

by Ray Watkinson

Artist and Artisan

Thomas Bewick, son of a small farmer, apprenticed to a provincial book engraver, is one of England's greatest artists, and the supreme master of the art of wood-engraving.

His work falls into a number of clear categories, and much of it was the coarsest hack engraving: but what is to be remembered in looking at all of it, 'including the most inventive and expressive of his prints, is that he did nothing without a firm appraisal of his purpose. He valued his own achievement as an artist and knew his unchallenged skill as a craftsman, and never feared., in the most utilitarian of day-to-day jobs, that his integrity or the flow of his creative ideas might suffer because his skill and his imagination were brought to bear constantly on quite humble tasks.

From his hands and from his workshop, between 1770 and 1828, came, among much other work, many thousands of engravings to illustrate and decorate books of all kinds; and it is for this work that he is remembered and admired.

One thing, however, must be clearly understood about him: he was not, simply, an illustrator. He did make illustrations, and he carried out many engravings which reproduced the designs of other artists. But it is the engravings which owe nothing to a given text, which are direct visual expressions of his own ideas, using the wealth of his observation and experience, which crown his work, and these, as works of art, are on the highest

In saying this, I would not qualify it by any reservation. The fact that these prints are limited to black and white, that few of them are even as big as the palm of a man's hand, must not stand in the way of our sharing Bewick's experience and, once having seen the world with his eyes, recognising the degree to which our own experience is enriched. To this artist, the limitations of his medium were not restrictive, but liberating; I know none who commands a greater range of expression within one medium.

His engravings vary from the boldest and simplest cutting, to blocks of the most minute and delicate workmanship. But it is not the display of virtuosity that makes them memorable. It' is the completeness of comprehension, the apt selection from material intimately known, the musical play of pattern to draw out meaning, that make these tiny pictures the powerful works of art which they are.. At this scale, and only at this scale, will this medium, and these tools, by their very limitations and discipline, transform faithful drawing into compelling communication.

Much of Bewick's day-to-day work has disappeared for ever - that is to say, as being likely to be known again for his. For in addition to the wood-engravings, he did much anonymous work. He engraved clock-faces, which in his youth were not yet enamelled; door-plates, coffin-plates, seals; moulds for bottlemaking and clay-pipe making, for buttons and other trinkets; ornamented silverware with coats of arms, inscriptions, and elegant rococo wreaths and borders: etched ornament on sword-blades, gunlocks, caneheads;

cut punches for type-founders, engraved plates for the printing of banknotes, shop-cards, trade-cards, bookplates, billheads; cut wood blocks for similar purposes, and for newspaper advertisements; newspaper headings, illustrations for children's books, diagrams and maps; cut letter stamps for bookbinders - in fact, the whole range of work which an engraver's shop could, in his day, be called upon to do, Bewick and his partner and their apprentices did.

Most of this work, of course, was done to the order of tradesmen, printers, publishers, craftsmen, manufacturers, and local businessmen, and carried out during a working day lasting from seven in the morning to seven in the evening. Nor was Bewick's attention given simply to the designing and cutting of plates and blocks. He was running a craftsman's shop, and must receive or wait on customers, travel to make drawings, arrange for printing, order materials, keep accounts, write letters, train apprentices. All this he did with a steady unpretentious pride in his independence, confident in his skill, his intelligence, and his principles.

This hardly sounds like the description of one of the greatest artists of the Romantic era; yet this in fact is what he was. I do not, in saying so, describe him as a Romantic artist.

The student of English art expects to know, and in varying degrees admire, the paintings of Reynolds, Gainsborough, Wilson, Romney, Lawrence: he may yet know nothing at all of Bewick but the name. Yet Bewick was an artist of no less power than these, and of greater integrity than any. He was not in his life-time ever thought to compete with them as an artist, much as his work was admired. The fashionable patrons of art who were aware of his existence would think of him as "the ingenious Mr. Bewick"; but it would not occur to them to question whether he might not in fact be a greater artist than the first President of the Royal Academy.

Time will largely invert this relation. The work of many of the most successful artists appears more and more shallow as time goes by, for their function and justification, the work they were paid for was the creation in their patrons' minds of images of self-esteem. Bewick had no patrons: he had customers; and when one of them wished him to create such images by drawing his prize sheep and cattle as bigger and fatter than they were, Bewick refused the job. Such artists as he, as Blake, as Hogarth, as Stubbs, as Wright, will keep their significance and their power to communicate.

Having made clear my conviction that a high proportion of the thousands of engravings which Bewick produced have a special claim as works of art, I must now say that no study of Bewick would be worth anything that could do no more than repeat and elaborate the assertion, or that rested on the abstraction from the mass of a few favourite examples. The man is a whole man, and his achievement as an artist rests largely on the hand-and-eye skill of the craftsman, on his use of particular techniques; techniques which he developed in a revolutionary way from the work of many unknown precursors, but which did not spring to his hand by magic.

Behind this again lies his actual condition of life, the circumstance which impelled him to pursue his particular path. He was not simply an engraver; nor, on the other hand, was he, abstractly, an artist. He was a particular kind of artist; one whose work sprang from the printed book which gave him, on the one hand, bread and butter, and on the other, inspiration.

Nor was it the printed book, abstractly, that moved him to his achievements. It was the printed book in a given society, in which it had, as he plainly saw, certain functions, a certain potential, which he grasped eagerly. It was the printed book indeed that gave him his independence from patronage.

It would be easy, in looking at Bewick's world through his engravings to look at him with romantic hindsight and think of him as looking backward with us. Certainly his view of his world was coloured with regret for much that he saw die: the liberty of the poor peasant, the old houses, the green land. But he was actively concerned in the pursuit of knowledge and the support of new ideas both technical and social. His working life was devoted to developing the best techniques of cutting and printing illustrations and pictures which should spread enlightenment among his fellows.

It would be easy, too, to present Bewick as the untaught instinctive genius, the unlettered country boy with a flair for drawing beasts and birds and charming rustic scenes. This would be as truthful and valuable as the traditional tale of Giotto as the inspired shepherd boy, discovered by Cimabue creating masterpieces in chalk on the road side stones. In presenting Bewick as the antithesis of the conventionally successful artist of his day, in giving proper weight to his origin and background - an origin and a background which remained at all times sharply in his own consciousness - I do not mean to offer yet another Noble Savage, or to canvas sympathetically his struggles to raise himself above the disadvantages of circumstance.

He was an intelligent and an educated man, whose country childhood and craftsman's training gave him a far richer source of imagery than the tired puppet-pantheon of contemporary artistic convention could ever have done.

At the outset of his career, in the full consciousness of his abilities and of the readiness of friends in the capital to help him to success, he turned his back on London and never, until he was an old man within months of death, set foot there again, though many of his dear friends worked there and he did much work for London publishers.

He chose to go back to his native Tyneside, and there to produce, among thousands of now forgotten tradesmen's jobs, the most remarkable series of prints; and to train at the bench the most remarkable group of wood-engravers and draughtsmen; perfecting, in the process, a new art-form.

Before looking closer at his actual work, we should look at this world to which he returned so confidently.

Newcastle-on-Tyne

Newcastle is not just another provincial town. It has its own special place in English history. Its name is embedded in our language in a traditional phrase: to carry coals to Newcastle is to do something supremely useless and unnecessary. For the Tyne valley is our oldest coalfield, and from Newcastle, at the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall, coal has been shipped to the rest of England, to France and Holland, and even to the Baltic, for nearly a thousand years.

