

Paxton House

Before describing some aspects of Paxton House on the Scottish banks of the River Tweed, it is interesting to reflect on the almost umbilical-like links between the history of Paxton House and the town of Eyemouth. Paxton House is believed to have been designed by much the same 'team' as Gunsgreen House in Eyemouth. In the case of Paxton House, the design was agreed with Patrick Home, a rich young Scottish gentleman from Billie in



1757, and is attributed to John Adam, perhaps with assistance from brother, James. It was around this time in 1766, that Patrick Home inherited the estate

at Wedderburn and one of his first actions was to buy Eyemouth from Henry Trotter.

So, Patrick was then the local Eyemouth laird and it was his cousin, Reverend George Home, minister of Ayton who bought Gunsgreen House from the Nisbet family in 1780. At the time and since, there have been many suggestions that the extended Home family may have had at least some knowledge of the elaborate smuggling enterprises that took place from the port of Eyemouth. Meanwhile, it was yet another relation of both the Homes, George Tod, who became minister at the Eyemouth Kirk in 1785 – and the central protagonist in the tithes dispute with the local fishermen in the following years.

Patrick Home moved on from Paxton House, selling it to another cousin, Ninian Home, for £15,000 in 1775. Ninian brought in the famous Robert Adam to design the interiors of Paxton house, while Thomas Chippendale provided the house with much of



its furniture and decorations. The Chippendale furniture and Robert Adam's interiors remain impressive in the house today. Patrick moved to Wedderburn and commissioned the Adams to design and build a grandiose castle there on the outskirts of Duns between 1771 and 1775. Ninian was a plantation owner in Grenada and was killed in a slaves' uprising there in 1795. His brother George Home inherited the house and further extended it, employing the chief Scottish government architect, Robert Reid to design a new east wing, built between 1812-13, housing the lavishly impressive library and picture gallery, which are the jewels in the crown of

'Round Eyemouth

the house today. The picture gallery is home to over 70 paintings from the late eighteenth century/early nineteenth century from the National Gallery of Scotland collection. The highly impressive picture gallery is shown on the right.

On a tour of the house, one is struck by the fact that while there are a number of very fine rooms that have a 'wow' factor – Paxton House was essentially a house to live in, which the descendants of the Home family did until relatively recently when Press Complaints Commissioner and former MP and MSP, John Home-Robertson bequeathed the house and grounds to the Paxton Trust in 1988.



Many visitors, especially with children, enjoy the woodland walk which takes in a superb stretch of the River Tweed, including the small boathouse salmon fishing museum and leads back to the house, near where there is an imaginative woodland adventure

playground, putting green and croquet lawn.

Visitors to the house and gardens are charged to help pay for the upkeep. For more details, see: www.paxtonhouse.co.uk