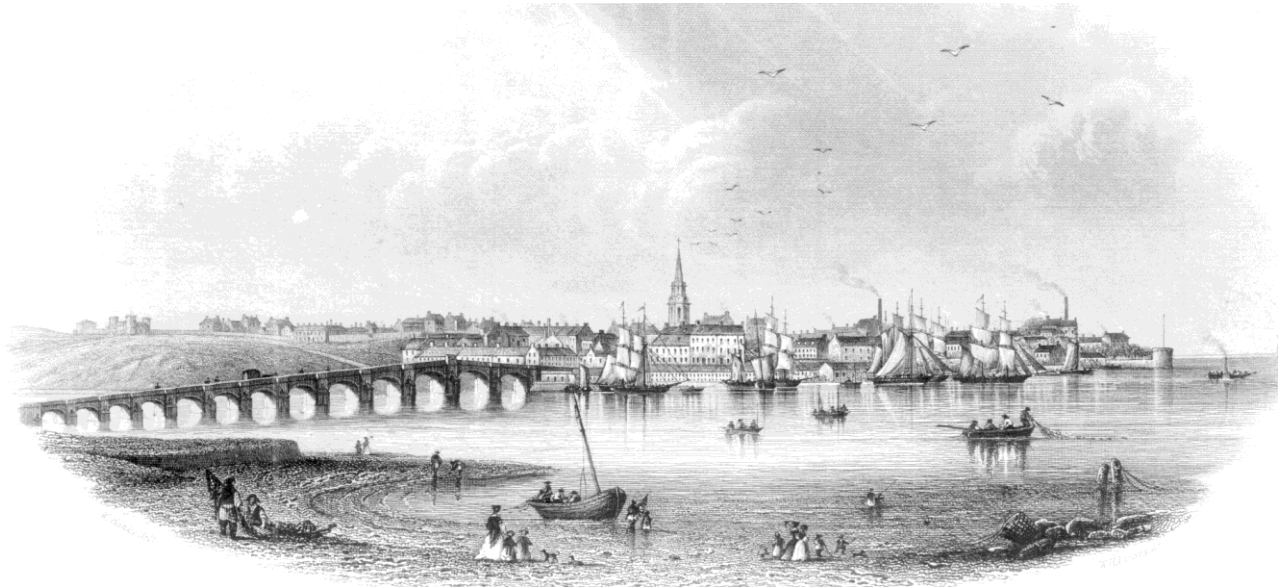


Friends of Berwick & District Museum and Archives Newsletter



NUMBER 113 – SEPTEMBER 2022

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Monday 5th September 2022

BAS Silver Anniversary Lecture :
Excavations at Berwick Infirmary : Steve
Collison. 7.30pm in Guildhall.

Friday 9th- Sunday 18th September
2022

Berwick Heritage Open Days – see attached
programme of events.

November 2022

Friends Autumn Lecture : Talk on the Anglo
Saxon Gold Pendant Cross found at Ord.
Date and speaker to be confirmed. Look on
the Friends website for details.

OTHER SOCIETIES' LECTURES

AYTON LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Ayton Community Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Tuesday 27th September 2022	The Eyemouth Fish Teind Riots of 1861: Norrie McLeish
Tuesday 25th October	Lost Churches of the Borders: Kenneth McLean
Tuesday 29th November	Irregular Border Marriages: Linda Bankier

BELFORD LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Bell View Resource Centre

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 28th September 2022	A.G.M.
Wednesday 26th October	Mail Routes Through Northumberland in the early 19th century: Ian Rawles
Wednesday 23rd November	William Coldstream, Artist: Jonathan Mason
December (date to be advised)	Christmas Social

BERWICK CIVIC SOCIETY

Venue: Berwick Parish Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 5th October 2022	"The Museum of the Wood Age" : Max Adams.
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Wednesday 19th October	Combined meeting with Berwick History Society. "The Miracles of St Ebba of Coldingham" : lecture by historian, Robert Bartlett, Bishop Wardlaw, Professor of Medieval History Emeritus at the University of St Andrews. Guildhall, Berwick.
Wednesday 9th November	"The Abbotsford Trust – An Outreach Talk": Hamish Reid
Wednesday 7th December	Christmas Themed Event starting at 7pm in the Parish Centre. Details to be confirmed

BERWICK HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 19th October 2022	See Civic Society entry. Joint Meeting.
Wednesday 16th November	'Berwick 1952-2022 - A Pictorial History': Linda Bankier
Wednesday 21st December	'HMS Trincomalee': Martha Andrews

BORDER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Parish Centre, Berwick

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 5th September 2022	Silver Anniversary Lecture: Excavations at Berwick Infirmary : Steve Collison, Northern Archaeological Associates. This lecture will take place at Berwick Guildhall.
Monday 3rd October	When Halfdan raided the Picts? A possible Viking Army site in the Coquet Valley: Jane Kershaw

Monday 7th November	Recent Excavations at Birdoswald Roman Fort: Ian Haynes, Newcastle University or Tony Wilmott, English Heritage.
Monday 5th December	Title to be confirmed but on a Roman topic: Rob Collins

BOWSDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Bowsden Village Hall

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 5th September 2022	Border Ballads: Thomas the Rhymer Poppy Holden
Monday 3rd October	The Hunting Hall Time Trowellers: Paul Langdale
Monday 7th November	Cuthbert and Bede: Katharine Tiernan
Monday 5th December	Bowsdens memories over seven decades: Local talent

CHIRNSIDE HISTORY GROUP

Venue: Community Centre, Waterloo Arms Dining Room

Time: 7.30pm

Monday 19th September 2022	Are We Nearly There Yet? : Bruce Keith
Monday 17th October	Building of Berwick Town Hall: Jim Herbert
Monday 21st November	Poaching & The Game Laws in South East Scotland: David McLean
Monday 19th December	Herstory: Isabel Gordon

COLDSTREAM & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Leet Room, Coldstream Community Centre.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Thursday 6th October 2022	Bridgescapes-bridges within Scotland: Bruce Keith
Thursday 2nd November	Searches for Churches on Lindisfarne: An Historical re-evaluation of the Early Medieval Monastery: John Woodhurst
Thursday 1st December	The History of the Cowboy: David McLean

DUNSE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Duns Social Club, 45 Newtown St, Duns.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 28th September 2022	Town Improvement in Duns and the Borders: 1830 to 1900: David Mclean
Wednesday 26th October	Robert Fortune of Edrom: Botanist, Explorer, Collector, Author: Anne McNeil
Wednesday 23rd November	Celts & Saxons in the Borders: Professor Andrew Breeze

GLENDALE LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Cheviot Centre, Padgepool Place, Wooler.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Wednesday 14th September 2022	The Archives of the Duke of Northumberland at Alnwick Castle- looking behind the scenes of the Castle at the work that goes on in the archives: Chris Hunwick
Wednesday 12th October	The History of Berwick Barracks: Rt Rev. Dr Stephen Platten

Wednesday 9th November A Boyhood between the Wars: the
Memoirs of Jock Wilson: Elisabeth Wilson

Wednesday 14th December Life of a Wooler GP in the 1960s: Dr Noel
Roy

LOWICK HERITAGE GROUP

Venue: Lowick Village Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 10th October 2022 Searches for Churches on Lindisfarne:
John Woodhurst

Monday 14th November Prehistoric sites in North Northumberland:
Allan Colman

Monday 12th December Faith in Lowick: Kevin Archer

NORHAM & LADYKIRK LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Venue: Norham Village Hall

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Monday 12th September Images of Cornhill & District' (this will
include Norham) And 'Then & Now:'. John
Straughan

Monday 10th October The Union Chain Bridge' : Edward
Cawthorn

Monday 14th November TBC

Monday 12th December Rabbie Burn's Tour of the Borders: Ian
Landles

NORTH NORTHUMBERLAND GENEALOGY GROUP

Venue: Bell View Resource Centre, 33 West Street, Belford **Time: 10.00am**

Saturday 17th September 2022	The Yetholm Gypsies: Anne McMillan
Saturday 15th October	Members' Stories: Interesting and unusual jobs
Saturday 19th November	Irregular Border Marriages: Linda Bankier

TILL VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Venue: Crookham Village Hall **Time: 7.30pm**

Wednesday 7th September 2022	The Celts: Kristian Pedersen
Sunday 9th October	Serpents and Viols: A History of Musical Instruments: Professor Murray Campbell. Etal Village Hall – 2.30pm. Tickets : £6 each, available at Etal Show. Otherwise, please contact Jenny Cant on jennet.cant@gmail.com .
Wednesday 2nd November	Belief in the North East: recent work on a community archaeology project: Dr David Petts of Durham University.
Wednesday 7th December	A beginner's guide to Orkney: John Reid

OTHER EVENTS

Northumberland Archives are involved in two Projects at the moment which include a number of online talks which may interest members.

ILLUMINATED SHEEP – Inspired by the Lindisfarne Gospels, a series of online talks and in person workshops on calligraphy and reading old handwriting in October and November.

Book via Eventbrite - <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/northumberland-archives-30770439808>

HADRIAN 1900 - to celebrate the Wall's 1900th anniversary, there are a series of talks and an exhibition. Two of the talks are online and can be booked via Eventbrite – <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/northumberland-libraries-12676562101>

BERWICK HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Berwick Heritage Open Days is nearly here again and this year we have put together an even bigger programme of events with hopefully something for everyone. For those who can't visit Berwick there are a series of online talks and via our website (www.berwickhods.org.uk) you can enjoy some of our walks and also try some of our online quizzes. The whole event runs from 9 to 18th September and if you are in Berwick over that period, there is plenty to do. From 9th September, you can enjoy a walk around Spittal finding out about the properties and the village in the past. On that day, we've added in a new guided walk at Cocklawburn. On 10th and 11th September, why not visit the Berwick Camera Club exhibition in St Aidan's Church ? Over our main weekend, 16 – 18th September, you can take part in our many guided walks and visit lots of buildings. Many have been open before but there are some additions – cellars at Blackburn and Price ; part of the renovated Council Offices in Wallace Green and the Catholic Church in Ravensdowne. Our brochure will be available from this weekend and we will be promoting our events at the Food Festival. Please do support us either by joining our online events or visiting Berwick. The Steering Group have worked very hard to make sure this all happens and we organise more events in Northumberland than anywhere else – 67 registered this year. Keep your fingers crossed that the weather stays dry for us and do have a look at the programme which is enclosed with the newsletter. To book a place on our guided walks and talks, visit <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/o/berwick-heritage-open-days-34043664105>

Linda Bankier

ARCHIVE NEWS

I'm not quite sure where this summer has gone but it has been particularly busy for the Record Office one way and another.

