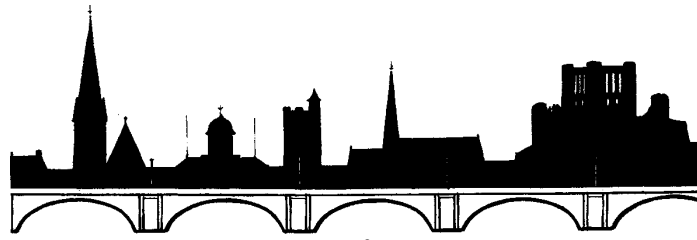


KELSO HERITAGE SOCIETY



Logo courtesy of A. Binnie

March 2021

NEWSLETTER

Welcome to the March 2021 issue of our Newsletter.

Until we are able to host speaker events, we are producing a monthly newsletter with articles of local historical interest, quizzes, update information etc. We would welcome your feedback.

The second talk in our series of on-line events held on 16th February 2021 proved to be another successful evening with around thirty participants. Again a few members of Duns History Society joined in.

The next event will take place on Tuesday 16th March when Charlie Robertson and Friends will present a talk with poetry readings on –Will Ogilvie a celebrated local poet.

If you wish to register for this event please email info@kelsoheritagesociety.co.uk by Friday 12th March 2021. The details for joining the meeting will be sent to you on 14th March 2021.

What is this and where is it (answer to last month's question) –

Firing Slots in the Pillbox at the end of Bridge Street on the approach to the old Bridge



One person identified the image and location

Meteorological History

Kelso is also notable for a long meteorological history. It held the UK record for lowest, official, January temperature at -26.7°C (-16.1°F), from 1881 until 1982.^[5] It also held the December record with the same temperature from 1879 to 1995.

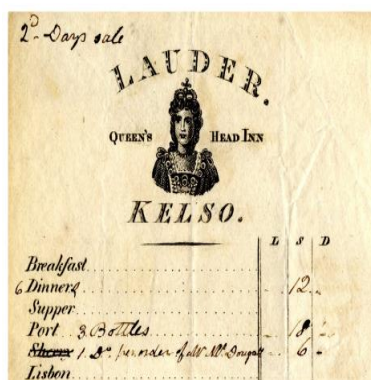
Two penny tax

At one time the parish of Kelso was able to levy a tax of 2 pence (2d) on every Scottish pint* of ale, beer or porter sold within the town. The power to do this was extended for 21 years in 1802 under the Kelso Two Pennies Scots Act when the money was being used to build a new bridge across the River Tweed. The building of Kelso's first bridge in 1754 was a major event, since it was, at the time, the only bridge over the Tweed between Berwick and Peebles. When it was washed away in a flood in 1797 this was a major disaster and a replacement was urgently sought. John Rennie, one of the most famous engineers of his day, was commissioned to build the new bridge, the one we still use today.

The purpose of the Kelso Two Pennies Scots Act 1802 (42 Geo. 3 c.xxxiii) (the 1802 Kelso Act) was, according to its long title, "for continuing and enlarging the Term and Powers" of the two penny duty on every pint of ale and beer sold within the town and parish of Kelso granted by several previous Acts. The preamble records that it was necessary to extend the term of the duties as money borrowed on the credit of the duties had been applied in the construction of a bridge over the river Tweed, which was destroyed by flood. The 1802 Kelso Act provided for the continuation of the duties for 21 years, to be levied and raised in the same manner and under the same penalties and forfeitures as under the previous Acts. Penalties could be imposed for importing ale or beer and failing to pay the duty. Trustees were empowered to borrow up to £1500 on the security of the duties for more speedily achieving the purposes of previous Acts of 1758 and 1780, and several named persons were appointed as Overseers of Duty.

The Kelso Two Pennies Scots Act 1824 (5 Geo. 4 c.xxxiii) renewed the 1802 Act which expired in 1823 on similar terms. The preamble records that, while the bridge over the Tweed had been completed, "some of the other Purposes for which the Duty was granted have not been accomplished, and cannot be carried into Execution, unless the Term and Powers of the said recited Acts be continued". The 1824 Kelso Act which provided for the duty to be applied to repairing the streets of the town and supplying fresh water to the inhabitants extended the term for a further 21 years. The Act expired in 1844.

*A now-obsolete unit of measurement in Scotland, known as the Scottish pint, or joug, is equal to 1696 ml (2 pints 19.69 **imp fl oz**). It remained in use until the 19th century, surviving significantly longer than most of the old Scottish measurements.



Queens Head Hotel built in 1725 would have been one of the establishments involved in this practice

Primary Schools

In this month when children are returning to school it may be of interest that there were over twenty primary schools in the Kelso High School catchment area at the turn of the twentieth century. Now there are six schools.

Stichill was one of them.

There has been a school in Stichill since at least 1640. The schoolmaster was provided with a salary and house, paid for largely by the tenants of the barony with the baron paying towards the education of the poor. By 1688, school attendance was obligatory. Tenants of the parish were not allowed to send their daughters to a 'sewing' school until they had completed two years at the public school.

After the Education Act 1872 the schoolhouse, built in the mid-1800s, was enlarged in 1894, the expense being covered by Mrs Baird. In 1898 the Stichill Public School was described as "perhaps the largest and best equipped rural school in the whole Border district".

Rev. George Gunn (Minister 1878-1900) ran evening classes in secondary education. In the early 1900s lecturers from the Scottish Agricultural College conducted classes. In 1909 a school garden was created, and War Cookery classes were offered from 1914-18. In 1923 a Soup Kitchen served Scotch broth to the pupils. From 1939 to 1945 Stichill accommodated evacuees from Edinburgh, Liverpool, Gosforth and London

By 1961 the school roll (78 in 1861) had dropped to 8 and in 1963 Stichill Public School closed, children of primary school age children transferred to Ednam.



Stichill School (now a private house)

Image courtesy of Christine Henderson

Some Online Events

National Museum of Scotland

<https://www.nms.ac.uk/>

25 Mar 2021 The Galloway Hoard: Dr Martin Goldberg in conversation with Michael Hirst

Curator Dr Martin Goldberg joins Vikings writer and producer Michael Hirst to delve into the mysteries of the incredible Galloway Hoard.

Maps Library of Scotland

<https://maps.nls.uk/>

This has a lot of information on maps of all types

Historic Royal Palaces

<https://www.hrp.org.uk/>

Wednesday 10 March, 7pm GMT Royal Gardens online introduced by

Contributions to the Newsletter are welcomed

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Deadline for April issue 31st March 2021