As long ago as the year 852, when Alfred the Great was king, coal went from the pits of Tyneside to the great abbey of Peterborough in the fen country. In the 14th century at least, ships from Newcastle traded as far as Windau in Latvia; and a series of royal charters, and monopolies gave the town and its burgesses privileges and protection almost unique, ensuring a high degree of prosperity until the end of the last century.

The Burgesses of Newcastle had complete control of the mining and transport of coal, without rivals until in the mid-eighteenth century the Lancashire and Yorkshire coalfields were developed. The town was the centre of the glass industry, from the time when James I gave Sir Robert Mansell the monopoly of production and import of glass: the need to develop pumps and engines for the deepening mines made Tyneside an important centre of engineering, and in 1714, when there were only four steam-engines in the country, two of them were in Newcastle. It was here, too, that the development of railways and the industrial production of alkalis began at the end of the eighteenth century.

When, in 1639, Charles I was marching against the Scottish Covenanters, he made Newcastle his headquarters, and set up the first printing press in any English provincial town; and in 1710, the Newcastle Gazette was the first English provincial newspaper, appearing three times a week.

With this concentration of industry and wealth, the town also had a high concentration of literate and indeed educated artisans and tradesmen, and continually attracted more from the whole of the north. It boasted, indeed, of being the "London of the North", and it resembled London in having its chief shopping centre on the old bridge across the river. Among these shops, which hung over the Tyne until a great storm swept the bridge away in 1771, there were, from the beginning of the 18th century, many bookshops. No other provincial town had so many booksellers, among whom were Bryson, Akenhead, Charnley, Linn (whose sign was the head of John Locke) Fleming, Harrison, Turnbull, Barber, Chalmers, Reed, and Gooding: this at a time when the whole population of Northumberland was about a quarter of a million, and that of Newcastle well under 20,000.

Though there was no theatre until 1781, plays were given in the assembly rooms of the large inns, or in the Moot Hall; and John Gay's Beggar's Opera was produced in Newcastle in 1728, while it was still enjoying its astonishing success in London.

A town so situated, with such diversity of activity, and such wealth, was naturally the centre of attraction for painters, musicians and other artists in the North. It was the natural place for the Beilby family, all highly skilled and well-educated, to settle. Children of a Durham silversmith, their chief business was in engraving and glass-enamelling: Newcastle was the chief centre for silversmithing in the North, and had its own Assay office.

To Ralph Beilby, on the 1st of October 1767, Thomas Bewick was apprenticed for seven years.

Early Days

Thomas Bewick was born on the tenth of August, 1753, eldest son of John Bewick, who farmed eight acres of land about his house of Cherryburn on the south bank of the Tyne, twelve miles or so above Newcastle. In addition to farming, he worked, with a few men, a small colliery at nearby Mickley Bank. His wife Jane was the daughter of a Cumberland schoolmaster and farmer (Wilson of Ainstable), and knew enough Latin to be able not only to keep house for the Rector of Ovingham (as she did before her marriage) but to help him in the village school.

This background of solid yeoman independence, of moderate comfort won by constant hard work, of country skills and earnest education, coloured the whole of Bewick's life and outlook. Of the countryside itself, the wooded valley of the Tyne and the high moors stretching up to Scotland, no later circumstance ever impaired the vivid images in Bewick's mind.

In the year of Bewick's birth, there was founded in London the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Commerce and Manufactures. Two years later, there began the Seven Years' War: the first modern war: the first, that is to say, fought on an intercontinental scale between nations, not dynasties, and resting plainly upon commercial causes. The enhanced power of England after that war, the vast expansion of her colonies and trading interests, and the development of her manufactures, hastened the profound changes hitherto hidden in agricultural and craft improvements, and set in motion the Industrial Revolution. During Bewick's lifetime, the character of England was radically changed; and he was at all times conscious of the process, and of his part in it.

In his boyhood, the tattered and crippled soldiers and sailors from the recent war tramped from town to town, begging, seeking work and homes. In his young manhood, the common lands of the village on which the poor labourers could pasture a cow, a few sheep, a few geese, were gathered by the enclosure acts into large farms and estates, and the peasants (whom he describes so lovingly in his Memoir) emigrated, were turned into casual workers in the towns, or became paupers. -

Nevertheless, in the process of this transformation, Newcastle, like Manchester, Birmingham, and Liverpool, prospered, and Bewick never lacked for work.

Very early, he showed his remarkable talent for drawing, and though as the eldest son it would have been his place to take over the farm, his parents, helped by the legacy from his grandmother of £20 for an apprentice fee, began to look for a trade in which he could exploit his skill.

One fine Sunday in 1767, William and Ralph Beilby rode out to Bywell to visit a friend, who was so full of young Bewick's praises that the two brothers, who were looking for an apprentice, rode on to Cherryburn to see the boy. The outcome of this introduction was that, on the 1st of October, Thomas Bewick was apprenticed to Ralph Beilby, and went to live with the Beilby family in Newcastle. He could hardly have been more fortunate in his master.

The Beilbys were not only remarkably skilled and versatile craftsmen: they were well-read, and had musical and scientific interests. Children of a Durham silversmith, they had learned engraving, enamelling, glass-painting, and seal and die-cutting. The eldest brother, Richard, had died some years before: but William, Ralph, Thomas, and their no less skilled sister Mary, all worked together. "The industry, ingenuity, and united energies of this family," says Bewick in the Memoir "must soon have enabled them to soar above every obstacle."

The pages of the Memoir which describe his life as Ralph's apprentice give a vivid picture of the eighteenth century craftsman's shop, and after describing how Ralph Beilby "undertook everything", Bewick goes on to say "I think he was the best master in the world for teaching boys, for he obliged them to put their hands to every variety of work." This included engraving and die-cutting, the polishing of copper plates, the sharpening and indeed the making of tools, at which Beilby was very ingenious; and; sometimes, the cutting of woodblocks for the local press or for tradesmen's billheads.

It was Beilby's distaste for the last type of work that made him turn it all over to Bewick, who took to it very readily, in the very first days of his apprenticeship. All the work was new and interesting to him, and he became particularly interested in this; so much so, that it was all left to him; and he did it with such spirit that more and more wood cuts began to be asked for, not only by shopkeepers and innkeepers, but by the printers and booksellers.

Bewick has often been credited with the invention of wood engraving, both in the sense of first using the graver on the end-grain of boxwood, and in the sense of first using the "white-line" technique. He invented neither, nor ever claimed to have done so. What he did was to develop a crude craft which had been in use for perhaps forty years before he ever picked up a graver, to transform it from a reproductive to a creative medium, and to develop it to levels never before dreamed of.

There is ample evidence that true wood-engraving had been practised for many years before Bewick began work, though he himself, like many others, does not in writing always make clear the essential distinction between wood-engraving, done with the graver on end-grain box-wood, and wood-cutting, done in plank-grain beech, pear, or cherry-wood, with knife and gouge; as by the Formenschneider of Duerer's day - a practice dating back to the 14th century and continuing into the late eighteenth; and even, for wallpaper and cotton-printing, into our own time.