Bamburgh Churchyard Survey

This project has now been completed. The survey has been printed and a copy lodged with the church. The family history research has been collated and the volunteers got together for one last time at the church to discuss what we had done. This was a great project and provides a template for other similar projects in other churchyards.

Education Work

In June, I spent a morning on Holy Island with some pupils from the Grove School doing some filming for their Island project. We visited the Lifeboat House and they interviewed Dick Patterson about life on the Island and the lifeboat. I have now almost completed work on the online Palaeography Module for volunteers and students with the help of a Newcastle University student intern.

Life in a Northumbrian Manor

Beth Elliott started work with us in April on this project which is county wide but she is based at Berwick. She is getting more familiar with the records and in June she gave an online talk about manorial records to commemorate the centenary of the Law of Property Act. She has just finished trialling some of her volunteer training for the project with some of our volunteers who have really enjoyed it. Beth will update you all on the project in the next newsletter.

Northumberland Village Halls Heritage Project

This is a county wide project but I have been delivering the Oral History training for the Halls. I've just completed some training at Felton and have met up with some of those who undertook the training last year to hear their recordings.

Opening up

It has been lovely to see more people just "pop in" to the Record Office in the past few months and also tourists come in wanting to trace their Family History. Overseas visitors are returning, bringing their Family History challenges!

Outreach

Most organisations don't tend to meet in the summer months but I have still given a couple of talks – Felton History Society on Berwick and its Archives and an online talk to the Alnwick Branch of the Northumberland and Durham Family History Society on the Ford Estate at the Time of the Waterford Family.

Platinum Jubilee

When the last newsletter appeared, we were about to run our Platinum Jubilee exhibition. The exhibition, Berwick, 1952 – 2022, created by Cameron Robertson was a huge success. We had over 1800 visitors over the two days which far exceeded our expectations. It was lovely to see so many people really enjoy looking at the photographs covering 1952 to the present. The sun prints created by the schools have been on display in the Maltings over the summer and can be viewed again as part of Heritage Open Days. We created an 8 page commemorative newspaper for the Jubilee covering royal visits and jubilee celebrations in the town over the past 70 years. We printed 2000 and these were given out free over the weekend – they've all gone and at least many people now have a souvenir of our weekend. Overall this has been a very successful project which has helped us identify individuals in many of the picture we displayed.

Photo Centre Collection

Cameron has continued his work on this collection over the past couple of months. He has been cataloguing the early boxes of glass slides and we are mounting the descriptions in our electronic catalogue, CALM. There are now well over 1500 entries on there for the early 1960s covering weddings, sporting events and other items of interest. Cameron is posting images on the Photo Centre social media pages as well which has been creating lots of interest and comments too. At the moment we are also working on a new publication of 1970s photos.

So, life in the Berwick Office is never dull!

Linda Bankier

A MISSING SINCE SATURDAY- MAGGIE PARK

Whilst checking the catalogue entries of our Police posters which were completed by the Twixt Thistle and Rose volunteers, I came across this one which caught my attention, particularly as it was a local one relating to Berwick. It was very striking and made me want to find out who Maggie Park was and what happened to her.



Reference: BA/P15/1/104

Firstly I looked to see if her disappearance had been reported and there was this short snippet in the Local News section of the Berwick Advertiser on 16 September 1887:

GIRL MISSING – On Saturday forenoon about half past nine o'clock, a girl named Maggie Park, 12 years of age, living with her brother, James Park, shoemaker, 14 Church Street, Berwick, was sent a message to Mr Rankin's shop in High Street. Since that time the girl has not been heard of or seen anywhere. She wore a brown felt hat, grey ulster and cape, green dress and lacing boots at the time of her disappearance.

This gave me some additional information as I originally assumed that James was her father, not her brother. Searching the 1891 census revealed that James was a

shoemaker, aged about 25 in 1887, originally from Scotland and married to Catherine.

I was intrigued to find out if Maggie was ever found and this was where it got very interesting. The Berwick Advertiser contained the following article on 23 September:

A YOUNG GIRL'S ENTERPRISE – Last week we stated that Maggie Park, a girl twelve years of age, living with her brother, James Park, shoemaker, Church Street, had not been seen since the forenoon of Saturday 10th September. It has now been ascertained that she set out from Berwick to walk to the house of her father, near Glasgow, a distance of fully 100 miles. She had got as far as Edinburgh before she was discovered.

