



CHERRYBURN TIMES

The Journal of The Bewick Society

A LONG-LOST TREASURE

THE RETURN OF THE SKETCHBOOK

by Anthony Smithson



The sketchbook was on show for one evening only at the Literary and Philosophical Society, Newcastle, 30th October 2017. Photo courtesy Keel Row Books.

On Monday 30th October the Bewick Society hosted an event at the Literary and Philosophical Society of Newcastle. We celebrated the arrival in the North East of a long-lost treasure: Thomas Bewick's Sketchbook from the years 1792-1799. The sketchbook's return also marked the publication of the facsimile edition. Enthusiasts, experts and local media gathered to record that the only known surviving sketchbook of the celebrated Northumbrian engraver and naturalist Thomas Bewick has returned home to the north east from the United States.

The 230 year old sketchbook was discovered at a book fair in San Francisco by Anthony Smithson of Keel Row Books, North Shields and Brian Lake of the London book-

seller Jarndyce.

After authenticating the item, they purchased the book on behalf of David Bolam, long-time member of the Bewick Society. The pocket-sized sketchbook was officially re-united with its new owner earlier in the day at the Lit and Phil. The ceremony took place in front of the cameras and in sight of the resident marble bust of Bewick by E.H. Baily.

This is one of the most important Bewick finds in recent times and has provided scholars with access to many unseen drawings and sketches.

Anthony Smithson spoke to the press: "I've handled a lot of Bewick's work over the years and the market for anything Bewick related is pretty buoyant not only here in the



Anthony Smithson, David Bolam, Thomas Bewick and Brian Lake with the Sketchbook, Photo courtesy Keel Row Books.

north east but around the globe. However, it's not very often you come across such a rare and significant find as this and I am just delighted that we have been able to find a buyer who shares our enthusiasm for Bewick and bring this important piece of history back to the north east."

The sketchbook's return to the region marked the launch of a new limited edition book featuring reproductions of the sketches and extensive commentary to the background of the sketchbook, the drawings and memoranda found therein from leading Bewick authority Nigel Tattersfield.

Anthony Smithson: "Together with Brian Lake and leading Bewick scholars such as author Nigel Tattersfield and designer Ian Bain, a doyen of Bewick studies, we have not only managed to bring this book back home but have been able to use it to learn more about the life and work of this incredible engraver which can now be shared with others for the first time. We owe our gratitude to David, who willingly handed over the precious sketch book to the team of Bewick experts in order to create this special 200 page book but we know he will be keeping a tight hold of it from now on."

David Bolam spoke at the book launch of his personal enthusiasm for the work of Bewick: "Bewick's work has always captivated me because of its professional depiction of nature, often combined with a quirky background. Having lived and worked on farms in the Tyne Valley in my own youth, I have always been interested in nature and the countryside and could therefore identify with the work of Bewick, who hailed from nearby Cherryburn. I jumped at the chance of acquiring the sketchbook not only to satisfy my personal interest, but it also seemed important to me it returned to the north of England."

The evening featured an account by Brian Lake of the San Francisco discovery and the publication of the fascimile. Nigel Tattersfield gave a short lecture offering a taste of his

detailed research. We heard of four previously unrecorded journeys made by Bewick to fulfill commissions. The sketchbook pages relate to some well-known images. The visit to Mr Hodgson of Elswick to draw the Pintado has been told before. Here though is the original drawing with clear signs of its transfer to the block. Also illuminated in the sketchbook's pages: Bewick's strident views on the realistic depiction of 'fat cattle'

Nigel faced a good number of questions after the talk. He was quizzed on the nature of Bewick's sketchbook use, on the provenance of the item and on the practicalities of Eighteenth Century travel. After a vote of thanks we enjoyed wine and canapés as the author signed books for a good number of purchasers.

At the time of writing copies of the limited edition are still available. To purchase your copy contact the Keelrow Bookshop or Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers.

BEWICK, Thomas. *The Sketchbook of 1792-1799. Edited with an Introduction & Commentary by Nigel Tattersfield. Jarndyce Antiquarian Booksellers. 2017*

Oblong quarto, 182 x 253mm, thread-sewn in decorative paste boards, cloth spine, gilt lettered. Limited to 200 copies, signed by the Editor. ISBN 978-1-910156-15-5.



BEWICK'S ATTEMPT TO BREAK INTO EUROPE

by Nigel Tattersfield



Philipp Otto Runge (1777-1810), *The Hülsenbeck Children*, 1806, oil on canvas, The Kunsthalle Hamburg

At a time when Britain is grappling with the problems of exiting from the European Union, the following article briefly describes the efforts made just over two hundred years ago to enter Europe with an edition of the General History of Quadrupeds in German.

At the end of 1797 the partnership between Ralph Beilby and Thomas Bewick was dissolved. However, this could not be a clean-break separation, for each owned a one-third share of the *General History of Quadrupeds*. The third partner was Solomon Hodgson, proprietor and editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, an important Newcastle printer and bookseller. He had originally been co-opted by his old friends Beilby and Bewick for his contacts and his print and retail expertise, but he was something of a mixed blessing, energetic and knowledgeable to be sure but consumptive and just a shade too fond of the bottle. Be that as it may, it was almost certainly Sol Hodgson who was the prime mover behind a project to print a version of the *Quadrupeds* in German for the northern European market. The venue he envisaged for the launch of this visionary edition was the old Hanseatic port of Hamburg, now grandly titled a Free Imperial City of the Holy Roman Empire and in effect an independent city state.

Although in terms of its population Hamburg was three times larger than Newcastle and vastly wealthier, indeed, the most vital seaport in the German territories,¹ there were some points of comparison. Both were busy ports located on major

rivers; Newcastle on the Tyne, Hamburg on the Elbe. Both were print centres, Hamburg possessing – like Newcastle – a thriving newspaper and periodical industry; and both cities had a long-established trade with one another. Hamburg had the added advantage of being a city with a thriving, outward-looking artistic and literary culture. As far as is known, neither Beilby nor Bewick had any links to Hamburg, but Sol Hodgson, in his role as editor of the *Newcastle Chronicle*, certainly did. In fact, after his death from tuberculosis in 1800, and during his widow Sarah's protracted dispute with Bewick, John Ware of Whitehaven, editor and proprietor of the *Cumberland Pacquet* (and a sycophantic supporter of Sarah Hodgson) claimed that Sol Hodgson was responsible for Bewick's rise to fame. Who else, demanded Ware peremptorily, 'waffed his Fame from the Tyne to the Elbe?'²

Be that as it may, by late 1798, whilst awaiting the additional text and woodcuts for the fourth edition of the *Quadrupeds*, Sol Hodgson obtained a translation of specimen passages of the book into German. The translator was merely identified as a 'Mr Saunders', a man well known to Ralph Beilby and apparently to Thomas Bewick as well.³ This was probably Jonathan Ward Sanders, a Newcastle corn merchant whose business interests extended to a share of the Whitby Bank and interests in companies manufacturing mustard, paint and colour.⁴ If not corn then certainly colour would have brought Sanders into contact with Hamburg, for Newcastle imported huge quantities of 'smalts' (potassium cobalt



The arms of Jonathan Ward Sanders cut for him by Thomas Bewick in 1818, probably intended for one of the series of Newcastle Typographical Society pamphlets (but never used).

silicate) from that source as a blue pigment for glassmaking, pottery and ceramics.⁵