English printing of the 17th century had been poor though plentiful. No masterpiece of literature ever had a worse dress than Paradise Lost. The last decade of the century saw the first developments of native printing and type-founding; which later flowered in the work of Baskerville, Caslon, and Bell. This was largely due to the energy of the bookseller Jacob Tonson, chief promoter of the Kit-Cat Club, most powerful of the Whig pressure groups. He was also the key figure in publishing, and his demands raised printing and bookbinding standards beyond recognition. In exploiting the expanding market for books, he drew at first on French, and yet more on Dutch type-founders, engravers, and papermakers; but before the century closed he had stimulated the native; craftsmen to the production of well-printed, well-bound and finely decorated books. There can be no doubt that a part of this stimulus was also provided by the influx of first-rate French craftsmen, of Protestant faith, who fled to escape religious persecution..

In the work of these craftsmen who rose to Tonson's challenge, we may look for the origins of Bewick's art.

Chief and first of them was Elisha Kirkall, a native of Sheffield, very active in the 1720s and 1730s, whose techniques, both in intaglio and relief engraving, derived from Callot and Claude Mellan, anticipated Bewick's in their purity. Some of the cuts in the Gentleman's Magazine (run by the enterprising Edmund Cave, who was a partner in a new silk mill in Derbyshire) as early as 1754, are unquestionable wood-engravings, signed W.Pennock: while twenty years earlier; the London Magazine had had a heading, almost certainly a wood-engraving, signed T.Davies. Two other craftsmen whose work can be identified in the: 60s and 70s are T.Gilbert and T.Lister - the latter working in Oxford.

Nearly all their work is cut in strict whiteline, with the graver. Their prints are not facsimiles of line drawings, but tonal renderings of originals probably carried out in pen- or pencil-and-wash. From Kirkall on, the artists who developed the medium understood that, the use of black lines and of cross-hatching is alien to its essence. The system adopted by Kirkall, in the 20s, was that of building up tones by parallel cuts of the graver: a system originally evolved by the French 17th century etchers of the school of Callot.

. Thus., by the time Bewick went to London, in 1776, there was already a well-established practice of wood-engraving, and workshops which supplied the trade with true wood-engravings as well as copper-plates and wood cuts. It remained for Bewick to develop the hardly-suspected range of the new medium.

Bewick's Working Life

The first job Bewick was set to, on starting work with the Beilbys, was the cutting, on wood, of the diagrams for a book on Mensuration by Charles Hutton, son of a colliery labourer, who was one of the leading mathematicians of the day. In the 1760s, he kept a small school in Newcastle, was friendly with the Beilbys, and, being a writing-master as well as mathematician, used to design for them the lettered portion of bill-heads, banknotes and other cooper-plate work.

Hutton, writing in 1822, at a date when, had there been any doubt as to facts, Bewick could have corrected him - said that it was he who had introduced Beilby - and therefore Bewick - to the use of boxwood and graver, and had got the first boxwood blocks for the illustrations to his book himself, from London. But Bewick, to whom this work was passed by his master, was not long in making himself a special graver with a double point, to cut the black lines at a single stroke.

The mathematical diagrams would not attract any attention; but a pictorial cut done for a bar-bill for the George and Dragon Inn at Penrith did, and it was this which brought more orders for similar work. It also caught the eye of one of the town's best established printers, Thomas Saint. Saint printed and published many children's books, and he saw how much they could be enhanced by this boy's work. One of the first such books with cuts by Bewick was Saint's New Lottery Book of Birds and Beasts for Children to learn their Letters by as soon as They can speak which appeared in 1771. More books of the same kind, often with texts by Oliver Goldsmith, were illustrated by Bewick during and just after his apprenticeship: they include A New-invented Hornbook; The Child's Tutor (1772); Moral Instructions (1772); "Youth's Instructive Storyteller" (1774); Select Fables (Dodsley's: 1776); Gay's Fables (1779), and many other story- and spelling-books.

This work exactly suited Bewick's temperament and outlook, and though in many ways his drawing was still unsure or crude, he was, by the time his apprenticeship ended, producing some very fine work indeed.

"Some of the fable cuts were so well thought of by my master", says the Memoir, "that he, in my name, sent impressions of a few of them to be laid before the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, etc., and I obtained a premium. This I received shortly after I was out of my apprenticeship, and it was left to my choice whether I would have it in a gold medal or money (seven guineas). I preferred the latter, and I never in my life felt greater pleasure than in presenting it to my mother."

Two other engravers (both older than he) were awarded premiums at the same time (February 1775) - William Coleman and Thomas Hodgson. The latter was a Newcastle printer who had been working in London for some time, and, like Bewick, had a passionate enthusiasm for wood engraving.

Bewick, after working for a while as a journeyman with Beilby, returned to his family home at Cherryburn, where he spent eighteen months of great happiness, working on wood engravings for Saint, Angus, and other printers; rambling the countryside, fishing, following the hounds, going about the business of the colliery with his father. But in June 1776, with a few spare clothes, and three guineas stitched into his waistband, he set off to walk through Scotland.

Walking to Haydon Bridge, he spent two days with his friend, Thomas Spence, who was now teaching in the school there; went on to visit his mother's relations in Cumberland, and so through Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dumbarton (where he was disappointed at not being allowed to look over the new cotton print works) up into the Highlands, where the kindness of the poor shepherds and farmers moved him deeply; to Falkirk, visiting the Carron Ironworks, then the most modern in Europe, and so by sea to Newcastle, where he arrived on August 12 1776, having tramped about five hundred miles, still with some shillings in his pocket.

But he had not brought the Cherryburn idyll to an end simply to walk through Scotland. The tour had been the prelude to settling down to work for good. First, however, he wanted some different experience of his trade. He stayed in Newcastle long enough to earn his passage money to London, and then, after three weeks in a collier brig, landed in the capital on October 1st 1776.

He had friends and acquaintance already there, for the coal trade had established a longstanding Newcastle community in London. His school friends Christopher and Philip Gregson were already working there, and through them he found lodgings. Thomas Hodgson had work waiting for him, and through Robert Pollard, a fellow engraver, he was introduced to Isaac Taylor, son of a Worcester silversmith, and the leading illustrator and book decorator of the day. From Hodgson and Taylor; from Carnan and Newbery, who were the chief publishers of the sort of books he had so often illustrated for Saint, he got, as he says in the Memoir, plenty of work, and earned good money. But he did not like London's crowded streets and contrasts of extreme wealth with extreme poverty, and determined to return home.

This cost him the friendship of Taylor, who saw what success this young man could command, and was eager to help him. But Bewick was as obstinate as clever, and in June 1777 he was back in Newcastle with the promise from Hodgson of as much work as would keep him busy for two years. He fitted up a workshop in his old lodgings and settled down happily.

But in addition to the wood engravings for Hodgson, he found that Saint and Angus had work to offer again; what was more, some of the local silversmiths brought him engraving jobs. This quickly produced the offer of partnership from Ralph Beilby. It had been Bewick's plan to work alone; but he joined Beilby, whose two brothers had now left to work elsewhere as drawing masters. Ralph Beilby had taken a new apprentice. It happened that John, Bewick's younger brother, had something of his talent; and he also joined Beilby and Bewick as an apprentice.

The shop prospered, and never lacked work. Copper-plate and silver engraving fell mostly to Beilby; Bewick thought him the best ornamental engraver in the country. He continued to concentrate on wood engraving.

During the next ten years, a scheme gradually took shape in his mind, in which his partner joined willingly. This was the production of a book on animals.

