



Impression from intaglio, showing Jupiter
Heliopolitanus

Scale 4/1



Impression from electro of Bewick engraving
See text page 243 – 5

XVII

NOTES

1. BAAL AT CORBRIDGE

WITH the exception of two altars from Carvoran, the great god of Baalbeck has not been attested in Britain.¹ This note is intended to draw attention to a sardonix intaglio in the site museum at Corbridge which depicts Jupiter Heliopolitanus wearing his distinctive long oriental vestments and *calathus*, carrying a whip in his left hand and an ear of corn in his right hand; on either side of him is a bull.²

The god is not frequently encountered on intagli, and our stone is probably unique in the North Western provinces of the Empire.³ It may have been lost by one of the Syrian archers to whom I have referred or alternatively by a levantine merchant or visitor.⁴

MARTIN HENIG

2. THE STANEGATE AT HOMER'S LANE

At the time when Mr. Wright⁵ traced the Stanegate through the field to the north, this field was not available for excavation. Therefore, when he discovered that the road made a sharp turn southwards, he was unable to follow its course further. In 1965, permission was kindly given by Mr. M. Straker for an excavation, but in the brief time available, several trial holes failed to establish the exact line of the road.

¹ E. and J. R. Harris, *The Oriental Cults in Roman Britain* (Leiden, 1965) 68-9. Cf *RIB* 1782, 1783. Carvoran was garrisoned by the *Cohors I Hamiorum Sagittariorum* during the second century. For the god in general, René Dussand, "Jupiter Héliopolitain" *Rev. Arch.* fourth ser. 1 (1903), 347-68.

² Miss Dorothy Charlesworth in *AA*⁴ XXXIX (1961), 32 No. 9 pl. ix, 5 describes the stone as "agate" and the figure as "Ephesian Diana, holding torch in either hand, deer either side" but the identification is not in any doubt. Cf Dussand, *op. cit.* 349 note 5 for list of intagli. Macrobius, *Saturnalia* I, 23 writes "Assyri quoque solem sub nomine Iovis quem Δία Ηλιουπολιτην cognominant, maximis caeremoniis

celebrant in civitate quae Heliopolis nuncupatur ... Simulacrum enim aurem specie imberbi instat dextera elevata cum flagro in aurigae modum, laeva tenet fulmen et spicas quae cuncta Iovis Solisque consociatam potentiam monstrant".

³ However an intaglio is recorded at Aquileia (G. Sena Chiesa, *Gemme del Museo Nazionale di Aquileia* (Aquileia, 1966) No. 33).

⁴ Cf *RIB* 1124 for a dedication to Astarte and *RIB* 1129, to Heracles of Tyre both presumably set up by Greek-speakers from the East Mediterranean littoral. Barathes who came from Palmyra, even further away, died in Corbridge. (*RIB* 1171).

⁵ *AA*⁴ XVI (1939), p. 146.

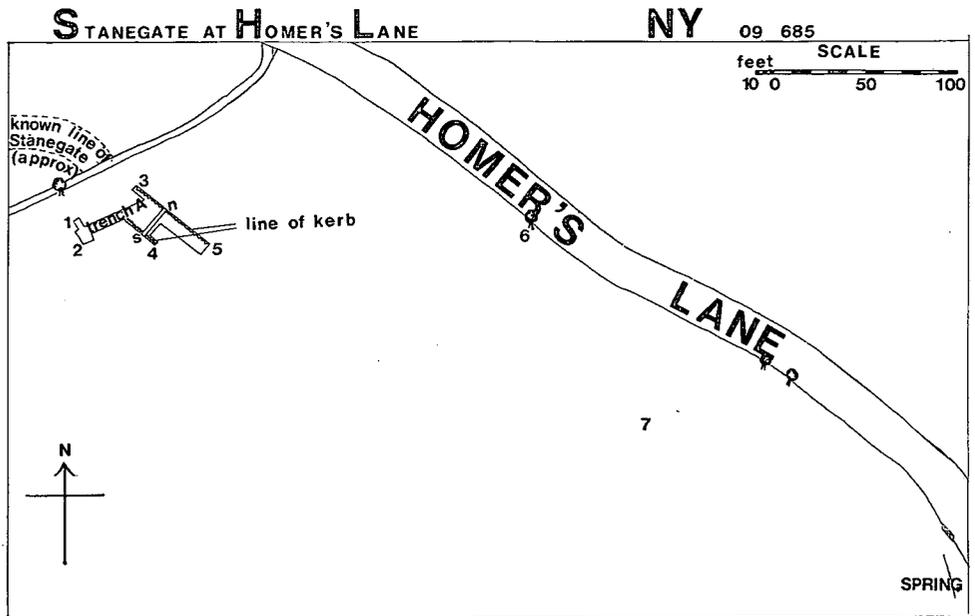


Fig. 1. Location of Excavation

In 1970, therefore, it was decided to lay down a long trench, eight feet wide, parallel with the fence-line, to intersect the apparent line of the road (Trench A), Fig. 1. The road was found to run through at an angle of some 60 degrees at the east end of the trench. This was then extended to trace the eastern kerb to points 3 and 5 and the western kerb to point 4. The road was sectioned at s-n, Fig. 2.

