



CHERRYBURN TIMES

The Journal of The Bewick Society



The Following in the Footsteps of Thomas Bewick Tote bag, September 2021.

BUILDING BACK BEWICK

by Peter Quinn

During 2021 the pandemic continued to impact our ability to gather, teach, research and organise. The Bewick Society held six meetings online using Zoom. Our thanks go to our speakers Douglas Downing, Chris Daunt, Kristin Bluemel, Anthony Smithson, Graham Williams and Graham Rowe. The topics covered included the Dalziells, making wood blocks, illustrations for children, North Shields, printing Bewick and the Zebra. The Zoom events will return in 2022.

Digitisation of newspapers can open new windows into the world of Thomas Bewick. A re-used biography from an Edinburgh periodical turns up in the Caribbean. In his paper 'Thomas Bewick in Barbados' Graham Rowe takes us through his research step-by-step. We re-visit Edinburgh with the Bewicks and are invited to re-assess Thomas Bewick's contribution to the anti-slavery movement. Book-selling online has thrived in the last couple of years. Les Jessop explores a bargain acquisition: 'Lessons in Truth' by Mrs Mathews. In

September a group gathered at Cherryburn for a four day wood engraving workshop organised by Chris Daunt and Alex Robb. You can read about their sunny four days at the back of this issue.

As Chair of the Bewick Society, I am often asked to give introductory talks to groups. It was a great pleasure to meet the Society of Wood Engravers at their annual picnic in Thirsk in July. My outdoor picnic-themed talk ended with a short discussion of how we might 'Build Bewick Back Better' after the recent upheavals. In no particular order of priority, we highlighted areas to direct our energy: better archive and museum experience; better research; more Bewick books in print, especially the Memoir; better popular understanding, a film, a documentary and a retrospective. The last major retrospective opened at the Laing Art Gallery in June 1978. It celebrated the 150th anniversary of Bewick's death. 2028 and the 200th anniversary is not so far away.

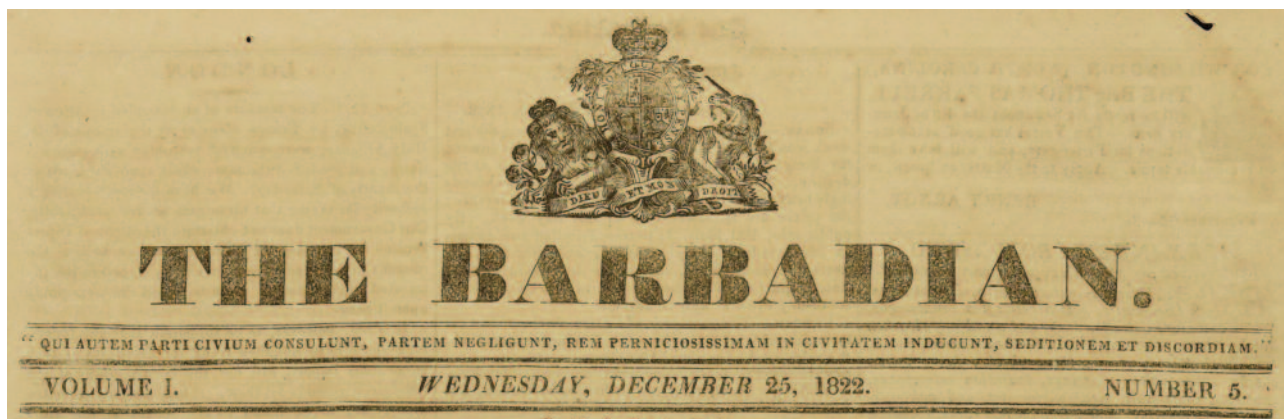


Figure 1. Masthead of *The Barbadian* newspaper from issue five, dated 25 December 1822, containing a woodcut of the British Royal Coat of Arms. The original material is located at The Barbados Department of Archives, in Barbados. Image digitised as part of the Endangered Archives Programme (Project EAP1251), distributed via the British Library, and used under a Creative Commons license.

THOMAS BEWICK IN BARBADOS

by Graham Rowe

Investigative Bewickians sometimes stumble across the name of Thomas Bewick in unexpected places. At first sight, the 6 January 1826 issue of *The Barbadian* – one of the newspapers serving Barbados, the most easterly of the Caribbean Islands – must be one of the most unexpected locations to discover a long article about Thomas Bewick. Who published the article? Who wrote the article? As the research criss-crosses the Atlantic, we encounter a pandemic, a flamboyant artist, many sailing ships, a pseudonymous writer, scientists, anti-slavery campaigners, slavery apologists, a man called Jacob and a national hero.

In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries Barbados had an unusually large number of newspapers per head of population and – printed in Bridgetown (the capital and largest city) – the bi-weekly *Barbadian* was one of the first. Founded and edited by Abel Clinckett (1775–1854), the first issue of was published on Wednesday, 11 December 1822.

The Barbadian was printed as a double-sided single folio sheet; although the size of the paper varied, it was folded to give four news pages. Abel Clinckett continued to edit the newspaper until his death from Cholera on 6 June 1854, aged 78 years.