It was partly 'Bewick's love of animals and intimate knowledge of the countryside that had made his illustrations so successful. Apart from the children's spelling books, he had cut several sets of illustrations to fables. The fabulists' convention, in which animals are endowed with human characteristics or made symbolic of human passions, had given his imagination the most fortunate of opportunities.

Not only this: but there was a, continual demand for books on natural history. The increasing scientific interest of the eighteenth century Englishman in agriculture, above all in stockbreeding; the many voyages of exploration, and the growing trade with remote countries, all promoted the demand. One of the most popular and often reprinted books of Bewick's youth was the Three Hundred Animals, of whose crude illustrations he had, even as a boy, thought very poorly. Now began, in 1785, the production of the Natural History of Quadrupeds, for which Bewick provided the illustrations, and Beilby the text. But though this was a considerable project, involving Bewick in cutting blocks of two hundred animals, apart from many tail-pieces, and Beilby in writing a rather larger number of descriptions, the work had to be done in the evenings; nothing must interrupt the routine work of their shop and office. So it went on slowly, and it was not until 1790 that the book appeared.

It was immediately popular, and went, quickly through several editions. Characteristically, as each was published, Bewick added new cuts, so that no two editions are alike.

Writing about his work in 1819, Bewick said: "I date the Quadrupeds to be my commencement of Wood Engraving worthy of attention." The book was critically important to him, as being the first completely independent venture, the realisation of his own conception not only in the detail of individual cuts, in which he had always been able to exercise his imagination, but as a complete project; and there is no doubt that its success encouraged him and his partner to go on with the scheme, which had matured while the Quadrupeds was in progress, for a book on British Birds.

The first volume of this appeared in 1797 - the Land Birds, having cuts of 117 birds, and 91 tail-pieces. The second volume was nearly another seven years in preparation, appearing in 1804, with 101 pictures of birds and 136 tail-pieces; and this book continues to be thought of by most people as containing the best, the raciest, the most varied and the most inventive of his work. It is significant that as these three volumes were produced, the proportion of tail-pieces to actual representations of animal or bird increased. Bewick's aim had been to produce books whose faithful pictures and accurate descriptions should be such as to supersede the many indifferent volumes of Natural History on the market, and in the pursuit of this fundamentally utilitarian aim he bought, borrowed and read every authoritative book on birds or beasts he could hear of. Friends collected information and specimens for him: in a letter to his brother John in January 1788, he thanks him for a drawing of a lion (probably done in the Tower of London menageria) and looks forward to the impending visit to Newcastle of a large menagerie which will enable him to draw from life some animals which he must otherwise have taken

from Buffon or some other illustrated (but not always reliable) book. He travelled about to make drawings, and came into touch with naturalists like Pennant and Tunstall - for whom, as a by-product of the work of the Quadrupeds. he made his largest and most ambitious engraving, the Chillingham Bull. With the Birds, since the scheme was confined to British birds, he could consistently work from actual specimens; but with many he was of course minutely familiar, as to appearance and habit.

On the Birds, too, he was able to work during shop hours, since it was clear that the whole project was commercially successful; and so to some extent the work could be shared by the apprentices; and though the creative responsibility is wholly Bewick's, the physical labour of production was spread in this way, and this partly accounts for the greater number of tail-pieces, the designing and cutting of which was his greatest pleasure. In them, the whole range of observation, beauty, pathos, irony and humour is displayed with an equal variety of styles and techniques.

Other notable works of the first years of the new century were sets of cuts for Thomson's The Seasons, one of the best loved and most significant books of the 18th century, a lifelong favourite of Bewick's; for Burns' Poems - and the affinities between Burns and Bewick are deep indeed; the Poems of Goldsmith and Parnell. a beautifully produced volume from the Shakespeare Press, managed by William Bulmer, who as a printer's apprentice in the 1770s had proved Bewick's earliest cuts: cuts to Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress: all these, of course, among a host of minor work for printers up and down the country, to whom now it was a matter of prestige to have at least one "cut by Bewick" in their books.

There remained one ambition to fulfil. Croxall's Aesop had always been a favourite book, and he had probably learned as much from cutting half a dozen variations on the traditional illustrations as from any other source; but he had for a long time wished to produce an Aesop which should have the best possible cuts. In 1812, as he recovered from a nearly-fatal illness, he began to work on the project, and finally completed it in 1818. He did not cut most of the illustrations himself, but drew them in pencil on the blocks, to be engraved by his apprentices, Temple and Harvey, and his son Robert, who became his partner in the same year. The Aesop cuts have often been criticised as too elaborate and often too finely cut, and it is likely that had Bewick himself cut them this might be less apparent. He could elaborate directly with the graver a design of his own, making last minute departures and not, like his assistants, feel bound to observe faithfully, exactly what the pencil had already given. These cuts are in fact many of them very fine; but over them there hangs a faint shadow of the decay that overtook wood engraving within twenty years - the descent into mere facsimile.

For the last few years of his life, Bewick though he went to his shop every day, spent less time at the bench, and left the business partly in his son's hands, who, though a timid engraver and draughtsman, overshadowed by his father's strong personality and achievement, was intelligent and capable. In 1823 Bewick took a trip to Edinburgh, there to meet again many old friends, and to visit, among others, Ballantyne the printer, who had recently installed a lithographic press. Bewick was interested in this, and Ballantyne very anxious that he should experiment. So, on the morning before he returned to Newcastle, the old man made his only lithograph - a lively drawing, done with the lightest of touches, of a farmer trotting to market.

Many artists and naturalists sought him out, and one of these was Audubon, whose drawings of American birds Bewick admired. Audubon visited him in 1827, and, for the short time that Bewick still had to live, they were warm friends.

In the summer of 1828, Bewick, with his two daughters, paid a second visit to London, where his old and now wealthy friend Bulmer was anxious to show him the newly opened Menagerie at Regent's Park, and had arranged a dinner in his honour to which the leading engravers were to come. But Bewick was too old and unwell, and three months later, on November 8th 1828, he died.

But just a week before his death, he had taken to his printer a large block on which he had been working with great pains for some weeks. The block was proved, to Bewick's satisfaction. It was intended as the key block of a set, the rest of which would have been overprinted. Bewick had for years been interested in the increased depth and subtlety to be obtained by using two or three blocks, much as had been done in the chiaroscuro prints of the 17th and early 18th centuries, but with the additional range provided by the techniques of true engraving.

Unfinished as the print is, in terms of this intention, it is nevertheless a profound masterpiece. Its theme is one which recurs throughout Bewick's whole career.

He had projected a definitive print of it for many years, and had long since - in 1785) the year of his father's death - written a descriptive text to accompany it.

When he left Cherryburn to be apprenticed to Ralph Beilby (his partnership with whom had ended in 1797) he had in his pocket a little drawing of an old horse of his father's which had recently died from neglect after being lent to a neighbour less careful of animals than the Bewick family. Bewick made one of his first etchings from this drawing, and this gaunt, blind, weary creature appears in variation after variation, from book to book, his life-long symbol of suffering, Waiting for Death.

The Bewick workshop continued for many years in Robert's capable but uncreative hands; but it was now simply another craftsman's shop.

F r i e n d s a n d P o l i t i c s

Newcastle in the 18th Century was not only important for its coal industry, but as a principal centre for the whole Border country, and a stage on the journey to and from Scotland. Many of the migrants attracted to, or pausing in Newcastle, came from Carlisle, Penrith, Kendal, or Berwick; but since the Act of Union, many more Were Scots. The disturbance of the Scottish peasantry, due in part to the two Jacobite revolts and in part to the large-scale enclosures practised by the gentry and nobility, on which Bewick comments bitterly in his Memoir, sent many of them south to England.

