

**The Unique Travel Journal of James Buist
By His Fourth Great Nephew, Michael T. Tracy**

Obscured away in the archives of St. Andrews University, Special Collections Department is a 92-page travel journal written by a 25 year old, James Buist, a tenant farmer of Kirktonbarns. Written during the summer of 1820 this unique, descriptive, informative and anecdotal travel journal chronicles Buist's travels through a part of Scotland and England by stagecoach. He entitled the work as "Desultory Observations made in a journey through a part of Scotland and England."¹ Buist dedicated the work to Mr. J. Russell of Walton-upon-Thames, Surrey, England with apologies for the delay in sending it.

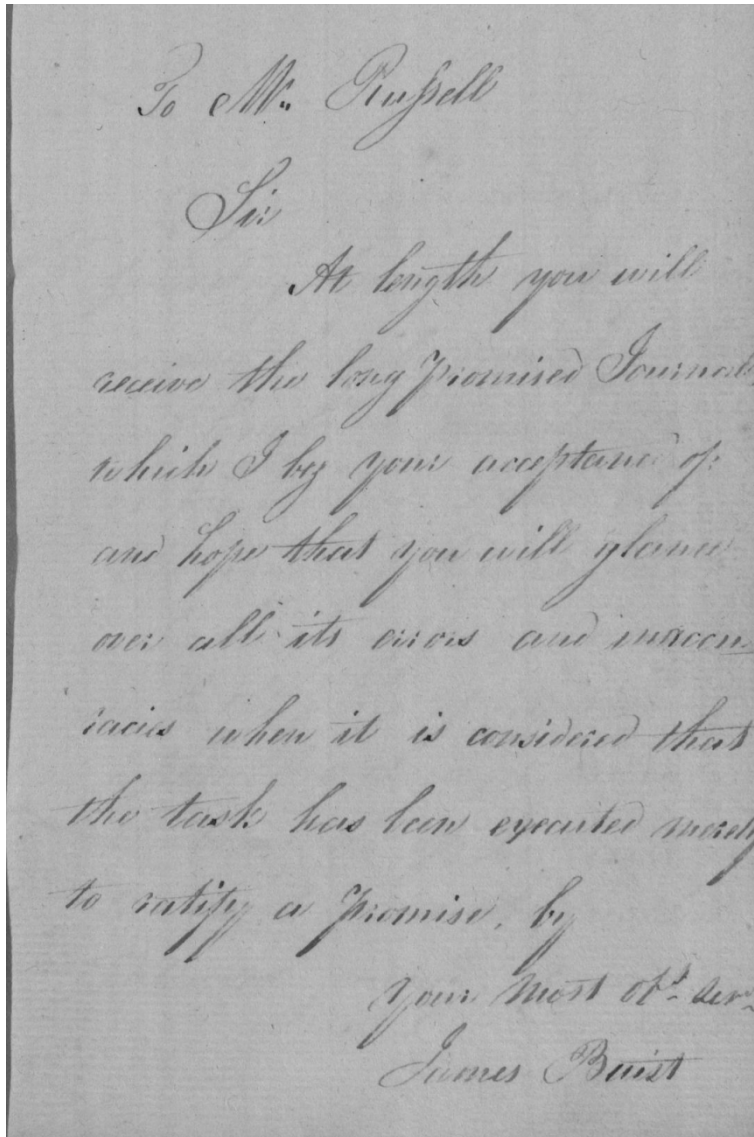


Fig.1. "Desultory Observations made in a journey through a part of Scotland and England" by James Buist, Page 1, Photograph Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Division, Call Number ms37856, Special Permission for the Use of This Photograph Granted by the Head of Special Collections

¹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 1

The travel journal begins with a young James Buist and his travelling companion, Mr. Russell Fernie assembled at the Black Bull Inn in Edinburgh where they later watched the drill of the Royal Edinburgh Volunteers before taking the Union Stage Coach to Newcastle, York, then to Mr. J. Russell's home in Walton-upon-Thames in Surrey. Buist provides a description of the countryside, agricultural practices and the main towns they passed through, including Haddington, Dunbar, Berwick, Alnwick, Morpeth, Newcastle, Durham, York, Doncaster, London and finally Walton. During the harvest time for Poland Oats, Buist, with a great interest in agriculture, compares this to the harvest in Fifeshire, Scotland and also records descriptions of various crops and orchards. He visits Claremont, Windsor, Hampton Court Palace, Oatlands, and Holkham Hall and often has social engagements with other Scots in his travels. Also contained in the travel journal are many anecdotes about conditions he endured while travelling by coach. Buist took the stagecoach to London, through the Fens, Grantham, Newcastle, then back to Edinburgh via Coldstream and Kelso by the end of August 1820. This then is the narrative of James Buist's journey through a part of Scotland and England during the summer of 1820.

