



CHERRYBURN TIMES

The Journal of The Bewick Society

CAVEAT EMPTOR. THE ANATOMY OF A 'BEWICK' DRAWING.

by Nigel Tattersfield



Watty and Meg.

The printed wood engraving from TB2.299 *Humorous Pieces. Epistle on Marriage* 1801.
Original page size, 130 x 92mm.

The following account is in the nature of a cautionary tale. Some years ago, a Bewick enthusiast scrolling through the offerings on eBay, would have stumbled across what he or she may well have believed was a fragment of the true cross, an original drawing by Thomas Bewick. It portrayed a scene from the tale of 'Watty & Meg', a popular Scottish ballad which was initially included by the Newcastle printer/bookseller John Mitchell in a flimsy pamphlet entitled *Humorous Pieces* (1801) with a full-page wood engraving carrying the caption 'Bewick fecit'.

It was subsequently reprinted in his compilation volumes *Charms of Literature* and *Flowers of British Poetry*, both of about 1809. The Weekly Engraving Books reveal this cut was engraved in the week ending 21 March 1801 at a cost of fifteen shillings; the apprentice responsible is not known but details of the background strongly suggest Edward Willis. The author of 'Watty & Meg', written in the idiom of Robert Burns and obviously inspired by his work, is now believed to be Alexander Wilson of Paisley, an impoverished weaver, peddler

and radical sympathiser. (Although there is little reason to believe that Bewick was aware of this curious parallel, Wilson later emigrated to America and laid the foundations for the study of ornithology in his new homeland with his pioneering nine-volume work, *American Ornithology*, 1808-1814.)

It behoves the Bewick collector to be properly cautious when assessing such an offering. For example, most of Bewick's surviving drawings relate to engravings for his *Quadrupeds* and *British Birds*. They are scarce enough in all faith, but sketches for illustrations to the multitude of minor works, probably intended for one of several apprentice engravers in the workshop of the day, are truly few and far between. So alarm bells may be heard trilling faintly in the distance.

Drawing closer to the object, handsomely framed in the 'Hogarth style' (after more than two hundred years, still a popular style), it will be observed that the mount has been signed in pencil by Thomas Bewick.

Continued overleaf...



The framed and mounted drawing. *Original size, 265 x 305mm.*



The drawing within its window mount.

What on earth was Bewick – who rarely if ever signed his drawings – doing signing the *mount*?

At this point the urge to dismantle the frame and dissect the innards becomes irresistible. By doing so, it is clear that the window mount is of machine-made card from timber pulp (not linen or cotton rags), thereby dating it to after 1845.

Passing quickly over the spurious Bewick signature and opening up the mount, the full scale of this deception is laid bare. The drawing, in graphite with watercolour applied subsequently, has been executed on a tinted rectangle of wove paper which has then been pasted (using what appears to have been a traditional fish glue) firmly to the backing sheet. There are no creases to indicate that the drawing has been folded over a block for transfer. It will be observed that this drawing could never have been used for that purpose as

its orientation is identical to the printed woodcut. Had it been a transfer drawing, it would have been in reverse to the printed image.



The drawing as laid down on its backing sheet.

Size of drawing, 55 x 70mm. Size of backing sheet, 110 x 143mm.

Moreover, the drawing itself shows not a trace of Bewick's customary ease and sureness of touch. Apparently traced from the printed image, the figures are stiff; Watty himself is seated most uncomfortably and his face and hands are clumsily detailed. Nonetheless, whoever drew this knew enough about Bewick's preparatory sketches not to overload it with detail; most fraudulent Bewick sketches attempt to include every jot and tittle, a grievous error.

The margins of the backing sheet – itself of machine made paper – start to give the game away. To the right are a series of trivial computations apparently relating to the framing of the drawing. The very edge of the sheet, below the drawing, betrays trial marks made with a fine water-colour brush, the tones of which correspond to those of the sketch. And then there is the pencilled provenance stating its origin, 'from Revd Lowry's sale Crosby on Eden'. This indicates Revd Thomas Lowry, c.1762-1832, vicar of Crosby 1791-1832, and four-times mayor of Carlisle. He is not known as a Bewick collector and had died long before the piecemeal distribution of Bewick's drawings to wealthy collectors by his daughters Jane and Isabella from the 1850s; the attribution is tenuous to say the least.

And so to the verso of the backing sheet. Here we find impressions from a couple of early Bewick woodblocks which had previously been in the collection of Revd Thomas Hugo and had appeared in Hugo's *Bewick's Woodcuts* (1870), images 614 and 629. These blocks were purchased by the London rare book dealer Edwin Pearson at Hugo's sale in 1877 as part of his concerted attempt to gather an unrivalled collection of such blocks. The backing sheet does not derive from Hugo's *Bewick Woodcuts* and may well be a waste sheet generated about 1880 by Pearson tinkering around with the blocks in his possession.



Verso of backing sheet.

Unfortunately, though we are on firmer ground, this drawing is starting to look irredeemably shaky. Edwin Pearson of 'The Bewick Repository' in London was, apart from his friend Thomas Hugo, the leading (albeit self-anointed) Bewick expert of the Victorian era. Best known for his ersatz editions of Bewick's *Select Fables of Aesop and Others* (1871, 1878, 1879, 1886) and his astonishingly inept Banbury Chap Books (1890), he is suspected of complicity in a number of spurious titles with woodcuts by Bewick. The pencilled provenance (citing Revd Thomas Lowry) to the present drawing is almost certainly in Pearson's hand and the irresistible conclusion is that this drawing is yet another of his contrived rarities.

As a confirmed alcoholic and as a wayward husband, Pearson would have appreciated 'Watty and Meg', the subtitle to which was 'The Wife Reformed'. The ballad, humorous in tone but reflecting serious contemporary social issues, describes how Watty, an habitual inebriate, exasperated by the nagging of his wife Meg, threatens to leave her for good unless she ceases her constant carping. Unwilling to lose a husband (and unable to embrace freedom), Meg is silenced. In real life, neither of Edwin Pearson's wives followed her example; one reached the end of her tether and divorced him, the other summarily banished him from the marital home.

Nigel Tattersfield has spent the last few years researching the career of Edwin Pearson (1838-1901) of 'The Bewick Repository'. A modest book, designed in its initial stages by the late Iain Bain, is in preparation.

YOU CANNOT BE SERIOUS, MR REAY? THE BEWICKS ARGUE INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY.

by Robin Adams

The *Newcastle Courant* of 26 July 1800 carried¹ an advertisement inviting subscriptions to a 'short Treatise on that useful Invention called THE SPORTSMAN'S FRIEND ... By a GENTLEMAN FARMER, of Northumberland.' The gentleman farmer was Henry Utrick Reay of Killingworth, whose inherited wealth came from a one-third share in the Walker pit. The invention was a peg to which a horse could be tethered if fences and hedges were lacking. The illustrations were to be 'ENGRAVED ON WOOD, | BY THOMAS BEWICK, | FROM THE PAINTINGS OF JOSEPH ATKINSON, | Cattle-Painter, in Newcastle.' The treatise – in reality a duodecimo² pamphlet of 27³ pages – was published on 15 January 1802.⁴

The invention may or may not have existed, but the three illustrations are real enough. The text of the pamphlet is a quite skilful, though for our tastes over-long,⁵ *exercice de style* that parodies the pomposity of the Board of Agriculture, or of their first president,⁶ or of those who wrote to the Board.⁷ The parody implies (for instance) that, in their – or his – mouth, 'it must be seen to be believed' would become '[it] would almost require ocular experience to obtain due credit.'⁸

The lampoon's purpose, however, was practical rather than literary. It used the peg and chain to attack the Board's ignorance of farming, its reliance on poor information, and its *de haut en bas* attitude of enlightened radicalism towards farmers' traditional knowledge and practice.⁹ The Board, in short, was gullible.