Early in the century, one of the leading booksellers in Newcastle was the Scot Martin Bryson, to whom Alan Ramsay (The Gentle Shepherd) wrote from Edinburgh addressing his letter:

To Martin Bryson on Tyne Brigg -
An upright, downright, honest Whig.

Ramsay's son was Bryson's apprentice, and a later apprentice in the same shop was William Charnley of Penrith; who, in 1750, became Bryson's partner.

Bewick did much work for Charnley, whose son and successor was his close friend. The Charnleys, Bryson, Slack, and others of the bookselling fraternity, were Dissenters - Presbyterian, Baptist, Quaker or Unitarian; libertarian supporters of the American and French Revolutions, rationalist and republican in much of their thought.

The steady influx of skilled tradesmen and artisans, with this sort of background, was an important factor, in stimulating the intellectual and political life of Newcastle, which otherwise, secure in its monopolies, might well have sunk into lethargic complacency.

Among these men, both young journeymen and apprentices like himself, or older tradesmen, Bewick found friends and continued his education.' Among ' them Gilbert Gray is worth especial mention. Bewick wrote at length and with affection of Gray in the Memoir, and clearly he was an important formative influence.

A native of Aberdeen, educated at the Marischal College, he had been intended for the Church, but early abandoned the faith, though not the ethic, in which he had been brought up. "Of a truth, Thomas," he said to Bewick, "I did not like their ways." Moving to Edinburgh, he became shopman to Alan Ramsay, and learned to bind books. He left Ramsay to work for Bryson in Newcastle, and when Bewick, as an apprentice, came to know him, he was working as a bookbinder. Then in his mid-sixties, he lived frugally, saving all His money either to help down-and-out fellow artisans, or to print his own tracts and fables, which he sold in the market. His workshop became a sort of club which attracted a group of serious youngsters like Bewick. To them he lent his own books, or gave permission to read others in his hands' for binding.

Similar, privileges were granted Bewick by Gray's son William, also a . bookbinder in a good way of trade (later he worked in London where he continued his friendship). Another son, George, became a close friend of the Bewick family; an accomplished painter, chemist, and geologist, he travelled, in the last capacity, into Poland and all over North America.

In the Gray's workshops, as well as in the daily course of his work, Bewick also met William Bulmer, apprenticed to the printer John Thompson. Master and boy were extremely interested in the developing technique of wood-engraving, and the blocks which Bewick engraved for the booksellers and other tradesmen in the town were proved by Bulmer, in later life wealthy and famous as the proprietor of the Shakespeare Printing Office. Here too Bewick met Robert Pollard, a life-long friend who, at first apprenticed as a silversmith, became so interested in engraving that on his master's retirement he went to London and bound himself to Isaac Taylor. It was to Pollard, Bulmer, and Thomas Hodgson that Bewick owed the ready flow of work he found in the capital.

But there were others whom he met in Gray's workshop whose acquaintance was no less important. Of these, one of the most significant, and one of the dearest to Bewick to the end of his days, was Thomas Spence.

"In my frequent visits to the workshops of Gilbert Gray and to that of his son William," says Bewick (Memoir, 1862, p.71), "I first fell in with , Thomas Spence. He was one of the warmest philanthropists in the world. The happiness of mankind seemed with him to absorb every other consideration. He was of a cheerful disposition, warm in his attachment to his friends, and in his patriotism to his country....For the purpose chiefly of making converts to his opinion 'That property in land is everyone's right', he got a number of young men together, and formed into a debating society, which was held in the evenings in his schoolroom, in the Broad Garth, Newcastle."

Spence was born in Newcastle on June 1st 1750, son of an Aberdonian net - and shoemaker who had been about ten years in the town, and was a leading member of the Sandemanian church, or rather community, there. Thomas started in life as a commercial clerk, but became a schoolmaster.

Though on the question of the ownership and control of land Bewick never saw wholly eye to eye with Spence, it is clear that the latter's general philosophical and political ideas influenced him a great deal. When, after the death of Bewick's younger daughter Isabella, the last of his goods were sold (1884) a group of Spence's books and pamphlets was among them. It included two copies of The Teacher of Common Sense (Newcastle 1779); The Restoration of Society (1801); Gray's Elegy - printed in Spence's Reformed Alphabet - The End of Oppression; The Meridian Sun of Liberty (1796); The Rights of Swine (1796); The Constitution of a Perfect Commonwealth (1798); The Trial of Spence before Lord Kenyon (1801) and Humourous Songs. With these was a collection of Spence's tokens.

Spence, says Bewick, "was afterwards famous in London as the head of the Spenceans. He was sent to Dorchester (should be Shrewsbury) gaol for (I believe) some of his publications, promulgating his doctrines. He taught a school at the Broad Garth, Newcastle; afterwards, writing and arithmetic in the great school at Haydon Bridge: and lastly, he was master of St. Ann's public school, Sandgate, Newcastle... I cut the steel punches for Spence's types, and my master struck them on the matrices for casting his newly invented letters of the alphabet, for his 'Spelling and Pronouncing Dictionary'. (This would be in 1774-5). He published in London many curious books in his peculiar way of spelling. Most of them, I believe, on his favourite subject of property in land being everyone's right. However mistaken he might be in his notions on this subject, I am clearly of the opinion that his intentions were both sincere and honest."

From the debating society in Spence's schoolroom, there- developed, in 1775, the first Philosophical Society (not to be confused with the later Lit. & Phil.) of Newcastle. It had about twenty members, including Spence, Bewick, and the Rev. James Murray, satirist and Hebrew scholar, for whose book "The Theban Harp" Bewick engraved a copper-plate.

This society held its first meeting on March 15th: Spence's membership was ended by expulsion in November. The Newcastle Chronicle (Nov. 25) announced that this was on account of his breach of a rule against the publication of any of the lectures. The one which Spence had published was, not surprisingly, on "Property in Land Everyone's Right", given on November 8th. On that occasion he had expected Bewick's support in debate. It was not forthcoming, and they quarrelled - but only for the moment. The expulsion had not been unanimous: Murray had protested against it.

This society had only a short life - it probably did not long survive the expulsion of its founder. But it had been brought into being with other Societies by the impending General Election of October 1774, and by the deeply disturbing reactions to the imminent American Revolution.

First was the Constitutional Club - whose Charter called for triennial parliaments, no placemen, more equal representation, and the recognition of Wilkes as member for Middlesex. The second was the Independent Club, with similar aims, whose members were all Freemen and electors of the town. The third was the Society of Patriots. To this belonged some of Bewick's friends, but not, I think, Bewick himself.

It is here that a most interesting and -unexpected association is uncovered. From 1770 to 1773, Jean Paul Marat lived in Newcastle, practising as a doctor and as a veterinary surgeon. There can be no doubt that he was closely connected with the members of these societies. In the Public Advertiser of May 3rd, 1774, appeared an advertisement of "an address to the electors of Great Britain" under the title of "The Chains of Slavery". With no author's name given, it was written as by an Englishman; but in fact Marat was the author.

