

## **Denholm.**

### **A History of the Village.**

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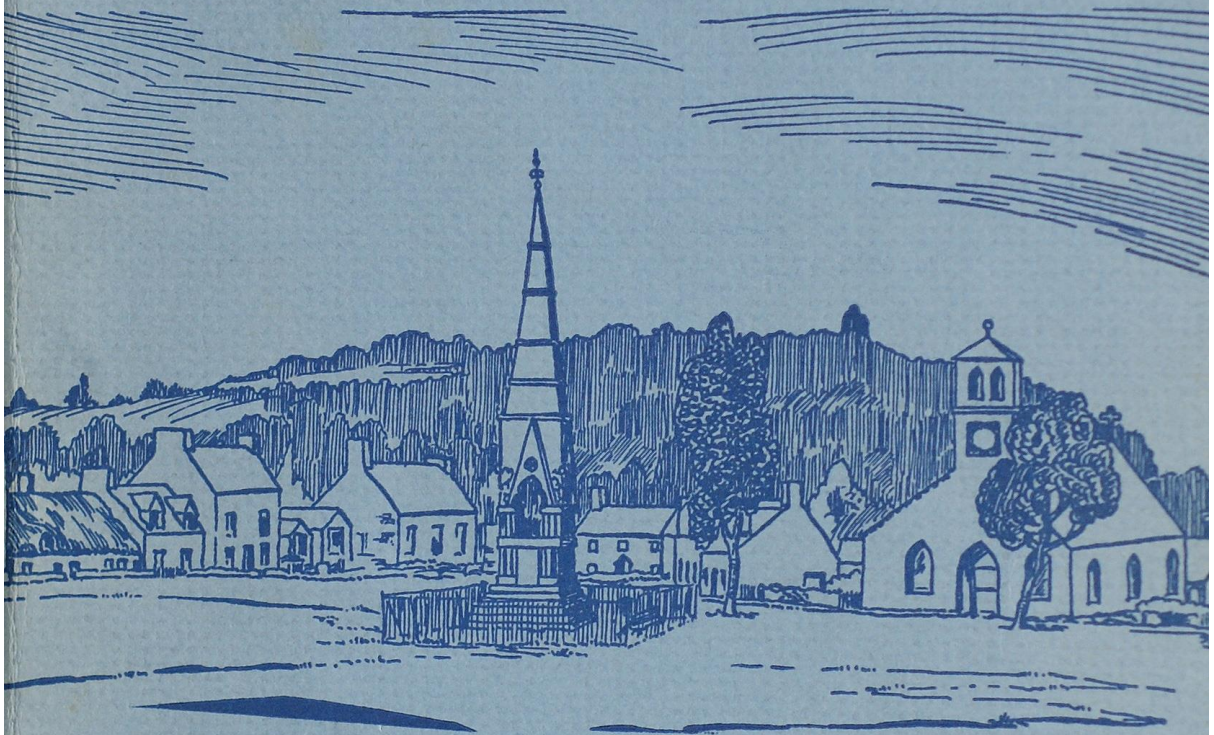
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Dated 5/2/2022

# DENHOLM



**A History of the Village**

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# **DENHOLM**

## **A History of the Village**

by

**Margaret Sellar**

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## Sources and Acknowledgements

In this history I have brought together a variety of material in order to present a more accessible and comprehensive account of the village of Denholm.

The main sources were:

- J. A. H. Murray. Historical Sketch of Denholm, read at a Soiree and Presentation to James Douglas Esq., of Cavers, 21st December, 1863, and privately printed.
- Sir Walter Elliot. Denholm and its Vicinity, History of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club, 1868.
- John W. Turnbull. Denholm and its Memories, Hawick Archaeological Society, Transactions, September, 1938.
- John M. Ramsay. The story of my boyhood days in Denholm over 50 years ago, 1951 Typescript.
- Denholm Primary School. Denholm in by-gone days, 1982.
- Notes made in the 1960's and 70's by Mrs Jessie Crawford, schoolteacher and registrar and by Miss A. T. N. Smith, schoolteacher.

Most of this material, together with photographs and press cuttings, articles from gazeteers and surveys and memories of other Denholm villagers, was collected by Mrs E. Fulcher, Ruberslea, Denholm. I am grateful to her for making all this available to me and for her help and encouragement.

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Margaret Sellar, 1989.

Front cover drawing by kind permission of Mr R. E. Scott.

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Most of these photographs have been kindly lent by Mrs Fulcher, Ruberslea, Denholm. She would be pleased to show the full collection to any interested person.

# I

## EARLY TIMES TO THE 16th CENTURY

### Ancient Britons and Romans

The very earliest inhabitants of Denholm were prehistoric settlers of the late Stone or Bronze Age, some 2000–3000 years ago. Skeletons in the crouched burial position of ancient times were found last century on the North Crofts, near where the school is now. These early settlers would have lived by hunting, fishing and gathering and would have built rough shelters near the Teviot. There is no trace of these shelters now but later, during the Roman occupation of the 1st and 2nd centuries, the native Britons fled to fortified dwellings on higher ground and remains of Iron Age forts have been found on Ruberslaw and at Clyde's Lynn at the top of Denholm Dean. Ruberslaw was also used as a Roman signalling station but there is no evidence of Roman occupation in Denholm itself.

### The Anglo-Saxon Settlement

After the departure of the Romans at the end of the 4th century the Britons were pushed north from this area by the Angles and Saxons invading from the south. The name Denholm is of Anglo-Saxon origin, meaning the "holm" (flat river meadow) by the "den," "dene" or "dean" (narrow wooded valley). Thus the Anglo-Saxon settlement was at the point where the narrow glen of the Dean Burn met the flat meadows or haughs of the Teviot valley.

Usually after driving out the native Britons, a Saxon chief would build himself a stronghold. His own hall, generally a large rectangular building, would be surrounded by the huts of his followers and fortified by a wooden enclosure. In time a church and mill were often built close by. The centre of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in Denholm is thought to have been the West Hall on the site of what is now Westgate Hall. In the subsequent Norman period it would have been called the West Castle. The site at the top of the steep brae was obviously chosen for defence. According to J. A. H. Murray in his "Historical Sketch of Denholm" there was also a moat on two sides, supplied with water from the hills.

### The East Castle

It is thought that there was also an East Castle or Hall (as indicated by the name Denholm Hall Farm). Its exact location is uncertain but it most likely stood somewhere near the East Burn and also near the Canongate. Here it would have overlooked the approach to the village from the east and north which was originally by the old ford, near where the sewage works are today.

In "Denholm and its Memories" John W. Turnbull was "definitely of the opinion" that the castle must have been at the top of the Canongate or very near the site of Denholm Hall Farmhouse, while in her notes on Denholm Miss A. T. N. Smith appears to be in no doubt that the castle was in the Croft Field between the Canongate and the Jedburgh Road. She quotes a local story that the stones from its ruin were used in the 19th century to build the eastern side of the wall round the Green. It also used to be said that the retaining wall at Denholm Hall Farm was built from Castle stones.

### Guy of Denum

The earliest surviving record of the village is found in the Ragman Rolls signed by a certain Guy of Denum at Berwick in 1296. In this document many Scottish lords swore fealty to Edward 1st of England after his campaign north of the border.

Guy, as lord of the Barony and Castle of Denum, signed along with other local notables such as "William of Wodeburn, parsonne of Mynthowe (Minto), Symond of Cresswell, son of Hugh of Astendean (Hassendean), William and Robert of Toftys (Tofts), Maurice Lovell parsonne of Little Cavers and Sir Alexander Balliol of Cavers," to whom it is almost certain that Guy owed allegiance under the feudal system brought in by the Normans.

Guy's successors were his sons John and William who were recorded as Barons of Denum between 1333 and 1357 in the time of Edward 3rd. It has been suggested that one would have held the West Castle and the other the East.

### The Balliol Family

During the Scottish Wars of Independence under Wallace and Bruce, the Balliol family and their followers were on the side of the English. It is therefore not surprising that once Robert the Bruce was established on the throne, he dispossessed the Balliols and gave their estates, including Denholm, to one of his own followers, Thomas 13th Earl of Mar. So it was that the family of Guy of Denum lost their castles and Barony.

English State Papers of 1380 give a list of English losses since "the great truce" of 1369. Amongst these were the Barony of Cavers including "the Demeenz" (domains or manorial land) of Denum with "cotiers" (surroundings) and "la balliol hag" (haugh) and "Denumdean."

The Earl of Mar happened to be related to both the Balliol and the Douglas families and for this reason the lands were granted back to a certain Thomas de Baliol and then later, when both he and Mar died without a successor, to William, Earl of Douglas. The Balliols were soon to leave the area and went north to seek better fortune, their name changing in time to Baillie.

### The Cranstouns and the 15th Century Charter

About the year 1382 the Earl of Douglas granted the lands of Denum to be held in fee by Thomas 3rd Baron Cranstoun or Cranyston. This was confirmed by Robert 2nd in 1441 in a charter which specifies "the lands of Foulerysland in Denum and the little Rulwood beside the town of Denum in the Barony of Cavers." Two centuries later in the "Retours" of October 1687 we find a fuller description, "the lands of Spittal-Toune and the chapel of Carloverock; the town and lands of Denholm; the lands of Denholm's Dean and Ballie hagistoks, 10 Libratae of the Dominical lands of Denholm; the lands of Little Rowlwood with the grove and tower and the lands called Comre near the town of Denholm; the lands of Fouersland in Denholm." The names Comre and Fouleryland or Fouersland have not survived. The chapel of Carloverock was at Spittal-on-Rule. The site is still shown on a map, just behind the present farm house. The last witch of Denholm is said to have been buried there (George Tancred, "Rulewater and its People").

### Little Rulwood

It used to be thought that Little Rulwood was the old name for Denholm Dean and about thirty years ago a house overlooking the Dean was given this name. But on the evidence here Little Rulwood is more likely to be over to the east, near the Rulewater. "The grove and tower" suggests that it was near Spital Tower. It is also significant that "Denholm's Dean" is separately mentioned, indicating it was not one and the same as Little Rulwood. Confirming this the Burleigh Papers of the mid 16th century list "on the water of the Rowle; Rowle, Spittal, Bedrowle, Rowlewood and the Wolles (Wells)."



One of the fields by the northern edge of Denholmhill Wood has long been known to local farmers as the "Castle Field" because in it there is a large square of stone which might once have been the foundations of a castle. The Hawick Archaeological Society carried out a dig to ascertain whether it might have been the base of a tower on "the lands of Little Rowlwood." But the stone square was found to be a natural rock formation.

### **Life Under the Cranstouns**

Denholm remained in the possession of the Cranstoun family for nearly 300 years until the mid 17th century. During this time the village population does not appear to have increased much, being inhabited mainly by the feudal vassals and dependants of the Baron.

This was also the case with Cavers and Hawick and most other towns and villages before they obtained charters of freedom and grants of land which made them independent of their feudal and military lords. Until that time the lives of the ordinary people were dominated by the actions of their lords who frequently called on them to leave home and fight in Border feuds.

### **16th Century Border Raids**

The village suffered its share of feuds and raids which devastated the Borders before the Union of the Crowns in 1603. In 1524 Lord Dacre boasted that he had harried the whole of the Borderland and left not a single habitable place. In 1533-35 Denholm and Cavers were burnt by Lord Dacre and Sir Kerstial Dacre.

In 1544 the whole of Teviotdale was "miserably plundered and destroyed" by Sir Ralph Ever and in the following year the same area was devastated by the Earl of Hertford. According to a contemporary record he "burend Jedwourd Abbey and the friar's menors, and all the Townes 11 myle beyond as Cavaires (Cavers) and Denem (Denholm) and Mento (Minto) and Manton Crake (Minto Crag) and Bedroule (Bedrule) and Towres (Spital Tower) and Newton and Langeton (Lanton) and Hassendean and the Barnehills."

Denholm would also not have escaped the ravages of an expedition under the Earl of Sussex in 1570 when Jedburgh and Hawick were plundered and burnt and the whole countryside laid waste.

## II

### NEW BEGINNINGS IN THE 17th AND 18th CENTURIES

#### **Sir Archibald Douglas and Westgate Hall**

In 1634 Charles 1st granted a charter of certain properties including "the town and lands of Denum" to Archibald Douglas, son and heir of Sir William Douglas of Cavers, and to his wife, Rachel Skene. In 1658, now 10th Laird of Cavers, Sir Archibald purchased outright the lands of Spittal and Denholm from William, Lord Cranstoun, and reunited them to the estate of Cavers. He rebuilt the Old West Castle for his own use. It was known variously as the "Ha'," "Old Castle Ha'," or "Westgate Ha'."

Today it is called Westgate Hall and although the interior plan has changed and a staircase added on the outside, it remains the oldest building in the village. The date 1663 can still be seen over the entrance. On the lintel over the fireplace in the great hall are carved the initials S.A.D. and D.R.S. for Sir Archibald Douglas and Dame Rachel Skene. Below this are their shields, the Douglas heart, which had been taken on Crusade against the Saracens with the three mullets in chief and the skean (dagger) between three wolves heads.

#### **The Feuing of the Village in the 17th Century**

In 1664 Sir Archibald feued  $8\frac{3}{4}$  acres of land for houses and gardens. That is to say he granted a perpetual lease at a fixed rent. This land lay in plots around the Green. More was feued in the 18th century down the Canongate.

Denholm is now a Conservation Area listed as "a planned village as opposed to the traditional unplanned or organic form of village usually found in Roxburghshire." Almost certainly it was the deliberate aim of the laird to provide homes and livelihoods in the newly purchased lands of Denholm for the people of Cavers — descendants of the old baronial fighting force which was no longer needed in these more peaceful times.

The Denholm villagers were fortunate to have an enlightened landowner as their laird. From this time on their circumstances improved and they were able to benefit from the agricultural improvements of the 18th century known as the Agrarian Revolution. The feuing ground was eventually taken up by 47 persons many of whom moved in from Cavers which from now on was to decline. By 1867 sixty people are recorded as holding feus or half feus, some of the original holdings having been divided.

When J. A. H. Murray wrote his "Historical Sketch" in 1863 the earliest titles still in existence dated only from the 18th century. But it is known that the conditions were payment of one merk Scots for a piece of land (about a quarter of an acre) with the right to a "darg" or a day's cutting of peat from the common land on Denholmhill and Denholm Muir on the lower slopes of Ruberslaw. Also the right to a load of sods for roofing the feuar's dwelling. The "darg" was later changed to the entitlement to a piece of common land where the peat could be cut at any time. Heaps of stones used to mark these plots behind Denholmhill Wood.

#### **18th Century Smallholders**

By agreement with Sir Archibald Douglas the villagers were entitled to graze their cows on the poor pasture of the common land to the south on the slopes of Denholmhill and Ruberslaw and on the haughs on each side of the river. According to Murray, there were between 20 and 30 of them and a common herdsman, usually

a youth or a lame person, was employed to watch them. We are told that he lodged week about at the houses of his employers and that each morning he blew his horn whereupon each cow made its own way to a collecting point from which it also found its own way home in the evening. The cows sometimes became so thin and weak in the winter that neighbours might be called to get one onto its feet in the morning. The horn used by the last herdsman, Walter Laidlaw, was kept by a descendant of an old Denholm family, Mr William Oliver of Galashiels, and given in the 1940's to the Wilton Lodge Museum, Hawick.

The villagers also supported themselves by raising pigs and poultry on their garden ground and on the Green. They were famous for their geese, the saying being "Denholm for lean geese." But the village was also known as "Dirty Denholm" because the Green was cluttered with middens, pigstyes, henhouses, heaps of firewood, turfstacks, sawpits, large puddles and muddy holes beloved by the geese.

Each feuar also had the right to rent and cultivate several acres of common land which lay in strips to the east of the village. Here they grew barley, oats, wheat, potatoes, beans and turnips in the old runrig system. Tait's Strip is still shown on a modern map. This arable land was separated from the grazing land by the loaning, a broad strip of grass up which the cattle would be driven to pasture.

Thus the agreement with Sir Archibald Douglas gave the feuars not only house and garden property, but also the means to make a living as smallholders with peat rights and land for raising cattle, pigs and poultry and for growing crops. Rents were often paid in kind or in work done for the laird, rather than with money.

Cavers Estate papers of 1767 and 1770 record the tenants of the following lands in and around Denholm.

Denholm Garden  
Denholm Acres and the Old Inclosure

Thomas Sibbald.  
John Dods, Robert Henderson,  
James Veitch, Archibald Murray,  
John Little, Margaret and Isabel  
Turnbull.

