consort the Marchioness, as well as otherwise enjoy themselves a little on such an auspicious occasion.

The Marquis and Marchioness of Waterford after a visit of twelve days to Ford Castle, left this morning at half past six o'clock for Newcastle. They were escorted beyond the bounds of their property by the tenants on horseback. During their stay, they visited every place

worthy of being seen in their neighbourhood. In our last we mentioned the visit of the Marquis to the spade manufactory at Ford Forge, in the operations of which he seemed to take great interest. On Saturday he and the Marchioness descended the coal-pit at Ford hill. It is very unusual for females to descend these pits as the natural timidity of the sex generally deters them, but the Marchioness seems made of firmer stuff, and, a conveyance having been prepared, she and the Marquis, with a workman to guide the descent, were let down to the depth of forty fathoms into the bowels of the earth. After inspecting the arrangements below, they were brought up again, much gratified by their visit. The inhabitants at Ford are quite delighted with their landlord and his lady, and as they are understood to be similarly well pleased with their visit, it is expected that it will be repeated at no far distant day.

Linda Bankier

FIRST WORLD WAR

The Northumberland Archives has been awarded a grant by the Heritage Lottery Fund to try and uncover what information we actually hold in the archives relating to the First World War. Berwick Record Office shall be looking at the Home Front and the War Front and will concentrate on the North Northumberland area. Carole Pringle, my assistant has been appointed as the Volunteer Co-ordinator for this Project.

We are very keen to involve volunteers in this project and to set the ball rolling we are holding an open meeting in the Record Office on **Tuesday 30th September at 2pm** for people to come along and find out more about the project and see if they would like to become involved. Some of you have contacted me already and so, please do come along to the meeting. If you know anyone else who would be interested, pass the message on and encourage them to come too. Most of the work will be based in the Record Office but we are looking at possibly digitising some resources which could be worked on at home. Just get in touch if you want to be involved but can't attend the meeting.

Linda Bankier

We have had a very successful season , with an increase in visitor numbers of over a quarter. We opened for two weekends over the school Easter vacation, as well as weekends in the school summer holidays, and were rewarded with lots of extra visits. We plan to be open during the autumn half term vacation, too. Next weekend is usually the busiest of the year when Berwick Food festival comes to the Barracks Square, and we will open for Berwick Film Festival this year, too.

Our 2014 exhibition of Berwick townscapes will soon make way for an interesting new experimental exhibition/installation “Return to Sender”, created by the artist Sally Madge. Linked to Berwick Film Festival’s theme of ‘Border Crossings’, the title of the installation refers to the fact that much of the flotsam and jetsam washed up on the shores of Lindisfarne is carried there by tidal currents from various places north of the island, including Berwick.

The aim is to return some of this material from whence it came and exhibit it as transformed items, including sculpture, assemblage, video, photography, film props, writings and recorded events. Artworks by collaborating artists are also included in the installation as well as artefacts generated from a postal art project where packages containing beach litter have been sent to, transformed and received back from a range of recipients, including visual artists, children, designers, scientists, writers and others.

For half term, we return to a more conventional theme, as we have been offered the North East Wildlife photography competition once again. Last year’s exhibition proved very popular, especially with our younger visitors, and the photographs this time look every bit as wonderful as last year’s winners.

The new set of Family Trails, which we had designed for the 2014 season, have won a prestigious printing industry award, taking the “Judges’ Choice” prize in the Pocket Media Awards. The artist Daniel Wetheritt had provided some charming illustrations based on the museum collections to accompany Jenny Dockett’s text. The trails, which come in a set of four - one for each Woodhorn Trust museum, are free, though we do have a suggested donation of 50p to enable a reprint if necessary.

Liz and Jenny – two of our front of house staff – have been researching our WWI plaque, which came to us from Berwick Grammar School in 1991. We aim to find out as much as we can about the people named on the plaque, with a view to putting on a display next season.

Jenny's other project has been to give the ship's bell from HMS Berwick a thorough clean. She has done such a good job of this that she is now having to clean the other bells in the collection, as they now look very shabby in comparison! Jenny is gathering stories from people who served on the ship, and who could remember it visiting the town. By a coincidence, we have just been given a splendid watercolour painting of a later HMS Berwick by J. Fergie to add to our collections. We will make a small exhibition featuring both items next season.

