



HEXHAM LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



Newsletter 66	Editor: Mark Benjamin (01434) 607746	Summer 2013
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Thoughts from a Chair Peter Rodger

The recent respite from snow, wind and generally inclement weather has given us all some hope that summer may finally be approaching. Once again, but much later than we are accustomed to, the gardens are filled with buds, blossom and colour. Long may it last – or at least until Midsummer Eve (old style) when in days past it was the custom in some Northumberland villages to make a large bonfire to be surrounded by dancers and merrymakers; and, as the flames died down, couples who wished to be lucky would jump over the embers. At the turn of the last century this was still the custom in Whalton near Morpeth. I doubt that there will be fires this year, although in 2012 there was the National Beacon chain to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee. The summer also sees in our series of trips and outings and those who have already reserved your places will be looking forward to the visit to the Tyne River trip and an outing to Richmond and Jervaulx Abbey in North Yorkshire. You may be planning your own history trails during the summer. I'm sure many of you will have a tale to tell and maybe you might be tempted to write a short piece for our next newsletter.

Message from the Secretary Yvonne Purdy

Thank you to everyone who's responded to your subscription reminder letter, and a gentle prod for those who would still like to! Thank you, also, to Jennifer Britton for organizing the very enjoyable the May outing to the "Lit & Phil", and Mining Institute; the first of what we hope will be many.

New on the Website Members' Library

1) Robinson, David M. The Augustinian canons in England and Wales: architecture, archaeology and liturgy, 1100-1540. *Monastic Research Bulletin* 18(2012)

2) Hexham Social Service Club – Annual Report 1935. The club, run under the auspices of the Hexham Council of Social Service, was in its second year. The report, as well as the usual elements of an annual report, includes a clear ground plan of the club's premises and grounds on Haugh Lane. There is no indication as to where on Haugh Lane this site was. If anyone has any further information about the club, we'd love to hear from you.

3) Names Index to Cadman's thesis on Hexham Union, 1839-1930 An alphabetical listing of all names appearing in the thesis, together with the reason for the inclusion.

Dukesfield Smelters & Carriers Project Greg Finch

18 months of collaborative work between the Friends of the North Pennines charity and the communities of Hexhamshire and Slaley parishes have paid off with the award of a grant from the HLF in March. The two year project, also supported by HLHS, will conserve the physical remains of the Dukesfield lead smelt mill arches, involve people in learning new skills in a range of conservation, research and heritage activities, and reconnect communities along the old lead routes between the high Pennine dales and Blaydon. By the time you read this, the preparatory work required to get formal HLF approval to commence the project should be complete. There will be many opportunities for members to get involved. Early activities will involve some community archaeology to expose the remains of the chimney stacks at Dukesfield prior to conservation work, an art club project, and the launch of the 'Reading the Past' documentary research and transcription project into the history of the mill, the carriage of ore and lead, and its place within the wider Blakett family lead business from the late 17th century. This will build upon a highly successful pilot last year which Society members were involved in. For more information on this or other aspects of the project, please send an email to

dukesfield@hexhamhistorian.org to be added to the mailing list, and do let us know if you have any particular areas you're interested in. We have a great opportunity in front of us to contribute much to the known history of one of the Northeast's most important industries.

So who was at the party?

On 6th August 1917, the Henderson family, owners of the Racecourse, decided to hold a Charity Garden Party at their home of The Ridings, St John Lee, in place of the Tynedale Agricultural Show which had been cancelled due to the war. One of the highlights was a Women's Football Match, between two teams of munitions workers from Tyneside! A descendant of one of the players has a photograph of the event and is curious to identify any of the people depicted. We know that the lady beneath the portrait of the king is Marjorie Henderson – if anyone can identify any others, Susanne Ellingham would love to hear from you at susanneellingham@hotmail.com or call Mark on 01434 607746



Care & Preservation of historic documents
Zoe Findlay

Many of us have historic paper documents in our homes which we are keen to look after either because of their financial value or simply because of the sentimental significance they hold for us. Whether they are paintings, letters, certificates, prints or maps, it can be confusing to know how best to go about ensuring their preservation. There are a range of factors which are potentially damaging to paper and many can cause often irreversible changes.

The following article introduces some of the common problems that represent a risk to paper. Whilst it's often not possible to prevent their effects entirely or to reverse all existing damage, there are many small, inexpensive steps that can be taken in the home to slow deterioration and help to preserve your paper items for the future.