Denholm West End  
Denholm East End  
Linthaugh and 1/5th of the common  
Nook Croft and 1/5th of the common  
Ridges and 1/5th of the common  
Dowcathill and Orchard and 1/5th of  
the common  
Denholm Flatts and 1/5th of the  
common  
Denholm North Croft

Walter and William Little.  
James Scott.  
John Scott and John Leiden.  
James Rae and Adam Mack.  
William Hendry and William Leidon.  
Thomas Huntly and Thomas  
Thomson.  
Thomas Thomson and John  
Turnbull.  
William Leidon, James Murray,  
John Little, Robert Scott,  
Andrew McCulloch, James  
Murray.

### The Wabsters

In the 18th century flax was grown on the common land and woven into linen cloth by the "wabsters" or weavers. It first had to be retted to soften its coarse fibres. This was done by steeping it in the backwaters of the Teviot and in the "Geddholes," pools and hollows by Denholm Mill Haugh on the south side of the river and the haughs on the north side. It was rinsed and the softened flax, or lint, laid out to dry. The name Lint Haugh, a field on Denholm Mill Farm, dates back to this time. The womenfolk then spun the lint into yarn, ready for weaving by the wabsters. The linen was peddled at local fairs and all over the country

between Newcastle and Edinburgh. Cavers Estate papers record sales to the laird's wife of "broad fine table cloths," "diaper for napkins" and "sheeting cloth" by Denholm weavers James Laidlaw, John Fraiter, Peter Huntly and George Renwick.

### Other Tradesmen

Other tradesmen and their dealings with the Cavers Estate in 1767 and 1770 include:—

John Little, mason, building Cavers new coachhouse, stable, byre, wright's shop and henhouse.

Robert Kerswell, George Wright and Walter Scott, wrights, peeling and cutting oak bark at Cavers and Denholmdean, making ditches and dykes to enclose Linthaugh and the North Croft, Nook Croft, Orchard, Dowcoat-hill and Flatts (49 days wages at 12d per day).

Adam Leidon, carrier.

James Murray, John Lockey and James Turnbull, tailors.

Andrew McCulloch, shoemaker.

Robert Scott and John Thomson, masons.

Thomas Douglas, tenant of Denholm Miln (mill).

Thomas Rutherford, mending hedges in Denholmdean and taking down the old house at Denholmdean.

Margaret Turnbull and partners, cleaning the greens, parks, meadows and pasture ground about Cavers.

William Leidon, carriage of two casks of porter.

John Turnbull, wright, supplying eight panes of glass for the hottbeds.

Elizabeth and Margaret Blakes and Margaret Reid, prosecuted for cutting and stealing wood in Denholmdean.

### The Fairs

Important to the smallholding economy of the 18th century village were the weekly and half yearly fairs held on the Green. These were set up to encourage local trade but would also have provided welcome distraction in a hard and monotonous existence. The weekly markets (mercats) held on Wednesdays were appointed by King William the 3rd in 1698, in favour of Mr Archibald Douglas who, as laird or "lord of the manor" was entitled to certain dues on the trading. The much bigger half yearly fairs were also appointed by the king, two years earlier in 1696, in favour of the previous laird, Sir William Douglas. These were to be held on the 16th day of June and the 5th day of November, the days before the Jedburgh fairs. Each was to last eight days.

At the November or Mart fair those that could afford it bought meat to salt down and use through the winter. In 1863 people could still remember when the Green, then unenclosed, was almost covered with sheep lying with their feet tied. In the 18th century the road along the south side of the Green was known as the Mercat Road. People with all sorts of produce and wares would come from the surrounding country and from Hawick, Jedburgh and Kelso. Hiring of labourers and servants took place and all kinds of other local business conducted. The fairs were an important outlet for the wabsters' linen.

### The Mercat Cross

The opening ceremony was performed by the laird riding over the Green with some of his retainers and proclaiming the fair from the mercat cross. This was a small stone cross on a low octagonal base. It stood in the centre of the Green until

the middle of the 19th century when the feuars converted it into a water trough for their cows by taking down the cross and hollowing out the base. Sadly all that is left is part of the base which can be seen inside the railings surrounding the Leyden Monument. A similar base can be seen at Cavers Townhead. We are told that for the children the fairs really only began with the arrival of an old woman with a krame (stall) from which she sold sweets and rock. In 1767 the Cavers Estate paid 6s 8d to the "Officers, Piper and Drummers of Jedburgh for attending the Denholm Fairs and 2s "for drink allowed to them."

The fairs began to decline at the beginning of the 19th century, the November one surviving longer as the sheep continued to be brought in for it. But eventually it too ceased despite the introduction of games to try and draw the people. For a while an old man called Tommy Tudhope continued to come with a krame of toys and the children used to shout "The fair's begun, yonder's Tammie Tudhope."

### **The Bough o' Bale**

The night before the November fair was always celebrated by a great bonfire, the Bough o' Bale or Boughabale (pile of boughs). This was a very ancient custom, dating back to pagan times. The tradition has survived although it was threatened in the 19th century after the Green was tidied and enclosed. The village constable and feuars, especially those living near the Green, made a determined effort to stop it. Sir Walter Elliot, writing in 1868 says in his paper "Denholm and its Vicinity" that the "Boughabale" had "ceased altogether." It was banned during the 1914-18 War in case it attracted enemy Zeppelins. But not for nothing did Michael Anderson (Muckle Michael) predict 200 years ago "The Bough o' Bale 'ill never fail, as long as burns grow trout and gardens kail." The old custom survives and the bonfire is lit every year on November 5th. Inevitably it has become associated with Guy Fawkes and Fire Works night.

### **The Highlanders' Pay**

One event in the 18th century is still recounted. In 1745 a detachment of Highlanders passed through on their way south to fight for Bonnie Prince Charlie. They camped for the night in a field by the Jedburgh road, just east of the Bedrule roadend. It has been known ever since as the Highlanders' Knowe. The officers were quartered in the "White Swan," the principal inn of the time, an establishment owned by James Millar. The house is now called Leyden's View.

During the night the pay bag was stolen from these quarters and the Highlanders threatened to burn down the village if the money was not returned. It duly was and the Highlanders continued on their way.

### **Dr John Leyden**

Leyden was born in 1775 in a cottage on the north side of the Green. His father, a shepherd, was descended from a servant from the university town of Leiden in Holland brought back to Scotland in the 16th century by one of the Douglas family who had studied there.

Within a year of the boy's birth, however, the family moved to Henlawshiel, by Nether Tofts, and at the age of nine he went to the nearest parish school which was at Kirkton. By this time he had already learned to read at home. Books were extremely hard for him to come by but he had read the whole Bible and knew much of it by heart.

Even at this age his ability and enthusiasm for learning were so outstanding that he was moved from Kirkton after three years and sent into Denholm to join a small, private class of four or five boys who were tutored in Latin and Greek by the Rev. James Duncan (1755-1830) minister of the Cameronian Chapel. The young Leyden's passion for languages was fuelled at this time by a book he was given by the owner of the donkey that brought him the three miles in and out of Denholm each day. It was a dictionary which gave synonyms in eight different languages.

In 1790, at the age of fifteen, he set off for Edinburgh University, making most of the journey on foot. There he studied arts for three years and divinity for four. He also made a name for himself as a poet and wrote for the "Edinburgh Literary Review" and other periodicals. His "Scenes from Infancy" were written at this time and he collaborated with Sir Walter Scott in collecting ballads for the "Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border."

He was extremely poor and had to support himself at University by tutoring private pupils. During his summer vacations he also studied the natural sciences and modern European languages besides Hebrew, Arabic and Persian. In his final year as a divinity student he began medical studies by attending chemistry and botany classes.

In 1794 his family moved to a small cottage in Cavers where lack of space forced him to study in the church during vacations. Various stories are told of how he terrified passers-by with practical jokes, pretending the church was haunted. He was fortunate in being allowed to use the library at Cavers House where he tutored one of the laird's sons.

Despite his brilliance as a scholar Leyden never managed to gain an appointment as a minister, possibly because of his high-pitched, grating voice and an off-putting delivery. But by the time he had qualified in divinity he was more interested in philology. His favourite field was oriental languages.

He was keen to travel abroad and in 1802 obtained an appointment as an assistant surgeon in India. For this he had to qualify in medicine. His previous medical studies enabled him to take a nominal M.D. at St Andrews in only six months. It was a superhuman achievement made possible by the same phenomenal memory which made him such a brilliant linguist.

Once in India he worked as a surgeon and a circuit judge but also set himself to master a long list of Oriental languages and became Professor of European Languages at the University of Calcutta. He died in 1811 in Java from a fever caught through studying manuscripts in a chilled and airless room. He was only 36 and his death was an incalculable loss to scholars of language. He was buried in Java.

Fifty years later, in 1861, a Monument to his memory was erected on Denholm Green. The minutes and financial records of the Monument Committee still survive. It is interesting to note that the sum of £514 2/3d spent on building it was less than the cost of cleaning and repairing it in the 1970's. In 1896 a plaque was unveiled on the cottage where he was born and in 1975 the bi-centenary of his birth was celebrated in fine style by the people of Denholm.

### III

## GROWTH AND CHANGE IN THE 19th CENTURY

### Agreements Between Lairds and Feuars

The entitlement to cut peat and sods on Denholmhill and Denholm Muir continued into the 19th century. So too did the "privilege exercised from time immemorial of erecting peat and turf stacks, pig styes and of laying down dunghills and other nuisances upon the Green." But the time came when the owners of the Cavers Estate wished to enclose and plant the hill and moor land to the south of the village and to "improve and beautify the said Green."

### The New Yairds

In 1835 a Deed of Excambion (exchange) was signed between the feuars and the laird of the time, Mr James Douglas. By this the feuars relinquished their peat rights in exchange for an addition to their garden ground. Six acres were feued in a strip running round the outside of the old village so that each householder had a "new yaird" added on to the bottom of his "old yaird." Some of these extensions met the old plots at a slant as can still be seen most clearly in some of the gardens on West Side. This new land, added to the original 18th century feus, made 16 acres of house and garden ground. Together with the Green and an area of roadway, it brought the total area of the village by the middle of the 19th century to just over 21½ acres.

### The Enclosure of the Green in 1836

Mr Douglas also succeeded in getting the feuars' agreement to tidy and enclose the Green. The Deed gave him the power to enclose it "at the expense of the said Feuars" but with himself to contribute "such proportion of the expense thereof as he may think proper." Thereafter he and his successors were to manage it for the "use and benefit of the Feuars and the ornament and amenity of the village." Any income from the Green was to be divided among the feuars.

In the following year the unsightly clutter was removed. While it is true that most of it was simply transferred to the feuars' own gardens, at least the appearance of the centre of the village was vastly improved and from this time dates the trim and picturesque Green of today. It was duly enclosed with a wall on three sides and spiked railings on the fourth along Main Street. The north east corner was separately enclosed and became the "Under Green," later the Small Green or, more commonly, the "Wee Green." The main square was the "Upper," later the Big Green. Most of the feuars did contribute to the cost of this but 30 years later some had still not paid their share!

A committee of management, the old "Feuars Committee" was set up. Each year the Greens were either let to the highest bidder for grazing cattle or else the Committee oversaw the growing and selling of a crop. The money realised was used to build and maintain the walls and fences and to pay John Tait, the village constable, £1 a year to keep off trespassers. In time the "green funds" also went towards more general local improvements such as drainage and the upkeep of wells and pumps.

### The Crofts

In 1862 the next laird, also James Douglas, assigned more land to some of the feuars for gardens and allotments ("spade cultivation"). These were known as the North, South and East Crofts — the North Crofts where Riverside Drive and the



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plan

Densholm Village with the houses and land to be given to the Trustees in exchange for the right to build a school house in 1835

VILLAGE IN 1835. MAP PREPARED FOR THE DEED OF EXCHANGE.



School are today, the South Crofts behind the "old back road" which is now Douglas Drive and the East Crofts behind Kirkside on land where Kirklands and East Neuk now stand. The next field there used to be known as the Croft Field and one of the houses on Kirkside is still called Croft Cottage. The annual lease was £3 an acre. Most of the plots were 1/8th acre and came to be known as the "eights." There were 75 of these at 7/6d each, 27 smaller ones at 5/- and 11 at various other sums.

### The Stocking Industry

The village remained an agricultural community until the end of the 18th century when the stocking industry was introduced. It prospered and by 1837 it is recorded that "most of the inhabitants are stocking makers and others engaged in rural affairs" (Pigot & Co's National Commercial Directory). In 1844 there were 87 stocking frames in Denholm. (Clifford Gulvin, *The Scottish Hosiery and Knitwear Industry*).

The machines were set up in the cottages at the windows in order to get the best light. Many cottages around the Green were built or rebuilt with the flourishing of the new industry. Some of these cottages, or stocking shops, are still standing — part of Leyden's Cottage, Rosebank (now called Rosecroft), the rear of the Fox & Hounds Inn and the rear of 5 Main Street. There was also a stocking shop on the site of Swiss Villa in the Canongate. The Old Mill at West End (now converted to a private house) was once a three storey stocking mill, with a pulley for taking up bales of wool and lowering completed garments. There was also a two storey mill, no longer standing, behind Sunnybank in Leyden's Road.

The owners of these businesses used to sell their wares all over the north of England and south of Scotland, from Newcastle to Glasgow and Edinburgh. The first hosiery manufacturer in Denholm is thought to have been Thomas Colledge. His apprentice, Andrew Scott, set up his own business and we are told that his supplies were never able to meet the demand of his Glasgow market. When he advised his customers there that he intended to call on them they would travel up to 20 miles out of the city to meet him and bid against each other for his goods. He lived in Hazeldean at the East End.

The firm of Dickson and Beattie was set up in 1793. Their scouring house was the cottage where John Leyden was born. But in 1803 the firm moved to Hawick where it was to become Dickson & Laing. From now on the Denholm enterprises were dwarfed by the large Hawick factories. Denholm remained a village and Hawick soon became a large manufacturing town.

Apart from George Hardie, who at one time employed 20 hands, most of the 19th century concerns were very small, many of them one-man businesses. Hosiers and stocking makers recorded in the 1835 Deed of Excambion are James and Andrew Scott, William Barrie, Robert Turnbull, Thomas Scott, George Hardie, Robert Nichol, William Leyden, James Scott, John Turnbull, Robert Scott and George Beattie. Also known from other sources are Thomas Oliver, Robert Forsyth, Thomas Riddell, James Little, who lived in the house where the entrance to the school playground is now, William Little in a cottage where the wall outside Denholm House is now, William Percival Scott in Leyden's Road and William Robson who built Rosebank Cottage and stocking shop.

The Census of 1861 records 32 stocking makers in Denholm. Latterly they were almost entirely dependent on the Hawick manufacturers for work. A cart used to come from Hawick once a week bringing out the yarn and taking back the knitted garments. It stopped at Townhead, at the west end of the village. Eventually even these weekly visits were discontinued and the stocking makers took their work into Hawick each weekend themselves, often walking there and back and

getting their "count," or wages, on the Saturday. The very last of the village hosiers were Willie Cook of Denholm and John Stafford of Hawick, who died in 1909 and 1910.

### The Quarries

The other important industry of the 19th century was the quarrying at Denholmhill, or Quarry Knowes, about a mile south of the village on the lower slopes of Ruberslaw. Local builders, notably the Fergusons and the Littles, had quarried there for some time but only for their own use. ("W. Little, Builder 1866" can still be seen on the side of Elm House and several of the Littles are buried in Cavers old churchyard).

In 1818 Walter Laing, farmer at Denholmhill, opened the quarries as a business. The eastern or White Quarry was opened first. Both it and the ruins of the old quarry cottages can still be seen. Later the Red Quarry was opened, to the west of the farmhouse and steading. Denholmhill stone was used for the Duke of Buccleuch's mansion at Bowhill and this helped to make its reputation. For the next half century it was in great demand. In 1868 in "Denholm and its Vicinity" Sir Walter Elliot writes that "Mr Laing (son of the founder) supplies the whole district with building material of the best description."

At 6.00 a.m. when the hewers arrived for work there might be 60 carts waiting to be loaded, coming from as far away as Galashiels and Selkirk. They used to cross the Teviot at the ford at the bottom of the Canongate in order to get to Hassendean Station which opened in 1849. When the river was high they had to make a long detour by the bridge at Hornshole. This continued until 1864 when the present Teviot road bridge was built to connect with a new road to Hassendean Station.

Denholm stone is sandstone (the local rock is Devonian Old Red Sandstone). It is softer than the very hard whinstone much used in Hawick and the upper Teviot valley and was therefore more easily worked into the blocks needed for lintels and flagstones. Most of the older houses in Denholm are built of it, both red and white (i.e. buff). Also Cavers House which was substantially rebuilt in the late 18th century.

