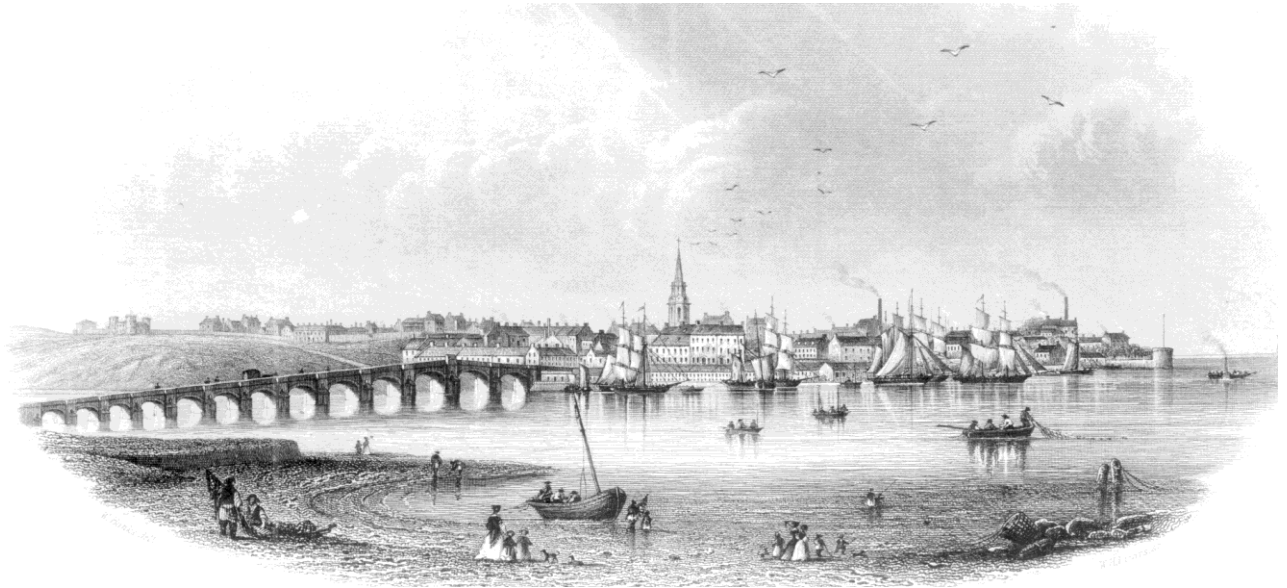


Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 96–JUNE 2018

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Wednesday 20th June 2018

Berwick Heritage Open Days Meeting,
Berwick Parish Centre, 7pm – see article

Thursday 28th June 2018

Fragments: Talk by Graham Taylor on his
work, created for the Peregrini Project and,
presently on display in the Museum. 7pm
start at Berwick Museum and Art Gallery

Saturday 30th June 2018

Armed Forces Day- Berwick in 1918.
Exhibition in the Guildhall, 10am -2pm

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

As most societies do not meet in the summer months, we have only listed those who will have meetings prior to mid-September.

BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY

Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 13th June Spittal Point-One of Berwick "Jewels" – A
presentation : Mike Greener

Wednesday 11th July Ancient Greek Medicine – Language &
Practice: Dr Peter Jones

NO LECTURES IN AUGUST

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

NO LECTURES IN JULY AND AUGUST

Monday 3rd September The Enigmatic Trusty's Hill: Royal
Capital of Rheged

NORHAM & LADYKIRK LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 11th June Holy Island and Lennel Archaeological
Digs : Mr Richard Carlton

Monday 9th July 16th century Berwick: Dr Catherine Kent

NO LECTURE IN AUGUST

Monday 10th September Medieval Villages of North
Northumberland: Mr Allan Colman

TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Crookham Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

NO LECTURES IN JULY AND AUGUST

Wednesday 5th September

Medieval Medicine and its use in the
present day: Dr Brian Moffat

ARCHIVE NEWS

It has been another busy couple of months in the Archives. Where does the time go - too fast for me! As well as the day to day running of the service, we have been involved in the following:

The Photocentre exhibition in the Granary ran through until mid May and proved to be a great success. Cameron and I and some of the Friends ran a couple of sessions to gather people's memories about the photos which provided us with very useful information. Just popping in and out, it was fascinating to hear people talk about the photos and what they evoked. Overall, we had about 3,500 visitors to the exhibition which was great for this time of year. We are hoping to do another one at some stage but need a break before that ! Three school groups visited to find out about photography. Scremerston First School is using the exhibition and a visit by Cameron to talk about photography to complete their Arts Award They will also take their own photos on a disposable camera which will be placed in the Archives.