Arrival at Edinburgh

Buist begins his account by writing: "The Party who made the following observations in journeying through part of Scotland and England consisted of Messrs. Russell Fernie and the writer of these remarks, who having appointed Edinburgh to be the place of rendezvous, assembled there on Thursday, the twentieth of July [1820] in order to concert measures for the intended journey. It was resolved that we should travel by the Union Stage Coach which runs between Edinburgh and Newcastle. So we went to the Coach office at the Black Bull Inn and engaged our seats for the [next] mornings' coach in the afternoon and happily for us that they were so soon taken for if we had delayed a few minutes longer only one of us would have had a seat."²

² Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 1-2



Fig.2. View of Edinburgh from Calton Hill, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

After their booking arrangements completed Buist and Fernie walked over to Bruntsfield Links which is 35 acres of open parkland in Bruntsfield, Edinburgh. There they watched the drill of the Royal Edinburgh Volunteers. Buist described what they saw by writing: “They went through a variety of evolutions in a manner which was creditable to so young a corps.”³

³ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 3



Fig.3. Bruntsfield Links, Edinburgh, Scotland, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist continued by writing: “It would be tedious and unnecessary to state how the remainder of this evening was spent, let this therefore suffice, that we [proceeded] to our lodgings at the Black Bull Inn; where after waiting a short time, were served with an elegant and plentiful supper, which was succeeded by copious libation of rare Highland whisky which cheered and refreshed our spirits vie with another in accounting the strange adventures we might meet with on our journey.”⁴

From Edinburgh to Newcastle upon Tyne

Originating in England in the 13th century, the stagecoach as we know it appeared on England’s roads in the early 16th century.⁵ A stagecoach is so called because it travels in segments or stages of about 10 to 15 miles.⁶ At a stage stop, usually a coaching inn, horses would be changed and travellers would have a meal or drink or stay overnight.⁷ This was the mode of transportation of James Buist and Russell Fernie as they began their travel journey on Friday, 21 July 1820.

Buist wrote that “the object of this excursion to the South was to visit Mr. J. Russell who resided at Walton-upon-Thames in the county of Surrey distant about seventeen miles to the westward of London.⁸ He continued: “After the guard had satisfied himself that all was right the Coach drove away from the Black Bull Inn precisely at five P.M. pacing through the arch of the Regent Bridge [illegible] reckoned one of the most useful as well monumental of the public buildings of Edinburgh.”⁹

⁴ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 4

⁵ The Stagecoach. Accessed at: [www.historic-uk.com/Culturel UK/The-Stagecoach/](http://www.historic-uk.com/Culturel%20UK/The-Stagecoach/)

⁶ The Stagecoach. Accessed at: [www.historic-uk.com/Culturel UK/The-Stagecoach/](http://www.historic-uk.com/Culturel%20UK/The-Stagecoach/)

⁷ The Stagecoach. Accessed at: [www.historic-uk.com/Culturel UK/The-Stagecoach/](http://www.historic-uk.com/Culturel%20UK/The-Stagecoach/)

⁸ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 5

⁹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 7



Fig.4. Regent Bridge, Edinburgh, Scotland, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

As a tenant farmer of Kirktonbarns in Forgan Parish, Fife, Buist as stated earlier was interested in the types of soils, types of produce and other agricultural practices. He described the area of Haddington by writing: “As we advanced toward Haddington the country gradually became more and more of a Moorish soil, however, the fields were well cultivated and enclosed with hedges which were neatly formed. Haddington the county town of East Lothian is a neat, well-built town, situated on the river Tyne. Every Friday there is held here one of the best corn markets in Scotland where the grain is all disposed of by the storks.”¹⁰

¹⁰ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 8-9

On Saturday, 22 July 1820 Buist describes passing the Castle of Dunbar after having a quick breakfast. “The Castle of Dunbar is situated on the west side of the harbour and on the north side of the town, it is still a venerable ruin though incidentally considered one of the Keys of the Kingdom and before the use of gunpowder must have been impregnable. I was informed a few years ago that it was once besieged by the Earl of Salisbury when the Earl of March, the commandant of the garrison was about but whose place was admirably filled in the person of his wife. The English General sent a summons to her Ladyship to surrender the fortress otherwise he would order his men to bring the enormous machine called the Sow to act against the walls; but she being a knowing one replied that he would better take care of his Sow in case she should lose her pigs – the attack commenced. [Illegible] was brought forward and just as she was on the eve of striking the walls, a ponderous stone was so let fall as bruised both sow and pigs to pieces. The Earl of Salisbury next attempted to carry this place by bribery but was unsuccessful.”¹¹