Builders uplifting stone from the quarry were charged 9d per cartload of selected rubble, 6d for rough rubble and 4d if it was to be used on the Cavers Estate. Rubble carted to Denholm would have cost 1/3d per ton. Hewers' wages were 12s per week but later rose to 20s.

As the Laings of Denholmhill were tenants of the Cavers Estate, the laird stood to benefit from the success of the quarries and consequently feuars were offered better feus in Denholm if they would work in the quarries. The Census of 1861 records 55 masons (i.e. quarrymen) but we are also told that as many as 200 men worked at the quarries if a big job was in hand. Many of the workers would be migrant, some of them Irish, and quite a number stayed in lodging houses in the Canongate. Few quarrymen survived beyond middle age due to lung disease caused by the stone dust.

The seam of rock was originally close to the surface but in time it became very deep and hard to work. The quarrying was made even more difficult and expensive by the increasing amount of boulder clay covering the rock. With the rising cost of carriage to the railway at Hassendean the business became less and less profitable. The coming of the railway made other quarries more accessible and the price of Denholmhill stone became uncompetitive. Mr Laing finally closed them in the late 1870's. The Little family worked them for a time about 1880 followed by Robert Oliver of the Post Office and Rule Tait of Rillbank. A small

whinstone quarry on the southern edge of Denholmhill Wood was also worked in the late 19th century.

### Population — Growth and Decline

1821 — 487	1849 — 805	1871 — 659
1831 — 564	1851 — 766	1881 — 592
1841 — 677	1861 — 766	1891 — 475

This shows the rise in the village population after the opening of the quarries in 1818. In July, 1849, it is estimated to have been at its peak of 840. (The official record of 805 was taken in September after the deaths in the cholera epidemic of that summer). Over the next two years it fell but remained steady until 1861. After that it began to dwindle away with the decline of the stocking industry and the quarrying. By 1901 it would be only 349, less than half what it had been in the middle of the 19th century.

### 19th Century Trades and Services

Supplying the needs of the smallholders, quarrymen and stocking makers were the village tradesmen and craftsmen. They are listed as follows in contemporary sources:—

#### The Deed of Exambion 1835

John Ferguson, Innkeeper.	Andrew Kerr, Wright at Minto.
William Smith, Blacksmith.	Walter Elliot, Carter.
William Little (Junior), Mason.	Robert Moodie, Millwright.
James Miller, Wright.	James Turnbull, Tailor.
William Turnbull, Butcher.	Walter Turnbull, Wright.
Alexander Turnbull, Innkeeper.	John Tait, Labourer.
John Turnbull, Joiner.	Alexander Scott, Labourer.
Robert Bulman (Junior), Grocer.	Thomas Oliver, Tailer.
George Shiell, Labourer.	James Haliburton, Shoemaker.
James Rae, Carter.	William Bigg, Weaver.
Thomas Bunyan, Labourer.	Robert Houston, Mugger.
John Houd, Labourer.	William Douglas, Butcher.
William Little (Senior), Mason.	William Mercer, Cooper.

#### Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory 1837

- 1 Baker—Widow Beattie.
- 3 Fleshers—William Douglas, Walter Elliott, Betty Turnbull.
- 5 Shopkeepers—Isabella Brown, Robert Bulman and his son Robert, Widow Ferguson, Isabel Swan.
- 3 Wrights—John Hackford, James Millar, Walter Turnbull.
- 1 Millwright—Robert Mudie.
- 1 Miller—Archibald Oliver.
- 2 Blacksmiths—Thomas Robson, William Smith.
- 1 Saddler—Walter Millar.
- 1 Joiner—John Turnbull.
- 1 Surgeon—John Young.
- 1 Post Mistress—Jane Turnbull.
- 2 Vintners—Andrew Jamieson, Jane Turnbull.
- Carrier to Edinburgh once a fortnight—Robert Bulman.
- Carrier to Hawick and Jedburgh every Wednesday—William Telfor, John Bonar.

**Rutherfords Southern Counties Register of 1866**

- 2 Bakers—William Beattie, John Smith.
- 2 Fleshers—Andrew Beattie, Robert Laidlaw.
- 5 Grocers, etc.—Isabel Brown, James Elliott, J. & G. Hall, John Mack.
- 2 Tailors—William Borthwick, William Oliver.
- 1 Draper—William Hope.
- 3 Shoemakers—Robert Hume, James Jamieson, James Park.
- 4 Joiners—John Davidson, Nicholas Furness, James Miller, John Turnbull.
- 3 Blacksmiths—John Robson, William Robson, George Smail.
- 2 Millwrights—Robert and George Moodie.
- 1 Cooper—William Messer.
- 3 Innkeepers—James Elliott (The Crown), William Leyden (The Fox and Hounds), Alexander Ferguson (The Cross Keys).
- 1 Spirit Dealer—Jane Turnbull.
- 1 Builder—William Little.
- 1 Stone Cutter—John Tait.
- 1 Road Contractor—Andrew Sinton.
- 1 Carter—Thomas Hall.
- 1 Doctor—William Blair.
- 1 Police Officer—John Buglass.

The "Volunteer Arms," now Ruberslea, and the "White Swan," now Leyden's View, brought the number of public houses in the middle of the 19th century to five.

### Some Denholm Families

In 1928, Mark N. Robson, preacher and eighth son of a Denholm blacksmith, wrote a series of articles for the "Hawick News" entitled "Some Denholm Families." In this he looks back to his boyhood in the 1860's and 70's and remembers some of the old village families—Littles, Olivers, Turnbells, Robsons, Scotts and Beatties. These brief family histories with anecdotes and personal portraits give substance and background to the names in the official records and on local tombstones. They can be seen on request at Hawick Public Library.

### Living Conditions

We know that in 1861 there were 98 houses inhabited in the village (317 rooms had glazed windows). At the same date there were 766 inhabitants so we can assume an average of eight persons per household. Most of the smaller cottages would have been very crowded and cramped. Many had only two rooms. Towards the end of the century no less than 50 children between the ages of 5 and 15 lived in the Canongate alone. James Murray and his brothers and sisters used to look forward to the time of year when the roof space of their cottage was cleared of winter fuel and they could play there.

Most of the cottages were thatched. The most primitive were in the Canongate and Kirkstyle, many of them built of undressed stone. Box beds and stone floors were common.

Water had to be fetched from wells, springs and pumps of which there were a number around the village. Amongst those on old maps or mentioned by John Ramsay are: pumps opposite Ruberslea, at the bottom of the Canongate, on the butcher's corner at Eastgate, on Sunnyside, in the Wynd, at Westgate, in Main Street and behind Sunnybank; wells behind the police station on the Jedburgh Road, in the Loaning, halfway down the Canongate and in front of Rubersvale.

The remains of a disused well can still be seen in the garden of the Orchard, on Kirkside. There was a good spring at the bottom of the Canongate, opposite the Mill Wynd, which was still usable when other pumps and wells were frozen.

Even at the end of the century it was still common for women to wash clothes in the Dean Burn, standing barefoot in the water. The washing was spread out to bleach and dry on the West Bleaching Green beside the burn above Denholm Mill. The playground in the Loaning used to be the East Bleaching Green. The walled area between Denholm Hall Farm and the Mill Wynd was used as a public bleaching green in the late 19th century.

There was no public refuse collection. Rubbish was dumped down the steep bank at "Windy Hole" in the Dean Road where the stile is now. The East Burn (or Loaning Burn) ran down the Loaning, past Kirkstyle and the Cameronian Chapel. It continued behind the gardens on the south side of the Canongate which it crossed at Denholm Hall Farm before joining the Teviot near the old ford. It regularly burst its banks and flooded houses and gardens on the way. All sorts of animal and household waste must have seeped into the water on its way down the hill and through the village. Not for nothing was it known as the "Clairty Burn" by the time it reached the Canongate.

### **The Cholera Epidemic**

Not only "dirty" but highly insanitary, the Clairty Burn has been blamed for the cholera outbreak of 1849 and for an epidemic of diphtheria in 1880.

When cholera broke out in the Borders in the late 1840's, the feuars, hoping to prevent it in Denholm, appointed two worthies, Mr William Sinton and Mr Robert Moodie, to inspect drainage and sewerage and report any buildings suspected of being insanitary. But in the conditions of the time there was little that could be done beyond cleaning out some of the wells. A house belonging to Helen and Jane Scott was taken over and £6 14/7d was spent on equipping it as a hospital where any migrants or travellers who might spread the disease would be isolated.

Altogether £23 2/11d was spent in an attempt to stop the disease breaking out in Denholm but to no avail. It reached the village in the summer of 1849 and between 24th July and 18th September there were 59 cases of which 29 were fatal.

The school was closed for several months and those that could left the village or sent their children away to stay with friends or relatives. A doctor and nurses had to be brought from Edinburgh and Jedburgh as the workload was too much for the local practitioner, Dr Young, and no other local doctor dared to help.

Victims were buried at once in extra strong coffins, soaked in pitch as a disinfectant, and buried in a pit in the north west corner of Cavers Churchyard. A horse and cart owned by Robert Bulman served as a hearse and was driven by John Houston. Both men were presented with Bibles in appreciation of their services. Miss Chrissie Bulman, the present owner of Denholm Hall Farm, still has the one that was given to her great grandfather. Infected clothes and bedding were burnt on the West Bleaching Green.

The final cost to the Feuars' Committee and the Cavers Parochial Board was £153 17/4d.

### **Public Waterworks**

The water supply was improved when the public waterworks was finally opened in 1874. The cost was over £700. It drew its supply from the Hawkburn which rises some two miles away on Ruberslaw. It was calculated to allow some 500 gallons a day per inhabitant. But it would be a long time yet before every house

in the village had tap water piped into it and in the meantime most people had to fetch and carry water from the street pumps.

In 1880 there was an outbreak of diphtheria which killed seven children, including James Bulman, aged six, of Denholm Hall Farm. The children were thought to have caught the disease playing in the Clairty Burn. After this it was piped underground most of the way between the Jedburgh road and the Canongate.

## Floods

Throughout the centuries the River Teviot has changed its course many times over the flat meadows between Eastcote and Spittal-on-Rule. It often overflowed its banks and periodically there have been serious floods. The worst of these was "the great flood" of 1795. This was an ice-flood which destroyed the old church and churchyard at Hassendean.

Grisly stories are told of disinterred remains washed downstream and left on the haughs near Denholm. One concerns a Denholm widower whose first wife had been buried in the churchyard at Hassendean. He was on his way to Minto to marry again and as he crossed the Teviot at the old ford the coffin of his first wife is said to have floated past him.

The second story took place earlier this century. A Hawick couple found a human jawbone near the Teviot and thinking it must be the remains of a murder victim, they took it to the police constable in Denholm. He assured them that it probably came from a coffin disinterred by the the great flood. A few evenings later the couple were at the cinema and in the dark the wife took a sweet from her pocket. It was rock hard and she took it out of her mouth to examine once the lights went up. It was a tooth from the jawbone.

In his "Historical Sketch of Denholm" J. A. H. Murray mentions a "cut" or channel which was dug in 1808 to control the river where it flowed past Denholm. The worst flood this century was probably in 1938 when fields were under water to the Minto crossroads.

Until the mid-1980's the east side of the village was affected by periodic flooding of the East Burn after sudden or prolonged heavy rainfall. Eventually, after a particularly bad flood in the summer of 1983, the Denholm Flood Prevention Scheme laid pipes from the fields above the Loaning over the Croft Field and down to the Teviot at the foot of the Canongate.

## Denholm Bridge and the Road to Hawick

The first Denholm Bridge was over the Dean Burn, sometimes called the West Burn. An early humpbacked bridge was superseded in the 18th century by one a little further downstream, built by Hunter. The Hunter Bridge was swept away by a flash flood during a storm in the summer of 1806 but the old humpbacked bridge survived until the 2nd World War when the Army blew it up for explosives practice.

The old road to the west would have gone down the Well Brae from Westgate and over Denholmhaugh (now the field in front of Deanburn House). It crossed the Dean Burn at the original humpbacked bridge and went up the slope on the other side, crossing Honeytown land (now the fields of Honeyburn Farm) before joining the Hawick Road at Ashybank.

## Crossing the Teviot

In the 18th century it was quite common to cross the Teviot on stilts. Most households had at least one pair. The usual crossing point was below Denholm Mill at a spot known as the Lambs' Pool Stream. The ford at the bottom of the

Canongate was obviously not always passable and between 1810 and 1820 two flat bottomed boats (trows) ferried people across the river at this point.

### The Suspension Bridge

In 1826-27 a chain suspension footbridge was erected about halfway between Denholm Mill and the point where the Teviot Bridge was later built. Several paths led down to it from the Green, including one through the garden at Fernbank and another through the pend at Somerville Buildings. The stone towers which supported the bridge can still be seen and it is interesting to note the distance between the river and the tower on the south side indicating how much the river has changed course in the last 150 years.

The chain suspension structure was taken down in 1875 as it was no longer used much after the opening of the Teviot Bridge. It was sold "to a gentleman near Kendal." (Hawick News, 1875). For a long time it was thought to have been re-erected by Kendal Borough Council but there seems to be no evidence for this.

### The Teviot Bridge

Road traffic increased greatly during the 19th century. In 1849 Hassendean Station was opened on the Edinburgh-Carlisle railway line. The suspension footbridge was the only bridge between Ancrum and Hornshole. When the river was too high to cross at the ford, horse-drawn traffic had to make a long detour by Hornshole to get to the Station. To avoid this the Teviot Bridge was opened in 1864, on the initiative of the feuars.

The bridge was built by Marshall and Ballantyne of Hawick with stone quarried and dressed at Denholmhill. "The Cut" was made to give a level approach on the south side. This involved demolishing at least one cottage at the top of the Canongate and digging out the bank behind. The feuars contributed £100 towards the bridge from a mortgage on the Green, paid off with the income from the grazing.

### The Jedburgh Road and Eastgate

After the opening of the Teviot Bridge in 1864, the "old ford road" and the Canongate were no longer used as an entrance to the village from the north. Over the centuries the present road to Jedburgh had already grown in importance until it was the main road to the east. The turnpike road between Hawick and Kelso followed this route out of Denholm. We do not know how far back the local people began to call it the "East Gate." Eastgate House gives little clue as it was not built until the second half of the 19th century. Sometime before the middle of the century an avenue of trees was planted along the road to Spittal-on-Rule by John W. Turnbull's grandfather, then head forester on the Cavers Estate. Many of them are still there today.

### Other Roads and Paths

Denholm Townhead was the area around the crossroads by Westgate Hall while Townfoot was at the opposite side of the village at the top of the Canongate.

The old Mercat Road along the south side of the Green was still known in 1850 as the Market Road or the Kelso Turnpike but gradually became known as **Main Street** until it was officially given that name in the 20th century. A cobbled causeway with a pronounced dome used to run along the front of the houses here.

The road parallel to it behind the houses (now **Douglas Drive**) was called the Cow Drove Road in the 18th century. By the end of the 19th century it had become

known as the Old Back Road. It was really just a rough path and right of way between Broomieknowe in the Dean Road and Burnside in the Loaning. The **Dean Road** was known for a long time as the Quarry Road. A cart road ran from the west end of the Wynd to the Minto Road. Part of it can still be seen on the south side of Riverside Drive.

The **Loaning** was originally the broad path or strip of grass between the common arable land to the east of the village and the grazing land to the south. The cattle would have been driven up it to the common pasture. Loans or loanings were often used too as a common milking place so that the cows need not be brought right down to the village twice a day. The Loaning in Denholm was also the approach to the old road over to Spital Tower and the Dykes. At the end of the 19th century it was given a good stone bottoming to accommodate the carts going to and from the whinstone quarry on the edge of Denholmhill Wood.

The approach to the old Cameronian Chapel by the Small Green used to be known as Kirkstyle. In 1863 it was widened at the request of the laird to allow a carriage to drive right up to the Chapel. **Kirkside** is its modern name. This part of the village was popularly known as the "Hole o' The Burn." The East Burn was contained here by built up banks with a flagstone over it at one point. But it often burst these banks and the hollow here was usually damp and muddy.

The **Wynd** led from the west side of the Green to the Back Braes, the steep bank behind Denholm Mill. There were paths from the Hawick Road along the Back Braes and the river bank to the Teviot Bridge. The **Mill Wynd** ran from the Canongate to the Teviot Bridge and would have taken its name from the old corn mill which, according to J. A. H. Murray, used to stand where the Teviot Bridge is today. It was replaced in the early 19th century by a new mill several hundred yards upstream (now part of the steadings of Denholm Mill Farm). There was a footpath from the top of the Mill Wynd along Bulman's Scaur (the steep river bank) to the old ford.

The **Well Brae** was the steep path from Townhead down to Deanburn House. The **Manse Brae**, the present approach to the village on the Hawick Road, took its name from the Free Church Manse, now known as Beechlands. The present **Minto Road** was known for a time as Station Road.