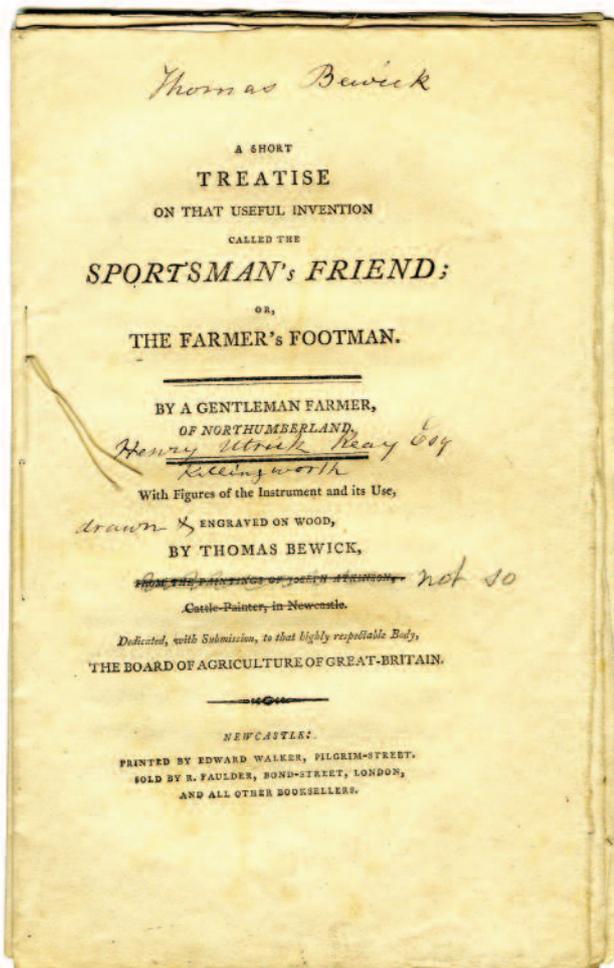
The title page of Thomas Bewick's proof copy of the pamphlet¹⁰ is reproduced at figure 1.¹¹

Bewick, writing in ink, has placed his name at top centre of the title page, and usefully confirms that the gentleman farmer was 'Henry Utrick Reay Esq | Killingworth'. From here on, the annotations become controversial. Thomas claims that he made the drawings ('drawn &') as well as the engravings. Ink lines strike through the words 'FROM THE PAINTINGS OF JOSEPH ATKINSON, Cattle-Painter, in Newcastle.' If the pen was held by Thomas (and I suggest that it was), he was also dismissing Reay's assertion that the originals had been made by Joseph Atkinson (?1766-1802).¹² Jane Bewick's pencilled 'not so', and her pencilled straight and wavy lines, endorse her father's assertion. Almost half a century after the pamphlet's publication, the Newcastle bookseller William Garret (?1795-1857¹³) added a further twist by claiming that George Stubbs, and not 'our Newcastle Atkinson', had made the paintings.¹⁴ This may have been a deliberate deception, as the reference to Atkinson suggests. It might, I suppose, have been nothing worse than a lapse of Garret's memory, since Stubbs had painted a pair of hunters from Reay's stables in 1786, and two saddled horses of his in 1792.¹⁵

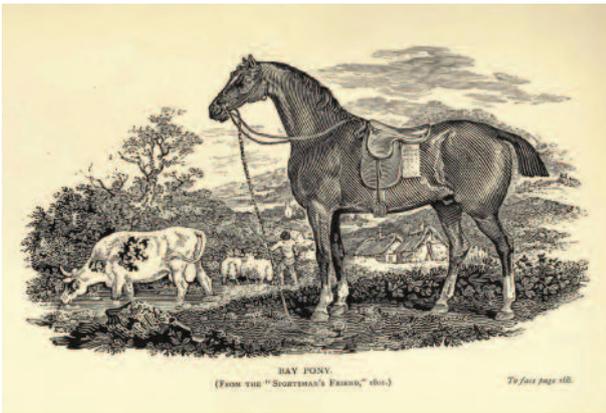
In any case, the two most assertive would-be witnesses, Jane Bewick (b. 1787) and William Garret (b. ?1795) were not speaking from first-hand knowledge. Jane had presumably heard her father's account of the *Sportsman's Friend* episode. Garret, in turn, and probably much later, heard Jane's version, which he proceeded to embroider – and thus contradict – when he wrote to Thomas Hugo. Jane Bewick was biased in her father's interest. William Garret was talking up the rarity of the pamphlet.

I do not know whether the original paintings have survived.¹⁶ The pamphlet's three engravings do not suggest originals in the manner, or of the quality, of Stubbs. The most striking of the three, the 'bay pony',¹⁷ is nearer to Bewick's own horse-portraits than to Stubbs'. The 'white pony', with the anglers enjoying their liberty 'from an early ... to a late hour',¹⁸ has the anecdotal quality of a Bewick vignette. The 'black pony', despite Garret's effusive protestations, is neither well designed nor well executed: since this was the copperplate, it may not even have been engraved by Bewick, whose signature on the proof could indicate no more than that he made the intermediate drawing.¹⁹

Joseph Atkinson's career in fine art may have begun as recently as 1796,²⁰ when he was already 30. He had never been a Bewick apprentice, and was not of Bewick's circle. Henry Utrick Reay, an eccentric but generous man, presumably saw that Atkinson's career deserved help, and employed him accordingly. To have passed off work by Stubbs



1: The title page of Thomas Bewick's proof copy of the pamphlet.



2: The Bay.

or Bewick as Atkinson's would have been a ridiculous and pointless fraud to attempt in the small, gossipy and suspicious world of 18th-century Newcastle. This is the best reason for accepting Reay's words as they appear on Reay's title page. Whatever elements of his own style Bewick subsequently introduced into the engravings, it was Joseph Atkinson who made the paintings. Mrs Holmes suggests²¹ that Atkinson's paintings were technically unsuitable for engraving, and that Bewick's necessary alterations in making the drawings led Bewick to feel justified in claiming the whole work as his. This seems quite possible, and would incidentally rule out Garret's claim that Stubbs made the originals: Bewick, though confident in his own powers, would not have claimed to have improved upon Stubbs. In all of this, though, Jane's 'not so' lacks any²² evidential value.

Was Jane Bewick's judgement any more reliable over Newcastle affairs that did not directly²³ affect or involve her family? Her annotations on pages 22-23²⁴ of the *Sportsman's Friend* pamphlet may offer some insight.

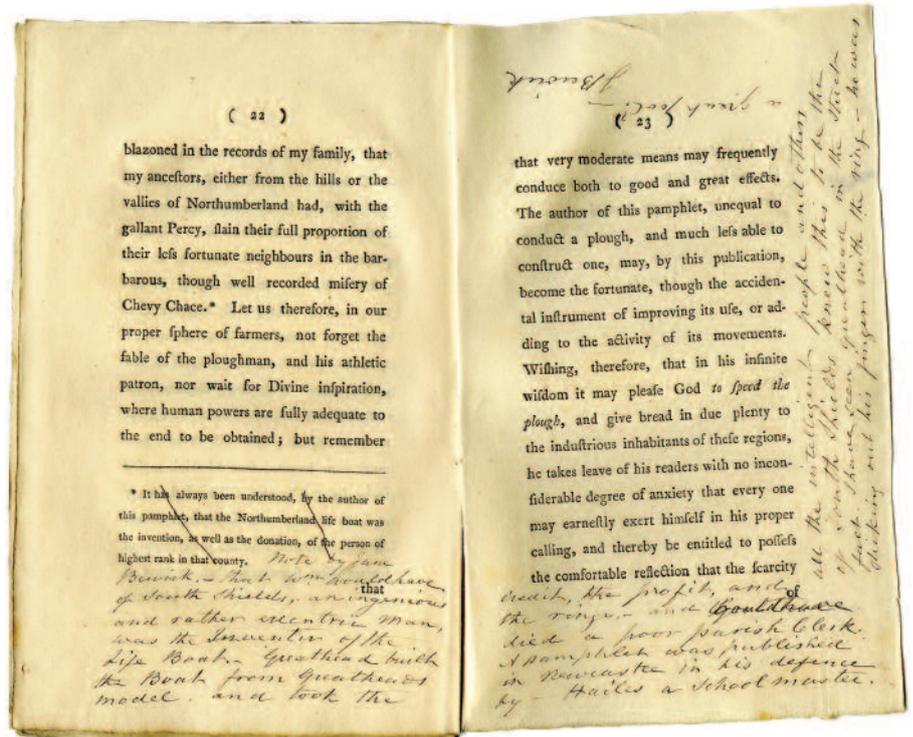
By page 22 of the pamphlet, Reay's gentleman-farmer persona has forgotten that he is supposedly promoting a metal peg.²⁵ He congratulates himself on not coming of an aristocratic bloodline. How much better to achieve repute through a useful invention than through an inheritance of faction and slaughter. How much better, therefore, to have invented the lifeboat than to have the battle of Chevy Chase on one's blazon. But there (a sly little footnote proclaims), the Duke of Northumberland²⁶ had not merely provided money for the North Shields lifeboat of 1798, but had designed it too. Or so the gentleman-farmer persona had always supposed.²⁷