*Fig.5. Dunbar Castle, Dunbar, East Lothian, Scotland, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010
Michael T. Tracy*

Buist further wrote on Dunbar: “the country around Dunbar is finely adorned with Noblemen and Gentlemen seats, which gives it a beautiful and a rich appearance. The soil too is a rich, deep loam perhaps the richness if not, generally the earliest in Scotland... It was here that summer fallow was first introduced north of Tweed and indeed many of our modern improvements have been used by cultivators of this favoured spot.”¹²

¹¹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 11-12

¹² Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 12-13

He describes Cockburnspath Parish in Berwick County as a dreary and uninteresting until the approach to Berwick. "Berwick though situated on the north side of the Tweed is an English burgh and consequently governed by English laws. From an eminence about a mile and a half from Berwick, the traveller hath a beautiful view of the rich vale of the Merse, the county on the southern side of the Tweed and even Berwick is seen from this to greater advantage, being situated on rising ground..."¹³

As the stagecoach approached Alnwick, Buist proceeds to copy the description from a book he was carrying "Scots History of the Borders" (1816). He then writes about the County of Northumberland in northeastern England by stating: "Our road through the County of Northumberland presented few objects that were interesting to agriculturalists was that the soil, in general, is a poor, cold, unfertile... The shades of night were thick around by the time the Coach reached Morpeth and the only object that afterwards attracted our attention was the horsemanship of a drunken Barber. At one time he galloped around the Coach, then from one side of the road, all the while maintaining a command of his horse at the same time maintaining his seat on the saddle with great difficulty. He continued to amuse us in that way for some miles before we landed at Newcastle, which was about eleven o'clock at night."¹⁴



Fig.6. Northumberland, England, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist recounts the next day as being "cold, cloudy and showery which rendered the sea on the top of the Coach very disagreeable, very uncomfortable and had it not been for our umbrellas must have been drenched to the skin with rain. A blazing fire, a bit of the roast beef of old England, and an excellent bed soon put to flight thou hardships which we experienced throughout the day and a pot of genuine London porter prepared us for enjoying a good night's rest."¹⁵

¹³ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 13-14

¹⁴ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 19-20

¹⁵ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 20

Newcastle upon Tyne to York



Fig.7. Newcastle upon Tyne viewed from the top of the Keep, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist describes Newcastle upon Tyne as a “large town situated upon the river Tyne, which is now navigable for vessels of small burden... The town is nearly surrounded by windmills for grinding flour. It is certainly a matter of surprise that the great London road from Newcastle to Durham is still carried over the summit of the hills; when a new line may be by winding around their circuit, thereby making the ascent more easy and the decline less difficult than it is present for the numerous heavy carriages which constantly crowd this great road.”¹⁶

The city of Durham was characterized by Buist as being “somewhat grand and imposing but when we entered it much of the grandeur which struck you from a distance is lost for in general, the houses are old, the streets narrow, winding and steep.”¹⁷ Durham is a historic city that lies in County Durham in northeast England and its Norman cathedral and castle dates back to the 11th century when the cathedral became a centre of pilgrimage in medieval England.

¹⁶ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 21-22

¹⁷ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 27



Fig.8. Durham Cathedral and Castle, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist describes the cathedral as “adding much to the grandeur of the town, the base of the rocks which supports its west end is washed by the river Wear, whose banks are here beautifully and richly fringed with wood.”¹⁸ Buist then goes on to write about the area between Durham and Darlington stating that “the hay was in hand and the several processes of cutting and stacking were going briskly forward. The crops, in general, did not appear weighty.”¹⁹ He describes Darlington as a “small clean healthy town and if we may judge by the sound of the weaver shuttle is a place of considerable trade in the linen or cotton manufacture. As we advanced to the south we soon had a view of the river Lees, which separates the county of Durham from that of York. Teeswater has long been famous for its breed of cattle, they are of the short-haired line and generally the colour of Jacob’s oxen, many of them have been remarkable for fattening and great weight.”²⁰