A few hundred yards out on the Jedburgh Road the "**Gang**" led up to the strips of arable land furthest away from the village. It is now the approach to the bungalow at Garthside. The **Bedrule Road** was called the Walkers' Road because people used to get down from carts and horse drawn vehicles to make the pull up the steep hill easier. **Drythropple** was an old road which led from the track past the farm at Teviot Haugh to Deanfoot.



THE VILLAGE  
IN 1858



OS 1.2500  
ROXBURGHSHIRE SHEET  
1861 (SURVEY 1858) XX 10

## IV CHURCH AND SCHOOL

### THE CHURCH

#### **The Early Church**

There is no record of a church in Denholm before the 17th century and it is thought that the villagers must have worshipped at Cavers. It is just possible that there was an early chapel at Little Cavers as "Maurice Lovell, parsonne of Little Cavers" is recorded in the Ragman Rolls of 1296.

All church lands and possessions on the Cavers Estate had been granted to the monks of Melrose about 1358 by William, Earl of Douglas. The "Dominical" (church) lands of Denholm referred to in the charters during the time of the Cranstouns were probably at Honeytown by the Stoneyburn, both known today as Honeyburn. The house at Honeyburn still has a cross on the north west gable. A possible explanation for the naming of the Canongate is that the monks used to come that way into Denholm on their way to church properties on Cavers land. They are said to have had an apiary at Honeyburn where they came to collect their honey.

#### **The Covenanters**

In 1658, as we have seen, Denholm was reunited to the Cavers Estate by Sir Archibald Douglas. The new laird and his family were fervent Covenanters, bitterly opposed to the bishops and Anglican forms of worship which Charles 1st had tried to force upon the Presbyterian Church of Scotland.

In 1662 the Douglasses refused to admit a curate sent by the official church and representatives from Jedburgh were stoned by the women of Cavers. After this the Covenanters in this area were persecuted by the law and had to resort to secret conventicles and prayer meetings in hidden places such as Peden's Pulpit on Ruberslaw and Peden's Vale in Denholm Dean (just below the ruined cottage).

In 1690 the Presbyterians were finally recognised as the Established Church in Scotland but the strictest Covenanters would not join it. A group of them known as the Cameronians formed their own congregation in Denholm under the patronage of the Douglas family.

#### **The Cameronian Chapel**

We do not know what building they used until about 1740 when the old Cameronian Chapel was built with the preacher's house adjoining. The site, behind Poplar Nook on the Small Green, was given by the laird. The Chapel had seating for 230 people and had three pulpits, the lowest one for the precentor. Seats and pulpits were later covered in red plush and the high pulpit ran the full length of the building.

The Douglas family continued to reject the Established Church in their home village of Cavers and worshipped with the Cameronian "Dissenters" or "Independents" all through the 18th and 19th centuries. They would walk to Denholm and back every Sunday as it was held to be wrong to ride a horse on the Lord's Day. Their route through the Dean became known as the "Kirk Walk." Presumably any Denholm villagers who belonged to the Established Church would take the same path to and from worship in Cavers—but in the opposite direction.

By the end of the 19th century the Cameronian or Independent Chapel was also called the Meeting House or the Mission Hall, Services were held only every

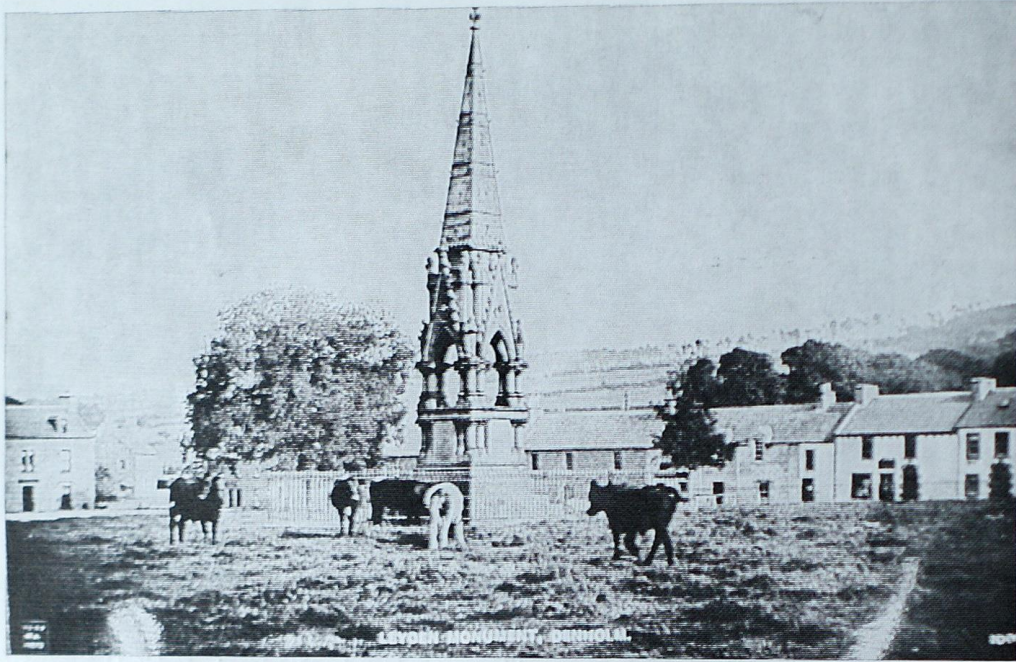


1. Westgate Hall, centre of the Anglo-Saxon settlement. Rebuilt in 1663 by Sir Archibald Douglas.

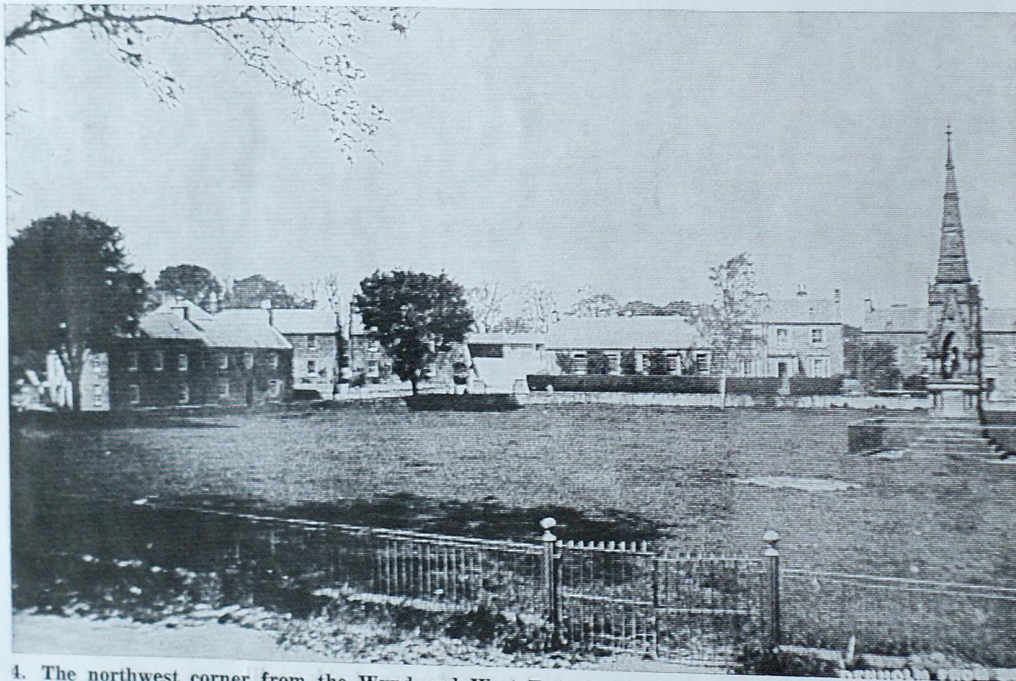


2. The Old Mill at West End — former stocking mill.

## DENHOLM GREEN IN THE EARLY 1900's



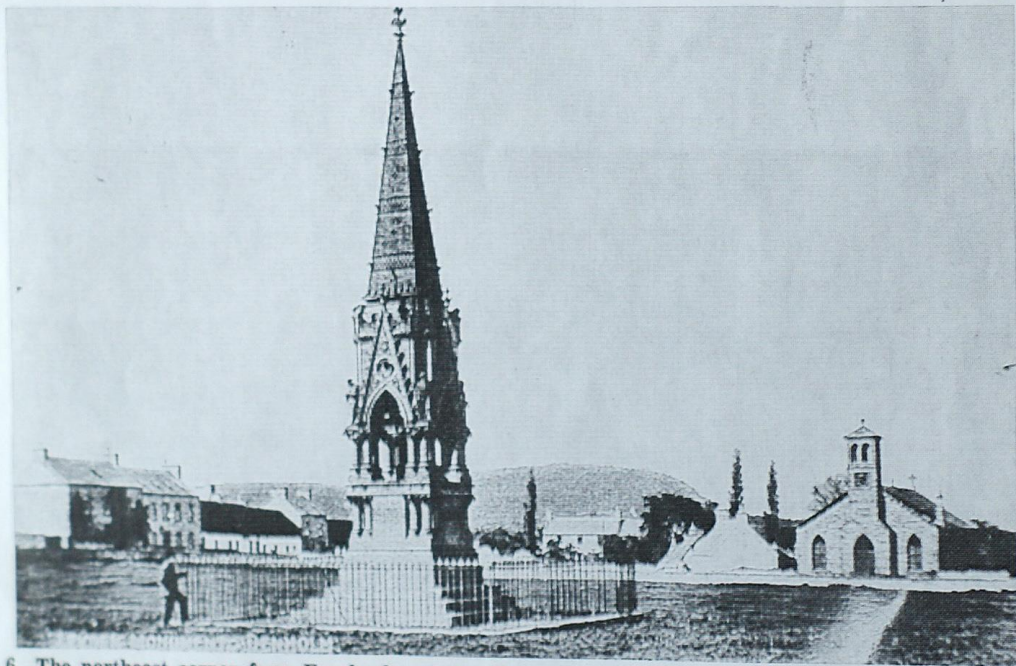
3. The southeast corner from Elm House at East End to Birkview and Mintlaw in Main Street. Cattle can be seen grazing round the Leyden Monument.



4. The northwest corner from the Wynd and West End to Sunnyside and Somerville Buildings. The railings along Main Street were requisitioned during the Second World War.

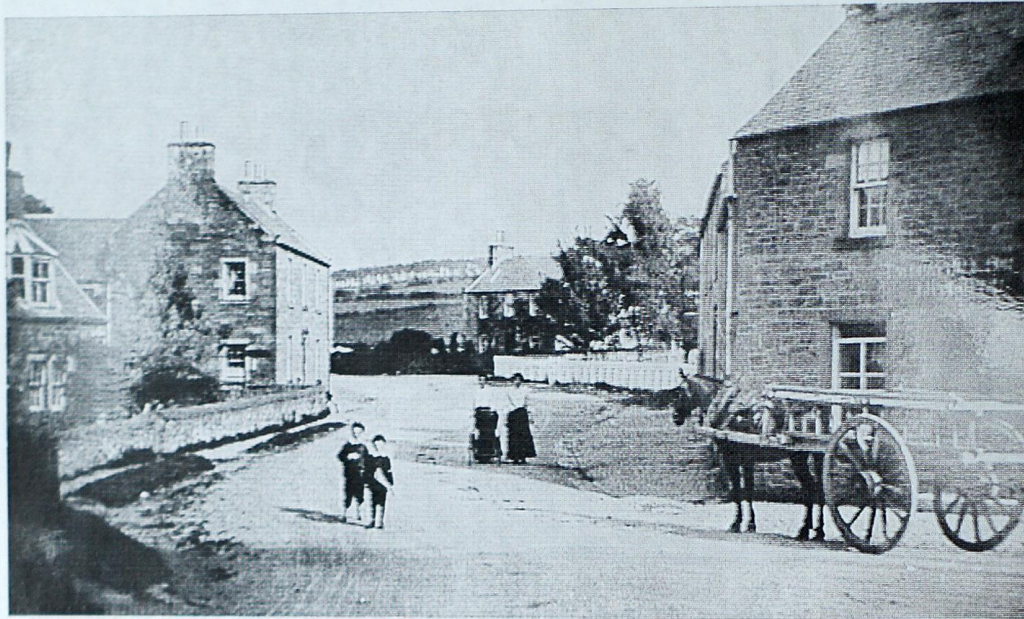


5. The southwest corner from the Cross Keys Inn to Rae Cottage on Westside. The Text House can be seen to the left of the Leyden Monument. The shop next to it was once the Crown Inn, birthplace of Sir James Murray. The walls round the Green were taken down in the 1950's and 60's to save continual repairs.



6. The northeast corner from Fernbank and the Manse to the Church. Dr John Leyden was born in the white cottage to the left of the Monument. Next to the Church is Seaton Cottage on the corner of Kirkside and in the background is the Poplars, overlooking the Small Green.

## VILLAGE ROADS EARLIER THIS CENTURY



7. Butchers' Corner at East End with Eastgate House in the background, centre.



8. Main Street, looking from Scott's Buildings and the Fox & Hounds Inn to Lindsay's Corner at the Townhead.



9. Leyden's Road from Fernbank and the Manse to Rockview on the corner of Minto Road. The thatched cottage on the right has been replaced by Oliver's Garage.



10. The Canongate which led to the old ford, the original approach to the village from the north and east. This part of the village was the Townfoot.

## FORMER SCHOOLS



11. The Auld Schule on the Green, 1802-58.



12. Children on the wall of the Auld Schule with the remains of the Mercat Cross in the foreground.



13. The School on Sunnyside, 1858-1965.



## FOUR DENHOLM SCHOLARS



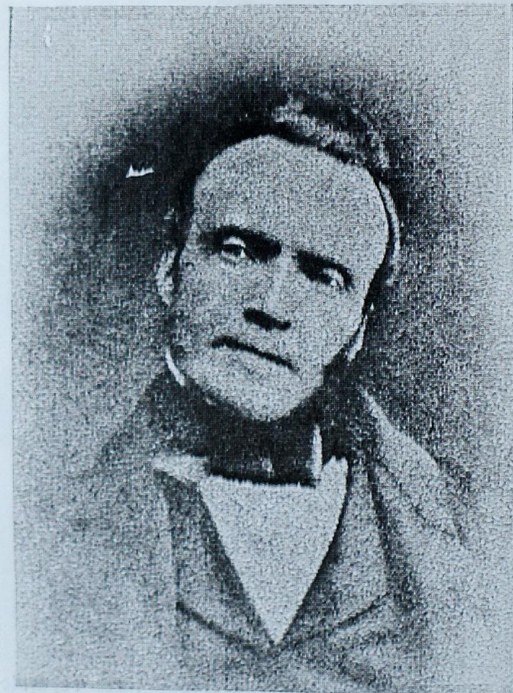
14. Dr John Leyden, 1775-1811, poet and linguist.



15. Sir James A. H. Murray, 1837-1915,  
lexicographer.



16. James Scott, 1836-60, horticulturalist.



17. Rev. James Duncan, 1804-61, entomologist.



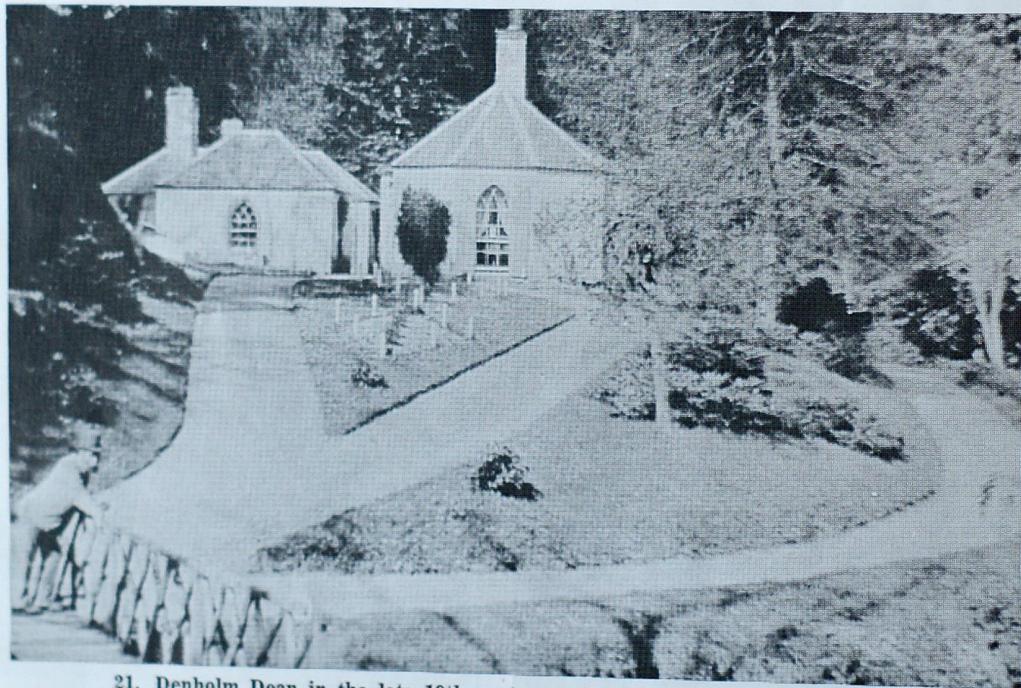
18. The Cameronian Chapel with the preacher's house on the right (now Elmbank).



