



# Stow Parish Archive

## Newsletter

### August 2008

This month's newsletter brings some news stories from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century that relate to the waters that run through our parish.

#### **August 29<sup>th</sup> 1878 – Eel Hunt**

On the evening of Wednesday last week a number of our villagers who are fond of sport turned up for a night of expectation on the Gala water at what is termed an "eel hunt". A good many spectators including summer visitors accompanied the sportsmen. The Gala was "burned" with lights from the Bow tunnel up to Stow. There were four pairs of eel shears, wielded by willing hands, but owing to the weather conditions the first of the eels did not come out of their hiding places so freely as on former occasions. A good bag was however taken, some of the eels being of a very large dimension. It is a matter of doubt whether there are as many eels in the river now as formerly.

#### **1884 - Poaching**

At Edinburgh Sheriff court Edward Hedley was sentenced to four months hard labour for poaching at Borthwick Bank, Stow.

#### **August 1st 1888 - Pollution of stream**

About a fortnight ago our attention was called in a local paper to the poisoning of the Lugate Water by shepherds emptying their dipping troughs into the stream, whereby hundreds of fine trout were killed. We now request to have to give notice of sadder results from this dangerous practice. Several

persons have had narrow escapes from being poisoned by using the water. One, a fisher belonging to the village became very ill after drinking it and medical aid had to be called for before he recovered. Some children who had been playing on the banks of the stream where it passes Lugate Farm, a couple of miles below where the dipping operations took place drank the water and were taken ill.

One of them only four years of age, daughter of Robert Torrie, ploughman, Lugate has succumbed to the effects of poison. Surely this should lead to some steps being taken to put a stop to this scandalous and dangerous practice.

The funeral of this young girl was delayed by order of the fiscal to afford time for a post-mortem examination by the authorities.

#### **August 9<sup>th</sup> 1888 Lugate Burn Case**

The following appeared in Monday's Scotsman. August 6<sup>th</sup> 1888, Sir, In justice to those gentlemen whose sheep-washing operations in Lugate Water have led to the suspicion that the death of a child at Lugate Farm was occasioned thereby, it is right to state that a post mortem examination and chemical analysis have found that there is no ground for believing that this death was in any way attributable to the ingredients employed in a dip. I am, etc, J. Middleton M.D.

#### **1899 – Tramp in water**

The body of a man was discovered in the Gala Water near Fountainhall. The deceased was identified as a tramp who had given his name as William Martin and described himself as an old soldier belonging to the Devonshire Regiment.

**Please come along to the Town Hall on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> August from 7.30 onwards and help us add to the Archive. We can copy any photos or documents or we can simply make notes on any memories that you have that would be of interest. Remember that we will be holding events later in the year and we will give you details as soon as we can.**