

### III.—THE WATCH AND CLOCK MAKERS OF NORTHUMBERLAND AND DURHAM OF THE SEVENTEENTH AND EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES RECORDED IN NEWSPAPERS, DIRECTORIES, ETC.

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[Read on 31st July, 1929.]

The following list of old northern watchmakers has been compiled mainly from the advertisement files of old newspapers and from local directories. There is still much to discover, particularly examples of early north country watches and watch-movements. This is, however, a field of research that is fast vanishing. The destruction of old watches all over England has been so comprehensive that it is hard to find examples of old watches made in the north. It has been thought that no watches were ever "made" in Northumberland or Durham; that watches were simply bought complete in London and Coventry, and their own names added to them by the persons who sold them in the north. This, however, can hardly have been the case. During the greater part of the eighteenth century the watch trade in England was a composite trade, in the hands of many specialists.<sup>1</sup> Hardly any watchmaker in England (even the most famous) himself fabricated the standardized portions of his watch. The drudgery of the work was left in the hands of specialists called "movement-makers" and others, who lived chiefly in London and Prescot (Lancashire). But the watchmaker was responsible for the "finishing" of the watch, that

<sup>1</sup> Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (1747). Rees, *Encyclopædia, Watches* (1819).

is to say, for assembling the various parts, fitting them together, adjusting the springs, regulators, etc. That was the really essential part of watch-making, which decided whether a watch should be good or bad. In London even great makers employed outside "watch-finishers"; but in the country the watchmaker was perforce his own watch-finisher, and very often he had started business in London in that way.

In earlier days the watchmaker had to make almost every part of his watch himself; the earliest Newcastle watchmakers undoubtedly did so. The following is an example of a completely "home-made" watch:

*Post Man*, June 2, 1719.

"Lost, a gold striking watch made at Newcastle, on the outside case is engraved a Stag in a Gaze, upon a wreath."

It was probably the work of Thirkeld or Emmerson.

Robert Graham of Sunderland stated in 1754 that he "finished" new watches "from the beginning," and he charged two guineas more for these than for the watches of other makers which he sold in his shop. John Weatherston, who took over a watchmaker's business in Morpeth in 1778, had served as foreman to a famous Edinburgh maker. There is no doubt then that most northern watchmakers really "made" the watches that bear their names, in the sense that they fitted them together and finished them. After about 1725 that was all that the average "watchmaker" ever did.

#### THE CATALOGUE

The following abbreviations are used:

W.	.	.	.	Watchmaker.
C.	.	.	.	Clockmaker.
D.	.	.	.	Directories.
N.J.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Journal.</i>
N.C.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Courant.</i>
N.G.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Gazette.</i>
N.I.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Intelligencer.</i>
N.Ch.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Chronicle.</i>
N.A.	.	.	.	<i>Newcastle Advertiser.</i>
13.II.79	.	.	.	13th November, 1779, and so on.



- ALISON, Gilbert (1795). W. Sunderland.  
D.
- ATKINSON, Joseph (1795-1801). C.W. Gateshead.  
D. N.C. 30.4.96.  
Lost, silver watch, no. "X-310." [N.C. 30.9.97.]
- AYREY, John (1779-95). W. Hexham.  
D. N.J. 13.11.79.
- BECKET, Thomas (1767-95). C.W. Durham.  
D. N.J. 12.9.67. N.Ch. 30.6.81.  
Lost, ladie's gold chased watch, no. 4,592. [N.Ch. 6.5.69.]  
silver watch, no. 2,466. [N.C. 17.8.76.]  
silver watch, capped. [N.Ch. 27.1.81.]
- BECKET, Mann (1795). C.W. Durham.  
D.
- BEILBY, William (before 1752). W. Durham.  
Lost, silver watch. [*Daily Advertiser*, 6.6.52.]  
silver watch, enamel'd dial. [*Ibid.*, 19.8.52.]  
silver watch, with "THOMAS FOSTER" round the dial  
instead of hour figures. [N.C. 4.10.55.]
- BEILBY & HAWTHORN (1790-1802). W. Newcastle.  
Also watch-glass makers. Lost, silver watch, no. 508. [N.C.  
14.8.02.]
- BELL, William (before 1791). W. Newcastle.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 1,763. [N.Ch. 8.1.91.]
- BENTLEY, John (1760). W. Stockton.  
Probably from Thirsk. [N.C. 26.7.60.]
- BENTLEY (1776). C.W. Darlington.  
N.C. 29.6.76.
- BENTLEY, Richard (1779-81). W. Stockton.  
*York Chronicle*, 25.6.79; 28.9.80.
- BOLTON, John (before 1801). W. Chester-le-Street.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 5,177. [N.C. 5.12.01.]
- BROWN, Benjamin (before 1746). W. Newcastle.  
Lost, plain gold flat-wheeled watch, with silver cap. [N.J.  
21.6.46.]
- BROWNLEES, George (1799). C. Staindrop.  
N.C. 1.6.99. Dead.
- BUGLAS, C. (before 1787). C.W. Berwick.  
Lost, watch-paper. [N.C. 10.11.87.]
- BURLEIGH (before 1750). W. Durham.  
Lost, large silver watch. [N.J. 10.3.50.]
- CARNABY, John (1778). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.