April 2018 was the bicentenary of Lady Waterford's birth and a weekend was held in Ford to commemorate this. The Record Office resurrected it exhibition on "Ford at the Time of the Waterfords" which was displayed in Ford Castle and I also gave a talk on the topic. Over 400 people visited the Castle and looked at the different displays there.

Work has continued on the Peregrini Project. The Reading Room is now being renovated and a small archive room created for us to store some sources relating to

Holy Island. We are still working on the cataloguing of material for the website and also checking the Sheddick cards – about 1800 now double checked. These are all time consuming projects but well worth doing.

Although most of my work revolves around North Northumberland, I do get involved in initiatives covering the whole of the county. At the Whit Bank Holiday, Northumberland Archives attended the Northumberland County Show where we were encouraging people to use the archives and raise our profile. We had a steady flow of people all day. I also get involved in training and have delivered some Oral History workshops at Woodhorn for a group based in the Amble area.

The Record Office has a wonderful collection of Borough Archives relating to Berwick which are difficult for researchers to access because there is no electronic catalogue of the collection. In January I submitted an application to Archives Revealed for some financial support for a cataloguing grant. We got through Round 1 and were one of 18 applicants asked to submit a more detailed application. I submitted this in April and will hear the outcome in June. Fingers crossed as this is a task which needs to be done.

Finally, this year Heritage Open Days in Berwick will be organised by a small group who have been meeting regularly. Our plan is to organise a varied programme of buildings open and walks/exhibitions. See the article for further information on how you can help.

ALEXANDER LORIMER MILLER

At present St Andrews Wallace Green and the Methodist Church are undertaking a project to find out information about members of their congregation who fought in the First World War – both those who were killed and survived. There is usually a starting point for those who died as their names are often on a church memorial but the Methodist Church does not have one and so they have had to start from scratch. I have been helping the group and decided to research one of the names on the Wallace Green Memorial – A L Lorimer. Not knowing anything about him but being aware that his father was an auctioneer in the town, I checked the local newspapers and found the following article in the Berwickshire News on, 22 May 1917 :

BERWICK AUCTIONEER'S SON KILLED

Lt Alex. Lorimer Miller, Australian Force, son of Mr A L Miller, J P , Berwick, was this week reported wounded in France. He is a Native of Berwick, was educated at Berwick Grammar School, and was in business with his father before going to Australia, where he married a sister of Miss Daisy Kennedy, the famous violinist who is a relative of the family, and who is wife of Mr Benno Moisievitch, the celebrated Russian pianist and composer. Lt Miller had had much service in Egypt, in Dardanelles and in France, and was also some time on duty on Salisbury Plain holding a Staff Appointment.

We regret to learn that last night a telegram from the War Office was received by Lt Miller's relatives in Berwick, stating that he has died from his wounds. Deep sympathy will go out to his widow and child (a girl born while this gallant officer was out on service, and named Marion after his own sister who died young); and deep sympathy will also be felt for Lt Miller's father and brother and relatives.



This gave me some clues for my research and some interesting connections. Using various sources I managed to find out more about Alexander. The article mentioned that his father lived in Berwick and so I was able to locate Alexander Lorimer Miller, senior and junior through the census returns. These told me that Alexander, junior was born in the first few months of 1891 when the family were living in Palace Street. His father was Scottish whilst his mother, Jane was born at Waren House near Budle Bay. Her maiden name was Short, one of the family who owned HO Short in Tweedmouth and Waren. Jane was 15 years younger than her husband but sadly died in February 1895, aged 32 years. Alexander was one of three children –

he had an elder brother, Hugh who became an actor and a sister Marion who died at the end of 1895, aged 1.

Alexander remained in Berwick until at least 1911. In that year, he is recorded in the census as living with his widowed father in 44 Castlegate. By then he had finished school – attended Berwick Grammar School between 1900 and 1907 - and was aged 20 and noted as an Auctioneer's assistant. He was also a member of Berwick Cricket Club. It is unclear when Alexander actually went out to Australia but he is certainly there by late 1914. When war broke out he was in New Caledonia but went to Australia to join up. Unlike British Service records, the Australian ones are very detailed and relate what happened to him between his enrolment and death as well as subsequent information about his family.