¹⁸ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 27-28

¹⁹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 28

²⁰ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 29

The stagecoach then enters the Vale of York which is an area of flat land that is considered a major agricultural area of northeast England. Buist describes this area as being a “natural flatness of the country and the enclosures being formed by thorn hedges having Forest trees planted in them, the cropping area of the vale which extends at least thirty miles on either side, has more of the aspect of a vast forest than a prosperous and agricultural district. The hedges are allowed to grow to a great height without being pruned or sufficient care taken of them which render many of them useless as enclosures at the same time diminishing their beauty by the neglect of the farmers to train them. It would appear from the great proportion of the ground being in the pasture that the farmers in this part of Yorkshire make the breeding of horses and the rearing and fattening of cattle their primary object. The breed of horses in Yorkshire has long been famed with as racers, hunters or carriage horses.”²¹



Fig.9. Vale of York, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist then briefly describes his overnight stay at the Black Swan Inn in York which presently is still in existence by writing: “We arrived at the Black Swan Inn at York about seven in the evening where we experienced the most civil and attentive treatment in a commodious and well-furnished house.”²²

²¹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 31-32

²² Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 35

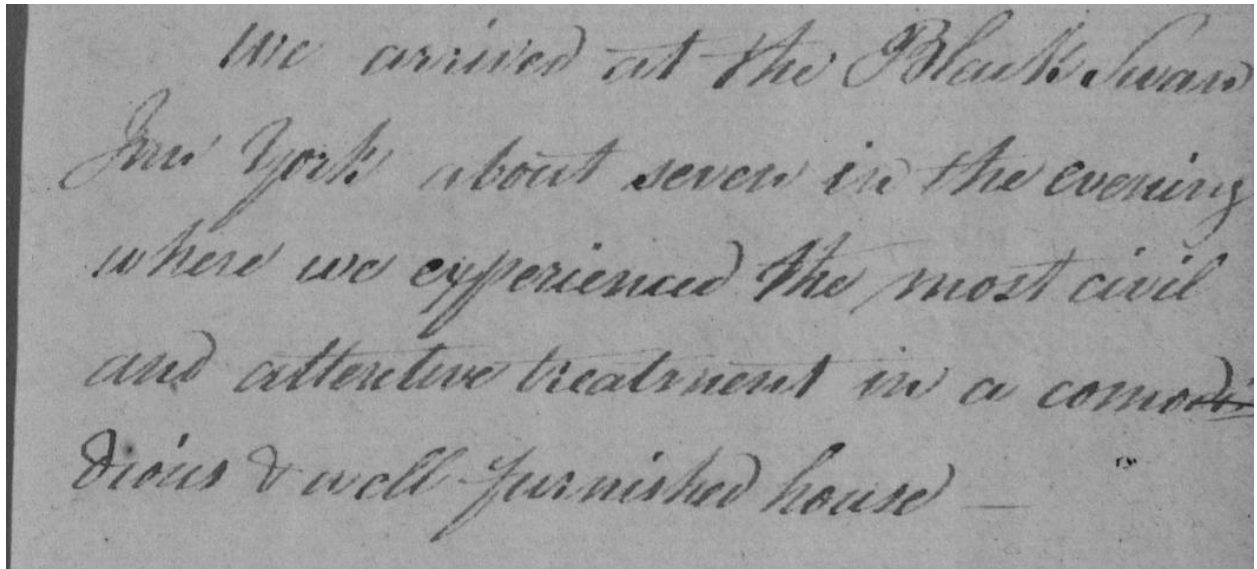


Fig.10. "Desultory Observations made in a journey through a part of Scotland and England" by James Buist, Page 35, Photograph Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Division, Call Number ms37856, Special Permission for the Use of This Photograph Granted by the Head of Special Collections

The Black Swan Inn stands in Peasholme Green and dates back to the 15th century when it was a private house. Prior to the present building, a medieval inn had stood on the site.



Fig.11. The Black Swan Inn, York, England, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy



Fig.12. Interior of the Black Swan Inn at York, Yorkshire, England, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

In the next entry of his travel journal Buist wrote about York stating: “York is a city of considerable magnitude and pleasantly situated near the heart of the County on the banks of a navigable river; being also the county town of the shire it may perhaps be termed the Capital of the North of England for hither many of the country people retire to spend the winter months... This being Sunday it was thought our time could not be better employed than attending [the] divine service at the Cathedral in the forenoon; so in conformity with this we set out from our lodgings at eleven o’clock and soon had a view of that grand and magnificent Gothic structure; which is universally admired by strangers and reckoned the first of its kind in the Kingdom. On entering this venerable edifice the lofty Gothic columns that support the megastructure the elegant and variety of its sculpture and symmetry of its parts strike the spectator with admiration and awe. The choir is large and elegantly fitted up for the accommodation of the audience, but it bears only a small proportion to the remainder of this huge edifice the greater part being appropriated for the people to promenade on... After the service was concluded we were proceeding to survey some parts of this wonderful building that we had not previously seen when our wanderings were arrested by one of the Church officers coming forward; who informed us that no person was allowed to remain within these walls at this hour, but only those who joined in the Communion.”²³