- CARTER, Thomas (1745). C. Bishop Auckland.  
N.J. 23.11.45.
- CHAMBERS, George (1775-95). C.W. Gateshead.  
D. N.Ch. 30.12.75; 13.5.80.
- CHARLTON, John (1785-95). C.W. Durham.  
D. N.Ch. 21.5.85. N.A. 4.12.90.
- CLARK, William (1795). C.W. Morpeth.  
D.
- COVENTRY, William (1778). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- CRAWFORD, James (1766-78). W. Newcastle.  
N.Ch. 28.7.70. "Goldsmith." N.J. 5.9.78.  
Lost, silver watch, enamel'd dial. [N.Ch. 14.6.66.]  
silver watch, no. 2,792. [N.Ch. 27.8.68.]  
silver watch, no. 793. [N.Ch. 28.7.70.]  
gold watch, with rim round the works and a glass on  
the cock. [N.J. 5.9.78.]
- CRAWFORD, David (1778-83). W. Newcastle.  
Lost, silver watch. [N.Ch. 16.5.78.]  
Sale of stock. [N.Ch. 15.2.83.]
- CUMMING, George (before 1778). W. Newcastle, Sunderland.  
*London Gazette*, 23.6.78. "Formerly of Newcastle; late of  
Sunderland," insolvent debtor, etc.
- DAGLISH, Joseph (1795). C.W. Alnwick.  
D. Long-case clock at "White Swan," Alnwick.
- DANTON, Cuthbert (1765-66). C.W. Chester-le-Street, Durham.  
N.Ch. 29.6.65.  
Insolvent [*London Gazette*, 15.6.76.]
- DAVIS, G. (c. 1800). Sunderland.  
Watch-movement.
- DOBIE, John (1796). W. Tanfield.  
N.C. 13.2.96.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 98. [N.C. 13.2.96.]
- EMMERSON, Henry (1699). W. Newcastle.  
St. Nicholas Reg. Marriages, 19.8.99.
- FARMER, Thomas (1795). W. Stockton.  
D.
- FEATHERSTONE (1766-95). W. Newcastle.  
D.  
[Lost watch, *Public Advertiser*, 7.3.66, "Newcastle under  
Lyne" (*sic*), probably error for "Newcastle upon Tyne."]
- FENTON, William (1778). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.

- FERGUSON, William (1767-68). W. Alnwick.  
N.J. 14.11.67; 8.10.68.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 78. [N.C. 17.9.96.]
- FINLAY, James (1782). C.W. Newcastle.  
N.Ch. 16.2.82.
- FLETCHER, Thomas (1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- FURNESS, Joseph (1795). W. Wearmouth.  
D.
- GARBETT, Jeremiah (1754-56). C.W. Newcastle.  
N.J. 22.6.54. N.I. 22.12.56. All sorts of watches made, plain  
watches from 10 to 4 guineas.  
Lost, silver watch. [N.J. 20.11.56.]
- GIBB, James (1779). W. Stockton.  
*York Chronicle*, 25.6.79.
- GIBSON, James (1759-66). C.W. Newcastle.  
N.J. 4.8.59. From London, makes all sorts of clocks and  
watches. N.Ch. 14.6.66.
- GIBSON, John (before 1781). W. Alnwick.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 410. [N.J. 27.1.81.]  
Watch-movement, Soc. Antiq., Newcastle.
- GIBSON, William (1795). C.W. Barnard Castle.  
D.
- GILBERTSON, John (1745-50). C.W. Newcastle.  
N.J. 16.3.45. In partnership with Jas. Smoult (I).  
N.G. 24.11.47. Partnership dissolved.  
N.J. 1.9.50. Dead.
- GILBERTSON, Mrs. Sarah (1750-51). C.W. Newcastle.  
Widow of John. N.J. 1.9.50; 28.12.51.
- GOWLAND, Clement (1795). W. Sunderland.  
D.
- GRAHAM, Robert (1754 and earlier). W. Sunderland.  
N.C. 5.1.54. Makes all sorts of watches, finishes new ones  
from the beginning, for 6 guineas each.  
Moved from Sunderland to Monkwearmouth.
- GRAHAM, William (1758). C. Hexham.  
N.J. 29.7.58.
- GREAVES [GRIEVE], John [before 1746]. W. Newcastle.  
Watch-paper in lost watch. [N.G. 29.10.46.]  
Lost, silver watch, no. 2,655. [N.C. 29.7.58.]