Environmental factors

These cover a wide variety of issues; adapting your storage and display to the following recommendations can greatly reduce the potential for damage.

Temperature and humidity

Very high or low temperature and humidity levels can cause damage however; the most harm can come from the fluctuation of levels. Repeatedly changing conditions can cause paper to buckle or even tear if the paper is restrained – for example, by being glued down. Certain media such as paint or pastels can also flake off.

High humidity encourages mould to develop on paper and as well as being unsightly and literally 'eating' away at the paper, mould also poses a health risk for people. Mould is also a convenient food source for pests which can eat or nest in the paper.

Another common problem which is encouraged by high temperature and humidity is 'foxing', which appears as orange/brown circular marks on paper. Foxing is caused by small iron particles which are within the paper or the media and it is often found in conjunction with mould. The resulting chemical interaction helps to create the ideal acidic environment for both to thrive in.

Some types of media are affected by humidity. Iron gall ink – an ink used since antiquity and into the early 20th century – is a common example. As the ink ages, its acid content is increased and reacts with the metal within the ink. When moisture is introduced, a complex chemical reaction is set up and the ink breaks down the paper, often resulting in holes and brown haloes around the writing.



To combat these issues, try to avoid large fluctuations in rooms by reducing the temperature of nearby radiators or by moving items to a cooler room. Pictures should never be hung near or above radiators or fireplaces or on outside walls. If a frame really must be hung on an outside wall, a small piece of cork at least 1cm thick should be attached behind each corner to allow for airflow. If possible, maintain a cool, dry environment with a relative humidity of 50-55% and temperatures of 17°C to 20°C. Be aware of high humidity levels and keep a check on your items, particularly during prolonged wet weather.

Air pollution

Air pollution includes dust and any particulates given off by vehicles, some cleaning materials, gases which can be emitted by non-archival papers, certain rubbers, plastics and paints. All of these can cause paper to become weak, brittle and discoloured.

To minimise this pollution, follow the storage advice which is given later in this article. For framed items, seal the back of frames with a gummed paper tape (preferably archival quality, but ordinary tape is preferable to none). This will provide a barrier to pollutants as well as insects and dust. If the seal becomes even slightly pierced, replace it or add a new layer.

Light

As we're probably all aware, daylight and electric light can cause darkening or yellowing of paper and fading of media such as paints and inks. Fading is an indicator of over-exposure to light and, with very little exception, it is an irreversible effect. The more light, the faster the paper and media will degrade. It may sound obvious, but drawing curtains and blinds whenever possible will help. You can also store paper items in the dark, wrapped up in acid free tissue and in a lidded box, drawer or cupboard. Avoid hanging pictures near windows and consider using protective UV glass for framed items.

Pests

There are a variety of rodents as well as pests such as silverfish and booklice which enjoy eating or nesting in paper. Each has distinct characteristics of damage. Following the advice given for 'Air pollution' will also help to deter pests, however try to check regularly for any insect excrement, discarded insect cases or 'frass', a fine dust produced when insects eat materials. Dust the areas near your paper items regularly.

Storage and display

Many materials and methods of storage can cause irreversible damage to paper. The following are some guidelines to storing your paper items in safe materials and locations.

Storage or display within acidic materials

Paper can often turn from white to yellow, cream or brown. The changes often indicate increased levels of acidity in the paper and this may also cause it to become brittle. Sometimes, paper may be made of acidic materials such as when it contains a high proportion of wood. In these cases, there is little that can be done to strengthen the paper itself; however, storage within archival materials is a priority. Storage in acidic materials can cause paper to become discoloured and brittle and media to fade or change colour. Always try to use materials which are unbleached and free of wood and acid content. Never use sellotapes (even many archival tapes are damaging to paper), paperclips (other than those made of brass), staples, adhesives or rubber bands on your items.

Handling items

Handling paper items can easily cause tears, dirt, stains, creases and abrasions. Always ensure you have clean hands before handling your paper items. Ensure your fingers never touch the surface of old photographs as finger grease can cause the surface to turn acidic and deteriorate over time. For framed items, clean the frame glass regularly with a soft cloth without chemicals, as dust accumulations attract mould spores, moisture and insects. Insert acid free paper or board inside frames between the picture and the backing board. Large items such as maps can be difficult to store,

but should always be kept either horizontally or rolled around an acid free core. Never store paper items on the floor in case of trip hazards and insects or in attics, cellars or beneath pipes in case of flooding or damp.

