

## SOUTHERN BORDERS TURBULENT HISTORY

*The Scottish Borders district has a rich and diverse landscape of great historic interest and beauty. Additionally, it also bears the marks with centuries of human intervention.*

In early 2020, the 'Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park' was initiated with a new research project on 'The Twelve Towers of Rule' and was in partnership with Archaeology Scotland as well as the local community. Professor Jane Bower, coordinated the research with the overall objective of putting together a more detailed picture of the history, its social context and the aftermath.

The plan integrated some investigative archaeology on the many Towers. With the help of local volunteers, guided by Archaeology Scotland's expertise, the long-term plan was to create interesting walks, drives and rides around the Borders with the accompanying historic information about these and other important events.

The latest research included historians Professor Richard Oram and Dr. Tom Turpie with voluntary assistance and extensive advice from Roger Curtis, who lives in the Valley, is a senior official at HES, a professional surveyor and an expert on ancient buildings.

### *The Twelve Towers of Rule - Historical Evaluation*

*Submitted by Scottish Mediaevalist Professor Richard Oram and Dr. Tom Turpie with acknowledgements to Professor Jane Bower and Roger Curtis - Historical Environment Scotland*

Although the archaeological remains of later pre-Roman, Roman period, and early medieval settlement that are distributed throughout the uplands that flank the valley, indicate a deep history of human settlement there, our understanding of settlement chronology, patterns and hierarchies is scant.

Even the history of this district during the centuries of Anglian Northumbrian domination after c.600 AD is a blank, despite its proximity to both the early monastic centre at Old Melrose and the slightly later minster church at Jedburgh, which functioned down to at least the end of the eleventh century and served as the basis upon which Bishop John of Glasgow founded an Augustinian priory there.



Photo: Roger Curtis

### *Rulewater view from Warchope Rigg*

But that the valley of the Rule Water – a clearly-defined territorial block containing all of the environmental elements needed to support an agricultural population – is likely to have continued to be settled and likely formed the estate of a man of rank through the era of the Late Antique Little Ice Age, sixth-century plague pandemic and resulting population collapse, to the re advance of human settlement in the eleventh century, can be glimpsed in the shadowy figures who emerge in the fragmentary parchment record soon after 1100.

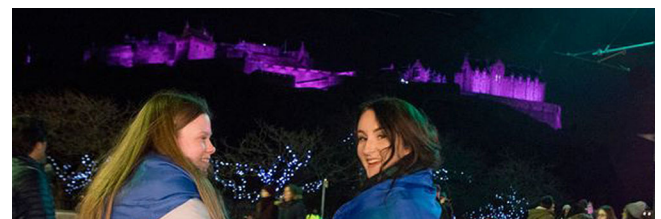
Bedrule appears in this period in the hands of Bethoc, who was possibly a daughter of the late eleventh-century Scottish king, Domnall III Bán, younger brother of Mael Coluim III. She was married first to one of the important Northumbrian nobles of the region, Uhtred son of Waltheof, who also held part of North Tyndale in what is now western Northumberland, and secondly to Radulf son of Dunegal, lord of northern Nithsdale.

Bethoc and her second husband were joint – but relatively minor – patrons of Jedburgh Abbey, to which they granted land at Ruecastle in the 1140s, suggesting that the lands of Rule perhaps formed part of her dower but were more likely her personal heritage.

*Continued on Page 6 . . .*



### HOW WILL YOU BE CELEBRATING HOGMANAY?



Exciting New Year's Eve stories and images will emerge at the coming celebrations. You could share these in the next edition! If so, please contact the editor at: [editor@turnbullclan.com](mailto:editor@turnbullclan.com)



## An outstanding year for TCA



*Holiday best wishes to you and yours. Looking back, 2023 was an exciting year filled with many Turnbull events. Perhaps the most exciting was the Clan Heritage Tour, expertly led by Katherine Turnbull, to the Borders. A group of twenty-seven Turnbells' from the USA and Canada gathered in June for five very full days of exploring their Turnbull heritage and Scottish History. Much was learned and new friendships were made. Thank you, Katherine, for making this possible.*

*Turnbull tent hosting representation grew with USA games now being represented from coast to coast. A heartfelt shout out goes to all our dedicated hosts, whose efforts make these events not only meaningful but also immensely enjoyable. A special shout out to Dale and Mary Kay Hilding who mark 22 years of tent hosting in Athena, Oregon. Thank you for your dedicated service to TCA. Interested in hosting a tent? We have beginner kits for new tent hosts.*