19. Leyden's Cottage, originally three separate cottages. Next door on the right is Sunnybank.



20. The Edinburgh Border Counties Association takes over Leyden's Cottage and unveils a plaque, 1896.



21. Denholm Dean in the late 19th century — the tearoom and woodland garden.

## FOUR DENHOLMITES



22. Thomas Barrie, librarian, died 1913.



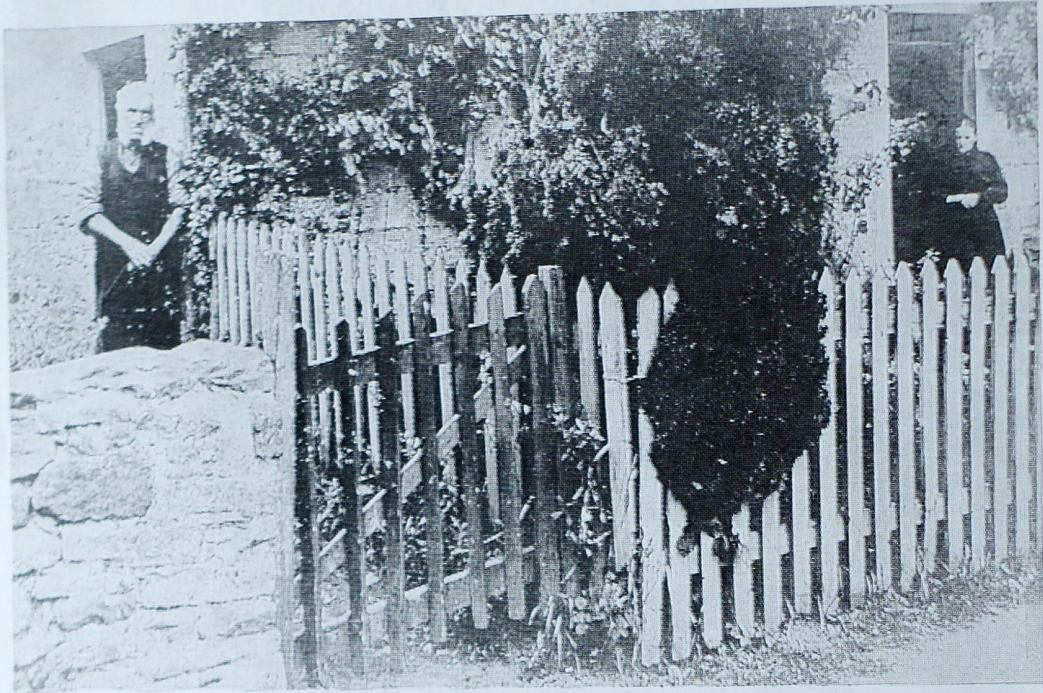
23. Thought to be Willie Cook, stockingmaker, died 1909.



24. Mr Ferguson, stonemason.



25. A local gardener.



26. Mr Hume, shoemaker, outside the Poplars.



27. Tea with Miss Agnes Miller behind the old Post Office in Main Street (now Greenside).

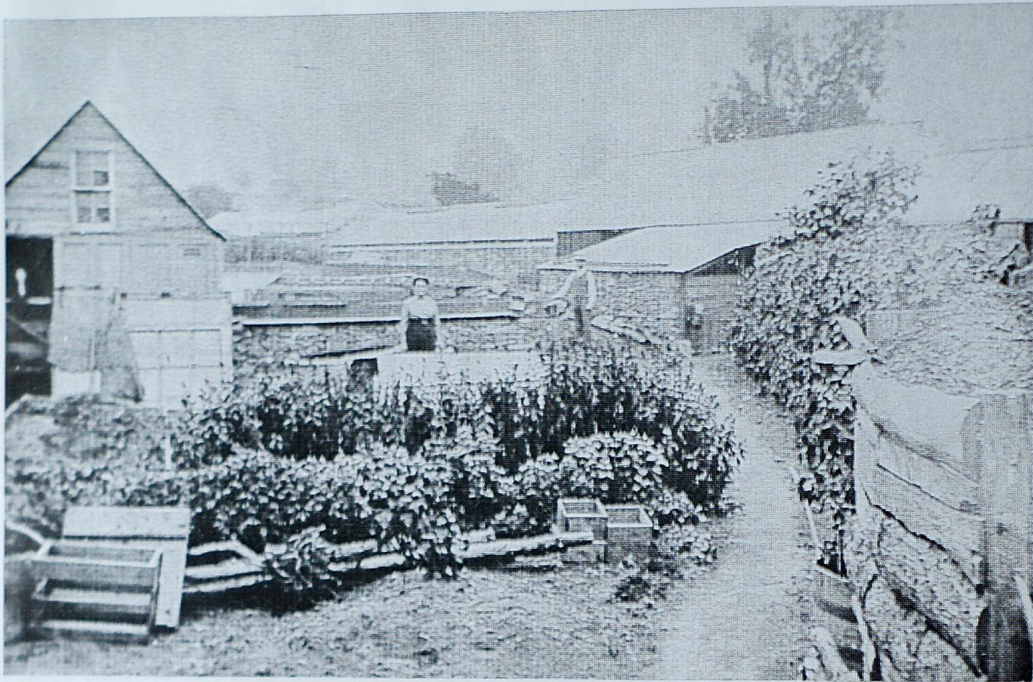
## SOME DENHOLM TRADESMEN



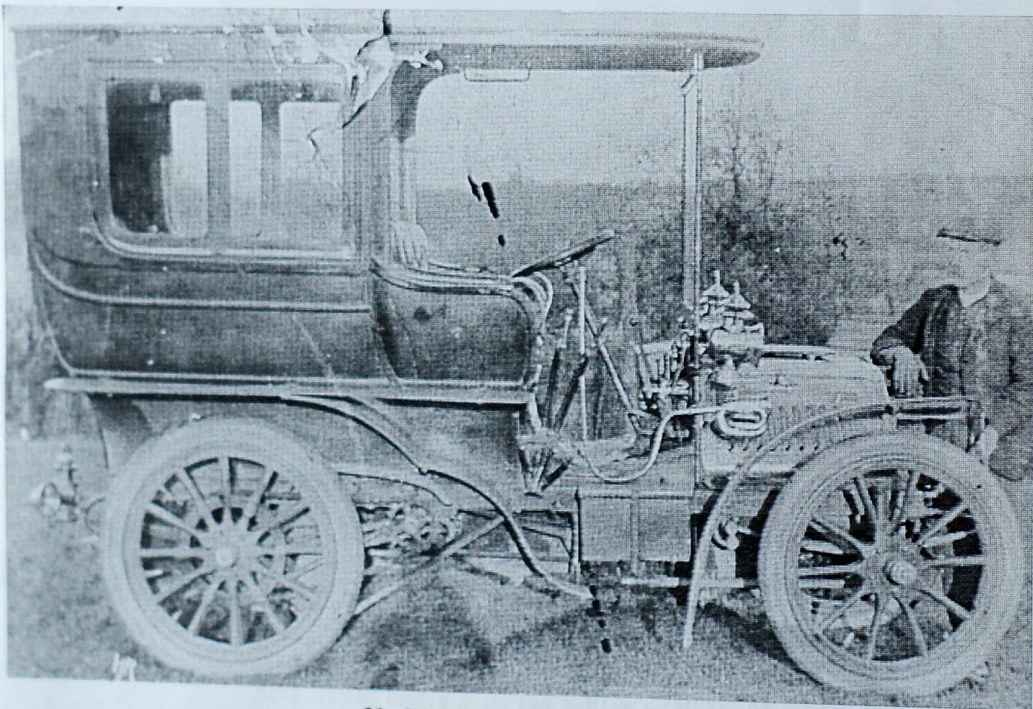
28. Furness's coachwork and joiner's business at the bottom of the Loaning.



29. The "model dairy" in Westgate.



30. William Murray's market garden at the foot of the Canongate.



31. Mr Milligan and his taxi.



32. Choir outing setting off from the United Free Church in the early 1900's.

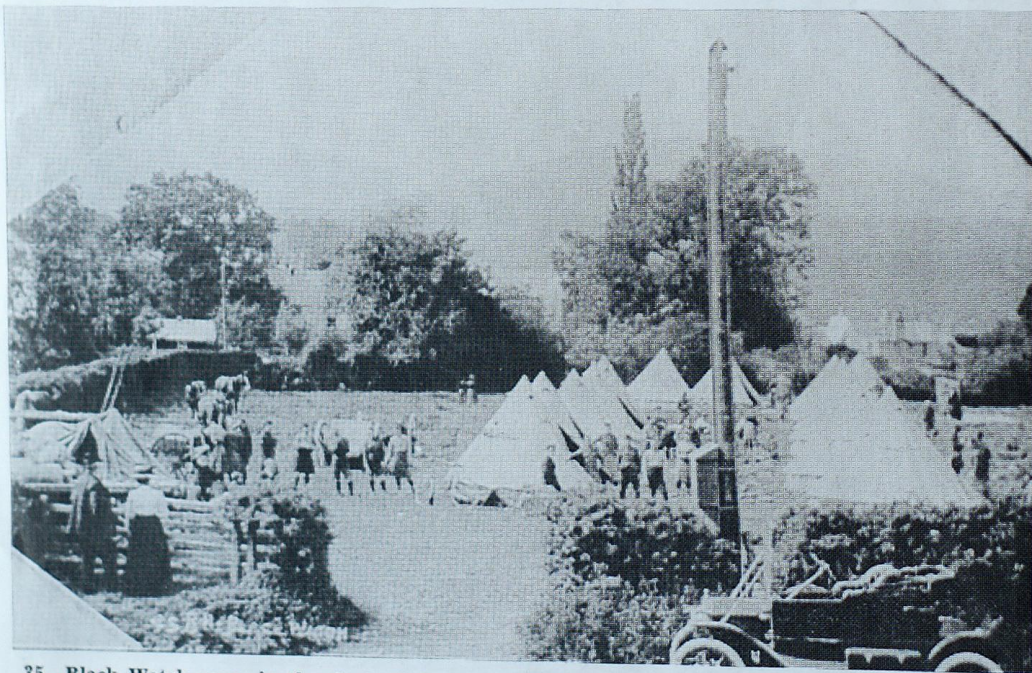


33. Children setting out on a school picnic, 1912.





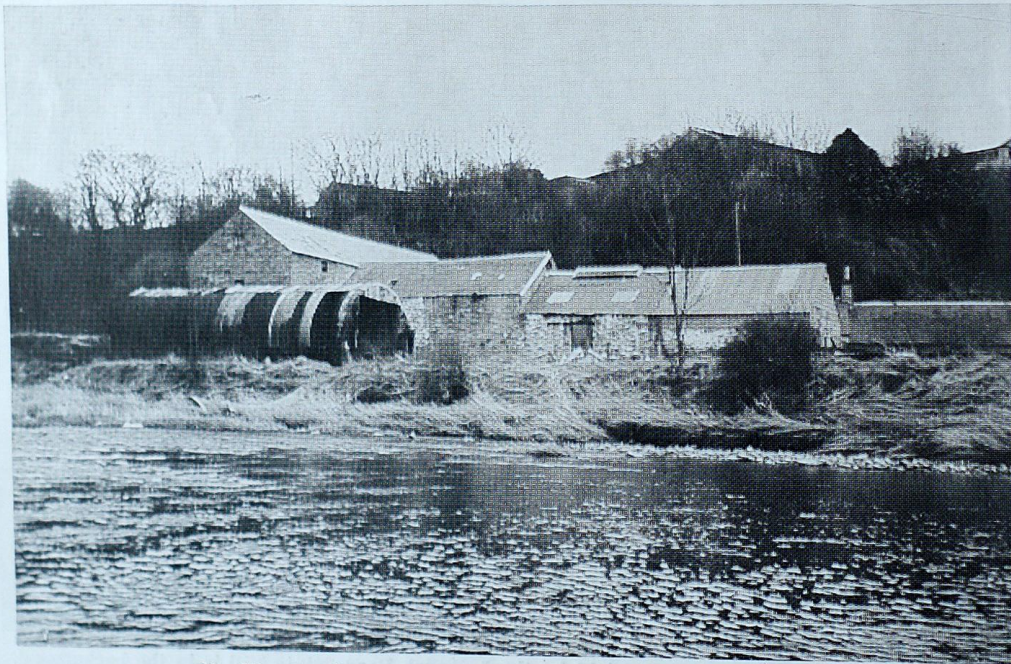
34. Opening of Denholm Golf Course, 1907.



35. Black Watch camp in the Croft Field by the Jedburgh Road. Minto Hill is in the background.



36. The Teviot Bridge (1864) with the Quoiting Haugh and one of the stone towers of the former suspension bridge (1826-75).



37. The steadings of Denholm Mill Farm — once a corn mill.

second Sunday and on summer evenings. It closed some time in the 1920's and was used for a while as a smithy. It was finally demolished after the 2nd World War but the preacher's house is still standing and is known as Elmbank.

### **The Woodside Library**

The Woodside Library was opened by Mr James Douglas in 1825 for the use of the young people attending Denholm Sabbath School at the Cameronian Chapel. Presumably it was in Woodside Cottage on the Denholmhill Road. In 1839 there were 1000 volumes to which anyone could have access without any charge (*New Statistical Account of Scotland* vol. 3). The books were also lent out to other communities in batches of fifty for a year at a time.

### **Chapel Preachers**

One of the first preachers at the Cameronian Chapel was John Arnott who died in 1774. The Rev. James Duncan was minister for over 50 years until his death in 1830 aged 75. It was he who tutored the young John Leyden in classics. His son, also James Duncan (1804-61), was a well known naturalist who specialised in entomology and corresponded with Charles Darwin. He also contributed to the *Encyclopedia Britannica*. He is said to have persuaded Mr James Douglas to tidy and enclose the Green in 1836 and was a great influence on the young James Murray (the future lexicographer) in the 1840's and 50's. The gravestones of Mr John Arnott and both Mr Duncans can still be seen in Cavers old churchyard.

After the death of the Rev. James Duncan in 1830 the congregation ceased to worship as a distinct body for a while. Services were taken for several years by a remarkable character, Francis Dick of Broughty Ferry, a travelling missionary who was invited to Denholm by Mr Douglas. For 31 years from 1846 until his death in 1876 the preacher was the Rev. J. McRobert.

The last preacher was William Ramsay who served from 1880 until after the First World War when the Chapel closed. He died in 1931 aged 81. He was paid £1 a month by the Douglas family, his patrons, and had the use of the manse next to the chapel. The rest of his living he earned as a colporteur (travelling salesman) for the Religious Tract Society for whom he worked for 38 years. He travelled the countryside on foot, selling religious books and periodicals. He was also the attendance officer or "whipper in" for the Parish School Board.

### **The Free Church**

The present church in Denholm was built as a Free Church in 1844 at the time of the Disruption. This had taken place the previous year when two fifths of the Scottish clergy broke away from the Established Church. They were no longer prepared to tolerate private patronage and interference from civil authorities in church matters.

The people of Denholm built their new church with money they raised themselves. The site was made available by the laird. Presumably he was pleased to support the new Free Church because it defied the Established Church which his family had long opposed. Some of the stones were collected by the village women from the river and rough undressed stonework can be seen in a section of the north wall near the entrance to the Pitt Memorial Hall. The Hall was built in 1892 in memory of the Rev. Thomas Pitt who died in service as a minister.

Two of the longest serving ministers were the Rev. James McClymont who held office for 40 years from 1847 to 1886 and the Rev. John Smith who was mini-

ster for 36 years from 1892 until his death in 1928. The original manse was at Townhead at the top of what came to be known as the Manse Brae. The house is now called Beechlands.

The United Free Church (as it became in 1900) was known locally as the Kirk. Chapel and Kirk appear to have coexisted well until the Chapel finally closed in the 1920's. On alternate Sundays the Independent congregation could worship at the Kirk and their preacher, William Ramsay, also served as an elder and seat rent officer for the Kirk.