He was an early victim of a cholera epidemic in Barbados that went on to kill over 20,000 inhabitants. Originating in 1817 in India, the 1854 ‘Year of Cholera’ was an outbreak (part of the third wave of a global pandemic) that would kill hundreds-of-thousands of people across Russia, Europe, North, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. After his death the paper was ‘printed for the Widow and Administratrix of the late Abel Clinckett’, Mary Judith Clinckett (1788–1862). The final edition of *The Barbadian*, dated Monday, 30 December 1861, was published just months before Mary Judith Clinckett’s own death, aged 74 years.

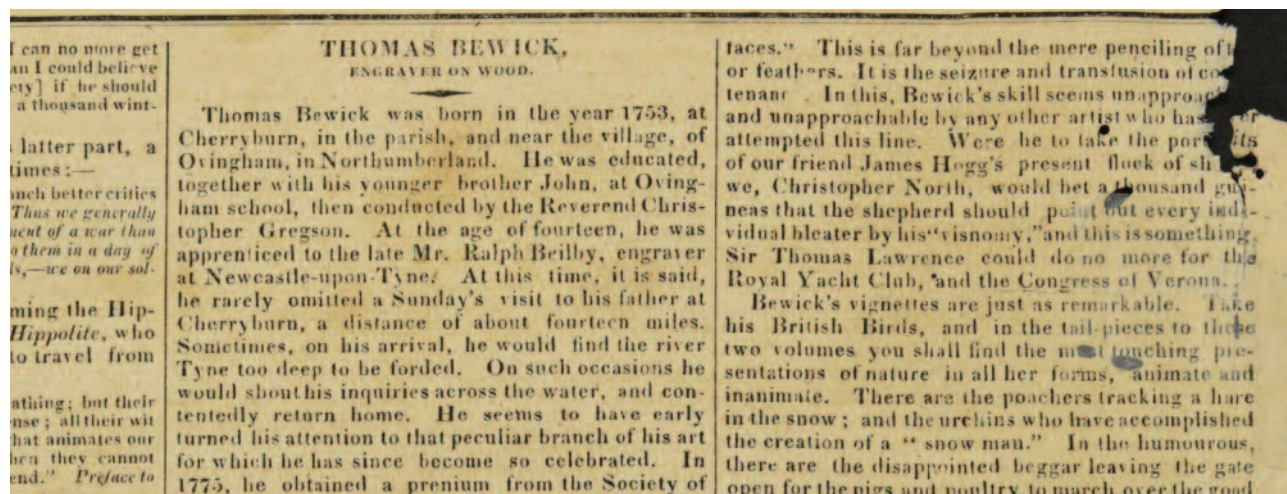


Figure 2. The ‘Thomas Bewick’ article in *The Barbadian* newspaper, issue dated Friday, 6 January 1826 (Vol. 4, New Series, No. 80). The original material is located at The Barbados Department of Archives, in Barbados. Image digitised as part of the Endangered Archives Programme (Project EAP1251), distributed via the British Library, and used under a Creative Commons license.

Barbados is a small island covering an area of 432 km² (167 square miles), about 34 kilometres (21 miles) in length. Between 1627 and 1640, the island was settled by British colonists, who brought indentured labour with them from Britain and some enslaved Africans, to produce tobacco, cotton, and indigo. Sugar cane was introduced to Barbados in the 1650s and led to the development of large plantations. By the end of the eighteenth century, Barbados had 745 sugar plantations worked by more than 80,000 African and African-descended slaves.

From its first issue in 1822, until the end of March 1825, the masthead of *The Barbadian* contained a woodcut of the British Royal Coat of Arms (Figure 1). The woodcut was dropped from the masthead at the end of March 1825. However use of the *Barbadian*'s motto continued; a sentence by the Roman statesman Cicero that read: *Qui autem partem civium consulunt partem negligunt, rem perniciosissimam in civitatem inducunt, seditionem et discordiam* [Those who serve the interests of part of the citizens, but neglect a part, invite a condition of things highly detrimental to the state, namely sedition and discord]; a rather disturbingly ironic motto, given the extent of slavery on Barbados at the time.

Physical copies of *The Barbadian* are extremely rare, with those previously kept at the National Library and at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society transferred to the Barbados Archives in the late 1960s. Due to the acidic nature of the papers used for printing the *Barbadian*, some issues have deteriorated considerably; however, a seven-month digitisation project in 2019–2020 (Project EAP1251) resulted in the 3,396 extant copies being made freely accessible online through the 'Endangered Archives Programme' on the British Library webpages and the subscription-based 'The British Newspaper Archive' (a digitisation programme in conjunction with the British Library). An online posting under the 'Endangered Archives Programme' on the British Library webpages (accessed 1 December 2021) recorded that:

'As a primary source, *The Barbadian* is crucial for understanding this British colony's 19th century history. The newspaper contains a wealth of information about life in this slave-based society, such as information about various personalities, commerce, governance, socioeconomic conditions, race, religion, politics, entertainment, education, etc. The papers include many advertisements for the sale of enslaved people, and adverts for the recapture of runaway/escaped enslaved people.'

By 1822 many Barbadians of British descent may never (or only rarely) have visited Britain and were primarily reliant on newspapers like *The Barbadian* for the distribution of anything other than family news that originated from, or circulated through, Britain. While containing local news and information, many 'newsworthy' items to appear in *The Barbadian*, including reviews of other publications, and matters of 'fashion' or 'taste', were copied from articles first published London and Edinburgh. On page 125, of Sir Robert Schomburgk's (1848) *The History of Barbados* (published in London), *The Barbadian* was referred to as 'a strictly conservative paper, and the organ of the church; the ecclesiastical proceedings of the diocese occupying a prominent place in its columns'.