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At the end of the same month, the Newcastle Chronicle (published by Thomas Slack) had a paragraph announcing: "Yesterday (May 27th) the Company of Bricklayers, the Company of Goldsmiths, and the Lumber Troop in this town, received each, by the fly, two large quarto volumes, from an unknown person in London, entitled 'The Chains of Slavery'...The work is spirited, and appears through the whole a masterly execution."

The election which the book was meant to influence took place in October, and the progressive candidates (Arctic explorer Captain Phipps, later Lord Mulgrave, and Thomas Delaval, both of whom had been made Honorary Bricklayers) were defeated by Blackett and Ridley, the two chief magnates of the area.

A year later, this gratuitous distribution was followed by a more normal publication, and the Chronicle of October 21st 1775 announced - "Next week will be published, price 10s.6d., and sold by the booksellers in Newcastle, THE CHAINS OF SLAVERY, written by Dr. Mariot." A week later a full advertisement appeared, and Marat's name was given correctly - with his degree of MD. The Newcastle booksellers handling the book were Slack, Charnley and Humble.

In between these two appearances of his book, Marat returned to England, principally to visit the patriotic clubs of the North. He stayed three weeks in Carlisle, Penrith, and Newcastle, and three of the clubs (probably in those towns) presented him with letters of admission in a golden box. That of Newcastle, says Marat's own account, published a new edition of his work, and was one of those which made him a member. This would be the 1775 edition, and evidently Slack, Charnley and Humble were the active agents in the publication. It seems likely that they were also members of one or other of the clubs, for organising which, according to Lonsdale's "Worthies of Cumberland", Marat was partly, if not wholly, responsible.

Whether Bewick himself met Marat we are not likely now to know; but it is clear that many of his immediate seniors and associates did; and the engraver's later comments on the French and American Revolutions, and on social and political institutions generally, show that he had deeply absorbed the ideas Marat propagated.

"During the eventful period of the French Revolution," he says in the Memoir, and the wide-spreading war which followed in consequence of it, and in which our government became deeply engaged, extending from 1793 to 1814 - a time of blood and slaughter - I frequently, by way of unbending the mind after the labours of the day, spent my evenings in the company of a set of staunch advocates for the liberties of mankind, who discussed the passing events mostly with the cool, sensible and deliberate attention which the importance of the subject required...The causes of this Revolution, and the horrible war which ended it, will form a most interesting subject for the head and pen of some future historian of a bold and enlightened mind. From the best consideration I have been able to give to the question, I cannot help viewing it in this way. In the year 1789, the French Revolution broke out, first of all from the income of the government not being sufficient to defray its expenditure, or, in other words, from its finances having become deranged for want of money, which the

"people, having "been taxed to the uttermost and "brought down to poverty, could no longer supply...By exaction, cruelty, and tyranny, the people had long been borne down to the lowest pitch of degradation. They were considered, not as rational human beings, equal in mind and intellect to their oppressors, but as beings made for the purpose only of continually labouring to support them in all their real and imaginary wants....

"This kind of treatment, so long shown- to the people of France, could be endured no longer. They indeed seemed heartily disposed to settle a rational and just government quietly themselves; but this did not suit the views of the surrounding despots, to whom the very word liberty was offensive; and it was determined, at once, that this attempt of the people to resume their rights should be instantly overwhelmed...The French people could not bear their condition any longer. They were driven to madness, and instantly retaliated upon their oppressors, who, they conceived, meant that they and their children's children should continue to be doomed for ages to come, (they) rose as one man, and with unconquerable energy and bravery, like a whirlwind, swept the advocates and the armies of despotism from off the face of the earth. Thus roused, this confederacy of Legitimates, finding or fearing that they might be baffled in their attempts, looked to England for support; and grieved indeed were the advocates of rational liberty, to find that these enemies of freedom had not looked in vain; for the government of this free country and free people - long veering, indeed, from the line of rectitude - had readily found pretexts for entering into a war in support of despotism; and war was begun, in the year 1793) against the Republican- government of France.

"It had long been the settled opinion of many profound politicians, that corruption had spread, and was spreading, its baneful influence among the members of the government of this Kingdom; and that the majority cared nothing about maintaining the constitution in its purity, which to them was become like an old song. In this state of things, with Mr. Pitt at their head, and the resources of the British Isles in their hands, it was calculated upon as a certainty that his weight, added to the already powerful confederacy, would soon put a stop to the march of intellect, and if found necessary, put an extinguisher upon the rights of man. Mr. Pitt...became the powerful advocate of an opposite and perverted order of things. Thus situated, nothing could to a certainty serve his purpose so well as corruption; and the House of Commons had long been growing into a state befitting to his purpose; for its members had, in a great degree, ceased to be the representatives of the people, and he had only now to begin an invigorated, new, or more extended system of place and patronage, to have the majority at his nod; and, in aid of this, to add an extension, of the peerage.

"Arbitrary laws were enacted, gagging bills were passed, and a system of espionage spread over the kingdom to keep the people down, many of whom seemed to have forgotten the exertions of their forefathers, whose blood had been spilt to purchase a better order of things. I felt particularly hurt at the apathy of the country gentlemen in these (politically considered) worst of times. Their faculties seemed benumbed; but, indeed, most of them fell into the vortex of corruption themselves...Although the friends of liberty and the constitution were both numerous and intrepid, yet, for want of what they termed respectable heads, they were widely spread and divided, and their efforts proved in vain.

"It was on (the sea) that the tide of affairs was first turned in favour of Britain, who now, by the valour of her seamen, reigned complete 'mistress of the deep', and the commerce of the world seemed to be poured into her lap.

"Estates rose in value to an extraordinary height, and the price of grain, etc., still more so. The shipping interest wallowed in riches; the gentry whirled about in aristocratic pomposity; they forgot what their demeanour and good, kind behaviour used to be to those in inferior stations in life; and seemed far too often to look upon them like dirt. The character of the richer class of farmers was also changed....When these upstart gentlemen had left the market, they were ready to ride over all they met or overtook on the way; but this was as nothing compared to the pride and folly which took possession of their empty or fume-charged heads, when they got dressed in scarlet. They were then fitted for any purpose, and were called 'yeoman cavalry'. When peace came, it brought with it a sudden fall in the price of corn; but the taxes continuing the same to them, and rents still keeping high, they, with a few exceptions, suddenly experienced a woeful change. I cannot say, after seeing so much of their folly, that I was sorry for them; for they mostly deserved this reverse of fortune. Not so with the industrious labourer. His privations were great, and he was undeservedly doomed to suffer for want of employment, and often to waste away and die of hunger and want."

Though Bewick went little to any sort of entertainment, he was, throughout his adult life, a member of some sort of club or society. "About the year 1790", he writes, "I became a member of Swarley's Club, held in the evenings at the Black Boy Inn....This was the most rational society or meeting I ever knew....No regular debates were allowed on any subject but such as might occasionally arise out of the passing conversation...". Bewick must have meant to write 1780, not 1790: for his membership card - engraved by Ralph Beilby, and bearing the motto "Honi soit qui mal y pense", and the title "The Newcastle House of Lords" - was issued on October 17 1778.

3e seldom missed at least a weekly visit to the club (which took its name from Richard Swarley, the landlord) though pressure of work on the Birds kept him away at times, and early in 1792 he was writing of being "but seldome at Swarley's or in public company - I cannot rise clear-headed in the morning when I spend my evenings out of the company of my wife and bairns."

