



CHERRYBURN TIMES

The Newsletter of The Bewick Society



THE WILD CATTLE AT CHILLINGHAM

by D W S Gray

In 2005 the Bewick Society was involved in two events relating to the herd of wild cattle at Chillingham in North Northumberland. Firstly, the Society had arranged for members to make a special group visit to the park at Chillingham to view the herd on 25th June. All Bewick lovers have a special interest in the Chillingham cattle because Bewick's engraving of the Bull, made in 1789, marks the transition from Bewick the jobbing engraver to Bewick the artist and naturalist with a national reputation. It was this engraving that Bewick himself regarded as his first important piece of work, and it is certainly his best-known image. In 2003 (*Cherryburn Times*, vol. 4, no. 5), we reported the installation of a large

bronze copy of the Bull in the pavement of Bewick Street, just opposite Central Station in Newcastle. (The site was chosen because this was the location of the house that Bewick lived in for thirty years, his 'little cot on the Forth.') In Bewick's *Memoir*, chapter 12, he gave an interesting account of his visit to Chillingham to make the original drawing. He also included the wild cattle in his *Quadrupeds*, published in the following year.

The second event was the Pybus memorial lecture organised by the Natural History Society of Northumbria on 11th November and a joint event with the Bewick Society. It was given by the leading scientific authority on the Chillingham herd, Professor Stephen Hall of Lincoln



University. He has been studying the herd since 1977, and indeed lived on the Chillingham estate for three years to establish his knowledge base. His lecture was very well attended, with an audience of at least two hundred – mainly, of course, members of the Natural History Society, but with quite a few of the local members of the Bewick Society.

The lecture included a history of Chillingham Park and of the herd since the earliest records, with some scientific observations about the genetic inheritance of the herd and some analysis of their behaviour patterns. It was most valuable to get such a clear and comprehensive perspective on the phenomenon, and it was also good to hear that the Natural History Society would be publishing a written version of the lecture in the near future. Without attempting a systematic report of his main points, we shall refer to some salient features below, in our account – with photographs – of our visit to the herd in June.

The first written record of the cattle is in a letter from the estate steward to the then owner, Lord Grey of Chillingham, in 1645-6. No tally of their numbers was given in that source; for that we have to wait until 1721 and a letter from steward William Browne to his employer, the newly created Earl of Tankerville, whose family was to own the Park for the next two and a half centuries. Browne reported ‘27 or thereabouts of wild cattle.’ The next time we have a tally is at the end of the century, in 1799, and this was made by John Bailey, the steward who was Thomas Bewick’s friend and who conducted him through the park to find a Bull to draw. In a report to the current Earl, he reported that there were now 48 cattle. In a letter to Bewick he also wrote a short account of the herd and their behaviour. This formed the main part of the section on the wild cattle

given in *Quadrupeds*. (The same text was also reproduced verbatim in E. Mackenzie’s *View of the County of Northumberland*, published in Newcastle in 1825, at p. 110 in a long footnote, with no reference or acknowledgement to Bewick.)

Bailey was a man of accomplishments. Mathematician, surveyor, agriculturalist, also a painter and engraver; later, he even became a banker at Berwick. The surprise in his account is that the cattle were treated like game and were shot, apparently for eating and not just for sport. This fits the traditional understanding of the rights of land ownership, especially the rights of noblemen. Of this, more later. The flesh was apparently delectable. Just a few years after Mackenzie, in 1832, there is another story told by Thomas Rose and given in his book of illustrations *Westmorland, Cumberland, Durham and Northumberland*, which shows a picture (and an illustration) slightly at odds with Bailey.