*In solemn reflection, we pay tribute to the TCA members who departed from us this year. Among them, we hold a special place in our hearts for the late Gail Turnbull, a remarkable individual and one of the early pillars of our community. Gail's unwavering dedication to the clan, alongside her husband Brian, a former TCA Vice-President, leaves an indelible mark on our collective memory. Their contributions will forever be remembered and cherished.*

*In the upcoming year of 2024, it's important to note that it is an election year for the Turnbull Clan Association. Contributing members will have the opportunity to exercise their right to vote and elect officers who will lead TCA for the next three years. If you are interested in being part of the leadership of our association, we invite and encourage you to consider running for a position. Your involvement can shape the future of TCA. Please let us know of your interest, and together, let's continue to strengthen and guide our community with enthusiasm and commitment.*

*Mark your calendars for the Annual General Meeting (AGM) scheduled during the Grandfather Mountain Games in North Carolina from 11th to 14th July. This picturesque location, nestled along the Blue Ridge Parkway, serves as the backdrop for one of the largest games in the United States. Start making plans now to join us. We look forward to seeing you there!*

*A heartfelt thank you goes out to all our members for their continuous sharing and caring. Your commitment is the heartbeat of the Turnbull Clan Association, and without each one of you, our association would not thrive. As we look ahead to 2024, let's collectively endeavour to make it another outstanding year for TCA.*

**Betty Turnbull, Vice President - Communications**

### BULLSEYE

The Bullseye, is the Turnbull Clan Association Worldwide (TCA) newsletter published six times a year at: 5216 Tahoe Dr. Durham, NC 27713 U.S.A.

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Officers: President - Walter Turnbull • Vice-Presidents - Jeff Trimble, Betty Turnbull, Katherine Turnbull, Kenneth Turnbull • Treasurer - Sandy Turnbull • Secretary - Brittany Turnbull •

Webmaster & Genealogy - Brian Turnbull

Founders: John F. Turnbull, Scotland • Dorothy Berk, USA

## A-MUIGH IS A-MACH (OUT AND ABOUT)



*Congratulations to my daughter Cara Turnbull, graduating at the Nottingham Trent University in Fashion Communication & Promotions - Robert Turnbull*



*Lilli Trimble was placed 1st overall in her age group at the Stone Mountain Highland Games held in October*

## HALLOWEEN IN AUSTRALIA



Australians relate well to the traditions of Halloween to the point of inventing their own variations, as can be seen with this farm gate version in South-East Queensland, near Beaudesert. Ed.

### End of year festivities or an event to share?



*How about submitting a photo of your celebration or an event that you'd like to share with the 2,500+ Turnbull Clan readers. Please let us know. We'd love to share.*

*You can send photos and information or stories of your adventures to the [editor@turnbullclan.com](mailto:editor@turnbullclan.com)*



*We congratulate the winner, who has found the little bull. Bragging rights go to Yvonne Turnbull from Aberdeenshire, Scotland. • Can you find the other hidden 'Bullseye Bull' in this issue?*





## Want to learn more about your family history, but not sure where to start?

We've collected some amazing resources to help you discover more about your ancestors. It's fast, fun, and absolutely FREE.

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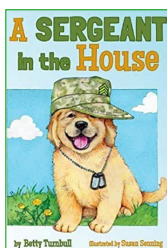
## Children's stories for this Season?

by **Betty Turnbull**

The author of several Scotland themed childrens books. Her stories set in the real past of Scotland, adds a dimension of interesting history and a beginning understanding of heritage.

In addition, each book has a positive impact of self-worth through her characters and the lessons learned.

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Rated: ★★★★★

## TCA TENT HOSTS AT THE HIGHLAND GAMES



## RICHMOND HIGHLAND GAMES

### Dorey Park and Recreation Center in Henrico County, USA

The first Scottish Highland Games in three years was held at a new venue in Richmond Virginia on the 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> November. The weather was as welcoming as the hosts of the games and the TCA tent. Brad and Tammy Trimble hosted along with co-host Joe Trimble. Attendance was very strong, the pipe bands amazing, wonderful athletic events, and more entertainment than one could take in. One family, the Capps family stopped by the tent and noticed our Sept chart. Joseph saw his family name, Rollo, posted and commented he had been looking for where he belonged for a long time. Joe's excitement was evident as he told us of his long family history.



*Bill & Claudia Trimble  
hosting the TCA Tent*



*Elodine & Ian  
Trimble, Brad  
and Tammy's  
children*



*Joseph Capps,  
Kristy, Maddison  
and Morgan*



*A great day at the Stone Mountain Highland games for the Turnbull's*

**Turnbull Clan Association will be represented at the following Scottish Festivals & Games in 2024**  
*(to be announced next edition)*

If you need more information or know of any other upcoming Highland Games where TCA can tent host, please contact Katherine Turnbull at the following:  
**kattturnbull01@gmail.com** - TCA VP for Events.