He was also a member of another club - the Brotherly Society, which met at Whitfield's Golden Lion Inn. As he himself engraved the floral border for the membership card, and his admission number (December 18 1782) was 32, he was presumably a member from its inception; but of this club he has nothing to say. In February, 1793, the Newcastle Literary and Philosophical Society was founded, promoted chiefly by his friend the Rev. William Turner, a Unitarian minister who was its first Secretary. Though friendly with many of its members, Bewick did not join this club.

His account of Swarley's Club closes thus: "This happy society was at length broken up, at a time when war on behalf of despotism was raging, and the spy system was set afloat. Some spies, and others of the same stamp, contrived to get themselves introduced, and to broach political questions, for the purpose of exciting debates and feeling the pulse of the members, who before had very seldom touched upon subjects of that kind."

This must have been in the mid-nineties. On October 4th 1794, Bewick wrote to a now unidentified correspondent (?George Gray?): "I received yours of the 17th ult. , and thank you for the opinion you have given me of America. Before I get the Birds done, I have no doubt of matters being brought to such a crisis as will enable me to see clearly what course to steer. My fears are not at what you think will happen in America: it is my own much-loved country that I fear will be involved in the anarchy you speak of; for I think there is not virtue enough left in the country gentlemen to prevent it."

"I cannot hope for anything good from the violent on either side; that can only be expected from (I hope) the great majority of moderate men stepping manfully-forward to check the despotism of one party and the licentiousness of the other. A reform of abuses, in my opinion, is wanted, and I wish th?t it could be done with justice and moderation; but it is because I do not hope or expect that it will take place in the way I wish it that makes me bend my mind towards America." This letter is quoted in the appendix to the Memoir, and in two or three places in the body of the book, Bewick makes clear his admiration for the American Revolution, the success of the colonials in setting up their republic, and his view that in it lay the hope of mankind.

Though Swarley's Club was dispersed by the reaction of the war years, in the last decade of his life (when the reaction was hardly less black) Bewick spent his evenings at yet another club. Robinson (Thomas Bewick: 1887) describes this. "Mr. Robert Wilson, merchant tailor, now in his 89th year, who, while I was an apprentice, lived in Richmond Court, Pilgrim Street, told me that he well remembered going down in an evening when the business of the day was over, to the Blue Bell Inn, at the Head of the Side, then kept by William Cant, an admirable performer on the Northumbrian small pipes. Here Mr. Bewick was accustomed to repair to regale himself with a pint of good porter. His dog Cheviot invariably accompanied him, and lay down at his feet on entering the room. Bewick was the acknowledged chief and president of a harmless gathering of substantial Newcastle tradesmen who met here to discuss the politics of the day." Dovaston also draws the same picture. Calling on Bewick in 1823, he was directed to the Blue Bell, where he "found him seated in an elbow chair by the fire, his dog at his feet."

Clearly Bewick was not only a Radical, but a convinced one, and a leader of progressive thought in his home town. Like Cobbett, of whose Political Register he was a faithful reader, he had a deep vein of nostalgia for a peasant past; he was suspicious, too, of the idea of universal suffrage (though he pays warm tribute to Major Cartwright). Yet he would have rejoiced at the Reform Bill, which was passed four years after his death; and no less over the Catholic Emancipation. He himself, though a regular attender at St. John's church, was essentially a Deist; and an advocate of complete religious tolerance.

"Were our own government", he says (Memoir, 282), "inclined to make this improvement in religion and politics, they would assuredly see the happiest results from it; it would soon be found that there would then be no need to keep Ireland in subjection, like a conquered country, by an expensive military force. The Irish, naturally acute, lively, generous and brave, would soon feel themselves, under our excellent constitution, as happy and loyal a people as any in the world, and as much attached to their country, which, for its healthy climate and fertile soil, may match with any other on this globe ...Ireland ought instantly to be put on a par, in every respect, with their fellow subjects of the British Isles. To withhold Catholic Emancipation from Ireland appears to me invidious and unjust; and if emancipated, it would be found at no very distant period that they would, under the forgoing tuition, individually become enlightened, think for themselves, adopt a rational religious belief, and throw off the bigotry and superstition taught them with such sedulous care from their infancy, and by which they have so long been led blindfold."

Bewick's love and sympathy for the Scots had its origin in the friendship with the Grays. His "ardent wish for the perfect happiness" of Ireland also had its origin in a personal acquaintance. One of the portraits of Bewick is a miniature, painted by Dennis Brownell Murphy, who also painted William Charnley and, when in London, Wordsworth and John Crome. Murphy was

for a quarter of a century an exhibitor at the Royal Academy. He had been a member of the United Irishmen, a friend of Wolfe Tone, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Napper Tandy. His wife was English, and after or during the troubles of 1798, he escaped from Ireland, first to Whitehaven in Cumberland, and then to Newcastle, to which town he no doubt came because there was a better chance of pursuing his profession. He was living over Richard Miller's bookshop in 1802, and in 1803 moved to London, carrying with him a letter from Bewick to his old friend Christopher Gregson in Blackfriars, commending him as " a man of worth, and a first rate artist in the miniature line".

One final connection with the world of politics lies in his connection with the Losh family. Bewick engraved book-plates for Thomas, George and William Losh. He also engraved banknotes for the Carlisle and Cumberland Bank, of which George was a director. It was George who first interested Bewick in schemes for unforgeable banknotes. The family was interested in the production of alkalis on an industrial scale, and helped to found the British chemical industry. William, the father, had in the 1780s entered into partnership in this enterprise with Thomas Doubledale and Lord Dundonald, and in 1791 was living in France, from which country he returned to set up plant using Leblanc's technique for the production of soda.

During the following year, a number of young Englishmen of revolutionary sympathies were also in Paris - among them James Watt, son of the inventor, with his friend Thomas Cooper of Manchester. These two were in France as delegates from the Constitutional Club of Manchester to the Club des Jacobins. Whether there on a similar errand on behalf of one of the Newcastle clubs or not, young James Losh (who later became Recorder of Newcastle) was also living in Paris for some months in 1792. "His love of liberty", says Lonsdale (Worthies of Cumberland), "not less than a desire to improve his educational status, induced him to visit France during the throes of the great Revolution in 1792...He attended the meetings of the Convention, heard Vergniaud, Danton, the Girondistes; and, being a handsome and conspicuous figure, and elegantly dressed, was an object of suspicion to people in the streets, one of whom he heard say - 'Aristocrate! Quelle belle tete pour la lanterne!'"

Watt and Cooper, in the end, were denounced as spies by Robespierre, and fled home through Italy. Losh evidently fell, or feared to fall, under the same suspicion: but the 'patriots' of Newcastle seem not to have lost their belief in the French Revolution for all that, if Bewick's testimony is worth anything. His, at all events, remained quite unshaken after thirty years.

B i b l i o g r a p h y

A Treatise on Wood Engraving by John Jackson and W.A.Chatto, Chas. Knight, 1839

A Memoir of Thomas Bewick, written by himself, Longman's, 1862

The Memoir has just been reissued by Centaur Press, December 1961

Thomas Bewick: Life and Works by D.Croal Thompson, The Art Journal, 1882

Bewick Gleanings by Julia Boyd, Andrew Reid (Newcastle), 1886

Thomas Bewick: His Life and Times by Robert Robinson, Robinson, 1887

Thomas Bewick and his Pupils by Austin Dobson, Chatto & Windus, 1889

Thomas Bewick by Montague Weekley, Oxford University Press, 1953

There is also a large volume, edited by Reynolds Stone, of reprints of Bewick engravings, with an extensive bibliography.