Jane Bewick silently dismisses the gentleman farmer's alternative version of history, and reverts to the real and bitter dispute of c.1789-c.1806 between Henry Greathead and William Wouldhave (and each man's supporters) for the credit of designing the first lifeboat. Jane is not troubled by the historical difficulties. The inventor could not have been Greathead,²⁸ she says: he was a vulgarian, sc. 'and thus incapable of original thought'. 'I have seen Greathead in the street

sticking out his fingers with the ring²⁹ — he was a great fool! — J Bewick'.³⁰ The inventor could therefore only have been the poor parish-clerk Wouldhave — to whom, in his turn, Jane is still quite condescending.

In just over a hundred manuscript words, plus some straight-ish lines and a scribble, Thomas and Jane Bewick say much about the personal, commercial and artistic antagonisms of 18th-century Newcastle. Jane had a mistakenly high opinion of her own ability to adjudicate fairly between Greathead and Wouldhave as inventors; but was happy to set aside all attempts at fairness when her father's primacy over Joseph Atkinson was in question. Thomas was not above making, if privately and *post facto*, an ambiguous claim to have done more than his patron had commissioned from him. Thomas had no interest in the pamphlet's text beyond its cover. Jane read further, but took the whole remarkable production at face value. William Garret elaborated irrationally on the stories he heard from Jane.

Finally, I come back to the title of this note. Reay's intent, I think, was serious. He used light-hearted parody against the Board of Agriculture because he hoped that sweet reasonableness would work better than anger — *plus fait douceur que violence*; but he was too ironic by half. He did not, in truth, 'know the characters of those I have the honor to address'³¹, and the expensive soufflé fell flat. Reay apparently³² withdrew the remainder of the copies from the market.



Acknowledgments. I am grateful to Mrs June Holmes, Archivist to the Natural History Society of Northumbria, for access to the Bewick copy of the Reay pamphlet, and for her advice on and around it; to the staff of the Philip Robinson Library, University of Newcastle, for providing photocopies of their Library's copy of the pamphlet as published; and to Ian Whitehead, Keeper of Maritime History, Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums, for advice on the literature and events around Joseph Atkinson's lifeboat picture. Errors are my own.

3:

REFERENCES



1. On the *Courant's* front page.
2. 'Duodecimo' is Thomas Hugo's statement of its format (in his *The Bewick Collector ...*: London, Lovell Reeve and Co: 1866, at page 71). Others have thought it to be the similarly sized Crown octavo. The actual dimensions, as taken by Mrs June Holmes (archivist to the Natural History Society of Northumbria), are 190mm (height) by 118mm (width).
3. Thomas Hugo's report of the pagination ('xi, 24': *The Bewick Collector*, page 71) is misleading. In the published pamphlet, the numbering scheme is page [i] to page [xii], then page [13] to page 24; the three engravings are inserted, but are excluded from the numbering scheme. If the engravings and their blank reverses are included, the pamphlet totals 30 pages.
4. Advertised in the (London) *Morning Post* of Friday 15 January 1802 (page 2), and again in the *Morning Post* of Saturday 16 January 1802 (page 2).
5. The length, like the euphuism, is part of the parody.
6. '[in Sir John Sinclair's first presidency] it is interesting to note the characteristic presidential touches given to the draft letters, though they usually consist of trivial alterations and of a little added pomposity to the phraseology': Sir Ernest Clarke, *History of the Board of Agriculture 1793-1822*: London, Royal Agricultural Society of England, 1898; at page 13. Clarke was perhaps using a little added meiosis.
7. Among those who pressed their opinions on the Board (see note ⁸, below), a strong candidate for parody would have been Francis Tweddell senior, of Threepwood. Tweddell, who in another context (inclosures) had been delated to the Bishop of Durham as a 'troublemaker', had 'particularly recommended' to the President of the Board a design for a pair of pruning shears. His recommendation received an elegant snub from Bailey and Culley in their *Agriculture of Northumberland ...* (page 55, 1797). They describe and illustrate the Threepwood shears, but then continue: 'There are many other implements used in this county, but as we believe most of them are such as are well known in other parts of the kingdom, it would be of little use to describe them here.' Interest, in other words, had enabled Tweddell to get away with twaddle. Nothing of Tweddell's was printed in the first two volumes (1797 and 1800) of the *Communications to the Board of Agriculture*.
8. At page viii of the pamphlet. The phrase is not altogether the parodist's invention. Its prototype appears in a communication to the Board of Agriculture in August 1799: 'The weight that has been removed [sic] by one horse on this declivity of an iron rail-way, appears so astonishing to some people, that it almost requires ocular proof to convince them of the fact.' (*Communications to the Board of Agriculture; on subjects relative to the husbandry, and internal improvement of the country. Vol. II.* [etc.] /London [etc.]/ 1800: pages 474-478, Communication XXIX, 'On IRON RAIL-WAYS. By J. WILKES, Esq. of Measham.', at page 475.) Mr Wilkes might have supposed that a Shakespearean allusion would commend his essay to the Board; but the handkerchief in *Othello* (Act III, scene 3: 'Villain, be sure thou prove my love a whore, | Be sure of it; give me the ocular proof:') was an unwise choice, not merely because of its tragic context, but because the proof it seemed to give was no proof at all. Reay's 'ocular experience' was close enough to Wilkes' (and Shakespeare's) 'ocular proof' to signal the connection, and imply Wilkes' lack of judgement and taste.
9. At least one other pamphleteer of 1800 criticised the Board of Agriculture for their 'inutility'. This was Thomas Stone (writing as A SOCIETY OF PRACTICAL FARMERS), whose pamphlet (G. Cawthorn, London, 1809) took the form of a 'Letter' (of 141 pages) to Lord Somerville, 'late President of the Board of Agriculture'. A digital copy is on line from the British Library, shelf mark General Reference Collection DRT Digital Store 7078.de.16.(1.). Some of Stone's pamphlet is moralising: 'For how contemptible do the brightest pursuits of Fame appear when opposed to the simple merit of doing good to mankind!' (page 141). Some of it, though, is remarkably direct: '... instead of wasting your time on frivolous pursuits or airy speculations.' (page 140).

