

Whiteadder

CHURCHES, CASTLES AND BRIDGES



With drawings and notes by Professor Brian Edwards

INTRODUCTION

This sketchbook documents a small selection of architecture from the beautiful landscape surrounding the Whiteadder river.

Professor Brian Edwards is the author of Understanding Architecture through Drawing. He lives in Duns and has documented the architecture of the Whiteadder area through his pen and ink sketches of architectural subjects, mainly of the 16th to 19th century, with emphasis on churches, castles and bridges.

We hope that you enjoy this series and that it entices you to come and explore this part of Berwickshire in the Scottish Borders.

CHURCHES

The Reformation was not kind to the early Christian churches in the Whiteadder Valley. Those that survive exist as either fragmentary remains within existing churchyards (as at Bunkle and Edrom) or as insignificant areas of carved stonework within new and much enlarged later churches (as at Chirnside).

The early Christian architecture in the area which does remain is of interest, however, and shows the links which existed with major religious centres such as Durham and Glasgow Cathedrals. Generally speaking the surviving Christian structures are Romanesque in form and detail. Such is their strong architectural character and historic associations that many 19th century churches are built in similar style.



BUNKLE CHURCH

What remains is a semi-circular apse from an earlier church built around 1150. It exists as a freestanding structure within the Bunkle Parish Churchyard. Of note is the stone vaulted roof and wide Norman doorway.



BUNKLE CHURCH
BRIAN EDWARDS
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CHIRNSIDE CHURCH

Although the plan of the 12th century survives nearly all the visible architecture is of the 19th century. However, the inner doorway with its chevron decoration and column shafts from around 1150 survive later rebuilding. To their credit the later architects respected the Romanesque character of the old church in their reconstruction.



CHIRNSIDE CHURCH
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CRANSHAWS CHURCH

The current parish church was built in 1739 and enlarged in 1899 to replace the old parish church of the 13th century whose remains can still be seen just south of Cranshaws Tower. The present church is Romanesque in style to reflect the original but more lavish and inventive both inside and out.



CASTLES

Being so close to the English border, the Whiteadder Valley was much fought over in the past. Most large estates required castles for defensive purposes. These were not only needed to house families but also livestock and provisions. As a result the castles and tower houses are generally tall with space for animals on the ground floor and people above.

Architecturally, all were built of stone (though often with timber predecessors) with vaulted lower floors, large fireplaces and narrow windows. Many have defensive ramparts or were built in positions of natural fortification (such as Hutton Castle). Sadly many of the castles today are forlorn ruins in the Border landscape, often hidden by trees or in inaccessible locations. Those that survive, such as Duns Castle, have been much extended, often to the detriment of their archaeological interest. However, these newer castles are significant features in the Whiteadder landscape with many built in the Scotch Baronial style. As such they evoke the spirit of the past, often on a lavish scale.



CRANSHAWS TOWER

This interesting survivor is a fortified tower house built in the late 15th century. It has rounded corners to deter dismantling under attack and a crenelated parapet. The windows originally had external shutters. Inside there is a lofty medieval hall.