²³ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 35-41



Fig.13. York Cathedral, York England, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

The history of this old cathedral at York dates back to about 627 A.D. for the christening of King Edwin of North Umbria.²⁴ Later in 1100 the cathedral was built in the early Norman/Romanesque style and has had a long and distinguished history since its consecration.²⁵ Buist continued by writing: “we proceeded to the west end of town, where the public gardens and nurseries are kept and where a windmill was grinding wheat.”²⁶ Buist then writes: “We next followed our countryman to the principal hotel of the city; where we were met with an elegant dinner, which though acceptable to the ‘palate,’ the bill was a sad enemy to the purse.”²⁷

²⁴ History of York Minister. Accessed at: www.misericords.co.uk/Yorkmin.html

²⁵ History of York Minister. Accessed at: www.misericords.co.uk/Yorkmin.html

²⁶ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 41

²⁷ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 44

York to Walton

The coach left the next morning headed toward Doncaster. Buist characterized Doncaster, judging by the regularity of its streets and the construction of its houses as a town of modern erection and noted that the planting of trees in hedgerows does not promote good agriculture.²⁸ Nearing London Buist wrote: "The country on the north side of London is finely ornamented with beautiful villages, and by the elegant houses of the Nobility and Gentry, the fields are chiefly in grass and many of them we were told were common fields; which may be the cause that so much is allowed to remain in pasture. The nearer we approached the great City; the more numerous the carriages of all description became; and while our attention was engaged in beholding these and the surrounding scenery the prospect of the British Capital came in view; which completely filled the eye and the mind with wonder."²⁹

Buist and Fernie did not stay long in London and after a good night's sleep proceeded to Walton-upon-Thames and Mr. J. Russell's home. Walton-upon-Thames is a town on the river Thames in Surrey which is an outlying suburb of London. Buist described Walton as: "delightfully situated on the river Thames in a beautiful and fertile country and finely embellished by having Oatlands on the west. Claremont on the south beside a number of Gentlemen's houses scattered around on every side. Mr. J. Russell's House and the village of Walton in such a manner that may either connected with it or not just as he pleases. His farm consists of eighty English acres; whereof five are orchard grounds... [Russell] is termed a Market Gardener. The Orchard lieth conveniently around the dwelling house, overhanging the Thames on the north side; from which there is a fine view of the river and the bays as they sail along. The Orchard is well stocked with every species of fruit trees that are adapted to the climate and to the situation; and with gooseberries, raspberries and other small fruits. The Crop of fruit here this season was very abundant but from this being a general they [are] all over this part of the country. The prices at Covent Garden, London was lower at the present time that they had been for some years past. The quality of the different kinds of early fruits certainly was not superior to the same with ours in Scotland."³⁰

Buist then describes the harvest operations he observed while staying at Walton. He wrote: "harvest operations commenced at Walton with the cutting of Poland Oats as early as the twenty-fourth of July this season although it was by no means general in the neighbourhood. The corn here was bagged, that is struck down near the ground with a large and heavy hook and is then bound into sheaves. The appearance of the harvest field here presented a striking difference in this respect from those in Fifeshire; in the former the work is executed by a few individuals, each of whom contracts to cut down a field or so much of it by the acre; consequently it exhibited merely one or two men working in different parts of it. While in the latter, the number of reapers varies from ten to nearly one hundred according to the extent and situation of the farm all proceeding in their operations together presenting an interesting and animating scene."³¹

²⁸ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 47-48

²⁹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 53-54

³⁰ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 57-60

³¹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 61-62

He also describes the wheat and oats at Walton. Writing: “the wheat and oats upon Walton farm was certainly a fair or average crop: and would be all cut-down and carried to the barnyard before there was anything like harvest in the northern part of the island. As a further proof of the superiority of the climate the market farmers here sow turnips to be ate off the ground with sheep; after a previous crop of early peas, potatoes have been removed from the land. The sewing of the seed commences about the latter end of the month of July and end by the beginning of August even where the land has been fallowed the seed is not deposited in the ground sooner than the first of July to prevent the root from shorting before it is full grown or fit for use.”³²