In the Friday, 6 January 1826 issue (Vol. 4, New Series,

No. 80) a long article titled 'Thomas Bewick, Engraver on Wood', filled half of the final page (Figure 2). The prose of the article was not original work: the *Barbadian* acknowledged *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* as the source. Under the same title, the text had originally been published as the opening article of the July 1825 issue of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. Physical copies of the July issue of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* went on sale from 30 June 1825 and were printed for William Blackwood (1776–1834) in Edinburgh and the younger Thomas Cadell (1773–1836) in London. That the 'strictly conservative' *Barbadian* should source material from the right-wing monthly, the *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, would appear consistent with Clinckett's editorial position and the newspaper's colonialist readership.

The more than five-month delay between the publication of the original article and its reproduction in the *Barbadian* can be explained, at least in part, by the time taken for goods to travel by sea between Britain and the Caribbean; although journey times for the mail, and similar items, would have been shortened by use of the speedier 'packet ships'. Indeed, the Bewick-article-containing issue of the *Barbadian* reported receipt 'by the *Pandora*, Liverpool papers to the 30th November, and Glasgow to the 29th'. Although the *Barbadian* did not specifically record the arrival date, the 2 December 1825 issue of the *Liverpool Mercury* reported the *Pandora* sailed from Liverpool on 30 November, suggesting a journey time of just over one month. Indeed, the 16 December 1825 issue of the *Barbadian* records the 'Brig *Elizabeth*' passed Barbados 'this morning, from Liverpool bound to Vera Cruz [Mexico], out 32 days.'

The 1825 article on Thomas Bewick was published six weeks before his seventy-third birthday. The article therefore post-dates all eight editions of *The General History of Quadrupeds* (eighth edition, 1824) published in his lifetime; the first (1818) and second (1823) editions of *The Fables of Aesop*. A new edition of *A History of British Birds* was published the following year.

Apart from two deleted passages, the *Barbadian* reproduced verbatim the biographical and more factual information from the original in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*. The first and lesser of the two deletions was the short opening preamble paragraph of the original article:

'WHEN reputations have been gained, still it often happens that few are really acquainted with the grounds on which they rest. Most people have heard of the name of Bewick. Yet inquire of the many upon what foundation the fame of this name is built, and, nine times out of ten, the answer shall be, "upon the excellence of his wood engravings." Even so. Ask what sort of excellence, and, upon the second interrogatory, the catechumen is a nonplus. We shall be excused if we devote a few pages to the genius and works of Bewick.'

Certainly the language is archaic: the catechumen is 'one being instructed', mostly used in the context of the Christian religion. Perhaps the editor was trying to save space. It seems more likely that this edit was the result of the island readers being much less familiar with Thomas Bewick and his works, than the general newspaper-reading populace of Britain. As published in *The Barbadian*, the article begins: 'Thomas

Bewick was born in the year 1753, at Cherryburn, in the parish, and near the village, of Ovingham, in Northumberland. He was educated, ...?.

The large passage deleted from the article reproduced in *The Barbadian* began with ponderings on whether Bewick would have made a good painter, continuing with a tedious and largely irrelevant discussion of 'taste' and 'beauty' in art (that included a rant directed at the Academicians of the Royal Academy). Given the restricted space of the 4-page *Barbadian*, some editing of the original *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* article might have been expected; however, long articles were not unknown sometimes spread over several editions of the newspaper.

The author of the text is revealed in the sentence: 'Were he [Bewick] to take the portraits of our friend James Hogg's present flock of sheep, we, Christopher North, would bet a thousand guineas that the shepherd should point out every individual bleater ...?.'

A copy of the eclectic *Notes and Queries* from 1913 (Vol. 7, Eleventh Series, p. 28) records that 'the article 'Thomas Bewick, Engraver on Wood' ... in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* for July, 1825' was 'said to be by "Christopher North," i.e. Prof. John Wilson'. Born in Paisley and the son of a wealthy gauze manufacturer, John Wilson (1785-1854) entered the University of Glasgow and subsequently Magdalen College, Oxford, where he took his degree. Wilson settled in

Edinburgh where he read Law and was invited to become a Scottish advocate in 1815 (although never practiced); the following year he published a second volume of his poems. In 1817, in the year of its foundation, John Wilson (Figure 3) became connected *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (set up as a rival to the more liberal Whig *Edinburgh Review*). Wilson wrote prose tales, sketches, and literary criticism under the pseudonym 'Christopher North', and his contributions were the making of the *Edinburgh Magazine*. Although Wilson became the principal writer for *Blackwood's*, he was never the named editor. In 1820, Wilson was appointed to the chair of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh, a position for which he was ill-qualified, but retained until 1851. Wilson's appointment (over Sir William Hamilton, a better qualified candidate) was a political one, the result of support from influential friends (particularly Walter Scott) and the Tory majority on the town council. Wilson's article on Thomas Bewick was presumably written shortly before it was published in July 1825 and apparently instigated as an overview of his life's work, rather than by one specific event.

