

## The Pinfold, Lowick Common

*[To read about Lowick PC 's project to place a stone circular seat on the site, completed April 2020, please see <https://lowick.live/?s=The+Pinfold>]*

A pinfold or pound was an enclosure for keeping stray animals in, a necessity in areas of open field agriculture. It was maintained by a Pinder who also cared for the animals, only releasing them on the payment of a fine by the owner. As a result of the subdivision and enclosure of the open fields and moor land in Lowick, c 1724, by means of hedges and ditches, the pinfold eventually became redundant.

The earliest known reference appears in a manorial court roll dated 1652. Manorial courts enforced the customs of the manor and regulated agricultural practices in the open fields. This particular document contains a list of freemen, tenants and cottars; complaints made by one person against another, and 14 administrative orders, of which No. 8 relates to the pinfold.

*8thly Ordered that whosoever are chosen Pinder is to finde a sufficient doore and a locke upon it to the Pinfold upon paine of vj s viij d [6s 8d]*

*Roger Heslop and Rob[er]t Heslop were chosen.*

It is not known whether a new door and lock were required due to wear and tear or due to damage caused by owners trying to retrieve their animals without paying!

In the Court Roll of November 1707, *The Jury present Henry Lightharns Pinder for not repaireing the Pinfold or Common pound according to his Agreem[en]t with the Town and amerced i s [fined One shilling]*

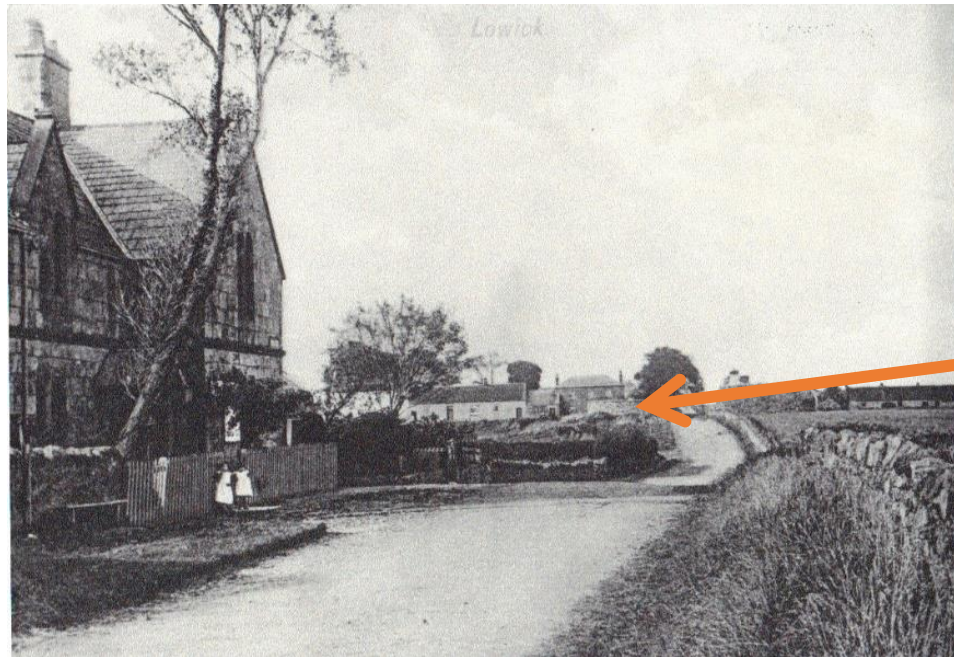
The pinfold stood on Lowick Common until its demolition in 1952, conveniently positioned near the village and the Burn.



1<sup>st</sup> Edition 6" OS Map surveyed 1860, Sheet XI

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<https://maps.nls.uk/view/102346230>*

We are fortunate to have two images of the pinfold, one in an old postcard looking from the Police House in South Road towards the Common; and the second, a water colour dated 1919.



Outside the Police House looking north along South Road.

*Robert Sinton's Collection*



'Pen' Fold, Lowick Common 1919, *Keith Purvis's Collection*

In June 1901, the Inspector of Nuisances or Sanitary Inspector was instructed by Glendale Rural District Council [RDC] to inspect the Common. He reported that he had found several heaps of household refuse laid down and also the refuse of the Village Scavenger, deposited near the pinfold.

References to the need for repairs appear in the Lowick Parish Council [PC] Minutes:

### **23 October 1929**

Two letters from Gilbert Park, North Shields, passed on from the RDC about restoring the pinfold were considered. The PC decided that it would take no action in the matter but that it had no objection to either the RDC or the Antiquarians doing the repairs.

### **8 July 1938**

Estimate to be obtained from Mr Moody for repairing the pinfold, to make it safe.

### **27 May 1949 Annual Meeting**

The stone coping to be replaced and the worst damage repaired, with the cost not to exceed £12.

### **1950 Annual Parish Meeting**

Awaiting sanction from the County Council to have the pinfold repaired.

### **16 October 1952**

Pinfold – PC wanted it demolished and the stone removed free of charge by the County Council Surveyor. The PC would have repaired it if the Ministry of Local Government or the Glendale RDC had paid for it.

The following report appeared in the Berwick Advertiser 23 October 1952:

### ***Lowick Ancient Pinfold to be Demolished***

*A familiar landmark in Lowick began to disappear on Wednesday when workmen arrived, and began to demolish the pinfold on Lowick Common.*

*The action is the result of a parish public meeting which was convened to decide the fate of the old stone structure. The building is in all probability over 200 years old, and the meeting decided that it would be cheaper ultimately to have it removed as it had fallen into bad repair.*

*The meeting was told that an approach had been made to the Ancient Monuments with a view to their taking it over, but the organisation refused to consider the matter. It is believed that the pinfold is one of the few remaining structures of its kind in Northumberland.*

*Its history has been varied. Dating back to the days when common land was recognised in Lowick, it housed stray animals, and was then referred to as "the poundfold"*

*Several years before the war it fell into disrepair, and it was mended at the costs of the residents in Lowick. It was stated that at the time that it was dangerous as children sometimes played near it and a section had collapsed.*

*Several of the older inhabitants recall the time when there was an old rusty gate on the pinfold, but this disappeared. In view of the fact that it will continue to be a burden on the rates, demolition was decided upon, and the meeting was reminded that it cost over £12 to have it repaired just before the war.*

[More information on Lowick and Barmoor Manors and the Lowick Enclosure Agreement of 1724 will be added in due course.]

## **Notes**

On pinfolds in Northumberland and further afield, the following are worth consulting.

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/101041477-the-pinfold-alnwick>

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1041235> Elsdon

[https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/county-info/pinfolds\\_in\\_cumbria.pdf](https://www.cumbriacountyhistory.org.uk/sites/default/files/county-info/pinfolds_in_cumbria.pdf)

## **Sources**

1<sup>st</sup> Edition 6" OS Map surveyed 1860 Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland <https://maps.nls.uk/view/102346230>

**Berwick Record Office:** BRO ZBM 8 Lowick Enclosure Award, 1724 ; BRO 331/A/1/1/1 Lowick Manorial Court Rolls , 1652 and BRO 331/A/1/1/5 1707; LG 1 / 3 Glendale Rural District Council. Minutes, 6 June 1901; PB 7/3 Lowick Parish Council Minutes

*The Berwick Advertiser* 23 October 1952

*Julie Gibbs, April 2021*