The translation was placed before John Diedrich Lubben, a partner with George Losh in one of Newcastle's foremost merchant trading companies on the Quayside. Here was a wealth of knowledge. Lubben was a recently naturalized British citizen of German descent, having been born in Stade, some twenty-odd miles to the west of Hamburg;⁶ George Losh, the senior partner, was also the Prussian (and Swedish) vice-consul for Newcastle.⁷ In addition, a junior member of the firm was his younger brother William Losh who had studied natural sciences in Hamburg (along with Alexander von Humboldt) and who had returned to work for Losh, Lubben & Company from Paris (where the French Revolution had cut short his studies).⁸ Unfortunately, Lubben expressed reservations about the translation and Ralph Beilby and Thomas Bewick subsequently sent it to stationer and bookseller John Binns of Leeds, owner of the *Leeds Mercury* and a partner in the Leeds Commercial Bank, with a request for his knowledgeable contacts to pronounce 'if it appears ... well & elegantly translated'.⁹ Unbeknownst to both Beilby and Bewick, John Binns had died suddenly in May 1796, but John Hunter, acting for Binns's sons John and Thomas (who had not yet reached their majorities), responded with the good news that '2 Gentlemen say it is very well done'.¹⁰

Owing to the terminal onset of tuberculosis, Solomon Hodgson's role was now merely notional and his death on 4 April 1800 left a void in the business of a German edition which the two remaining partners struggled to fill. Ralph Beilby had already cautioned Bewick that it was 'a matter of so much consequence & I think must not be lightly determined upon'.¹¹ Bewick was entirely in agreement and the next step, probably taken after consultation with Losh Lubben, appears to have been a letter of introduction to Hülsenbeck, Runge & Company, merchants of Hamburg.

This was a clever move. Friedrich August Hülsenbeck and his business partner Johann Daniel Runge,¹² although general import/export merchants, specialised in importing

English articles of fashion, the sort of luxury goods and larger decorative items which Matthew Boulton in Birmingham and Josiah Wedgwood at Etruria had made their own. The partners' predilection for the fine arts had been piqued by the flow of fine paintings which were now pouring into Hamburg in consequence of the upheaval caused by the French Revolution. This was too good a chance to miss. The seaport was a city of affluent entrepreneurs who had no compunction about displaying their considerable wealth and the demand for objects of conspicuous consumption – especially those reflecting English fashions and culture – was intense.¹³ Although at first glance this would hardly seem fertile territory for a volume of natural history illustrated with humble woodcuts, both Hülsenbeck and Runge were closely involved in an influential literary, philosophical and artistic group in Hamburg which has been compared to the Lunar Society of Birmingham. Prominent amongst their friends was the distinguished bookseller Friedrich Perthes whose shop was in the nature of a literary salon, the collector of engravings and etchings Johann Michael Speckter, and numerous painters and poets. Occasionally present, though not resident in Hamburg, was the influential poet Ludwig Gotthard Kosegarten whose belief in Nature as the sacred embodiment of the Divine would have struck an answering chord with Bewick. (And there was a budding painter within the Runge family. Although presently an unhappy and temporary apprentice in the family business, Phillip Otto Runge, Daniel's younger brother, was shortly to emerge as one of the greatest artists in Germany's Romantic period, especially renowned for his unsettling group portrait *The Hülsenbeck Children* – the children of Friedrich August in fact – painted between 1805 and 1806, which still hangs in Hamburg's Kunsthalle.)

Nor was the involvement of Hülsenbeck and Runge in the literary and artistic life of Hamburg limited solely to this well-heeled intellectual elite. Several decades earlier, a society had been created for the advancement of arts and crafts which had developed into a major educational force. Modelled on London's Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce (the same society which had awarded Bewick first prize for his cut of 'The Hound and Huntsman' in 1776), Hamburg's 'Patriotische Gesellschaft' was now a fully-fledged school of art with a strong emphasis upon the applied arts, such as engraving, and enthusiastically patronised by the city's prosperous mercantile class.¹⁴

This was the merchant house with whom Bewick now opened a correspondence. By this time the plan of a German edition appears to have been in abeyance; instead Bewick took the opportunity of a visit to Hamburg by a 'Mr Sewell' (probably Joseph Sewell of St Anthony's Pottery) to send twenty-four copies of the latest edition of the *Quadrupeds*, in demy, royal and imperial octavo sizes, accompanied by a tentatively-phrased letter which requested that 'you will pardon me, if in this, I am troubling you with a concern that may not be in your way [of business], or beneath your notice'.¹⁵ Obviously ill at ease with this manner of doing business, Bewick added loose impressions of the four large cuts executed for Gilbert Pidcock, the 'Wild Beasts' showman, to sweeten the transaction. He had no need to worry. Within eighteen months Hülsenbeck & Runge replied triumphantly that all copies of the *Quadrupeds* had sold successfully and that the

proceeds had been enclosed in a draft to their London bankers. In the interim they must have seen a copy of the *Figures of British Land Birds* of 1800, for they now requested a copy of the *Quadrupeds* in a similar format, that is, without the text. As a final flourish they signalled that further business was definitely on the agenda. ‘We could wish’, they continued, ‘to have it in our power to render you any agreeable service’.¹⁶

Alas, these fine sentiments failed to survive the geo-political maelstrom that was about to sweep Europe. The brief window of opportunity and economic partnership between Britain and Napoleonic France which opened after the Treaty of Amiens in March 1802 slammed shut in May 1803. Hostilities resumed; almost immediately the Royal Navy proclaimed a blockade of the Elbe and Weser rivers, severely limiting trade from Hamburg and Bremen.¹⁷ Worse was to come. A year or two later Hamburg was besieged and then occupied by Napoleon’s forces and the Germanic states forced to operate under the Continental System (sometimes regarded as a prototype for the European Economic Community), which allowed trade within the continent but embargoed all links with Britain. Perhaps predictably, as with so many other import/export firms on the Germanic shores of the North Sea (called the German Sea in most atlases prior to World War I), Hülsenbeck and Runge quickly succumbed to bankruptcy. Any dreams that Beilby and Bewick may still have entertained of a German edition of the *Quadrupeds* were now at an end.

ENDNOTES

1. Albert Boime, *Art in an Age of Bonapartism, 1800 – 1815* (Chicago, 1993), p.386.
2. John Ware to Sarah Hodgson, 1 September 1802; BL, Add. MS 50240, fol.58.
3. Ralph Beilby to TB, remarking he has ‘a high opinion of Sanders’ but admitting he is out of his depth when assessing the competency or otherwise of the translation, n.d., [1799]; Tyne and Wear Archives.
4. Nigel Tattersfield, *Bookplates by Beilby & Bewick* (1999), p.20.
5. [John Baillie], *An Impartial History of ... Newcastle upon Tyne* (1801), p.534.
6. [William Arthur Shaw], *Letters of Denization and Naturalization for Aliens in England & Ireland, 1701 – 1800* (Manchester, 1923), p.203.
7. Tattersfield, pp.165-66.
8. Tattersfield, p.167.
9. Ralph Beilby and TB to John Binns, n.d. [1799]; Tyne & Wear Archives. For John Binns (1743 – 1796) see John Nichols, *Literary Anecdotes of the Eighteenth Century*, Vol. VIII (1814), p.468.
10. John Hunter [for John Binns], n.d. [1799]; Tyne & Wear Archives.
11. Ralph Beilby to TB, n.d., [1799]; Tyne and Wear Archives.
12. Hülsenbeck’s dates of birth and death are 1766 – 1834, his partner Runge’s are 1767 – 1856.
13. Boime, pp.387, 416.
14. Boime, p.417.
15. TB to Hülsenbeck & Co., 2 July 1800; draft in Pease 175. Also cited by Roscoe, *Bibliography*, p.22.
16. Hülsenbeck, Runge & Co. to TB, 9 February 1802.
17. Lance E. Davis and Stanley L. Engerman, *Naval Blockades in Peace and War* (Cambridge, 2006), p.28.