The United Free Church in Denholm rejoined the Established Church, now the Church of Scotland, in 1929 under the Presbytery of Jedburgh. But some who had been in the habit of travelling to Cavers or Minto continued to do so throughout the 1930's. In 1963 it was linked with the parish of Bedrule and in 1975 with Minto.

### **The House of the Brethren**

At the end of the 19th century there was also a House of the Brethren in Denholm. This was the cottage which is now the west half of the Neuk in Eastgate. Mill workers used to come from Hawick and Jedburgh to worship there.

## **THE SCHOOL**

### **The Parish School at Cavers**

Until the late 17th century the parish school was at Cavers Village, also known as Cavers Townhead or Muckle Cavers. As Denholm grew and Cavers declined the school was moved to Little Cavers about halfway between the two villages. For three successive generations the family of Olivers were schoolmasters at Cavers. The parish schools were under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery and the local Kirk Session. Regular inspections would be made by representatives of the Church to make sure sufficient religious knowledge was being taught.

Hours were very long, sometimes from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. or dusk, and not until the mid 19th century did they begin to close on Saturdays. Children often had to walk considerable distances to get there. The three miles between Denholm and Cavers would not have been untypical. If the weather was wet they had no means of getting dry for the rest of the day and absences were common in bad weather. In the summer most of the children went barefoot.

### **The Auld Schule on the Green**

In 1802, to the great joy of the people in Denholm, the parish school was moved into the village. The "Auld Schule" was built on the Green where the monument is today. Here it remained for 56 years.

In 1839 the salary of the schoolmaster in Denholm is recorded as £30 per annum and the total fees paid as £25 (New Statistical Account of Scotland vol. 3) Fees were payable by the quarter of thirteen weeks and were;

2s for English,

2s 6d for English and Writing,

3s for English, Writing and Arithmetic,

5s for advanced subjects (Grammar, Geography, Book-keeping, Algebra etc.).

In 1858, the year that the Auld Schule was demolished, an article entitled "The

School and its Teacher" appeared in a periodical called the "Bouquet." It was written by Alexander Murray, younger brother of J. A. H., later Sir James Murray, the lexicographer.

He describes the school as a rectangular building with a blue door that grated on rickety hinges and large windows with white shutters. Ivy and honeysuckle climbed up the gable end around the windows. In front of the building was the school playground. Despite the large windows the schoolroom seemed "designed for undermining the constitutions of the young who spent the principal portion of the day within it. The roof was low even for a dwelling house and the ventilation most inefficient." The "Dominey" sat in front "inhaling the united breaths of the whole."

The school took children from infancy until they were big enough "to bear a part in the toil and broil of life." The younger children who were still learning the ABC from a primer were drilled individually by the teacher. The older ones were divided into classes, sometimes taught by the teacher and sometimes learning by themselves.

On first entering the schoolroom a visitor would be struck by the noise and seeming confusion. "The noise is indeed not very pleasant. The wonder is that business can be contracted properly in the midst of so much din." But the writer goes on to say that the pupils were in fact industrious and well disciplined. The constant noise came from several different classes learning aloud at the same time. One might be reciting the ABC and another chanting a metrical psalm while the arithmetic class did calculations out loud and the geography class lunged at a map with wooden pointers.

Even to Alexander Murray these teaching methods seemed old fashioned. But he goes on to say that the "village school puts out better writers, better arithmeticians and better geographers than many which seem to be conducted on a better principle." This he attributes to the excellence of the teacher who "had a decided knack of instilling knowledge, and all who were willing to learn made rapid progress under his tuition."

### The Maister

This teacher, "a prodigy of a man," was George Scott, usually known as the "Maister." Six foot tall and nick-named "lang-legs," he lived over the school. He was "a real specimen of the old school of parish teachers" and also held the offices of Poor Inspector and Session Clerk.

As a man he was "generally respected." He had "a good natured laugh" and "no pretensions to be more refined in manners and language than those among whom he moved." Murray praises the Maister's "plain and simple dress" and his use of the local dialect, the "Border Doric." This he much preferred to the "stiff starched collars and desperate attempts at English" of "the teachers of nowadays."

He approves of Scott's own plainness of speech and manner but criticises the "bad mode of reading and pronouncing possessed by all his scholars. The fluent English was badly faltered and strangely vernacularised when it passed through his voice into their ears." He also regrets that Scott "took no pains to teach his pupils civility or politeness, either to himself or to any other person. This was perhaps his greatest drawback, and its effect on the juvenile portion of the village population was but too apparent."

Alexander Murray was all of 18 years of age when he wrote this!

### The School on Sunnyside

In 1858 a fine new school was built on Sunnyside with a schoolhouse adjoining.

The school building is now the Village Hall. In 1866 the average attendance was recorded as 145.

The Education Act of 1872 made schooling compulsory from five to thirteen and set up a rating system to pay for schools under local boards. Thus attendance at the village school became free and the governing body was no longer the Kirk Session at Cavers but a separate school board. The school attendance officer or "whipper in" was appointed to enforce regular attendance. For many years this was William Ramsay, the preacher and colporteur.

By the end of the century the school roll had dropped to about 100 as the population of the village had fallen. But by that time there was a headmaster, two teachers and two assistant teachers. The assistant teachers were apprentices who still had to go to training college. There were three classes, Senior, Junior and Infants.

There were three doors and a large high ceilinged room, partitioned into three. Despite two fireplaces and a large iron stove, it was very cold in the winter. The tawse was often used. The school had its own garden at the top of the playground and each boy had his own plot. At that time girls were given cookery lessons by Mrs Kerr, a housewife, in her home near the school but later, in the 20th century a cookery room was built on behind the main schoolroom. This was later used as the County Library and is now the Small Hall.

From the 1930's to the 1950's, under headmaster Donald McLeod, two acres of ground behind the school was laid out as a garden where pupils learned practical horticulture and agriculture. There were also hen runs and hen houses.

### **The Present School**

The present school was built on this land and opened in 1965 to include a Junior Secondary with over 200 pupils. Since 1971 it has been the Denholm Primary School. The building on Sunnyside was used as the school canteen until 1983 when it was adapted to become the present Village Hall.

### **Sir James Murray**

The school's most distinguished former pupil in the 19th century was James A. H. Murray. He was born in 1837 in one of the two rooms rented by his parents in the Crown Inn (now 3 Main Street where a plaque commemorates his birth). His mother, a Hawick girl, had been a servant at Deanburn Cottage on Denholmhaugh, then the home of the Independent minister. His father was a tailor, but though he worked hard, money was always scarce and he encouraged his sons to study and better themselves. James would have needed little telling as he seems to have been born with an insatiable thirst for knowledge and a prodigious memory.

There is a good account of his schooldays in the biography written by his granddaughter K. M. Elisabeth Murray, "Caught in Web of Words."

He first went to school at the age of seven, not to the Parish School on the Green but to a private one held in the old church at Cavers. It was run by a Mrs Jane Telfer, the widow of a Denholm baker, with the help of her daughters and neice. For two years he had to walk the three miles to Cavers and back but his parents must have thought it a better school for an infant than the one in Denholm. The widow and her daughters would certainly have been more genteel than the Maister, George Scott.

In 1845, when he was nine, he moved to the Auld Schule on the Green. Scott quickly recognised in James a pupil of exceptional ability and gave him a seat next to his own where he could pay him special attention and push him on to more

## CHURCH AND SCHOOL

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advanced work as soon as he was ready. Seeing the boy's keen interest in language he taught him Latin although no other pupil was studying it at the time. He was also given a good grounding in mathematics including algebra.

Out of school hours he found out all he could about the natural world, geology, botany, geography and astronomy. He was encouraged in the study of botany by James Duncan, the naturalist and well known entomologist, the son of the minister who had tutored Leyden. They went on nature rambles together in the countryside around Denholm, bringing back specimens of rocks and plants. Murray later recalled that no other boy in the village then took any interest in botany; "indeed, then, my pursuit of it was rather a matter of ridicule."

When he was twelve he and his two younger brothers transferred to the Parish School at Minto,  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles away. The methods here were more modern than Scott's at Denholm. James had a certain amount to re-learn, especially in the field of pronunciation, both of English and Latin. He was thus introduced to phonetics, an essential subject for a future lexicographer!

Clever as he was, he had to leave school at fourteen. His family could not afford to send him to the Grammar School at Melrose. He always hoped to go to University but had to help out at home and earn what he could doing odd jobs for local farmers. He continued to educate himself as best he could although books were difficult to come by. He borrowed what books he could from George Scott and James Duncan and he studied "Cassell's Popular Educator," a cheap serial brought out in 1852.

He would have liked to teach but the Murrays belonged to the Independent Chapel and most teaching posts were in the parish schools and were filled by members of the Established Church of Scotland. Finally in 1854, at the age of seventeen he got a job as an assistant schoolmaster in Hawick. He proved such an excellent teacher that after three years he was offered the headmastership of a new private school in Hawick, a post he held until 1864.

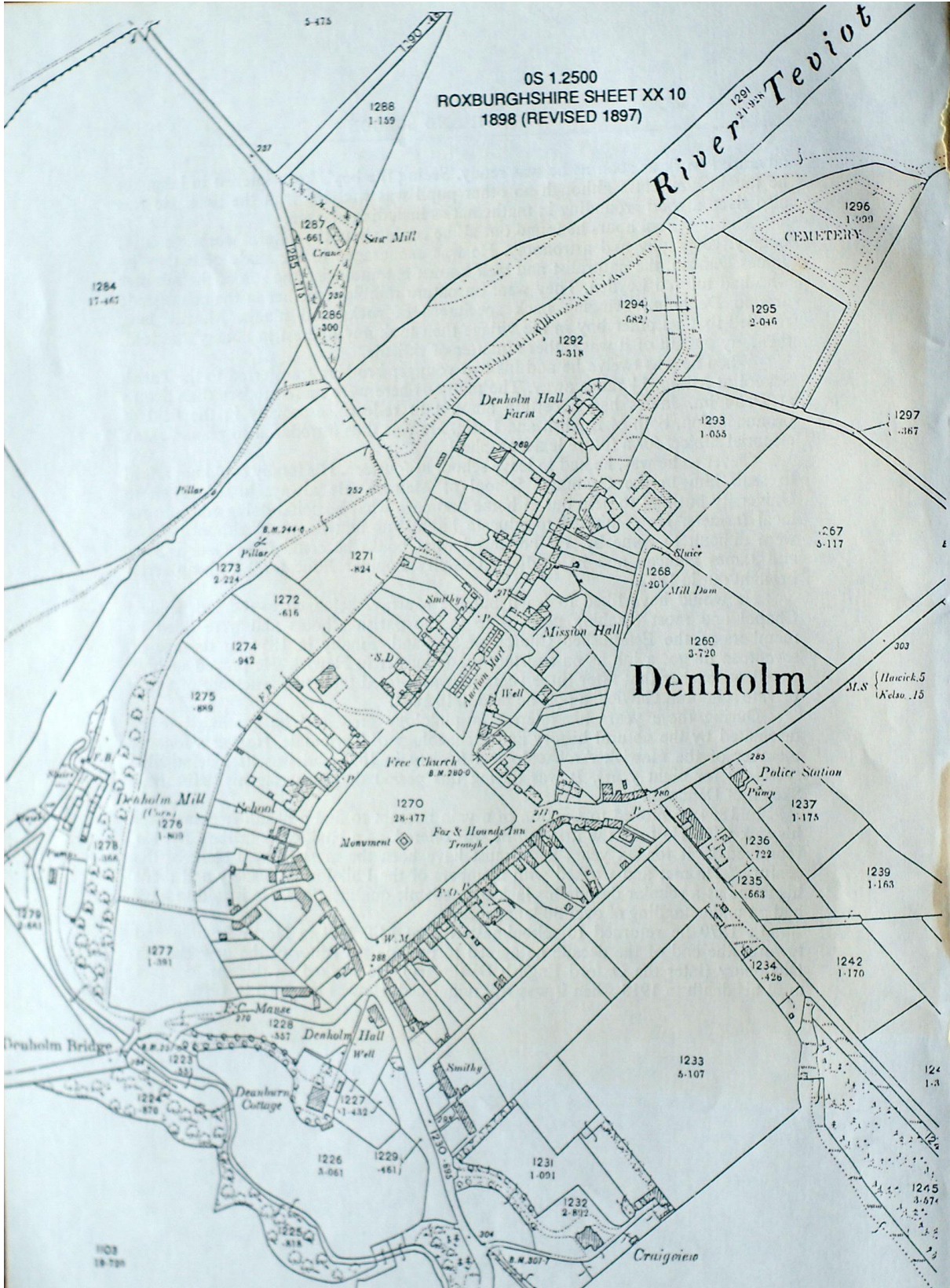
During these years his interest in philology grew and he continued to be fascinated by the natural history and archaeology of Teviotdale. He was a founder member of the Hawick Archaeological Society in 1856 and was its indefatigable secretary for eight years. It was during this period that he wrote his "Historical Sketch of Denholm."

In 1864 he moved to London in a vain attempt to find a healthier climate for his sick wife. He took the first job he was offered, as a bank clerk in the City. He remained in it for six years and "must have been the most learned clerk of the century." He met and worked with members of the Philological Society and made his name as a scholar despite his lack of academic qualifications. He is said to have had an understanding of over 30 languages.

In 1870 he returned to schoolmastering at Mill Hill in North London and towards the end of the decade he agreed to become the editor of the new English Dictionary (later the Oxford English Dictionary). He worked on this for 35 years until his death in 1915 when it was still unfinished. He was knighted in 1908.

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ROXBURGHSHIRE SHEET XX 10  
1898 (REVISED 1897)

River Teviot



Denholm

M.S. (Hawick) 5  
(Kelso) 15

1103  
18-790

1245  
3-574



## V THE LATE 19th CENTURY REMEMBERED

A good first hand account of village life at this time is given by John Ramsay in his article written in 1951 "The story of my boyhood days in Denholm over 50 years ago." Ramsay, born in 1885, was the son of the last preacher at the Cameronian Chapel and was brought up in the house next to it, known at that time as the Old Manse, now called Elm Bank.

By the 1890's there were few stocking makers left, the quarrying had dwindled away and the community was once again mainly agricultural, made up of smallholders, rural craftsmen and the village tradesmen and shopkeepers.

### Smallholders

Ramsay mentions several "farmers." Most of them were no more than smallholders, in the tradition of the 18th century feuars. They worked their garden ground, the Crofts given in 1862, the haughs by the Teviot and the common land to the east and south. They kept pigs, poultry, cattle and horses.

He names Farmer Armstrong who had a steading near the bottom of the Loaning and a "milk house" (dairy) in Eastgate where his family sold milk, butter and eggs. His customers were also supplied with manure for their gardens and every autumn he gathered up all the fallen leaves from the elm trees in Main Street to use as bedding for his pigs.

The Tait family who lived in Rillbank and other cottages at the bottom of the Canongate had smallholdings and also ran a quarrying and contractor's business. Ruberslea, in Eastgate, was a "farmhouse" at that time with a stable and a large hayshed attached. So too was Thornbank in the Wynd which had a byre and was worked by the Barrie brothers. Several households in the village kept and hired out horses.

### The Farms

Denholm Hall Farmhouse was built by Robert Bulman about 1837 and the map of the village in 1858 indicates that it was known for a time as "New Westgate Hall." It replaced the old farmhouse of Denholm Townfoot which stood next to the Mill Wynd. The steadings, including the farm mill (a horse mill in Ramsay's time) were on the other side of the Canongate. As the number of smallholders dwindled, Denholm Hall Farm gradually took in some of the old common land until it became a sizeable farm with fields by the river, on both sides of the Jedburgh Road and up behind the village on the slopes of Denholmhill.

In Ramsay's day Denholm Mill was still a corn mill but in time it too acquired fields from the common land and became a farm, using the old mill buildings as steadings. The Olivers, Archibald, Bill and finally James, were tenants of the mill for quite some time.

### The Sale Ring on the Small Green

From about 1890 Robert Milligan, Auctioneer, ran a sale ring on the Small Green with a livestock market every alternate Wednesday, a relic of the 18th century marts. An extra large sale was held at Christmas and Ramsay recalls the whole green covered with extra pens. Messrs Scott and Rutherford continued to sell cattle and sheep there until 1908 when the ring and pens were moved to the Loaning (where Ruberslaw Road is today).

## Trades and Craftsmen

There were two blacksmiths, John Robson employing two or three men at Broomieknowe in the Dean Road and Joseph Laing at Rockview on the corner by Minto Road. The saddler and harness maker, James Scott, had two men and an apprentice in his workshop at Townhead. The present Manse in Leyden's Road was an engineering shop (Davidson). A master builder lived in Hazeldean at the East End (one of the old Denholm family of builders, the Littles). He often worked in Hawick or Jedburgh and walked there and back.