Bewick had visited Edinburgh less than two years earlier, in the two weeks after his seventieth birthday. (See Quinn, P. (2009) *Thomas Bewick in Scotland*, Cherryburn Times.) The Bewicks' fortnight visit of August 1823 'was a busy time ... being taken up with the kindness & hospitality, we met with every where, as well as in visiting its various scientific & other



Figure 3. Sir William Allan *The Celebration of the Birthday of James Hogg, 1770 - 1835*

Oil on Panel, 1823 or 1825 National Galleries Scotland, PG 3136, used under a Creative Commons license.

Note this scene shows a group of friends celebrating the birthday of James Hogg, the writer nicknamed 'the Ettrick Shepherd'. The gathering includes the artistic and literary elite of Scottish society. John Wilson (Christopher North), the author and moral philosopher, raises a toast to Hogg.

establishments' (Bain 1975, p. 182). However, Bewick recorded that, 'It being at a vacation season, when most of the learned professors were out of town – we saw only professors Jameson & Wallace...'

Bewick does not mention meeting John Wilson nor his brother James. James Wilson (1795–1856) was one of Edinburgh's most diversified and accomplished zoologists. Both John and James moved in the circle of Professor Jameson and both knew the Bewick-admiring visitor from America John James Audubon (1785–1851). When James Wilson was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh in 1827, his proposer was Scottish naturalist and mineralogist, Robert Jameson (1774–1854); the same Professor Jameson – Regius Professor of Natural History at the University of Edinburgh – who hosted the Bewicks during much of their two-week stay in Edinburgh in August 1823.

John and James Wilson offered Audubon hospitality and friendship during his first (and later) visit to Edinburgh from the late autumn of 1826 (on leaving Edinburgh on 5 April 1827, Audubon headed for Northumberland and was to soon meet Thomas Bewick; with a reciprocal visit made by Bewick on Audubon, while both were present in London the following year). Audubon greatly admired Bewick and later wrote an account of his visits to Newcastle and Gateshead. Wilson had written glowing appreciations of Audubon's work in *Noctes Ambrosianae*, No. XXX, published in the January 1827 (Vol. 21, No. 121) issue of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (see pp. 112–113; although the latter page incorrectly numbered 105). Christopher North offered the opinion that Audubon 'is the greatest artist in his own walk that ever lived, and cannot fail to reap the reward of his genius and perseverance and adventurous zeal in his own beautiful branch of natural history, both in fame and fortune.' John Wilson also wrote the highly complementary review of *Audubon's Ornithological Biography* (pp. 1–16) in the July 1831 (Vol. 30, No. 182) issue of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*.

John Wilson's connection with Jameson shows him to be an important part in the history of the formation of museum collections in Edinburgh. In 1816 he was commissioned to travel to Paris to purchase the Louis Dufresne (1752–1832) collection of birds on behalf of Edinburgh University and arrange them on his return to Scotland.

James Wilson wrote widely on natural history. His 1827 *Illustrations of Zoology, being Representations of new, rare, or remarkable Subjects of the Animal Kingdom, drawn and coloured after nature, with historical and descriptive details*, published by William Blackwood of Edinburgh and Thomas Cadell of London (the publishers of *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*) was an Audubon-influenced work issued in parts until 1831. It contained fine hand-coloured plates of some of the specimens from the Dufresne collection.

In June 1828 *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (pp. 856–873) featured a rambling and rather effusive 'anonymous' review of this illustrated work (written perhaps by James Wilson's own brother, John?). The review evokes Bewick in a notable quotation:

'Have we forgotten, in our hurried and imperfect enumeration of wise Worthies, have we forgotten, "The Genius that dwells on the banks of the Tyne," the Matchless, the Inimitable Bewick? No. His books

lie on our parlour, bedroom, dining-room, drawing-room, study table, and are never out of place or time. Happy old man! The delight of childhood, manhood, decaying age! A moral in every tail-piece – a sermon in every vignette.'

In many respects, the format, structure, and contents of *The Barbadian* broadly mirror those published in any British newspaper at that time; in a large part because much of the subject matter was sourced and copied from material that originated and was in circulation in British newspapers and monthly periodicals. The first page of the 'Bewick' edition included a story called *Jan Schalken's Three Wishes. A Dutch Legend*; sourced directly from the October 1825 issue of the *European Magazine* (No. 2, New Series). Alongside the Bewick article, the fourth page was effectively filled with the following: an anonymous poem titled *The Mother's Remonstrance*; a long article called *Opinions of the French Character, Given at Different Times in England* by 'the late Mr. [John] Scott, author of two excellent works on France, and the first editor of the London Magazine'; a short anonymous article on *Doctor Johnson*; and an anonymous snippet titled *Admiral*, on the first use of this word.

It was, however, the items for sale; 'Marine Intelligence'; business, church, and legal announcements; and news from the capital Bridgetown, that gave *The Barbadian* its local feel. Ship arrivals at Bridgetown on 3rd January 1826 included the brig *Bermuda*, from 'Rio de Janeiro [Brazil], bound to Halifax [Nova Scotia]', and on 5th January the brig *Manly* from Portsmouth [England] and 'ship *Achilles*, Bristol [England],



Figure 4. Museum number 1882,0311.3227 **Tobacco-paper, showing a black man, intended as an African chief, standing to front beside a barrel, wearing a kilt, headdress made of tobacco leaves, holding a bunch of tobacco leaves in one hand and smoking pipe in the other, the train of his ermine-trimmed robe held by a small black boy at left; proof of state before letters. c.1777 Wood-engraving 72x54mm. © The Trustees of the British Museum**

bound to Trinidad'; one imminent departure was the 'Brig AGNES' to 'sail in a few days' for Demerara [Guyana], with the 'new Barque IRLAM' set to 'sail on the 18th instant' for Liverpool [England]. Items advertised for sale in the 6 January 1826 issue of *The Barbadian* include:

'... from Belfast, IRISH LINENS, assorted ...'; 'Dry Goods and Various Fashionable Articles'; 'Bags of fine green COFFEE, Bags COCOA, Barrels yellow CORN MEAL'; 'A Choice Collection of Millinery'; 'BLACK-EYE PEASE - RED HERRINGS, A few kegs OYSTERS'; 'Spermaceti Candles'; 'LUMBER'; '... old MADEIRA and SERCIAL WINE ... Gunpowder Tea ...'; and a '... Sugar work Plantation ... with the Slaves, Cattle and quick and dead Stock ...'.

While this issue of *The Barbadian* reported receipt of the 'Liverpool papers to the 30th November, and Glasgow to the 29th', it noted that '[t]he former contain nothing of importance' (or at least no opinions deemed to be suitable for *The Barbadian* and its readership). However, the '*Glasgow Courier* [was], as usual, full of entertaining miscellaneous matter; but what gives it a chief interest to us is, Mr M'Queen's unwearied exertion in the Colonial cause, and complete exposure of the abominations of the anti-slavery junto.' *The Barbadian* was strongly pro-slavery.

Anathema today, the sea change in British attitudes towards slavery occurred over the course of Bewick's lifetime. A 1777 cut (Figure 4) by Bewick depicts an African Chief: 'a subtle acknowledgement that tobacco, like sugar, was harvested and processed by plantation slavery.' (N. Tattersfield, *Graphic Worlds* p.76). A 1781 cut (Figure 5) for Samuel Steel in Bedale, Yorkshire exposes the slave labour at the heart of the tobacco trade. 'The iconography now makes

plain that the enjoyment of tobacco is the white man's privilege alone but – usually – the planter's or overseer's whip emphasizes that the labour involved in its production was coerced.' (*Graphic Worlds* p.77)

The best-known engraving by Bewick in this context (BM 1882,0311.3142), is the title-page device for William Hutchinson's *The Princess of Zanzara*; engraved on wood by Bewick, at a charge of 15 shillings, and dated 10 January 1789. *The Am I not a Man and a Brother?* image (Figure 6) designed by Josiah Wedgwood from which it was derived had originated in 1787, as the design for the seal of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave trade. Readers are referred to the discussion of these images by Nigel Tattersfield and Professor Donald: see Tattersfield, N. (2011) vol 2 page 560-1; Donald, D. (2013) p.38.

It was still legal to own slaves in Barbados in 1826. While the British 1807 *Act for the Abolition of the Slave Trade* outlawed the trade in slaves in Barbados, it had not abolished the practice of slavery. Harsh working conditions in Barbados had led to a slave revolt in 1816, an event likely still fresh in the memory of many British colonialists in 1826. The brutality of the lives of African slaves is caught in an announcement in the 6 January 1826 issue:

'A reward of Twenty-Four Dollars will be given by the subscriber to any person that will apprehend and lodge in the Cage, or deliver to him, his Negro man, named Jacob: he is full sized, about thirty years of age, has a scar upon his nose, near the eye. ... He has a brother belonging to Mr J. Montefiore, of Bridge-Town, by the name of Jupiter, and a brother named John William, and his mother, Molly, the property of Mr Gilkes, late the property of Mr Owen ...'.



Figure 5. Museum number 1882,0311.3226 **Tobacco-paper for Samuel Steel in Bedale, Yorkshire,** showing a white man seated at right on a chair in a courtyard, smoking a pipe with a whip in his left hand, supervising black slaves filling and moving barrels of tobacco; lettered on oval tablet below with 'S: Steel's Best Virginia / Bedale.'; *proof. c.1781 Wood-engraving 1781 60x74mm*

The newspaper was firmly in the anti-abolition camp. On page two we read a long letter ‘To the Editor of *The Barbadian*’ strongly criticising a pamphlet entitled ‘Negro Slavery’ written by William Wilberforce, a leader of the movement to abolish the slave trade, and the antislavery activist Zachary Macaulay. Page three is given over to a long article on ‘West Indian Slavery’, sourced from the October 1825 issue (Vol. 32, No. 64, pp. 506-543) of the London-based *Quarterly Review*. The first part of the *Quarterly Review* article, fully titled ‘*First and Second Reports of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions*’, had appeared in *The Barbadian* for 3 January 1826; the article was published in full, distributed over five consecutive issues, and concluded on 17 January 1826.

Despite the *Barbadian*’s campaigning, the final emancipation of the enslaved population in Barbados occurred over a five-year period after the 1833 *Slavery Abolition Act*.

John Wilson’s January 1826 article was not Thomas Bewick’s only appearance in *The Barbadian*: he is referenced in article called, ‘A Glance Over Selby’s Ornithology’ – a highly edited version of the article that was first printed in the November 1826 issue (pp. 657-680) of the *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* (Vol. 20, No. 119) Pridcaux John Selby (1788–1867), an ornithologist, botanist, and natural history artist, was born Alnwick, Northumberland. When Audubon left Edinburgh, in April 1827, he visited Selby, before travelling on to spend a week Newcastle, where he met Bewick. The review printed in *Blackwood’s*, and again been written by

John Wilson was published on page three of *The Barbadian*, dated Tuesday 02 January 1827 (New Series, Vol. 5, No. 183).