We Three: Self-portrait of Philipp Otto Runge on the right, together with his wife Pauline and his brother Johann Daniel Runge on the left. 1805. Held in the former Kunsthalle in Hamburg, until it was destroyed in 1931.

Thomas Bewick's *The Wild Bull*

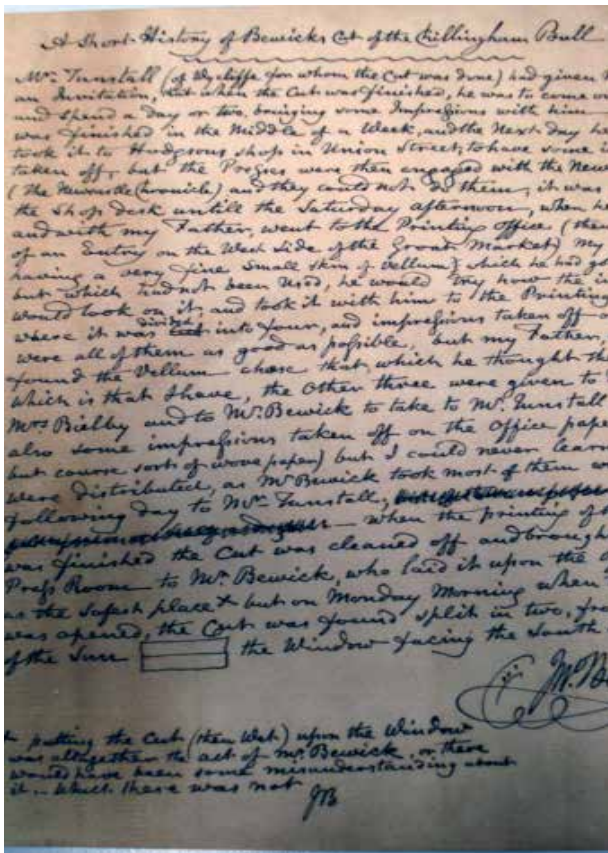
FURTHER IMPRESSIONS

by Graham Carlisle

Thomas Bewick's large wood engraving of *The Wild Bull* (from an abbreviation of the full title *The Wild Bull of the Ancient Caledonian Breed now in the park at Chillingham Castle* a.k.a *The Chillingham Bull*), has gained iconic status as traditionally generations of collectors have searched for the perfect print.¹

Most accounts of the printing of the block derive from John Bell junior son of John Bell, trained land surveyor and employee of Solomon Hodgson, the Newcastle upon Tyne printer. Bell senior was one of those present in the printing office when the infamous split in the wood block was allegedly set on its irreversible course.

The manuscript account – and there is more than one example extant – sold, together with an early impression of the Bull on 29 November 2011 for £4,250.² This was shortly after the publication of Nigel Tattersfield's: *Thomas Bewick, The Complete Illustrative Work* 2011, with its excellent section on the *Bull* and essential reading on Tunstall. (TB 7.1.2). The print which accompanied the manuscript is discussed later.



John Bell Junior, manuscript of *A Short History of Bewicks Cut of the Chillingham Bull*.

A Short History of Bewicks Cut of the Chillingham Bull.

Mr. Tunstall (of Wycliffe for whom the cut was done) had given Mr Bewick an invitation, that when the cut was finished, he was to come over to Wycliffe and spend a day or two bringing some impressions with him – the cut was finished in the middle of a week, and the next day he (Bewick) took it to Hodgsons shop in Union Street, to have some impressions taken off but the presses were then engaged with the Newspaper (The Newcastle Chronicle) and they could not do them, it was laid into the shop desk untill the Saturday afternoon, when he came again and with my father, went to the printing office (then at the foot of an entry on the West side of the Groat Market). My father having a very fine small skin of Vellum which he had got for a plan, but which had not been used, he would try how the impressions would look on it, and took it with him to the printing office, where it was divided into four, and impressions taken off on each which were all of them as good as possible, but my father as he had found the Vellum chose that, which he thought the best, and which is that I have, the other three were given to Mrs. Hodgson, Mrs. Beilby and to Mr. Bewick to take to Mr. Tunstall. There were also some impressions taken off on the office paper (a strong but course sort of wove paper) but I could never learn how they were distributed, as Mr. Bewick took most of them with him the following day to Mr. Tunstall, when the printing of these impressions was finished the cut was cleaned off and brought from the Press Room to Mr. Bewick, who laid it upon the office window as the safest place * but on Monday morning when the office was opened, the cut was found split in two, from the heat of the sun [diagram here] the window facing the south west.

Jno. Bell

* Putting the cut (then wet) upon the window was altogether the act of Mr. Bewick or there would have been some misunderstanding about it... which there was not.

JB

An entry within the Beilby and Bewick workshop archive dated 25 June 1790 indicates the last printing of *The Wild Bull* for the commissioning customer: 'Mar.[maduke] Tunstall Esqr. 12 prints of the Wild Bull on paper'. Tunstall unfortunately died four months later leaving some uncertainty over the fate of the remaining twelve prints.³ One early example however, on wove paper and showing no evidence of the horizontal split, was later sold on by Bewick's partner Ralph Beilby to George Howlette a Coventry watchmaker.

Bell's letter indicates every confidence in his father's explanation of events leading to the split in the wood block. Later writers have disputed the account. W. A. Chatto co-author of *Treatise On Wood Engraving* (1839) entered into vigorous correspondence with Bell on the subject. Whatever the true facts Bell, within this correspondence, was to cast some light on an unrecorded state of the *Chillingham Bull*. Unrecorded up to this day as a discrete print state, and although the crucial letter was transcribed within his own book, ignored by Thomas Hugo in *The Bewick Collector* 1866.

Over two hundred and twenty five years later, after losing its ornate border, passing through several hands and subject to numerous printings the original engraved block is in the care of the Hatton Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne where it may be seen by request.

THE PRESENT CONDITION OF THE BLOCK

Now seems the time to assess the present dilapidated condition of the block in relation to the various print states or variants that have occurred over the intervening years. (Positional references are for the block illustrated below. The reverse applies if viewing prints taken from the block.)

A The right hand (RH) vertical separation associated with the narrow strip which lacks a small section in the middle.

B The horizontal separation; the lower element of which retains a small curved piece from the upper element, which is about two thirds the distance from the left hand (LH) side.

C The jagged break occurring almost halfway along the lower element.

D The small split halfway along the upper element which curves to the left.

E Several natural splits LH side of the upper element.

The composite block now severely damaged is set within

a brass frame bowing slightly outwards at the top and bottom. Engraved on the frame are the words 'H. Watson's Newcastle - On Tyne'.

The elements that form the composite block appear to be firmly held in position and perhaps fixed to backing material in such a way that emphasises separation B and break C.