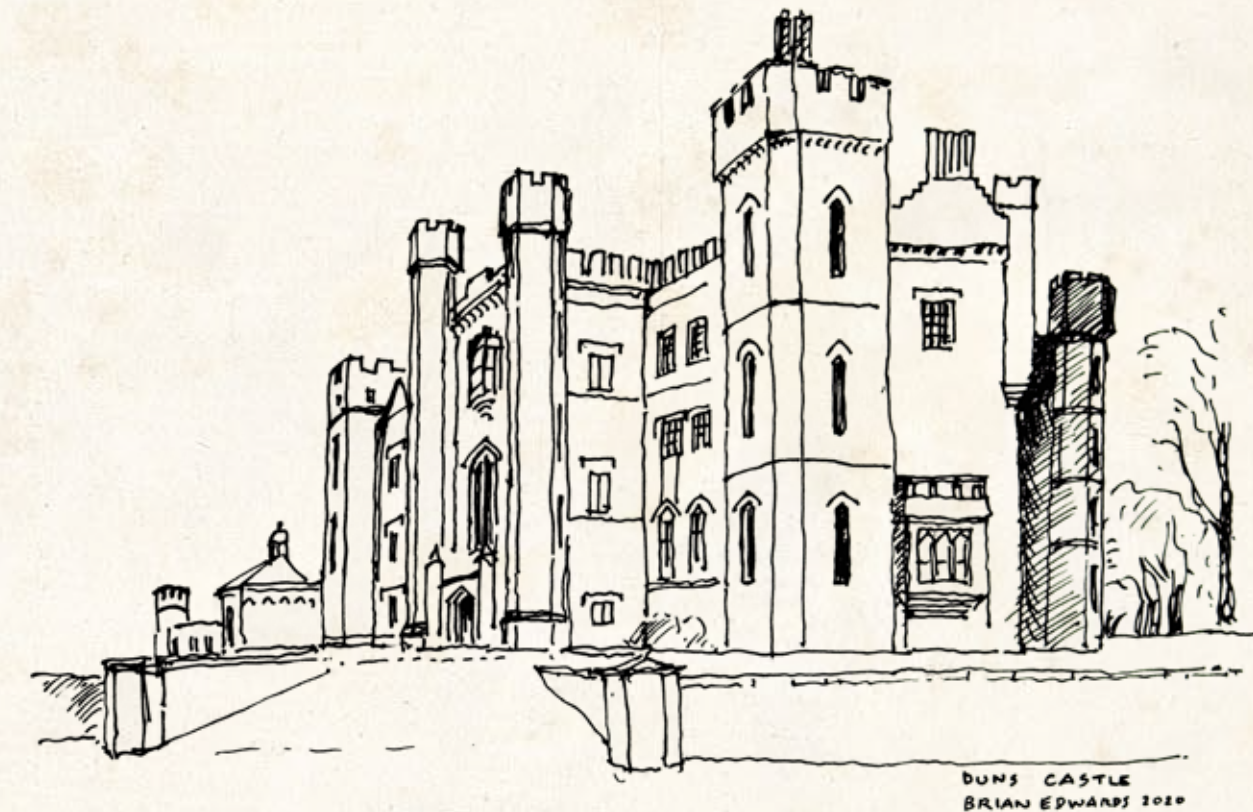
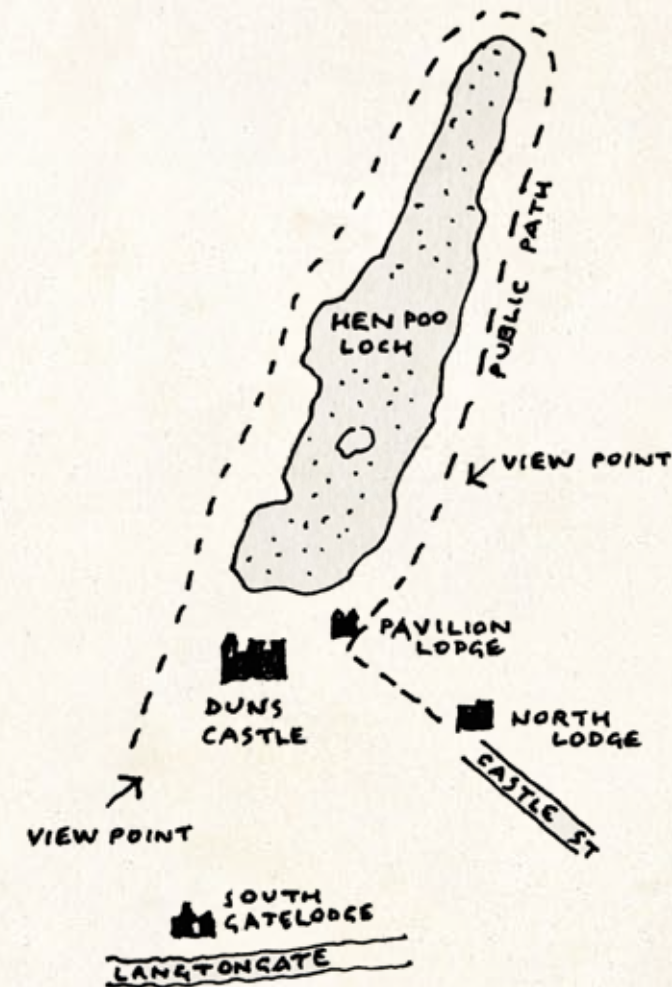


CRANSHAWS TOWER
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DUNS CASTLE

Celebrating its 700th year in 2020, Duns Castle was the home of the Dunbar Earls of March, built as an 'L' shaped tower house in 1320. Parts are still visible as the south east wing of the much enlarged Scotch Baronial castle designed around 1820 by the eminent architect James Gillespie Graham (who also designed Ayton Castle).

