ALNWICK

AND THE CHANGES IT HAS UNDERGONE SINCE THE LATTER PART OF THE 18TH CENTURY

A LECTURE

delivered in

THE TOWN HALL, ALNWICK

On the 13th day of December, 1871

by

JOHN ATKINSON WILSON, Esq.

ALNWICK

ALNWICK

PRINTED BY H.H.BLAIR, MARKET PLACE.

1872

The following pages which I have since revised formed one of a course of lectures recently delivered in the Town Hall in Alnwick, in connection with the Mechanics' Institution and are now published at the request of the Committee.

J.A.W.

January 1872.

ALNWICK

and the changes it has undergone since the latter part of 78th century

I have undertaken to give a brief description of the state of Alnwick as it existed about the close of the last century, and of the changes it has undergone between that period and the present; and although the incidents I may relate are too trifling in their character to have occupied the pen of the historian, yet I trust they may not prove altogether uninteresting. Those who are old enough to remember the condition of Alnwick half a century, ago or more, will be sensible of the important changes it has since undergone, and I trust be able to confirm much of what I am about to relate. And with regard to those who have more recently sprung into existence, some account of the early state of the town may not be entirely devoid of interest. It shall, at all events, have the effect of making them more contented when they look around them, and contrast what they now see with the state of things from which they have happily escaped. It will show them the progress which time, the most irresistible of reformers, has produced in the face of many obstacles, and in spite of those who cling with fondness to whatever is ancient, and view with suspicion, and almost with alarm, every attempt at innovation. Such information as we possess of the town of Alnwick at a very early period is extremely scanty. There is no proof of the existence either of a town or a castle previous to the Norman Conquest, and the earliest notice of a church is in 1147. Our local historian, Mr Tate, however, informs us that Alnwick derives its main interest from its ancient history - when battles were fought before its gates, when it was repeatedly besieged and burnt, when kings were slain, and malefactors executed within sight of its walls, and their gory heads exhibited over its gates. With such a picture of its ancient history, have we any cause to regret that we did not live in that "golden age" when Alnwick is said to have achieved its greatest celebrity? should we not rather be disposed to exclaim with the poet:-

> *"The good of ancient times let others state;*
> *I think it lucky I was born so late"*

At the beginning of the fifteenth century, the town of Alnwick, within the walls, contained little more than one third of its present inhabitants. The houses at that period, and for a century later, were of a very insignificant character, and even at the present day there are few buildings in Alnwick either ancient or modern deserving of very particular notice, which, from being the county town and centre of a large district, is somewhat surprising; but this may partly be accounted for from its contiguity to Scotland and from the incursions to which in former years it was so constantly exposed. Although the title of the subject of which I have undertaken to treat is "*Alnwick, and the changes it has undergone since the latter part of the eighteenth century*" yet the subject would be but imperfectly understood if my observations were confined to that limited period; I therefore purpose to take a rapid glance at the condition of the roads and the mode of travelling which prevailed from a much earlier date. Up to the commencement of the eighteenth century a large proportion of the traffic of the county was carried on by

means of pack horses, which for mutual protection travelled in large troops. They formed a single line as the packways were narrow, and each horse used to keep his place in the rank with the utmost regularity. The leading horse had a bell suspended from his head, the tinkling of which served as a guide to his companions, as well as to warn passengers of their approach. The goods they carried were of an endless variety, and the method of loading the horses required considerable skill. We learn from Lodge, and other authors, that the circuitous and hilly nature of many of our early roads is owing to having adopted the tracks of the pack horses, which found little difficulty in crossing hills and frequently made a circuitous route to avoid low and marshy ground. The widening and improving of these roads and the formation of others led to the introduction of long wagons, and afterwards of wagon coaches which were regarded as innovations from which the most serious evils were predicted to result. These wagon coaches which were designed for the conveyance of passengers as well as goods had, in addition to the interior accommodation a basket behind called the boot which, however, Mr Edward Parker who occupied it in his journey from Lancaster to London in 1663 seems to have to have regarded as being but ill adapted for comfort, for he writes thus to his father -

> *"I got to London Saturday last, my journey was noe ways pleasant, being forced to ride in the boote all the waye; ye company yt came up with mee were persons of greate quality as knights and ladyes. My journey's expence was 30s. This travel hath soe indisposed me yt l am resolved never to ride up again in ye coatch. I am extremely hott and feverish, what this may tend too I know not; I have not, as yet, advised with any doctor."*

Although stage coaches were introduced into England about the middle of the seventeenth century, yet it was not until long after that period that they reached these northern parts, when the rate of travelling is represented to have been extremely slow, the state of the roads atrocious, and the jolting intolerable. In the year 1700 the journey from London to York occupied a week, and even half a century later a fortnight was required to make good the journey between London and Edinburgh. The coach started only once a month from each extremity, and went forth equipped with hatchets to remove any obstacles which might block the way, and implements to repair the coach in case of accidents and upsets. In the year 1741, when the first Act of Parliament was passed for repairing the great north road, passing through Alnwick, described the "*the high post road from London to Edinburgh*", it was represented to be so deep and ruinous that travellers were unable to pass thereon without great danger.

In the middle of the last century, however, the state of the roads and the mode of travelling began to improve, and in the year 1766 Lord Eldon made his first journey from Newcastle to London in four days and four nights. The coach in which he travelled was called the Highflyer, and had inscribed upon the doors the words - *Sat cito si sat bene* - "*Quick enough if well enough*" a motto which the future Chancellor never forgot but stuck to through life, to the ruin of many a poor and heartbroken Chancery suitor.

About the beginning of the present century, although the Mail and Union coaches passed through Alnwick from Edinburgh, yet Moore's coach was the only local conveyance for passengers. It performed the journey between Alnwick and Newcastle in one day, returning the next; and the time occupied between the two places was little less than is now required to reach London by rail. It left the Black Swan, Alnwick, then kept by Mr Moore, at eight in the morning and reached the old Turk's Head, Newcastle, about five in the afternoon. From half an hour to an hour - for time was of little importance - was allowed for the passengers to dine at Morpeth, and they had an opportunity at every wayside inn to pass their judgement on the quality of the ale. With such repeated stoppages and tardy pace a good pedestrian could easily outstrip the coach, and when time was of importance frequently adopted that mode of travelling. At length a spirit of competition led to an increase in the number of public conveyances, and amongst the local coaches, which will be well remembered, were the Dispatch, the Defence, the Royal William, and the Wonder. The drivers and part proprietors of the Wonder were Scott and Pauling; and as George Scott was a true type of the stage coachman of forty years ago, now almost extinct, a brief description of him may not be out of place. His dress was strictly that of the coachman of the period, with a broad brimmed hat, frock coat, and top boots. His neck was surrounded with many folds of muslin, and a silk handkerchief neatly compressed beneath the collar of his coat, gave a professional finish to his toilet. His face had been dyed a permanent red by exposure to the weather and other causes which are generally understood to produce that effect, and nature had endowed him with a voice which a boatswain might have envied in a gale of wind. The passenger who occupied the box seat was expected, in return for that privilege, to supply Mr Scott during the journey with any particular beverage of which his constitution might occasionally stand in need; for in spite of an almost perpetual and husky cough he was vigorous and hearty and appeared to absorb with evident satisfaction every kind of fluid but water. As stage coaches were restricted in the number of passengers they were licensed to carry, some disappointment was occasionally experienced in obtaining a seat; and to avoid such a contingency, it was customary for two or more gentlemen bent on the same destination jointly to engage a post chaise - a description of vehicle now out of date, but constructed to accommodate two inside passengers, the driver being suspended outside on a rickety board called the “dickey”. As a saving of expense three persons of moderate size occasionally occupied a chaise but from its limited dimensions it was better adapted for two. On one occasion the late Mr Leithead and Mr Gerard Selby, having business at the Newcastle assizes, agreed to join in a chaise, and Mr Leithead undertook to procure a third party to lessen the expense.

He and Mr Selby were both men beyond the ordinary size, and Mr Selby's surprise by be readily imagined when, on the eve of starting, Mr Leithead introduced his brother William as the third passenger, his weight being little short of twenty stones. Mr Selby used to describe with great humour the amusing incidents of the journey, and it is needless to say, it was the last occasion he entrusted Mr Leithead with the selection of a travelling companion. Whilst speaking of Mr Leithead, I may repeat an amusing

incident which I have heard him relate in reference to Mr Sergeant Cockell, at that period one of the leading counsel on the Northern Circuit, and extremely skilful in the cross-examination of witnesses. At the assizes referred to after endeavouring, but in vain, to break down the evidence of an old woman named Fish, he at last said, "*Well, mam, you may retire, we have had plenty of Fish for one day*". "*Yes*", replied the old woman, amid the convulsive laughter of the court, "*and we've had plenty of Cockell sauce, too*".