I was relieved to hear that she had been found but was amazed that she had tried to walk that distance, not something many people, never mind a child would contemplate. I wondered what happened to her in the interim and quite by chance, in the same bundle of posters, I came across a handwritten letter, dated 13 September 1887 about Maggie which had been sent by Inspector M Fraser of Dunbar Police Station to John Garden, Superintendent of Berwick Police. In the letter Inspector Fraser indicated that she had arrived there by train from Haddington at 3.30 pm, stayed until 7pm and then travelled back to North Berwick. If the police were contacted at North Berwick, they could detain her. Obviously that didn't happen as she wasn't found until much later in Edinburgh. What happened to her in between is a mystery.

Where was she going and who was her father? The 1911 census indicated that James Park was born in Linlithgow about 1862. I checked the 1871 census and found a James Park, aged 9 living with his mother and father, Peter and Margaret in High Street, Linlithgow. Peter was also a shoemaker. By the next census, 1881, Peter was a widower and neither James nor Maggie were with him on the census night. However, I found Maggie, aged 7 in Cambuslang in the household of her married sister, Helen, now called Ellen. James at this stage was working in London and was a boarder in a house in the Cavendish Square area. His occupation was listed as shoemaker. Peter, the father is missing from the 1891 census but he appears again in 1901 – listed as a patient, aged 76 in Linlithgow. Presumably in a hospital or institution. He died in 1908, aged 84.

What happened to Maggie ? So far, I have not been able to find out anything further about her. She doesn't appear on later censuses and so she is a mystery.

However, I have been able to find some additional information on her brother. James who remained in Berwick through local newspapers. He married Catherine Elizabeth Redfearn, daughter of a local innkeeper on 30 June 1883 at St John's Church in London and must then have moved to Berwick. In the 1901 census, James and his wife, Catherine were living at 1, Marygate. By 1911, they were living at 3 Summerhill Terrace in the north end of the town. They had no children. The couple continued to live there for the rest of their lives – Catherine died on 23 January 1933 (not long before their golden wedding anniversary), aged 71 whilst James died on 6 February 1951, aged 89.

It was only when I looked at James' obituary that I realised who he was. The obituary which appeared in the Berwick Advertiser on 8 February 1951 stated that he was one of the last surviving makers of handmade boots who had come to Berwick 67 years previously (around 1884) . His business was originally in Church Street and then he moved to his premises at the corner of Marygate and Hide Hill. To many a person with connections to Berwick, this was Park's corner, the home of "The Bootman" , a business which closed its door for the last time on 31 May 2003.

Undertaking family history research can take you in so many different directions and along the way; you never know what you will find. When looking at the poster, I wanted to find out about the young girl but in the end, I found out more about her family and her brother, whose business was very much a part of Berwick in the past. One thing leads to another!

Linda Bankier

CONSERVATION APPRAISAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

The County Council have authorised Conservation Appraisal Management Plans (CAMPS), to include the Berwick area, including Tweedmouth and Spittal. This will involve conducting a conservation area building survey – the output would be a completed proforma description and photo of each property. It is anticipated that the work will provide proof for action to be taken to improve buildings where appropriate.

It is hoped that some volunteers from among the Friends will come forward to undertake this interesting and important work. A consultant will provide 1 to 2 days training to volunteers so they can carry out the surveys.

If you would be interested in getting involved and hearing more about it, please send your name and email address to: info@berwickfriends.org.uk, and label your message CAMPS. We will forward your details to the relevant authority so that the organisers can contact you directly about their plans when they are ready to start.

Bob Steward

A TALE OF BERWICK PIER

Fairly recently, I read two 16th Century poems which were probably written contemporaneously or soon after the Battle of Flodden 1513. I was particularly interested, having taken part as a volunteer, in a number of archaeological excavations in the vicinity of the Battle, before and after the Quincentenary of the Battle in 2013. One of these poems was edited by Rev. Robert Lambe, Vicar of Norham, in 1774 and dedicated to 'John Askew of Palins-Burn, Esq. [Pallinsburn House and Estate near Crookham]'.

Rev. Hastings Neville (1840-1911), Rector of St. Michael and All Angels Church, Ford, states in his *A Corner in the North* that Robert Lambe was of a scholarly disposition who took up the study of ballad poetry in the North and had remained a bachelor for many years. Robert's friends urged him to seek a wife and he remembered an old acquaintance in Durham, a carrier, who had a daughter whom he had not seen since she was a child. He thought that it would be simple for her to come up to Berwick on one of her father's waggons. The exotically named Philadelphia Nelson (Philadelphia from the Greek φιλεω [phileo] 'to love' and αδελφος [adelphos] 'brother') was said to be 'very charming'. She accepted the plan and her father considered it an eligible match for his daughter as Norham was one of the choice benefices in the patronage of St. Cuthbert's Dean and Chapter'.