10. (a) Thomas Bewick's copy of Reay's pamphlet is item 231 in *A provisional checklist of the library of Thomas Bewick*, drawn up by David Gardner-Medwin for The Bewick Society, and © the Society. The latest revise (2010) of the checklist is on line at [http://www.bewicksociety.org/Research/PDFs/A PROVISIONAL CHECKLIST OF THE LIBRARY OF THOMAS BEWICK.pdf](http://www.bewicksociety.org/Research/PDFs/A_PROVISIONAL_CHECKLIST_OF_THE_LIBRARY_OF_THOMAS_BEWICK.pdf).
- (b) The Bewick copy is in the archive of the Natural History Society of Northumbria (NHSN) at the Great North Museum: Hancock, in Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Its shelf mark is NEWHM:1997.H 74.1.
- Its text is complete. The illustration of the 'bay pony' is missing, and the other two illustrations, 'the black pony' (NEWHM:1997.H74.2) and 'the white pony' (NEWHM:1997.H74.3), are on loose proof-sheets of about the same size as the pamphlet.
- (c) I am grateful for Mrs June Holmes's enlightening observation that, by Bewick's standards, these woodcuts are large.
11. Image by courtesy of, and ©, NHSN.
12. A different Joseph Atkinson, also a Northumberland cattle painter, made a painting now in the Berwick Museum. It is signed and dated '1825'.
13. An obituary notice in the *Newcastle Journal* (02 January 1858, page 8) says that at his death on 28 December 1857 William Garret was in his 63rd year.
14. William Garret, 1849, in a letter to the Reverend Thomas Hugo, quoted at page 71 of Hugo's *The Bewick Collector*: London, Lovell Reeve and Co, 1866. If Garret had been correct in his attribution of the paintings to Stubbs, the clear implication would have been that they had not been made by Bewick.
15. Judy Egerton, *George Stubbs, painter*: catalogue raisonné: New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2007: catalogue numbers 264 and 275.
16. If Joseph Atkinson's originals survive, and have passed through the saleroom, they may have been ascribed to John Augustus Atkinson (1776-1830), or more probably to the Newcastle horse painter John Atkinson (1863-1924), or perhaps – if unsigned – to 'School of Stubbs' or 'School of Bewick'.
17. See figure 2. Image of the bay pony ©, and by courtesy of, the Librarian, Special Collections Department, The Philip Robinson Library, Newcastle University
18. The pamphlet, at pages 19-20.
19. If we combine Thomas Bewick's ms. with the letterpress, he might be narrowly read as asserting only that he drew and engraved those figures that were 'ON WOOD'. The reason for engraving the black pony on copperplate, rather than wood, is not clear.
20. An 'Atkinson J', who specialised in 'Animals', exhibited 'Portraits of a Horse and Dog' at the Royal Academy in 1796. Latterly, Joseph Atkinson became known chiefly for his *View of Tanfield Arch*, lithographed by J. C. Stadler and published in December 1803 [sic]. That image includes two quite distant horses (whose characteristics, it may be argued, might be due to Stadler). The dogs in the foreground are full of character and technically well done (although this too might be Stadler's work.) The original painting might settle these questions, but it is inaccessible.
21. Personal communication, 13 January 2018.
22. The 'not so' serves, of course, as further evidence of Jane's protection of her father's legacy.
23. I suggest that Jane Bewick's mind (i) lumped Joseph Atkinson with Henry Greathead because Atkinson had made his painting of the lifeboat as a commission from Greathead; and (ii) supposed both men to be cheats who had appropriated others' endeavours.
24. See figure [2]/[3]. Image by courtesy of, and ©, NHSN.
25. Without warning, the peg had metamorphosed into a plough.
26. Hugh Percy, second Duke of Northumberland, 1742-1817.
27. This of course was irony. **Reay** can have supposed no such thing.
28. Greathead's innovative contribution to the Lawe House Committee's lifeboat design was the strongly curved keel. See Adrian G. Osler's *Mr Greathead's Lifeboats* (Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear Museums, 1990), at page 27 and page 70.
29. A diamond ring was presented to Henry Greathead by the Russian emperor, via the Russian ambassador, in late 1803 or early 1804. The gift was being reported in the newspapers by 01 February 1804 (e.g. by *The Scots Magazine* of that date, at page 74. Its report says explicitly that the emperor had paid for the boat: the ring was a recognition of Greathead's sending the emperor the print of Atkinson's lifeboat picture.) Most reports said the value of the ring was '300l.'; one at least said '330l.' Greathead was reported in 1804 to have received another award from overseas, a gold medallion from the King of Prussia. Jane Bewick perhaps recollected this as a ring rather than a medallion: this would explain her plural 'rings' in 'Greathead ... took ... the rings' (her annotation on page 23).
30. From Jane Bewick's annotation across pages 22-23 of the pamphlet.
31. Page (v) of the pamphlet. Perhaps – if the parody was seen to mock Francis Tweddell – Reay's friends thought he had gone too far, and told him so.
32. According to Garret, that is. Garret, misunderstanding Reay's motive, supposed that the invention itself had been laughed at. Reay would not have minded about that, if only the lampoon's central message had been understood.



AESOP 200

A LECTURE TO CELEBRATE THE BICENTENNIAL OF THE PUBLICATION OF THE FABLES OF AESOP AND OTHERS, DESIGNS ON WOOD

BY THOMAS BEWICK

by Peter Osborne

These notes formed the basis of the public lecture delivered in the Bewick Hall, The City Library, Newcastle on 1st October 2018.

Two hundred years ago Thomas Bewick at last published his Aesop's Fables. While many have decried the work John Ruskin declared it showed Bewick to have been 'one of the great artists of all time'.¹ Michael Marquess, in his introduction to the paperback edition of 1972, wrote that 'Bewick's finest productions offer a visual and intellectual pleasure....'.² Given this, I must declare myself. The Aesop is a fine production however it is a flawed masterpiece because Bewick took on too much and, during its production became not only ill near to death but also nearly blind.

Most criticism of Aesop has judged the cuts against his natural history work. 'The History of British Birds' had a cognitive purpose in recognition and understanding, with some (long unrecognised) intellectual purpose in Natural Theology.³ Aesop, by contrast, is entirely about intellectual and higher level affective aims. It seeks to influence our values and feelings and for this Bewick sought something different: maximum power in his images.

Bewick carefully planned and varied the style of cuts, emphasising, for example, in some a sense of enduring strength and in others the expression of disgust at immorality. Times had changed radically since the 1780s. The long

period of European wars had exacerbated the effects of the Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions. By 1811 England was entering upon a decade of political repression. Bewick loved the world of his childhood. He saw that disintegrating and with it the social fabric in which his cherished moral tradition had thrived. This was accompanied by a widening gap between traditional wisdom and virtue, on the one hand, and declining morality and ethical uncertainty on the other. All this reinforced his determination to find the means to express himself trenchantly.

Bewick had developed his early vignette style from books.⁴ Those early sources had been in a light-hearted Rococo style, almost diametrically opposed to the required new gravity. For Aesop he now needed images that were challenging rather than delightful. There were however books in his library for him to turn to such as Reynolds' *Discourses* and J. J. Winkelmann's *Reflections on the Painting and Sculpture of the Greeks*, translated by Fuseli. Both these books highlight the work of Nicolas Poussin. Reynolds for instance had written 'the favourite subjects of Poussin were ancient fables' and that 'we are thrown back to antiquity' by his work.⁵



1: Noah's Sacrifice; After Nicolas Poussin; Frey (Johan Jacob, 1681-1752) Rome, 1746, Print on paper. Image Courtesy of the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Did Bewick know Poussin's works? One print is of particular interest. It was made in 1746 after Poussin's 'The Sacrifice of Noah', which now hangs in Tatton Park dining room.⁶ We see Noah sacrificing at an outdoor altar and surrounded by several figures including a kneeling servant who is pouring water. Bewick needed to depict in 'The Wanton Calf' a scene of ancient sacrifice more seriously than he had as an apprentice.



2: The Wanton Calf.



3: The Boy and his Mother.

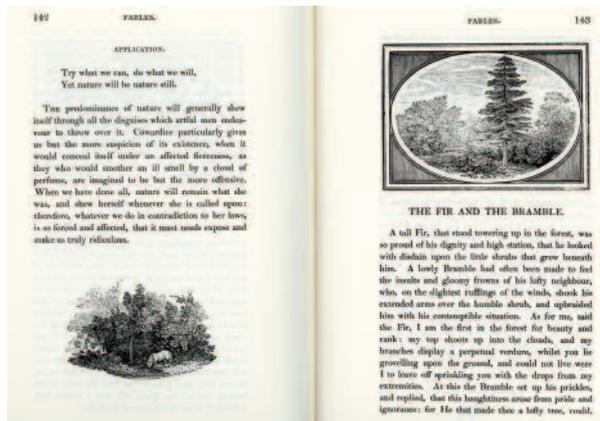
In 'The Boy and his Mother' we see Poussin's influence. The background level of the heads of the crowd is broken by the main figures that form a triangular central group with the gallows. The gallows' blackness gives maximum contrast with the whiteness of the boy and his mother, she oppressed by its post, and he by the noose that hangs straight down to his neck. This major black and white contrast is relieved by a secondary one on the mounted soldier, just as Poussin regularly used a subordinate contrast area. The whole composition compresses into the biting of the ear, aided by the arch of the horses' necks. Within all this there is also expression in detail: in the implacable faces of the cavalry and the violent face of the executioner. The whole is portentous and powerful, a magnificent dramatization.