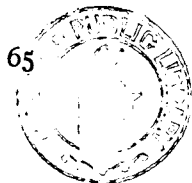
- GREAVES, Richard (before 1749). W. Newcastle.  
 Lost, silver watch of a fashionable size, with a cap on it  
 [N.J. 1.7.49.]  
 silver watch.\* [N.J. 29.7.58.]
- GREAVES, William (1758-78). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D. N.C. 29.7.58. N.J. 17.5.66.  
 Lost, silver watches. [N.C. 26.7.60. N.J. 17.5.66.]
- GREY, Joseph (1755-68). W. Durham.  
 N.C. 30.8.60. N.J. 2.2.65; 16.7.68 (dead).  
 Lost, silver watches. [N.J. 7.6.55. N.C. 29.4.58.]  
 Lost, flat metal watch, no. 1,290, with single fluted case.  
 [N.C. 30.8.60.]
- HARDY, John (1795). W. Morpeth.  
 D.
- HARRISON, Jasper (before 1756). W. Newcastle.  
 Lost, large silver watch, "Harrison, Newcastle." [N.J.  
 14.3.52.]  
 Lost, middle-sized silver watch. [N.J. 26.6.56.]
- HARRISON, John (1777-95). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D. N.Ch. 15.3.77. N.J. 13.11.79.  
 Lost, gilded metal watch. [N.Ch. 19.3.85.]
- HASTINGS, David (1758-95). W. Alnwick.  
 D. N.J. 14.10.58; 31.8.71.  
 Lost, silver watch. [N.J. 31.8.71.]  
 Watch, c. 1760. [Fairgrieve, Alnwick.]  
 Lost, horizontal watch, no. 47, capped with silver. [N.C.  
 6.7.76.]
- HAWTHORN, John (1755-79). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D. N.J. 1.11.55; 13.2.79 (dead). Mentioned often.  
 Called "Hawthornthwaite," *Liverpool Chronicle*, 18.5.59;  
 N.C. 12.5.59.  
 Many lost watches from no. 551 [N.Ch. 13.5.80] to no. 1,110.  
 [N.C. 27.12.77.]
- HAWTHORN, Mrs. Margaret (1779-82). W. Newcastle.  
 Widow of John. N.J. 13.2.79. Dead, N.Ch. 23.3.82.
- HERBERT, Robert (1782). W. South Shields.  
 N.Ch. 12.1.82.  
 Lost, silver watch, no. 21. [N.Ch. 12.1.82.]
- HEWITT, James (1749-52). W. Sunderland.  
 N.J. 9.9.49; 14.3.52.  
 Lost, silver watch, no. 5,212. [N.C. 20.2.62.]
- HILLS, Ralph (1795). W. Sunderland.  
 D.

\* N.B.—This second watch is conceivably an error for "John"  
 (q.v.).

- HINDHAUGH, Joseph (before 1776). C.W. South Shields.  
 Lost, watch-paper. [N.C. 10.8.76.]  
 silver watch, no. 358. [N.Ch. 25.1.84.]
- HUTCHINSON, John (1752). C. Durham.  
 Durham, St. Mary-le-Bow, Regs. 7.1.52; 2.8.52.
- JACKSON, Richard (1762-68). C.W. Hexham.  
 From York, a pupil of "the noted Henry Hindley of York."  
 N.C. 29.5.62. N.Ch. 8.3.66; 29.3.66; 17.12.68.
- JOHNSTON, John (1753-78). C.W. Morpeth.  
 Came from Berwick. N.J. 15.9.53. N.C. 29.4.58.  
 N.J. 31.10.78. Dead or retired.
- KING, Thomas (1773-95). W. Alnwick.  
 D.  
 Watch dated 1773, Guildhall Museum, London.
- KIRKUP, Matthew (1797-1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D. N.C. 10.6.97.
- KNOX, Alexander (1795). W. Berwick.  
 D.
- LANGLANDS & CO. (before 1780). W. Newcastle.  
 Also Goldsmiths.  
 Lost watch. [*York Chronicle*, 21.7.80.]
- LATIMER, Henry (1765). C.W. Gateshead.  
 N.Ch. 17.8.65.
- LECKIE, T. (before 1759). W. Newcastle.  
 Lost, silver watch with enamelled dial plate, no. 16,078, to  
 open with a picker (i.e., had a secret spring). [N.J.  
 15.9.59.]
- LIDDEL, Charles (1795). W. Stockton.  
 D.
- LIDDLE, John (1795-96). W. Morpeth.  
 D. N.C. 17.9.96.
- MARSHAL, Richard (1745). C. Wolsingham.  
 N.J. 23.11.45.
- MARSHALL, Francis (1795). C.W. Durham.  
 D.
- MARTIN, Jonathan (before 1786). W. Durham.  
 Lost watch, probably old. [N.C. 4.11.86.]
- MEIN, William (1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
 N.C. 12.12.01.
- MORLEY, William (1729). C. Newcastle.  
 Insolvent debtor, imprisoned for debt, taking advantage of  
 the Insolvent Debtors' Acts. [*London Gazette*, 31.5.29.]