Although in early times the traffic of the country was carried on by means of pack horses, yet for many years previous to the introduction of railways, the heavy goods were principally transported from one end of the kingdom to the other in large wagons with broad wheels and drawn by powerful horses and, up to about the middle of the present century, the tradesmen of Alnwick and of the surrounding neighbourhood had their heavy goods and merchandise sent in sailing vessels from London to Alnmouth, and from thence by carts to Alnwick; whilst goods to and from Newcastle and intermediate places were transported in cumbrous stage wagons drawn by six and, occasionally, eight horses. Mr William Graham was for a number of years the noted carrier from Newcastle to Berwick, and the wagon which travelled between Alnwick and Newcastle was a huge conveyance.

It was usually piled up with goods to an enormous height, and the horses with which it was drawn, as well as the men who drove them, were of corresponding bulk. With regard to the trade of Alnwick, although we are informed that in early times it was extremely small in proportion to the size of the town, yet about the middle of the seventeenth century it had considerably improved, at which period there no fewer than twenty-two tanneries - the other trades being principally those of shoemakers, skinners, glovers and weavers; but yet the town itself must have been very inconsiderable, for in the year 1681 Mr Thoresby writes, "*After a short stay at Morpeth I proceeded over the moors to Alnwick, an insignificant but ancient town*"; and another author describes the surrounding country at that period to be bleak, barren and thinly inhabited, and the houses in Alnwick all thatched and so contemptible little that they might easily be run through the gates. A little later, Alnwick is described as an indifferent good town, with a castle in ruins, and an abbey in the same condition. In 1770 it is represented to be an ancient town with three towers, one of them being without a roof; whilst our historian, Mr Tate, informs us about a century later, that it was an unimportant town in the great empire of Britain, although it enjoyed a corporate existence, and in the fifteenth century was presided over by a mayor. No future reference, however, is made to the mayor, and we are without any evidence to show how that important functionary sprang into being, or how he ceased to exist. The scarlet robe and gold chain, the emblems of his civic greatness, are no where to be found nor does even his portrait adorn those ancient walls. It may not be inaptly compared to an army without a leader. It is like playing Hamlet without Hamlet's Ghost. We are told, however that with the exception of the mayor, the Corporation still exists in its ancient integrity, consisting of the chamberlains and four-and-twenty, who claim a sort of apostolic succession. A good deal of mystery, however, seems to hang over their history, for they did not, until a comparatively recent period, consist of any definite number.

Sometimes there were 30, at other times 33, and occasionally 34; yet, whatever their number might be, they totally disregarded the ordinary rules of arithmetical progression, and continued to style themselves the "*Chamberlains and four-and-twenty*"; and one of their minute books contains a resolution that the four-and-twenty shall, for the time to come, consist of no more than seven-and-twenty. They however claim a corporate existence, and we are told that at an early period the inhabitants of Alnwick enjoyed many of the privileges which a corporation can bestow. Whatever those privileges may have been, they must either long ago ceased to exist, or been held by an earlier generation in much greater veneration than by the present.

The few observations I purpose to make in reference to the Freemen I shall defer for the present, and proceed to consider the condition of Alnwick about the close of the last century.

Of the many changes which have been effected in the town of Alnwick within the last seventy or eighty years, perhaps none are more striking than the improvements which the streets have undergone during that period. The principal thoroughfare which now, during the hours of darkness, afford convenient and well-lighted walks, were, seventy or eighty years ago so dark after sunset and so wretchedly paved that, unless the pedestrian took the precaution - which was common at that period - of carrying a lantern, he was in imminent peril of stumbling into a gutter or coming in contact with a post. There was no flagging in front of the houses, and the pavement presented a rugged and uneven surface.

Pigs were allowed to run wild through the streets, and dung heaps to remain upon the most frequented thoroughfares. Sheep and oxen were slaughtered in the Shambles, and the garbage and offal left to putrefy in the Market Place. And as at that period there was no system of drainage by which the refuse water was conveyed from the houses, the garret windows were opened and pails were emptied with little regard to those who were passing below. The inhabitants had to grope their way through the streets in all but the utter darkness of a twinkling oil lamp, and although instances perhaps were rare of persons being plundered and robbed in the streets, yet no protection whatever against such outrages was afforded to the public. With such a state of things few persons of respectability were to be seen in the streets after dark, as the risk of being insulted operated to keep within doors those who assumed a character for decency as well as those who really possessed one.

Even so late as the beginning of the present century the town contained but few lamps, and these were the property of private individuals; they were lighted with oil, and enclosed in a glass case resembling in shape what Grose, the antiquary, has called "The night urn of Venus". The glass itself was of the coarsest manufacture, and served only to obscure the little light which it encircled. These gleaming meteors loomed through the darkness of the winter fogs to little other purpose than to warn the public to avoid the posts on which they were placed or perhaps what is more strictly correct, to avoid the projecting gables of the houses from which they were suspended, as lamp posts were not, until long after that period, introduced into Alnwick.

At length this wretched state of things led to the passing of a private Act of Parliament for lighting and otherwise improving the town of Alnwick, which was described to be of considerable extent, and a place of great resort. Amongst the early efforts of those who qualified as commissioners under the Act was to consider the most efficient mode of lighting the town; and after much consideration they, at length, resolved upon the erection of six gas lamps, which they deemed amply sufficient for the purpose, and it was after much discussion and anxious deliberation at last decided that one should be placed in Bailiffgate, another at the Bow Bridge, a third in Bondgate, a fourth in Clayport, the fifth in Fenkle Street, and the sixth at the Town Hall steps. The gas at that period was manufactured from oil, and it was discovered, after a trial that its illuminating power fell considerably short of the expectations of the commissioners, who decided upon the erection of two other lamps, one of which was placed at Woodhouse's and the other at Thrussell's corner. A hand-bi|l however, of that period, informs us that the lamps had hardly been erected when the boys commenced climbing up the posts, and extinguishing the lights; and that some evil disposed persons had not only torn up the pavement and carried off the pipes, but also seriously damaged the lamps. A reward of five guineas was offered for, but did not lead to, the apprehension of the offenders. Further depredations led to the offer of a further reward of ten guineas, with no better result. Many were the grievances and great the difficulties which the commissioners had to encounter in their early efforts to carry out the contemplated improvements. Even the official, whose duty it was to light and extinguish the lamps, was not suffered to discharge his duties unmolested. He was hooted on his way through the streets, and before he had reached the second lamp his tormentors had probably succeeded in extinguishing the first. He had frequently to perform his circuit two or three times of a night, and had occasionally to seek the watchmen's protection. “His duty of lighting the lamps was thus considerably increased, yet he was not infrequently saved the trouble of extinguishing them. Although several new streets have been added to Alnwick within the last half century, yet that portion of the town which the eight lamps were distributed has not in any way extended, and yet it is now lighted by ten times that number.

The shops in Alnwick half a century ago were of a very inferior description compared with those which now exist; and perhaps, there is now no town in England of the same size and population, which can boast of better shops or so high a class of merchants and tradesmen as are to be found in Alnwick at the present day. With regard to the inns and hostelries that existed Alnwick about the close of the last century, they were almost as numerous as at present, and although their outward appearance might not, in every respect, be so imposing, yet nothing was wanting in their internal arrangements to secure the comfort of those who frequented them. Dr Samuel Johnson - no mean authority - has declared that a tavern chair was the height of human felicity; and Mr Tate, the greatest of our local historians, informs us that from an early period the inhabitants of Alnwick were remarkable for their social and genial dispositions, and that they enjoyed their canary, mulled claret, and music. There is no reason to believe that the tastes for such amusements has, in any way, degenerated, or that the hostelries of the

present day are less seductive than those which existed half a century ago. Music may still serve to enliven our townsmen after the toils of the day, but the consumption of canary and mulled claret, at all events, the former perhaps, belongs more to an earlier generation than the present. The tastes of our townsmen of the present day are probably more in unison with those of the great lexicographer already quoted, who on being asked by his friend, Mr Boswell, to what liquor he awarded the preference, replied "*claret for boys, port for men, but brandy for heroes*". Although the remission of the duty on claret is said to have dealt a death blow to the wines of Oporto, yet we still find amongst the present generation some steady adherents to port. it still has numerous admirers, and the chief drawback to its popularity seems to be that it is generally looked upon as gout in disguise. Whatever may be its effect upon the constitution it has always retained a high reputation. Blackstone's Commentaries are said to have owed their inspiration to port, and the late Lord Eldon and his brother, Lord Stowell, were amongst its greatest admirers, whist the celebrated statesman, Mr Pitt, was by no means a stranger to its influence. It is said that he never entered the House of Commons on the eve of a great Parliamentary debate until he had discussed two bottles of port, and that his witty contemporary, Mr Sheridan, was equal to double that number. It is related that on one occasion, after dining together, Pitt remarked to Sheridan on entering the House that he was unable to discern the Speaker, which greatly surprised Mr Sheridan, who assured Mr Pitt that he must be mistaken as he distinctly saw two. We are told that the habits of the people during the last century little resembled those of the present day, and that much of the business which is now done in offices and counting houses, was then transacted in taverns; and we are informed by a witty author of that period, that few farmers on the market days could muster courage to pay a visit to their attorney, until they had fortified themselves after the weekly ordinary with something considerable stronger than water.

