

Bewick, Thomas, the distinguished wood engraver, was born at Cherry-burn in Northumberland, in 1753. He is said to have worked when a boy in his father's coal-pit, and he received what small school-learning he could at Ovingham. His fondness for drawing led to his being apprenticed to Ralph Beilby, an engraver at Newcastle, in 1767. He served for seven years, working at the most prosaic tasks for his master, paying ninepence a week for his lodging, and receiving a brown loaf weekly from Cherry-burn. During this period he made his first attempts at wood-engraving on the diagrams for Hutton's 'Treatise on Mensuration,' which appeared in 1770. Soon after the expiration of his apprenticeship he began to devote himself entirely to wood-engraving, and in 1775 he obtained the premium of the Society of Arts for his cut of the Huntsman and Old Hound, one of a set of illustrations to Gay's 'Fables.' After a tour on foot in the Lake district in 1776, Bewick spent a year in London, but he pined for green fields and the songs of larks, and went back to Newcastle, where he became Beilby's partner. He continued to practise his favourite art, and rapidly improved both as designer and engraver. He has the merit of introducing a truer method of representing the foliage of trees, and of drawing animals more naturally and characteristically. Many of his cuts display genuine humour and

tender feeling. The principal works illustrated by this lover of nature and genuine artist are—Gay's 'Fables,' 1779; 'Select Fables,' 1784; 'General History of Quadrupeds,' the first edition of which appeared in 1790, a second in 1791, and a third in 1792; 'History of British Birds,' in two vols., 1797 and 1804; and 'Fables of Æsop and others.' A print of a bull is mentioned as one of Bewick's most capital works. The partnership with Beilby ended in 1797. Bewick was much engaged in teaching engraving during the latter part of his life. He died at Gateshead in 1828, and was buried at Ovingham.