

EMBLETON – A PICTORIAL HISTORY

1931 – 1940

In August 1931 nine boys from the 1st Embleton Scout Troop went away to camp at Bendibus Haugh beside the river Tweed. This was the first time the Embleton scouts had camped so far from home. The camp site was shared by a large group of the 18th, 19th and 24th Midlothian Girl Guides who camped 200 yards further up river. 25 year old Percy Adams was a lay preacher at Embleton church and founder and scoutmaster of the Embleton scout troop. He was in charge of the scout camp. Shortly after mid-day on August 6th the scouts were playing in the river and Percy was watching from a small boat. Suddenly 11 year old Albert Butters from Craster was swept away and his brother William, aged 14, tried to help him. Percy jumped into the river and grabbed the two boys but the boys went under dragging Percy with them and all three disappeared from view.

Scouts ran to the Girl Guides' camp and the guides came with a rope. One of the guides, Margaret Taylor, was tied to the rope and searched under the water whilst another, Miss Dalgetty, repeatedly dived into the river. Despite the fact the rope snapped Margaret went in time and time again after it was repaired but the scouts were not found. The police arrived and dragged the river but the bodies were not found until late afternoon by fishermen. All three were together so it appears that Percy held onto the boys to the end without thought of saving himself. For their attempt to save Albert, both Percy Adams and William Butters were awarded the Scouts highest award, the bronze cross. They also received a Carnegie Hero trust certificate plus an award of £50. Percy was buried in Tibshelf, Derbyshire, where he was born, and there are memorial plaques in both Embleton and Craster churches. The funeral of the two scouts took place at Embleton.



A Bolton Brothers Leyland Lion bus in its blue and cream livery bound for Newcastle in about 1932. The bus is parked outside Bolton's garage next to the school. John Bolton, born in 1882, was a shoemaker in the village who graduated from a horse and trap 'taxi' to his first bus (with solid tyres) about 1923. This was soon replaced with a larger charabanc and a second was purchased shortly afterward. Apart from regular services to Newcastle they operated tours around Northumberland. In 1928 three new Leyland buses were purchased to run a regular service to Newcastle, the journey taking approximately two hours. Boltons was the first bus company to have a stand in the Haymarket Newcastle but were absorbed by United in 1936.



The Embleton Feast. 'A brass band from Amble formed up at Sunny Brae and marched around the village'. Taken about 1932 the band is passing the side of the Blue Bell Inn and approaching the Greys. At this time there were stalls stretching from the schoolhouse to Sunny Brae selling homemade foodstuff and produce. The races, which included children from the school, were keenly competitive and were run round the village. The Feast continued to be held up until about 1940 and although it was revived after WW II it quickly died out.



Dunstanburgh Castle Hotel, Embleton. 9609.

An unused Monarch (R.Johnson & Sons Newcastle Works Gateshead) series postcard No. 9609. Bolton's garage with petrol pumps can be seen beyond the three cottages (which now form one house) in this photograph taken about 1934. At this time the main entrance to the hotel was through the door on Front Street.



A 1935 pen and ink drawing by A.E. Macleod on a plain letter postcard sent to Mr Child in Ponteland Newcastle postmarked Embleton 1942. Message :- ‘Very sorry I cannot get to the 1937 club on March 20. It was jolly seeing Austin last week. Please thank him for his letter. All good wishes A.Macleod’. The ‘Turrus de Emyldon’ is included in the 1415 census of fortified houses. It was probably intended as a ‘solar’ of a medieval dwelling rather than a pele tower. It was fortified around 1450 when the vicar was granted a license to crenelate and the ground floor was strengthened. In Tudor times mullioned windows were added in the north eastern elevation. The comparatively modern house to which the tower is attached, grew in several stages starting in the late 18th century. The most substantial part of the present house dates from 1828 and was designed by John Dobson the celebrated Newcastle architect. A fine conservatory was also added about this time. It is one of only three fortified vicarages in the county.



A card by E.T.W.Dennis & Sons Ltd London & Scarborough sent to Mr Keen in Whittingham with blurred postmark. Message :- 'Well dad I arrived safe hope you are getting on alright hope to see you at Alnmouth. Love EK'.



An unattributed postcard sent to Mrs Smithson in Sunderland postmarked Alnwick August 1936. Message 'c/o Mrs Scott North Villas Embleton. Dear Mother & T. Thanks so much for cards. We are pleased to hear Mother is getting on alright. We have been here three weeks, the weather has been glorious lately. Eileen & George are brown as berries. We are looking forward to seeing you soon. Love Fred & Hilda'.

According to advertising copy of the day the Villas, built in 1911, were the beginning of a development overlooking the sea, the Golf Links and Embleton Bay. The first four houses were completed as part of a crescent but the scheme then stopped for some reason – possibly the start of the War. Each house was advertised as having a Drawing Room, Dining Room, Four Bedrooms, Child's Room, Kitchen, Scullery, Larder, Outhouse, Bath Room and Garden. The picture is probably from about 1930.



The Stephenson family had a long connection as tradespeople in Embleton. In 1827 Andrew (shopkeeper) and John (tailor) were working in the village. Twenty years later Robert (aged 31) was a tailor and grocer whilst Peter (aged 53) and John (aged 25) were tailors. By 1861 only Robert and John are listed. In 1879 Robert is still listed as a tailor but John (aged 57) is now licensee at the Star Inn located close to the Greys Inn. In 1891 John (aged 21) was a grocer (but living in the Star Inn) and Robert (aged 28) a tailor. Ten years later Jane Stephenson (aged 70) was licensee of the Star whilst John (aged 31) is listed as grocer, tailor and shopkeeper. Finally in 1910 only John was still working in Embleton as a tailor and grocer. This photograph, taken in the late 1930's shows another generation John Stephenson in his shop doorway.