Thomas Bewick died on 8 November 1828 and his third and final mention in *The Barbadian* was his obituary published just over two months later, on page four of the Tuesday 13 January 1829 issue (New Series, Vol. 7, No. 395). Although not acknowledged by *The Barbadian*, the single paragraph, approximately 350-word obituary had been sourced from that first published on page 891 of the 19 November 1828 issue (No. 56) of *The Athenaeum*, a London-based weekly literary magazine that had started publication in January of the same year.

Despite the abolition of slavery across the British Empire from 1833 and the emancipation of former slaves, Barbados was slow to loosen its connections with Britain; indeed, it was only on 30 November 1966, that Barbados became an independent state and Commonwealth realm with Elizabeth II as Queen of Barbados. Today, the island population of 287,000 is predominantly of African descent. On 30 November 2021 – a date chosen to coincide with the country’s 55th anniversary of its independence – Dame Sandra Mason became the first President of Barbados, replacing Queen Elizabeth as head of state, with Barbados transitioning to a republic and ending nearly 400 years of British ties. At the ceremony in Bridgetown, guest of honour Prince Charles acknowledged ‘the appalling atrocity of slavery’ the Caribbean island suffered. One of the first acts of the new President was to name musician and businesswoman Rihanna (Robyn Rihanna Fenty b.1988) a national hero.



Figure 6. **Am I not a Man and a Brother?**
Anti-slavery emblem of a kneeling black slave used on the title-page of ‘The Princess of Zanfara’ by William Hutchinson. 1789 Wood-engraving with letterpress. This famous image originated in 1787 as the design for the seal of the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade; it was produced in many versions, probably the best known being the jasper-ware cameo by Josiah Wedgwood, a member of the Society.

This was engraved by Bewick on 10 January 1789 at a charge of 15s. Lit.: N. Tattersfield, ‘Thomas Bewick, Graphic Worlds’, London, 2014, p. 121

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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- A digitised copy of this issue is freely available online via the British Library webpages: *The Barbadian*, 6 Jan 1826, British Library, EAP1251/1/5/1/2, <https://eap.bl.uk/archive-file/EAP1251-1-5-1-2>.
- Blackwoods original . Direct access to a digitised version of the original article is accessible through the online Internet Archive: <https://archive.org/details/edinburgh-mag1825/page/n4/mode/1up>.
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Figure 1.

LESSONS OF TRUTH

by Les Jessop

A copy of *Lessons of Truth* by Mrs C. Mathews (1802). York: Wilson & Spence recently appeared for sale on the internet. A cheaply produced volume of moralising tales for young people issued by Wilson & Spence in York in 1802, its main attraction to me as a buyer was that it contains prints taken from Beilby-Bewick woodblocks. It is also a rare book, COPAC recording copies only in Oxford University, York Minster and Cherryburn. Also, on checking in Tattersfield's *Thomas Bewick The Complete Illustrative Work* (vol 3 page 96) I read "*Pretty Book of Pictures* cuts also found their way into Mrs Mathews' *Lessons of Truth*". At a price of less than £8, it was a bargain I couldn't resist.

On arrival, I checked through the book and noted nine images. One was so crudely done that it raised immediate questions whether it had any Beilby-Bewick input; one I recognised from *A Pretty Book of Pictures*; the other seven needed some detective work to find out which publications had originally included them. Three resources were crucially important in this task:

1. Volume 2 of *Thomas Bewick The Complete Illustrative Work*. Flicking through the many images can often lead directly to the identity of a print ... as was the case with the Frontispiece to *Lessons of Truth*. In other cases the overall style of an image, or its subject matter, can sometimes suggest a lead to follow up.
2. The online database of the British Museum collections. This contains thousands of images of proof impressions of woodcuts, with notes identifying where they were first used.
3. The database *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* (E.C.C.O.). This contains scans of most of the books

produced in Britain in the 18th Century. Unfortunately it is available only to subscribers which, however, include Durham and Newcastle Universities.

Within a day I had identified all nine of the images. A final twist came when I checked my copy of Edwin Pearson's reprint of *Pretty Book of Pictures* and noticed a slight difference between the coach-and-horses cut used to illustrate 'Master Tommy and Miss Molly riding in a coach to take the air' and the cut in *Lessons of Truth*. In fact, on looking at a proof in the British Museum it was clear that the cut used by Wilson & Spence was not from *A Pretty Book of Pictures*, but instead from *A Collection of Pretty Poems for the Amusement of Children* (1781) (Tattersfield TB 2.95). So, the note on page 96 of Volume 3 of Nigel Tattersfield's book needs to be altered to "none of *Pretty Book of Pictures* cuts found their way into Mrs Mathews' *Lessons of Truth*"

Reading the text of the book, it became clear that Wilson & Spence had not merely picked out blocks at random to prettify it. The images were obviously selected because they relate to the tales being told. So, when they wanted an image of a young woman in despair, they chose a comparable scene from *History of Pamela*.

If I have a favourite among this small group of images, it is Figure 1, an illustration of a young boy reading to a small group of children in a fire-lit room: an image of charm and quality.