The current arrangement clearly shows the deterioration of the block. A perfect print is no longer possible. Robert Robinson, who printed from the block in 1878, tells us in his book:

"Repairs [to the block] were made about the year 1817, and more lately in 1876, after my purchase of the block from the Misses Bewick. I then took it out of the old iron frame in which it had so long been clamped up, removed the mahogany wedges, and inserted others of boxwood, carefully wedging the precious woodcut in a new frame of gun metal. For this my best thanks are due to Mr. Henry Watson of the High Bridge Brass Works, Newcastle."⁴

Although suggesting a date of 1876, (two years prior to the 5th state printing), nothing in Robinson's note of c.1887 indicates that the block was printed whilst it was wedged within the frame made for him by H. Watson.

The pattern of the natural splits E suggest that Bewick



Splits or Separations A to E. The Block in its frame, collection University of Newcastle, the Hatton Gallery. Author's photograph.



Viewed from the RH side of the block. Author's photograph.



Viewed from the RH side of the block. Author's photograph.

has, as we would expect, used end grain for his engraving surface. However this is difficult to confirm at the present time without access to all surfaces of the block.

The thin right-hand strip is fixed to the upper and lower sections using nails. Perhaps from an earlier period, small pins or dowels had been used. These show corresponding breakages in the block. The different rates of expansion and contraction between wood and metal has added to the poten-



Curved piece of block, broken away from the upper section. Author's photograph.

tial for splits and breaks. Glue traces are evident around the area of the missing piece which also shows ink penetration to some depth.

Construction of the block is more complicated than suggested at first sight and perhaps one of the earliest attempts at making a high quality composite wood block of this size for engraving. The objective was surely to provide a smooth and

flat end grain surface without gaps and minimal flaws to interrupt the flow of Bewick's wood engraving tools.

The block-maker probably selected two large consecutive end grain sections of near-identical size from a trunk of boxwood; cut and squared up all surfaces.⁵ For maximum strength in furniture-making for example, it is often the case that surfaces come together at different angles and with alternate grain, so in most instances avoiding the wood fibres running parallel. This is not possible in wood engraving. Bewick wanted the end grain across the whole of the engraving surface. Using animal glue, the block-maker needed a thin smooth application to the surfaces ensuring that joint B is not apparent. The thin wood strip on the right-hand side also needed to be perfectly straight and square at the joined surfaces and the process repeated.

Butt joined and fixed with soluble animal glue, liquid penetration and pressure from the printing press has inevitably hastened separation. At the RH side there is a tiny fragment of lower section retained by the upper section around the area of the missing piece. The inherent weakness of the block's construction has also led to the retention of the small curved fragment shown in the illustration. The resulting curve to the hairline is a feature evident in later-state prints taken from the block.

Despite previously written accounts, visual evidence suggests that the composite block is constructed from three elements not four.⁶ Each required to be of identical depth, and all joined surfaces square in each plane for the glued block to stand any chance of long term survival from the pressure of the printing press. As later examples show, problems started immediately printing began.

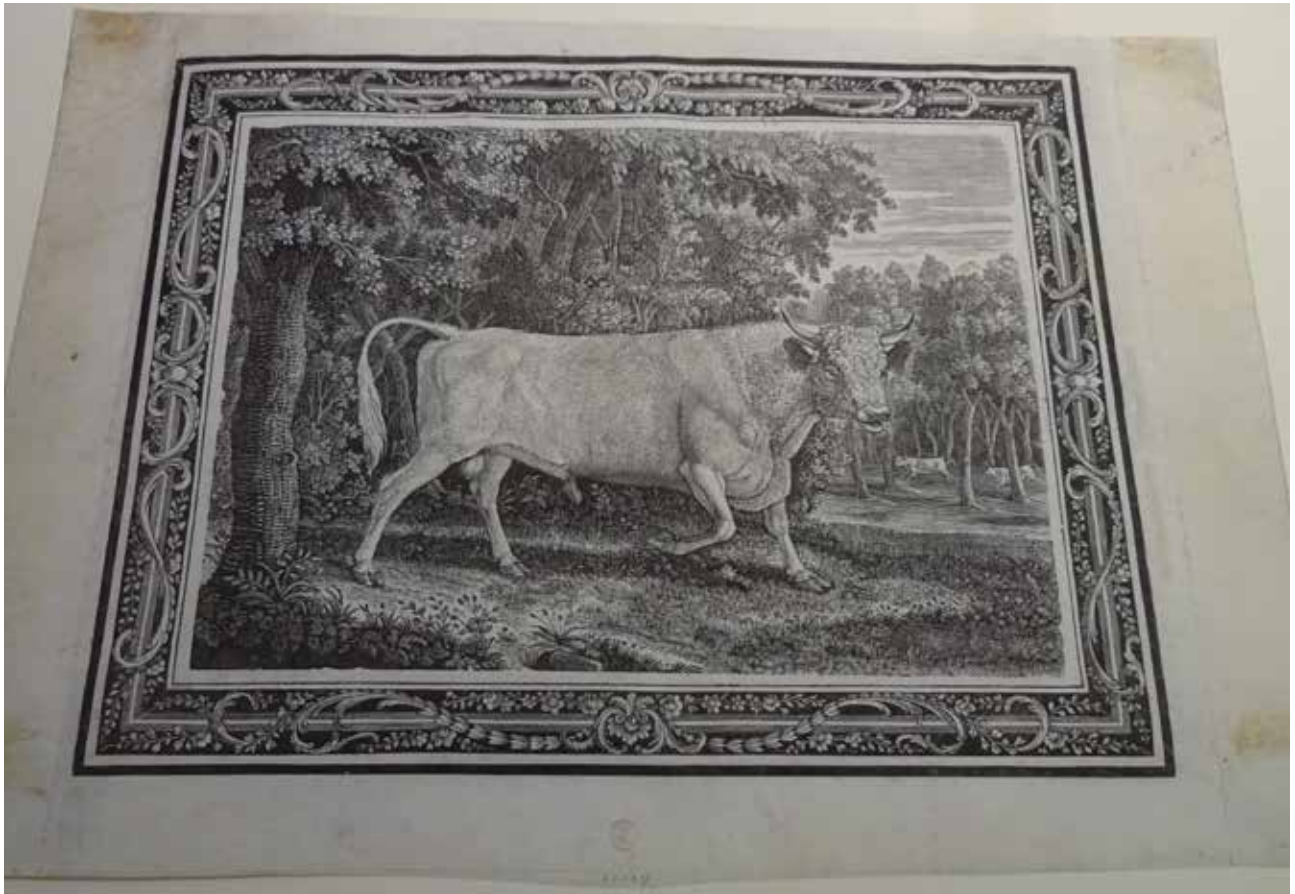
The upper section is continuous showing no signs of a joint. It has however, several natural splits to the LH side. The middle split does not extend above halfway and is curved indicating it occurred naturally rather than a joint in the process of separation.

C is a jagged break. There is no visual evidence of a joint in this area. There are no recorded print states that would indicate a joint.

The upper and lower sections are identical in size and originally continuous. Apart from 'B', the only visual evidence of a joint is where these two sections butt up against the thin RH strip.

The existence of the thin RH strip is curious. Its introduction is a further, almost unnecessary challenge. Is it there simply to strengthen the block; or other reasons? Blanking out the area – on a print – extending from the fork of the tree down to the W of the word Bewick shows a less balanced and visually satisfying image but importantly for this his greatest achievement Bewick needed additional room to engrave his name, town of origin and date.⁷

The decision to extend the block must have been taken before engraving commenced on the floral border. The floral border would of course provide a separate frame of four mitre joined lengths which, when assembled, played its part in holding the composite block in one piece as problems developed.



First State, Before Letters. The Victoria and Albert Museum impression, Author's photograph.