Friends will be delighted to hear that our joint HLF application (with Berwick Visual Arts) for an exhibition and an education programme on the Burrell Collection was successful, and work has just got underway on the project . We will stage the exhibition at the Granary Gallery early in 2015 , and because we have funding for an education officer, we will be able to do lots of work with schools and colleges. We also plan to carry out some oral history interviews as part of the programme, trying to find people in Berwick who might have memories of Sir William Burrell, and the museum in the 1950s. We are looking for volunteers to help us with all these aspects of the project, so if you feel like taking part in carrying out research into the artworks, learning how to record interviews or helping with schools work, please do get in touch - we would love to hear from you.

Berwick Museum has now got a Facebook page. We hope to keep it up to date with interesting pictures and facts, notice of events etc. Please do check it out, and tell us what you would like to see on there... and like us!

Anne Moore / 3rd September 2014

Berwick Food Festival weekend (September 13th -14th) & Film Festival (September 20th -21st)

Saturday 1000-1700 /Sunday 1100-1600

Half term Holiday (25th October – 31st October)

Saturday & Monday – Friday 1100 -1700 / Sunday 1100 -1600

Anne Moore - Museums Officer, North Northumberland.

A CHARMED LIFE

This is an account of the events behind a brief entry in the Caledonian Mercury for 4th February 1782, and the subsequent outcome.

The story in the Caledonian Mercury read:

This morning, came on before the High Court of Justiciary, the trial of Thomas Gordon, formerly residing at Spittle, near Berwick, indicted at the instance of his Majesty's Advocate, for stealing two sheep, in company with another person unknown, from a park in the farm of Lamberton, and county of Berwick, on the evening of the 24th of October last; and likewise of snapping a pistol at, and stabbing Abraham Logan, possessor of the above farm, with a knife in different parts of his body,; and also of being habit and repute a thief.

The account of the trial survives in the Records of the National Archives of Scotland. From it the following story can be pieced together. On or about the evening of 24 October, about 8.00 pm Thomas Huntly, shepherd to Abraham Logan, tenant of Lamberton Farm, was making his way back to the farm, when on passing the sheep park, his dog barked and he saw two men leading their horses. They claimed to have lost their way, but, near where the men were, Huntly saw what he thought were two dead sheep. Discretion being the better part of valour, he left the men and hurried the quarter of a mile to his master's house, where he told him of the men and that he thought they had killed the sheep. Logan immediately armed himself with a stick, and called for the assistance of one of his hinds – George Kerse. All three men returned to the sheep park, Huntly lagging a little behind. When they arrived the men and horses were still there. Logan and Kerse climbed the wall into the park and challenged the two men, Logan taking on the one and Kerse the other. Both men pulled out guns, but both misfired. Kerse succeeded in felling the one man with the help of Huntly, but the other drew a knife on Logan and stabbed him five times on the arm, side, breast and back. Logan shouted for help and Huntly and Kerse came to his aid, overcoming the assailant and taking the halter from one of the horses to tie the man up. In the process they discovered a bag with the carcasses of the two sheep, a second bag with the sheep entrails and one sheepskin, the other skin lying across the back of a grey horse. Meanwhile the other man took advantage of the distraction to make good his escape. The Lamberton men took the prisoner, the sacks and the horses back to the farm, and a doctor was sent for to see to Logan's wounds. The following morning the ground was searched again and the knife, pistols and two greatcoats were found.

At this point, Alexander Renton, the Lamberton JP, arrived to question the prisoner whom he identified as Thomas Gordon, a man with a bad reputation; indeed he said that if anything went missing it is commonly said that it must have been taken away by Gordon or some of his Gang, and he is looked upon as the head of a Gang that practice the taking away the goods of other people.

Having said that, he was unable to give definite examples of previous crimes of which Gordon had been convicted. Renton also identified the horses saying that the grey was Gordon's and the brown he thought belonged to Gordon's son-in-law, Ananias Jamieson.