# Turnbull Clan Association Worldwide

## News from around the world

by Kenneth Turnbull - International News Editor

### Scotland - Art Studios weekend

Scottish art jewellery maker, Nicola Turnbull showcased her work in Edinburgh at a special open studios weekend. On the 4th and 5th of November, around 20 artists and makers showcased their works to the public in the red brick buildings of the over-100-years-old lemonade factory. The open studios allowed her a one-off chance to experience Turnbull's jewellery – which is predominantly crafted in silver,

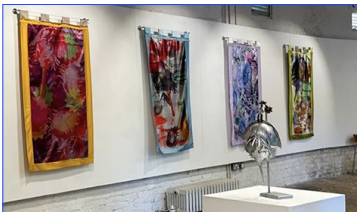


### Canada - New advice expertise

The IG Wealth Management announced its new comprehensive advice service for Canadian business owners, and its newly onboarded leader David Turnbull is excited for what's in store. His wealth of knowledge includes more than a quarter-century of investment banking and capital markets experience. Turnbull is passionate about building value in mid-market companies



### UK - Thought-provoking exhibits



Josie Rae Turnbull, an interdisciplinary Artist and Art facilitator has constructed a thought provoking exhibition, 'Saline Shock!' that combines science and art with the influence of science-fiction and mid-20th century films. Turnbull incorporated this real-world practice in an imagination of a near future. It is a re-imagined future where scientists investigate the species in microscopic depth.

### UK - Award recognising homemade watercolour cards initiative



Nine-year-old Amelie Turnbull, from Caversham, west of London, is now recognised for raising more than £5,000 for charity by selling her homemade greetings cards. They proved so popular that she printed them as cards and with her mother decided to sell them online and in local shops. Her brother, George, 16, has lobar holoprosencephaly, a complex genetic condition.

She donates 50% of her profits to two charities which support him. Amelie, who attended the Pride of Reading Awards ceremony with her family and was recognised as "someone who has inspired a community initiative or inspired someone to do the same".



### UK - Turnbull's butcher teams up for fundraising festival

To celebrate its 142nd year of history, in Northumberland, Alnwick butcher, 'Turnbull's' launched its inaugural Northumbrian Food Festival – and it had some special guests lined up to help. The week-long event featured food demonstrations and tastings from local food producers, along with a small weekend market at its Northumbrian Food Hall. There was also a charity element to its festival recipe, as it aimed to raise a significant donation for several local youth sports clubs. Dan Turnbull demonstrated a range of butchery skills and presented the preparation and provenance of local venison.



### USA - Army Veteran gets a smart home renovation



Army Veteran Jonathan Turnbull, 37 who lost his sight while serving in Syria as a result of a suicide bomber attack in 2019, found out two years ago that three organisations had partnered to renovate his family's home in Michigan to make it easier for him to live in — and to pay off their mortgage. In early November, Jonathan, his wife Samantha and their three children experienced their newly-renovated custom smart home. "It's absolutely wonderful," commented Jonathan,

### British Virgin Islands – Selling our cultural birthright

Melvin 'Mitch' Turnbull, Second District Representative, gave his views on the planned public meetings with residents across the territory. He commented that BVI Islanders have become afraid to shape the narrative on residency and belonging in a way that benefits them and preserves their culture. "We're at a place where we want everybody to have a say in what they want the Virgin Islands to be and a lot of times it's for their own self interest and what they can get out of it. He is not against immigrants who have contributed much to the Virgin Islands and have become eligible for residency and belongingship.



### Canada - Renowned doctor speaks

Dr. Jeffrey Turnbull as the chief of staff at a hospital with a budget approaching a billion dollars, never imagined when he started providing medical help to the homeless, Known as "Dr. T.". Today, his ground breaking work he addresses the health-care needs of the vulnerable population of Ottawa and has gained national attention. In mid-November, he gave an address at the MacEwan University. "You have to look at the whole person all the time, where they're living, what social services they have, their family and friends, and putting them into a community of help and support," Turnbull said.



### Australia - Squash enters Olympics



Australia's top ranked squash player, from New South Wales, Jess Turnbull can finally chase her Olympic dream with the sport added to the 2028 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, USA. Cheering on the announcement from Sydney, she was lost for words. "I never thought that Squash would be an option." The addition of Squash was one of five sports added to the Olympic games. She added "We have been waiting for this across the world for as long as we have been a sport."