The records are available online and having downloaded them, I have worked through all 100 images and pieced together the following :

19 January 1891 – Alexander Lorimer Miller born in Berwick

10 June 1915 – joined Australian Imperial Force (AIF) – attestation papers said that before joining up he had served 4 years with the Northumberland Fusiliers; 1 year with Lothian and Border Horse and 7 months with the 13th Infantry of AIF but had been discharged after contracting enteric fever. Physical description at time of joining in 1915 : Height 6 feet 2; chest = 37 inches; weight = 12 stone

September 1915 – received a Commission

18 December 1915 – married Elizabeth Isabel Kennedy at Wayville, South Australia

February 1916 – left Adelaide for Suez and eventually came to England

September – November 1916 – hospitalised in Fargo Hospital (England) with Influenza/malaria

January 1917 – sent to France

March 1917 - promoted to Lieutenant

27 April 1917 – rejoined his unit having been in hospital

6 May 1917 – received wound in action

8 May 1917 – died in 3rd Casualty Clearing Station of a gunshot wound to the abdomen.

May 1917 – buried in Grevillers British Cemetery in France

Often not much information is available after this in the service records but Miller's records provide more about his family and other personal details :

Medal Entitlement : 1914-15 ; British War Medal and Victory Medal

From 16 July 1917 – his widow was granted a fortnightly pension of £3 10 – 0 and his daughter, Marion, a fortnightly pension of 20 shillings

2 January 1918 : Alexander's widow received the first parcel of his personal effects : disc (2) and chain; whistle; lanyard; watch; 4 stars; braces; spirit flask; note case; letters; photos and fountain pen.

2 January 1920 – his widow received the contents of Alexander's suitcase which included : a rifle grenade; slippers. Mittens; brush and comb; sleeping bag; flannel shirt and boot polisher

January 1921 – his widow was in America but planning to go to London to live there.

July 1921 – his widow wrote a letter to the Australian authorities informing them that her permanent address in England for the next few years would be 67 Upper Richmond Road, Putney in London (home of her sister)

I have tried to find out what happened to Alexander's widow, Elizabeth and his daughter, Marion. I can find no trace of them in English records but they may have returned to Australia or she may have remarried. I have had more luck with his brother, Hugh Miller, about whom an article can be found on our website - <http://www.berwickfriends.org.uk/history/hugh-miller-actor/> . He became a well known actor.

I had no idea what I would discover when I started this research. However, it has shown that Berwick people have links far and wide – Nigel Kennedy, the famous violinist is a descendant of Daisy Kennedy. There are still lots of unanswered questions – when did Alexander leave England and why; what happened to his family? If you have any additional information on Alexander Lorimer Miller, please do let me know. I have really enjoyed undertaking this research but there is more information out there to unearth ! If anyone would like to help with the project, please do get in touch.

Linda Bankier

MUSEUM NEWS

The season is now in full swing at the Barracks, and we have just had a very busy half term week with a goodly number of visitors.

We opened this year with an exhibition of artwork from the Peregrini Project. Entitled "Fragments", this is a display of work inspired by Lindisfarne and the North Northumberland coast by potter Graham Taylor, poet Katrina Porteous and photographer Josie Snook, together with crafts by the Peregrini participants. It was

nice to see some of you at the very well attended open evening for the show back in April. Looking forward, a series of Peregrini crafts sessions and related events have been scheduled in throughout the season, beginning with an evening talk with Graham Taylor at 7pm on 28th June.

We are in the throes of putting up our new temporary show about Spittal, with a rare opportunity to see Arthur Wood's wonderful ceramic scale model of the high street at its centre. We are having much fun researching for the exhibition, and have found interesting material in the collection about the Venetian Pavilion and the prom and some fantastic photographs of the lifeboat and its crews. We will also be getting out that perennial visitor's favourite - the 1930s football machine once again. The show should open by the end of June, and we will have a special viewing evening for Friends in early July.

We are contributing exhibits to an interesting and unusual show at the Literary & Philosophical Society in Newcastle upon Tyne as a spin off from the main Great Exhibition of the North project on display this summer. The Lit & Phil, founded in 1793, was the venue for the very first museum in the region – a stuffed wombat and a duck billed platypus are recorded as part of its original collection. The "Imaginary Museum" will include interesting and unusual items from Berwick – sadly, no stuffed wombat, but perhaps some ancient Egyptian mummy artefacts, some pinned butterfly specimens and maybe a Thomas Bewick engraved banknote!

We have recently started an after school art club for a trial period, overseen by Rebecca. We had a good turnout for the initial meeting this week; all the children had a fun time and we hope to be able to stage a small exhibition of their work during the summer holidays. In conjunction with the art club, we will be running an art competition at the same time, as part of a project to document our Islamic decorative art collections. We have been given advice on these items by Professor James Allan of Oxford University as part of the Subject Specialist Advisory Network - mostly donated to the museum by Sir William Burrell; this small but highly decorative collection contains ceramics from Turkey and Spain, and metal objects from Persia.

