

CHEVIOT VIEWS

The newsletter for Hedgeley Parish



ISSUE 6

WINTER 2010

OUR PLACE IN HISTORY

Hedgeley parish lies at the extreme southern edge of the great prehistoric Glendale Lake. As the land forms changed and natural drainage took place, human life began to shape the landscape as we know it.

Powburn village probably owes its existence to its strategic position near a river crossing (usually a ford) which, in time, would be replaced by a bridge of sorts. The Roman Army certainly used it for a military road which was part of a network north of the Great Wall. The road began in this part of the world at Rochester, crossing through Alndale to the Bridge of Aln. It was excavated and proven on farm land at Rothill, and crossed east of Glanton, coming down the High Powburn road and following that part of the A697 to Percy's Cross along the route of the Devil's Causeway to Hortons, Lowick and Berwick.

After wheeled traffic came into general use, the old track became a regular route through the village from Morpeth to Cornhill, and for the transport of corn and wool from Glendale to Tyneside. With the coming of the mail coach system in the late 18th century (which used the old

route from Longframlington Gate to the old Moor House, passing Thrunton Forest, through Whittingham and Glanton to Powburn) the volume and speed of coach traffic meant that a new route had to be found.



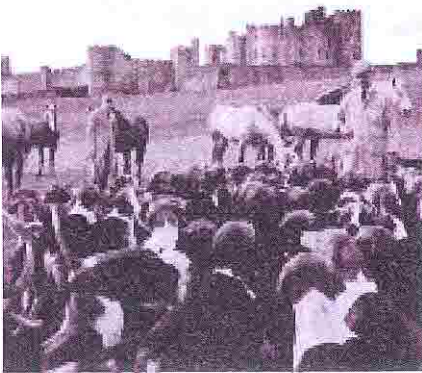
18th Century Mail Coach

This was replaced by a new Turnpike road (a system of collecting tolls from road users) which followed the present route of the A697 from Longframlington via the New Moor House, Bridge of Aln Hotel, through Crawley Dene and Powburn to Percy's Cross. A network of posting horses (allowing for change of horses at regular intervals) for coaches became available at the various hostleries en route, including the Plough Inn, the Turnpike. Tollgate houses still exist at Longframlington Gate, New Moor House,

Bridge of Aln, Shawdon Hill and Percy's Cross.

The coaching system was at its zenith just about the time that railways appeared in the 1860s. The new Alnwick to Cornhill railway used Crawley Dene for its track between Glanton Station and Hedgeley Station. The track was apparently laid upon woolsacks as a foundation (they may still be there) with the normal ballasting laid upon the wool.

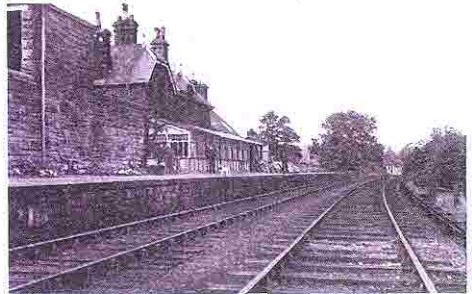
I suspect that, because the railways brought easy access from Alnwick and the coast, this influenced Major Alec Browne, Master of the Percy Foxhounds, to build Breamish House (and cottages) as a hunting box (or lodge) for his use when he wished to hunt the Breamish foxes on his properties in the area, some time before he purchased Callaly Castle and its estate.



The Percy Foxhounds

The railways effectively destroyed the stage coach system in most of Britain, just as the internal combustion engine has done to the railways.

Shortly after this, in the late 19th /early 20th century, the village of Powburn began to take its present shape. Major improvements at Hedgeley Hall were taking place and the Hedgeley estate yard and its attendant housing for staff (adjacent to the Plough Inn yard) began to shape the present form of the village. The Inn and the Forge can still be seen in their original form; the estate buildings are now converted to modern living accommodation. The road bridge, which had been built originally to accommodate the coach traffic, now had a railway bridge lying alongside it. This railway bridge lasted for nearly a century before the floods of 1948 destroyed it and the other railway bridges along with the rest of the Glendale rail network, 20 years before Dr Beeching did his worst on the rest of the Victorian railways.



Hedgeley Station

In the first half of the 20th century, Powburn village had its own Co-operative store, one of the earliest in north Northumberland, occupying the small building at the rear of West Hedgeley cottages - later moving to the present Breamish Hall,. It then became part of the Tweedside Co-operative Society organisation based at Tweedmouth.

During this time most employment was based upon farm and estate work along with the river Breamish and its gravel works.

All of these factors bring us to the present millennium with its fast, cluttered roads and workplaces far from the home firesides. Powburn has lost its railway station and its travelling shops, has only intermittent bus services, but is still on a main traffic route with all its attendant problems of speed and volume of heavy vehicles. Powburn has always needed a by-pass to alleviate these problems; the nearest we ever got to success was in 1990 but failed because the funding available was moved to SE Northumberland. The line of the proposed by-pass is still protected by local authority planning policies. You never know - at some time in the future?