If the habits of the people were different from those of the present day, their tastes and amusements were also dissimilar. One of the favourite, but most disgusting, sports to which people of Alnwick were formerly addicted was that of bull-baiting, which was practised in the Market Place where is still seen a stone, and originally an iron ring, to which was attached one end of a rope, the other being tied round the horns of the bull, when one dog after another, trained for the purpose, was let loose upon the wretched animal. Many individuals in Alnwick kept bulldogs, but perhaps the most noted was Mr Thew, the landlord of the Dragon, who kept several dogs exclusively for the purpose.

Somewhat allied to bull-baiting, and scarcely less cruel, was that of cock-fighting, a sport to which the inhabitants of Alnwick seem to have been extremely partial, as cockpits, up to the close of the last century, were very numerous. One near to Pottergate Tower, we are informed by Mr Tate, belonged to and was supported by the Corporation, and almost every hostelry had a cockpit attached to it. The White Swan and the Angel had each its cockpit, and there was also a famous one at Denwick, and indeed the inhabitants of every neighbouring village indulged in that sport, which was in full force up to about the year 1825. The stakes were considerable, varying from £20 to £70. Jemmy

Cousins, the barber, was the owner of a celebrated breed of cocks, known by the name of the "*Felton greys*", which he was in the habit of fighting at the pit behind the Seven Stars in Bondgate. Mr Cousins, at that period, resided in an old house in Fenkle Street, on the site of which Mr Douglas, the tailor, now lives, and which was previously occupied by Mr Finlay, the barber, whose son became a bookseller in Newcastle. Mr Cousins afterwards removed to a shop on the opposite side of the street, where the Alnwick Journal is now published.

Amongst the ancient customs which have prevailed in Alnwick from a very early period is the game of football, which has been annually played on Shrove Tuesday. At two o'clock in the afternoon the football was sent over the barbican of the Castle amongst the crowd assembled in Bailiffgate, who kicked it through the principal streets of the town, occasionally over Bondgate Tower, and from thence into the Pasture. In consequence, however, of the danger arising from kicking the ball through the town, the practice was discontinued in 1825, and it has since been confined to the Pasture where the contest takes place, the final struggle being to obtain possession of the ball, when broken heads, torn coats, and lost hats are amongst the minor accidents of the day. Joseph Daglish, the watchmaker, who died in 1843, was the most noted football player in Alnwick, and it is said could kick the ball almost out of sight.

Although horse races were annually held on the Moor Farm from an early period, at all events to 1654, yet they never attained any great celebrity, and entirely ceased in the year 1810.

Amongst the many customs which in early times prevailed in Alnwick, none are more ancient than the Waits, but they also ceased to exist in 1831; pipes were anciently their musical instruments, but afterwards fiddles, with which they nightly serenaded the inhabitants between Martinmas and the end of January. Their ordinary dress consisted of blue coats, yellow breeches and vests, and their hats were usually decorated with a profusion of lace. From 1770 to 1823 the family of Coward acted as Waits, of whom Thomas Coward was the last of the race. Our historian, Mr Tate, declared that although he had listened to Paganini and other celebrated performers on the violin, none of their strains had such charms for him as the Border airs when played by Thomas Coward.

Although Alnwick has not very greatly extended during the last century, yet the condition of its buildings and the general aspect of the town have undergone considerable changes, which l shall now proceed to notice, and perhaps the most convenient plan will be to commence at the south entrance to the town. On the east side of the gate now entering the Column field stood the parish pound, and near to it the pump; the former since removed to the Green Bat and the latter down Denwick Lane. On the south side of the street, on the site of a portion of Dr Easton's premises, stood John Weatherburn's thatched house, and behind was the large barn occasionally used as a theatre, where the celebrated Stephen Kemble frequently appeared in the character of Falstaff before large and fashionable audiences, and the Duchess of Northumberland occasionally honoured the theatre with her presence. The barn was two storeys in

height, and the upper part being used as a hay loft the theatre beneath occasionally went by the name of "*The Hay Market*". Behind the barn, which stood in the stackyard, was a footway leading from the Green Bat into Love Lane. It was frequently so deep and miry as to be of little use to the public. The road from the end of Bondgate to the Tower, which at present is only a slight descent, was then hilly, uneven, and dangerous for carriages, and there was no footway but simply a sandbank on each side. The thatched houses situate between Mrs Hunter's and the Bondgate Hall rails, occupied by Archie Slade and others, are doubtless of great antiquity, and from the early part of the last century belonged to the Wilkinsons of Holystone. This family appears to have settled in Alnwick about the middle of the last century, for by the will of Thomas Wilkinson, of Holystone, dated 1751, he devised the property in Bondgate to his son, George Wilkinson, of Alnwick, gardener, in which family it continued until it was purchased by the late Mr Thirlwell, in ---. Near the site of the present Bondgate Hall gates stood the old house called Bondgate Hall, two storeys high, covered with red pantiles, and having wooden rails in front. The house, with the field behind, was purchased by the late Mr Carr from Mr Cook, of Newton, in the early part of the present century, when the old house was pulled down, and the present Bondgate Hall erected. Previous to its removal the old house was occupied by Capt. Embleton, but from 1731 to 1736 the congregation of Sion Meeting House used it as a place of worship, it being then the property of Mr Robert Widdrington, of Hauxley. The adjoining property occupied by Mr Matthew Williamson and others is very old, but has not undergone much alteration. On the site of Miss Moffit's premises, however, was an old thatched house, and at one end of it projecting into the street stood Robert Horsely's blacksmith's shop.

Some distance further down lived a noted character called Billy Bone, whose house was the great rendezvous for that wandering tribe who had no settled residences of their own.

Mr Bone, who, in the early part of his life, was a member of that community himself, was well acquainted with their habits, and his house was consequently the most popular of its class. It was capable of accommodating upwards of twenty guests, the uniform charge for each being threepence per night. As Mr Bone was a noted player on the violin the evening's amusements occasionally concluded with a dance, which kept up with more vigour than elegance to a later hour than was consistent with the comfort of his neighbours. Next to Billy Bone's were the projecting premises which still exist boundered by Taylor's field, extending to the old Fleece Inn, a thatched house replaced by the present building, and which adjoined another thatched house, which for many generations was occupied by the family of Wilkinson.

Crossing over to the north side of the street, on the site of Mrs Wilson's and Mr Allen's premises, at the close of the last century, stood an old barn, in the occupation of John Weatherburn, which he obtained from the Duke of Northumberland, in exchange for some property in Canongate. The present houses were built on the site of the old barn about seventy years ago by Mr Weatherburn, in possession of whose family they

continued until recently purchased by the present occupiers. The house now occupied by Miss Pringle was erected shortly before Mr Weatherburn's, as a residence for the officiating minister of the Sion Meeting House, and afterwards purchased by the late Dr Pringle. On the site of this house originally stood the stable belonging to the adjoining house on the west, which has still a thatched roof, and is of considerable antiquity, and about the close of the last century was used by the Roman Catholics as a place of worship. The Plough Inn, which adjoins it, at the beginning of the last century belonged to the family of Willoughby, after which it passed into the hands of the Weatherburns, and is still held by a female descendant of that family. The inscription above the entrance:-

"That which your Father old
Hath purchased and left you to possess
Do you dearly hold.
To show his worthiness".

