

Barmoor Castle and the Bechuanaland Border Police.

William Henry Sitwell.

An interesting document printed by the Rhodesian Study Circle gives publicity about correspondence relating to W. H. Sitwell, a career soldier, closely linked to the branch of the Sitwells located at Barmoor Castle, near Lowick in Northumberland.

In 1801 the castle was built by a John Paterson, a pupil and partner of the Adams brothers, and first occupied by Francis Sitwell, a brother of the first Baronet, Sir Sitwell Sitwell. A descendant, Francis Henry Massey (born 1832) was a military Officer in India, and W.H. Sitwell is his son, born in Benares in 1860. This latter Sitwell served with distinction and retired as a Brigadier General. The correspondence about his duties in Bechuanaland (1891- 1893) is not the only feature of the Study Circle's work as it details the efficiency of the postal system, and his military adventures, including an expedition in 1892 to Bulawayo. Too, there are references about his almost daily correspondence with his mother, addressed to Barmoor, Beal, Northumberland. He married twice and died in 1932 at Barmoor Castle.

In passing it is worth noting Claude George Henry Sitwell, a nephew of the 3rd Baronet, Sir Reresby. He too was a career soldier and married Amy Elizabeth Barrington Cooke, the daughter of a Scarborough doctor who practised, and lived, at 15 St Nicholas Cliff**. She died early in the marriage and Claude was killed in action in February 1900 in the Boer War.

The Study Circle document came into my possession by means of Ebay, where a trader had registered my interest.

(** Confirmed reference in "A Biographical Dictionary – The Medical Profession in Scarborough 1700 to 1899". by Anne and Paul Bayliss)

(Submitted by James Bantoft on 6th May 2011).