Berwick's Degas drawing is being prepared for going out on display again over this summer. We have received funding to commission a special purpose built display case for the delicate artwork, which was recently included in "Degas – Drawn in Colour", a major exhibition over the winter at the National Gallery London which featured all of the artist's work from the Burrell Glasgow.

A final mention goes to our Education Officer Jane Miller, who – sadly for us but happily for Jane – has been seconded to the Union Chain Bridge project in its initial stages. I am sure you will join with us in wishing her every success.

Please do drop in and see us over the summer - we would be delighted to see you!

Anne Moore

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS IN BERWICK

This year Heritage Open Days in Berwick will take place from Friday 14th to Sunday 16th September. We are trying to organise a programme of open buildings/talks/walks and exhibitions. As this is all done on a voluntary basis, we need volunteers to help us over the actual weekend – man exhibitions; help those guiding walks etc. If you are interested in getting involved in any way, come along to our meeting at Berwick Parish Centre on Wednesday 20th June at 7pm to find out more. Refreshments provided !

If you are organising an event in North Northumberland for Heritage Open Days, please let me know as I will produce a list of all events taking place over the two weekends which can be distributed to publicise them. I will also make sure that Berwick Tourist Information are aware of what is happening in the area.

Linda Bankier

FBDMA LECTURE

Following the AGM of the Friends of Berwick & District Museum & Archives held on 16 March, Dr Catherine Kent gave a lecture on "The 1562 'General Survey' in Berwick's First Book of Enrollments", with a subtitle quoted from the book itself, "One perfytt Booke".

Berwick is fortunate in having preserved among its records a detailed property survey, ordered by the government in 1562 both to bring some order to the documentation of property rights in the town and to establish what amounts of rent the Crown should be receiving from the holders of 'burgage' plots. Today it provides an important source of information about the social history of Berwick in the Elizabethan period as well as a detailed record of buildings in the town and the history of their ownership.

In Berwick the system of land registration was the responsibility of the Chamberlain, whose seal would be attached to transaction documents. By the 1560s however, things were in disarray: the seal had been lost and a forgery was suspected of being in use; and court judgments in land disputes often displayed local favouritism. At the same time that the construction of the new fortifications was being undertaken and requiring the demolition of numerous houses, the population of Berwick was actually growing and more houses were being built, often without permission or proper records.

Therefore the Privy Council commissioned Thomas Romney, a young man from Gloucestershire who had been educated at the Middle Temple, to act as an independent investigator and to produce a survey of the town's property. In order to find the money to pay him, it was proposed that if the Mayor and the burgesses each paid four shillings, the town could have second copy of the survey made for their own use. Romney started work on 2 October 1562, with a team of 24 men, and the relatively short time of five weeks was allowed for completion of the task. Romney achieved this but only delivered a copy of the survey to Sir William Cecil, Elizabeth's Secretary of State, many months later in July 1563. It was even longer before the burgesses of Berwick obtained their copy.

This copy survived in the town archives, albeit with some damage along the way, and in the 1990s it was properly conserved and rebound (it is now in Berwick Record Office). The Survey is written on paper and fills about 50 folio sheets, with an average of 4 or 5 property entries per page. One of the losses over time has been several pages which appear to have been cut out, all of them relating to properties in the Greenses. About 450 properties are described in total. They relate only to those which had a door on the street and hence were liable for burghmail rent; those houses which were built behind the front plot were not included (that is, those more likely to be occupied by poorer and more mobile sections of the population).

It was clear from Dr Kent's lecture that the Survey is a rich source of personal stories from the period, giving insight into many aspects of Berwick's social life in Elizabethan times. Those names which feature in the survey can often be linked to records in other sources, such as the Enrolment books or the Holy Island land titles, allowing stories to be tracked through time. Sometimes the details of a property transaction can even be linked to architectural features, such as a wall or a blocked up doorway, which are still visible in the town today.

John Spiers

WHITE GLOVES – FRAGMENTS OF AN UNUSUAL CUSTOM

At the meeting of the Board of Guardians for the Glendale Union on 21 February 1884 Mr George William Balmain, Relieving Officer, announced that there had been no application for relief in his district and he therefore begged the Chairman's acceptance of a pair of white gloves as a remembrance of the occasion. I mentioned this to our archivist Linda Bankier, who told me that she had once come across this phenomenon but it was in connection with a court case at the Berwick Petty Sessions recorded in the Berwick Advertiser on 25 June 1915. It stated that "there was a unique little ceremony of presenting a pair of white gloves to the presiding Magistrate, the Mayor (Mr Thomas Wilson), to mark the gratifying fact that there were no cases for disposal."