OUR HISTORY is published quarterly by the History Group of the Communist Party. Copies (1s.6d. post free) or subscriptions (5s. a year) are obtainable from The Business Manager, Our History, c/o Central Books, 37 Grays Inn Road, London, W.C.I.

Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) Wood Engraver, naturalist and Northumberland's Greatest Artist. The aim of the Bewick Society is to promote an interest in the life and work of Thomas Bewick and related subjects, especially with regard to wood-engraving. The Society publishes a journal called the Cherryburn Times, normally twice a year. This provides a forum for the activities of the Society and keeps members informed about the latest research into the life and work of Bewick and his apprentices. Members publish articles about their own special interests where relevant to the Society. The Societ Thomas Bewick (1753â€“1828) Laing Art Gallery. Study of Fruit with Squirrel Laing Art Gallery. 3 more. Follow us. Join us on Facebook. Follow us on Twitter. Follow us on YouTube. Thomas Bewick, (born August 12, 1753, Cherryburn, Northumberland, Englandâ€“died November 8, 1828, Gateshead, Durham), printmaker and illustrator important for reviving the art of wood engraving and establishing it as a major printmaking technique. Bewick, a precocious youth, was apprenticed to a local metal engraver when he was 14 years old. He progressed rapidly and, after his apprenticeship, entered into a partnership with his former master in Newcastle, where he remained for most of his life. Bewick was a brilliant technical innovator, but he did not invent wood engraving as is sometimes cla By "Bewick, Thomas, 1753-1828". Books/Journals (20). Chapters/Articles/Treatments (0).Â By: Bewick, Thomas, - Anderson, Alexander, - Beilby, Ralph, Edition: 1st American ed., with an appendix, containing some American animals not hitherto described. Publication info: New-York:Printed by G. & R. Waite, no. 64, Maiden-lane,1804.

Thomas Bewick (c. 11 August 1753 – 8 November 1828) was an English wood-engraver and natural history author. Early in his career he took on all kinds of work such as engraving cutlery, making the wood blocks for advertisements, and illustrating children's books. He gradually turned to illustrating, writing and publishing his own books, gaining an adult audience for the fine illustrations in *A History of Quadrupeds*. His career began when he was apprenticed to engraver Ralph Beilby in Newcastle upon Tyne. He became a partner in the business and eventually took it over. Apprentices whom Bewick trained Thomas Bewick, (born August 12, 1753, Cherryburn, Northumberland, England—died November 8, 1828, Gateshead, Durham), printmaker and illustrator important for reviving the art of wood engraving and establishing it as a major printmaking technique. Bewick, a precocious youth, was apprenticed to a local metal engraver when he was 14 years old. He progressed rapidly and, after his apprenticeship, entered into a partnership with his former master in Newcastle, where he remained for most of his life. Bewick was a brilliant technical innovator, but he did not invent wood engraving as is sometimes claimed.

Thomas Bewick — Thomas Bewick, né le 12 août 1753 à Cherryburn près de Newcastle upon Tyne dans le Northumberland et mort le 8 novembre 1828, est un graveur et un ornithologue britannique — Wikipédia en Français. Thomas Bewick — Thomas Bewick. Thomas Bewick (agosto de 1753 – 8 de noviembre de 1828) fue un ornitólogo y grabador en madera inglés. Bewick nació en Cherryburn, Northumberland, cerca de Newcastle upon Tyne. Su padre arrendaba una pequeña mina de carbón en — Bewick, Thomas — born Aug. 12, 1753, Cherryburn, Eng. died Nov. 8, 1828, Gateshead British wood engraver. At age 14 he was apprenticed to a metal engraver, with whom he later went into partnership in Newcastle; Bewick remained there most of his life. He — Creator: Thomas Bewick, 1753-1828 Date: Early 19th Century Format: print Digital Identifier: AG129_43_0018 Digitization: Digitized at the Boston Public Library and federally funded with LSTA funds through the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners. Rights: Samuel P. Hayes Research Library, Perkins — Woodcut Fairytale Illustration Art Pet Birds Bird Art Wood Engraving Art Masters Bird Drawings Black Bird. Thomas Bewick - Alchetron, The Free Social Encyclopedia. Thomas Bewick c 11 August 1753 8 November 1828 was an English engraver and natural history author Early in his career he took on a Thomas Bewick (c. 11 August 1753 – 8 November 1828) was an English wood-engraver and natural history author. Early in his career he took on all kinds of work such as engraving cutlery, making the wood blocks for advertisements, and illustrating children's books. He gradually turned to illustrating, writing and publishing his own books, gaining an adult audience for the fine illustrations in *A History of Quadrupeds*.

Thomas Bewick (1753-1828) made explicit decisions about whether the main protagonist in his pictures should face left or right and did so to express particular meaning. In three experiments we examined whether orientation changes the expressiveness of an image. In experiment 1 participants viewed eight of Bewick's animal wood engravings facing either in their original orientation or reversed, in a between-subjects design. They rated each print on ten characteristics, for example: docile-wild, clumsy-agile, and weak-strong. The original received more extreme ratings, across characteristics, than the reversed version.

Thomas Bewick, (born August 12, 1753, Cherryburn, Northumberland, England—died November 8, 1828, Gateshead, Durham), printmaker and illustrator important for reviving the art of wood engraving and establishing it as a major printmaking technique. Bewick, a precocious youth, was apprenticed to a local metal engraver when he was 14 years old. He progressed rapidly and, after his apprenticeship, entered into a partnership with his former master in Newcastle, where he remained for most of his life. Bewick was a brilliant technical innovator, but he did not invent wood engraving as is sometimes claimed.

Thomas Bewick (c. 11 August 1753 – 8 November 1828) was an English engraver and natural history author. Early in his career he took on all kinds of work such as engraving cutlery, making the wood blocks for advertisements, and illustrating children's books. Gradually he turned to illustrating, writing and publishing his own books, gaining an adult audience for the fine illustrations in *A History of Quadrupeds*.

Thomas Bewick (c. 11 August 1753 – 8 November 1828) was an English wood-engraver and natural history author. Early in his career he took on all kinds of work such as engraving cutlery, making the wood blocks for advertisements, and illustrating children's books. He gradually turned to illustrating, writing and publishing his own books, gaining an adult audience for the fine illustrations in *A History of Quadrupeds*. His career began when he was apprenticed to engraver Ralph Beilby in Newcastle upon Tyne. He became a partner in the business and eventually took it over. Apprentices whom Bewick trained included Thomas Bewick.

Thomas Bewick, né le 12 août 1753 à Cherryburn près de Newcastle upon Tyne dans le Northumberland et mort le 8 novembre 1828, est un graveur et un ornithologue britannique. Wikipédia en Français.

Thomas Bewick — Thomas Bewick. Thomas Bewick (agosto de 1753 – 8 de noviembre de 1828) fue un ornitólogo y grabador en madera inglés. Bewick nació en Cherryburn, Northumberland, cerca de Newcastle upon Tyne. Su padre arrendaba una pequeña mina de carbón en el área. Thomas Bewick [Thomas Bewick] (1753–1828) an English artist who worked mainly in book illustration. He brought a new realistic style to the art of engraving (= cutting designs on metal, and then printing from it.). He is especially famous for his pictures of animals.