Figure 1: (Frontispiece, *Lessons of Truth* [LoT]) Five children lounge in a fire-lit room while a sixth reads a story from a book: this was commissioned in 1799 by Wilson for *The Happy family*; or, *Winter evening's employment* (1800). (Tattersfield TB 2.230)



Figure 2.

Figure 2: (page 13, LoT) ‘Charlotte asks forgiveness from Deborah’, from *The Holiday Present* (1784) (Tattersfield TB 2.289). No copy of this edition is known, but the 1782 edition, published by John Marshall and containing the scenes copied by the Bewick workshop, can be seen online (on E.C.C.O.).



Figure 3.

Figure 3: (page 20, LoT) A young woman kneeling in profile to right in front of a chair, with hands folded in prayer; curtain behind; picture of Christ on the cross hanging on the wall; in an oval; illustration to Isaac Watts’ ‘*A Choice Collection of Hymns, and Moral Songs*’ (Newcastle upon Tyne: 1781, p.15); proof. Wood-engraving © The Trustees of the British Museum. (page 20), (Tattersfield TB 2.80).



Figure 4.

Figure 4: (page 29, LoT) Headpiece for the fable ‘The ant in Office’ from *Fables by the late Mr Gay* (1779) (Tattersfield TB 2.163). Fable of The Ant in Office; an ant addressing a group of ants under an old tree on a riverbank at right; water-mill on the opposite bank; in an oval, within rectangular frame; illustration to the ‘*The Fables of Mr. John Gay*’ (York: 1797); proof. Wood-engraving © The Trustees of the British Museum.

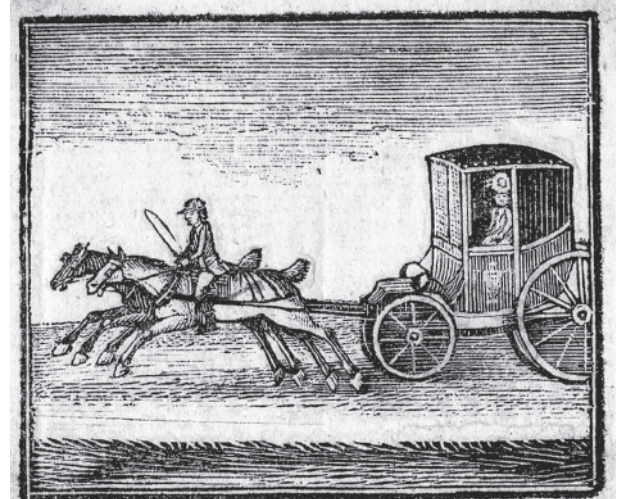


Figure 5.

Figure 5: (page 53, LoT) This scene is very similar to Figure 6 but the latter has a tree on the left, bushes in the background, stronger shadows under the horses, less of a dark band in the foreground and the hatching in the sky is different. This is from *Happiness mistaken*; a young lady travelling in a carriage, drawn by two galloping horses from right to left, a postilion riding the one nearer to the viewer; illustration to ‘*A Collection of Pretty Poems for the Amusement of Children*’, by an anonymous author, calling himself Tommy Tagg (London: 1781); proof. Wood-engraving © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Figure 6.

Figure 6: A lady travelling in a coach, drawn by two galloping horses on a country road from right to left, a postilion riding the horse nearer to the viewer; large house in the distance; illustration to ‘*A Pretty Book of Pictures*’, Thomas Saint’s ‘*Twelfth Edition*’ © The Trustees of the British Museum.



Figure 7.

Figure 7: (page 61, LoT) Trees beside a river, the headpiece for the fable 'The Mock-bird' in *Select Fables* (1784) (Tattersfield TB 2.574).



Figure 8.

Figure 8: (page 81, LoT) Headpiece to the Fairy, the good daughter giving water to a fairy in the guise of an old woman. This crude image is unlikely to be from the hands of Bewick. Contrast the same subject in Figure 9.



Figure 9.

Figure 9: The Fairy: a young woman standing to right on the bank of a brook, holding up a jug of water for an elderly woman to drink; illustration to 'Tales of Past Times, by Old Mother Goose: with Morals.' (London and York: c.1788); touched proof. Wood-engraving, touched with graphite © The Trustees of the British Museum



Figure 10.

Figure 10: (page 82, LoT) Headpiece for the fable 'The ants and the grasshopper' from *Select Fables* (1784) (Tattersfield TB 2.574).



Figure 11.

Figure 11: (page 101, LoT) The maid Pamela Andrews seated on the bank of a pond, with eyes closed, in a contemplating pose, her clothes floating in the water; in an oval, within rectangular frame, against background of vertical lines; frontispiece and illustration (p.61) to Samuel Richardson's 'The History of Pamela; or, Virtue Rewarded'; proof. Wood-engraving © The Trustees of the British Museum (Tattersfield TB 2.274).



FOLLOWING IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THOMAS BEWICK

by Alex Robb and Chris Daunt

Chris Daunt and **Alex Robb** struck up a friendship approximately 6 years ago, after Alex attended one of Chris's wood engraving workshops at West Dean in Sussex. Fledgling engraver Alex was drawn to Chris's easy going and highly knowledgeable style of teaching and he was soon coming to London to teach courses at the iconic Shot Tower in Crane Park, Richmond, a nature and visitor centre Alex was then running.

The success of these workshops led to organising the first in a series of wood engraving courses to be held at Cherryburn.