These two cases prompted me to try to find out more about this custom and I discovered that there are examples galore of white gloves being presented to judges at so-called maiden assizes, which were sessions where there were no cases to present, or as it was interpreted in some cases no cases to present that could carry the death sentence, in which case the judge would wear the symbolic opposite, a black cap.

The earliest example of the presentation of white gloves I have come across is from 10 August 1732 and reported in the St James's Evening Post which states that "Assizes ended at Worcester, which proved a maiden assizes, and the Sheriff according to custom, presented the judges with white gloves". This, of course, clearly illustrates that this custom was not new.

Another case is from County Tipperary, Ireland, where Judge Sealy was presented with a pair of white gloves as the County was free from indictable offences. The reason for the white gloves on this particular occasion might have been expressed by Judge Sealy when he said "I am very pleased to accept this presentation especially after the heavy criminal work we had here at the last two sittings. There seemed to be a wave of crime, and I hope it has disappeared altogether or for some considerable time." Another case runs along similar lines, which shows that the presentation of white gloves would indicate a state of longer periods of no crimes. This case is also from Ireland from the Assizes in Maryborough, Queen's County from July 1913, where white gloves were presented to Mr Justice Moloney by the High Sheriff, Capt Kemmis. "The gloves were presented to mark the fact that there

was no criminal business before the court. Mr Justice Moloney said it was a very great pleasure to receive his first ever pair of white gloves and that he was happy to say that the county was in a state of peace, order and prosperity. There is no boycotting, no intimidation, no cattle-driving. There is nothing whatever to disturb the maintenance of law and order.”

But where does the occurrence of white gloves mentioned at the beginning of this article fit in? In the column called Local Gossip in the Berwick Advertiser on 15 February 1884 the following article appeared: “It is an unusual event for a relieving officer to present the chairman of a board of guardians with a pair of white gloves as a token he has no applications for parish relief. The rarity of the fact must be excuse for the gift, which might establish a somewhat inconvenient and expensive precedence were the case otherwise. However, although such an event happens seldom it is no new thing for it has happened in Berwick before. A year or two ago Mr Crosby, the Relieving Officer for the town, also presented the Chairman of the Board of Guardians with a pair of white gloves to indicate that he had no cases to present. It is 25 years since there was such an occurrence in the country district of this Union. Let us hope the next interval will not be so long. In Berwick we have become accustomed to the presentation of white gloves by the Sheriff to the Recorder to mark immunity of the Borough from crime when there were no case for trial. Respecting the practice it is said in a curious book just published: ‘The custom (of providing white gloves to judges), which has similar currency over the Border, appears to have acquired a far wider latitude than was at a former period, allowed to it, for the white gloves were only presented to a judge when he presided over an assize at which no prisoner was capitally convicted, and this alone was known as a maiden assize. Maiden assizes of the ancient order were, under the blood-thirsty penal code formerly in force, far less common than maiden assize as we know it now. It is startling to remember that there used to be no less than 223 distinct offences punishable with death, and more to remember that reform on this matter has been brought about within the reign of Her Majesty the Queen. In the first year after the accession, the category of capital offences was brought down to seven. Three years before that, in 1834, there were 480 executions, of which only about one-fifth were offences against life or limb. The maiden assize has altered its character with the change in the law.’”

The fact that Mr Balmain’s action at the Board meeting took place only a week after the publication in the Berwick Advertiser is interesting to contemplate.

Unfortunately I have not been able to find evidence of the other examples mentioned in the newspaper article.

Lars Rose

PETER ANDERSON GRAHAM

Peter Anderson Graham born in Crookham in 1866, the youngest son of Stephen and Isabella Graham. Stephen was a shoemaker. In 1871, Peter was a Pupil Teacher at Tweedmouth, Berwick, living with an older brother and sister and by 1881 had moved to Edinburgh and embarked on his literary career.

He was described as ambitious, reserved and kindly, determined to make his mark in journalism and prepared to move around the country to improve his position. In 1891 we find him living in London, married to Jane Macleod with 4 children. He is described on the census as “author and journalist”. By 1901 he has moved to Essex, with 3 more children and employed a live-in servant.

The previous year he had become the second Editor of the new magazine “Countrylife” and continued in this role until his death in 1925. In 1901 with Edward Hudson, the owner of “Countrylife”, he visited Holy Island and explored the recently abandoned and semi-derelict castle, which led to Hudson leasing the Castle and commissioning Edwin Lutyens, to carry out extensive restoration works. Both of these men were “town” men with “a foot in the country” and although he wrote extensively on rural matters, he was never a true countryman and there is no record of him ever returning to Crookham after his parents died.