Buist further elaborated on the English mode of making hay by writing: “the hay is almost universally sowed by the acre, the whole time discouraging it when the weather is favourable seldom exceeds four days... The haystacks are neatly built.”³³ According to his journal Buist spent the afternoon of Friday, 28 July 1820 ascertaining the quality of the different fruits in the orchard of Walton farm.³⁴ The evening was spent according to Buist as “partaking of an Englishman’s dinner qualified with a glass of Brandy. We visited a Scotch farmer in the county of Middlesex who received and treated us in the kindest and social manner.”³⁵

A Visit to Claremont

On Saturday, 29 July 1820 Buist and J. Russell visited the nearby farm of Claremont. He wrote: “we should see all the places in the neighbourhood that are frequented by the tourist and the curious, conducted us to Claremont this day convinced that the short distance we had to walk would soon be forgotten after seeing the beauties of that far farmed place. As the chief gardener was a native of the Land O’Lakes, he appeared to be happy at the sight of so many of his countrymen and as a mark of his favour for us politely showed us the different gardens where we observed the most elegant taste displayed in the manner they are cultivated and laid out while nature hath contributed largely to enhance their value and beauty. In the flat houses, there were the richest clusters of ripe grapes, the finest crops of peaches and apples that can be imagined but I regret to mention that our situation too much resembled the Toy in the Table.”³⁶

³² Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 62-64

³³ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 64-66

³⁴ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 67

³⁵ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 68

³⁶ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 69-70

Windsor

The next day, on Sunday, 30 July 1820 Buist described his visit to Windsor. “According to the appointment, our coach drove up to the door at an early hour to convey us to and from Windsor. In proceeding forward we passed through the large and extensive plain of Runnymede well known in the pages of history for being the place of mutiny between one of the English Kings and his subjects; who after a few days conferred, produced and signed the famous Magna Carta which has secured most important privileges to every denomination of men in the Kingdom.”³⁷ Runnymede is a meadow running alongside the River Thames in Surrey where the sealing of the Magna Carta took place in 1215 agreed to by King John of England.



Fig.14. Runnymede Memorial, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Buist continued by writing: “The Castle the favourite residence of our late good old King [George III] and St. George’s Chapel were the next places we visited; but we shall not attempt to describe the State Beds, the many splendid paintings, ensigns of Royalty which we saw in the former nor the banners of the different Knights in the latter, these we left for the round tower from whose summit the spectator enjoys such a beautiful prospect of twelve counties of England.

³⁷ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 73-74



Fig.15. Windsor Castle, Berkshire, England, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy ©2010 Michael T. Tracy

After having taken a cursory view of Windsor we repaired to the New Inn to dinner which consisted only of a dish of Lamb chops for which were charged three shillings each. Upon this being announced to the Company a certain individual in it addressed the waiter nearly in the following words. My conscious what a charge for such a fare! Why Master Waiter, is this your usual way of dressing out your dinner bills or do you only practice such extortion upon travellers because I suppose the farmers in the adjoining are fairly more sumptuously and at a cheaper rate than what we have done. No answer. Well you may tell your Master that we shall pay his exorbitant demand at the present time with a grudge but he and you may rest assured that I shall mark him, his name of the inn and his bill in a Journal and shall inform any traveler that we may meet with on the way how we have been treated here, that we may make this as a beacon when returning to Windsor.”³⁸ Buist and his party then visited the village of Oatlands which is in the north of the English county of Surrey overlooking the river Thames. His description is reprinted below.

³⁸ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 75-77

77
with a grudge but he & you may rest
assured, that I shall mark his name
of the Jew & his Bill in a Journal &
shall inform any traveller that we may
meet with on the way how we have
been treated here, that we may make
you as a beacon when ^{you} ^{return} in Windsor
July
1735.

On our way to Walton Church
in the forenoon, we accidentally asked
a labourer, if he was going to Church
No, replied he — then pointing to a bit of
grain which he held in his hand, No
like a bit of wheat for better things to
Church

The admision is given on a Sunday
only to visit Balnakeil & its curiosities; by
that means in ~~the winter~~ when the
weather is favourable, an immense concourse
of people resort thither to spend part of the day

Fig.16. "Desultory Observations made in a journey through a part of Scotland and England" by James Buist, Page 77, Photograph Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Division, Call Number ms37856, Special Permission for the Use of This Photograph Granted by the Head of Special Collections