Powburn, historically, has always suffered to some degree from flooding, the worst floods on record being 1896, 1948, 1950 and the dreaded 2008 inundation.

Flooding problems arise from modern

drainage systems, but the main difficulty here is drainage from Powburn into the river Breamish. There is little or no natural fall in the Pow Burn itself from the village to the river Breamish. (There are some interesting records in the Hedgeley Estate archives with evidence of this). Hopefully, new measures initiated by the Environment Agency will control, if not prevent, these problems in future. We must wait and see.



Powburn Village

The village (and parish) is still a delightful place and area to live, but it still lies astride a main traffic route which caused its birth and its reason for being, with all of the traffic - volume and speed - problems.

...Councillor John Taylor

Burns Night Supper

Breamish Hall

Powburn

Saturday 22^d January 7-0pm

Tickets £9.50

Ring 01665578576 or 01665578499

Registered Charity Number 244772



*Some hae meat and canna eat,
And some would eat that want it;
But we hae meat, and we can eat,
Sae let the Lord be thank it.*

RECIPES FOR SUCCESS

ICED GINGER SHORTCAKE

150g (5oz) plain shortbread
1 tsp ground ginger
100g (4oz) butter
50g (2oz) caster sugar

- ✦ Heat the oven to 150c (gas mark 2)
- ✦ Sift the flour, baking powder and ginger together into a bowl.
- ✦ Cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy.
- ✦ Fold the dry ingredients into the creamed mixture to make a dough
- ✦ Spread the mixture into a well greased 20cm (8inch) square tin and cook until golden



Icing

100g (4oz) icing sugar
50g (2oz) butter
1 tble spoon golden syrup
1 tsp ground ginger

- ✦ As the shortbread is cooking prepare the icing by heating all the ingredients together over a low heat.
- ✦ Pour over the shortbread while it is still hot.
- ✦ Cut into fingers before it cools, leave in the tin until cold.

MULLED WINE

Mulled wine is as near to drinking the traditional wassail at Christmas. Wassail was a toast, at least as old as Saxon times, and for centuries it was customary to have a wassail bowl steaming on the table or sideboard throughout Christmas. Its traditional content was ale and the pulp of roasted apples, plus sugar and spices.

Serves 6-8
peel of 1 lemon and 1 orange
6 cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1/2 whole nutmeg
1 star anis
1 1/2 bottles red wine
300 ml (1/2 pint) cold water
12 lumps sugar
1 liqueur glass brandy (optional)

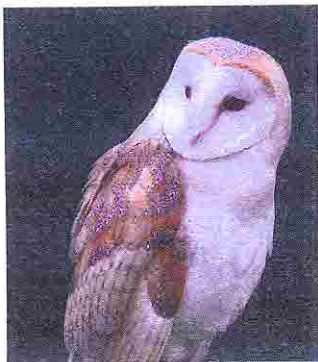
- ✦ Put the lemon and orange peel, the cloves, cinnamon, nutmeg, star anis and sugar into a pan with the water.
- ✦ Bring to the boil and cook till the sugar has dissolved.
- ✦ Add the red wine but do not let it boil, add the brandy at this point, if using it.
- ✦ Strain into a warm jug and serve in warmed glasses



... May Wilson, Powburn

CHEVIOT VIEWS REPORTS FROM CHEVIOT VIEW!

Regular subscribers to Hugh Tindle's excellent nature newsletter may have noticed an advert I placed regarding a bird of prey rescue service. Richard has suggested I might like to explain a little more about the subject, which serves me right for stopping to admire the community garden and getting waylaid by him I suppose!



THE BARN OWL

As I have no veterinary training and only limited space my role is really to collect the bird, try to assess the nature of the problem and then, if I can't deal with it, to pass the bird on to someone who can.

Should you come across an injured bird and are confident enough to pick it up (pay more attention to the talons than the beak!), it is best to put it in a secure box and place it in a warm, dark, quiet location, until I can fetch it. Or by all means bring it to my house. Don't worry about trying to feed it. If you are unsure about handling the bird then call me and I'll try to locate it. Please supply as much detail as possible as to its whereabouts - if you assume you're directing a 3 year old we'll get along just fine. Perhaps I should mention at this point that it is

normal for young owls to venture away from the nest before they can fly and in most cases they are best left well alone because the parents will return to feed them.



