

District BERWICK-UPON-TWEED (ENGLISH)

Tartan Designer Alison Wilkinson

Date March 1982

Berwick-upon-Tweed is England's most northerly town being situated in Northumberland on the north bank of the River Tweed. Prior to the Union of the Crowns of England and Scotland in 1603, Berwick was the site of many skirmishes between the two countries. Indeed, between 1147 and 1482 it changed hands thirteen times. Today the town still has a distinct 'border town' atmosphere, for example, in the number of Scottish banks there. To commemorate the historic past of the town therefore, in 1981, the firm of Trow Mill (now closed) from Hawick, Scotland, arranged for its then Berwick branch, Marygate Weavers, to organize a competition for the design of a Berwick-upon-Tweed tartan. A number of designs were submitted by local people. In March 1982, the winner was announced, Alison Wilkinson of Wooler, Northumberland. She was at that time a pupil in form 3M of Berwick High School and received a prize of £50.

The black, red and gold of the tartan are the heraldic colors of the town, and represent its corporate identity and the gray its many stone buildings. The blue symbolizes the river Tweed and the green the nearby hills.

The tartan was woven and displayed at the town's quincennial celebrations which began in August 1982 at which time the Royal Guest of Honor in the following month was the Duke of Gloucester. When first designed, it was woven as an asymmetric tartan, in which the half sett was repeated, rather than reversed. More recently it has been woven symmetrically with a half sett reverse.

Taken from "District Tartans of Scotland", by Gordon Teall & Philip Smith, Shephard-Walwyn (Publishers) Ltd.

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