Peter Anderson Graham is probably best known in our part of the world for his book “Highways and Byways in Northumbria” in which he mentions Crookham, describing it as “finely situated, standing high on jugged ground, with a population of horsecopers, crofters, and other smallholders, bondagers, and those who kept lodgings for the packmen, pedlars, clock menders and the other ‘gaun’ folk”

Information obtained from Census Returns, and “Country Life” Library for the Branxton & Crookham Village Atlas.

Maureen Charlton and Val Glass

SERIOUS STABBING CASE

Serious Stabbing Case at the Mason's Arms, Belford.

A serious case of stabbing occurred on Monday night, at the Mason's Arms. The hour having arrived for closing, Mr Dunn, the landlord, made arrangements for clearing his house, when George Wood, about 30 years of age, and a native of Belford, refused to leave. Joseph Paxton, Mr Dunn's assistant went to his master's help, and after a struggle Wood stabbed Paxton with a knife in the abdomen, the knife having penetrated the bowels. Wood made his escape, but was apprehended shortly afterwards at his father's house by Superintendent Harkes. He made a desperate resistance, and both went down into the road. The prisoner got away, and hand-cuffed as he was, made off. The superintendent followed, and came up to him in West Street, near the Bridge, and closed with him again, when both the two rolled into the burn. There Superintendent Harkes was obliged to use his baton, and having got Wood out of the burn, he applied for assistance to several men who were about (some of them being in volunteer uniform), but without response. He then despatched a police-constable to seek assistance, some of the persons present urging Wood not to allow himself to be taken. Ultimately, however, assistance did arrive, and Wood was then locked up. Dr Burman was promptly in attendance upon the wounded man, and found the bowels were penetrated in four places; and, as the case was considered a very serious one, a horse and trap were despatched to Budle for Mr R.B. Sanderson, who at once attended and took his statement. His statement was also taken in the presence of the prisoner as soon after as possible, by Mr H.S. Johnson, Clerk to the Justices, before Mr Sanderson. When the prisoner was taken to Paxton's bedroom, and charged with wounding with intent to murder, the wounded man made the following statement:- My name is Joseph Paxton, and I live at Belford. I am a labourer. I was in the Mason's Arms, Belford, last night about ten o'clock. I was there mostly all the evening waiting on customers. I was in the front kitchen about that time. Prisoner came in, and appeared to have had drink. I saw George Dunn (the landlord) and prisoner scuffling. The landlord wanted prisoner to go out as he had no extension of hours. Prisoner refused to go, and the landlord attempted to put him out. Prisoner was on the ground or his knees, I don't know which. I don't know how he got on to the ground. I went to assist the landlord, and got hold of prisoner, and believe I tore his coat. I did not strike him, nor did he strike me. The scuffle began in the kitchen, and lasted until we got into the passage, or space, between the long-settle and the kitchen door. We left off scuffling in this

passage, and prisoner went into the passage leading to the back door. The landlord was then in the kitchen. Prisoner went towards the back door, and I followed him. The back door was open. The only light in the passage was that coming from the kitchen. The passage was very dark near the back door. There was no light outside the door. I saw no other person in the passage except prisoner. When I got near the door, I found a sharp instrument pierce my left side. It was prisoner who did it. I did not see the instrument, I only felt the blow. Just before I found myself stabbed prisoner turned half round towards me. After I felt the blow, I felt something running down my side, and put my hand towards the wound, and walked into the kitchen, when I looked at my hand and found blood upon it. Prisoner went out of the back door, and just as he went out he was swearing to himself. He had been swearing all the time he was in the house. Prisoner was very excited, but never threatened me. I have known prisoner six or eight years. I saw him mostly every night. He has been living in Belford some weeks. I have always been friendly with him. I was sober. I had had a glass or two, but I was not the worse for drink. I was certain it was prisoner who stabbed me. Prisoner had been out and in the house all night. I cannot say how long he was out the last time." - Prisoner, who was remanded until the 9th inst., said "I am very sorry for what happened. I was drunk. I was in the Mason's Arms all night, and never was out of it. Paxton and I were good friends. I remember nothing about it." The case caused great excitement in Belford, and during the time the prisoner was being taken to the Mason's Arms and back again to the police station, and during the investigation the streets were filled with people.

Alnwick Mercury 5 Jan 1884, page 3

Joseph Paxton dies some years later from his wounds.