dated 1714 and bearing the initials "M.W." are those of Matthew Willoughby. The Plough Inn is supposed to have been formerly the east-most house in Bondgate, and this supposition is strengthened by the fact of there having been in the eastern gable of the upper storey a window, which is now blocked up. The mother of John Weatherburn was the hostess of the Plough about the close of the last century, and brewed her own ale, for which she was greatly celebrated. What now passes by the name of bitter ale, was unknown to an earlier generation, who manufactured a wholesome beverage purely from malt and hops. Nearer to the town on the site of the Militia Mess House, stood the old Sion Chapel, which was used by that congregation from 1736 until 1748, when it was re-built by the congregation who continued to use it until the erection of the present chapel in St Michael's Lane in 1815. The old chapel was then sold, and converted into a militia armoury, and afterwards into the mess-house. On the east side of the chapel was the stamp office, kept by Mr Guy, and afterwards by his widow; and a little to the west, bounded by Cutler's or Jackson's Lane, stood some old buildings, called Burnt Houses, with three butts of land adjoining. The origin of the name I have been unable to discover; but they are so described in certain deeds, dated 10th January, 1711, 1714, and 1724, but not in any subsequent deeds; and nearly on the site of the present road leading to the Castle Gardens, was Cutler's, or Jackson's Lane, the ancient road to Denwick, for which the present road was substituted in 1768. There was anciently another road from the end of Bondgate down Fisher Lane, crossing the river at Eadington's Mill, and thence through Denwick to Boulmer. Between Cutler's Lane and Bondgate Tower stood an old tavern called the Dun Cow, and another house occupied by Peggy McDonald, blocked up the existing footway on the north side - the carriage road being the only passage through the Tower, which was long used as a prison, the cells of which were dark and gloomy, and swarming with rats.

It may perhaps be convenient here to take a hasty glance at the state of the Green Bat, at the early part of the present century, and also to trace the line of the Town Wall.

Hotspur Street was not built until after 1821, previous to which there was a cart road leading past Mr Purvis's warehouses, formerly a tannery. The only house in the Green Bat was near the site of the Duke's School, and behind it was a raff-yard. In the field where St Paul's Church now stands was a large ropery, and near to it the United Presbyterian Chapel, which was built in the year 1803 and removed in 1845. On the 28th October of that year the foundation stone of St Paul's Church was laid by Hugh, second Duke of Northumberland, and on the 14th October, 1846, the church was consecrated by the Bishop of Durham. By the munificence of His Grace it was built and endowed at an estimated cost of £13,000, including the parsonage house intended to have been built, which, although commenced was not completed. The general style of architecture of the church is said to be that which prevailed during the reign of Edward III, and consists of a nave ninety-five feet long by thirty-one feet in width, and its height upwards of sixty-two feet; a building, which from its dimensions, is better adapted for the climate of Madeira than for the north of England. In the chancel is a very fine stained glass window, placed there in November, 1856, to the memory of the noble founder of the church, in testimony of the affection and esteem in which he was held. It was executed at Munich, after a design by Mr Dyce, the artist. The cost of the cartoon was £500, that of the window £970, and the carriage and other incidental expenses brought up the total cost to £1,639, of which Algernon, third Duke of Northumberland, liberally contributed £769. St Paul's parsonage, formerly called Croft House, was built by Mr Robert Patterson, who carried on the business of a draper in a shop at the corner of the Market Place. He died in the year 1807, when his son Robert succeeded to Croft House, and in 1811 died at the age of twenty-three from the effects of a fall from his horse upon Alnwick Moor. His estate was administered under the direction of the Court of Chancery, and on the 13th October, 1819, Croft House was sold by auction, when after a spirited competition Mr Thos. Kerr, the solicitor, became the purchaser at the price of £1,530. He resided there from that time until his death on the 24th September, 1831, during which time he made considerable improvements. By his will, dated January 1830, he devised the property, subject to payment of certain legacies, to his partner, Mr Leithead, in whose possession it continued until his death, in 1847. In the following year it was sold by public auction, when Florentia, Dowager Duchess of Northumberland, became the purchaser at the price of £2,080, to be used as a residence by the officiating minister of St Paul's Church, in lieu of the parsonage intended to have been built by her late husband, Hugh, second Duke of Northumberland, the accomplishment of which was prevented by his sudden death, which occurred on the 11th February, 1847.

There were no houses until a comparatively recent period in the direction of Prudhoe and Howick Streets, the ground which they and the adjoining streets now occupy being open fields, commonly called The Dunterns, but properly the Dunertons; the higher ground beyond being called the Dunerton Hills, which, with the lands of Hope House, Stoney Hills, and several adjoining fields, at the the begining of the eighteenth century, were held by William Stanton, of Alnwick, and Matthew Alnwick, of Rennington, in common, two-thirds of which belonged to the former and one-third to the latter; and in 1705 they executed a deed of division of the property, shortly after which William

Stanton sold his two-thirds shares to George Potts, of Alnwick, whose son Robert afterwards succeeded to the property, which by his will, dated 13th January, 1716, he devised to his daughter, Elizabeth, afterwards married to Mark, commonly called Ford Grey. Ford Grey died in 1724, leaving a widow and two daughters, Elizabeth and Katherine, the latter of whom afterwards became the wife of Captain George Farquhar. On the death of Mrs Grey, in 1763, these two daughters, as the co-heiresses of their mother, succeeded to the property before mentioned, as well as to a considerable amount of landed property, both in the parish of Alnwick and chapelry of Holystone. On the 2nd April, 1765, they executed a deed of partition, whereby the lands at Holystone and a portion of the property in the parish of Alnwick, including the house now occupied by Mr Drysdale, in Clayport, became the property of Mrs Farquhar, whilst Miss Grey's share consisted of the remainder of the house and landed property in the parish of Alnwick, which had belonged to Mrs Grey. Mrs Farquhar died in the lifetime of her husband, who afterwards married Margaret Detchon, who had one daughter, who became the wife of Ralph Hanson Dawson, to whom Capt Farquhar devised his property. Miss Grey, who had survived her sister but predeceased Capt Farquhar, would have died intestate had not her medical attendant, seeing that her end was near, apprised her banker, George Palfrey Burrell, of the circumstance, in case she had any matters to arrange. Mr Burrell (generally known as Banker Burrell) accordingly had an interview with Miss Grey, which resulted in her making a will a few hours before her death, by which she left nearly the whole of her property to him, whom she styled in her will “My worthy friend, George Palfrey Burrell”.

We must now return to Bondgate or Hotspur Tower, and from thence trace the line of the town wall, which Mr Tate describes to have been twenty-and-a-half feet in height and six feet in thickness, and its circumference about a mile - that from Bondgate Tower it ran in a southerly direction, nearly on a line with Hotspur Street, and thence westward along the Green Bat, bending at Monkhouse Square to Clayport Tower, and thence northwards following the line of Dispensary Street to Pottergate Tower, and thence down the hill along the south side of what is now Northumberland Street, a distance of about ninety yards, where a corner tower is supposed to have stood. The wall from thence took a southerly direction to Narrowgate Tower, and thence continued in an easterly direction, at a little distance from the Castle, towards the Bow Burn and the Castle Moat. Mr Tate considered it doubtful whether any wall ran on that side of the tower boundered by the Bow Burn, or whether the Castle and the moat formed a sufficient defence, as the wall on the south would connect the moat with Bondgate Tower.

Although Mr Tate endeavours to prove that Hotspur or Bondgate Tower has only recently come into possession of the Percy family, and that in early times it belonged to the Corporation, yet what he urges in support of that position only tends, on the contrary, to prove that the Corporation, during the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, were nothing more than the tenants of the Tower, under lease from the successive lords of Alnwick. Besides why should the Brabant Lion, sculptured in relief and now almost defaced with age, have been built into the centre of the Tower? If

Hotspur Tower had been the property of the Corporation it would probably, long ere this, have shared a similar fate to that of the tower in Clayport, which, in the begining of the present century, was ruthlessly pulled down, and the materials sold by the Corporation.

Few parts of Alnwick have undergone greater improvements during the last half century than Bondgate within the tower, not only as regards the state of the streets but also the character of the houses, and perhaps the greatest of all the improvements has been effected with that portion of ground on the south side of the street which commonly passes by the name of "the hill". This was formerly a piece of waste ground, one portion of which was a sand-bank and the other overgrown with grass, which served as a pasture for that class of animals whose owners were unable to provide for them with a better. In early times Bondgate Hill was studded over on fairs and market days with stalls, where boots and shoes and wares and merchandise of various kinds were exposed for sale, a description of trading similar to what is now carried on in and around the Market Place, but to a much greater extent.

