

The following is an extract from “A Directory and Concise History of Berwick upon Tweed” compiled by James Good (1744 – 1812) and dated 1806. Although principally dealing with Berwick it covers an area of about twelve miles around Berwick and therefore has a section on Ayton. The book is very rare but thanks to Berwick History Society a facsimile has been produced and the following has been taken from that publication.

AYTON

This is the most pleasant situation of any Village that I know of: it is situate on the Water Eye, and well stored with plantations, shrubbies and lofty trees, and has two Bridges, the old and the new. It lies nearly North-east and South-west. The houses in general, are very neat, and feued for 199 years, from John Fordyce, Esq. the proprietor of the estate.

The Kirk is on the South side of the Water Eye, the Rev. Mr Home, Minister: Also a Burgher Meeting-house, well filled with hearers, the Rev. Mr Ewer, Minister; and an Anti-Burgher Meeting- house, the Rev. Mr. Wilson, Minister.

There are two Schools in this village: The first is the Kirk-school, kept by Mr White, who is also a County-bailiff. The other by Mr Sherriff. It is a Subscription-school. There is a large Bleach-green for Linen Cloth, by Mr Brodie, on the water Eye.

There are six Publicans and Spirit Merchants in this village:

Mr J. Knox, Publican and Stabler

Mr R. Liddell, Spirit and Porter Merchant.

Mr John Anderson, Spirit and Porter ditto

Mr George Whitley, Cross Keys

Mrs McMillan, General Howe

Mr William Dickson, King’s Arms.

And five Merchants, who sell Cloths, Muslins, Groceries, &c. &c. viz. Mr R. Liddell, Mr A. Lyall, Mr Dodds, Mr Thomas Dickson, and J. Scougal, Auctioneer.

Mr Delegaty and Mr Patterson, Bakers. –

Two Butchers, who kill regularly every week. — George Cow, James Henderson,

Thomas Johnson, Peter Kerr, Carpenters, and Henry Youll, Millwright.

The Post-Office, kept by Mr Thompson.

Doctor Veitch, Surgeon.

This Village has one fine Company of Volunteers, who are all well disciplined.

There are two Fairs, yearly.

From Ayton to Eyemouth is two miles and an half: At the halfway bridge stands Mill-Bank, Robert Kerr, Esq. proprietor. He has a capital Paper-Mill, supplied by the Water Eye: but the water is often scarce in dry Summers. This Mill has excellent machinery, and is capable of executing a great quantity of work every week, when a sufficiency of water is at hand.