Home Remedies

Many home remedies are chemically unstable and will cause long-term, permanent damage. Cleaning with bread, a popular activity, can cause future darkening or yellowing of the paper as well as being attractive to insects and mould. The practice of bleaching stains, especially foxing, with lemon juice will see an eventual return of the foxing, aggravated to a worse state than before.

When paper deteriorates, it does so on a chemical and microscopic level as well as by the visual evidence we can see. Often, the damage may not be immediately apparent however chemical, physical and ethical considerations are taken into account by conservators during the planning stages and the treatment of items.

Where possible, seek professional advice for any problems that you notice. However, following the above guidelines will help you to avoid many problems developing, to slow down deterioration and to ensure that you enjoy your paper items for longer. If you would like further details on any of the above issues, about how to handle and store your books or you are interested in sourcing some of the materials mentioned, please contact me by email at zoe.finlay@gmail.com or phone 07906 334 002.

Zoe Finlay Paper Conservation is a private practice that specialises in the conservation of watercolours, drawings, prints, letters, manuscripts and other items on paper. For more information, visit: www.zoefinlaypaperconservation.co.uk

Events for your diary

Throughout the year: Newcastle City Guides operate a variety of interesting walks around Newcastle, Gateshead & Tynemouth on Sundays & Wednesdays; cost £4 (£3 for over 60s). Their brochure can be downloaded from <http://digbig.com/5bhfrd> or call Newcastle Visitor Information Centre on

(0191) 277 8000

Monday 24th June, 7.30pm: Hexham and the history of railways. Queen's Hall. A free talk by the eminent transport historian, Dr Bill Fawcett, on the development of the railway in Hexham (and the wider area).

Thursday 27th June, 7.30pm: The Ouseburn: the cradle of the Industrial Revolution on Tyneside. The Hearth Arts Centre, Horsley NE15 0NT. An informative session ranging from the glassworks in the 17th Century to a range of river based mills and engineering works, including Maling Pottery and a vital canal network.

Thursday & Friday 25th & 26th July: The art of Robert Stephenson. The Hearth Arts Centre, Horsley NE15 0NT. A touring exhibition with 2 family days of activities, including 'make a semaphore signal', and an evening talk

Thursday 29th August: Life on the footplate. The Hearth Arts Centre, Horsley NE15 0NT. A talk with video by Lee Davies, a serving railway engine driver.

Monday 9th September: Battle of Flodden Conference to be held by the North East of England Historical Institute (NEEHI). For further details see our last issue (Spring 2013)

Thursday 19th September, 7.30pm: Morpeth Town Hall: 'Collingwood and Morpeth' Morpeth was without doubt Collingwood's favourite place, although he spent relatively little time there. A talk by Captain Stephen Healy. Free admission for Collingwood Society members, £2 for others.

Thursday 26th September, 7.30pm: John Hancock: naturalist and taxidermist. The Hearth Arts Centre, Horsley NE15 0NT. A talk by James Littlewood of the Newcastle Natural History Society.

Crimewatch – 19th Century Style

Notice found in the Hexham Courant 6th January 1825

HEXHAM ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROSECUTION OF FELONS, & c.

We, whose Names are Underwritten, do give this public Notice to all Thieves, Robbers, and Vagabonds, that we continue our Association as formerly, and

that we are resolved to prosecute, at our joint Expence, any Person or Persons who shall be found guilty of trespassing through Fields, breaking Gardens, stealing Potatoes or Turnips, or otherwise injuring the Person or Property of any of us; and ample Rewards will be given to any Person, who will give such Information as may lead to the Conviction of the Offender or Offenders.