## A-MUIGH IS A-MACH (OUT AND ABOUT)

### 9 YEAR OLD DESIGNS CHRISTMAS CARDS FOR MCDONALD'S



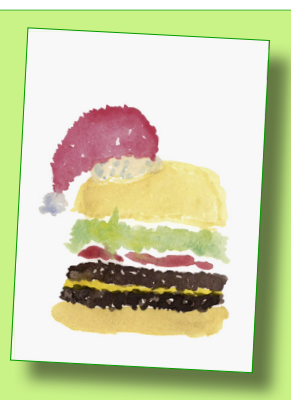
A Reading franchise owner for McDonald's, situated around 50 km west of London, has sought 9 year -old Amelie Turnbull, to design one thousand Christmas cards to sell over the festive period. One of her several Christmas designs includes a burger wearing a Christmas hat.

Other themed cards will also be selling, including paintings of kittens. The cards will be on sale in all 26 of Mr Forte's stores, while stocks last.

Amelie Turnbull has been selling watercolour painted cards for three years now and recently won the Pride of Reading award in October for her creative work. (*Details in Worldwide News, Page 4*)

Amelie's mother Ms Davina Turnbull said that she started making the cards back in lockdown. "She's always been creative and was painting in the house," she said. "And I looked at what she was doing and was so shocked at how good they were." Amelie's mother then advertised six of the paintings on Facebook to raise money for charity, and all of them sold quickly. Half of the money raised from the sales goes to two charities that have helped Amelie's brother George, who has complex special needs.

The rest of the proceeds from the sales are put away in a trust fund when Amelie is older. *Images: Ms Davina Turnbull*



## AN INFORMATIVE NEW REFERENCE FOR VISITORS



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## THE FAERY BAGPIPE ORIGINS

*The two-holed 'Faery' chanter (restored in 1880) is believed to have been played at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314*



*If the pipes were being played in Scotland by the 14th century, they may have been more or less unknown in the Highlands before about 1400. However, the Gaelic society had its own very rich musical traditions.*

Legend has it that these 'Faery Pipes' were enchanted. Today, all that remains is the chanter, a drone top and a mouthpiece. The original chanter is the only playable part of the bagpipes left of an instrument known to folklorists as the 'Faery Pipes of Kinlochmoidart'.

The 'enchanted' chanter, was reputedly played at Bannockburn in 1314. These pipes are normally kept in a special case in the West Highland Museum at Fort William in Lochaber.

However, they made a rare appearance at a clan gathering in July 2018 at the World Gathering of MacIntyres in Oban, Tayside, Argyll and only the fourth time they had been played in 200 years.

It has also been claimed that the chanter has never been played in a battle which has been lost and is believed to be the oldest Highland pipe chanter in existence. It was hand-made by a MacIntyre piper more than 800 years ago. A further distinction which is claimed on its behalf, is that it is the first chanter ever to be made with sound holes.



The story goes that the MacIntyre's piper had just made his own new chanter, when in a dream, a fairy came to him and said: 'Heat up your poker until it's white hot and pierce the bottom of your chanter side to side and it will make the sweetest sound in all Scotland'.

When the original Faery Pipes chanter is examined closely, the holes look as though they were in fact, burned by a poker.



*The inscription plaque is a later addition. How the pipes came to be known as 'of Kinlochmoidart' is still not very clear.*



*HISTORIC SCOTLAND AROUND THE BORDERS . . .***TURBULANT SOUTHERN BORDERS HISTORY IN BRIEF***Continued from Page 1*

Research into the historical development of the named sites in the valley has been complicated by the uneven spread of the past historiography. Whilst there is a nineteenth-century family history of the Rutherford family – of variable reliability and quality – the other family whose presence was well established along the Rule Water, the **Turnbells**, has not been the subject of systematic study.

This unevenness in the secondary record has rendered it difficult to secure an overview understanding of the main historical trends or even to catch sight of some of the key properties and the descent of property holding.

In that redistribution, much of the local heritage in the Borders passed into the hands of Sir James Douglas, lord of Douglas, and his successors, but following the outbreak of the second phase of Anglo-Scottish conflict in 1332/3 the Rule Valley lay in that part of southern Scotland that was taken into English hands by gift of King Edward Balliol and the Bruce-supporting Douglasses were dispossessed, at least in theory. It was not until Jedburgh Castle was retaken in 1409 that Douglas control over the lordship of Bedrule was secured and consolidated.

It was through Douglas patronage that the **Turnbells** seem to have secured a substantial piece of landed property that was to form the basis of their barony of Bedrule into the seventeenth century.

Although it remained under the over-arching superior lordship of the Douglas earls into the middle of the fifteenth century, the **Turnbells** began to settle Bedrule with their own kinsmen, providing for junior branches of their expanding family with portions of the greater territory. In this period after 1409, therefore, that the fragmentation into the multiple smaller holdings gathered pace.