Today Duns Castle is a large fairy tale house with crenelated roof, gothic windows and extensive castellation. Besides the castle, there are gate lodges in similar style all set in a delightful wooded estate. Duns Castle was used as a pretend Balmoral Castle in the 1991 film Mrs Brown.



HUTTON CASTLE

Built above a steep escarpment on the south side of the Whiteadder Water, Hutton Castle was a medieval tower house extended in 1532 to form a defensive 'L' shaped castle.

After much neglect it was rescued in 1916 by the Glasgow ship owner and connoisseur Sir William Burrell who, using the architect Robert Lorimer and later Reginald Fairlie, rebuilt and extended the castle. Some of the original features can be seen at the Burrell Museum in Glasgow.



BRIDGES

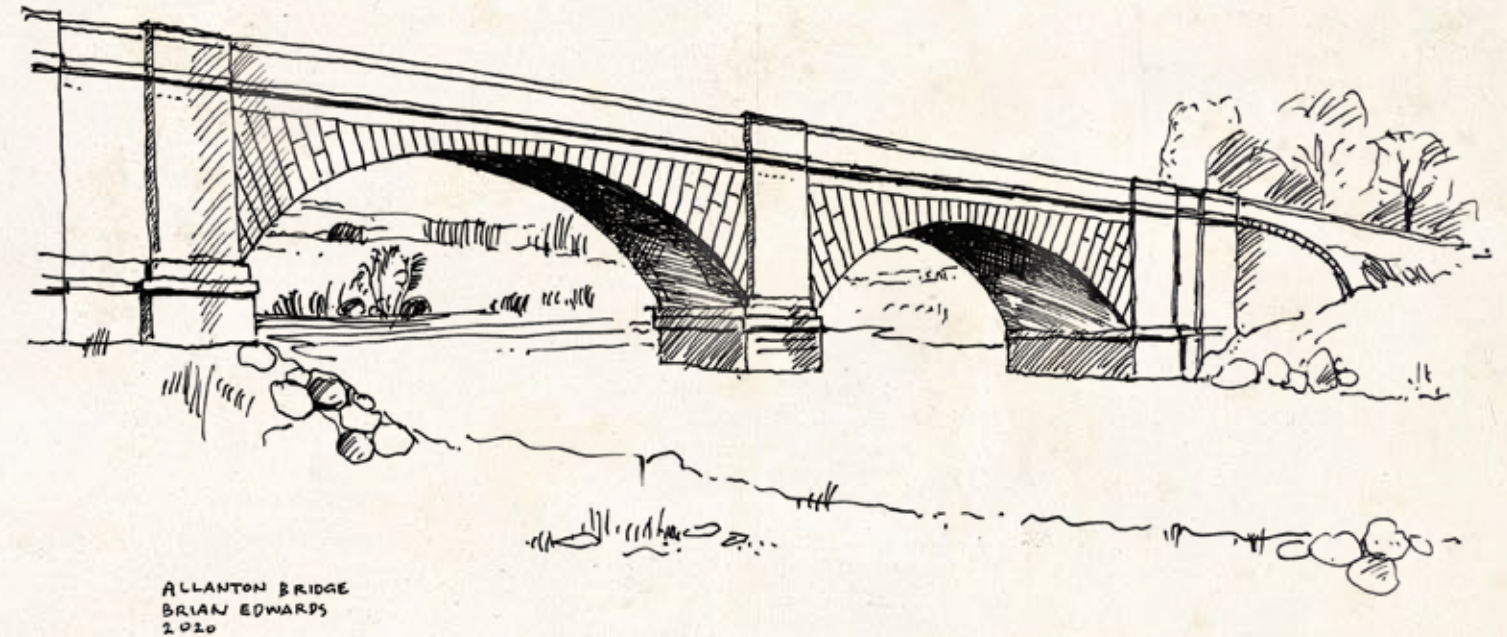
Until the 18th century the Whiteadder Water was a significant barrier to movement. Admittedly, there were fording places but these were weather dependent and widely spaced.