T. W. Beaumont, Esq. Hexham
 James Charlton, Hexham
 M. W. Carr, Esq, Ditto
 John Bell, Ditto
 Michael Bell, Ditto
 Ann Charlton, Ditto
 John Kirsopp, Ditto
 Edward Ainsley, Ditto
 George Wilson Marg. Thompson, Ditto
 Peter Dixon, Tyne Mills
 R. W. Whitfield, Ditto
 Nicholas Temperley, Hexham
 John Nicholson, Summer-roads
 Peter Keir, Ditto
 Matthew Coulson, Hexham
 John Watson, Ditto

Leonard Wilson, Newbiggin
 J. Featherstone, Esq. Ditto
 Thomas Briscoe, Ordley
 Robert Bell, Highshield
 John Cooke, Hexham
 S. P. Maughan, Beacon
 William Burn, Ditto
 Wm. Bates, Hexham
 William Errington, Ditto
 John Ridley, Ditto
 Smith Stobart, Ditto
 William Donkin, Ditto
 W. and Thos. Nicholson, Ditto
 Matthew Barker, Ditto
 J. Dufour, Ditto
 James Kirsopp, Esq. Spittal
 William Robson, Ditto

Publications noted

Billy Bell, Redesdale roadman, border bard: his life, times and poetry. Northern Heritage ISBN 978 0 9575426 0 0 £8.99 e-book Amazon ISBN 978 0 9575426 1 7 £2.50

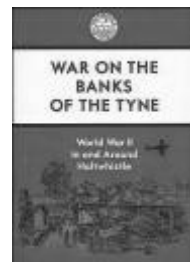


Billy Bell (1862 - 1941), lived just south of Carter Bar with links over the border into Scotland as well as across Northumberland

Contents include:

- A biography of Billy Bell
- An introduction by Johnny Handle to the comic and dialect poetry
- A large selection of his poems, including: *The Doshin' o' the Hoggs*, *The Cleugh*, *Winter on the Carter Fell* and all three *Bellingham Show* poems
- Fred Terry's 1917 article about their encounter in the snow

War on the banks of the Tyne: World War II in and around Haltwhistle. Haltwhistle Partnership, 2013. ISBN 9780956694348.



The result of a community research project, this booklet, with its many colour illustrations, is a great introduction, particularly for children, to the effect of the war on a rural community and, in particular, of having a large POW camp on its doorstep. Some copies may be available to buy at £2.50 inc. Please contact Mark Benjamin if you would like one.

Book Review

Helen Rutherford

Turnbull, Les. **Railways before George Stephenson: a study of the waggonways in the Great Northern Coalfield 1605-1830.** (Chapman Research Publishing/North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers, 2012) £17.50



“As soon as you are placed, with your candles lighted, you set off at full speed, with a boy in the first wagon, for your charioteer, into a tunnel six feet high, about the same in breadth, and three miles in length” (account of a tourist trip c1807 on the wagonway linking East Kenton Colliery with Scotswood)

When did the railways begin? The popular- trivia quiz answer might be, with the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway in September 1825, however this lavishly illustrated and

exhaustively researched book demonstrates that 1825 was merely a station on the journey, and that railways had existed for at least two hundred years prior to the ribbon cutting at Shildon.

This very readable book traces the birth of the waggonways in the North East through discussion and exploration of the coal trade and associated industries, from the middle ages onwards. It is divided into three sections: the historical background, seven chapters of specific studies of a number of waggonways and then a section of reference materials and further reading. As well as being a scholarly study, the book contains copious interesting snippets of information, such as the fact that the earliest illustration of a coal wagon (from 1724) exhibits no evidence of a brake (it is assumed that the horse pulling the wagon could control it) and an account of an early rail fatality, involving the unfortunate Margaret Dobson from Shields.

Geographically, the book covers a large area from the river Wansbeck in the North to Pitlington, in County Durham. There are a large number of maps showing the distribution of the waggonways as well as detailed descriptions of owners, freight and the industrial sites served by the infrastructure of the early industrial period.

The book is beautifully presented and provides an illuminating addition to any historian's library, offering something for railway enthusiasts, and anyone interested in transport, as well as students of industrial heritage, the coal trade, industrial archaeology in the North East of England, and the landscape of England in and around the industrial revolution.

Profits from the sale of this book will go to support the archive at the North of England Institute of Mining and Mechanical Engineers. (www.mininginstitute.org.uk)

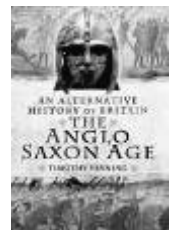
Book Review

Mark

Runnacles-
Goodridge &
Tim Owens

Venning, Timothy. **An alternative history of Britain: the Anglo Saxon Age** (Pen & Sword, 2013) ISBN 9781781591253 £15.00

Venning has carved himself a little niche writing alternative, "what if" histories such as 'If Rome Hadn't Fallen'. This book is part of his latest series of alternative British histories which will include forthcoming titles on the Wars of the Roses and the Hundred Years War. The book follows a chronological



format taking the reader from the departure of the legions and the arrival of Germanic settlers, in the fifth century, through the invasions of the opportunistic Vikings and the rise of the Kingdom of Wessex in the ninth, up until 1066 and the end of the Anglo-Saxon age.