While the above introduction provides only a bare bones narrative for the period down to c.1450, the historical record for the four centuries after 1100 upon which it is based, is extremely fragmentary and enables only a bare narrative of ownership at the top levels of the landholding hierarchy to be seen.

While greater depth can be added to discussion of the emergence of the parish units in the valley and some indication of the overall landholding patterns, the physical landscape of lordship and especially the residences that formed the centres of administrative, economic and judicial power locally can barely be glimpsed.

Much can be implied from the fragments, but the results will always remain conjectural. Consequently, the discussion that follows the early period is focused on the post-1500 period, when the documentary record becomes slightly more abundant and the spread of forms of evidence – letters and reports as well as charters of landholding – and permit us to see the local structures of settlement and lordship with slightly more clarity.

The emphasis, however, is on slightly, for despite deeply-entrenched local – and relatively modern traditions, the castles and towers of the valley remain largely elusive. The next section addresses that question of tradition and tackles the historiography of the Rule valley, from its first emergence in the narrative histories



Photo: Roger Curtis

*View from the Bedrule Castle floor North-west toward Minto*

of the later sixteenth century down to the later twentieth century.

It explores the nature of the presentation of the valley and its reputation and examines how the later eighteenth and earlier nineteenth-century accounts have influenced more modern local traditions and wider popular perceptions of a profoundly militarised landscape stretching from Spittal-on-Rule south to Wauchope and the head of the valley.

The following section works through the record evidence for the places of importance in the valley that have left an impression in the formal documentation, looking to construct outline histories for the identifiable sites. Wherever possible, specific references to buildings are highlighted, but in most cases the formulaic and usually legalistic formats of the sources are concerned with the generalities of what comprised the social entity of a landed estate and the building at its core is often present as little more than a concept rather than a physical reality.

While several of the properties identified as Tancred as the location of a tower or castle have yielded no evidence for such a structure, there are others within the valley or in the baronies that lay around it, that have evidence for important defensive provision.

The final section comprises an appendix of documentary material from which this analysis has been assembled and a series of brief observations on the pre-1500 period from primary sources.

*Thanks are due to The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, the Scottish Borders Council and The Campaign for a Scottish Borders National Park for co-funding the project, and to Roger Curtis of HES for advice.*

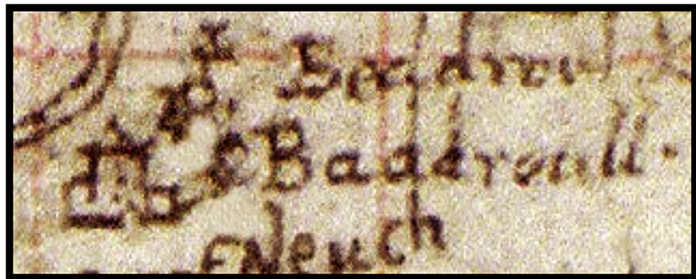
*Continued extracts from the Full Report on historical Bedrule Castle and Fast Castle on the following pages . . .*





## HISTORIC SCOTLAND AROUND THE BORDERS . . .

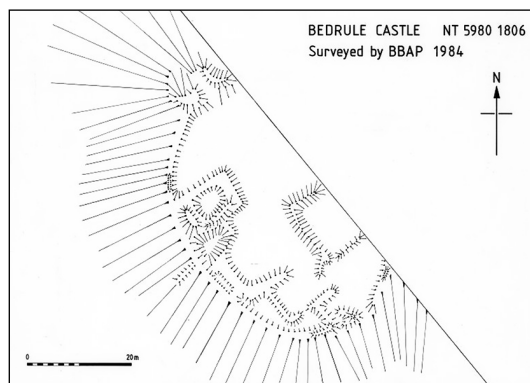
## BEDRULE CASTLE &amp; FAST CASTLE HISTORICAL LINKS



*With the feasibility studies being undertaken, the Bedrule research report findings are of particular historical interest . . .*

This site on the east bank of the river is presumably the tower marked on Pont's map to the SW of the parish church rather than to the NW and is represented by a tower with garret and annexes, plus the adjacent town, the castle referenced in the 1649 description of the district and which by 1795 was identified in the OSA (*Old Statistical Accounts*) as the principal seat locally of the Turnbells.

No early source provides a physical description of the structure to corroborate Pont's drawing, the castle having been reduced to something approximating to its current condition before the end of the eighteenth century. George Tancred's short comment on the castle at Bedrule (*below*) perhaps best sums up the level of historical awareness of this once-important site. 'There existed at one time', he observed, 'a castle of great strength and importance at Bedrule, but little is known concerning it'.