The tale becomes even more astonishing. Robert and Philadelphia didn't know each other and the latter must have been very trusting in agreeing to come to Berwick unaccompanied, meeting Robert at an agreed time on Berwick Pier and identifying herself by carrying a tea-caddy under her arm. It seems hard to imagine, but the bookish and forgetful Robert did not turn up and the poor girl wandered up and down the pier. An old Customs House officer on his rounds, saw a pretty girl at nine

o'clock, saw the same girl at twelve o'clock and saw her finally at six o'clock, 'this time weeping bitterly'. On questioning her, 'she poured into his ears the tale of Lambe's treachery and deceit'. "I came to be married to the Vicar of Norham—he promised to meet me here, but has never come." The old man reassured her "Come home with me tonight and we'll go over together to Norham in the morning. Lambe is a friend of mine, a good fellow, but absent-like in his mind. I'll warrant he's forgotten all about it". A meeting was arranged and Philadelphia must have been very forgiving and Lambe must have redeemed himself sufficiently because a marriage took place, the bridegroom's present to his wife being a silver teapot, presumably to go with the tea-caddy. Records show that Robert and Philadelphia were married in Norham on 11 April 1755. Rev. Neville tells us that, 'Among the descendants of Mr Lambe "Philadelphia" is a favourite name, and a teapot is always presented to the one who bears it'.

The present Berwick Pier was not the one on which Philadelphia wandered up and down in her distress. Berwick Harbour was transferred by Act of Parliament on 9th June 1808 from Berwick Corporation to The Berwick Harbour Commissioners. The new pier was designed by John Rennie and completed in 1825; the Grade II listing suggests that part of the new pier was built on foundations of the Elizabethan pier. An extract from Armstrong's map dated 1769 shows what must have been the remains of the Elizabethan pier, detached from the 'town fields' and shown in the top, right hand corner of the map, below. It would seem to be an unlikely location for the young Philadelphia's meeting with Robert. The intended spot was more likely to have been the Quay (in the same position as today) shown at the bottom of Armstrong's map, which would have been near to the Customs House and the Customs Watch House and where the 'old Customs House officer' would have come across Philadelphia.



Sources:

1. Lambe, Robert (ed.), *An Exact and Circumstantial History of the Battle of Floddon [sic] in verse written about the time of Queen Elizabeth*, Berwick Upon Tweed, Printed and Sold by R. Taylor, and by E. and C. Dilly in The Poultry, and G. Freer, Bell-Yard, London, 1774
2. Neville, Rev. Hastings M., *A Corner in the North: Yesterday and To-day with Border Folk*, Andrew Reid & Company, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, 1909, pp. 151-2
3. Forsyth Scott, Robert (ed.), *Admissions to the College of St. John the Evangelist, Cambridge University, Part III, 1715-1767*, Cambridge, printed for the College at The University Press, 1903, pp. 413-4
4. Kent, Dr Catherine, *The Holdman Wall and the Elizabethan Pier*, Berwick Heritage Open Days

Antony Chessell

THE TRAGIC DEATH OF LIEUTENANT HUME JOHNSTON

The Milne Graden Papers is a body of letters, journals, documents, etc, held in the archives at Paxton House. Situated on the Tweed a few miles upstream from Paxton House, Milne Graden was built in the 1820s by Admiral Sir David Milne (1763-1845). Although Milne never lived at Paxton House, he was a frequent guest there as well as a close friend to its owner, George Home. Milne's first wife was related to George, and their son, also named David, married the heiress to Paxton House, and eventually lived there with his family.

Many of Milne's papers are in other archives, but his letters in the Milne Graden collection are more intimate and concern the doings of family and friends. Recently I encountered letters and documents relating to the tragic death of Lieutenant Hume Johnson, the son of one of Milne's friends, Colonel Robert Johnston, of Hutton Hall.

I have not been able to find out much about Colonel Johnston or his family background except that Hutton Hall at the time was the seat of the Johnstons of Hilton. He was married to Catherine Hume of Ninewells, and we know more about her. She was the niece of the philosopher David Hume, and there is a pastel portrait of her, dated 1796-1800, painted by the Scottish artist Archibald Skirving (1749-1819), in the National Gallery. They had at least four children: two unmarried daughters named Catherine and Margaret, a daughter Agnes married to Rev Alexander Scott, and Hume Johnson, later Lt Hume Johnson of the Royal Navy, born ca 1795.

Prominent families were often able to get their children positions as midshipmen and they could work their way up to becoming officers. Milne helped many of his family and friends' sons in this way, and in 1824, young Hume Johnston was a Lieutenant and assigned to the HMS Fury, a ship being fitted out for an expedition to the Arctic. In a letter, written on board the Fury at Deptford and dated 11 February 1824 to Admiral Milne, Johnston indicated that all was not well. Captain Hoppner had invited Johnston to join the Fury, but some attempts were being made to block the promotion (we are given no reasons for this but can surmise from later events). Through the intervention of someone – Johnston thinks it was Milne or at least someone of his rank – the final decision would rest with Viscount Melville, the Lord of the Admiralty. In the meantime, Johnston continued on the Fury and his recommendations for fitting out the ship were seconded by Hoppner. Johnston then went on to give a detailed account of the preparations for the rigours of the Arctic climate and that he found his fellow crew members to be upright and of good quality. In his next letter, dated 30 March 1824, Johnston wrote that matters were at such a standstill he had not wanted to bother Milne. Unfortunately, Viscount Melville had taken ill the very day Johnston had gone to see him and that there was still no decision. The fitting out of the ship for the Arctic had been delayed because of lack of workmen at the dockyard and also that the extremely changeable weather – hot sun one day and sleet the next – had given many of the crew inflammatory colds and Johnston doubted whether some of the fittings would be adequate (doubts which later proved to be justified). Johnston gave some news and gossip about people they know and mentioned that he had been busy outfitting himself for the expedition. He hoped very much that Milne would be coming to London next month and looked forward to welcoming him on the Fury.