Under questioning, Gordon, who was 62 years old, told a very different tale. He described himself as a hornspoonmaker, and said that the previous evening he had left his house in Spittal with one John Williamson, a horse dealer and smuggler, who was going to Eyemouth to get some tea. (Was he one of the customers of Gunsgreen House?) They had stopped by the Park as Williamson had wanted to pass water, and his horse ran off, resulting in the two men chasing it, and it was while they were looking for it, that Logan and his servants attacked them. He conceded that the horse Williamson was riding did belong to Jamieson, but said he didn't know how Williamson had come by it. He absolutely denied having anything to do with killing the sheep.

On the basis of the evidence, Gordon was taken to Edinburgh and imprisoned in the Tolbooth, with the trial fixed for 26 January, later adjourned to 4 February. Henry Dundas of Melville, Lord Advocate of Scotland, and in the days when the Hanoverian kings took little interest in the affairs of their northern kingdom, nicknamed 'King Harry IX' and 'Grand Master of Scotland', took charge of the prosecution. At the trial, Gordon pleaded 'Not Guilty', but offered nothing save one character witness in his own defence. Further evidence was given suggesting that the second man may have been Jamieson; there was also hearsay evidence that Gordon was a notorious thief, countered by two statements that he always paid any monies owing on time. James More, the Sheriff Officer of Berwickshire added that both Gordon's sister and daughter were known thieves. The following morning the 15 men of the jury were unanimous in finding Gordon guilty and the sentence was pronounced:

...the said Thomas Gordon to be carried from the Bar back to the Tolbooth of Edinburgh therein to be detained till Wednesday the Thirteenth day of March next and upon that day to be taken forth of the said Tolbooth, and carried to the common place of Execution in the Grass market of Edinburgh and then & there between the Hours of two and four o'Clock in the afternoon of said day to be hanged by the neck by the hands of the common Executioner upon a Gibbet until he be dead, and ordain all his moveable goods & gear to be Escheat and inbrought to his Majesty's use, which is pronounced for Doom.

According to the Caledonian Mercury, Gordon remained composed. He did not deny his guilt but said that the trial had been the result of spite and malice. He begged that his body might be returned to his wife.

At this point the story becomes more complicated. On 7 March, a letter was sent from London, respiting the death sentence until 1 April, because, it was said, Gordon's four sons had offered to enlist in the army if their father could be spared. A second letter survives from 29 March, saying the death sentence was respited till further signification of His Majesty's Pleasure. There is however a report in Ruddiman's Weekly Mercury for 27 March:

Thomas Gordon, condemned to be hanged for sheep-stealing, who was respited, is now (27th March 1782) ordered for execution on Monday next, in consequence of an application of the gentlemen and farmers of Berwickshire, setting forth his abandoned character, and showing how unworthy he was of the Royal clemency.

The Leeds Intelligencer of 2 April rather confirmed this account stating that:

On Sunday an express arrived from the Secretary of State's office, with a letter from Lord Viscount Stormont, to the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh, signifying his Majesty's pleasure, that no longer respite would be granted to Thomas Gordon, convicted of sheep stealing. The sentence of the law will therefore be put in execution on Monday next. We formerly mentioned, that his Majesty granted the respite to Gordon, on account of the filial duty of four of his sons, who offered to enlist in his Majesty's service, on condition of their father being pardoned. These four young fellows were all attested last week before the Magistrates for the 48th regiment; but we presume they will now be discharged.

There the paper trail for Thomas Gordon seemed to end. No further reports recorded either his hanging or his pardoning, but we had tended to think he must have been hanged in the Grassmarket. Then, a couple of months later, whilst looking up something completely different, we found the following entry in The Local Historian's Table Book:

1810 - Died, at Spital, near Berwick, after a life of strange vicissitudes and wonderful escapes, aged above 90, T. Gordon. It is related of him, that at one period of his life, being under sentence of death in Edinburgh gaol, one of the county magistrates, speaking warmly about the prisoner, said that "all the Gordons should be hanged." This speech was conveyed to the then duchess of Gordon, who, feeling for the honour of the name, immediately exerted all her influence in behalf of Gordon, and succeeded in getting his sentence changed to a few years' solitary confinement.

On checking further this proved to be the exact obituary published by the Berwick Advertiser at the time of his death.