The Age of Enlightenment in Scotland (from around 1750) generated many improvements to agriculture and rural transport. This in turn led to the building of bridges over the Whiteadder of which at least six exist from this period. Mostly designed after 1770, they are built of local sandstone and form an important element in the landscape. Being designed to consistent standards of width, engineering practice and materials, the bridges have remarkable consistency.



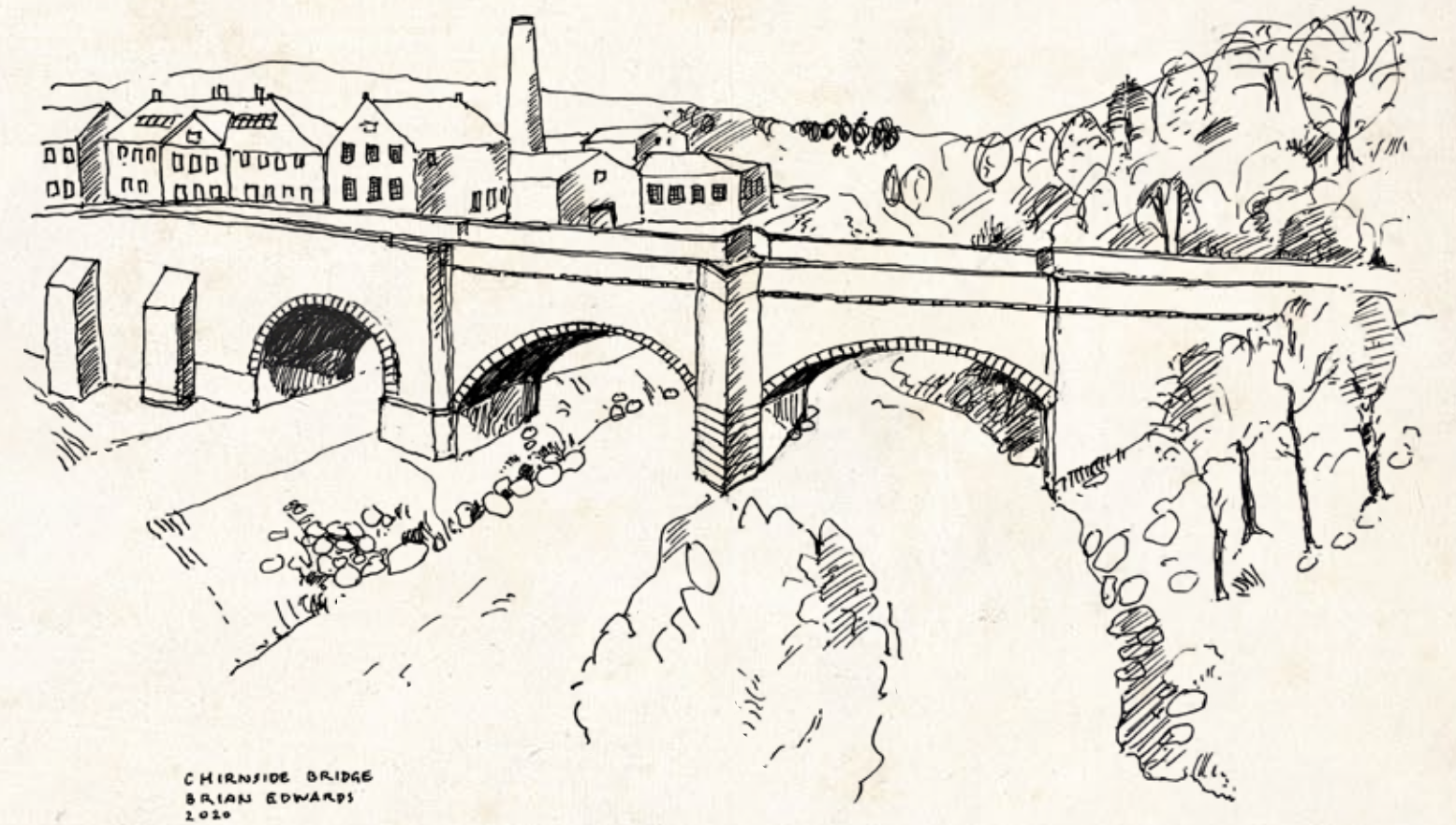
ALLANTON BRIDGE

Dated 1841, this stylish bridge was designed by Robert Stevenson and Sons to cross the Whiteadder Water at its junction with the Blackadder Water. Two long segmental arches picked out with exaggerated voussoirs span the Whiteadder. Round cutwaters with wide pilasters above complete an elegant composition.