Finally, we have a copy of a letter Milne, now in London, wrote to Johnston, dated Sunday, 18 April 1824, in the evening of the same day he had visited Johnston on

the Fury. It starts: "I was extremely sorry to find you complaining so much when I called on board the Fury this forenoon, but I trust it is merely a nervous attack from your stomach being disordered." He went on to say that if Johnston feared it may be something serious, of course he should not continue on the expedition, but Milne himself thought it was merely a nervous attack, and that he should persevere, and that especially if the expedition was successful there would be much honour for him. He ended by writing: "If your complaint is nervous, new scenes and new objects the moment you sail will remove it and you will be stout and well." We do not know when Milne sent this letter (or if he even sent it) or whether Johnston received it. Three days later, on Wednesday, 21 April, Johnston killed himself.

We will now let the Edinburgh Annual Register take over with their graphic account of the event:

"Wednesday morning a most shocking occurrence took place on board the Fury Discovery vessel, lying off Deptford. Lieutenant Johnston having been promoted to the ship for the Northern Expedition, received from his brother on Tuesday night a double-barrelled gun. Previous to this time he had been entreated by his friends not to proceed with the expedition, but endeavour to obtain his discharge. His application had been forwarded to the Lords of the Admiralty, and Wednesday evening the answer was expected to arrive per post. The circumstance, however, seemed to weigh heavy on his mind, and about seven o'clock in the morning, loading the gun which had been sent him by his brother, he fastened the butt end in a sling, and attaching it to his feet, placed the muzzle in his mouth, and fired it off. The ball carried away the whole of the lower part of the mouth, and, passing through the back part of his head, scattered his brains in different directions. The officers and crew of the Fury flew to assistance of their unfortunate friend, but life was totally extinct. Mr Carttar, the coroner, held an inquest on the remains. The witnesses who attended, were his brother officers, who spoke of his state of mind, and also of the perpetration of the dreadful act. They gave their decided opinion, that the unfortunate officer laboured under a depression of spirits, probably accelerated by the causes already stated, and the Jury unanimously returned their verdict. 'that the deceased, Lieutenant Hume Johnston, destroyed himself, being at the time in a state of temporary mental derangement.' The deceased was about thirty years of age."

Even though it was 200 years ago, letters to and from London to Scotland arrived at their destination the day after they were posted. Milne, as we know, was in the area

and was informed of Johnston's death by Capt Hoppner on 22 April, and immediately wrote to William Foreman Home (who had inherited Paxton after the death of George Home) asking him to inform the family at Hutton Hall and find out their wishes, and then, still on 22 April, he assured Captain Hoppner that if Johnston's father was unable to come to London, he would take charge of Johnston's papers and effects and have them safely forwarded to the family. Hoppner immediately replied by saying he was sending Johnston's desk, which contained £200, to Milne, and that his other effects were being packaged up. He had also ordered the Deptford Shipyard to make a leaden coffin. Tragically, Milne received a letter from Margaret Johnston dated 23 April (before she heard the sad news), where she expressed concern at their brother's illness and thanked Milne for doing what he could to help. At the same time, she asked Milne not to tell Johnston she had written.

In a letter dated 24 April, Foreman Home expressed how shocked he was at the news and the family was now informed, but the manner of Johnston's death was being kept from the sisters. Colonel Johnston did not feel he could leave his family to travel to London and Foreman Home offered to come instead if he could be of help, but added that he hoped he wouldn't have to. The family decided they did not want the body brought to Scotland. On 27 April Foreman Home wrote Milne that the sisters were more composed but still did not know the particulars of the death, and he hoped they never would (although when the Edinburgh Annual Review was published the secret would be out). The family decided that all effects should be sent by ship to Foreman Home except for items intended for the Arctic expedition which should be offered to the ship's officers at no loss. The packaging of the items sent to Scotland should not bear the name of the deceased or the family if possible. Finally, Foreman Home asked Milne to take charge of any trinkets or watch found in Johnston's desk until further notice. The next day, Foreman Home wrote with further wishes from the family, among them that Johnston's dog should go to Milne. The day after Johnston's death, the Navy Office had written Milne stating the cost of the leaden coffin to be made, but the post was misdirected and Milne did not receive it until June. The Navy later reduced the cost and Milne paid it. Hoppner wrote on 30 April that he did not think Johnston's effects for the expedition would fetch much, but officers were interested in the warm clothing, and also asked for arrangements to be made concerning some unpaid bills. At the same time Hoppner expressed his apologies for not being more attentive, but time was getting exceedingly short before the Fury was to set out on its expedition. Finally, we have several letters written to Milne from Johnston's two sisters. In one, some shells given to one of the sisters by Johnston are given to Milne and in another, doubt is expressed as to whether she

can bear seeing Johnston's dog, which Milne brought up from London to Milne Graden. The grieving and sorrow of the sisters are indeed deep as is their gratitude to Milne for taking care of matters.