Alex Ross writes:

Chris has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the National Trust at Cherryburn. When it was suggested that we use the house as a venue for the course it was very well received.

So after a few months of friendly and helpful negotiation with the Trust and recruiting a keen group of engravers a delightful group of like-minded people arrived, on a sunny Sunday morning in early September for the beginning of the 4 day course.

Everyone found local accommodation in B and B's and guest houses and lifts were readily shared.

Here is a brief run down of each day's events, followed by comments from our participants which will give you a much fuller picture of the course.

Day One – An introduction and tour of Cherryburn by Kay Owen, the house manager. Practicing on the blocks, followed by a sunny afternoon sketching around property and along the River Tyne

Day Two – Down to the hard work of producing an engraving. In the evening we had an entertaining and informative talk on Thomas Bewick by Dr Peter Quinn.

Day Three – More work on our blocks, followed in the afternoon by the printing of a Bewick block by Christopher Bacon.

Day Four – Finishing up and printing our engravings. We had a final celebratory meal at the Rat Inn near Hexham, which included a magnificent Bewick themed cake kindly created by Chris's cousin and course participant Jeannette Telfer.

Chris Daunt writes:

Writing as the workshop tutor, I'd like to add that this was one of the most rewarding and enjoyable courses I've had the privilege to teach. The setting was not only idyllic, but the rich history connected with Cherryburn made this event very special indeed. We were blessed with beautiful weather, which displayed the Tyne Valley in all its glory, largely as Bewick would have known it.

Alex's description of the four days provides an overview of what took place and how we arrived at the idea, but I'd like to add that she brought expert organisational skills and imagination to make this happen so smoothly. In addition, I should also say that none of this would have been possible without Kay Owen of the National Trust. Kay not only backed us all the way, but gave up her weekend to be on hand.

I think everyone present would agree that one of the highlights was the talk given by Dr Peter Quinn, chair of the Bewick Society. Focusing on the tailpieces, Peter made the world of Thomas Bewick alive and relevant.

We've included extracts from comments and feedback of the participants, which will help give a flavour of the four days. Several engraving workshops are being planned with Cherryburn for 2022.

Continued overleaf...



Fields, Amanda Taylor.

The very endeavour of making work in good company and a tranquil location really was a privilege. I miss the lunch with a view, the chimes of the clock and even the occasional muttered curses of a cut in error. As well as the excellent guidance of Chris I found the additional lectures were all interesting, particularly the talk given by Peter Quinn. I would happily attend the course again.' *Stephen Guest*

'The 4-day sketching and wood engraving course at Cherryburn was every bit as wonderful as I had hoped – in fact it exceeded my expectations. There was nothing to fault it – organised very efficiently by Alex Robb, the tutoring by Chris Daunt was excellent and the setting was just perfect – made even better by the fabulous weather. *Amanda Taylor*

'Me: 'I am used to hacking at Lino' Chris 'We'll soon knock that out of you' This was done over the next four days but a real challenge for me. As Edison (the lightbulb man) said 'I have not failed. I have found four thousand ways that do not work' *Marian Kuit*

'I greatly enjoyed the cheerful company of the other engravers, appreciated the support we received from Kay Owen of the National Trust and staff, and am especially grateful to Alexandra Robb who helped Chris organise the whole wonderful experience.' *John Dawick*

'Thank you for a most interesting and inspiring course. Great company, slick organisation and Chris thanks for such thoughtful, measured and helpful tuition. I enjoyed it all enormously. I think Cherryburn in the sun is a perfect venue for such course. Repeat please!' *Henry Middleton*

'What I learnt during the four days was overwhelming. Thank you for allowing me to take photos/videos, so I could gradually digest what I have learnt. Peter's talk on Bewick was

also impressive. It was nice to hear the analyses of those masterpieces, so now I have better understanding of Bewick as a great artist and as a person with sympathetic heart. Surrounded by such nice and talented group of people, I was very much enjoyed every minute of this experience. Just feel cannot thank you both enough for everything you have kindly offered.' *Weimin He*

'The Cherryburn course was a very stimulating and beautiful experience. The effect of the landscape and the house was very real and moving, watching the swallows swooping in and out of the outbuilding was totally mesmerising. I felt watching their dances against the landscape gave me a glimpse of what Bewick was noticing as he went about his business at Cherryburn as a child. There were so many little Bewick scenes around and about – an old fallen tree across a ditch, sprouting new shoots, a group of wise looking cows looking out from under the shade of the interlocking hawthorns – shame we didn't see any stilt walkers crossing the river.' *Liz Myers.*

'Thank you both, Chris and Alex, so much for such an enlightening time at Cherryburn. Beautiful surroundings. *Sasa Marinkov.*

'I enjoyed every minute of the Cherryburn course. It really inspired me to get back to drawing and engraving after quite a long break. The extra talks were great too and I've been able to use what I learnt in my conversations with the visitors.' *Kate Jones* (Kate demonstrates engraving and printing to visitors at Cherryburn).



Homage to Bewick, Weimin He.

Cherryburn Times is normally published twice a year. Thanks to all involved with this issue. In the springtime membership newsletter we hope to have details of the next Zoom meetings, a walk, a visit, a face-to-face lecture and new displays for the coming year. If you are inspired to write for the *Cherryburn Times* or have a project in mind please do get in touch. We can be contacted via the Bewick Society email and address:

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