Aesop was a sort of new beginning for Bewick, a cherished project which took on new and urgent meaning for him during his illness of 1812. It is an extraordinary book. Never before had there been a book which had attempted so coherently, so cogently and so creatively to express deep personal thoughts and feelings in visual terms.

This was achieved by:

1. Creative graphics/typography;
2. Thought-provoking thematic development;
3. Complementary visual/verbal interaction;
4. Powerful imagery.

1. CREATIVE GRAPHICS/ TYPOGRAPHY.



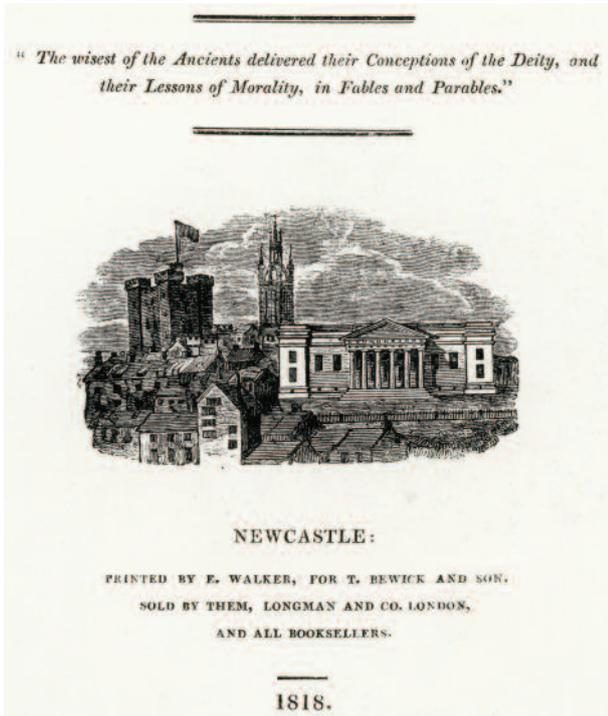
4: The Fir and the Bramble and its preceding page.

Aesop merited a place in Stanley Morrison's 'Four Centuries of Fine Printing' for its fine balance of text, image and space.⁷ In the double page of the 'Fir and the Bramble' (pp 142-143) for example, we see a distributed balance that enhances meaning. We are drawn first to the framed fable cut, but then back to the vignette opposite that comments on it. The vignette of a sheep drinking at a fountain is a statement of Natural Theology showing the rightness of things in nature. Similarly the first text seen is the fable, with the eye drawn by its heading. But the eye is then drawn back to the opposite Application which again restates Natural Theology. The overall balance throws particular attention to the non-centrality of the fir tree which is correct because it is the humility of the bramble that is in tune with the principles of nature. In total therefore the double page spread has a dynamic and meaningful balance.

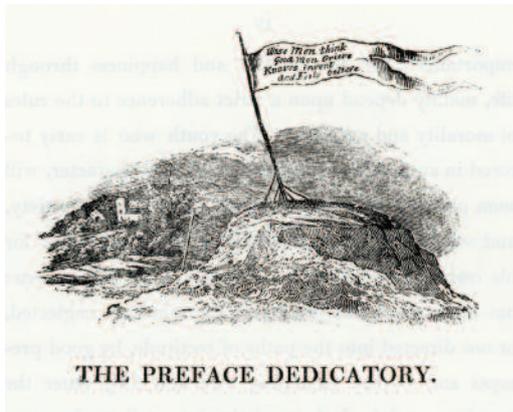
2. THOUGHT-PROVOKING THEMATIC DEVELOPMENT.

Bewick could not have achieved this frequent interaction between the heading of one fable and the application/vignette of the previous one, without careful juggling of their order. To have done that completely throughout the book would have been nearly impossible but we can recognise the care of thematic order and its creative exploitation. This is especially evident in the prolegomena from title page through to the start of the first fable. As well as the basic title information the page bears two key markers: the motto and the vignette. The motto that 'The wisest of the Ancients delivered their Conceptions of the Deity, and their Lessons of Morality, in Fables and Parables' is made effective by the vignette to the here and now and to its long tradition as emphasised in its architecture.

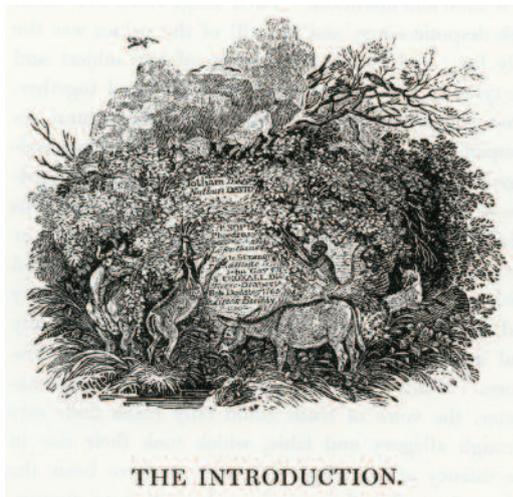
The motto tells of the wise, particularly the great fabulists who, like Bewick, attributed the ecologically perfect balance of nature to divine creation ('Providence').



5: The Frontispiece motto and vignette.



6: The Headpiece to the Preface Dedicatory.



7: The Introduction Headpiece.

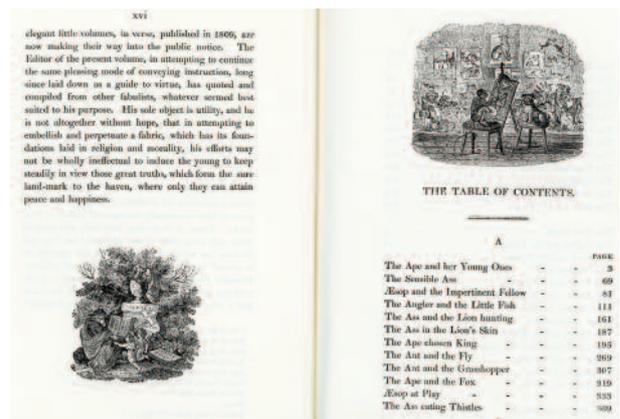
The headpiece to the Preface now breaks the motto down into a quatrain, each line of which will be expanded in sequence:

‘Wise men think
Good men grieve
Knaves invent
And fools believe’

The pennant proclaiming the verse stands on a rock. Rock, solid and durable, is always a signal of wisdom in Bewick’s Aesop. The headpiece offers a binary choice, as indicated by the signpost: its white arm points to the village, the traditional home of wisdom with its church and cross, but its black arm points down to murky chaos. That binary choice is explored in the Preface as between the ‘masquerade of life’ and the ‘temple of virtue’. It is followed by the Introduction that celebrates the great writers of fables, with the superb visual epitome at its head.

The Introduction headpiece celebrates the wise through the adulation of all nature. It may be seen as a progression from *The History of British Birds* into the depiction of creatures in setting and in action. Each creature and plant makes homage through its own unique character. Again the wise men ‘who think’ are inscribed into the permanence of rock. They are the subject of the Introduction, which ends with a statement of hope that a ‘fabric, which has its foundations in religion and morality’ can be perpetuated, though ‘good men grieve’ at the passing of the wise.

These good men are represented here by a sage who, under a sculpted figure of Grief, introduces children to the ‘worthies’ of English history. They are those of the liberal tradition, starting, as always in the 18th century, with King Alfred the supposed founder of English liberties. We see them for example in William Kent’s work at Stowe. Bewick here reworks the tradition of tradition. This vignette also followed his title page piece to Parnell’s poems in ‘*Poems by Goldsmith and Parnell*’ of 1795 and reprinted in 1804.



8: Double page spread

The Introduction and the Table of Contents

The ‘*Contents*’ list the follies of mankind and therefore are appropriately headed by the ‘*Knives Invent*’ vignette. Bewick bases this on the fable by Gay where an artist alters a true likeness of his sitter in order to gratify his vanity. The artist is an ape and his sitter a vain pooch, while all around are dogs and their pictures in an amoral chaos. Such, Bewick says, is the ‘*Masquerade*’ that will be revealed in the fables that follow. Their list is underlined by his tailpiece ‘*Fools Believe*’ in the

person of a foolish hen who, having absconded from the farmyard to save her eggs, believes herself safe, while a fox looms above just waiting his moment.