It is worth mentioning, that had Johnston taken part in the Arctic expedition, he would not have attained the honour and glory that Milne had mentioned, as the voyage turned out to be disastrous. 1824 was a bad year for ice and the ship was forced to winter on Baffin Island. In late July the following year they freed themselves, but 60 miles further south the ship was caught in the wind and ice and damaged by the ensuing pressure. It was eventually beached, unloaded and abandoned on 25 August, and the crew picked up by one of the other ships on the expedition.

Interestingly, in 1825, the year after Johnston's death, we have an exchange of letters and notes describing the bitter feud taking place that year between Johnston's father, Colonel Robert Johnston, and the widowed William Foreman Home of Paxton House, over Foreman Home's courtship of Catherine Johnston without the knowledge of her father. Admiral Milne and others tried to mediate this feud, but that is another story.

Sources: Milne Graden Papers, held at Paxton House, MGP 7/6 and 7/7: letters from Lt Hume Johnston and correspondence concerning his death; Edinburgh Annual Register 1807-1825, Google Books, p 186f; Wikipedia.

Jane Pigney

BERWICK PUB LANDLADIES

In recognition of Brenda Collins' over 50 years as landlady of the Free Trade in Berwick (initially with her late husband, Eddie), the following notes describe other long serving Berwick landladies over the last century, though none equal Brenda's remarkable record.

Next door to the Free Trade is the White Horse Inn. In 1961 Mrs Mabel Hogg was presented with a gold watch by Vaux for her 40 years as licensee with Vaux. (1921 – 1961). She had succeeded her father at the White Horse. Indeed, she was so well known, that the pub was called Mable's by the locals, in recognition of her years there.

Not far away, in the Greenses, the Pilot Inn had a tradition of female licensees. In July 1991, Mrs Jean Dargue celebrated her 102nd birthday in the Pilot, having been

landlady there with her late husband (Joseph Dargue) from 1944 until 1959. Prior to that, the Murphy family were licensees of the pub from c 1840 to 1922. Mrs Isabella Murphy was the last of this family of licensees at the Pilot, being landlady from c 1894 to 1922.

Further along in the Greenses, Agnes Crombie was licensee at the Fishers Arms pub from c 1894 to 1916.

Across the river in Tweedmouth at the Thatched Inn (the Thatch), another family had an even longer record of being licensees in one pub, namely the Heslops. It was reported that when Miss Mary Eleanor Heslop retired from the Thatch in 1940, that this was the end of over 100 years of Heslops in the Thatch. Immediately prior to Mary Heslop, was Rachel Agnes Heslop who was the owner and licensee of the Thatch from 1903 to 1939.

Mrs Gray (who had been brought up in the Berwick Arms) was licensee of the Stanley Arms in West Street (the last of Berwick's ale houses), from 1932 (with her husband, Andrew, who later died) until 1952 when she took over the Rose and Thistle in Walkergate.

Interestingly she took over from another female licensee, Mrs Ethel Brown, who, with her husband, John Brown, was licensee there from 1929 until 1951. This was another Berwick pub with a tradition of female licensees, since prior to Mrs Brown, the licensee was Bridget Strongroom, from c 1903 to 1927. Thus, for over 50 years (c 1903 to the 1950s) the Rose and Thistle had a succession of female landladies.

It is interesting to note how many of these landladies took over the running of a pub after the deaths of their husbands.

In contrast, the Black Bull Inn in Silver Street (now no longer) had a succession of female licensees without evidence of husbands. From c 1903 to 1937, Margaret Summers, and then Jane Anne Summers were licensees of the pub. Well before their time, Oliver Cromwell is supposed to have lodged in the Black Bull in 1650.

Finally, the role of the Foxtan family mustn't be overlooked. Under Gertrude Foxtan, with her husband Peter, Turret (House) Villa Hotel became a well respected hotel, with a well known popular bar called the Garden Bar and a reputation for excellent cuisine. The couple, who took over the Hotel around 1969 had already run the Hen and Chickens for 15 years previously and appear to have been a remarkable partnership in the hotel and bar trade. Indeed, Gertrude's own parents (Frank and

Gertrude Parkinson) had originally set up Turret House as a country club hotel in 1959.

Bob Steward

THE JAIL BIRD- BERWICK ON TWEED, 1892

On Thursday a full-grown swan of an age which should have taught the bird better, fell into the hands of the Police at Berwick. It seems that this morning the luckless cygnus which is believed to hail from the Paxton district, found its way down Tweed to Berwick, and at once attracted a great amount of attention.