‘There is still to be seen in the park a pure race of wild cattle, called Scotch white bison; its flesh, which is marbled, has an exquisite taste. These beasts are of medium size, and have very long legs: the cows have fine horns, and the orbit of the eye and the end of the nose is black; but the bulls have lost their manes, the characteristic attributed to them by Boethius. They are fleet of foot, wild and untameable; it is only in bad winters that they dare to approach the byres and stables to get some fodder. The plate [reproduced above] shows an accident that happened – fortunately without fatal outcome – to the son of the noble owner of the estate, the earl of Tankerville. Lord Ossulston, indulging in the pleasures of the hunt, with some of his friends, was attacked by one of these ferocious animals with such a fury that although he was well mounted he would probably have fallen victim had it not been for the help afforded by the people and a gentleman among his followers.’

This text was also published in French in 1835, with the same illustrations, in a book entitled *Itinéraire pittoresque au nord de l'Angleterre* for the new tourist market that was just beginning to develop in Europe with the spread of the railways. It seems clear from this account that the pleasures of the hunt were restricted to the hunters. As may perhaps have been observed from our photograph at the head of this article, the ferocity of the Chillingham Bulls was not very noticeable on the day of our visit, though of course it should be said that we were not chasing them on horseback. They seem to have had the temerity to attack their noble owners when they were hunted! Thomas Allom's etching of this scene does not have the authority of a photograph, and we can be fairly sure he did not witness the event, but it still seems a reasonable representation of what it must have been like. He had obviously seen the landscape, which is indeed of breathtaking beauty, quite living up to the cult of the picturesque which inspired the artist and the purchasers of the books. The castle is still nestling in the wood.



Visitors to the cattle are welcomed with a display board which includes a copy of the Allom print, and a short text telling the story - but rather differently to Rose:

In 1832 a guest of the 5th Earl of Tankerville, the Prince de Ligne, had shot at a wild bull and had wounded it, supposedly mortally. The Earl's son, Lord Ossulston, advanced on horseback, rifle in hand, to dispatch the animal finally. Suddenly, and without warning, the wounded bull charged Lord Ossulston's horse and buried its horns in the horse's flank, on either side of the rider's leg. Staunch to the last the noble horse carried its master away at a gallop, but after traversing some 400 yards it fell stone dead. But for this horse's gallant action, Lord Ossulston would have been in mortal peril and but for Lord Ossulston's action, the Prince might have been in similar peril.

Lord Ossulston was the eldest son of the Earl, so he lived to inherit the title and to invite the then Prince of Wales, Prince Albert Edward, to Chillingham to hunt in 1872. (This was in the October of the year that the Prince had almost died of typhus.) *The Monthly Chronicle of North Country Lore and Legend*, March, 1889, carried the following report:

It appears that the present Earl of Tankerville, when a young man, was attacked while riding across the cattle enclosure, and would have sustained serious injury if a watchful gillie had not opportunely shot his incensed assailant. But in spite of this occurrence, the character of the breed is hardly bad enough to justify extreme precautions against them. The Prince of Wales paid a visit to Chillingham in the month of

October, 1872 when it was announced he would signalise the occasion by shooting the noblest specimen of the herd. His Royal Highness allowed himself to be stowed away in a hay cart that was carrying the poor creatures their breakfast, and was thus able, from the hungry and unsuspecting herd that followed him, to exterminate the king bull at leisure. The plan, no doubt, was in accordance with courtly notions of safety, and was eminently calculated to secure the object in view; but it was scarcely a feat to warrant any unusual jubilation. Yet, as the sequel shows, the feat was highly appreciated in very distinguished circles. A few hours after the tragedy, the carcass was brought from the scene of slaughter, and carefully deposited on the castle lawn. The photographer was ready, the Prince not unwilling, and the result is shown in our sketch.' [p.113-4]

The account here is interesting for its writer's



struggle between his sense of deference to both Earl and Prince, and his obvious appreciation that their rôles in the two incidents had been somewhat less than glorious – if not positively ignominious in the case of the Prince. How very different from the home life of our own dear Prince!