TERMINOLOGY

BEFORE LETTERS: *An impression of a print taken before the addition of names, titles etc. Usually a small number for trial purposes or to enhance rarity.*

STATE: *“Of illustration,...[or engraving]; which may show evidence of wear, alteration, reengraving in whole or in part,..” (Carter, J. ABC For Book Collectors 1952).*

VELLUM: *Parchment made from calf skin.*

PARCHMENT: *Calf, goat or sheep skin.*

The splits or separations are now referred to in the orientation applicable to prints taken from the block.

PRINT STATES

The charge for engraving the block was a substantial £7.7s.0d. The print run, according to Beilby & Bewick records, was reasonably large for a private endeavour. A gentleman collector would not intend to sell the print on.

‘25 July 1789, printing 6 upon parchment, 50 upon royall (sic) paper; 18 December 1789, 8 Prints of the wild bull on fine Vellum; 25 June 1790, 12 Prints of the wild Bull on paper.’

Although intended for Tunstall's own use, it would surely not take long for word of the marvellous print to spread.⁸ Whether oversight or deliberate omission, for a limited number of early impressions Bewick had delayed adding his name to the block. According to his son and literally before the ink had dried, Bell had chosen the best unlettered vellum impression.

FIRST STATE (BEFORE LETTERS).

The V&A impression above: With the decorative border, not signed in the woodblock in the lower left corner, not ti-



First State, Natural History Society of Northumbria: Thomas Bewick's impression and one of the first printed on vellum or parchment. It shows hairline A.

led, printed on parchment or vellum. Under close examination no evidence of any separations.

The Newcastle upon Tyne City Library collection has at its core the Pease Bequest of outstanding Bewick mate-

rial. Catalogued in 1904, items 267 to 271 are titled: *The Chillingham Bull*, impressions on vellum. These have been examined, (apart from 271 which, unfortunately, is currently unavailable); all show evidence of separation A.

SECOND STATE

Separation A is evident, starting at the top of the print and extending down through the fork of the tree. Of the second state impressions seen, the extent of the separation is variable, depending on inking and pressure from the printing press producing movement in the thin block. Prints without evidence of separation A are very few. The main area of concern is the long horizontal separation B which developed later and extends from under the bull's eyes each way and through the knot of the tree.



Second State. Author's photograph showing detail of the British Museum impression on paper with the decorative border, signed, titled.

THIRD STATE.

The previously recorded chronology changes with the identification of this impression. The example shown is that from the 2011 sale.

Separation A is evident. The area of separation B is starting to become a problem; not visible as a white hairline but as a shadow like effect along the horizontal length of B. The decorative border has been fitted upside down compared to previous states. Looking closely, this can be seen in several of the leaf and floral motives; most evident from the small central leaf close to the thin single line nearest the block. The 'blades' of the outside leaves bend to the right on the lower part of the border; both ways on the upper.

Although the type used for the title (if present), has every appearance of that in second state examples; it has been reset with the word 'The' one letter to the left. The 'e' being over the 'A' of CALEDONIAN.

Since it is after Tunstall's death, Beilby and Bewick must have had their own purpose in mind for this printing.⁹ The

2nd state prints (which supposedly were all done for Tunstall) show no evidence of separation in the area of the block's horizontal joint B, but within a very short time trouble seems to have been noticed. With the border, type and Hodgson's services all available; the block now enters its 3rd state as attempts are made to lessen the effects of the block separations. Using some device between frame and block (a very small distance of 2 or 3mm) the hairline separation B was compressed, but an unfortunate outcome was a fractional misalignment in the block; resulting in prints with a darkened area in place of a white horizontal hairline gap. Probably not noticed and of no particular consequence at the time, the engraved border became reversed in the process.

Putting aside the disagreement over events leading up to the split in the block, here we find Bell remarkably close to the truth in his exchange with Chatto. Bell is quoted at length and robustly supported by Thomas Hugo in his *Bewick Collector* 1866 where, unrecognised and unaccountably without insertion in Hugo's print list, attention is brought to the 3rd state [Hugo's italics]:

"Reverting to Bewick's Chillingham Bull, the half-dozen impressions on fine parchment I mentioned in my letter are *without his name*, which he added at the left-hand corner of the cut, 'T. Bewick, Newcastle 1789,' during an attempt of his own to close the crack *after he got it back from the printing-office*. He succeeded so far in closing it that he took it back to the printing-office to have it printed, and was *able to print some impressions without any mark of the crack*; but it soon, either by bad management or otherwise, got hove up on the edge of one side of the crack, which made a line along the side of the Bull, from below its eye to the tail, blacker on the under side than the part immediately above on the same line. When this did not succeed, he took the cut back to the shop, where it lay for many years, until Wilson, the whitesmith, undertook to screw it together and back it with iron. In this he succeeded but was obliged to leave out the border, and all the impressions after it was in his hands are without it..."



Third State, Author's photograph.

The print was sold at auction and is now in a private collection.



Fourth State, British Museum Visible hairline breaks A & B .

FOURTH STATE

A quarter of a century later, re-examination of the block must have shown yet more deterioration, so more extreme methods were deemed necessary. As pointed out by Robinson, Robert Bewick had the blocks tightened by use of an iron band. In that condition it would be impossible to refit the original engraved border, even if it happened to be around; the three widely spaced type metal borders are the outcome.

FIFTH STATE

Moving on sixty years it was time for Robert Robinson's final attempt on the block. Whether Henry Watson's gun-metal (brass) frame was involved in forcing the sections together is not clear; the printers might have made their own arrangements. Obvious though, is the increasingly fragile state of the composite block. Separation A is partially reduced but B is deteriorating fast leading to the alarming breakage in the thin LH strip under the demands of clamping arrangement and iron printing press. D is the natural crack now showing for the first time and impossible to close.

ROBINSON'S RETURN

Having resurrected Bewick's Bull, Robert Robinson was able to enjoy the fruits from his investment as we can see from a letter to E.B. Mounsey.

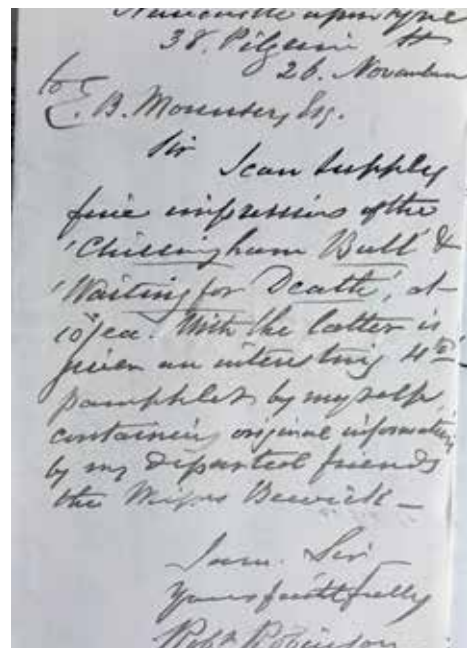
Newcastle upon Tyne
38, Pilgrim St 26. November [post 1883]
to E.B.Mounsey Esq.

Sir

I can supply five impressions of the 'Chillingham Bull' & 'Waiting for Death' at 10/- ea. With the latter is given an interesting 4to pamphlet by myself containing original information by my departed friends the Misses Bewick -

I am Sir

Yours faithfully
Robt. Robinson



Manuscript letter in the collection of the author.



Detail of Fifth State, impression in the collection of the author.