9: Foolish Hen tailpiece to the Table of Contents. 'Fools Believe'.

The whole sequence reveals the meaningful approach in which Bewick has unveiled his theme in a creative way that plays off image against text to involve us in its significance. In the text of the book through the fables that follow he imposes a basic order from childhood to maturity, ending with the image of a funeral (his own?) above 'Finis', but placing fables where he could to achieve the interaction between one and the next such as we have seen in the Fir and the Bramble.

3. COMPLEMENTART VISUAL/ VERBAL INTERACTIONS.

It is clear both in his page layout and his development of his themes that text and images work closely together. In some cases, as in the Prolegomena, the general argument of the text is epitomised in the picture. In others a particular word or thought in the text is given a creative twist by a vignette. For good measure there are often challenging writings in the vignette, as in the 'Old Filtering Stone'.



10: An Old Filtering Stone.

A 'filtering stone' was a receptacle through which gallons of foul water were poured; an 'old' one had its pores clogged from much of such use. This is the imputation of the inscription on page 138 to the old drunkard portrayed in the brutal 'fac'. He exemplifies dissolute old age as described in Bewick's trenchant Application above. Compared with his youthful portrait on the wall behind, his gout, medicine, boozing and thrown-down bottle show him to be 'like liquor of a thin body, and vile quality, soon become sour, vapid, or good for nothing'. Thus does Bewick through the combined force of word and image intensify the meaning of this fable.



11: They All Want Brains Wigs.

An extraordinary example of words within a vignette is 'They all want **Brains** Wigs'. The vignette represents a group of bald pseudo medics, who illustrate the sentence in the Application directly above: 'we should never aim at mending our fortune by fraud and violence.' The stuffed chameleon hanging above them echoes that which hung in the Society of Apothecaries, so they were claiming probity. The text suggests that although they really lack, i.e. 'want,' true thought, 'brains', they desire, i.e. 'want', wigs to cover their bare-headedness. Did Bewick get his idea from Richard Newton's 'HEAD... and BRAINS' cartoon of 1797? It is not impossible that John had sent him a copy. If it is so could there also have been a political slant to 'They all want Wigs' ie Whigs? In any case it is clear that Bewick loved to exploit the interplay of word and image within a given vignette as well as between the vignette and the text of the book.



12: Head and Brains; satirical representations of the heads of George III and William Pitt, facing opposite directions.

1797 Pen and black ink and watercolour
British Museum.

fall foul where they cannot expect their nibbling will meet with any thing but disappointment, as every one must who is biting at that which is too hard for his teeth. Thus it is that spite and malignity, which are twin brothers, and the offspring of envy, are, as well as their parent, their own tormentors. They intend that the wounds they inflict should be deadly, and the greatest wits and brightest characters in all ages have been the objects of their attacks; but the brilliancy of truth and justice at length shines forth, and shews the deformity of such characters in the clearest light. Other people, of the same character and disposition, though of minor consideration indeed, ought not to be passed over unnoticed. These may be called nibblers, who let their tongues slip very freely, in censuring the actions of persons who, in the esteem of the world, are of such an unquestionable reputation, that nobody will believe what is insinuated against them, and of such influence through their own veracity, that the least word from them would ruin the credit of such adversaries to all intents and purposes. The efforts of little villains of this stamp, like dirty liquor squirted against the wind, recoil back and bespatter their own faces; or like the shades of a picture, serve to set off the brilliant tints of the opposite virtues, which support and adorn society.



THE WOLF IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING.

A Wolf disguising himself in the skin of a sheep, and getting in among the flock, easily caught and devoured many of them. At last the Shepherd discovered him, and cunningly watched the opportunity of slipping a noose about his neck, and immediately hung him up on the branch of a tree. Some other Shepherds observing what he was about, drew near and expressed their surprize at it. Brother Shepherd! says one of them, what! are you hanging your sheep? No, replies the other, but I am hanging a Wolf in Sheep's clothing, and shall never fail to do the same, whenever I can catch one of them in that garb. The Shepherds then expressed themselves pleased at his dexterity, and applauded the justice of the execution.

13: The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing and preceding page.

The most extraordinary and cutting juxtaposition of words and images appears on pages 244 to 246. It is again, like *'The Fir and the Bramble'*, promoted by effective layout, drawing attention to a small and isolated tailpiece. *'The Wolf in Sheep's clothing'* is shown as being hanged for his murderous cunning. The fleece still attached to him is reflected opposite in the judicial wig of a judge, which was also a fleece. Bewick turns the Application into a condemnation of oppression, and particularly of that injustice which 'sets up the letter of the law against its spirit'.

The three examples given above illustrate the intensity generated in Aesop when the going was good; but it was not always so. After the illness of 1812 Bewick remained weak for a time but then work gets into full swing with plentiful vignettes including regular wisdom cuts. However, we know from the *Memoir* that over-work on the cuts and, especially, 'compiling or writing the book by candlelight' damaged 'the proper tone of memory and sight'.⁸ This is evident in the 80 fables from *'The Old Hound'*. 35 of those fables have such verbose applications that there is no room for a vignette; 24 have vignettes with no clear connection; and there is only one single *Wisdom* vignette whereas up to that point there had been one such per c.8 fables. There seems though to have been renewed vigour in the last dozen and a half fables with the return of *Wisdom* cuts and greater word and image cohesion.

We have noted that the views of Goldsmith, especially in his poem *'The Deserted Village'* were an important entry

point for Bewick's Aesop. Professor Donald has shown the essential alignment of Bewick's views about the damage to village life with those of Spence, Cobbett and Goldsmith.⁹

In the case of Goldsmith this is emphasised not only by frequent quotations in the *Memoir* but also by the title page vignette to the *Poems of Goldsmith and Parnell*. This ruined tomb presages the tombs of the wise, the fabulists, in Aesop. It also prefigures the tonal approach to many Aesop cuts.

If the lapses in the third quarter of Aesop arose from Bewick's near blindness from overwork, it seems that the reinvigoration of the last quarter may have been due to something new, namely a determination to show far more of the moral ills of urbanisation. He was aware of the rural dispossessed moving into town. In Chapter 3 of *The Memoir*, written in 1822, he linked this with a 'degradation' when previously happy villagers became 'dispirited, & mean & often dishonest and useless.'¹⁰ It was this 'degradation' and its amoral causes that exercised him in the last quarter of Aesop.

The sequence begins with the terrible 'fac' (facsimile engraving) where a baby (presumably a slave child), held up by its hair, is being sold at auction. It illustrates the 'utmost indecency and irregularity' that arises, says the Application above, from the 'shamefacedness... and ... overbearing impudence (of) a vicious, guilty, mind.' The 'cruel and insolent oppressors' of the disadvantaged are pilloried in the vignette of a toad, which is 'not so ugly as a purse-proud ignorant and wicked man.'



14: Vignette of the Baby Auction.



15: Toad.



16: The Press Gang.

The simpletons entrapped by the press gang ‘part with that invaluable jewel, liberty.’ The poor woman and child at market are subject to the ‘tricking and fraud’ of sellers who ‘take all manner of undue advantage’. It seems that Bewick was tweaking his Applications as a verbal platform for these social ‘facts.’ Even religion is subjected to his scorn in the white cross with the black shadow when true Christianity, which teaches ‘aid to the poor and humble’ turns to ‘intolerance and persecution’. The expose continues. The crowd quarrelling at the town water pump are those degraded by ‘continual labour.’ There are vignettes of labouring children and a

whipped dunce who is a little villain who ‘must submit to fate, that great ones may enjoy the world in state.’ Boy chimney sweeps must perform their ‘precarious dirty work.’

WISDOM AND FOLLY



17: Ill Fares the Land.