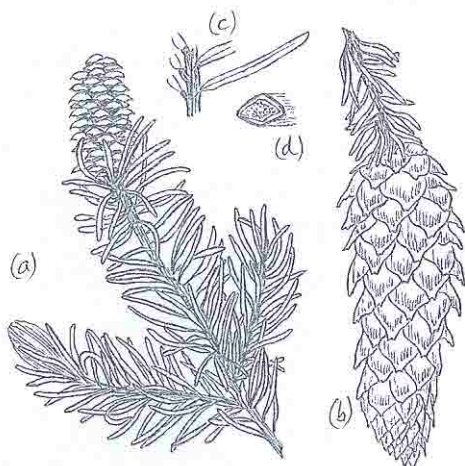
THE BUZZARD

I think that in the last 3 years I've seen about 15 birds. The majority have been barn owls which seem particularly accident prone. Buzzards, kestrels, sparrowhawks and tawny owls have also come in. About 50% are too badly injured to survive even in captivity, 25% will go on to live in a raptor centre as they have a reasonable quality of life and about 25% have made a full recovery and been returned to the wild. The law is quite specific on this point: it is illegal to keep any wild bird of prey which has a good chance of survival on release. This is one reason why falconers in the UK only fly captive-bred birds.

Finally may I just take the opportunity of thanking everyone who has gone out of their way to contact me about birds they have found. I couldn't do any of this without you!

... Dean Wilkinson at Cheviot View, Powburn

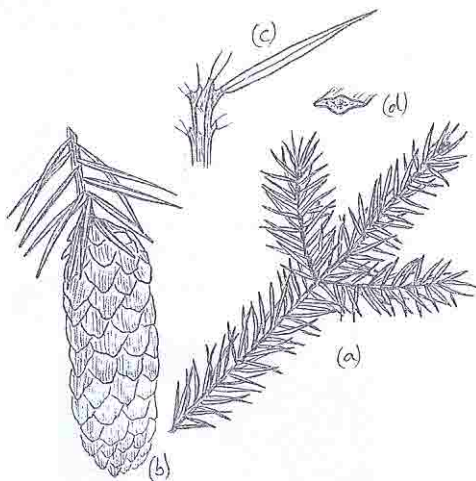
PLANTASTIC



NORWAY SPRUCE:
 (a) SHOOT WITH CLUSTER OF FEMALE CONES
 (b) MATURE MALE CONE
 (c) NEEDLE BASES
 (d) NEEDLE CROSS SECTION

This is the time of year for Christmas Trees. Some people these days pay a lot of money for trees such as Nordman Fir and Noble Fir and other people like Scots Pines with their long coarse needles. But the traditional Christmas Tree is the Norway Spruce. So if you have been out in the countryside, looking a bit furtive and with a handsaw concealed under your jacket, how did you know whether you were looking at a Norway Spruce (good) or a Sitka Spruce (bad)?

The Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*), if allowed to achieve full size, can reach 46 metres. However British winters are too warm (well that's what the books say!!) and the trees don't get an adequate period of dormancy, so they grow too rapidly and, if not harvested, begin to die back after only about 80 years. The short needles are dark to bright green



SITKA SPRUCE:
 (a) SHOOT
 (b) MATURE MALE CONE
 (c) NEEDLE BASES
 (d) NEEDLE CROSS SECTION

and lack the paler stripes that give the Sitka Spruces their characteristic blue-green foliage effects. The female cones are quite long at 10 to 20cm and this is another major difference from Sitka whose cones are much shorter.

Sitka Spruce (*P. sitchensis*), a native of Alaska, is not nice as a candidate for an indoor tree. The best and easiest test that will tell you whether you have a Norway or a Sitka is to grasp a leafy shoot in your hand. If it's a Norway you can run the shoot through your hand and it has quite a soft feel. With Sitka you will likely yelp and jerk your hand away, pausing only to pull the excessively sharp needles from your fingers. The other visible difference, apart from the cone sizes, is that the base of the trunk of a more mature Sitka Spruce is scaly with the bark forming almost rectangular

patches, while the Norway bark, whilst not exactly smooth, lacks the scales. If you let them, Sitka Spruces will grow to 55m in their native habitats. Here we tend to fell them at 40 to 50 years and

the timber quality is not very good because their over-fast growth leads to wide growth rings and rather soft texture, lacking in strength.

... Richard Poppleton, Tittington Mount

VOLUNTEERS STILL WANTED



GOOD NEWS 2 volunteers found so far - please join us. Could you be a community minded volunteer? We intend to keep advertising until you come forward! The community garden is still looking for up to 4 volunteers to take a month each between April and September to look after the gardens for the whole community. If you can help in any way contact Richard Poppleton or email cheviotviews@hotmail.com

COUNCIL LAUNCHES iPHONE APP

The county council has launched the Northumberland iPhone Application as a new way for residents of the county and visitors to the area to find out about information and services available from Northumberland County Council.

The app, which is free, contains a whole range of information including up to the minute news and events, details on how to find key services, and help in contacting the authority.

Some key features on the application include:

- Current job vacancies at Northumberland County Council
- Vital alerts on things like school closures, extreme weather and flood warnings
- Advance notice of road closures and road works
- A large selection of local events to attend
- The opportunity to have your say about issues that affect you

You will need to have an iPhone or iPad to access the app. For more information visit the council's website at www.northumberland.gov.uk