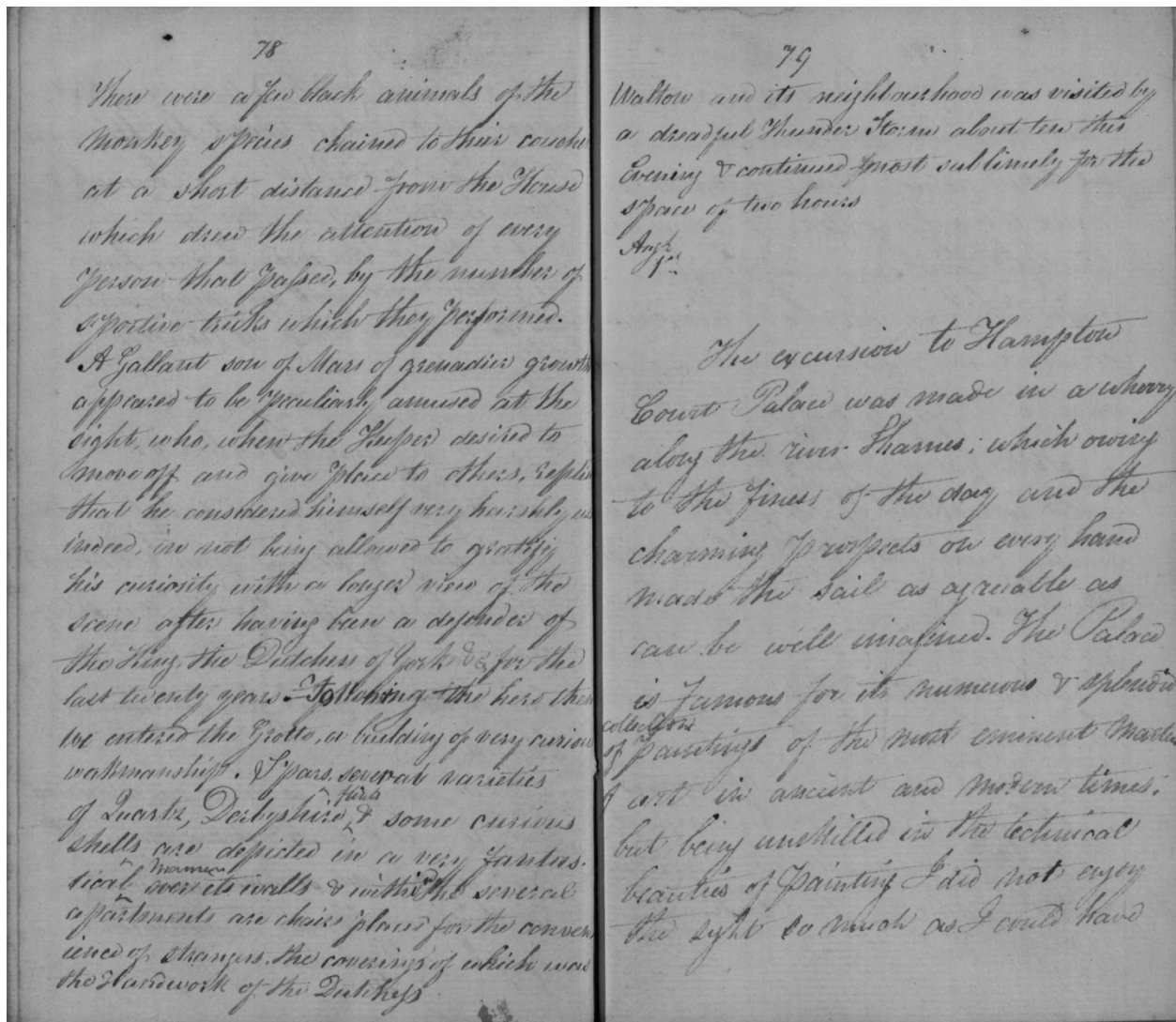


Fig.17. "Desultory Observations made in a journey through a part of Scotland and England" by James Buist, Pages 78-79, Photograph Courtesy of the University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Division, Call Number ms37856, Special Permission for the Use of This Photograph Granted by the Head of Special Collections

Hampton Court Palace

Hampton Court Palace is a royal palace in London and was built in 1515 for Cardinal Thomas Wolsey, who was a favourite of King Henry VIII. According to his travel journal James Buist visited Hampton Court Palace on Tuesday, 1 August 1820 and wrote the following: "The excursion to Hampton Court Palace was made in a wherry along the river Thames; which owing to the fineness of the day and the charming prospects on every hand made the sail as agreeable as can be well imagined. The Palace is famous for its numerous and splendid collections of paintings of the most eminent masters of art in ancient and modern times, but being unskilled in the technical beauties of painting I did not enjoy the sight so much as I could have wished; however there was a family piece above the chimney in one of the

rooms which drew our attention from everything else.”³⁹ Buist continues: “This being the last day which we were to remain at Walton the majority of the party resolved at an early hour to spend the most of it in the orchard.”⁴⁰



