

HEXHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Newsletter 52

Autumn 2008

Tour 4
Newcastle-on-Tyne - Otterburn - Durham.
108 miles

Rothbury: The medieval four-arched bridge over the Coquet has been reconstructed in concrete. Rothbury's castle was destroyed in the 19th century and its 14th-century rectory is now a children's home.

From Garleigh Moor there's a view worth stopping to see, of Rothbury beside the Coquet, the Simonside Hills to the west, and north-west the Cheviots.



Wallington Hall

Newcastle United Football ground, the Barracks (early 19th century) and Leazes Park - 'When Mayses breezes shake the trees The cowses hooves go on the Leazes' - and Nuns Moor, separated from the Great Town Moor, and the Lesser Dukes Moor, by the grandstand - these form the green heart of modern Newcastle.



START HERE

78

Visitors are welcomed at the Otterburn Woollen Mills where excellent tweeds, blankets, etc., are produced. The industry is traditional and women once took work away from the mills, using the cottage spinning wheel.

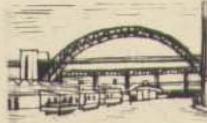


Simonside

At Hartington the road turns sharply due east to catch the lower slopes of the Simonside Hills.

The grotesque figures overlooking the road keep guard over Wallington Hall. It was built by the Blacketts, a great Tyneside family of merchants and coal owners in the 18th century.

Belsay is a fine Italian arcaded village with a Grecian mansion, designed by Monck and John Dobson.



Newcastle

This Tour is taken from a 1951 publication "The Lakes to Tyneside", a guidebook with a foreword by Sid Chaplin. It would make an interesting day out. Note the reference to Hexham as being "famed for its orchards and market gardens."

Continued on back page

Welcome to the Autumn 2008 Newsletter

If you would like to receive future newsletter by e-mail, please send a message to h.j.rutherford@fsmail.net and you will be added to the electronic list.

In this issue we have a large number of requests for information. Colin Dallison kindly helped with a number of the requests for information in the last newsletter and a flavour of his responses are reproduced in this edition. Any help is gratefully received by those requesting information so please wrack your brain to see if you can help this month. Whilst sorting through HLHS papers I came upon a few articles and snippets sent by Rodney Higgins that did not find a space in previous editions. Rodney provided a lot of the information in the newsletter and his contributions are sorely missed. If you have anything you would like to have printed in the newsletter, short articles, items of interest or queries please e mail to the above address or post to 4 Hackwood Park Hexham NE46 1AX.

Members may recall a headline in the Hexham Courant "A Bridge too far for the River Tyne Ferryman". It referred to a letter from George Gibson the local ferryman, complaining that the new bridge would put him out of business and suggesting that he should receive some compensation. Whether he was successful we do not know. The letter was auctioned in Shropshire by a firm who specialised in historical documents. After a whip round and an appeal in the Courant £375 was raised to try to secure the letter. Unfortunately the bidding closed at £420 and so, unfortunately, we lost a little bit of Hexham Heritage.

Now that the summer is over, I hope you will be attending the remaining lectures of 2008. Plans are already in hand for a sparkling menu for 2009!

Outing to Spadeadam

Stan Becksensall attended the sold out trip to RAF Spadeadam in the summer. RAF Spadeadam is the only facility in Europe where aircrews can practise manoeuvres and tactics against a variety of threats and targets that they face in contemporary warfare. The site attracts aircraft from the RAF, Army, Navy and NATO Forces. As the Spadeadam website points out "The survival of aircrews over Iraq, Afghanistan or elsewhere, and the soldiers on the ground who depend on air support are affected by the training provided by RAF Spadeadam." It was a very interesting day out but, unfortunately no cameras were allowed so there is no photographic evidence of the trip (pictures are always welcome in the newsletter!) but Stan has provided the following report about the derivation of the unusual name of the site:

As no one knew what the word Spadeadam meant, I said that I would try to find out. In the past I had found the name in some documents, and had an idea that it referred to vegetation.

It is not in the *Oxford Dictionary of Place Names*, but I found it in the Cambridge, more recent, one.

Here are the spellings and dates:

1295 Spathe Adam

1399 Spadadam

1576 Spadeadam.

It's meaning is thought to come from the Welsh: ysbyddaden, which may mean a place where there was a hawthorn tree. One thing in favour of this is that it would have been unlikely to have much of a settlement there, but hawthorns would have grown in numbers quite naturally and prominently.

Updates for past queries

In the Spring Newsletter there was a request for information about the **Temperley** Family. Colin Dallison has been able to help with this query with a great deal of information gleaned from directories, burial registers and newspapers, dating from 1699 onwards.