Karon Ives

BAILIFF'S COURT BOOK

The following are extracts from the Berwick-upon-Tweed Bailiff's Court Book during the mid-1500s

A presentmentt touchinge the abuse vused within the house Apointed for the Measuringe of Corne

Maye it please yow (As we can conceave) The order apointed for Measuringe of all corne and grayne that comethe for Sale to this Markett, within the townehouse, was

donne vpon good consideracion And to the Ententt that the cuntrye people shoulde neither delyver Lesse Measure then lawfully they oughte by the Busshell or Kennynge of this towne. Nor to receave any wronge or damadge in the same Measure at thandes of anye within this towne yet nevertheles the same good order ys of Late yeres growen into grete abuses aswell that the Measure ys impaired and maide Lesse then it oughte to be as alsoe the Measurers who shoulde be indefferentt in such thinges doe vse suche Sleighte and deceitfulnes in measuringe of Meall, that the buyer therof dothe Losse twoe peckes in everye bole the means and reason wherof yt dothe incorage the common badgers to forestall this markt they buyenge vp and gyvinge grete prices for corne at those gentlemen and fermers handes who otherwise wolde themselves send and bringe hither the same corne at reasonable prices for oneles the Same Badgers vsed so manye sleightes and naughtie practisses in the corne that they buye and bringe hither They were not able to lyve vpon that trade as they doe, to the no Lytle hurtt and hindrance of this towne.

Brief Translation *An order was given that the correct weighing of corn and grain must be adhered to which meant that country people must not under-weigh bushels (containers for measuring 8 gallons) of grain etc. nor receive suchlike from others. Lately this order has been abused and the underweight grain suggests that the purchaser loses 2 pecks (containers for measuring ¼ of a bushel) in each bole (measure of capacity for grain). It also encourages 'badgers' (people who deal in corn) to buy grain to sell on at inflated prices, thus damaging the trade of those others (gentlemen and farmers who would be similarly trading) to lose their livelihood.*

Item the Courte dothe fynde and present that John Snawdall servant vnder Sir William Reade dwelleth in a litle howse on the grenes belonginge to Olde Widow Corbytt whiche was taken owt of the Comon, and now dothe inlardge yt more vpon the Comon Grenes, and cawsethe Claye pittes to be Caste to the great hurte and annoyance aswell of people as of horse and Catle.

Brief Translation *This is a problem at The Greenses where clay pits were causing great annoyance and damage to people, horses and cattle.*

Item doth fynde and present that the water streame yssuinge frome the well on the grenes ys turned frome thaccustomed course by the bleachinge of Clothe in somer tyme whiche hath caused and brede myres and bogges on the grenes to the grete hurte and annoyance of the dwellers there and of the whole towne alsoe.

Brief Translation *This is a problem of water issuing from the well on the Greenses it having been diverted from its usual course by the people who were bleaching cloth during the summer causing mire and bogs which greatly annoyed the inhabitants.*

Item dothe fynde and present that the Narrowe Layne nere to the dwellinge of Morgane Lane, Arnolde Teather and William Wollobye in defaulke of pavinge and repairinge is growen to suche myre and water that it is not pasable for People.

Brief Translation *Narrow Lane on The Greenses is in need of paving and repairing it being impossible to pass through because of mire and water.*

Wendy Urwin

EVERY PICTURE TELLS A STORY

The Trials and Tribulations of Researching the stories behind photographs

Friends volunteering to provide captions for the two Photocentre books of photographs of Berwick in the 1950s and 1960s have faced many challenges in collecting the relevant information. It has meant extensively searching the local newspapers to provide back stories for the photos (made more difficult as dates for the images compiled by the Photocentre are often vague). Then there may be the cross-checking of this information with people's memories; and this has sometimes revealed sharply conflicting opinions – with relatives, friends or neighbours of those persons pictured in disagreement about their identities. In such cases it has been found prudent either to include a ? in the caption, or else to omit the photograph altogether.

The Volunteers looking for the story behind the photographs in “Snap shots of the Sixties” sometimes found those stories a little obscure and fading from memory. Without a context, a picture loses much of its interest and even significance. If, to understand the present and plan for the future, we need to know the past, the work of recording those stories is important. Hence the value of archives, archivists and the enthusiasts who carry out this work.

This later stage in the books' production follows the already laborious process of selecting photos to include in the books from the tens of thousands of negatives in the Archives, with only a very basic Photocentre inventory to go by. All in all, the people involved in this work, which has taken many months of close examination of negatives and writing up of captions, are to be congratulated, as evident from the

success of the two publications so far. We look forward to their starting all over again, and producing a book of Photocentre photographs of Berwick in the 1970s.

Bob Steward and Jean Watts

PS If you would like to help us to research the newspapers for possible events to include in the 1970s book, please get in touch

USEFUL WEBSITES

The British Association for Local History (BALH) www.balh.org.uk

The Local Historian journals, published by BALH, provide guidance on sources and methods, and give practical advice. They can be accessed via the website, by non-members.