The whiff of disapproval which hangs around the wording of this account reflects the emergence of new attitudes to the hunting activities of nobility and royalty in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Antony Taylor's article in the *Journal of the Historical Association*, *History*, January 2004, 'Pig-sticking Princes', is helpful in showing how the long-established attitudes were under attack from the radical and republican movements. He quotes the prominent radical Charles Bradlaugh's scornful swipe at this very event, when the latter complained that the Chillingham estates in Northumberland were reserved 'for a few wild cattle, in order that the Prince of Wales may now and then drive about it, and from the safe eminence of a cart may have the pleasure of shooting at a bull'. Taylor does not mention the point, but it deserves noting all the same: what can be depicted as the narrow self interest of the upper classes in exploiting the animals on their estates for

their own leisure and pleasure was also responsible for them guarding and maintaining the cattle for centuries. No nobility, no wild cattle herd.

The 8th Earl of Tankerville bequeathed the herd, but not the park, to the Chillingham Wild Cattle Association when he died in 1971. When the 9th Earl died in 1980 there were various dealings over the park culminating in 2005 with the Association acquiring the land. This voluntary body (and charity) currently manages the 365 acres and the livestock. We were told by Dr Hall that, following a visit by Charles Darwin in 1862, precise details have been kept of the herd, following the model of Darwin's records. From 1862 to 1899 the average size of the herd was 61. About 40% of the bull calves were castrated, and the composition of the herd was 17 bulls, 13 steers (castrated males) and 31 females. In 2005, there are 56 in the herd. Nowadays there is no castration or culling, and of course, they are no longer hunted.



Dr Hall considered the genetic consequences of the inbreeding inevitable with such a small population – indeed, there have been times, such as the bad winter of 1947, when the total size of the herd was down to 13 animals. By the time he started his study of the herd in the late 1970s, the numbers were up to nearly 70. Since the animals are all of the same blood group, and are all near-clones of each other, there is a lack of heterozygosity (i.e. not enough variation) in the genome. This means that the cattle could not cope with new diseases if they eventuated – though recent studies seem to indicate that ‘bad genes’ are being purged naturally, without veterinary intervention. Precautions against extinction have now been safely established by creating a reserve herd in north-east Scotland, near Elgin, and there is now a store of semen.

The group of Bewick Society members who visited the herd last June had the advantage of an inspiring introduction to the herd and its history by the current chairman of the Chillingham Wild Cattle Association, Philip Deakin, who is a member of the Bewick Society. All visitors and observers have to be conducted by the Warden of the Park, Austen Widdows, partly for our protection and partly because he is the only one who knows where the cattle are currently grazing and what is the best way to approach them. As we walked for twenty minutes to find the herd, he gave us a running commentary covering the main points of its history since



The warden, Austen Widdows, holding forth to the Chairman and Secretary of the Bewick Society.

prehistoric times, and describing the behaviour of the cattle. It was a most enlightening and entertaining talk, especially his remarks about the genetic features of the herd. We had with us a photographer, Ian McKie, who took the photographs shown here. Unfortunately, we did not see more than a dozen or so cattle during our hour-long tramp, so there were perhaps forty others we did not see. It has to be said also that the cattle did not deign to notice our presence apart from an occasional ruminant gaze. We did not observe any interesting social relations between the cattle and we certainly did not see any aggressive or ‘wild’ behaviour. There was no occasion to take refuge in a tree. These ferocious cattle appeared remarkably focussed on eating grass.

We passed within a few yards of a lone bull resting under a tree; it was probably an old bull that had lost the struggle for leadership of the herd and was therefore no longer allowed to mate with the cows, or indeed have any dealings with them or the herd. It was difficult not to see him as a lonely outcast. This was the condition of the bull that Bewick had drawn and engraved, except for the fact that Bewick's animal looks anything but dozy. The one we saw was not going to be siring any more calves, though in his time he had doubtless covered every cow in the herd. He is a retired king; perhaps he was glad to be out of the struggle. He looked content and unthreatening in the heat of the afternoon, but we gave him a respectfully wide berth as we wound our way slowly back to the Warden's cottage to view and buy some souvenirs of our memorable afternoon.