- MORPETH, Thomas (1776-95). C.W. Hexham.  
 D. N.Ch. 10.2.76. Applied for journeyman.  
 Watch movement, c. 1780. Soc. Antiq. Newcastle.
- NICHOLSON, John (1768-95). C.W. Durham.  
 D. N.J. 16.7.68. Succeeded Joseph Grey (q.v.).
- OCHILTRER, James (1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D.
- OGDEN, John (1751-53). C.W. Sunderland.  
 N.J. 23.11.51; 1.12.53 (dead).  
 Lost, gold horizontal watch, no. 535. [N.J. 1.1.72.]
- OGDEN, Mrs. Jane (1753). C.W. Sunderland.  
 Widow of John. N.J. 1.12.53.
- OGDEN, Bernard (before 1753). W. Darlington.  
 Lost, silver watch. [N.J. 4.8.53.]
- OGDEN, Mary (1766). W. Darlington.  
 N.Ch. 13.9.66.  
 Lost, silver watch. [N.Ch. 13.9.66.]
- OGDEN, John (before 1778). W. Darlington.  
 Lost, silver watch. [*Bristol Journal*, 4.4.78.]
- OGDEN, Samuel (before 1779). W. Alnwick.  
 Lost, silver watch. [N.C. 18.9.79.]
- OSELL, William (before 1779). W. Hexham.  
 Lost, silver watch, no. 21. [N.J. 13.11.79.]
- PATTERSON, David (1763-66). C.W. Sunderland.  
 N.J. 6.8.63; 29.3.66.  
 Makes 8-day clocks for less than 4 guineas.
- PEARSON, Thomas (1777-78). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D. N.C. 27.12.77.
- PEARSON, Thomas (1795). W. Berwick.  
 D. Possibly identical with the above.
- PILE, John (1791). C.W. Newcastle.  
 N.A. 9.7.91.
- PORTHOUSE, William (1795). C.W. Barnard Castle.  
 D.
- RAWE, Nathaniel (before 1756). W. Durham.  
 Lost, silver watch. [N.J. 6.3.56.]
- RAWSON, William (1790). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D.
- RAWSON, John (1790). C.W. Newcastle.  
 D.
- RICHARDSON, T. (1783). C.W. Darlington.  
 N.C. 25.10.83.  
 Lost, silver watch, no. 39. [N.C. 25.10.83.]





- ROBSON, Samuel (1784). W. North Shields.  
N.Ch. 9.10.84.  
Lost, silver watch, capped. [N.Ch. 9.10.84.]
- ROWLANDS, Jonathan (1766). W. Berwick.  
N.J. 8.2.66.
- ROWLANDS, Walter (1795). W. Berwick.  
D.
- RUMFORD, John (1795). W. Bishop Auckland.  
D.
- SAMUEL, Hart (1777). W. Sunderland.  
N.Ch. 18.1.77. Shop robbed of "new silver watches, nos.  
8,946, 9,228, and 9,714" (probably his own make).
- SANDERSON, J. (before 1776). W. Newcastle.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 169. [N.Ch. 28.12.76.]
- SCOTT, John (1790-95). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- SHIPMAN, John (1790-1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- SMOULT, James (I) (1745-49). C.W. Newcastle.  
"Smoult & Gilbertson," 1745-1747. [N.J. 16.3.45. N.G.  
24.11.47.]  
N.G. 25.1.49 (dead).
- SMOULT, James (II) (1749 and 1750-58). C.W. Newcastle.  
N.G. 25.1.49. Apparently in partnership with his father  
James (I); on his death, went to Lancaster.<sup>2</sup>  
N.J. 15.12.50. Returned to Newcastle.  
N.J. 14.10.58 (dead).  
Lost watch, enamelled dial plate, no. 1. [N.J. 21.2.56.]  
Lost, silver watch, new, horizontal, with enamelled dial plate,  
cased and jewelled, no. 140. [N.J. 21.2.56.]
- SMOULT, Mrs. Eleanor (1758-59). C.W. Newcastle.  
Widow of James (II). N.J. 14.10.58.  
Stock sold. N.C. 28.7.59.
- SMOULT, Thomas (1790-91). C.W. Newcastle.  
D. N.A. 9.7.91 (retired).
- STANLEY, Joseph (1761). C.W. North Shields.  
N.J. 21.2.61. Journeyman wanted.
- STODDART, Charles (before 1782). W. Morpeth.  
Lost, watch. [N.Ch. 12.1.82.]
- STOKELL, Hugh (1766-95). C.W. Newcastle.  
St. Nicholas, Marriage Regs. 5.6.66. D.  
N.A. 28.8.90. N.C. 12.10.99.  
"Stokell & Stuart," 1795.