There are many signs in Bewick’s Aesop of the importance to him of Oliver Goldsmith. The clearest is the vignette on page 28 which inscribes on a great rock a quotation from Goldsmith’s poem ‘*The Deserted Village*’. It is by far the longest of Bewick’s vignette inscriptions and it is accentuated by a great split in the rock that ominously cuts through ‘hastening’ and wealth ‘accumulates’. Storm clouds gather; rooks fly up; already the fence is broken. All is the language of regret that wealth and affectation is leading to the destruction of village life to the point where ‘rural virtues leave the land’. The words are Goldsmith’s; the thought is also Bewick’s.



17a: Tail-piece to the Bear and the Bee-Hives.

Furthermore much illustrative work in Aesop harks back to cuts previously made for Goldsmith and Parnell. John Bewick’s cut of Goldsmith’s tomb prefigures the tombs of the fabulists in Aesop, and the title page cut of Parnell’s ‘*The Hermit*’ prefigures the ‘*Good Men Grieve*’. Bulmer’s ‘*Poems of Goldsmith and Parnell*’ was specifically intended as a ‘near approach to perfection which (the bookmaking arts including engraving) had achieved in this country.’¹¹ The image style of Aesop picked up again ‘the higher department of engraving such as landscapes or historical plates’ which Bewick had used in prints like *The Chillingham Bull* and books of history and poetry. This particularly marks the fable cuts, but in Aesop

Bewick had an additional challenge. He needed to uphold classical wisdom but also to expose folly and to maximise the contrast between them. Hence the solidity and permanence of the wisdom cuts and the sketchy impermanence of folly, both in their different ways complementing the fable cuts.

WISDOM

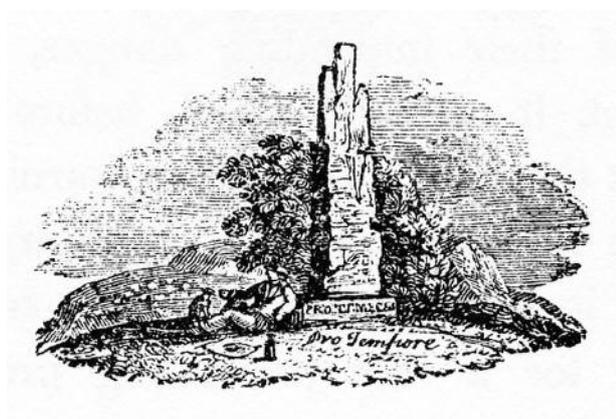
Bewick tells in *The Memoir*,¹² of how in his early wanderings he had thought the names of ‘Worthies’, such as King Alfred could be inscribed on wayside rocks. He imagined ‘maxims or quotations’ on rocks ‘to hold up their heads with these names to the Sun forever.’ The ‘wise’ fabulists are each given a tailpiece in the form of a tomb. Phaedrus, for example, has classical ruins. Most imaginatively, and a typical piece of Bewick wit, is the wisdom cut for Boothby. He, still being alive, could hardly have a tomb, so we see his tomb in the process of being made in the sculptor’s workshop. To wish Boothby long delay in needing this tomb Bewick has played two tricks: over the gate we read ‘vivat’, ‘long life’, and the work on the tomb is in abeyance as the sculptor enjoys a long lunch with his dog.

Closely allied to the ‘wise’ fabulists are similar tombs with the dates of Bewick’s parents’ deaths. These relate in turn to the wisdom cut ‘Honour your father and your mother’, also on rock, because parental guidance of good parents was living wisdom.

Similarly the vignettes ‘This stone ...’ on page 62 and ‘Tis a world’ on page 76. are Bewick’s intense response to the *Vanitas* tradition that highlight the smallness of man and his efforts against the immensity of time and space. They reflect a couplet that he quotes in the *Memoir* that:

If aught on earth the immortal powers provide
 ‘Tis surely this- the littleness of pride

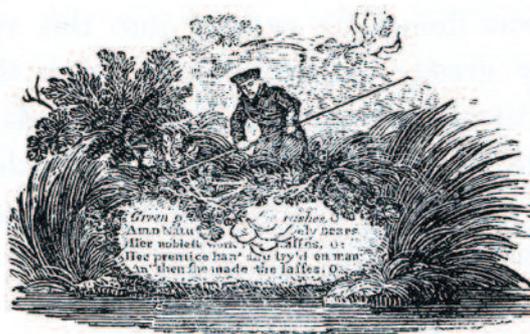
The same message shapes ‘pro tem’, ‘for the time being’ on page 72. A traveller takes his lunch time rest at the foot of a great monument, which even itself is in decay. (This rock closely resembles one of The Devil’s Arrows near Borough-bridge which Bewick had visited on his walking tour of 1780. He had also enjoyed the classical garden of Studley Royal.)



18: Pro Tempore.

After the wisdom cuts of the prolegomena, we can count 16 such vignettes of various kinds through the book. Of the Wise there are 8, if we include his parents and the officials of Newcastle. As well as the 3 vanitas cuts, there are 4 wise sayings if we include the Goldsmith, ‘Honour thy Father and thy Mother’, and *Temperance*. The fourth is perhaps unexpected – a quotation from Burns: ‘Green grow the rushes, O’. In full it reads as a natural theology ode to young love:

Auld Nature swears, the lovely dears
 Her noblest work she classes, O:
 Her prentice han' she try'd on man,
 An' then she made the lasses, O.
 Green grow, &c.



19: Green Grow ...

FACSIMILE

Bewick nicknamed a facsimile a ‘fac’, which, if a reproduction of a pen line which includes cross-hatching, would be ‘not a legitimate object of wood engraving’.¹³ This is what he uses to depict immorality. It seems that he made a conscious decision to demean that which he deplored.

The Application of The Collier and the Fuller is an impassioned warning against ‘keeping bad company’, which is like ‘blending nature, like water, with a foul current’. The vignette beneath is of two beer swilling and pipe-smoking women who have taken their little children to the ale house into the company of two ruffians. Pen marks all over are rapid and vigorous, but in the face of the left-hand ruffian they become truly vicious, asking us to re-imagine his visage from a jumble of angry squiggles.



20: The vignette to the Collier and the Fuller.

Not all ‘facs’ are so vicious. The ‘*Old Filtering Stone*’ mentioned above seems more an object of pity than detestation, but his whole setting has been reduced to a graphic mess, a confusion of hatched nets in which he himself is ensnared. Contrast this with the outer surround of the sleeper in ‘*There will be sleeping enough in the Grave*’, where the long zig-zagging lines seem part of his somnolence.¹⁴ It seems that in these ‘facs’ Bewick was, consciously or not, varying his drawn response according to his feelings. In the ‘fac’ of the ‘mistaken or designing men’ following ‘*The Sensible Ass*’ there is a ranter, a judge and a quack made into a fairground show with idiotic supporters, all so unreal as to be held up by no more than a string held by an ape. The unreality of the scene parallels the falsity of what these men purvey.



21: Sleeping Enough in the Grave.

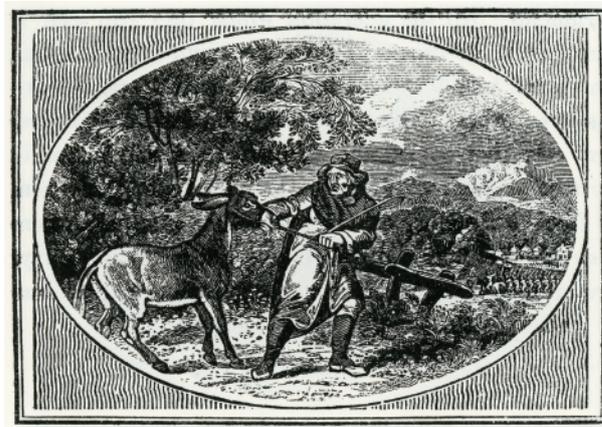
There is, by contrast, a set of three more gentle ‘facs’ representing families who have been driven from their land embarking for the New World. They set off with their pitifully small possessions by a small boat to the waiting sailing ship. They are drawn with gentle curves not jagged hatching. The contrast shows Bewick’s versatility of expression in these social vignettes and the extent to which his handling betrays his feelings.