BEWICK'S *LAND BIRDS*: HAND-COLOURED COPIES

By Graham Carlisle

At the end of the eighteenth century there was a great increase in demand for printed pictures of all kinds and it was met by an equal increase in supply. The relation of supply to demand in all areas of cultural production can give us problems – we want to know which came first, especially when we are trying to account for explosive changes. In the matter of illustrations, whether humorous, informative, satirical, or decorative, we can see one interesting change in the very name: it was only in the 1790s in London that the word 'illustration' started to be used with a new meaning referring to printed pictures in books – and there is a case to be made that it was specifically for the new wood-engraved illustrated books that this new name first came to be used. Thomas and John Bewick were in the vanguard of this production, the one in Newcastle and the other in London. It was the technical convenience of being able to print letterpress and picture together, at the same time and on the same press, that created a golden opportunity for printers and publishers to meet the demands of new audiences hungry for pictures.



The title page of Copy A including the sub-title, the vignette and the publisher's imprint information with price and date. (which should be 1798).



The title page vignette (only) from copy B. What seems to be a tombstone is in fact a boundary stone, showing the three castles of Newcastle's coat of arms.

However, a significant aspect of the demand was clearly for coloured images, and although there had been some technically successful experiments in colour printing during the eighteenth century (and even earlier), they were hopelessly complicated and expensive, so only a few seriously rich buyers could afford them. It remained an exclusive, experimental area of production. But the taste for coloured pictures was clearly there, and the obvious way to meet it was to supply hand-coloured versions of black-printed pictures. The period from about 1780 until about 1820 was the heyday for hand colouring. Buyers were usually asked to pay twice the price for a hand-coloured copy of an uncoloured print, often having to wait for the copy to be made. Such practice would seem to indicate that demand was running ahead of supply. In any case it was usually the retailer who organised the colouring.

How could this market be satisfied at every level and quality? The West End shop windows of Rudolph Ackermann, Holland, Hannah Humphrey and Fores were ablaze with colour, eclipsing in the process John Boydell's business as he stuck resolutely to his monochrome prints. As to the hand colouring process itself, there is remarkably little documentary evidence to show how this was achieved. This is the more remarkable considering it remained commercially viable well past the onset of the photographic age in the 1840s, the development of chromolithography in mid-century and in fact into the twentieth century. Whether as wood-engraved illustrated books, separately printed intaglio plates to be bound into books, sheets intended for framing, or the connoisseur's portfolio, it has to be assumed that some form of production line method was used to get the colouring done.

Although not mentioning hand colouring specifically, an unknown commentator in Ackermann's first issue of *The Repository of Arts* for 1809 suggests a possible work force: 'During the period when French emigrants were so numerous in this country Mr A. was among the first to strike out a liberal and easy mode of employing them, and he had seldom less than fifty, nobles, priests and ladies of distinction at work upon screens, card racks, flower stands and other ornamental fancy works of a similar nature.'

London seems to be a special case with its ready supply of distressed gentlefolk. How, though, were things organised in the provinces? Schools of outworkers were paid piecework; maybe whole families were involved, the more skilled doing the finer coloured areas of the image the children being left with the blacks or coarser parts. Was a master copy used, with guide colours? Again, no concrete documentary evidence. It can only be assumed that this thriving industry, using many professional and semi-skilled colourists working in teams, developed methods of achieving consistency.

Could Thomas Bewick resist the attractions of colour and the demands of people with cash to spend?

Thanks to David Gardner-Medwin and his article in *Cherryburn Times*, Vol. 4, No. 6, readers will know of two Bewick notebooks located in the Tyne & Wear archive. Compared to the Day Books and Cash Books from Bewick's engraving business, these appear to show a more personal record of transactions, mostly involving first and second editions of the *Land Birds*. Note Book 1269/136 is titled on the cover: 'Subscribers to History of Birds.' It contains a tabbed alphabetical list of hundreds of names annotated with various marks, abbreviations and symbols, not all of which are clearly to be understood. Crosses, ticks and crossed ticks abound, with no explanations as to their meaning. Some entries are marked 'dead', with no indication as to the relevance of that fact to the volume(s) of the *Birds* involved with the entry: did it mean the order was cancelled? Some seem to be deleted by crossing out with a line through them. But most interestingly, 25 of the names have the note 'cold' added, presumably for 'coloured,' all in Bewick's hand. The first such on the list was Bewick's old friend, John Bailey, the steward to the Earl of Tankerville. (R refers to Royal paper size.)