*Surveyed plan of Bedrule Castle by Piers Dixon, 1984*

There is perhaps more that can be said than Tancred believed, but there remains a fundamental shortage of detailed information and, not least, a question mark over whether the headland site to the north-west of the parish church at Bedrule or the motte on the opposite side of the river 100m or so NW of that site is the location of the early castle which formed the caput of the Comyn lordship of Bedrule.

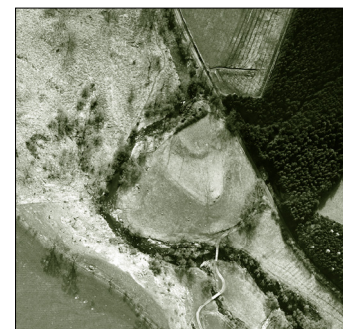
The labelling of the former as the early caput site appears to be based solely on the identification of its remains as being those of a castle of enceinte of late thirteenth-century form.

The discrepancies between the published 1956 account of the form of the remains, a 1967 revisit and subsequent interpretation based on aerial photography, and the 1984 measured drawing by Piers Dixon, raises some doubt over the certainty expressed by



*Fast Castle or Castle Knowe: the massive earthwork of the probable 12th-century motte and bailey on the west side of the Rule Water*

*RCAHMS aerial photography*



the RCAHMS (*Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland*) surveyors in 1946 and the accuracy of their description of an enclosure with multiple round towers.

While the current programme of excavation might yet resolve these issues, there is as yet nothing to suggest that the site at present identified as the later medieval castle of the **Turnbells** occupies the same position as the pre-1300 castle of the Comyns.

It is possible that this early castle of timber and earthwork form was replaced by a new stone-built castle of enclosure on the site that we now know as Bedrule Castle. Without excavation at both sites, this hypothesis cannot be proven with certainty one way or the other.

The earthwork remains on the west side of the river appear to be those of a large motte and bailey of the later twelfth or thirteenth century. There is considerable confusion in most modern accounts of these remains, which have been labelled variously as 'Fast Castle' and 'Castle Knowe', and uncertainty over why such a substantial castle of this form should have been located so close to what was believed to be the caput of the lordship in the later thirteenth century. Short-range transferences of this kind are not unknown.

It is possible that this early castle of timber and earthwork form was replaced by a new stone-built castle of enclosure on the site that we now know as Bedrule Castle. Without excavation at both sites, this hypothesis cannot be proven with certainty one way or the other.

The justification for this argument is based on several conjectures and would require more research into the twelfth- and thirteenth-century landholding patterns of this part of Teviotdale, which goes far beyond the scope of this present investigation. The basis of the argument, however, is set out in the following discussion of the status of the four parishes that in the medieval period encompassed the valley of the Rule Water and adjoining districts.

The juxtaposition of the castle to the parish church of Bedrule might be seen as strengthening the likelihood that this was the location of the lordship centre in the twelfth and earlier thirteenth centuries on the basis that many early lordship centres and parish churches are closely adjacent.

That correlation, however, cannot simply be assumed in this case, for the parish of Bedrule as an independent entity is unrecorded before its appearance as a free parsonage in the schedule of pay-

*Continued on Page 8*



## HISTORIC SCOTLAND AROUND THE BORDERS . . .

## BEDRULE CASTLE &amp; FAST CASTLE HISTORICAL LINKS

*Continued from Page 7*

ments taken by the papal tax-collector, Master Baiamund, in the last quarter of the thirteenth century.

Given that the pattern of Scottish parishes in southern Scotland was still only crystallising in the 1100s, it is possible that a separate parish of Bedrule only gained independence from a mother-church (*possibly Hobkirk*) in the second half of the 12th century.

The fact that this parish then remained what is termed a 'free parsonage', *i.e.* it was not annexed to another religious corporation in the way that Abbotrule, Cavers and Hobkirk were, with the presentation of the parish priest remaining in the gift of the lords of Bedrule and their successors into the modern era, is strongly indicative of it having been the creation of those lords.

Certainly, the patronage of the church was acquired by Sir James Douglas when he was gifted Bedrule by King Robert I, which indicates that it had been a right enjoyed by his Comyn predecessors in the thirteenth century.

To extend the conjecture, it is also possible to see the relocation of the caput from the Fast Castle site to the Bedrule Castle site as signalling a wider reorganisation of the Comyn lordship of Bedrule that perhaps better reflected the pattern of population distribution within their territory.

Such a division would explain why the Rutherfords, who held the presentation of the parish church from the fifteenth into the seventeenth century, did not hold the lands of Bedrule along with that patronage right, but did hold the lands of Fast Castle on the west side of Rule Water.