CHIRNSIDE BRIDGE

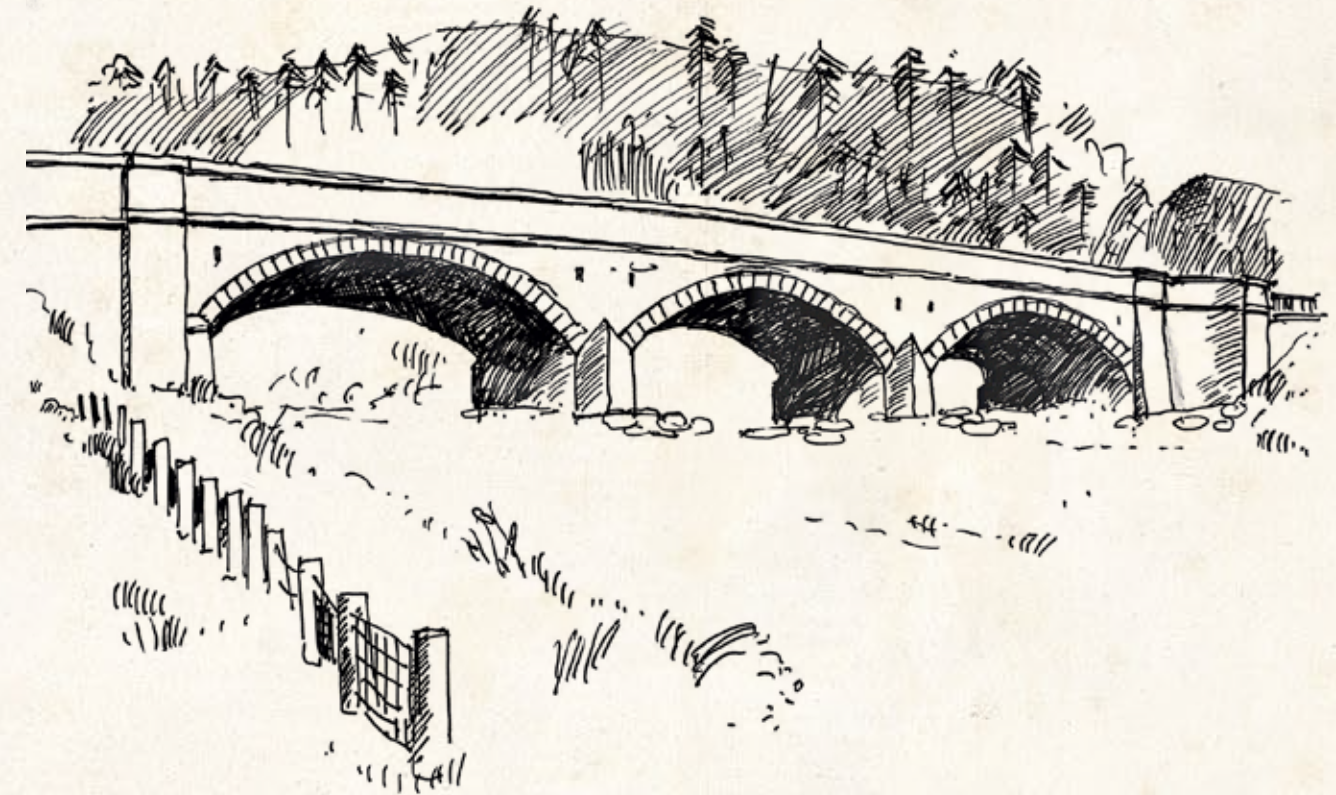
Built in 1782, the bridge has two segmental arches and a semi-circular flood arch to help protect the nearby paper mill begun in 1742. Now bypassed by the concrete David Hume Bridge built in 1968, the earlier bridge has triangular pedestrian refuges at mid span.



CHIRNSIDE BRIDGE
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2020

ELLEMFORF BRIDGE

Three segmental sandstone arches span the Whiteadder with bullet shaped cutwaters. Built around 1880, the voussoirs are picked out in dressed stone to highlight the bold engineering of this conspicuous bridge.



ELLEMFORF BRIDGE
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