Bailey, J. Chillingham 1 R cold.
 Barneston, Lt. Col. Chester 1 set cold.
 Bell, John. N. Castle 6 cold.
 Clavering, Chas. Jas. 1 cold.
 Dale, Shallet. N. Castle 1 cold.
 Greenwell, Cutht. N. Castle 1 cold. [underlined - marked: dead]
 Grey, Lord. At the Earl of Standford's, Chas. St. Berkley Sq. 1 set cold. Do. plain.
 Howlette, G. Esq. Coventry. 2 cold.
 Hawthorn, Edwd. London. 6 sets Royal 3 cold.
 Leaton, Anthony. Esq. Whickham. cold.
 Muncaster, Mrs. Wall's End. 1 cold.
 Parker, Capt. Astle near Knutsford, Cheshire. 1 cold.
 Ridley, Sir M.W. Bart. 1 cold.
 Ridley, Rev. Henry. 1 Do.
 Ridley, Nichs. Esq. London. 1 Do.
 Smith, Leigh. N. Castle. 1 cold. [underlined and marked: no subscriber]
 Shaw, Capt. 4 Dragoons. 2 cold.
 Spedding, Lieut. 4 Dragoons. 1 colourd.
 Shaw, Capt. 4 Dragoons. cold. [this entry almost erased]
 Trevelyan, Jno. Esq. Wallington. 1 each comn. Royal & cold.
 Todd, Mr. York. 6 large, 6 small, 6 extra, 2 cold. [deleted]
 Sent by Sol Hodgson [not deleted]
 Walton, Nichs. Esq. N. Castle)1 cold. [deleted] 2 Imp.
 Walton, Thos. Esq. N. Castle)
 Wilson, Mr. Morpeth. 1 cold.
 Warburton, Sir Peter. Astley, Knutsford. 1 cold.

Among this list are some of the great and good of Northeast England – people of wealth and influence, certainly well able to afford the premium that could be expected for a hand-coloured issue of Bewick's *Land Birds*. The existence of the list seems to suggest that Bewick was involved in the colouring in some way, if not executing it in his workshop, still perhaps organising it at some other location. David Gardner-Medwin has already pointed out in the *Cherryburn Times* that 'no mention of colouring is

made in the record of the printing, binding, pricing and sales in notebook 1269/135. It may be cautiously concluded that the original intention to colour some copies was abandoned.'

Recently, however, two examples have come to light which seem very likely to have been the result of a colouring project.

Copy A.

Sold at auction at Dominic Winter of Swindon, S.W. England, 2 October 2002; Lot 131 & 132.

Auctioneer's description

Lot 131. Bewick (Thomas) *History of British Birds*, 2 vols. 2nd/1st ed., Newcastle 1797 (1798) - 1804 . . . vol. 1 with later HAND-COLOURING throughout . . . bookplates of Shute Barrington [1734-1826, Bishop of Durham], gilt gaufered edges, contemp. Gilt-dec. straight-grained blue morocco . . . imperial 8vo . . . Roscoe 15a and 17a . . .

Lot 132. *A General History of Quadrupeds* . . . Newcastle 1800 . . . Matching *British Birds* above.

[Subsequent to the auction, the complete set came into the possession of a Bewick Society member via a bookseller].

Copy B.

Sold at Auction at Holloway's, The Banbury Auction Rooms, in the Midlands, 25 May 1993; (A private library of books: H.D.Agnew)

Auctioneer's description

Lot 159. Bewick (T) *History of British Birds*, vols. I and II, *Land Birds* and *Water Birds*, Newcastle 1797 and 1804, (vol. I) having coloured woodcuts), green calf, gilt tooled spine (2).