The following is a taste of the information available. In 1827 Nicholas Temperley was a grocer selling butter, bacon, cheese, tea and flour from premises in Market Street. The Temperleys are described in a directory from the late 19th century as "an old established and well known firm of merchants and importers with premises at Hexham, and Newcastle." The directory goes on to state that "The name Temperley has been a familiar one on Tyneside for several generations, and the establishment of the firm dates from 1801... the firm do an extensive business in home produce, and as importers of cargoes, and direct steamer shipments of various descriptions of foreign oil-cakes, grain, and other feeding materials... They also act as agents in the district for one of the largest Hungarian flour mills at Budapest"

The Temperleys left quite a mark architecturally in Hexham. In 1826 Temperley Place was built on the north side of Hencoates and in 1859 William Temperley built Westfield House at Hexham at the substantial cost of £1,047. His eldest son Nicholas laid the foundation stone on his fifteenth birthday, February 14th 1859. The house was sold in 1877, after being let for a few years, to J. Hope for £11,000 and later became Hexham Hydro. The same year, 1877, 9 Beaumont Street, an "essay in free Baroque" according to Pevsner, was built for W. A. Temperley and Co, followed in 1897 by 7 Beaumont Street.

After reading the request for information about **Eliza Armstrong** and **Charles Hodges** in the Summer newsletter, Colin Dallison forwarded some details from the censuses and directories about Charles C. Hodges and Philip Ham provided the following interesting addition to the story: an 'Eliza Armstrong'

was described as a 'nurse domestic servant' in the household of C. C. Hodges in the 1891 Census and would have been engaged to look after Hodges' daughters Etheldreda (b. 1887) and Freda (b. 1889).

The biography of Hodges in *Hexham Lives* unfortunately gives no indication of when he left Hexham or where he went, but we can speculate that he might have felt that his work as Abbey Architect had been fulfilled after 1908 when the new Nave had been completed, and he would almost certainly have been living in Hexham up to that time. It is known that he later moved his practice to Gateshead, where he continued to be a prolific contributor to antiquarian publications and where he died in early 1932 in his 80th year.

The 1901 Census shows him to have been a 'boarder' in a hotel at the rather upmarket area of The Heads, Keswick, together with his wife, Emma, son William C. (8) and a domestic servant named Ursula C. C. Dodd (24). It is more than likely that he was on holiday and had been accompanying, or visiting, his daughters who at the time were at a Ladies' Boarding School at Brunswick Street and Cavendish Place in Carlisle. It would seem likely that Eliza Armstrong may have served the Hodges as a children's nurse during much of the 1890s but had left before William attained the age of 8 and before the 1901 Census was taken. There is still no definitive answer to the query but lots of interesting information nevertheless.

F Dodds read the query from Philip Drew and sent the following information: Philip Drew, is in fact my half cousin although I only heard of him on your website. He is asking about the **Rumney** family whose fortunes I have followed up to the 1930s. His father Featherstone Rumney was the son of Hannah and Joseph Rumney. She was formerly Hannah Hodgson and lived at New Alston Haydon Bridge. Theirs was a large family and some of the sons were in the First World War. Hannah died in 1927 and her husband in 1906. Theirs is a long story, but life was very hard for them. I gleaned much of it from the Haydon Bridge Church records. I believe their origins were in Garrigill, but they lived at Fourstones station in 1881.

Book Review:
***Northumbria on
This Day by Chris
Kilkenny***
(Ergo Press)

Rodney Higgins

Chris Kilkenny must have an obsession with dates. This book contains hundreds of dates of events in Northumbria covering the counties of Northumberland and Durham. The author also seems to have a morbid interest in death. There is a concentration of pit disasters, shipwrecks and deaths of local personalities. There are many items of specific local interest such as the Hexham Riot, the opening of the Carlisle- Hexham Railway, the death of Wilfred and the Great Flood of 1771.

The Events are in datal sequence on the basis of the day of the month and the year. For example, on the 17th March 1874 it is noted that John Candish, son of a Bellingham farmer died. One would think that such a humble background was hardly auspicious but John Candish had founded his own

bottle factory in Sunderland and became mayor of Sunderland in 1861 and an MP in 1866. The book is illustrated and represents good value at £10.99.

Information Wanted

Malcolm Rowntree is tracing the life of his father's uncle, **Mark Rowntree**. Rowntree was mentioned in *The Hexham Historian* 16 in the section on watch and clockmakers. He lived at Acomb in Orchard Gap. Unfortunately the dates in the article are incorrect and the census referred to was 1881, not 1871 and he was actually born on 12 April 1856.

