

A Brief Synopsis of the life of Thomas Bewick

- ❖ Born in 1753 at Cherryburn, in the Tyne Valley.
- ❖ It was named Cherryburn after the burn or stream behind the house.
- ❖ Thomas liked to listen to the sounds of nature - the music of the stream and birds singing.
- ❖ Particularly liked fishing - one of the friends he went fishing with was Jack Roe
- ❖ Loved the landscape - he was fascinated by nature, studied birds, bees.
- ❖ Often spent all day roaming round the countryside - his father would whistle for him to come home, his whistle could be heard down the valley.
- ❖ Thomas the farm boy had a flock of sheep to look after.
- ❖ He had to muck out the byre and milk the cows.
- ❖ He went to the local school in Mickley, where the teacher beat the children. Thomas bit a boy and as he got into trouble for this he played truant.
- ❖ He was then sent to Ovingham, where he was taught by the Vicar Christopher Gregson.

- ❖ Thomas was often in trouble. Once he was punished by being locked in the Church. He climbed up to the top of a column to hide and gave the vicar a fright.
- ❖ Vicar changed tactics and started being nice to him - Thomas responded favourably.
- ❖ Thomas drew on everything in sight, pews, and the porch.
- ❖ At the age of 14 his godmother recommended him to Beilby.
- ❖ Became an apprentice engraver for the next 7 years making bar bills, book illustrations, bank notes and adverts.
- ❖ He liked music, often whistling while he worked.
- ❖ Loved traditional songs and melodies as played on the Northumbrian pipes.
- ❖ Enjoyed debating - interested in politics
- ❖ Walking was Bewick's great escape, his way of absorbing the life and history of the region
- ❖ Travelled all around Scotland and found it to be a great experience.
- ❖ Admired the people he came into contact with and often sketched everyday scenes.
- ❖ Went to London for 9 months, but did not like it.

- ❖ When he returned to Newcastle became Beilby's partner.
- ❖ Bewick's brother John became his apprentice
- ❖ Married Isabel at St John's Church in Newcastle April 20th 1786
- ❖ He had a daughter, Jane and a son, Robert
- ❖ Produced books on animals and birds as well as illustrating Aesop's fables.
- ❖ Wrote his autobiography, addressed to his daughter Jane, which was not published until after his death.
- ❖ Died in November 1828