Detail of the Fifth State. Impression in the collection of Nigel Tattersfield. These details are taken from different prints in the same run; each lettered at the bottom. Published by Robert Robinson, Bewick's Head, Pilgrim Street, Newcastle. [Printed by Ballantyne & Co, Edinburgh and London, April 1878.



The Wild Bull at Cherryburn, photo courtesy Peter Quinn, 2015.

THE WILD BULL AT CHERRYBURN

A visit to Thomas Bewick’s birthplace at Cherryburn is always worthwhile. Should a visitor be interested in the minutiae of Chillingham Bull print states, there is an added bonus. Hanging on the far wall of the museum is the second only example of the 3rd state printing to be identified.

This came to the museum having originally been in the possession of Mr Alan Angus (1920-2002); first honorary treasurer of the Bewick Society and descendent of the workshop apprentice John Laws.¹⁰ Laws, who’s fame rests mainly with silver engraving and not wood, was paid his last wage on 19 June 1790. A parting gift from Bewick to Laws perhaps? If so, it is tempting to speculate that the date indicates the 3rd state printing followed a very short time after the 2nd

‘FAKESIMILE’

The Life and Works of Thomas Bewick: being an account of his career and achievements in art; with a notice of the works of John Bewick. David Croal Thomson... 1882 page 99:

“The design of the Chillingham Bull, as shown in the fac-simile

(which is taken partly from one on paper in the possession of Mr. M. Mackey, Newcastle, and partly from Mr. E. Grey’s vellum impression),...”

Bewick Gleanings: Being Impressions from Copperplates and Wood Blocks, Engraved in the Bewick Workshop... By Julia Boyd,... 1886 page 46:

“Thanks to Mr. Croal Thomson’s kindness, the Editor has been able to enrich the large paper copies of this book with an impression from the fac-simile he had taken for his work on Bewick.”

Separated from the book and attractively displayed, these prints can offer temptation, though there is worse.

A recent auction brought to light an example of the Bull printed on old stained “vellum”. Wide margined and printed without title; with the ornate border and before Bewick’s name was added. Close examination revealed re-use of Thomson’s facsimile plate. When the printing occurred is not known. What is certain, the print has returned to the auction house for a refund; although it is still listed on Art Sales Index showing a four figure price point.¹¹



The signature, town and date are engraved in an area of the composite block crossing the thin strip and clearly left blank for this purpose. There are precedents for Bewick leaving blank areas in his blocks for the sole purpose of inserting his engraved name, initials or other details.

The Bewick Prize 2017

80TH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF SOCIETY OF WOOD ENGRAVERS.

The winner of this year's prize for a small wood engraving is Howard Phipps. His engraving *Ebble Valley Oak* caught the eye of the judges. It is 100x125mm in size and is touring the country as part of the annual SWE show.



You can find all the details of how to buy this and many other prints on the website of the Society of Wood Engravers. (<http://www.woodengravers.co.uk>). The exhibition visits all corners of the British Isles from its starting point in Oxford.

Howard Phipps studied Fine Art at the Gloucestershire College of Art in Cheltenham. He is a painter/printmaker with a special interest in wood engraving.

A member of the Royal West of England Academy since 1979, and the Society of Wood Engravers since 1985, he has also been a frequent exhibitor at Royal Academy summer exhibitions where he received the Contemporary Print Award for colour engraving. In 2003 & 2004 he received the landscape print prize at the National Print Exhibition in London.

He has illustrated books for Bloomsbury, Century, The Fleece Press, Perdix Press, Country Life Magazine and The Folio Society (Charlotte Bronte, Shakespeare and Tennyson's *Lady of Shalott*). His closest collaboration has been with The Whittington Press who published *Stubble Burning* (1982) with poems by Roland Gant. They have since published three more books of his wood engravings - *Interiors* (1985), *Further Interiors* (1992), *The Ebble Valley* (2007).

The SWE exhibition details are as follows:

Kevis House Gallery, Petworth, 13 November–23 December 2017; BRLSI, Bath, 3–22 January 2018; Bankside Gallery, London, 30 January–18 February 2018; Zillah Bell Gallery, Thirsk, 24 February–17 March 2018; Da Gadderie / Shetland Museum, Shetland, 31 March–29 April 2018; Pier Arts Centre, Orkney, 5 May–15 June 2018; Woodend Barn Art Centre, Banchory, 24 June–21 July 2018.

Full details on the SWE website

<http://www.woodengravers.co.uk>.

ENDNOTES

1. The WILD BULL OF THE ANCIENT CALEDONIAN BREED NOW IN THE PARK AT CHILLINGHAMCASTLE, NORTHUMBERLAND. 1789.

2. This is almost certainly Lot 378 in: *Catalogue of the Choice and Valuable Collection of Books, Wood Engravings, [&c]...* Thomas Hugo...Sotheby, Wilkinson & Hodge 1877, sold for £4.14s. If not a catalogue error, Lot 375, a first state impression of the Bull on vellum also came with a short history of the cut signed by Jno. Bell; the Lot fetching £3.10s. (S. Roscoe's priced copy of the Hugo sale catalogue, in the writer's collection).

3. Tattersfield, vol.2 p.812 shows a charge of 2-0 [two shillings] for the 12 prints (Day Book entry date 25 June 1790). Although the Cash Book shows that Tunstall paid 4-0 [four shillings] for his 8 prints on Vellum at this date, the outstanding amount of 2-0 appears unpaid.

4. *Thomas Bewick, His Life and Times* 1887 Without doubt, Robinson printed from the original wood block in 1878; but it should also be noted that his book contained a good quality electrotype taken from the block. The writer has seen a separately printed example of the Robinson electrotype with extra wide margins; much larger than those in the book.

5. Assuming end grain blocks, then they came from a good size trunk. A minimum of 21cm diameter if a single upper or lower section was cut from a slice of the trunk. Though this would still leave provision for the thin strip from wastage. (See also, note 6.).

6. All previous writers on the subject have maintained that the composite block is constructed from four pieces.

7. 'better things might be performed on Wood than is generally imagined', said Bewick around 1795. (Tattersfield vol.3 p134). Conjecture certainly regarding the thin wood strip, which might be cleared up if the original transfer drawing ever appears.

8. John Bell (1765-1816): As manager of Hodgson's printing office and also bookseller, he was well aware of the factors governing rarity. The year after gaining his impression of the Bull, he arranged to have printed four special copies of the Quadrupeds on Whatman paper: one for himself and one each for Mrs Hodgson, Mrs Beilby and Mrs Bewick. (Tattersfield vol.2 p25).

9. It is possible that this relates to a proposal that Beilby & Bewick: "...issue their own separate account of the wild cattle, based around the projected engraving for Tunstall." (Tattersfield vol.2 p.813). The possibilities might also have extended to enhancing the Quadrupeds for favoured customers. A copy is extant once owned by George Howlette, a watchmaker friend of Beilby's. Howlette's 1800 Imperial 8vo. issue is extended with the Chillingham Bull 2nd state; early impressions of Pidcock's large Lion, Tiger, Elephant and Zebra, (Writer's collection). Perhaps relating to this, the workshop archives note a charge to Howlette of £4.7s Mar 11, 1799.

10. Hugh Dixon from National Trust sources.

11. Some of D. C. Thomson's collection is housed at Southwestern University USA which has an example of the Bull of an unknown status.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ann Carlisle for pointing out the Cherryburn (new) 3rd state, and also close up photography.

British Museum, London.

Bonhams Oxford: Lot 14, November 2011.