He moved from Hexham to Sunderland where he continued to work as a watchmaker and died in 1934. From information from other quarters he may have worked for a firm called Harrison in Sunderland and I am wondering if it is possible anywhere to get more detail of his employment in Hexham. Can anyone suggest any sources he might be able to consult?

Any help or suggestions would be greatly appreciated. Malcolm considers that the family suffered some sort of tragedy and he would like to uncover this. malcolm.rowntree2@btinternet.com

Lorna Young, younglorna@msn.com, has been researching various schools and schoolmasters in the wider Hexham area and has come across references to the "**Hexham Pupil Teacher Centre**" in the late 19th Century and early 20th Century. She has looked in trade directories and also at O.S. maps but has been unable to locate it. Any information or help gratefully received.

Professor Alan Davison is working on a number of local history projects in Morpeth and one of them has led to **William Fell** the nurseryman of Hexham. He would like to find any sources of information about his nursery business and particularly correspondence with other nurseries.

The background to this request is research into the Whinham family. Robert senior bred Whinham's Industry gooseberry. Just before he died in 1861 he sold his stock to Matheson of Morpeth who publicised it and helped make it very successful. Around 1900, about 200 tons were exported from Morpeth per year. Matheson sold it to the USA where it became one of the best-known varieties. Matheson correspondence has been located showing that around 1900 he was selling upwards of 40,000 plants per year to at least two companies in the USA. Records in the USA say that Ellwanger & Barry of Rochester were the first to market the gooseberry (c.1888) but their advertising says that they bought them from William Fell. Professor Davison is therefore trying to work out the links between Matheson, Fell, Ellwanger and a USA importer by the name of Rhotest.

Finally, Robert's son, also Robert, was a musician and dance teacher who operated in the Haltwhistle area around 1850-1860 or later. There is an

oral history account by George Hepple stating that his grandfather was taught by Whinham in Haltwhistle. Whinham's music is still played today. If anyone knows of any records, posters or newspaper cuttings referring to Whinham the musician Professor Davison would like to know about them. (Contact: Emeritus Professor Alan Davison, Orchard House1 Cottinglea Morpeth NE61 1DP)

Rosemary Marsh from Cheshire is researching her family history and has discovered that her father's mother's family all came from Wigtown, Kirkcudbright and the rural areas of what is now Dumfries and Galloway. Most of them were farm labourers who migrated to Newcastle in search of work after the Napoleonic wars. They lived in Newcastle in the Groat Market, Fenkle Street and around the bottom end of the Westgate Road, moving from one rented room to another. Most of them became travelling drapers. Beamish Museum have panniers used by travelling drapers when they went about on horseback but she can't find anything out about how they divided up the territory or quite what they sold whether to shops or individuals. Does any member of the Society by any chance have any connections with the travelling drapery trade or even know about the history of retailing drapery in nineteenth century Northumberland? Contact: 66 The Downs Altrincham Cheshire WA14 2QJ (rosemary@thedowns66.wanadoo.co.uk)

Meryl Hiron has an ongoing enquiry about a relative who lived in Hexham in the first half of the 19th century, in the hope of getting some input from other members, as she seems to have come to the limit of all other sources. Meryl's query relates to William Dean a mining engineer, who, in about 1833, moved from Blanchland to Hexham to set up a firm in partnership with his son-in-law, John Blenk, and one other. This enterprise was to be called 'The Hexham Iron Works' and, according to the Registers of Electors 1833 -1839 he was qualified to vote in respect of 'Copyhold Houses, Land, Gardens and Iron Foundry situate At or Near the Mill Lane'; in Pigot's Directory of 1834, William Dean is listed under Iron Founders as 'Dean Wm & Co (& Saw Mills) Tyneside'.

Having examined the possibilities of various other sites, Meryl is considering whether the site he chose is that which later became Davison's Foundry at the corner of Eilansgate with Tyne Green Road (now occupied by the Hexham Horseless Carriage Company) and including the yard behind it, Foundry House, and the row of cottages, some of which still adjoin beyond.

If anyone has knowledge of the history of the site, access to the Deeds of any of the buildings mentioned, or can direct Meryl to any resources that may help, please contact the Secretary.

**North East War
Memorials Project**

The paper by David Butler, found under "Research War Memorials" on the Home Page of the Website at www.newmp.org.uk, has been revised and updated, to take account of comments from Website users, and to provide further information on research sources.

John and Mavis Dixon are retiring from the Project, though they will complete the tasks currently in hand, such as the Walks Booklets, and the Index to Abbreviations found on War Memorials.

Bob Wilson will be replacing John as Treasurer, and Paul Campbell is taking over as Website Co-ordinator.