Lot 160. Bewick (T) *A General History of Quadrupeds*, Newcastle 1807. . . , green calf, gilt tooled spine. (1)

Lot 191. *Aesop's Fables*, Illustrated Thomas Bewick 1818 . . . tooled morocco. (2)

The above lots all match in green morocco gilt extra. They are all imperial octavo issues with the bookplates of William Agnew (1825-1910) and lot 191 also had, unmentioned by the auctioneer, the imperial *Select Fables* of 1820. The set of *Birds* only is in the possession of a Bewick Society member direct from the auction house].

Copy A has the armorial bookplates of The Hon. Shute Barrington, LLD, Lord Bishop of Durham, 1791-1826. Finely bound ca. 1810, quite likely in the North East, possibly in Newcastle.

Although not in Bewick's list, Shute Barrington certainly qualifies as both influential and rich. The position of Bishop of Durham ranks fourth in the Anglican hierarchy, and during Barrington's incumbency still had special status as a palatine prince, legally entitled to mint his own money and maintain defences against the Scots, etc., though these rights were effectively in abeyance. He is said to have pledged £32,000 of his own money towards the relocation of Durham gaol as it was causing great inconvenience to traffic. (Using retail price index records we can say that would be in the order of £2 million in modern money.) Such an august personage may have used an agent to acquire his books, and several of the listed names might have acted in such a capacity.

Copy B has the armorial bookplate of William Agnew. Finely bound ca. 1860; with uncoloured Supplements, 1821.

The Agnew family of art dealers can trace their history back to 1817. Influential and commanding great financial resources, they dominated the art auction scene in Victorian London. Although it is possible Agnew obtained his hand-coloured copy of the *Birds* via James Toovey, the London bookseller – an active buyer of choice Bewickiana and who had the set bound up – it is interesting to note also Agnew's connection with the Fawkes family of Farnley. Fawkes, a patron of J.M.W. Turner, obtained several specially commissioned watercolours of birds from the artist around 1810-1815. This was about the time Fawkes and other members of the family were in correspondence with Thomas Bewick, ordering copies of the *Birds* and requesting sketches and engravings to help with their great 'Ornithological Collection'. William Agnew formed a friendship with the Fawkes family, buying many Turner watercolours over the years, and stayed, with his family, at Farnley in 1873.



The Shrike or Murdering Pie, from Copy A above, and from Copy B below.



How do our two copies compare? As can be seen from the colour illustrations there are key points in common. The title page vignettes have the same choice of blue, which is applied in a similar way to emphasise the boundary stone. The background is the same unusual

shade of pink or brown. Throughout, the engravings use the same pigments occasionally heightened in an identical manner with, possibly, gum arabic. Curiously, some of the white areas in both copies have deteriorated in a similar fashion, to black or grey.

Until the last quarter of the 18th century white pigments contained a high proportion of lead. Because of pollutants in the atmosphere such as hydrogen sulphide and sulphur dioxide and their reaction with the white pigment, the result is the production of lead sulphide, giving a blackening effect. The problem was overcome owing to the availability of Chinese white in the first quarter of the 19th century. Containing zinc instead of lead, this does not discolour. Although in the case of our examples this factor explains why some images are now not correct ornithologically, this alone helps date the colouring to around 1800. There seems little reason to doubt that these two copies were coloured in the same workshop, possibly by the same person, though it seems more likely to have been a team effort. But who did the colouring and at what cost?

Here we are on shakier ground. We know the colouring is very fine, taking many hours of skilled labour to achieve. It seems unlikely Thomas Bewick would have the time or inclination to colour books personally for subscribers, though we know that he did make colour copies of his *Quadrupeds* for his children (for details of these, see part 2 of the checklist of his books on the Bewick Society website). Should the workshop apprentices be considered? There are risks involved with this type of project; TB would need reliable people to see it through. Expensive to start with – retailed to the public at one guinea plainly bound in paper covered boards – the 'proposed' choice for subscribers of the hand-coloured issue is the *Imperial Land Birds* 1798; only 207 copies were printed, but dated 1797 on their title pages. Selected for its printing qualities, the thick wove Leopard paper of 1794, with its absence of chain lines, is a good and convenient choice for watercolour. None the less, because each bird and vignette are printed together with the text and on both sides of the page, the colouring process must have tested the technical and financial viability of the whole undertaking.