Here, retention of the rights of patronage signalled where the superiority of the lordship of Bedrule lay and points to the abandoned twelfth-century motte at the eastern extremity of Cavers parish as still being the location of the notional caput long after the territories on the east of the river had been disjoined from their control.

That arrangement would explain also why Bedrule Castle could pass out of the hands of the superior lords of Bedrule while the patronage of the parish church did not pass with it. If we accept the above scenario, then the old caput of Bethoc and her husbands lay at Fast Castle, while Bedrule was developed as a residence by the descendants of her Comyn son-in-law.

With the exception of the pre-1300 references and the general confirmations of property holding by the Black Douglasses through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, the castle and lands of Bedrule are almost invisible in the historical record before the sixteenth century. References renders it difficult to determine if the subject-matter is in fact the castle.

Although relatively recent tradition fixes Turnbull possession of Bedrule Castle as established before the 1510 justice ayre led by King James IV, it is only in 1519 that we encounter in George Turnbull a man of that kindred designated as 'of Bedrule'. While we have no grounds to suggest that George was the first of his kindred to hold this property.



Photo: Roger Curtis

*A view of the Bedrule Castle mound area looking north*

That the Turnbull barony of Bedrule was centred on a castle or residence, there has been a long-established tradition, based on the series of reports to the English king and his administration of the September 1545 raid into Teviotdale by a detachment of the English army commanded by the Earl of Hertford, led by Sir Richard Bowes.

That report has left us with an account that has been seen as indicating the extent of the Turnbull possessions along Rule Water. This account forms the basis for Tancred's reference to 'twelve castles' down the length of the Rule Water, yet at no point in any of these detailed accounts are either the Turnbells' specific properties in the valley identified or any castles/towers mentioned. All four of the English narratives refer simply to 'towns' and other economic infrastructure. The idea of 'twelve castles' is Tancred's alone.

The first of these accounts is Hertford's personal report to Henry VIII, that a detailed list of the places burned down the Rule valley as set out, stated that, On the water of Rowle: - Rowle Spittell, Bedrowle, Rowlewood, the Wolles, Crossebewghe, Donnerles, Fetton, Weast Leas, two walke mylnes, Tromyhill, Dupligis.

Importantly, the raid up the Rule Water shows that English efforts in the immediately preceding years to secure at least the acquiescence of families like the Turnbells had been largely a failure.

It appears that in the preparations for the English campaign into Scotland that had been drawn up in 1543, intended to press home the advantage gained after the defeat of the Scottish army at Solway Moss in November 1542 and the death of King James V three weeks later, the Turnbells (*and the Rutherfords*) were regarded as well-disposed towards the English, likely to support the invasion.

The campaign proposal, indeed, went so far as to suggest that the Turnbells, Rutherfords and other chief families of the region could be used to drive out the Kerrs, who were likely to mount the strongest opposition to the English army. The Turnbells had certainly proven favourable to this approach and had given pledges of their faith in the form of hostages, who were housed at the expense of the English warden. As 'assured' supporters of Henry VIII, the Turnbull lands were to be spared if and when an invasion occurred.

These assurances proved to be of little value by 1545, as Hertford's raid illustrated, and completely broke down.

*Continued on Page 9*



## HISTORIC SCOTLAND AROUND THE BORDERS . . .

# HISTORIC BEDRULE RESEARCH

*Concluding from Page 8*

When a truce had been settled in November 1546, the Turnbolls continued to launch raids into Northumberland and it required Sir Richard Bowes to launch a punitive counter-raid into the Rule valley to quieten them. No details of this attack's targets – other than Turnbolls in general – are provided in the report.

Amongst properties burned on the south side of the Teviot were Denholm, Spittal(-on-Rule), Rule (*probably Bedrule*) Langton and Newton. In all cases, Bulmer described the properties as 'touns' and made no reference specifically to castles taken or destroyed by his men.

Sixteenth-century references to Bedrule Castle do appear to refer to the property possessed by the Turnbolls on the east side of the river just north of the church, but there is a question mark over the pre-1300 caput's location. Only excavation can confirm if this building was the location of a new caput provided for the lordship in the great shake-up in property-holding that followed the Bruce victory in the first wars. In that redistribution, much of the Comyn heritage in the Borders passed into the hands of Sir James Douglas, lord of Douglas, and his successors.

As a concluding point, it is important to bear in mind always that the barony of Bedrule was more extensive than the lands immediately surrounding Bedrule itself, as the preceding ratification makes clear, comprising not just the ancient Comyn and Douglas lordship territories, but also additional properties that had been brought into Rutherford and Turnbull possession in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.