If you need to contact the Project - please use enquiries@newmp.org.uk and include the nature of your query in the subject line - this will assist the direction of the message to the most suitable member of the Team.

Dates for your diary.

These are the last two meeting of the HLHS for 2008. They will be held in The Trinity Methodist Hall Beaumont Street, as usual, starting at 7.30pm. Free to members. £2 for non-members.

Tuesday 14th October

Landscape and Capability Brown, Professor John Cannon, Professor Emeritus Newcastle University

Tuesday 11th November

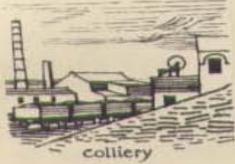
A Sapper's War, a talk by Colonel A. K. Johnson on his experiences in World War Two

For all up to date information visit the Society's website:

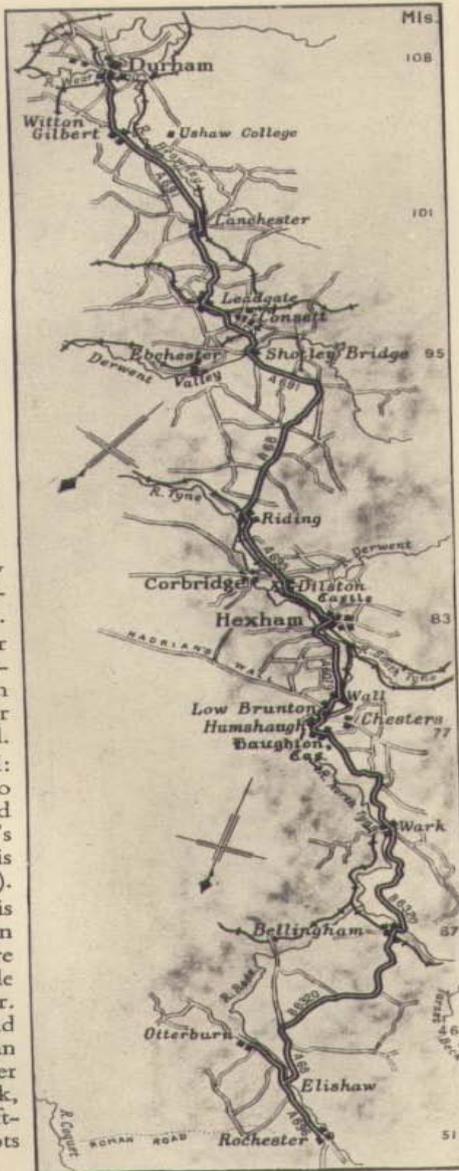
<http://www.northumberlandlife.org/hexham-local-history-society/>

Tour 4
concluded

Along the valley are collieries with inter-connecting aerial ropeways spaced so infrequently that they do not spoil the effect of well-wooded pastoral land until Witon Gilbert and the more thickly populated area is reached.



The Tyne Valley widens below Hexham, with a fine view. Hexham: Famed for its orchards and market gardens, the town is the best centre for exploring the Wall. Low Brunton - Wall: between these two villages the road passes over Hadrian's Wall. Westwards is Cilernum (Chesters). The Redesdale Inn is the last in England on this route. These are the famous Debatable Lands of the border. Between Coquet and Rede is the Roman way of Agricola, later used as a reiving track, later still as a 'driftway' by the Scots drovers.



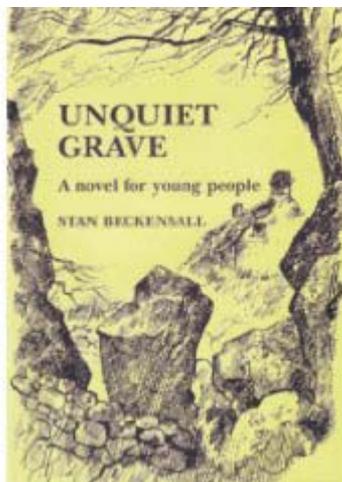
Durham (see gazetteer).

Shotley Bridge, now a suburb for the industrial town of Consett, was once a centre for flour milling, paper-works and cutlery-making.



Wark-on-Tyne is just another village, but when Tynedale was a possession of the Scottish King his courts of justice were held here.

Bellingham is a quiet village with a church of considerable interest.



Book Stop Press... Stan Beckensall's historical novel for young people, 'Unquiet Grave', based on Old Bewick Moor and Alnwick, has been published by Powedene, the group that publishes 'The Northumbrian' and can be bought from Cogito in St Mary's Chare for £7.50. In November 'Northumberland from the Air' with 170 photographs and comments, including 30 in full colour, also by Stan Beckensall will be published by The History Press (Stroud). Both will make ideal Christmas gifts. (Yes, its that time already...)