From copy A: Vignette, p 42: 'What a relief!'

The cost? In the absence of direct evidence, we have to speculate. Around 1800 Andrew Tucker had under way his *History of Devonshire Birds*. Intended as a parts publication of 24 issues, only 2 materialised, priced at 5s. uncoloured,

7s. coloured. (This gives a projected price of £6 uncoloured, £8-8s. coloured, for a complete set of Devonshire Birds). At 3 coloured plates per part, the 'retail premium' for colour works out at 8d. per plate. We should remember that a journeyman's day rate at this time would have been about a shilling (12 old pence) a day; and we know that Bewick paid his apprentices 5s a week. Using this – admittedly – rough and ready guide, the 117 coloured birds in TB's book would give additional retail value of £3-18s.; allow a penny extra for the 91 vignettes and add in the price of the book. Does 5 Guineas sound achievable for a large paper hand-coloured copy of the *British Land Birds* supplied by Thomas Bewick direct to his subscriber?

The above offers compelling evidence for the existence of hand-coloured subscribers' editions of Bewick's *Land Birds*. In uncoloured state, *Imperial Land Birds* 1797 (1798) are uncommon. In 35 years this writer has owned four and known of perhaps twice as many others. Accepting the common thread in the colouring of copies A and B, but also bearing in mind the differences in presentation, binding styles with probable dates of commissioning, it is difficult to avoid a conclusion as follows. Because of the scarcity of 1797 ('98) Imperials, it seems inconceivable that some unknown Victorian lady would be in a position to while away her time colouring 'two copies' of this desirable large paper issue. Much more likely, because of the genuine rarity of the 'fully' hand coloured *Land Birds* of 1797 (1798), the law of probabilities suggests that the colouring was done before copies A and B departed their separate ways. That is, at a location in the city of Newcastle upon Tyne, probably very close to the printers, and soon after publication in 1798. But that informed speculation is as far as we can go with the evidence available.



From Copy A. This colouring is similar to that of Copy B, though slightly darker.

Just as this article was being prepared for print, new information was offered by Nigel Tattersfield from a manuscript held by McGill University in Montreal, the diary of Joseph Crawhall 1st, in an entry for 19th March, 1826. Visiting Bewick, he met there Richard Wingate, one of Bewick's closest friends who was very knowledgeable about birds, to whom he refers in the following terms: 'Wingate does not know much of drawing or painting; he is now colouring 'the Birds' of Mr Bewick, but this can



From Copy B. The underside shows the effect of lead in the 'white' pigment.

never be done with good effect – for instance in the breast of the pheasant or partridge or mallard where small lines are to be of any colour – say red or green: that cannot be done because the effect is already produced by black.' The relation of the Crawhalls, both father and son (1st and 2nd) to the Bewick family is important enough to make this a significant and suggestive discovery.

The new information opens up some further lines of possible research, though of course the date itself is at odds with everything we can establish in respect of the two coloured copies at issue here. Should more 'completely' hand-coloured *Land Birds* turn up, the writer puts forward – with some confidence – the proposition that the genuine article will always have 'every' engraving finely hand coloured, with the white pigment often discoloured. It will be the *Imperial* octavo issue of 1797 (1798), with 'Price One Guinea in Boards' printed at the foot of the title page. And we would very much like to hear of it, even if our confident prediction be overturned! Please communicate with the editor of the *Cherryburn Times* if any more information emerges to throw light on these problems.



From Copy A: Vignette, p. 26: 'The Stonebreaker'. Colouring of clothes is different to that in Copy B.

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