On the north side of the Tower stood some old thatched houses, adjoining my father's house, which I well remember when a boy. The occupiers kept a number of pigs in such a filthy condition that the stench was almost intolerable, yet l never heard of the neighbours making any complaint, probably from the fact that some portions of their own premises were in little better condition. There is no reason to believe that they formed any exception to those in other parts of the town, and I simply mention the circumstance with a view of shewing the state of Alnwick then, compared with its present condition. At that period the town crier was the only scavenger employed in cleaning the streets, for which, in addition to a small salary, he was allowed the manure, and as its value increased, in proportion to the length of time it remained, he was generally in no hurry to remove it; and it was not until the Board of Health entered upon their duties, in 1850, that any regular staff of officers was employed in cleaning the streets. It has occasionally been alleged that the scavengers of the Local Board are somewhat antiquated in their appearance and rheumatic in their movements, and that the arrival of the water-cart is the harbinger of rain. Such assertions are easily made, but it cannot be denied that our streets are in a much more cleanly condition than they have been at any former period.

In early times Alnwick appears to have suffered from the effects which a more rigid attention to sanitary measures might probably averted; and our historian, Mr Tate, informs us that it has frequently been visited by the plague - that in 1543 it was infected with this dangerous scourge for two months, and that in the seventeenth century it also ravaged Alnwick so fatally that the country people were afraid to enter the town. And although the fearful visitation of cholera, with which it was attacked in 1849, carrying off no fewer than 136 victims in thirty days, was a dreadful calamity, yet it cannot be otherwise than regarded as one of those wise interpositions of Providence for arousing the attention of the inhabitants to what they had too long neglected, and which the state

of town so urgently required. The fearful result of this visitation induced them to regard with favour the necessity of an improved system of drainage, and the adoption of other sanitary measures, and in 1850 the Board of Health was ushered into existence; and although the most praiseworthy efforts have been used in carrying out many sanitary improvements the Board have not escaped criticism from certain quarters, of have totally neglected to make the slightest provision for the sick, in the event of an epidemic; for when their attention had been called to the subject, they had, like Felix, dismissed the unwelcome intruder until a more convenient season.

On the site of the premises in Bondgate occupied by Mr Borthwick and Miss Carr were some old thatched premises, a portion of which was for many years previous to the end of the last century occupied by Mr Newton, the gardener. In 1584 the property belonged to Richard Greene, and was devised by him to Margaret Stewarth, widow, for her life, at the yearly rent of eightpence, and is described as being boundered on the north by Barnedside Close. There were various dealings with the property between 1584 and 1802, when William Weddell and wife and John Muscroft were admitted on the Court Roll of the Manor and Borough of Alnwick. A little lower down, until a few years ago, stood two of the most ancient and interesting houses in Alnwick, on the site of where the new part of the White Swan was afterwards built. The west-most house boundered upon what is now called the old part of the White Swan, and the entrance was reached by an outside stone staircase; beneath was an underground cellar of considerable extent. These premises are supposed to have been built about the middle of the fifteenth century, but there is nothing definitely known to lead, with any degree of certainly, to that conclusion. ln the west-most house was born Thomas Riddell, who, half-a-century ago, carried on the chief business of an auctioneer in Alnwick, his father having, for many years previous to the close of the last century, been the head ostler at the White Swan, and resided in the old house. He was succeeded by George Allison, who, in early life, was the first driver of the mail coach from Alnwick to Felton, it being then customary at each change of horses to change the driver, who also acted as horse-keeper. From the nature of his duties Mr Allison had early imbibed a taste for rum and milk, which was his favourite beverage, and of which, for many years, he drank daily fifteen or sixteen glasses, and yet he lived to the advanced age of eighty years, and died in the old house above referred to in the year 1847.

The White Swan, originally embraced only that part extending from Allison's house to the present gateway, and for many years subsequent to 1720 Mrs Gray was the hostess.

The adjoining house, now occupied by Mrs Busby, was previous to and after the commencement of the present century, occupied by Dr Davison, the brother of the Consul at Nice, the former of whom is frequently referred to in the autobiography of Dr Carlyle, of Inveresk, as having been one of the most accomplished and polished men of the period.

The house in question, for several years previous to the new part of the White Swan being built, formed part of that establishment, and in the days of posting was considered the most comfortable family hotel between York and Edinburgh. A little lower down, on the site of the premises formerly occupied by Michael Paterson and Gerald Selby and now by the Alnwick and County Bank, stood, at the beginning of the present century, some old thatched premises, partly occupied by Mr Weddell, who, in addition to the business of a tailor, carried on an extensive and lucrative trade in the sale of eggs - which at that time were sent in great quantities from Alnmouth to London. in the adjoining house, now Mr Dickman's, lived Mr Joseph Falder, the surgeon, and after him Mr Lambert, solicitor. In the next house lived Nancy Wilson, who was succeeded by Mr Embleton, the grocer. The house was afterwards converted into an hotel called the Globe, occupied by Mr Johnson, after his removal from the Star, and subsequently purchased by Mr Spours, who, on removing to Charlton Hall, sold it to Mr Carr. In some old premises on the site of the adjoining house, sunk considerably below the level of the street, more than half a century ago, lived Mr Moffit, who carried on a very extensive trade in the manufacture and sale of hats, in which he had constantly employed between twenty and thirty men. Miss Falder resided in the corner house, now replaced by Messrs Wilkin and Dickman's; and Harry Young carried on the business of a barber, in 1790, in the site of the present Post Boy Inn.

On the site of the new Turk's Head, built by Mr Brown, stood the old Turk's Head, which, in 1790, was kept by Mr Appleby. in a very old house, since replaced by Messrs Turnbull's premises, lived McLain, the barber; and Mr Robinson carried on the business of a grocer in the adjoining house, where John Cairns now resides. An old thatched house called the Sun Inn, occupied the site whereon Mr Mark Smith's premises have since been built, and it was occupied as early as 1775 by Nancy Thew, who in 1790, removed to the Dragon, and was succeeded at the Sun by John Lee; and 1826 it was occupied by James McLean, who was succeeded by George Best, who had inscribed upon his sign "*Best ale under the sun*".

The Horse Shoes is an ancient hostelry and has been long in the occupation of the family of Trotter. The adjoining premises occupied by Messrs Charlton and Selby (formerly one house) are probably the oldest houses in Alnwick. The date of the erection is uncertain, but it is said to be the begining of the fifteenth century. The building is two stories in height, but low, with walls of great thickness, and there is a winding stone staircase leading to the upper story, the beams as well as the original flooring are of oak. In the front wall above the entrance is a stone panel on which is carved in high relief two Percy badges and motto. In 1620 this property belonged to Thomas Salkeld and continued so until his death, when his widow, Florence, became entitled; and in a deed, dated 5th February, 1658, to which she is a party, the property is described to be in the occupation of Alice Brandling, widow, and boundering on the high street on the south, and the Castle moat on the north. In a subsequent deed dated 20th January, 1666, it is described to be in the possession of Robert Pemberton. In 1710 the property was purchased by Wm. Patrick, of Alnwick, gentleman, who, in 1712, devised it to his wife. In 1729 she

devised the property to her grandson, Patrick Boyd, and failing him entailed it upon Jane Patrick, who on the death of Patrick Boyd, succeeded to the property, and married Thos. Jamieson, the saddler, who, in 1745, joined with his wife in barring the entail. It was then occupied by Eleanor Forster, and is described as being boundered on a burgage of Elizabeth Fenkle on the east, on a burgage belonging to Jane Wood on the west, the Castle moat on the north, and the King's high street on the south. Thos Jamieson, in 1766, by his will devised the property to his sons, who afterwards sold it to Wm. Leithead, and now is the property of his niece, Mrs Downes. For many years before and after the close of the last century the east-most premises, now occupied by Mr Charlton, were in the occupation of Luke Mattison, and afterwards of Thos. Anderson, ironmongers. Mr Selby's shop was for many years occupied by Robert Swan, the chemist, previous to his removal to the premises now in the occupation of his successor, Mr Newbigin.

Next to Mr Selby's premises formerly stood the ancient tavern called the Seven Stars, which in 1799, was in the occupation of John Small; and, in 1812, of Thomas Hall. Behind was a long room, frequently used as a theatre, and the yard extended a considerable distance in the rear of the house at the foot of which was Thos. Wallace's blacksmith's shop. Cuthbertson, the barber, at the close of the last century occupied the shop now in the possession of Mr Simpson, the chemist, and a little lower down lived Jackey Hunter who kept hack horses, and although not a professional dealer was always prepared to embark in a little speculation when any favourable opportunity occurred. Mr Hunter was not an indifferent judge of a horse, and few men could show off an animal to greater advantage. On one occasion having been applied to by a gentleman requiring to purchase a horse Mr Hunter assured him that he had at that moment the identical animal he was in search of. After a little stable preparation, which of course was conducted in private, the horse was brought out, and after being put through his various paces in gallant style, with Mr Hunter on his back, a very few words sufficed to conclude the bargain. The gentleman mounted the horse on the following day but, excepting in height and colour, so little did he appear to resemble the animal ridden by Jackey Hunter that he took him back to the stables to get the mistake rectified. Mr Hunter was from home but the ostler assured him that it was the identical horse he had purchased, but, Sir, added he, you made a great mistake - you should have bought Jackey Hunter to ride him.