FABLE CUTS

The fable cuts have been the most criticised element of Aesop.¹⁵ It is true that Bewick retained the traditional motifs based on Croxall. He loved Croxall and he was concerned to uphold tradition, to facilitate the easy recognition of well-known depictions. Solidity of tradition is also maintained by the regular framing which enabled the more classical composition which marks them in general. It gives weight to the fables, which he regarded as a form of wisdom, as we see on the title page. It also provides a firmly structured framework for picture composition which, at the best, Bewick planned to maximise meaning. The results are finely finished in the same way as his literary illustrations for Bulmer and others and the tendency to heavy texturing facilitated the tonal control that was his chosen means of dramatization. The key characters are brought out by heightened tonal contrast, usually light on dark, but sometimes as in ‘*The Partridge and the Cocks*’ by dark on light, the reason for this last being the violent nature of the cocks in the fable.

Time and time again Bewick invented a compositional device to bring out and characterise the fable’s drama.

A brilliant example of Bewick’s use of the frame is ‘*The Sensible Ass*’, where he roots the donkey’s rear leg to the oval surround: he is immovable against all the efforts of his master. These efforts are augmented by the black diagonal of rope and fence, which, in turn, point us to the approach of the enemy. It is a good example of how much he had learned since his early days when it is compared with the charming but lightweight cut in *Select Fables*.



22: The Sensible Ass.

In his earliest engravings Bewick had experimented with compositional devices such as crossed tree trunks and frames that curved into the format. Now he brings such things to a functional point, often thereby anticipating much later art developments.

In ‘*The Fighting Cocks*’, while the loser droops dejectedly, the victor sits bragging on a pillar. But he is pounced upon by an eagle, which Bewick depicts as a great shadow darkening into the top of the format upon the unsuspecting cock. ‘*The Flying Fish and the Dolphin*’ reprise his old trick of drawing the oval frame into the composition but here it is to enhance the meaning as the dolphin curves down away from the open sea and the fish swerves across from the foam. In ‘*Juno and the Peacock*’ the bird swerves his neck and head up parallel to the frame as he turns to Juno in the sky. In ‘*The Fox and the Goat*’ the latter is sunk in a well that is enclosed by an extension of the lower frame. Bewick was ever prepared to bring the shape of the frame into his composition as an expressive factor.

No less effective are the ways in which he employs rhythms and contrasts within the frame. ‘*The Vain Jackdaw*’ is surrounded by the sinuous curves of the peacocks and is effectively distinguished from them by his angularity. In ‘*Industry and Sloth*’ the composition writhes about in lazy rhythms and only the mirror indicating industry has vertical lines.

Bewick did not have the time to cut all the fable images. He makes it clear that he ‘drew the designs upon the wood’ and was helped in the cutting of them by Robert, Harvey and Temple. He drew the design ‘stroke by stroke’ on the block and, after it had been cut by an assistant, usually finished the work in detail.¹⁸

It was the sheer creative quality of this detailed cutting that led John Ruskin to declare in the context of his Oxford Lectures that Bewick was ‘one of the great artists of all time.’ He praises the ‘deliberate laying down of solid lines and dots,

of which you cannot change one' and which 'entirely expressed ... the essential particulars' of this frog, and in doing so 'strikes at vice' and the 'degradation of the viler popular mind'. The validity of Ruskin's observation may be checked by comparing this frog with the subtly different shaping and marking of the vain frog in the tailpiece to *The Proud Frog and the Ox*. Ruskin was impressed above all by the powerful expression of feeling in the process of his making of engraved strokes. *The Memoir* speaks of this deeply meaningful use of the burin as 'Stroke engraving',¹⁹ It was Bewick's 'ardent desire to see this...carried to the utmost perfection'. He saw his 'designs on wood as the only way I had in my power of

giving vent to a strong propensity to gratify my feelings'. This was 'developed in time' and, as Ruskin observed, it came to its fullest fruition in Aesop.

But does it have value for us today? Bewick believed that the social structures he knew when young were conducive to 'wisdom and virtue.' He also believed that this great moral tradition was so under threat that he turned all his creativity and his remaining energy to enforce that message in Aesop. Now, two hundred years later, the outstanding development in moral philosophy, especially in the work of Alasdair MacIntyre²⁰ shows that Bewick hit the nail squarely on the head.

FOOTNOTES

1. John Ruskin, *Ariadne Florentina, Six Lectures on Wood and Metal Engraving given before the University of Oxford in Michaelmas Term, 1872*, London, 1890, p.247 (lectures delivered 1872, published for the first time in 1876) Ruskin also mentions Bewick in *Aratra Pentelici*, 1872.
2. Marqusee, Michael *The Fables of Aesop with Designs on Wood By Thomas Bewick*, Paddington Press, London, 1975. Introduction (pages not numbered).
3. See the author's paper in the Cherryburn Times Volume 7 Number 4, Winter 2019, *Thomas Bewick, Beliefs and Vignettes* pp.7-11.
4. See the author's paper in the Cherryburn Times Volume 6 Number 4, Winter 2013-4, *To Bind For Gentlemen, William Shenstone (1714-1763) — A Quiet Influence*.
5. Joshua Reynolds, *Seven Discourses Delivered in the Royal Academy by the President*, Cambridge Library Collection - Art and Architecture, Cambridge University Press, 2014 see the Fourth Discourse : *The favorite subjects of Poussin were ancient fables....*
6. <http://www.nationaltrustcollections.org.uk/object/1298200>
7. *Four centuries of Fine Printing; Two Hundred and Seventy-two Examples of the Work of Presses Established Between 1465 and 1924*, London 1924.
8. Bain, Iain (editor). *A Memoir of Thomas Bewick written by himself, edited and with an introduction by Iain Bain*. London: Oxford University Press, 1975, reprinted with corrections, in paperback, 1979 pp.131-2.
9. Donald, D., 2013. *The Art of Thomas Bewick*, Reaktion Books pp.36-39 and Chapter Two 'Endless Conjectures'.
10. Bain, Iain (editor) (1975,79). *A Memoir* p.33.
11. Tattersfield, N. *Thomas Bewick: the complete illustrative work*. London and New Castle, Delaware: The British Library, The Bibliographical Society, and Oak Knoll Press. Volume Two, 2011. p.532
12. Bain, Iain (editor) (1975,79). *A Memoir* p.185.
13. Bain, Iain (editor) (1975,79). *A Memoir* p.189.
14. The quotation is from Benjamin Franklin. Bewick owned a copy of *The works of the late Doctor Benjamin Franklin: consisting of his life written by himself, together with ...* , 2 vols. Edinburgh: D. Schaw, 1803. See A *PROVISIONAL CHECKLIST OF THE LIBRARY OF THOMAS BEWICK* available on the Bewick Society website.
15. See for instance Donald, D., *The Art of Thomas Bewick*, Reaktion Books, 2013. p.162-4.
16. We follow some in order through the book: In 'The Master and his Scholar' he employs a tipped bright rectangle falling out of the picture to the bottom right from which the scholar is hauled up only by his master, whose form is rooted back to the left by the tree trunk. In 'The Husbandman and his Sons' the old dying man is laid gently white on white, while his sons' rapt attention is held in place by the black door frame that silhouettes the third boy. In 'The Old Woman and her Maids' the latter are isolated in their evil task by the grey architecture to left and right out into which they furtively peer in fright. 'The Boasting Traveller' is one of several cases where creative use is made of the oval surround, here, as it were, spinning the bragging traveller into its web of curves.
17. Bain, Iain (editor) (1975,79). *A Memoir* pp.131-2.
18. See footnote One.
19. Bain, Iain (editor) (1975,79). *A Memoir* p.189.
20. ALASDAIR MACINTYRE, see especially. **After Virtue**. Third edition. University of Notre Dame Press, 1981, 2007 and. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* University of Notre Dame Press, 1988.

Cherryburn Times is normally published twice a year. We have an ambition to publish more frequently when time and material allows. The committee of the Bewick Society is actively seeking a new editor. If you feel you would like to help out or if you would like to contribute to future issues in any way, please get in touch. We can be contacted via the Bewick Society email and address: June Holmes, Membership Secretary, The Bewick Society, c/o Great North Museum: Hancock, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE2 4PT bewick.society@newcastle.ac.uk
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