Sadly, so far it has not proved possible to establish exactly how the Duchess of Gordon had him spared, but Wikipedia includes the information that she was the mistress of Henry Dundas, Lord Advocate for Scotland. Perhaps the fact is not irrelevant.

Jane Bowen & Janet Ward

CONSTABULARY DUTY

In March 1785 two of Berwick's parish constables made a legal deposition before the Mayor concerning an incident which had occurred a few days previously. The (unpaid) constables exercised considerable authority in enforcing the law, especially during the hours of darkness. They carried a staff which was their badge of office and on occasions a useful weapon too.

"The joint and several Informations of John Ross and James Hume, two of the Constables of and for Berwick.... [They say that] on Sunday morning [6th March 1785] between twelve and one o'clock they apprehended a Woman which they suspected to be of ill fame, and as they were enquiring of her what she was doing there at that time, one William Cook, ... Gardiner, came up to them in a very furious manner and ordered them to set her at liberty as she was a freeman's Wife."

When the constables refused to let her go, Cook tried to take away their staff. A struggle ensued between them which lasted for 15 minutes, during which one constable was hit in the face and the other bitten on the hand. At this point two other people came up to join the fight - against the constables, who were then obliged to take flight for their safety. The lady apparently went on her way.

Source: B.R.O. BA/C15/4

For more about parish constables, see the article by Dennis Nicholson in Newsletter no.8 (December 1995) pp.7-9. Available on the website at:

<http://www.berwickfriends.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/Newsletter-1995-December1.pdf>

John Spiers

SHOCKING HABITS OF POULTRY

Case: Drunk and Incapable - December 1896 at Oban, before Sheriff Mactavish.

John Turner, Laggan, claimed £50 damages, restricted to £12, against a local distillery company, for injury done to his poultry by the said company in allowing intoxicating material to flow into the Laggan burn.

This material, it was alleged, caused drunkenness among the pursuer's poultry, and consequently rendered them of little or no value to him. Pursuer elicited that for some years past he had been making a considerable income from keeping poultry, but that since the starting of the distillery he had made little or nothing. His hens and ducks would not eat.

They were, he might say, almost more or less under the influence of drink, except on Sundays, when the distillery was not working. On Sundays their condition was pitiable in the extreme. Mondays were their worst days, for then the hens drank excessively, fell into the burn frequently, and lately he had to keep a boy to look after them on Monday mornings.

They took no food unless they first had a walk to Laggan burn. Their conduct was generally very reprehensible, and the ducks were no better than the hens.

It took the poultry some time to discover the burn. He thought it was a hen he had bought at Fort William that had made the discovery first, and that she had led the rest astray. Cross examined. by Mr William Smith, solicitor, have you ever observed "gapes" in hens? - Yes. Do you not consider that your hens are suffering from "gapes"? Yes; whisky "gapes" -(laughter). Did you know anything about this Fort William hen before you bought her? - Nothing whatever.

Superintendent Moss was then asked by Mr Scott to place on the bench a large cage of wickerwork containing the Fort William hen referred to.

He asked to be allowed to recall the pursuer, granted Mr Scott: this is the Fort William Hen? - It is - is it sober? - It is not. Anyone could notice that this was correct, for it sat on the bottom of the cage and put its long neck through the bars, looked sideways at the ceiling, crooning to itself in, what was termed a "maudlin style" by the pursuer.

This was always noticed, he stated, when it was 'far gone.' At this stage the hen seemed to address some forcible remarks to his lordship who ordered it to be taken away.

Examination continued: Was this hen at the distillery burn this morning? - Anyone could see that (laughter). How are the other hens today? Worse than this one. Was this the only one you could take to court? - Yes. Why? - The rest were too drunk. So that on the whole the Fort William hen is not the worst - That is so. How do you account for that - she can stand it better.

Cross-examined: What do the hens do when they return from the burn? - Sleep. Anything else? - After a sleep they generally fight. Have you no sober hens at all? - Yes, but the drunken ones break their eggs.

For the pursuer it was contended that he had made out he was entitled to damages. In an able speech for the defence it was submitted that the contention had not been proved. The condition of the pursuer's hens might be due to influenza. His lordship stated that, the case being a peculiar one, he would delay giving a decision that day. The court was crowded, and the Fort William hen was the object of much interest outside. A thoughtful individual presented to it fully half a glass of whisky, which it took greedily. This revived it considerably, and it cackled at a great rate, to the intense enjoyment of the bystanders.