A little below Jackey Hunter's stables John Pringle, the tobacconist, occupied the old house on the site of Edward Thew and Son's present establishment, of which he was the founder, and the tenant of the corner house was Vint, the bookseller, and author of the “Burradon Ghost”.

Jimmy Bamforth, the sexton, occupied the old house before it was replaced by the present structure, which for some years was used as a savings bank. Nearly opposite, on the west side of Fenkle Street, lived Jimmy Cattanach, the well known printer, who, about the close of the last century, removed to London, where he died in 1813. His son,

James, succeeded him in the Seven Dials, and by the sale of the last dying speeches and ballads amassed a considerable fortune. Lower down the street in Mr Henry Trotter's present shop, David Hastings, who is represented as having been a very scientific man, carried on the business of a watchmaker as early as the year 1743; one of his sons became a bookseller in London, and another an artist of considerable eminence. A little higher upstreet on the opposite side is a burgage in the occupation of Robert Dunn and others, held under the manor of Stamford, subject to the payment of a castle rent of 3s.4d. annually in respect of the castle of Dunstanburgh.

A little lower down the street is the ancient hostelry called the Black Swan, which, in early times, belonged to the family of Woodhouse, and on the marriage of Thomas Strother with Barbara Woodhouse it became the property of the former, in whose family it continued for several generations, and was sold by Charles Strother a few years ago to the late Dr Hedley. For many years previous to 1817 the Black Swan was in the occupation of Mr Moore, on whose death Mr Samuel Egdell, who had been long the waiter, became the landlord, and continued so until his death in 1837 when he was succeeded by his widow, who was the hostess for many years. A little lower down, on the site of Mr Milne the baker's premises, formerly stood an old thatched tavern called the Bird and Bush, and Mr Adam Robertson occupies the adjoining house, which some time previous to the close of the seventeenth century, belonged to and was in the occupation of Timothy Barton, the saddler, who was succeeded by his son Charles, from whose daughter, in the year 1802, the property was purchased by George Findlay, on whose death it descended to his son Robert, the father of Mrs Robertson. On this house, which is supposed to be very ancient, there is a shield upon which is a carved cross built in upside down. On the site of Mr Robertson's shop, at the southern corner of the Bow Alley, Thomas Moss carried on the business of a cabinet-maker for many years previous to 1804. The Bow Burn, which anciently flowed in an open channel across the street with a foot bridge on each side for pedestrians, was not covered in until after the passing of the Alnwick Improvement Act in 1822. A little beyond it, on the site of Mr Thomas Robertson's present establishment, was one of older date carried on by Mr Sewell, the predecessor of Mr William Leithead; adjoining it, and on the site of Mr T. Robertson's present dwelling house, was the tavern called the Horse and Hounds, which from 1790 till 1803 was kept by Matthew Davison, after whom Robert Luke, Thomas Brown, and James Skelly successively were tenants; and on the opposite side lived Mr Forster, better known as the "*Skekkin Laird*". Nearer to Bailiffgate, on the east side of the street, lived Peter Wilkie, who appears, from the Newcastle Magazine of 1822, to have been the original founder of the shop trade in Alnwick, previous to which pedlars or packmen were the merchants of the day, and supplied the inhabitants with news as well as goods. Peter Wilkie had served many years in the travelling troop himself, and tired of a wandering life at last settled down in Alnwick, and on a fine July fair day his shop was opened to the gaze of an admiring crowd.

His stock-in-trade was of a varied character, to suit every class of customer. Whilst his windows displayed the newest fashions to attract the ladies, they glistened with ginger bread figures, arrayed in gorgeous gilt clothing to suit the juvenile tastes, and with such varied attractions Peter Wilkie carried on a thriving trade, and was not long in amassing a considerable fortune.

Bailiffgate, which may now boast of being the widest and best flagged street in Alnwick, was, half-a-century ago, equally as rugged, uneven, and ill-paved as the other parts of the town. Between the Castle and the Square stood the old market cross where the butter market was anciently held, near to it were the parish stocks; and on the north side of the street, extending from the Castle towards the church, was an uneven row of houses, most of them very different in character to those which now exist. On the site of Mr Lisle's present residence was the Derwentwater House, two storys high, covered with grey slates. it formerly belonged to the Radcliffe family, and was given to the Duke of Northumberland in exchange for some property at Corbridge. The Red Lion tavern, at the other end of the street, was in existence upwards of a century ago, and in 1790 Matthew Mills, who built Brizlee Tower, was the landlord. Bailiffgate was then, as at present, the chief approach to the church; the land on which Northumberland Street now stands was part of a field, on the east side of which a narrow footway extended from Pottergate Tower to Bailiffgate, and from thence through the churchyard to a wicket leading into Walkergate. Parallel with this footway was a carriage road called the "Dirty Loaning", in continuation of the Howling Lane, extending from the Wash Burn to the foot of Rotten Row, which was anciently called "Lady Row Lane". A short distance below stood the parish stocks, for the punishment of offenders, and halfway down Canongate, at an earlier date, was a similar instrument of torture, and near the bottom of the street was an ancient Quaker's burial ground. Although Canongate may have undergone some changes for the better within the last few years, it certainly cannot boast of being beyond the reach of improvement, as the condition of the street and general appearance of the inhabitants might still be considerable improved by a more liberal application of water.

The land on each side of the river, from Canongate to the Lion Bridge, was formerly open to the public. On the north side was the hilly ground known as Barbary's Banks, and on the south was Canongate Common, and a little lower down Walkergate Haugh, where were occasionally mountebanks and other performances; and on each side of the Lion Bridge was a row of ancient thatched house.

With regard to Walkergate, there is little to notice beyond the remains of St Mary's Chantry House, which was built about the middle of the fifteenth century; an account of which, by Mr Dickson, is to be found amongst the proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalist's Club.

Proceeding along Painter Hill and up Northumberland Street we reach Pottergate Tower, on the site of which originally stood one of the ancient gates of the town, of which nothing is now known except that it existed prior to 1768. It was then replaced by the

present building, which was surmounted by a spire resembling that on the tower of St Nicholas' Church, Newcastle, but which, half-a-century afterwards, was removed in consequence of its apparent insecurity. The clock, the face of which occupies a space on the eastern front of the tower, was, in 1772, placed there on its removal from the Town Hall. On the south side stands what was anciently the Borough Schoolmaster's residence, and lower down, on the same side of the street, in an old house with a projecting window, formerly lived Miss Hodgson, who kept the post office, which, in the early part of the present century, was removed to the corner house leading into Narrowgate. A little to the west of Pottergate Tower stands Barndale House, built about forty years ago by Hugh, second Duke of Northumberland, on land called Barndale Riggs, which he purchased from the heirs of George Palfrey Burrell, to whom it was devised by the late Miss Grey, who succeeded to the property on the death of her mother, to whom it was devised, under the will of her uncle, Mark Forster, dated 20th September, 1726.

A short distance from the north end of Dispensary Street, formerly called the Backway, stands the Infirmary, originally founded as a Dispensary. The land on which it stands was purchased and the house built at the beginning of the present century by William Barber, the brewer, and in 1810 the property was sold to William Bolton, from whose representatives it was purchased for a Dispensary in the year 1819. Having been originally constructed for a private residence it is, in many respects, ill adapted for its present requirements. Efforts, however, are now being made to remedy what is found to be defective, and it would indeed be a great misfortune should any difference of opinion on minor points prevent a united action on the part of the governors, in carrying out so laudable an object. With the exception of the north end of Dispensary Street, which has been much widened, there has been little change within the last half century. On the east side is the only remaining tannery out of no fewer than twenty-two, which existed in the middle of the seventeenth century. A little nearer to Clayport, on the same side of the street, is "*Haggis Hall*", so named from being formerly the abode of Kitt Renwick, who manufactured a description of food called a haggis, which, although highly extolled by the poet Burns, is said to require a Scotch appetite as well as a Scotch digestion.