<sup>2</sup> There were generations of Smoults, watchmakers, in Lancaster.

STRACHAN, Archibald (1778). C.W. Newcastle.

D.

Lost, silver watch, no. 110. [N.C. 12.10.99.]

STUART (1795). C.W. Newcastle.

See STOKELL.

SWINBURN, John (1761-95). C.W. Sunderland.

D. N.J. 21.11.61. From Bishop Auckland.

N.Ch. 31.5.77.

SWINBURNE, John (1769). W. Hexham.

N.C. 11.11.69.

THIRKELD, Deodatus (1699-1700). W. Newcastle.

St. Nicholas Marriage Regs.; 3.1.99; 29.10.00.

Lost, "large silver watch, having THIRKELD, NEWCASTLE, engraved on the dial plate." [N.J. 10.11.50.]

TICKLE, William (I) (1763-1801). C.W. Newcastle.

D. N.J. 10.9.63. N.Ch. 30.10.84. N.A. 28.8.90.

Lost, silver watch, no. 7,041. [N.Ch. 6.8.85.]

TICKLE, William (II) (1790). C.W. Newcastle.

D.

TURNBULL, William (1761-80). W. Darlington, Newcastle.

N.J. 28.3.61.

Lost, silver watch, enamel'd dial, opens with a pin. [N.J. 28.3.61.]

Watch movement c. 1780. "W. Turnbull, Newcastle." No. 1401.

VARDY, THOMAS (1774). W. Alnwick.

N.C. 26.2.74.

WALKER, John (I) (before 1762). W. Newcastle.

Lost, an *old* silver watch, no. 160. [*Daily Advertiser*, 31.8.62.]

Hardly the work of John Walker (II).

Lost, watch-paper. "I. Walker, Newcastle." [N.C. 8.5.56.]

WALKER, John (II) (1754-73). C.W. Newcastle.

N.J. 22.6.54. From London, makes all sorts of clocks and watches.

Sykes' *Local Records* I, 236. Made new chiming clock for St. Nicholas Church, October, 1761.

N.J. 12.2.66. Invented "a perfect machine for cutting and finishing the movements of a clock." His 8-day clocks cost £3 13s. 6d.

N.J. 12.6.73 (dead).

Lost, silver watch, no. 335. [N.Ch. 3.9.68.]

WALKER, Mrs. Jane (1773-83). C.W. Newcastle.

Widow of John (II). N.J. 12.6.73. D.

N.Ch. 27.9.83.

- WALKER, John (III) (1790). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- WALKER, James (1769). C. Newcastle.  
Insolvent debtor. N.C. 3.6.69.
- WALKER, Michael (1795). C.W. Chester-le-Street.  
D.
- WARD, Joshua (1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.
- WATSON, Thomas (before 1801). W. Newcastle.  
Also silversmith.  
Lost, silver watch, no. 1,056. [N.C. 10.1.01.]
- WEATHERLY, Thomas (1795). W. Berwick.  
D.
- WEATHERSTON, John (1778). C.W. Morpeth.  
N.J. 31.10.78. "Late foreman to the celebrated Mr. M'Pherson,  
watchmaker, in Edinburgh, has taken the stock of Mr.  
Johnston in Morpeth."
- WEATHERSTON, John (1790-1801). C.W. Newcastle.  
D. Possibly identical with the above.
- WEIR, John (1759). "Dealer in Watches." Newcastle.  
N.J. 15.9.59.
- WHITE, Edward (1751). W. Morpeth.  
N.J. 1.6.51.
- WILSON, John (1778-90). C.W. Newcastle.  
D.