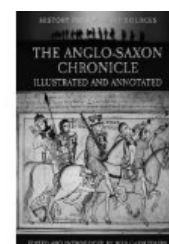
What is striking as you read the book is the sheer number of forks in the road where it was possible for history to take a different path. These alternative forks, explored by Venning, may derive from a key battle going the other way or an important, successful king living longer than he did in reality. But the book also explains the reasons why, in many cases, history could not have taken the alternative route – whether it is the reasons the British kingdom of Rheged missed out on the chance to be the major northern kingdom (in place of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria) or why none of the 7-9th century English kingdoms could unite the country under one banner. This is not however a purely alternative history; Venning gives us what really happened, providing his personal interpretation which convincingly places a high importance on the character and ability of individual rulers, as well as luck, in determining the fate of the various kingdoms.

Venning's writing style does leave a little to be desired, with clunky chapter subtitles and occasionally slightly confused, repetitive prose - in particular chapter three is very repetitive in its discussions of the interactions of the warring kingdoms. However on the whole this is a good history book. If this was the only book you read on the Anglo-Saxon age then you would come away with a sound knowledge of the period and with some interesting ideas to raise in debate with friends – such as "if Harold II had won the battle of Hastings who would have succeeded him?" and "could Northumbria, with a run of good luck, have conquered the whole of England".

Book Review

Mark Benjamin

Carruthers, Bob **The Anglo Saxon Chronicle: illustrated and annotated.** (Pen & Sword, 2013) ISBN 1781591482 £14.99 (Kindle version £2.99)



There is a myriad of versions of the Anglo Saxon Chronicle available to buy so do we need another? Part of the publisher's "History from primary sources" series, this

has an introduction from Bob Carruthers setting the text in its historical setting and explaining the origins of the various documents known collectively as the Anglo Saxon Chronicles. He also looks at instances where translations differ in their interpretation of certain passages. This is followed by the original introduction to his 1823 translation by the Rev James Ingram; the primary text used in the book. The final part consists of the "Parker" manuscript started at Winchester in the late 9th or early 10th century – for those who can read Anglo-Saxon!

It is a shame that the illustrations, an interesting mixture of medieval and later depictions of the Anglo-Saxon world, are in black & white given that much is made of their inclusion. Interestingly, this version appears to have been initially intended to be available in electronic format; indeed the text occasionally refers to "this ebook", something that should have been amended before publication; perhaps the author hoped to include colour images only to be over-ruled by the publisher's considerations of printing cost.

On the whole, this is a useful book for the serious student of the period although relatively expensive – unless you go for the Kindle version – compared to other versions of the Chronicles already available.

Book Review
Ted Wall

Jones, Rebecca H. **Roman camps in Britain** (Amberley, 2012) ISBN 9781848686885 £17.99

If you want to know about Roman Camps this book is for you. These were temporary fortified enclosures set up by campaigning army contingents on the march; or to hold construction crews whilst forts were being built; or whilst sieges were conducted. Five hundred sites have been identified in Britain, more than in any other part of the Empire. Although they were only occupied for a short period, Roman thoroughness in constructing ditches and ramparts has left remains in the landscape which can be seen on the ground, and from the air as cropmarks. 65% are known only through cropmarks. Their size varies according to the size of the army contingent, from 1 hectare for a cohort of 440 men to an astonishing 70 hectares for a camp in the Scottish Borders associated with Emperor Septimus Severus's campaign with an army of about 60,000 soldiers on the move.



The first half of the book covers a general overview of the conquest of Britain and an explanation of what the Roman camps were used for, their layout, orientation, and holding capacity, and a discussion of the historical sources. Camps in other parts of the Empire are referred to.

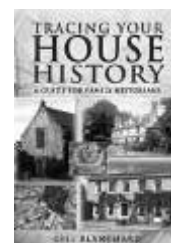
The second half of the book focuses on the archaeological evidence, from early antiquarian interest to modern aerial surveys and excavations, including the features identified and case studies, concluding with a discussion of chronology.