On entering Clayport from Dispensary Street at the beginning of the previous century stood the ancient tower, formerly the western entrance to the town, and although about the same height was much wider but similar in style and architecture to the tower in Bondgate. On the north side was a turn-style for the foot passengers, but the south was almost sufficiently wide to admit the passage of e cart, and the centre had a portcullis, similar to the other towers. Clayport Tower belonged to the Corporation, and contained several apartments, in which the incorporated trades held their meetings until the Town Hall was rebuilt in 1736, when the upper portion of Clayport Tower was let, principally to weavers, who, at that time, carried on an extensive trade in Alnwick. The lower part of the tower was converted into and used as a poor-house until 1785, when the paupers were removed to a house in Bondgate. Clayport Tower was taken down in the year 1804,

when Mr Howe, a farmer at Edlingham, purchased the materials, with which he built a portion of the Union Court. On the north side of the tower, on the eastern side of Dispensary Street, stood a very old house, apparently built at the same period; it was called "the house on the wall", and for many years previous to its removal in 1794 was occupied by an old soldier called Johnson; adjoining it were some old thatched houses, apparently about the same date. On the opposite corner of Dispensary Street stands an old house, which, in 1726, was devised by the will of Mark Forster for the use of the Borough school-master.

On the south side of the tower was another very old house, which, previous to its removal, was occupied by Mrs Robinson, who was long celebrated for the manufacture of ginger-bread. A little lower down, on the same side of the street, is the old parsonage house, and on the site of the United Presbyterian Chapel stood the old Correction House, and opposite to it is the ancient hostelry called the Grey's Inn, which, for many years previous to the close of the last century, was occupied by a family called Bolam. A little lower down is an ancient property in the occupation of Mr James Horsley, which, by a deed of feoffment dated 2nd April, 1633, was conveyed by John Green to Luke Alder, and on the 11th May, 1652, his son George was admitted tenant, at the Court Baron of Elizabeth, Countess Dowager of Northumberland. George Alder, in 1688, conveyed the property to his daughter, Dorcas, in consideration of his being boarded in the house for his life. In 1695 the property was purchased by Thomas Alnwick, who sold it in 1710, to Wm Gallon, who devised it to his son David, a London merchant. He, in 1752, sold it to John Gallon, of Alnmouth, merchant, from whom it was purchased in 1773 by George Smith, who in 1797, devised the property to his son Robert, the vicar of Kyloe, who, 1819, conveyed it to Mrs Ann Horsely. On the opposite side of the street is the ancient hostelry called the Three Tuns, which for many years previous to 1717, belonged to Mark Forster, who then resided in the adjoining house, on the east. He sold the Three Tuns to Ralph Wake, of Grumwell's Park, who devised it to his daughter subject to her giving Mary Hall two guineas and a cow again May-day next ensuing. In 1784 the property was purchased by Robert Adams, of Longhoughton, whose son Robert, in 1795, sold it to Clement Yellowly, from whom, in 1811, it was purchased by John Rattray. At the junction of Clayport and Fenkle Streets was an open building, called the Corn Market, and on the site of St Michael's Pant stood the Grass Market, which was taken down about the beginning of the eighteenth century, and converted into a Malt Market; behind it stood the Dragon, an old thatched house, on the site of where the newer house called the Dragon was afterwards built; and since converted into a bookseller's shop, occupied by Mr Davison. On the east side of St Michael's Lane, then called "*Willow Tree Walk*", was the White Hart, a much older house than the present, and was long occupied by the Beals. The Queen's Head adjoining, was in 1710, occupied by Mr Robert Atkinson. In an old thatched house, on the site of Mr Geggie's present establishment lived John King, the watchmaker, who was one of the last in Alnwick that wore a cocked hat. In the adjoining house, now converted into Mr Sanderson's grocery establishment, lived, for many years previous to his death in 1812, Edward, commonly called Justice Gallon. By his will, dated 3rd January, 1800, he devised the bulk of his

property, in the parishes of Alnwick, Lesbury, and Longhoughton, to his uncle John Gallon, for life, and afterwards to his niece, Elizabeth Gallon. Justice Gallon,

at the date of his, was 61 years of age, and in good health, whilst his uncle, to whom he devised his property, was 84, and had therefore little prospect of succeeding to it. He lived, however, for ten years afterwards, dying at the advanced age of 94, and only predeceased the testator, Justice Gallon, two years; the latter dying on the 12th July, 1812, at the age of 73, when Elizabeth Gallon succeeded to the property; and in the year 1843, under a commission in lunacy, she was found to have been of unsound mind from the year 1812. She died on the 5th April, 1849, at the advanced age of 80 years. The family of Gallon was settled in Alnwick at an early period. Edward was a merchant and resided in Clayport Street in 1630. Edward, his son, the grandfather of Justice Gallon, died in 1695, leaving a large family; and Justice Gallon's father, who died in 1763, left three sons. The family, however, became extinct on the death of Elizabeth, in 1849. At the corner next to Mr Purvis's establishment, formerly lived Lindsay, the grocer, and more recently Vernon, the shoemaker, and Thrussell, the barber. Nearer the Market Place, in Mr Grey the baker's shop, at the close of the last century, lived Miss Pratt, the first person that carried on the business of a chemist in Alnwick, and was succeeded by William Davison. On the south side of the Market Place stood the old Shambles, an insignificant building, which, in the year 1763, was removed and replaced by another erection called the Shambles, or new market, somewhat ornamental in its style of architecture. The building was one story in height, and on the north side was an arcade, whilst the east and west ends were supported by rows of pillars and pointed arches. This building was taken down in 1826, and the present Assembly rooms erected on its site. On the site where the Town Hall now stands was the beerhouse belonging to the lord of the manor, where the burgesses, on payment of certain fees, brewed their ale and beer. It was afterwards called the beerhouses, and by that name was purchased by the Corporation in 1585, after which it obtained the name of the Toll Booth, and after being rebuilt in 1734 it was called the Town Hall. To the north of where the Town Hall now stands, was anciently a public footway leading from the Market Place into Fenkle Street. The house now occupied by Mr Skelly, the shoemaker, was built upon the eastern portion of the footway.

Previous to and for some time after the commencement of the present century, Fenkle Street contained the best houses, and was undoubtedly the leading and most fashionable street in the town. Here was the Angel lnn, the chief hostelry and posting house of that period, and further down were the Nag's Head, the Spread Eagle, and the Half Moon, all houses of considerable repute. The grandfather of the late Thomas Henry Bell was long the landlord of the Angel, and was succeeded by Mr Salkeld. Mr Robertson succeeded him and continued landlord until 1804, when George Coxon entered, and was succeeded by Joseph Turnbull, the predecessor of Mr Cummings, who removed from the Nag's Head to the Angel. The premises on the north of the Angel, up to the middle of the last century, belonged to Christopher Carr, an extensive merchant, who died in 1751, and the following year his widow was married to George Selby,

solicitor, who was then a widower, and father of the late Henry Collingwood Selby, of Swansfield. A few doors further down is the ancient hostelry called the Nag's Head, which early in the present century, was kept by Mrs Appleby.

The three houses situated between the Nag's Head, and the Star Inn originally formed only one house, and was purchased in 1724, by Wm. Forster, merchant, who resided in the house until his death, and was succeeded by his son, Collingwood Forster, who, in 1744, married the daughter of John Doubleday, of Alnwick Abbey; and, at his death, in 1746, left three daughters to whom the property descended; the eldest married Mr Ward, and afterwards Mr Bush, of Bristol; the second Mr Peareth, and the third, Mr Fenwick of Lemington. The eldest, who purchased each of her sister's shares, sold the property, in 1790, to Mr Palfrey George Burrell. ln 1598, the old property, which occupied the site of the present three houses, belonged to Edward Hall, of Alnwick; who, in 1630, sold it to William Hunter; who, in 1668 devised it to his son Michael; who in 1674, was succeeded by his son Matthew; who, in 1702, sold it to Francis Anderson, who erected the existing buildings and afterwards sold the property to George and Robert Storey, of Sheepwash, from whom it was purchased by William Forster.

What is now the Star Hotel was, previous to the year 1814, a private residence occupied by, and the property of, Mr Thomas Adams, but formerly of Mr Richard Grieve, the leading solicitor in Alnwick at that period. Mr Grieve amassed a very large fortune, and became the owner of Swansfield, Swarland, and other estates in the county; and, on his death, in 1765, what is now the Star lnn was purchased by Mr Adams, the solicitor - who was no less successful in his profession than Mr Grieve, having left behind him a very large amount both of real and personal property. His brother Benjamin, the Newcastle merchant, succeeded to the South Acton estate, which had been in the possession of their family from the year 1682, when it was purchased by Edward Adams, of Longhoughton.