Some thoughtless youths began to stone the representative of the large and strong beaked, long-necked genera, and it was struck. Thereafter the aquatic one was "arrested" and conveyed to the Police Office, it probably being considered that the "coloured" condition of the Tweed, whose waters the unfortunate bird had been imbibing, had rendered it incapable of taking care of itself.

At the Police Office "the prisoner", who in its native element is renowned for its graceful movements, was duly "examined" by the Magistrates. The Prisoner appeared to fully realise the gravity of the position and the anxious looks at those around and the quivering of the slender neck and nervous twitch of the eye disclosed the sensitive nature of the ill-fated swan.

After hearing sufficient evidence to justify a remand, the prisoner was removed to the New Gaol – to become pro tem, a "jail bird" instead of a river bird, there to lie until the Police have made investigations as to the prisoner's antecedents.

Literature has it that the swan is fabled to sing a melodious song, especially at the time of its death so if the prisoner now lodged in the much abused New Gaol is desirous of singing a melodious song it may give to the cold bare walls of the New Gaol that popular melody, "Ask a Policeman".

Should it however not be able to corroborate the assertion of literature, it may be of the genus the Whistling Swan, (*olor cygnus*) and it may pipe out the melody already referred to. But if the bird has been locked up on a charge of "wetting its whistle", it may be difficult for it to "blow its whistle".

By Tung-Inch-Eek.

Source: *Berwick Advertiser*.

Maureen Charlton

BERWICK ADVERTISER SNIPPETS

Berwick Advertiser, 18 October 1872

THE NEW MASONIC BUILDING-GRAND DRAWING

These buildings gradually assume larger dimensions, and the structure gives indications of being, when completed, a decided ornament to the town. The local brethren of the "mystic tie" have incurred a considerable pecuniary outlay by the erection of this edifice, and they have made an appeal to the public to assist them in defraying the cost of the buildings. The appeal takes the form of a grand "drawing" to be conducted on the Art Union principle, and the prizes offered amount to 150 in number, and are valued in the aggregate at £140. A very judicious selection of articles has been made, and the prize list we have no doubt will entice many persons to speculate. Among the prizes are pictures to the value of 40 guineas, three fat sheep, two pigs, a sack of flour, two bags of potatoes, three half-barrels of beer, three half-dozens of brandy, two dozens of wine, two cheeses, seven turkeys, eight fat geese, &c., &c., and the price of the tickets, enabling the holder to have a chance of obtaining one or other of these or many other prizes, is only one shilling. In our advertising columns will be found full particulars about the drawing. We hope the Freemasons will be fortunate enough in netting a sufficient sum to enable them to enter their new premises free of debt.

Berwick Advertiser, 18 October 1872

LADYKIRK

Mr Robertson of Ladykirk, M.P., has, with his accustomed generosity, given all the cottages about Ladykirk who have gardens (some thirteen in number) the sum of £2 each, in order to make up for the loss of their potato crop, which there is no longer any doubt is completely gone, and valueless as food to their families, which is a sad loss to poor people. We hope this excellent example will be followed by many who have wealth at command, as the approaching winter threatens to be a trying one for working people.

Berwick Advertiser, 8 November 1872

THE LATE ROYAL VISIT TO CHILLINGHAM

An admirable series of photographs, representing the principal incidents of the recent Royal visit to Chillingham castle has just been issued from the studio of Messrs W. and D. Downey, Eldon Square, Newcastle. Perhaps the most noteworthy are two views illustrative of "Victor and Vanquished," in the memorable hunt of the wild cattle. In these the Prince of Wales dressed in a light checkbocker suit, is seen standing in an easy and sportsmanlike attitude, rifle in hand, over the prostrate body of the noble king of the forest whom his unerring bullet has just levelled to the ground. The likeness of his Royal Highness, in one case profile, and in the other full face, are remarkably good.

Berwick Advertiser, 8 November 1872

DESTRUCTION BY FLOODS IN THE TWEED AND WHITADDER

To know the full extent of the damage done by the heavy floods of rain we have had this year, can only be ascertained by taking a stroll on either side of the Tweed. The marks of devastation there would astonish people. On the Berwick side, the plantation is worse by far than ever it used to be, several land slips having made the road less a path than it was. On the banks of the Whitadder, near the mouth, a sweeping away of some tons of earth marks the work of the flood. The old tree that for so many long years stood an isolated sentinel of the waters and the finny tribes beneath, has got a friendly lift from the one side to the other, and it now stands guardian of the stream on the west instead of the east side, and about 100 yards nearer its mouth. Even the bed of the stream has been changed, and at present the lower side and not the upper at its mouth is the deepest. To perform the pilgrimage at present to Chain Bridge from the west or from Berwick would be no mean task, and none but those of stout limbs and stalwart frame need attempt it. The extent of damage done to land lying close to the Whitadder below Canty's Bridge, will, it is understood, in one part alone cost the Corporation of Berwick fully £300 to repair.

Carole Pringle