There was one slater and plumber but two thatchers (Rob Wood and George Scott). Most of the houses were still thatched but few would have had much plumbing! There were three joiners' businesses — John Miller's, Scott Elliot's and the largest owned by Nicholas Furness. He lived in Eastgate House and employed several men and apprentices in the workshop behind. A wood merchant who lived in Sunnyside worked the sawmill on the road to Minto (where Oliver Brothers' yard is today). There were two molecatchers and a hedger.

*James Scott  
Tailor 1904*

## Shopkeepers

Amongst the shopkeepers, only one baker is mentioned (Carruthers, successor to Wullie Beattie on Lindsay's corner) but numerous other shops and households sold pies, homemade scones, sweets and lemonade. There were two butchers on "butchers' corner" at Eastgate — Johnston in what became Douglas's shop and Thomas Beattie next door. Behind both shops were slaughter houses and Ramsay remembers how the village boys used to go there to hold a candle and watch. One of the butchers shops also sold groceries, sticks of rock and scones with a slice of potted meat inside. There were four other grocers shops in the village and a poultry shop in Sunnyside. The woman who kept it used to travel into Hawick or Jedburgh with any produce she could not sell in Denholm.

There were three cobblers. Tom Park in 5 Main Street was one of them, Mr Hume in the Poplar's was another, and the third was in the Canongate. There were three tailors — John Turnbull's father in Rosebank had several men and apprentices — and three dressmakers, two of them in Elm House. A draper's shop in the middle of Main Street used to have a fine display at Christmas. Next door, part of the house that is now Leyden's View was a crockery shop, kept by an old man with a cork leg. A woman in the Neuk in Eastgate sold baskets and brushes from her house. Between Elm House and Elm Cottage there used to be an old building where coal and turnips were sold and "tick" was marked up on a slate.

On the north side of Eastgate there was a public wash house and in Leyden's Road old "Mrs Parcel" (Mary Percival Scott) took in clothes to be mangled. The post office, managed at that time by the Miller family, was in the Main Street, where Greenside is now. It had a savings bank, an insurance department and letter and telegraph services. It also sold groceries and newspapers.

There was a large public weighing machine on the Green, near where the bus shelter is now. Loads of coal, hay, straw etc. were weighed on it and it was looked after by the baker on the corner.

## Inns and Lodging Houses

By this time only two of the five public houses were left, The Fox and Hounds and The Cross Keys. Both had stables behind. The owners of The Fox and Hounds kept a dogcart and wagonette and one or two carriage horses which they used to hire out. Ramsay says the wagonette went to Hassendean every day.

An earlier landlord of the Fox and Hounds, William Leyden, had been a well

known athlete. He is said to have walked to Innerleithen, taken part in the sports there, and walked back to Denholm on the same day. The owners of the Cross Keys at the end of the 19th century were the Andersons.

In addition to accommodation at the two inns there were several lodging houses which put up tramps, hawkers, tinkers, muggers (mug sellers) and the many migrant Irishmen and casual labourers. These appear to have been mainly summer visitors. "Magenta Robbie," a well known tramp, used to stay from time to time. Examples of these lodging houses are Leyden's View, remembered by Mark N. Robson as the Old White Swan, several cottages on the south side of the Canongate and the now demolished two storey building (previously a stocking mill) behind Sunnybank Cottage, in Leyden's Road. The owner of this last one rejoiced in the name of Bridget Danny Hoo!

### Other Services

The doctor lived on Sunnyside where Somerville buildings are now. His coach and coachman were housed in the Coach House up the pend through the arch. The village constable lived in the police station at the bottom of what is now Eastlea Drive. His main duties were to help catch poachers and deal with the drunk and disorderly. They were sometimes locked up in the old police station or "House of Refuge," a building with barred windows at the top end of Kirkside (now Seaton Cottage).

Ramsay mentions a local fire brigade (formed in 1890 with 8 men) with a base in the Wynd, and remembers them giving the Leyden Monument an annual wash. Since 1882 the village was lit by 8 lamps — but not on windy or moonlight nights. Concerts used to be held in aid of the "lighting fund." The lamplighter, a hard drinker, was pestered and made fun of by the village boys.

By this time there was a proper hearse, kept in the Loaning, but it was not often used as most burials now took place in the new cemetery beyond the Canongate and the coffin was simply carried there by pall bearers. Fewer Denholm people were now being buried at Cavers. The registrar, Mr Moodie, lived in Fernbank. Ramsay remembers him as a very tall stately man who wore a half-tile hat. Behind his house was another stable.

The village bible woman lived in Leyden's Road. She was Jessie Armstrong who, according to her tombstone, was also "sick nurse in Denholm for many years."

### Libraries

There was a subscription library in Barrie's Cottage on the corner of the Wynd, dating back to 1805. It was set up by Andrew Scott, schoolmaster, and four others, including William Barrie who became the Librarian. The Barrie family continued to look after the library until it closed in 1906. A full account of its 100 years can be found in an article entitled "An old Denholm Book" by William F. Cuthbertson, Hawick Archaeological Society, Transactions, April 1933.

The second last building at the west end of Main Street housed a reading room where people could sit and read magazines and periodicals. Sir James Murray's father had been a promoter of the Reading Room Club back in the middle of the 19th Century.

### The Gentry

Mr James Douglas had died in 1878 without a male heir and had been succeeded as laird by his niece, Mrs Palmer Douglas. The largest house in the village

was Craigview (now called Denholm Lodge). It was built by the Scott family, owners of Lyle and Scott, Hawick. A Mr Andrew Stewart lived in Belleview (now Denholm House) and Ramsay remembers that the family used to bury all their pets in the garden. He remembers "quite a swell" called Mr Turnbull who lived in Main Street and worked in a bank in Hawick.

### **Church Life**

Much of the villagers' leisure time and social life was connected with the Church. The Chapel Sunday School was well attended and the highlight of the year was the annual picnic at Spital Tower or Penielheugh. Farm carts were borrowed for the journey. The Kirk ran the Bible class and the Young Men's Fellowship. The Band of Hope met every week during the winter with a magic lantern show, depicting scenes from "Pilgrim's Progress" or the lives of John Knox and George Wishart.

On fine summer evenings services were sometimes held on the Quoiting Haugh by the Teviot Bridge with music from the organ carried down from the Chapel. The Kirk ran an annual "soiree," a musical evening to which came violinists and other musicians from Hawick. The children would be treated to a bag of buns. Also provided by the Kirk was a Christmas tree, a rarity then. The choir used to go for an annual outing on bicycles. There used to be regular sewing meetings when ladies of the congregation made articles for the annual sale of work.

### **The Sports**

Parts of the old common arable land were used at this time for sporting activities, organised by the feuars. In Ramsay's boyhood "sports" were held in the field by the "Gang" on the Jedburgh road. At other times this field was used for football and cricket. Later, between the two World Wars, it was rented by Mr Dickman, the saddler, and used for hen runs. The "sports" were then held where the Ashloaning is now, later behind Jedward Terrace and, before the 2nd World War, in the Croft Field between the Canongate and the Jedburgh Road.

### **The Quoiting Haugh**

The piece of ground near the entrance to Deanburn House had once been used as a wrestling ground. In the 1870's however the owners enclosed part of it with a hedge and the public playground became instead the river bank between the Teviot Bridge and the old suspension bridge. The grassy slope behind made a good terrace for onlookers. The men of the village used to play quoits here and it became known as the Quoiting Haugh. The game died out after the 1st World War but the name is still used.

### **The Flower Show**

The Denholm Horticultural Society was founded in 1848 and the annual Flower Show was held in the school which served as the village hall. Sir James Murray recalled that as a boy in the 1850's he used to compete for the prize for the best collection of wild flowers. "My only serious rival was Willie Cook" (who grew up to be one of the last Denholm stockingmakers). "He generally beat me in tasteful arrangement while I had the pull in my knowledge of the botanical names and the power to arrange them in scientific order."

Another of his contemporaries, John Scott (1836-1880), gained all the prizes for hardy annuals and cultivated flowers. This success encouraged him to take up

gardening as a living and he became a well known horticulturalist. While at the Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh he corresponded with Darwin and experimented with hybridisation of plants.

### **The Big Green**

The Big Green was still let for grazing to butchers or smallholders but Ramsay also remembers how it used to be a meeting place on New Year's Day for friends from near and far. Some folk brought melodians and concertinas and football would be played. In the summer large parties would come out from Hawick in brakes, wagonettes etc. They refreshed themselves at the Fox and Hounds and then came out on to the Green to dance to music from a fiddle and concertina.

The Bough o' Bale was celebrated at this time and as yet there was no association with Guy Fawkes. The elm trees on the Green served as public notice boards and were studded with hundreds of nails left after old notices had been taken down.

Soldiers on recruitment marches used to camp on the Green. They were given a reception by the Chief Feuar (the Chairman of the Feuars' Committee), the minister, the doctor and schoolmaster. The local band, the Old Volunteers, would turn out to play.

### **The Shows**

In 1892, Mr Milligan, the auctioneer, was asked to allow "shows" onto the Small Green "in order to give some amusement to the youth of the village" and in Ramsay's boyhood the shows would come every year with shooting galleries, stalls, sideshows and roundabouts. Later, after the 1st World War, they were moved to the Croft Field where they were run by the Millers, a couple from Denholm who had eloped from the village to get married.

Ramsay also remembers the circus passing through, and travelling folk who sold horses, donkeys and goats stopped on their way to and from fairs in other places. The circus elephants used to stop at a drinking trough on Main Street which was divided by the railings so that it could be used by the cattle on the Green and the horses in Main Street. The trough was later taken away but it seems that the elephants never forgot it. In the 1930's they still stopped at the same spot and would not move until they had been given their drink of water.

### **Denholm Ba'**

The Denholm Ba' took place on the Green every year in late February or early March. The annual Ba' or Hand Ba' is an ancient custom still held in several Border towns and villages. The ball is said to represent the head of an Englishman. In Denholm the appointed day is always the Monday after Shrove Tuesday which was known as Fasten E'en or Fasten's Eve. According to an old saying, "First comes Candlemas, then the new moon, the following Tuesday is Fasten E'en, the following Monday is Denholm Ba' Day.

On the day large crowds of men from the surrounding district would collect around the Leyden Monument. The single men were known as the "uppies" and the married men as the "doonies." A beribboned leather ball was traditionally supplied by the men who had married during the year. It was made by the saddler in sections of leather and stuffed with wet moss or newspaper.

The ball was thrown up in the air by the donor and when it fell the ribbons were torn off and it was thrown up again. The "uppies" then tried to hail the ball to the bridge at Honeyburn and the "doonies" to the "Gang" on the Jedburgh Road

(now the track up to Garthside Bungalow). There was no prize, only the honour of winning but sometimes the newly wed who supplied the ball would offer a reward for its return.

The apprentices played at 9.00 a.m. and the men at 1.00 p.m. Schoolboys had their own Ba' on the Friday. Ramsay recalls that a man named Best was killed on the spikes of the iron railings opposite the Cross Keys and says that the spikes were the cause of several accidents that he can remember.

Nowadays the men's Ba' begins in the afternoon. There is no separate event for the apprentices. Several balls are given and the donors are no longer confined to the newly married. Sometimes they are couples celebrating a silver or golden wedding anniversary and the owners of the pubs usually give a ball. The "doonies" are now the men and youths living in the village and the "uppies" are the outsiders. The schoolchildren, both boys and girls, have their own Ba' in the early afternoon.

## The Dean

At the turn of the century Denholm Dean was a beautiful woodland garden, with fine trees and a wealth of wild flowers. It still belonged to the laird of Cavers, then Mrs Palmer Douglas, but was open to all, with pathways wide enough to accommodate a carriage and pair. Hawick folk would drive out to picnic or take tea at Denholmdean Cottage, the ruins of which can still be seen about a mile up the Dean Burn.

It is thought that the Douglas family originally built this cottage about 1730 as a shooting lodge. They would have driven to it through their deer park and entered the Dean at Deanhead, near East Middle. Later, towards the end of the 19th century, the Dean was made into a pleasure garden and the cottage became a tea pavilion. It was painted pink with green doors and white woodwork at the windows. A flight of 12 steps led up to the entrance. Inside a small circular hall gave access to two roughly circular rooms with a kitchen behind. There was a large central chimney. The caretaker's cottage was built on at the back.

Mrs Palmer Douglas is said to have encouraged the wild flowers and estate workers maintained the paths and bridges, cut the grass and kept the weeds down.

In November 1898 an article entitled "Denholm as a Holiday Resort" appeared in the "Border Magazine." It shows a photograph of the tea pavilion and extols the beauties of "Denholm's Fairy Dean" which inspired some of Leyden's "Scenes of Infancy." According to the article "in this beautiful dell, in the shade of the verdant foliage, even on the warmest day in summer, one can feel as cool as the proverbial cucumber, young and old can spend days and days in restful idling. Cosy garden benches are placed in retired nooks, and here young lovers can make love to their hearts' content."

Between the two World Wars the cottage in the Dean was the home of woodcutters who felled timber for a sawmill in the Dean. The last family to live there were the Wylies. The children used to walk up 100 steps to reach the road where they caught the school bus. After they left in 1948 the cottage fell into disuse and the roof was taken off (probably to avoid tax).

In 1962 Mr Palmer Douglas wanted to close the right of way through the Dean but the Feuars' and Householders' Council objected and it was kept open. This path goes down the steep bank from a stile opposite the entrance to Denholm Lodge, over the bridge and up the other side to follow the boundary with Honeyburn Farm. It passes the site of the "Rake," a cottage occupied by John Leyden's father between 1808 and 1818.

The Dean was sold some time ago to new owners and recently several paths and bridges have been renewed. It remains to this day a popular place for walks.

## VI INTO THE 20th CENTURY

### Shops, Trades and Services

These were listed in notes by Miss A. T. N. Smith who was born in 1902 and brought up in the United Free Manse at Townhead. Her original list has been expanded and updated from other sources.

#### **Baker**

At the beginning of the century Alexander Carruthers had the business on "Baker's Corner" at Townhead. Later Peter Scott had it and then Robert Martin, before D. A. Lindsay took it over in 1934. It has remained in the same family for over fifty years although it is now a general store and newsagent.

#### **Butchers**

"Butcher's Corner" was at the other end of Main Street. Andrew Beattie took it over from his father Thomas and set up in the shop which became Douglas's, and is now Denholm Meat Suppliers. He used to do a country run in a horse-drawn vehicle with a chopping block in the back.

Renwick's was further up Main Street in the shop that is now Westgate Salon. Between the Wars Fred Webb ran a country business, operating from a storage shed in the Loaning.

#### **Dairy**

This was in Westgate in the buildings that later became Scott Elliot's garage and the hairdresser's next door. They have recently been demolished. It was built by the laird in the late 19th century and became known as a "model dairy" as it was fully tiled and spotlessly clean. Before the 1st World War it was run by George Watson of Rillbank. It expanded into Hawick as the "Denholm Co-operative Dairy Society" but the premises in Westgate were not used after the 1st World War. Between the Wars Tom Tait sold milk from a dairy behind Rillbank and the Tinlins of Denholm Mill Farm had a milk round with a horse and cart.

#### **Grocers**

There was a small general store between Sunnybank and Oliver's Garage, run by a Miss Anderson, later by Lizzie Murray, Miss Lizzie Scott had another at 3 Main Street in part of the building that had once been the Crown Inn. This shop later became a fancy goods shop and then Tom Scott's knitwear shop before its conversion to a private house in 1987. The Co-op (Hawick and Jedburgh Co-operative Society) was opened in Elm House in 1951 but closed in 1985. The whole building has now been developed by the Eildon Housing Association and the shop is occupied by Tom Scott Knitwear.

#### **Chip Shop**

Andrew Turnbull had a chip shop next to Lindsay's Bakery in the house which was then just a one storey cottage.

#### **Confectioners**

There were several small sweetie shops on Main Street and at odd corners of the village. Sweets and toffee were often home made.

#### **Post Office**

This was halfway down Main Street in the house that is now Greenside. It was run for a long time by Miss Agnes Miller. She had a whistle to summon a part-time assistant when a telegram arrived and had to be delivered. She was followed after the 2nd World War by Mrs Russell and then by James Lawrence. In 1966 the Post

Office was transferred to Sunnyside where it was run by Jim Steel and then by Bob Neil. In 1986 it was moved to Westgate, to Braemar Cottage (so called because the Hawick knitwear firm of Braemar had a small branch factory there after the 2nd World War).

#### **Chemist**

Mr Barber had a dispensary in the room on the left of the entrance to the Cross Keys. This used to be a separate house with a pend leading to a courtyard and stables at the back.