Kevin Graham

TITHE FOR TURNIPS

Maureen Charlton found this information in some papers relating to Branxton Church :

Mr. Perryn's Opinion concer[nin]g Tithe Turnips

If Turnips be eaten upon the Ground without Severance from the Ground by profitable Cattle the Rector is not entitled to the Tithe of such turnips; but if they are once severed from Ground the Tithes are payable for them let them be eaten by what Cattle they may: and as to turnips eaten by sheep it is to be observed; that if sheep, after they are shorn, are fed upon turnips and then sold, Tithe must be paid for them¹s unprofitable Cattle from the Time of shearing. And as Turnips eaten upon the Ground by unprofitable Cattle Tithe must be paid for them as for Herbage (that is to say) the Tenth Part of the Value. If turnips be howed up, pulled severed or carried from the field they grew upon, in any of these Cases the Rector will be entitled to the Tithe of these Turnips.

The Opinion of Mr. Charles York (concerning Tithe Turnips) who was appointed Lord Chancellor just before he died.

When Turnips are drawn the Parson is entitled to every Tenth Turnip: Where they are only hoed and fed by Sheep or Cattle, an Agistment [Adjustment] Tithe shall be paid for Sheep depastured on Turnips, al [all] the Tithe Wool has been already paid, because it is a new Increase.

In like Mannor it shall be paid for the feeding of all dry Cattle w[hi]ch do not serve for Plow or Pail.

Footnote

Mr. Charles Yorke was Lord Chancellor between December 1722 and January 1770

Maureen Charlton

BELFORD WAR MEMORIAL

Whilst undertaking research on Belford Presbyterian Church, Val found the following information in the Managers' minute book (Ref : BUR/P8/3) :

21 June 1915 Roll of Honour to be hung in porches of church.

26 March 1917 Mr Millican made reference to the loss the Board of Managers and the church had sustained in the sad death of Mr George William Young while serving his country in her hour of need, who as one of our members had been ever ready and willing to give his services in the best interests of the church and he moved that letters of sympathy and condolence be sent from the Managers to Mrs George William Young and to his mother, Mrs Young, and family in their sad and irreparable loss.

Dr McDonald, in seconding, spoke of his association with Mr Young who as secretary to the Young Men's Mutual Improvement Association had helped greatly to make the association a success.

8 June 1919 Mr and Mrs Hunter of Outchester offered to erect in the church or hall a memorial brass in honour of those members and adherents of the congregation who had given their lives for their country in the Great War.

18 June 1919 Mr Miller read the list of names who had fallen and all connected to the church who had served in the army or navy. It was proposed that the brass should be hung in the hall as a Roll of Honour.

14 Oct 1921 Names added to the Roll of Honour : James Young, James Taylor, Thomas F Hunter, John Blackhall, William Clark.

Val Glass

WORLD WAR 1 ADVERTISER SNIPPETS

As a new feature, we will include some snippets from the Berwick Advertiser about the First World War period in each newsletter over the next couple of years. The first are just at the beginning of the war.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 7 AUGUST 1914

WEDDING AT BEADNELL

Captain W.S. Craster and Miss Esther Marshall - The wedding of Captain W.S. Craster and Miss Esther Marshall took place at St. Ebba's Church Beadnell, on Thursday afternoon. The weather was perfect and the road to the church was gay with flags. The bride, who was given away by her father, Colonel Marshall looked charming in a white satin charmeuse gown, the lace covered bodice and draped skirt being caught up with pearl and diamante clasps. She wore a veil of Brussels net with a circlet of orange blossom, her ornaments being a beautiful string of pearls and pearl diamond and aquamarine brooch, both wedding gifts. She carried a bouquet of white lilies and carnations, a gift of the bridegroom.

