



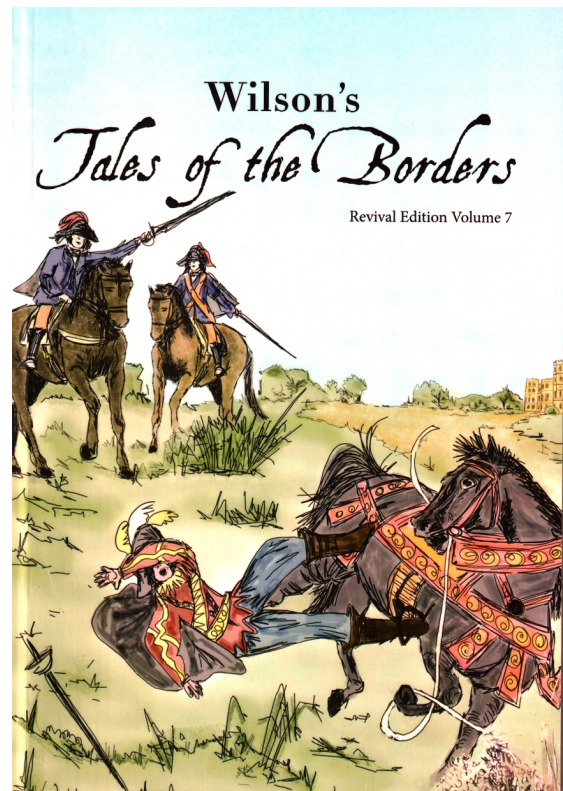
No.67 March 2021

After the year that never was, the Wilson's Tales Project is ready for ever more exciting times ahead. There are all manner of projects and event ideas lined up, and with the conversion to becoming a registered charity, we have more opportunities to extend our Tale telling into more places, and to more people.

The closure of our usual outlets prevented the usual launch event and also closed down events intended for 2020 and 2021. The more encouraging news is that initiatives such as our Radio Play competition, our Literary Dinner, our joint event with the StoryTelling Centre, and a Wilson's Friends group visit to Thirlestane Castle (August 5th) will all be able to go ahead once more.

Leading the charge is a Live event at Berwick's new Radio Rooms on July 2nd (see below)

We're also hoping to tap into pent up demand for Volume7, which launched mostly on time in the Autumn. Outlets were closed, and still are, but our on-line sales are available at [Wilson's Tales shop HERE](#)



## Wilson Went on-Line!

Sunday 8th November saw 'Tales of the Borders' go world-wide, when we delivered '*Intoxicating Tales*' to a capacity audience. around the globe.

Featuring Tales *The Heir of Elphinstone* and *The Pentland Smuggler*, told by Stuart MacHardy, as well as items from other members of the group, our friends at the Berwick Literary Festival provided very professional 'stage management' ensuring a high quality event beamed to around 100 people.

You missed it??

Shame on you, but, thanks to the magic of Internet, now you have a chance to see it again.

Berwick Literary Festival now has its own channel with [videos of the events here](#), so you still have chance to raise a dram to Wilson for 2020. A successful event, inviting us to do more by way of audio visual presentation of the Tales.

## What's coming up?

We are very pleased to welcome new faces to our organising committee. Andrew Leaver and Carol Whinnom each bring enthusiasm and skills, and enable us to broaden our activities, and further our objective of bringing the heritage of Wilson into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. Andrew states "his recent introduction to The Wilson's Tales Project has been akin to finding the end of a rainbow." - well, that's a simile we hadn't heard before!



## Volume 8

is already underway. Our cadre of rewriters has started work, and at least one of the researchers has already completed a companion piece. This volume will be presenting:

*Wilson; What was he like?*

*The Rival Sheriffs*

*Rattling, Roaring Willie*

*The Monk of St Anthony*

*The Lost Heir of Elphinstone*

*The Battle of Dryffe Sands*

*Lord Kaimes Puzzle*

*plus, in default of the usual school writing entries, a selection of our own 100 word Tales, culled from the Literary Dinner items plus other event sources.*

## New Writer

We are also welcoming a new Tale Rewriter to the garret. Tony tells us: "Like many others, I am a descendant of King Robert the Bruce, via two lines. A recent lucky break revealed details of a Sheriff Court alimony hearing in Edinburgh 1848. This confirmed the existence of my great great grandfather, Andrew Douglas. This got my creative juices flowing, and following the re-telling of a Tale I am busy writing my first historical fiction story, based in 19th Century Edinburgh."

## Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July Live Event at Berwick's Radio Rooms

It now seems very likely that we will be able to host an event at the newly opened Radio Rooms in Berwick. Tickets are £5.00 and doors open at 6:00 p.m.. Keep an eye on the Radio Rooms website.

"Tales from Tweedmouth and their musical connections"

"Over the course of the evening we will retell some of Wilson's famous local tales and recite the Ballads and songs that either inspired them or were inspired by the tale.



An intoxicating mix of local heritage and history, story telling and music. To include:

The tale of Tweedmouth Muir & Cochranes Grizzly

The tale of the Laidley Worm of Spindleston

The Royal Raid & the Ballad of The border Widow's Lament."

Not to be missed!

Tickets £5. Doors 6pm.



[Keep your eyes open for further news. Click here for the Website](#)

## 5<sup>th</sup> August visit. Thirlestane Castle Exclusive

Continuing our programme of exclusive visits to locations of Tales in the Borders, we have August 5<sup>th</sup> inked in for the next of our visits. If you particularly want to be advised of details nearer the time, send a note to [wilsonstales@gmail.com](mailto:wilsonstales@gmail.com) or contact us via the website. The format will follow previous visits, with an opportunity for a picnic on the greensward, followed by a glass of something and a personal tour of the castle, interspersed with readings and performances of Tales.

## Wilson's Tomb

The longest running project we have is the effort to preserve and take care of Wilson's tomb stone. Some small progress here, as we are again in contact with English Heritage, and the Church authorities, and are now able to look for appropriate craftspeople to put forward details of the preservation work for consideration and approval by EH, and of course an estimate of the costs that would need to be funded.

## Grizel Cochrane

Talking of Grizel, one of the Radio Room's items, this Tale suddenly seems to be everywhere! It is number 1054 in our catalogue; written by JM Wilson and first published on 18<sup>th</sup> November 1834 in the second week's edition. Incidentally, as the last item of that week's edition, and at only 2,230 words it may have been there merely as a 'page filler.'

We featured her in Vol 6, as it is one of JMW's 'Rattling good reads,' so we put it forward for the Radio Rooms event, then serendipitously we found...

... 1968

and we discovered it featuring in the 1968 Annual of Judy for Girls .

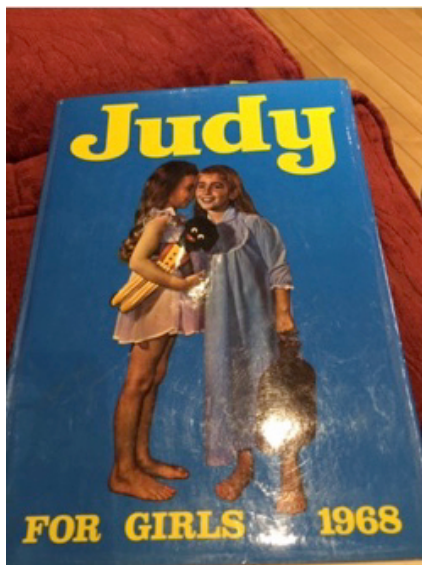


*Illustration from Vol 6*

## But also... 1934

In 1934 the Ettrick Press published an edition of Wilson's Tales of the Borders, containing 23 Tales, and at number 20 is Grizel Cochrane.

The introduction, by T. Henderson, begins "Exactly one hundred years ago..."



*Judy Annual 1968*

### and also... 1935

Coincidentally?, in 1935 the BBC broadcast a re-written and simplified version of 1,000 words. It was printed in the August 28 edition of *The Teachers World* in the 'Friday Afternoon Stories' by Frank Roscoe, column complete with a line illustration. as a story to be read by teachers to their pupils.



*Presently a horseman came riding along the road from the south*

*Teacher's World Illustration 1935*

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For more information, to contact us, or to purchase any of the Revival Editions, go to:

[www.Wilsonstales.co.uk](http://www.Wilsonstales.co.uk)

*Wilson's Tales first appeared as occasional "fill ins" in The Berwick Advertiser in the early 1830s, penned by its editor, Tweedmouth resident John Mackay Wilson. They were well-received and this encouraged him to start publishing them in his own standalone weekly publication "Wilson's Tales of the Borders" from November 1834.*

*They became a publishing sensation with runaway demand and the original series ran to 312 editions over six years. Reprints and compendium editions became a global success and they were seldom out of print over the century that followed.*

*The Wilson's Tales Project is giving fresh life to the tales and the historic events and times, many are based on and celebrating Berwick's literary hero of the 19th century.*