Fig.18. Hampton Court Palace, London, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

Holkham Hall

In the next entry, Buist wrote of the apprehension of his journal by stating: “By this time I apprehend that you will be as tired pursuing these dry, uninteresting pages as I am at this time in writing them.”⁴¹ By this time he has already left Walton and nearby London and has proceeded northeast to the village of Holkham which lies in the northwest of the county of Norfolk, England. Unfortunately, he does not give a date but it was in August. He visited Holkham Hall and stated: “Every Tuesday the doors of Holkham Hall are flung wide for the reception of those who have come hither to survey his far-famed system of cultivation and livestock and on these occasions are sure to be treated with the utmost kindness and hospitality by the generous and patriotic Landlord Mr. Coke... In traversing a part of Holkham Farm we

³⁹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 80

⁴⁰ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 81

⁴¹ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 84

were highly pleased with the manner in which the fields were cultivated and with the general appearance of the different crops especially with the turnip and barley.”⁴²

The Journey from Newcastle to Edinburgh

Buist describes his next leg of his journey back to Scotland by writing: “an intelligent and agreeable companion is at all times desirable though in some situations the society of such is more highly appreciative than in others. When the [illegible] of a stagecoach is carried many miles through a cold, bleak, uninteresting country he is apt to become layered with the dismalness of the scene but having the fellowship of such a personage, his mind is relieved from any of these momentary disquietudes by the interesting conversation and fascinating manners which he eludes... What a beautiful view, what a delightful prospect does the aspect of the country afford as you advance between Coldstream and Kelso. On the right you have the southern district of Berwickshire ornamented with elegant villas, thriving plantations and with well-cultivated fields, on the left you have a rich and fertile plain terminated by high grounds on the south and the beautiful windings of the rivers Tweed from the foreground; it is difficult for the power of language to give a just and adequate description of which the envisions of Kelso are compared.”⁴³



Fig.19. Kelso at the Scottish Borders, Photograph Courtesy of Michael T. Tracy © 2010 Michael T. Tracy

⁴² Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 85-86

⁴³ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. p. 89-91

Buist concludes his journal by stating: “glad I was when the lights of Edinburgh came in view, that I might be relieved from such an unpleasant state.”⁴⁴

James Buist would later become a well-respected farmer at his estate at Kirktonbarns in Forgan Parish, Fife and philanthropist as well as a benefactor during his lifetime. This unique travel journal, however, is a glimpse into the early life of James Buist when at the age of 25 he travelled through a part of Scotland and England by stagecoach. He wrote the journal for Mr. J. Russell of Walton-upon-Thames, Surrey, England during the summer months of 1820.

The stagecoach was the primary means of transportation before the introduction of railway transport. The stagecoach made regular trips between stages or stations, which were places of rest for drivers, the horses and travellers. Buist and his travelling companion, Russell Fernie begin their journey at the Union Stage Coach Station in Edinburgh and travelled through Newcastle, York and then Walton-upon-Thames in Surrey, England. The distance the coach travelled would have been about 414 miles each way. Buist provides a description of the countryside, agricultural practices and the main towns they passed through, including Haddington, Dunbar, Berwick, Alnwick, Morpeth, Newcastle, Durham, York, Doncaster, London and finally Walton-upon-Thames.

Buist, as a young tenant farmer had a keen interest in agriculture and at times is more interested in visiting nearby farm estates. He visits Clarendon, Windsor Castle, Hampton Court Palace, Oatlands, and Holkham Hall. He provided an overwhelming and complete visual description of the countryside he passed along with anecdotes about the conditions endured while travelling by coach. This journal gives the reader an accurate portrayal of the journey between Edinburgh and Walton-upon-Thames during the summer of 1820.

Years later upon his retirement from farming in 1870, the 75-year-old referred to the “Wise men of the East,” and how they transformed the landscape of farming in Fife. These early farmers of Scotland through innovation of the times paved the way for another generation of farmers like James Buist to continue to seek advancements in agriculture. James Buist, Esquire was considered one of these “Wise men of the East” who pursued a lifetime in agricultural pursuits and gleaned at a young age how other farmers cultivated their vast lands, grew crops and maintained their lavish gardens. This trip provided such an experience and most likely played an indelible part on the methods he used on his own estate.

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⁴⁴ Buist, James. Travel Journal. University of St. Andrews, Special Collections Department, Call Number ms37856, 1820, p. 91-92