OFF TO DUTY

The Wooler section of the 7th Northumberland Fusiliers numbering twenty men left Wooler on Wednesday morning at 8 o'clock by motor for Belford, their destination being Tynemouth Castle. Leit. Swan was in charge and the men were drawn up in the Market Place, where he addressed them, saying it was no child's play they were going to, but actual warfare. The men were loudly cheered as they left.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 7 AUG 1914

Wooler- Excitement is getting high and the different editions of the newspapers are eagerly scanned. There was a run on food stuffs on Tuesday, prices having advanced considerably.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 7 AUG 1914

Great excitement prevailed in Lowick on Wednesday, when Government officials arrived in the village, taking away the suitable horses and having the schools prepared for hospitals. The beds are expected to arrive at Beal tonight. It is to be hoped they will never be needed, but at the time of writing things are indeed looking extremely black.

BERWICK ADVERTISER, 7 AUG 1914

Wedding at Beadnell-Captain W.S. Craster and Miss Esther Marshall.

The wedding of Captain W.S. Craster and Miss Esther Marshall took place at St. Ebba's Church, Beadnell, on Thursday afternoon. The weather was perfect and the road to the church

Norman Anderson

Berwick Advertiser, 3rd March, 1871

BERWICK AMATEUR ROWING CLUB

This Club has this week made an increase to its already large stock of boats, by the addition of a beautiful new racing four built by J.H. Clasper of Wandsworth. The craft-a splendid specimen of the boat-builder's art, which reflects the greatest credit on her maker-weighs, when fitted with the outriggers, only 80lbs; she is forty-two feet in length, twenty inches broad amidships, and seven inches deep in the centre. The Club, we are informed, will, in all likelihood, be represented at the forthcoming Tyne Regatta to be held in June next, by both a senior and junior crew, the former of which, seated in the new four, will doubtless give a good account of itself.

Berwick Advertiser, 10th March, 1871

THE CENSUS

The TOWN CLERK read a printed communication addressed to the Mayor from George Graham the Registrar General, stating that the census would be taken on April 3rd next, by enumerators acting under the instructions from the Census Office, carried out by Superintendent Registrars and Registrars of births and deaths, and asking assistance in the undertaking. The community would be enumerated in districts framed for the convenience of enumeration, and connection with the local boundaries. The houses inhabited, uninhabited, and building-would also be taken in their several streets and roads, each house being described by its name or number. The Local Government Act enacted that the authorities shall cause all streets to be named, and houses to be numbered, and it was hoped that the Town Council would forthwith take steps, where it is not already done, to name the streets or roads, and to number every dwelling- house under its jurisdiction. An outline of some suggestions as to the system of naming streets and numbering houses was sent along with the circular.

The MAYOR said that the question as to naming the streets and numbering the houses was receiving consideration, and would probably be soon brought under their notice.

TOILET MAGAZINE

We have been favoured with a copy of this magazine, which is a collection of pamphlets upon toilet matters issued at different times during the year, by the well known perfumer, Alexander Ross. This work will be found to contain a great deal of amusing and interesting matter, besides useful hints and directions connected with the beautifying of the complexion and the encouragement of the growth of hair etc, and is well worth perusal.

Berwick Advertiser, 10th March, 1871

WRECK OF "THE MISTRESS OF THE SEA"

The barque Kirkland, of Sunderland, which put into Table Bay, Jan.20, landed part of the crew of the ship Mistress of the Seas, the foundering of which has already been announced in our columns. The Mistress of the Seas, of Greenock, Laing master, left Glasgow on the 30th July 1870, for Calcutta with a cargo of railway chairs, with a crew of 24. Soon after leaving it was found that the ship was making a little water near the sternpost of the vessel, which was only kept free of water by working the pumps. On the 27th Nov, she foundered in a hurricane in the Indian Ocean, lat.11.16.s., long.90E., part of the crew being saved by taking to the boat, in which they were picked up on the 8th December. We regret to find amongst those who went down in the ship:- Captain John Laing, captain, 32 years of age, from Berwick, who refused to venture into the boat as he could not swim; and Norman McKenzie, 39, Berwick. Captain Laing is a son of Mr William Laing, for some time chief porter in the Goods Department at Berwick Railway Station. Mackenzie leaves a widow, who resides in Church Street, and a family of three, two of whom are grown up. The return of the crew of the Mistress of the Seas is as follows:- Deserted, 1; died at sea, 1; saved in the lifeboat 11; left the ship in the gig, 3; went down with the ship, 11; total, 27 men.

Carole Pringle