The book is well written and thorough. The insights into the physical relics capture the imagination: for example, in Wales there are groups of earthworks with tiny internal areas which are interpreted as the product of training exercises and the descriptions of the marching camps evoke battlegroups campaigning through England and Wales and far into Scotland. The book is well illustrated with plans, black and white photographs, (handily usually on the same page as the relevant text), and ample coloured plates.

Book Review
Susanne
Ellingham

Blanchard, Gill. **Tracing your house history: a guide for family historians** (Pen & Sword, 2013) ISBN 978 1 84994 254 0 £14.99

This book is aimed at any family or local historian researching a house. The "your" of the title is as much a reference to your interest in any residential building as to your current home. It is a very practical guide with numerous websites to help you find both online and physical resources. In many instances the website is there as a pointer to where to start looking. It is not provided as a substitute for looking through records on paper, microfiche or film.



The first section is devoted to house and architectural styles. This includes 20th century developments such as New Towns and slum clearance. The author points out that "many buildings have been altered, added to and extended". Therefore, dating when a house was first built - possibly

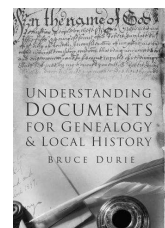
not as a house - may not be simple. It can involve research into physical features, local records and previous occupiers, each of which may lead to other resources. The author explains that it is important to build up your local knowledge of the location and she recognises the importance of groups, such as local history societies, that research areas and people of historical interest and publish the results. Many of the examples and images that she provides are from East Anglia and the south-east but, as she points out, they can be applied to many other areas of England and Wales. Scotland's resources differ in many ways so it is not included but some of the resources are relevant to Northern Ireland.

The second half of the book is a detailed account of the resources that can be consulted - some well known, such as directories and newspapers, others less so, such as the National Farm Survey of WW2 or business and occupational records. A useful feature of this section is the "Finding" paragraphs for each of the score of resource groups discussed eg "Finding probate records" gives several websites for regional and national indexes and explains the differences before and after 1858.

The author has been researching family, house and local history professionally for 20 years and has a background in researching local records. The index is not as comprehensive as it could be eg Fowler's Cholera Plan of Leeds is indexed under Fowler, not Leeds. However, the book layout is very clear which makes it easy to find what you need. This is emphatically not a dummies or idiots guide. While the author suggests working methods like using timelines, keeping clear records and alternative methods of writing up your research, the assumption is that is that you are aiming to produce a well-rounded, professional account of the house you have researched.

Book Review
Yvonne Purdy

Durie, Bruce **Understanding documents for genealogy & local history.** (History Press, 2013)
ISBN 9780752464640 £20.00



The book is a heavy paperback, slightly larger than A5. It contains a great deal of very useful and informative information, in three parts part one, Reading the documents; part two, The documents; part three, Glossaries.

Despite the author's obvious great depth and knowledge of his subject, unfortunately, I encountered an immediate drawback in the actual size of the book. I found many of the images of documents to be too small to read and had to use a magnifying glass, which was frustrating, and time-consuming. I would have much preferred the extensive Latin translation lists to have been more document-specific, and to have been shown examples and translations.

The extensive detail of this book for learning and reference would make it a good addition to any genealogist's library, but the format could have been improved.

Answers please!

I am an alumnus of Carmel College and am writing a history of the school (which closed in 1997). Included in this history will be a brief biography of teachers who were at Carmel College. One of them was William Charles Phelps (born 1908) who was a teacher, almost certainly of French, at the Camp School Hexham. He began teaching at the Camp School in the summer term 1955. However, after that term he left, and joined the staff of Carmel College, but he was only there for one academic year before rejoining the staff of Camp School for some period which I don't know its duration. He died in about 1966. I would be grateful for any information on his teaching at Camp School Hexham, and/or the contact details of anyone who may have memories of him there. Dr Chaim Simons chaimsimons@gmail.com

**And finally:
An honest
rogue!**

Spotted in the 1851 Census Return for Giligate:

John Black, Occupation – Whisky smuggler
Jane Black, Occupation – Smuggler's wife

Should anyone know anything further about John & Jane, both of whom were born in Scotland, Yvonne would love to hear from you.