

## Extracts from 19<sup>th</sup> century local newspapers relating to the Harvest

**HARVEST** - The harvest in our neighbourhood was resumed on Wednesday, having been interrupted by the heavy rains of Saturday and Sunday. On that day the demand for shearers was very great, and consequently the parties who attended for hire at the gate got high wages 3s 6d and some as high as 4s each. The weather, with the exception of some heavy showers during Wednesday night, has continued dry, and the farmers have busily improved the opportunity. The crops everywhere are much beaten down, which causes the work of reaping to be very laborious. In many fields the green weeds are sprouting at the roots of the corn; but if the weather continues fair, the crop will be cut down before these reach the height of the sickle, and thus escape being gathered with the grain.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
21st September 1839

**THE HARVEST** – The general harvest in this neighbourhood commenced with the present week and for the first three days proceeded uninterruptedly. Hiring at the gate has been good, and wages on the first two days were 3s for women and 3s 6d for men; on the third day they were 2s 6d for the former and 3s for the latter. Yesterday, however, was a blank day in the harvest, as rain fell until the afternoon. This morning the weather was favourable and clearer again in demand when an increase to former wages was made. The fears which have been occasioned by the non-arrival of the usual number of Irish people are not likely to be long felt and parties of these work people are now arriving daily and are readily meeting with engagements. There was a demand for shearers in our market on Saturday, but the high wages demanded by the work people present prevented a general hiring. The few we heard of being hired were at 16s or 17s with victuals for men.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
15<sup>th</sup> August 1846

**THE WEATHER AND CROPS** are at present the cause of much solicitude, and we are happy in being able to join in with the favourable reports which reach us from other districts, and to give a similar account in regard to our own district. Everything around us looks well and promising, and the most favourable anticipations may be indulged for the result. This refers not merely to one description of crop but to all. The pastures never perhaps afforded more delicious and abundant food for the cattle, and these as they graze on the meadow bear evidence of the fact. Some weeks ago doubts were entertained as to the thriving condition of the oat crop, and some fields of these far inland were in consequence ploughed over and another grain sown. This was occasioned by the appearance of a grub which threatened to consume the crop before it came to maturity, and which it was supposed owed its existence to the want of frost in the course of the late winter. Complaints on this head have now, however, almost entirely ceased, and the disease is asserted to be confined in some heavy clayey soils. The potatoes stand well on the field, and so far as appearances indicate are this year to be preserved from disease, and may be expected to yield a plentiful return. The other crops are equally promising, and an early summer having set in, we hope that an abundant and early harvest will crown all our anticipation.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
6th June 1846

**THE HARVEST** - The cutting down of the grain crops has been commenced this week on several farms in our neighbourhood and should the present favourable weather be continued we shall next week have a general harvest. The crops will now rapidly reach maturity and should the labourers be plentiful the work and the harvest is likely to be of short duration. The wheat crop, contrary to the general rule here appears to be the first ready for the sickle and most of the fields already harvested contained that grain. It is reported to be at least an average crop. It is well-headed, and apparently will be gifty although it does not stand thick in the field. Barley and oats also appear to be good crops.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
8th August 1846

## **The Summers and Harvests, 1840 to 1845**

- 1840 A fine warm Summer, with intense heat in August, fair harvest weather. Feed deficient.
- 1841 Fine and warm in May and June, wet and cold in July and beginning of August. Fine harvest weather at the end and in September.
- 1842 Very fine Spring, Summer and Autumn. Harvest not abundant, but excellent grain. Mild Winter.
- 1843 Mild May; tolerable Summer; good harvest. Winter windy. Good times.
- 1844 Very dry. Deficient hay harvest, Autumn fine. Harvest excellent, and beautiful grain. Winter very severe. Frost from October to February 1845.
- 1845 Spring late and cold. Summer not cold but sunless. Harvest beautiful, but deficient in quality.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
16<sup>th</sup> May 1846

### **THE WEATHER AND THE HARVEST**

– Sufficient harvest work remains to be performed to keep up an anxiety respecting the state of the weather. The progress during the past week has been small and tardy in the extreme. Although the weather has been dry still the heavy rind which falls under night required the greater part of the following day to be spent before the grain is sufficiently dry to admit of leading. In this unsatisfactory manner the work proceeds, and we much fear that ten days may yet be required to complete the work of the harvest. As a proof of the damaged state of the crop in this district, we may state that wheat was last Saturday sold in our market at 20s per boll, while we have heard of several samples being offered for sale at one shilling per stone.

*Berwick Journal*  
25th October 1856

**THE HARVEST 1859** - The harvest is now fast approaching completion, the crops, excepting beans, being all cut and stored. The yield is not as great as was at one time anticipated, but the quantity is excellent. Farmers are now crying out for rain for the turnips, which in some parts are looking badly.

*Berwick Journal*  
10th September 1859

**THE WEATHER** still continues more like that experienced in October than that generally found at midsummer. Cold, rain, and high winds, varied only by high winds, rain, and cold, unfortunately prevail, and crops of all kinds are consequently backward. We observe that the grain crops are beginning to shoot, but the rainy weather is very prejudicial to their growth.

*Berwick Journal*  
11th July 1862

**THE HARVEST** in consequence of the variable weather, progresses slowly a great quantity of all kinds of grain being still green and uncut. A few of the fields in this district are cleared, but this is the exception to the general rule. Much of what has been thrashed has turned out to be soft, especially barley; and great fears are entertained that the yield will prove to be below average. We regret to hear that the potato disease has unmistakably shown itself, one gentleman having informed us that of twelve stones which he dug up a few days ago, not over three stones are sound.

*Berwick Journal*  
3rd October 1862

**WEATHER AND CROPS** - A good deal of rain has fallen since last week and the weather has been most unfavourable for harvest operations. The moisture, however, has not done any mischief beyond delaying the cutting and leading of the corn crops; while it has been of great benefit to potatoes, turnips, and pastures. Most of the grain is now cut in our neighbourhood and some farmers Mr. Black, Lanton, and Mr. McCreath, Galagate, Norham amongst them have been fortunate to have their corn all led into the stackyard.

*Berwick Advertiser*  
9th September 1887