*Recent excavation at Bedrule castle site, recording old wall remains*

Reference to castles, towers, fortalices and houses 'in the barony' of Bedrule does not mean that these were located in the neighbourhood of the parish church and 'toun' of Bedrule, or even in the valley of the Rule proper.

Amongst the prominent places within the lordship of Rule but located outside the valley on the north side of the Teviot, Barnhills appears as a significant Turnbull-held property in the middle of the sixteenth century, but with no clear reference to a lordly residence located there. It is named in royal letters dated 28 September 1564, sent to a suite of lairds in the Middle March region to remind them of their duties to uphold law and order there.

At that date, it was held by George Turnbull 'of Barnhills'. The manner of designation indicates that he was a gentleman of substance, known by his property name, but not of lairdly status.

**Full Report:** <https://www.scottishbordersnationalpark.com>

## THE CAPON OAK 'HANGING TREE'



The Middle Ages were brutal times, and the way of life was still harsh. Reiving was not only a way of life, but another way to thumb their noses at the authorities who tried to control the clans.

The aristocracy, who had tried to stop the border reiving (*a combination of raiding and theft*) for many years, frowned on the practice. Laws were implemented, but were ignored. Reiving continued to cause unrest among the population along the border area in Scotland.

The Turnbull's were notorious reivers who ignored the laws of the King. They were indeed a rowdy bunch who had little or no respect for the laws. However, they were not the only clan of reivers.

In 1510, King James IV of Scotland tried to solve the problem of reiving. The story is recorded that the King hung every tenth Turnbull, in an attempt to halt the practice of border reiving. Some 200 clansmen who faced the King at the Capon Tree were either imprisoned or hanged. This action by King James caused many clans to flee Scotland completely. Many a Turnbull wife was left as a widow and many children were left fatherless.



The Capon Oak Tree is more than a thousand years old and one of the last surviving trees of the ancient Jedforest, close to Jed Water, a small river which has cut a course below the soft sandstone cliffs.

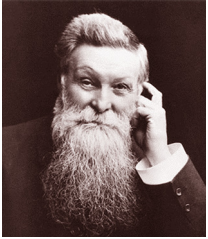
Located 2 miles (3.2 km) south of Jedburgh and west of the A68. The Capon Tree today is held together with concrete with bricks and timber beams supporting its trunk and branches. This is due to a massive split down the middle of the trunk. Yet, the tree continues to grow.

Trees are being replanted in the Borders to establish a renewal of the ancient 'Caledon Wood,' or great northern forest, which included Ettrick Forest and Jedforest.



# SCOTTISH INVENTIONS – THE PNEUMATIC RUBBER TYRE

Researched and compiled by Kenneth Turnbull



**John Boyd Dunlop**

*Scottish entrepreneurs, geniuses and eccentric inventors and their ability to think outside the square, have helped to change our everyday lives throughout the world for the better. Here is another example of Scottish ingenuity with imaginative foresight that ultimately influenced the developing world.*



**Robert W. Thompson**

It is hard to imagine driving a vehicle today without rubber tyres, something we take for granted. Almost every vehicle in the world now uses pneumatic tyres however, this development came in two stages, both by Scottish inventors. In the 1830's the problems of road travel were of concern. It was bumpy and uncomfortable and needed some improvement.

In 1839, a new process called Vulcanisation added sulphur to rubber to make it pliable but not sticky. This was the turning point for change. Robert William Thompson, a Scottish merchant's son from Stonehaven, a self-taught civil engineer and entrepreneur, saw a use for this material to improve the efficiency and comfort of horse-drawn carriages. He came up with the idea of creating a cushion of air between a vehicle's wheels and the road.

In 1845, he successfully applied for a patent for a pneumatic rubber tyre (arial wheel) and his subsequent tests in Hyde Park in London, proved the efficiency of his invention. However, his patent for the pneumatic tyre remained in the background for many years, because he was unable to afford the commercial costs of developing his ideas any further.

Then in 1887, Scottish born John Boyd Dunlop from Ayrshire, decided to put a cushion of air between the road and the wheels of vehicles. The idea came when he watched his son jarring uncomfortably on his trike and realised that this idea would improve the ride considerably. He demonstrated his innovation to the public and applied for a patent for a pneumatic rubber tyre, only to have it rejected.

Undaunted, he took the innovation to a new level by adding valves and made wheel rims to fit the tube for which he patented. He also established a firm known as Dunlop Rubber Company, which has now become a household name throughout the world. So, it can be argued that it was two Scottish inventors who created the pneumatic rubber tyre.

Pneumatic tyres first appeared on the market in Scotland in 1895, coinciding with the appearance of the first car.



**A worker at the recently opened Dunlop Factory in Cork slicing rubber for tyres**



## TOTALLY TURNBULL

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