Editions less than three years old, are available to purchase, while stocks last. Those published over three years ago, may be downloaded for free. Select *Publications*, then [The Local Historian](#) for details. There is a search option, enabling searches for a specific theme or source.

Internet Archive, a non-profit library <https://archive.org>

The library consists of millions of free books and other media.

A text search – Lowick, Northumberland, for example, will bring up a large number of both well-known and obscure journals and other publications, many of which may be downloaded for free. Select the book of interest and open. Enlarging it to full screen, will allow you to search within the publication.

For those interested in the public health of an area, the Medical Officer of Health Annual Reports, prepared for the relevant Council, are available to download on the following link. <https://archive.org/details/medicalofficerofhealthreports>

The reports provide data on birth and death rates, infant mortality, incidence of infectious and other diseases, a general statement on the health of the population, housing conditions, sanitation and water supplies.

Although not every year's report has been digitised, Glendale, Norham and Islandshire, and Belford Rural District Councils have good coverage for the years 1894 to 1974, the years for which the Councils were in existence. The Borough of Berwick is also well represented particularly for the period 1940s to 1970s.

If any Friends are aware of useful but less well known websites, please do contact the Editor.

Julie Gibbs

SNIPPETS FROM THE BERWICK ADVERTISER

Berwick Advertiser, 27 October 1871

THE MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

There is an apparent shaking of the dry bones, and the elections on the 1st proximo are not expected to pass off quietly. Mr Robert Brown, of Sanson Seal, has entered the field to contest one of the vacancies in the North Ward, and has issued circulars to the electors. Canvassing is being prosecuted with vigour on the part of the retiring councillors and Mr Brown. In the South ward there is some talk of opposition; but no candidate has yet ventured to disturb the quietude on the south side. In the Middle Ward all is peace. Surmises are rife regarding the filling up of the two Aldermanic chairs, and it is currently believed that Dr Fluker and Councillor A. Smith (the next Mayor) will be appointed to the vacancies.

Berwick Advertiser, 27 October 1871

A TOWN COUNCILLOR OBSTRUCTING THE FOOTPATH

Local gossipmongers are this week rolling a sweet morsel of sensation under their tongues. On Saturday evening a female travelling artist was catering to the public in the way of singing songs at the top of Hide Hill. The vocalist was above the ordinary run of her class, and her singing attracted a large number of persons, including one of our Town Councillors and his companion, a respectable fish merchant in town. The crowds began to block up the free passage of the foot pavement, and P.C. Cruden having ordered the vocalist to "move on", the Town Councillor and fish merchant interfered, taking the part of the woman, and encouraging her in a pecuniary fashion to sing on. In the midst of the fracas which ensued the Mayor put in an appearance, and he defended the officer. Between the civic head and the Councillor a little scene was enacted, but eventually the crowd was dispersed. It is said that the Councillor and the merchant are to be summoned for obstructing the foot pavement, and the case is to be heard on Thursday. If this be so the facts pro and con will then be adduced. What about prosecuting under the Highway Act in the

face of the argument advanced by Mr R.B. Weatherhead at the Petty Sessions yesterday?

Berwick Advertiser, 27 October 1871

BERWICK PETTY SESSIONS

An incorrigible – Edward Toal, labourer, Chapel Street, was charged with being drunk and riotous. P.C. Davidson deposed that about half-past twelve on Monday night the defendant was in Church Street, causing a great disturbance. Witness saw that he was drunk and advised him to go home. Defendant then went away, apparently with the intention of going home, but shortly afterwards he renewed the uproar. He was then taken into custody. The Superintendent stated that defendant intended to join the Good Templars if he was dismissed. He had only been out of jail about a month, and had since broken a window when intoxicated. The Justices fined him £1 with the alternative of fourteen days' imprisonment. He was locked up.

Carole Pringle

**FRIENDS SURVEY AND REQUEST
FOR ARTICLES**

We would like to thank all those who completed the Survey. We were very pleased with the encouraging and positive responses to the Friends website, newsletter and activities. Your ideas for future publications and exhibitions are much appreciated and are being considered by the Committee. Those of you who have offered to volunteer at events, will be contacted in due course.

Many thanks to those who regularly contribute to the Newsletter, making it an interesting and varied read. If you are researching a local family, place or theme, please do consider sharing your findings, whether in the form of an interesting snippet or a longer article. You never know, a Friend may be able to fill in some of the gaps, or perhaps someone in the future, reading the Newsletter online, may be able to help. Please forward copy to me at newsletter@berwickfriends.org.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Julie Gibbs- Editor