City library, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Hatton Gallery, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

June Holmes, Natural History Society of Northumbria.

National Trust Cherryburn.

Nigel Tattersfield, *Thomas Bewick, The Complete Illustrative Work*, 2011.

Victoria & Albert Museum, London.

WILLIAM TELFORD SENIOR AND JUNIOR.

THE LAST ENGRAVERS IN THE BEWICK WORKSHOP.

by Nigel Tattersfield



William Telford's business or trade card, engraved by himself in the High Victorian style, c.1894, 60 x 92mm. This example bears the signature, dated 1896, of Charles William Sherborn (1831 – 1912), a celebrated engraver and etcher on copper, now best remembered for his exquisite book-plate designs. As a Bewick enthusiast, Sherborn had probably made a pilgrimage to the old workshop and must have been delighted to find fellow engravers still plying their craft therein.

When Robert Elliot Bewick finally closed the door to his workshop, turned the key in the lock, and handed the premises back to the parish of St Nicholas, he must have reflected upon the fact that it was the end of an era. His father had entered the building, lately the premises of the apothecary surgeon Nathaniel Bayles, with his then partner Ralph Beilby in 1790. It had seen the engraving of the blocks for the *Quadrupeds*, the *Birds* and the *Fables of Aesop*. It had witnessed the frantic everyday life of a busy engraving shop and copperplate printing office. It had seen distinguished visitors passing through its modest portals; Czar Nicolas of Russia, the Duke of Northumberland, the Earl of Bute, to name but three. It had resounded to the urgent footsteps of young apprentices as they clattered to their appointed benches – Luke Clennell and William Harvey amongst them, both bound for fame and fortune, although not in equal measure. And it had silently observed the workshop's slow decline into obscurity under Robert Elliot Bewick's timid management as other apprentices – Mark Lambert and Isaac Nicholson spring to mind – boldly claimed most of the commercial work that had previously been the undisputed province of the Bewick workshop.

When Nathaniel Bayles (suffering grievously from the stone) sold the lease of number 16 St Nicholas Churchyard

to partners Ralph Beilby and Thomas Bewick, the building was little short of a wreck. The walls were out of whack, some of the timber joists had sprung and it took a deal of expense and time to make it weatherproof, inhabitable, secure and seemly, for customers now expected certain standards when they called, whether at a workshop or a retail establishment (and this was both). Substantially rebuilt and redecorated from top to bottom, the building served the partnership for seven years, then Bewick's tenure on his own from 1797, followed by his partnership with son Robert, and finally Robert until 1847 and the last edition of the *History of British Birds*. Robert had no-one to succeed to the business, no son of his own and no favoured apprentice, and when the lease lapsed the business was finished.

Robert appears to have vacated the premises at the beginning of 1849 but possibly earlier. For example, White's *General Directory of the Town and County of Newcastle* of 1847 lists Robert as an engraver but only at his home address, 8 West Street, Gateshead. By 20 April 1849 his cousin Robert Ward, later the printer of Bewick's *Memoir*, whose engraver's workshop and printing office was a step away at 24 St Nicholas' Churchyard, was advertising the availability of number 16, 'To Let, Offices conveniently situated'.¹ In the meantime there appears to have been no auction of rolling presses or

any other capital equipment that Robert's workshop must have contained; perhaps these were sold privately or silently absorbed by Robert Ward's firm. By the end of June, a new occupant – one Henry Dale – had moved in under the aegis of 'The Institution for Employment', later amended to 'The General Register for the Unemployed', an agency specialising in domestic staff.²

By 1858 a new tenant had agreed terms with the freeholders, the vestrymen of St Nicholas' Church, and the workshop had been re-numbered '27'. The new arrival, William Henderson Dawson, had previously occupied premises in the Groat Market, and was active in the book trade as a binder, but he subsequently achieved a more lasting fame as a Tyneside poet and songwriter.³ Dawson remained in the workshop until his death in 1879, continuing the tradition of a binder having an office on the premises which was first established by Bewick's tenant William Lubbock in February 1808.

Following Dawson's death, it appears that the workshop hosted a procession of miscellaneous tenants and was also the site of the offices for the parish overseers of the poor; one George Wilson in 1886,⁴ and Thomas Dobie Pickering a year or two later. Following Pickering's death in 1890 the parish overseers appear to have vacated the property and another book binder, Charles James Loraine, arrived on the scene.⁵ Here history was close to repeating itself; about the year 1814, Charles's father Fenwick had been apprenticed to William Lubbock in the very same building and though little more than a lad, must have had a nodding acquaintanceship with Thomas Bewick. Fenwick Loraine proved to be a fine binder and indeed, his master's favourite apprentice. In 1821 he started in business on his own account and prospered greatly, a beneficiary of Lubbock's bankruptcy in 1822. It was not to last. A quarter of a century later Fenwick Loraine followed his erstwhile master into financial difficulties and in 1848 committed suicide as a result. What remained of the business was gathered up by his capable widow Catherine and in 1859 she handed the reins to their son Charles.⁶

A few years after Charles Loraine commenced business at his new bindery in St Nicholas Churchyard he was joined by William Telford, an engraver, lithographer and printer, as his trade card proudly announces. Probably unbeknownst to Loraine and Telford, there was a pleasing reverse symmetry to this development. Back in 1808, as we have seen, the engraver Thomas Bewick rented office space to the book-binder William Lubbock; now the book-binder Charles Loraine rented space to the engraver William Telford.

Telford's trade card reveals he was well aware of the distinguished heritage behind his workshop in St Nicholas' Churchyard; he could hardly be otherwise since at some point between 1854 and 1884 a granite slab, inscribed 'Workshop of Thomas Bewick, Wood Engraver, 1795 [sic] to 1828', had been inserted by the front door of the workshop.⁷ However, Telford was hardly stepping into Bewick's shoes for his own career – as a run-of-the-mill jobbing engraver and lithographer – was of a far lesser magnitude. His family was originally from Benwell, but he was born in 1822 in Middleton Tyas in north Yorkshire where his father was bailiff and gardener to a wealthy landowner, George Hartley of Middleton Lodge.⁸ It is not known to whom William Telford was apprenticed (it could have been to one of Bewick's own ex-apprentices such