#### **Draper**

Miss Furness had a shop in Birkview in Main Street up until the 2nd World War. Later Willie Parker, the "packman," used to travel the countryside selling drapery from his car or from his house by the pend at the Fox and Hounds.

#### **Tailors**

Jack Turnbull had a workroom in the old stocking shop at Rosebank in the Dean Road (now Rosecroft) and Adam Cairns was in Main Street. Later, in the 1930's, Mr Minto worked in Leyden's View and Mr Richardson in Scott's Buildings, next to the Fox and Hounds.

#### **Shoemakers**

Tom Park was still in 5 Main Street. Later Billy Little had a cobbler's shop where the chemist had been (now part of the Cross Keys).

#### **Barber**

Mr Milligan was in the Cottage opposite Swiss Villa in the Canongate. Miss Smith recalls a swing between two box beds in the kitchen on which customers could pass the time while they waited! Later George Stormont came out from Hawick every Tuesday afternoon to a shed in Westgate (where the public toilets are now).

#### **Photographer**

In the early years of this century there was a photographer, Hugh J. Rigby, in a studio in the Poplars on the Small Green.

#### **Saddler**

James Scott was the village saddler for 50 years in the first house in Westgate (now part of Braemar Cottage). After his death in 1905 the business was bought by David Dickman who later moved it to Main Street (where Westgate Salon is now). He was followed by his son and latterly the business was run by Bill Rae, once a Dickman apprentice. On one occasion Mr Dickman Junior was reckoned to have had 17 pairs of stirrup leathers running in the Grand National! The shop also ran a petrol pump on the opposite side of Main Street.

#### **Blacksmiths**

The Scotts were in Broomieknowe on the corner of the Dean Road and Douglas Drive, where the Robsons had been in the 19th century. Joseph Laing was in Rockview by the Minto Road. The Cockburns also worked Rockview Smithy for a time but moved in the 1930's to the disused Cameronian Chapel behind Poplar Nook. Mr Cockburn used to work the country, taking a horse and cart up to Bedrule and to the Grange on the Ancrum Road.

#### **Joiners**

Nicholas Furness, grandson of the founder mentioned by Ramsay, had the workshop behind Eastgate House until his death in 1936. He specialised in carriage and coach work. The business was taken over by Bob Scott, later by Ian Ainslie, and is now Border Coachcraft. Other joiners were Scott Elliot in Westgate, John Miller,



followed by his son Tom, in Main Street, and Bob Scott, later Peter Sinton Wight, in the Wynd.

#### **Timber and Coal Merchants**

George and James Cairns ran the sawmill at the yard by the Teviot Bridge. Later Tom Cairns, carrier and coal merchant, had his lorries there. After the 2nd World War the coal business was nationalised and the transport lorries were taken over by Ross and Sandy Oliver.

#### **Wheelwright**

William Oliver had a wheelwright's business and engineering shop in Leyden's Road, where the garage is now.

#### **Public Houses**

The Fox and Hounds was run by Jock Sanderson, later Dick Hutchison, before it was bought in 1949 by Tom and Tib Cairns, later Tib Lothian. After 40 years as landlady she has recently handed over to her daughter and son-in-law Ruth and Alec Trotter.

The Andersons were still owners of the Cross Keys in the early 1900's. Since then it has changed hands many times and is now owned by Peter and Heather Ferguson.

#### **Market Gardens**

William Murray came to Denholm in the early years of the century and set up a flourishing market garden business. He leased the Small Green in 1910 and also had land and greenhouses at the bottom of the Canongate where he grew melons, grapes and peaches. Produce was sent as far afield as London. A horse and cart, later a motor van, took it once a week to the station at Hassendean. The business was taken over by Mr and Mrs Wood shortly after the 2nd World War.

At this time there was a second market garden run by Ed Scott on the other side of the Canongate. Large greenhouses used to occupy the ground behind his house, Ashlea, where Minto Gardens is today. He also had a shop in Hawick.

#### **Poultry Business**

The first Mr Dickman set up a poultry business for one of his sons who was not fit or able to take up the saddler's trade. The "Dickman hen runs" were on the land behind the gardens in Main Street (the old South Crofts or "eighths"). For a time he also rented land at Garthside, out on the Jedburgh Road.

#### **The Farms**

The Bulman's have farmed at Denholm Hall Farm almost continuously since the 1830's, apart from a period early this century when George Gray and then Peter Wight were tenants. Tom Bulman returned in 1927, after the death of Mr Wight. The farm is still owned by his daughter, Chrissie. Denholm Mill ceased to be a corn mill around the turn of the last century. The Olivers remained tenants until 1921 when Danny Taylor took it over, followed by the Tinlins about 1930. Mr Scott had it for a time before Jock Galloway bought it at the beginning of the 1950's.

#### **Policeman**

The police station remained at the corner of Eastlea Drive and the Jedburgh Road until its closure in 1971. The last village constable was Bob Mole.

#### **Buses**

In the early years of the century a horse-drawn bus service was run by Simon Jackson. It was a wagonette with a door at the back and a canopy behind to keep off the dust. Later Jackson's bus was a motor vehicle and in the 1920's it ran in competition with a service set up by Cairns and Welsh. Their Albion bus, the "old

16," was 6d return to Hawick. Buses would only depart when they had a full load of passengers.

#### **Taxis**

Mr Cairns also ran a taxi service with an old Ford. Mr William Milligan drove a taxi between Denholm and Hassendean and Willie White ran a rather erratic service to Minto. Later T. B. Oliver had a taxi service.

#### **Doctors**

In the early years of the century the village doctors lived in the house which is now the Manse, known then as Teviot House. Their coach and horse were kept in the stables behind. Later the doctors' house was Fernbank, next door, and latterly it was Kirklands, behind the Church. The doctors often dispensed their own medicines. Dr Heddleston, the last village doctor, retired in 1949 and was not replaced. The village used to have its own district nurse who lived in Elm House, later in the last house before the Teviot Bridge.

#### **Fire Brigade**

The old brigade of local volunteers was not set up again after the 2nd World War. From then on the service was provided from Hawick.

#### **The Golf Course, Putting Green and Tennis Court**

A nine hole golf course was opened in 1907. The first tee was by the seat at the top of the Loaning. The membership fee was 1/- later 2/6d, but the golf course did not survive the 1st World War.

Between the Wars there was a putting green further down the Loaning, below where Ruberslaw Road is today. It helped to raise money for a public hall.

The road to Hawick used to be so quiet that children could play tennis at the bottom of the Manse Brae. If any traffic came there was plenty of time to get out of the way. Between the wars there was also a tennis court in the field behind Denholm Hall Farmhouse.

#### **The Poplars**

The Poplars on the corner of Kirkside got its name from the five poplar trees planted by an 18th century owner for each of his five sons. The last one blew down in a storm nearly 50 years ago. The same man, Thomas Turnbull, is also said to have built five houses at the end of Main Street for his sons. Connecting doors were built into the attics—probably to provide a fire escape but there is also a legend that it was an escape route for smugglers!

#### **The Text House**

The Text House was one of these houses and was originally the same height as the others. In 1910 it was pulled down and rebuilt by Dr John Haddon with texts on the front inspired by similar ones on a house in Hawick.

"All was others; all will be others"

"Tak tent in time, ere time be tint"

Dr John Haddon himself was something of an eccentric. He was interested in dietetics and in growing herbs but is said to have had some outlandish theories such as the one that a man could live on two gooseberries a day. He was a vegetarian but rumour had it that he could fill himself up with any food provided at someone else's expense. He kept a horse and several hounds which are said to have been half starved. He seems, however, to have been a good medical practitioner and he was philanthropic enough to buy up several houses in the village

and leave them in trust to be let, rent free, to elderly people who had been born in Denholm.

### **The Denholm Feuars' and Householders' Council**

In 1920 all but one of the Feuars bought their feus from the laird, Mrs Palmer Douglas, and in 1946 a Deed of Gift was drawn up whereby the Feuars finally became the rightful owners of:—

- The Green and the Small Green.
- The Quoiting Haugh and the East Bleaching Green.
- The Feuars' Paddock (ground adjoining Rubersvale at the foot of the Loaning).
- The Old Back Road.
- The Wynd and the path along the Back Braes.
- The Old Cart Road (a track from the Wynd to the Minto Road, now Riverside Drive).
- The strip of ground between the Teviot and Rillbank and Minto Gardens.
- The Mill Wynd.

This was all land that they had long looked after by custom or consent but only now did it become their legal property.

At the same time the old Feuars' Committee was replaced by the Feuars' and Householders' Council which was to represent not just feu owners but all the village householders and ratepayers. The new Council's prime responsibility was the management of the above common land and rights of way but it also looked after many other amenities and it represented the villagers' more general interests before the introduction of the Community Council in 1978.

### **The Green**

The Green was still let for grazing until the 1930's although the public were allowed onto it during the winter months when the cattle were taken off. The official public playground was still the Quoiting Haugh but there was a growing feeling that the Big Green should be given over entirely to recreation, especially as the pasture had become poor due to years of uninterrupted grazing. In 1936 the income from it was only £6. In 1937 the County Clerk agreed to pay £10 p.a. for it as a school playground and in 1938 anyone over 16 was allowed onto it to walk or play.

Electricity came to the village in the mid-1930's. At the request of the Feuars' and Householders' Council the power lines were laid underground so as not to spoil the Green and centre of the village. The old cobbled causeway down Main Street was lifted and replaced with tarmac roadway and pavement. Residents' parking space was provided on the opposite side of the street and a car park cut out of the corner of the Green for those at the end near Eastgate.

After the end of the 2nd World War the Feuars' and Householders' Council worked hard to provide recreational facilities on the Green. From 1948 to 1951 they ran a putting green on the south west corner, re-erecting the old fire hose shed as a hut for the equipment. They put up swings and a see-saw for the children who still used the green as their school playground. On the east side was a cricket pitch and football field with goalposts.

Later rosebeds were planted and maintained with the help of the school and other volunteers until 1971 when the beds were levelled and grassed over. Roxburgh County Council took over responsibility for cutting the grass in 1963 but the villagers were so dissatisfied with the results that the Feuars' and Householders' Council continued to manage this for several more years.

Gradually the old trees — elms, chestnuts, ashes and limes were taken down,

either because they were diseased and unsafe or because they darkened householders' property. As a rule they were replaced with smaller species — hawthorn, lilac, ornamental cherry, acer, sorbus — but a birch was also planted and an old weeping ash still survives at Lindsay's corner.

The railings on Main Street were requisitioned during the 2nd World War but repairing the walls around the Green remained an uphill and expensive task. During the 1950's and 60's they were gradually lowered or taken down completely and the flat coping stones were laid on the ground as a boundary. The paths around the outside of the Green were the responsibility of the Feuars until 1955 when they were taken over by the County Council.

In 1959 the villagers were alarmed by a Council proposal to build a road right across the Green from east to west so that through traffic could avoid the bad corners at both ends of Main Street. The plan however came to nothing and the Green was left intact.

### **The Small Green**

William Murray the market gardener had fruit trees on the Small Green until 1934 when householders complained that their light was blocked out. The trees were cut down and other produce grown there instead. Mr and Mrs Wood took it over in 1947 and worked it as a market garden until 1962 when Ed. Scott had it for a couple of years. After he gave it up it was grassed over and the wall around it taken down. There was great enthusiasm at this time for a bowling green but after a year or so the idea was abandoned for lack of interest. The "Wee" Green was kept as a pleasant open space and playground and various individuals and local organisations have donated small trees to plant around it.

### **The Quoiting Haugh**

With the Green becoming the new recreation ground, the Quoiting Haugh became a place for walks and picnics. The Feuars' and Householders' Council saw to the mending of its gates and fences and let it for sheep grazing—usually to the tenants of Denholm Mill Farm. Gradually the large ash trees that grew above it were taken down because they overshadowed the new houses in Riverside Drive.

### **The East Bleaching Green**

The lower part of the East Bleaching Green at the foot of the Loaning was leased in the 1920's to the Comrades of the Great War who built the Comrades' Hall (now the Country Store). The top part was let for some years to Anthony Wilson, gardener, for a greenhouse, but most of the rest was kept as a drying green with clothes poles until 1960 when swings were put up and a playground made for the growing number of children in the new houses on this side of the village.

### **Village Halls**

In the middle of the 19th century public meetings were usually held in the "Auld Schule on the Green." The new school built on Sunnyside in 1858 was large enough to serve as a village hall and here were held, in Ramsay's boyhood, concerts, dances, elections and the Flower Show. Towards the end of the century however people began to want a separate, purpose built village hall. A committee was set up and much fundraising ensued. By 1903 £100 had been raised and an appeal was made for outside help. Not enough money was forthcoming for a new building but the Palmer Douglas family gave over the top floor of Westgate Hall. This was used

as a meeting hall and committee room from 1907 up until the 1950's. A stairway was built up the outside to make a separate entrance.

Westgate Hall however was not suitable for large gatherings or for recreational activities such as badminton. In 1918 the Y.M.C.A. "Red Triangle Club" gave a grant for a building which might be used as a public hall providing a religious service was held there once a month. The Feuars' Committee voted another £100 towards it and in 1921 a former army hut from the camp at Stobs was erected behind the second last building at the west end of Main Street. At last Denholm had its Public Hall.

The Somerville Trust was set up to raise funds to maintain it. Property was bought with money bequeathed by Mrs Euphemia Somerville who died in 1928. This included Somerville Buildings around the arch on Sunnyside where she had lived. It was hoped that the rental from this would generate a steady income for the maintenance fund but the money somehow dwindled and the properties were sold. Other ways were found to support the hall.

For many years it was used by the Badminton Club, a Youth Club and the Boys' Brigade. Dances, film shows, coffee mornings, concerts, political meetings and the Flower Show were held there. It housed a lending library and reading room before the County Library was set up in the old cookery room behind the School on Sunnyside (the room that is now the Small Hall).

The present School building was opened in 1965 and the old one on Sunnyside became the canteen. In 1983 this too was moved and with the aid of grants and more fundraising the building was converted to become the present Village Hall. The old Y.M.C.A. Public Hall in Main Street was therefore no longer needed and was demolished.

Back in 1920 a second hall—corrugated iron and purpose built—was erected on the lower part of the East Bleaching Green by the Comrades of the Great War (now the British Legion). This, the Comrades Hall, was used for recreation and social gatherings and carpet bowls were played in it in winter. There was often great rivalry between it and the Public Hall. Latterly it became a grocer's shop (Betty's, now the Country Store).

## The Conservation Area

In 1971 the old part of the village was designated a Conservation Area being "of special architectural and historic interest, the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance . . . It represents a fine example of a planned village formed around a central open space. The designated area includes the main and small greens together with the buildings which front on to them and the approaches to the centre of the village — the Canongate, Eastgate, Westgate and the A698."

A considerable number of listed buildings are to be found in this area.

Class A—Westgate Hall

Class B—Leyden's Cottage

Class C—The Old Mill at West End,  
Birkview and Mintlaw,  
From the Cross Keys Inn to 3 Main Street,  
The buildings round the arch on Sunnyside,  
Leyden's Monument,  
The Church,  
The Teviot Bridge.

### **New Streets and Houses**

Only a few new houses were built in Denholm before the 2nd World War. The houses in Jedward Terrace went up in the mid 1930's and building began a few years later in Eastlea Drive and Riverside Drive but was not finished until after the war ended.

Council pre-fabs were put up in the Ashloaning at the end of the war followed by the "Crudens semis" and the "Orlits." During the 1950's 6 more semi-detached houses were built in the Loaning and 10 in Murray Place.

All through the 1950's the public water supply was inadequate for the post-war village but in 1963 a proper supply was finally piped in from Alemoor Loch, above Robertson. The way was now open for more housing development. Many new council houses were built in the Ashloaning followed by more in Douglas Drive and Douglas Court in 1966. Another 10 were built at the top of the Ashloaning in 1969 and 9 pensioners' houses replaced some of the pre-fabs.

In the 1970's and early '80's there were private developments at Ruberslaw Road, Minto Gardens and at the top of the Loaning. Individual houses have "infilled" various other smaller sites.

### **Population in the 20th Century**

1901—349
1911—400
1931—365
1951—500 (estimate)
1971—581
1981—533

This shows the increase in the village population after the 2nd World War as new houses were built.

### **The Modern Village**

Denholm now has two small knitwear factories, Tom Scott's and Jim Hogarth's, also Border Coachcraft, Oliver Brothers' lorry transport and several joiners and housepainters. Most of its inhabitants, however, have to find employment outside the village and travel to Hawick, Jedburgh, St Boswells or even further afield. It has become an attractive village for commuters and a pleasant place for retirement.

Its residents are fortunate in that today it still has two newsagents and general stores, a butcher's shop, a Post Office, a hairdresser's, a garage and two public houses. It also has its Church, its Village School and a thriving community life.



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