Thomas Adams, the Alnwick attorney, died a bachelor and intestate in his house in Fenkle Street, in the year 1813, when his only brother Alexander succeeded to Eshott and other estates, as well as to a large amount of personal property which had belonged to his brother Thomas. Benjamin Adams, by his will, dated 12th May, 1815, left his immense property, both real and personal, to his illegitimate son, William Adams, then in the East Indies, and who died in the Province of Bengal on the 24th October, 1818. He made a will, which, however, was ineffectual to pass his real estate; but his personal estate, which considerably exceeded £150,000, passed under his will to Henry Naters of Quebec; on whose decease Mr Mather, a stone mason, in Newcastle, unexpectedly succeeded to it. In consequence of the illegitimacy of William Adams, the whole of the real estates, which had belonged to Thomas and Alexander Adams, escheated to the crown; but by a warrant, under the sign manual of George IV, dated 14th May, 1822, the several real estates, situated at Eshott, South Acton, and elsewhere, were re-granted to the next of kin of Alexander and Thomas Adams. The two houses to the north of the Star Inn, in the occupation of Mr Thompson and Miss Tate, were originally one house,

and occupied by Mr Nicholas Browne, a solicitor and one of the chamberlains during a great part of the last century. The house was afterwards occupied by Mr Perigal the father of the late Vicar of Ellingham. On the site of the adjoining property, on which Lambton's Bank and other premises now stand, was an old house occupied during the middle of the last century by Mr George Selby, whose father - a retired merchant at Holy Island - died in 1730. George Selby practised as a solicitor in Alnwick and married first, Mary, daughter of Prideaux Selby of Beal, who died in 1750; and secondly, Dorothy, the widow of Christopher Carr, and Alnwick merchant. He left three sons and a daughter by his first marriage, and died on 1st March, 1806, at the age of 86 years. His third son Henry Collingwood Selby, who purchased and for many years resided at Swansfield, married the daughter of Prideaux Wilkie, of Doddington, afterwards of Hatcheugh, and had one daughter who was married to Archdeacon Thorp, and died in 1811. In the early part of his life, Henry Collingwood Selby was chief commissioner to Hugh, 1st Duke of Northumberland, but for many years previous to his death resided at Swansfield, where he died, on the 9th February, 1839, at the age of 91 years. A few doors further down on the same side of the street, where Mr Amory, the tailor, now lives, was the inn called the Spread Eagle, long celebrated for the excellence of its “punch”, and on the premises now occupied by Mrs Stamp, resided her late husband's father, who carried on a very large business as a merchant; and next door was the Half Moon, a very ancient hostelry.

Although Alnwick has undergone important changes since the close of the last century, yet they are trifling in comparison with what the freemen have effected within a very short period, by converting into a productive tract of land, that, which but a few years ago, was a marshy barren waste, where although whins flourished in the greatest luxuriance, the grass, even in the most favoured seasons, resembled in colour what is commonly called invisible green. Here some ragged quadrupeds, which the freemen dignified with the name sheep, were left to eke out a miserable and scanty subsistence. These ravenous animals were widely known beyond their own territory, the highest fences being insufficient to restrain their predatory habits; and therefore the cultivation of the moor has perhaps been a greater boon to the neighbouring proprietors than it may ultimately prove to the freemen themselves.

From time immemorial the freemen of Alnwick appear to have regarded themselves as an oppressed and injured body. At one time we find them complaining of being plundered by the lord of the manor, and at another of being grossly deceived by the four-and-twenty; and if we may trust to rumour, we learn that even amongst themselves the greatest harmony does not always prevail; for we are told that at their meetings or guilds physical as well as moral force is not unfrequently resorted to in support of their arguments.

The following document, dated nearly a century ago, will furnish some idea of the state of feeling which at that period prevailed between themselves, the four-and-twenty, and the lord of the manor.

Hexham, December 11, 1781.

TO THE PETIONING FREEMEN OF THE BOROUGH OF ALNWICK

And it came to pass as I journeyed northwards, that behold I met with sages arrayed some in leather; some in woollen aprons, and some almost Adamites.

And I said unto them, whither go ye? And they answered and said, We be select men of a confused number, immersed in our Pool of Bethesda, and we go to seek our patrimony, a large tract of country, of which we have been bereaved by unrighteous men, who have usurped an authority unknown to our forefathers, and we go in search of means to redeem our birthright.

And lo to that end we have heretofore laid our grievances before the beautiful young man, the Chief of the Stewards of our Prince at the Castle, who hath promised to do whatsoever seemeth meet unto us, and behold, we sojourn thither. Then said I, Beware whom ye trust, and confide not in the promises of designing Princes, nor their fair promising agents.

Your inheritance is the gift of the good old King John, who, to preserve peace and to prevent the unruly rage of the multitude hath wisely appointed perpetual Stewards to rule over you, which Stewards have been found faithful.

Attempt not therefore to alienate your property, but with all sobriety conform to the mode prescribed by your bountiful donor, which hath preserved it inviolate to your ancestors and their posterity for so many generations; cease therefore, your lawless altercations.

At this, my friendly admonition, some cursed the day they listened to the advice of evil counsellors, and returned to their homes; but others, having no reason of their own and being unable to withstand mine, murmured threat, and went their ways, the Lord knows whither.

Howbeit, after some days, behold I met these pretended sages near the great man's gates, having their faces covered with shame and confusion.

And I said unto them, Oh ye wicked and perverse individuals, how long will ye continue to distress your own families and disturb the peace of your benefactors. Wot ye not that ye are all in the wrong.

And they answered and said, We have laid our grievances before the great man, who hath spurned at our application and accosted us thus:-

Oh ye drunkenest of all drunken freemen, so audaciously to enter these gates with such wicked proposals. Conscious I am that all my civilities have been treated with unparalleled ingratitude, and, to ruin my reputation with my respectable neighbours, you now impudently solicit me to be a principal in an unlawful act against them, in direct violation of the terms prescribed by our royal donor.

Wot ye not that it is my duty to study the interests of my family, and to conciliate the friendship of my neighbours; but not such vagabonds as you are?

Go your ways then, and with dutiful submission implore the forgiveness of your lawful superiors, the Four-and Twenty, whom ye have so wickedly bely'd.

And, till this my mandate you have obeyed, never shall your ungodly lusts be gratified with a single horn of ale from my cellar. And go directly, lest a worse course should fail upon ye.

And they submissively answered and said Lo we go and do as thou hast commanded.

(Thus ends the First Lesson)

Alnwick does not appear to have ever achieved the distinction of being a parliamentary borough. it, however, claims the dignity without sharing the advantages of being the county town of Northumberland. It also boasts of having a corporate existence, but bereft of the chief functionary which confers dignity on a Corporation. That body on all public questions seems to exercise a sort of divided authority with the Board of Health, except with regard to railway communication, over which the latter appears to claim exclusive jurisdiction. For many years their efforts have been directed towards extending the present line of the railway to the west of Alnwick, and so long ago as the year 1861 they issued a prospectus shewing the advantages likely to result by the formation of a railway to Wooler. Surveys were then made, a subscription list opened, and a committee appointed, and from 1861 to the present time the same performance has been almost annually gone through. The difficulties attending the construction of the line from Morpeth to Rothbury instead of acting as a warning seems to have produced the opposite effect, a prospectus having since been issued for the formation of a rival line to Rothbury.

Whether the proposed line to Wooler is intended to be abandoned or both schemes to be carried out, if definitely settled, has not yet been announced, although upwards of a year has elapsed since the prospectus appeared under the auspices of a newly-elected secretary, whose enterprise and energy are doubtless equal to the occasion. Although the public may not be satisfied, yet they will be grateful for the accomplishment of either scheme and the realization of a hope long deferred.

Alnwick can claim the distinction of being the birth-place of one of the most distinguished of modern philosophers. At the top of Clayport, in a house adjoining Grosvenor Terrace, was born, on the 27th June, 1801, ‘and passed the first few years of his life, George Riddell Airey, the astronomer royal, whose father was a collector of excise, and a native of Lincolnshire. The career of this eminent man is so well known that anything beyond a passing allusion would be superfluous. There are numerous other men connected with Alnwick who have risen to eminence; but none have achieved a more distinguished position in science, archaeology, and border literature, than he whose crowning effort was the history of his native town; and I cannot help calling to your recollection the circumstance that in the hall in which we are now assembled, he received at the hands of his fellow townsmen a most gratifying testimonial of the esteem in which he was held. On the imperishable basis of his great historical work - more enduring than the bronze statue or the marble bust - will rest the memory of GEORGE TATE in his native town, which he loved so well.