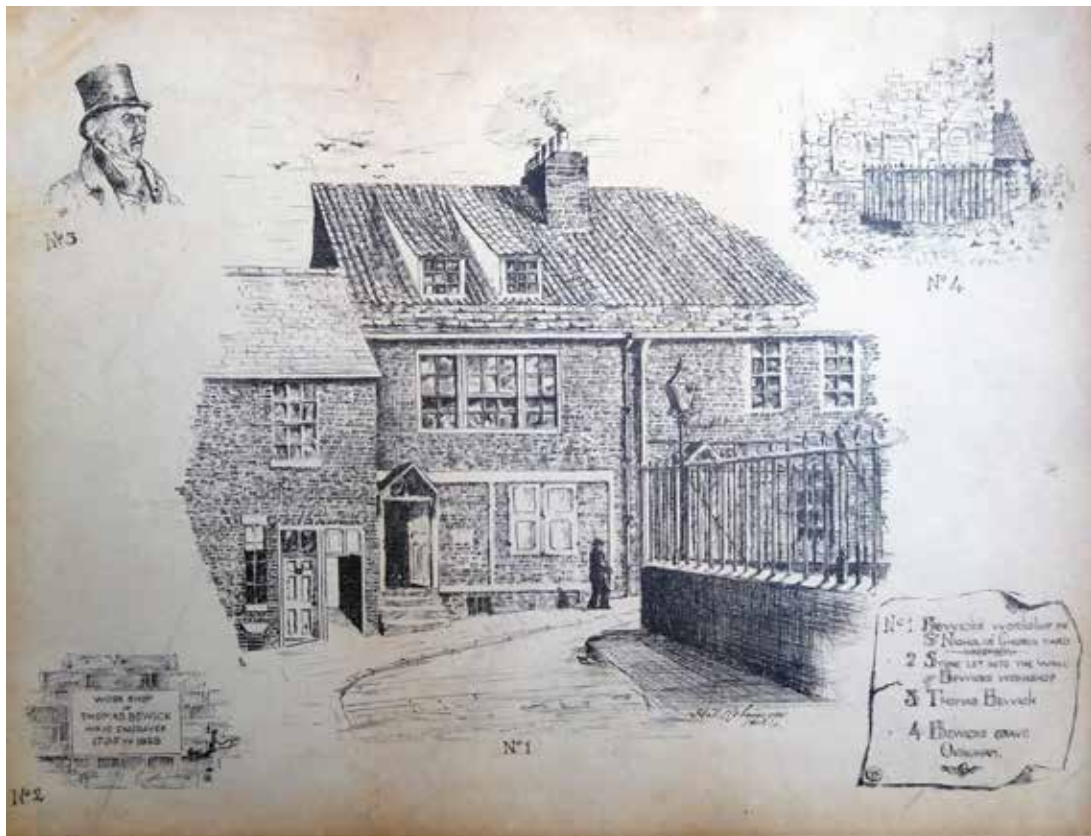
as Mark Lambert), but by 1867 he appears to have been in partnership as 'Thompson & Telford' and advertising a vacancy for 'a youth with a taste for drawing'.⁹ In 1871 he was 'employing 3 hands' according to the Census of that year; ten years later he was listed as a copperplate engraver. By 1886 Telford was sharing premises with printer Thomas Fordyce in Dean Street.¹⁰ The Census of 1891 called him a 'general engraver' and three years later he was also listed as a lithographer with premises in Pilgrim Street's Royal Arcade in addition to his newly-rented engraving workshop in St Nicholas' Churchyard.¹¹ Perhaps as a reflection of his modest standing, Telford's name has not been found on any published engraving.

In the meantime, he had married and had two sons; William born in 1861 and George born the following year. William eventually followed his father into the same line of business (and indeed, the same workshop) whereas George became a jeweller.¹² Both William Telford senior and junior were still sharing Bewick's old workshop in 1898 with book-binder Charles Loraine but two years later, on 8 March 1900, the workshop was threatened, along with many neighbouring premises in the Churchyard, Dean Street and the Side, by a colossal fire at Messrs Robinson and Company, the paper merchants and stationers, whose extensive warehouses occupied much of the steep gradient from the Quayside up to St Nicholas.¹³

The entire burnt-out site and many adjacent premises (such as Bewick's old workshop, now a little scorched and smoke-stained but not materially damaged) were subsequently scheduled for redevelopment as commercial premises and promptly purchased by the Milburn family, wealthy ship and colliery owners, with the idea of creating a vast office block.¹⁴ By this time William Telford senior, now eighty years of age, appears to have retired in favour of his son. Alas, the final scene enacted in the workshop was to be one of tragedy. As reported on the morning of 2 May 1902, 'Mr Telford's eldest son, William Telford, aged 40, was found lying dead on the floor, shot through the head. The fact was discovered by the office lad, who at once raised the alarm, but, when assistance came, it was found to be hopeless. A revolver, in which there were undischarged cartridges and one discharged, was found near. The matter is enshrouded in mystery, as the revolver shows signs of having been under the process of engraving, and it is surmised that it may have gone off, whilst the deceased was at work upon it'.¹⁵

The balance of probability suggests that this was deliberate suicide rather than careless accident. In any event, it marked the end of Bewick's workshop. Just one week later a demolition team had already commenced work, prompting a despondent valediction in the local press: 'the erection of the hoarding yesterday shows how soon there will be removed another trace of the former presence of the great engraver in Newcastle'.¹⁶





Bewick's workshop in St Nicholas' Churchyard as drawn by the young Henry Thomas Robinson (1871–1952) in 1884, 155 x 165mm. The granite memorial plaque to Thomas Bewick can just be made out between the front door and the shuttered street-level window.

ENDNOTES

1. *Newcastle Courant*, 20 April 1849.
2. *Newcastle Courant*, 29 June, 2 November 1849.
3. *Post Office Directory for Newcastle* (1858). Although C. J. Hunt, *The Book Trade in Northumberland and Durham to 1860* (Newcastle, 1975) records Dawson trading between 1850 and 1882, his dates are actually born 1827, died 1879. He is cited in Allan's *Illustrated Edition of Tyneside Songs* (Newcastle, 1891).
4. *Kelly's Directory of Newcastle* (1886).
5. *Ward's Directory of Newcastle* (1890).
6. Hunt, *Book Trade* and P. J. Wallis, *The Book Trade ... a Supplement* (Newcastle, 1981). Note that Fenwick Loraine was born 25 October 1797 and not 1798 as generally reported.
7. Recalled by an unknown correspondent in the *Sunderland Daily Echo*, 10 May 1902.
8. Appleby in Westmorland Society website, accessed 28 December 2016; Census 1841. William Telford senior's dates are born 1822, died 1909.
9. *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, 19 September 1867. The identity of 'Thompson' has not been traced, and neither Hunt nor Wallis offer convincing candidates.
10. *Kelly's Directory of Newcastle* (1886). Fordyce died in 1890, whereupon Telford moved to premises in the Royal Arcade in Pilgrim Street. Designed by John Dobson for Richard Grainger it was demolished in 1963.
11. *Kelly's Directory of Newcastle* (1894).
12. Census 1881. William Telford junior became a keen cricketer; see cricketarchive.com for details.
13. Although established in 1818 and the largest stationers by far in Newcastle, Hunt's *Book Trade* fails to mention this Robert Robinson (not the bookseller and Bewick biographer of the same name) and Wallis only offers a sketchy entry in his *Supplement*.
14. See John Grundy, 'History of Milburn House' at www.milburn-house.com, accessed 30 December 2016.

house.com, accessed 30 December 2016.

15. *Sunderland Daily Echo*, 2 May 1902. The event was widely reported in the northern press, for example the *Sheffield Evening Telegraph*, 2 May 1902.

16. *Sunderland Daily Echo*, 10 May 1902.

Note: the website www.freebmd.org.uk has proved invaluable in supplying dates of births and deaths (and even the specific identity) of many of the people mentioned in this account.

Cherryburn Times is normally published twice a year. We have an ambition to publish more frequently when time and material allows.

Marie-Thérèse Mayne, Exhibitions Officer at Durham Cathedral Museum, has sadly decided she can no longer continue as editor. Pressure of work in her new job has meant she has had to reluctantly retire from her role on the Bewick Society Committee. We wish her well in the future.

Marie-Thérèse handed over a file of articles awaiting publication. We'll endeavour to get these into print as soon as possible.

This edition has been put together by Peter Quinn with the help of June Holmes, Hugh Dixon, Charles Fleming and Dave Grey of Kimmerston Design. Many thanks to them and the authors for being so patient and understanding.

As mentioned at our recent A.G.M the committee is actively seeking a new editor. If you feel you would like to help out do please get in touch.

In the meantime all communication to the Bewick Society email and address:

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