

DERE STREET – THE BLEAK ROMAN NORTH?

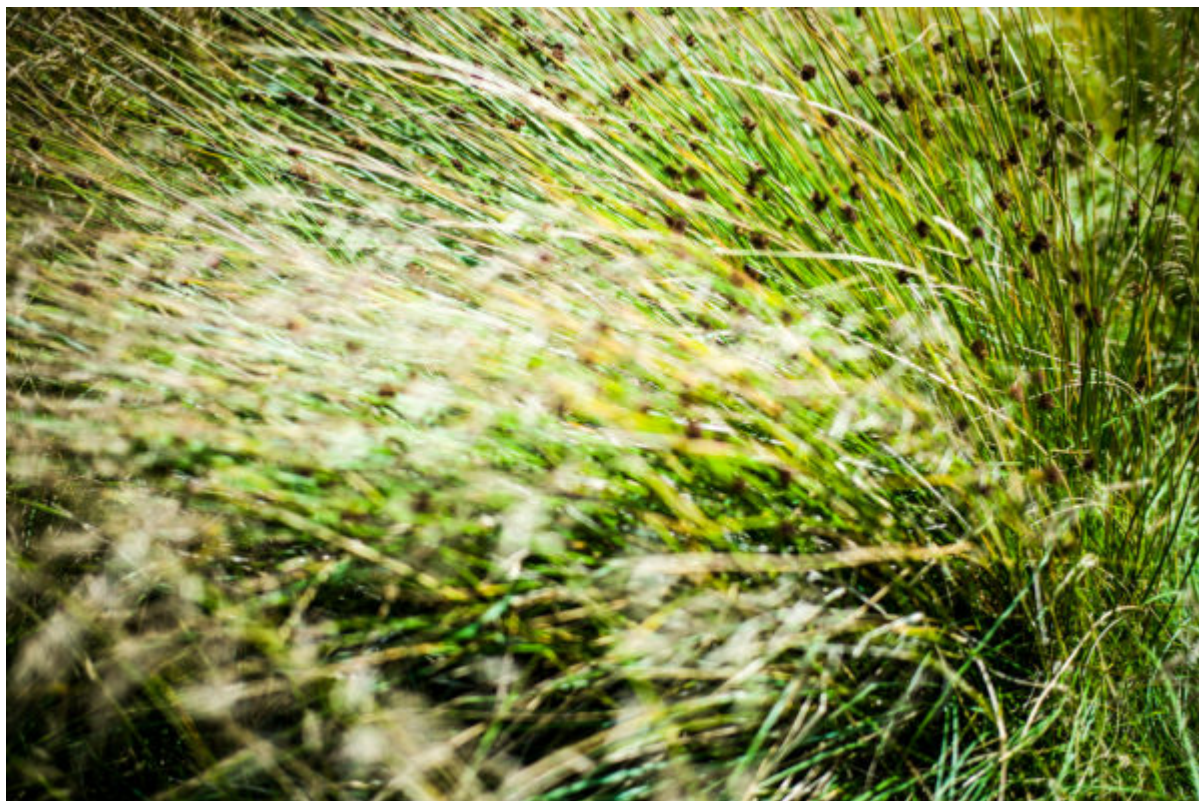


The Roman road runs through the landscape – Scott country – over the modern border between England and Scotland, towards the Eildon Hills and the outpost of Trimontium (on the skyline to the left – [click on image to enlarge](#)).

Not so bleak on such an August afternoon.



Site of the Reidswire Fray – July 7, 1575 – Sir John Forster, Warden of the English Middle March, notorious double-dealer, presided for the English, whilst his counterpart for Scotland was Sir John Carmichael, Deputy March Warden and Keeper of Liddesdale. What started as a regular truce turned into the last major battle between the English and Scottish.





Some gaed to drink and some stude still,
And some to cards and dice them sped;
Till on ane Farnstein they fyled a bill,
And he was fugitive and fled.

...

Then was there nought but bow and speir,
And every man pull'd out a brand;
"A Schafton and a Fenwick" thare:
Gude Symington was slain frae hand.

(Walter Scott, Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, Volume 2, page 24-5)