All that remained of the road surface, was a single layer of sandstone "cobble" with some of the larger kerb stones remaining *in situ*. The rest had presumably been removed by stone-robbing, deep ploughing, and drainage work. The section shows a gap in the surface beneath which a drain was found, capped by a large stone. This drain was not thought to be of Roman date, although because of the very wet soil conditions, it was not possible

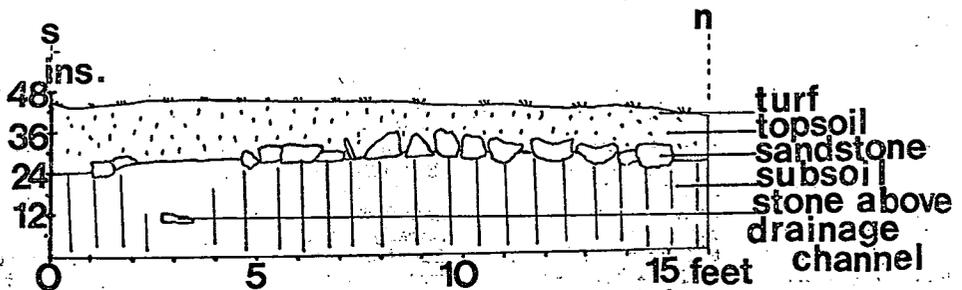


Fig. 2. Cross-Section at point s-n

to distinguish the sides of the drainage trench. Evidence of a similar drain, possibly connected, was found near point 5.

At the western end of Trench A, a large area of similar cobbles was revealed and extensions at 1 and 2 attempted to define this area which still requires further investigation. It was thought that it might represent a change in the line of the road, to reduce the sharpness of the bend, or might be only a spread of material from the road surface, or from a culvert over the stream on the north of the fence, which now flows free. A similar patch of stone was noted by Mr. Wright, on the east side of his section.

Time did not allow further investigation and the line of the road southwards cannot be stated with any certainty. A marked rise in the level of Homer's Lane at point 6 might indicate that the Roman road swung across there, giving a zig-zag line similar to that at Carvoran or Quarry Beck. However, a large stone was visible at point 7, which probing suggested might mark the eastern kerb. Continuing on this line, the road would leave the field near the gate by the spring. A crop mark on the same alignment, in the field across the road, could not be explored because of intensive cultivation.

E. W. SOCKETT

3. THREE BEWICK BLOCKS

The Society owns three blocks attributed to Thomas Bewick. Of these one is the Society's seal. This block was ordered by Council on 1st March 1815 and we paid three guineas for it.⁶ It is exceedingly worn, having grown old in our service. It should now be regarded as a museum exhibit only.

The other two were given us in 1960 by Miss E. M. Bell, having been formerly the property of her grandfather T. J. Bell of Clyvedon, Cleadon.⁷ Of these one⁸ is well-known as it was used on the title page of Charnley's 1820 edition of the *Select Fables*. Of this block Charnley in his Advertisement, page iii, states that *the vignette of the Old Exchange, in the title, was engraved by Mr. Thomas Bewick in 1819*. It is a sound piece of work but not one of the master's more inspired productions. Its value as a record is somewhat qualified by the circumstance that it is apparently based on the same sketch as a copperplate engraving re-published by Miss Julia Boyd,⁹ attributed to the Newcastle Almanack for the year 1786 and described as a View of the Exchange from Sandhill. This block is missing.

The remaining block¹⁰ is a very different matter. Its technique is character-

⁶ *Proceedings* 4th ser. Vol. IX p. 144. Incidentally in a letter to his friend Dovaston in 1826 Bewick writes: *I am only an honorary Member of our Antiquarian Society and have very seldom attended their meetings.*

⁷ Miss Bell believes that her grandfather pur-

chased the blocks in a secondhand shop in the West end of Newcastle either early this century or towards the end of the last century.

⁸ Accession No: 1960/17.

⁹ *Boyd Bewick Gleanings* (1886) Plate XXXV.

¹⁰ Accession No: 1960/18.

istic of the master at his best. The transitions of light and shade, the highlight for example on the back of the chief figure placed against the solid shadow of the bosky bank, the meticulous attention to detail, the filling of the space, the balance of the composition, are all characteristic, as are the natural, restful but concentrated, postures of the anglers, and the closing of the view with a bridge. The only element missing is the master's humour; even this may be provided by the bird, watchful, but not perhaps expecting an immediate flurry of action. If we had to express our opinion about the authorship of this block, without the assistance of other evidence, we would have good ground for averring that it was from the hand of Thomas Bewick himself.

The only publication¹¹ traced of this engraving is in Hugo's *Bewick Woodcuts* (London 1870). This establishes that the block was in Hugo's collection and that it was probably engraved either by Thomas or John Bewick. In this volume the block appears as No. 672. The impression in the copy that has been examined is rather heavy, losing some of the finer differences of tone, but giving virtually unbroken lines in the sky. Hugo categorises it as a book illustration. As such it could well have been cut for inclusion in a Fisher's Garland, a type of publication then coming into fashion. Finally in Hugo's numerical catalogue the block is stated to be: *From Davison's Office, Alnwick.*

As Professor Isaac tells us in his study¹² of William Davison that printer is said to have paid Bewick £500 in all for engravings. Davison sold stock stereos of these and other blocks to fellow printers. We must accept that this block was one of those purchased from Bewick by Davison, but no trace of its use at that time has so far been discovered by the writer. Professor Isaac has examined all his Davison books and chapbooks without finding an impression of it, nor does it appear in Davison's catalogue (undated) of stock blocks, his copy of which Professor Isaac kindly lent me.

After Davison's death in 1858 his blocks were sold by auction in Newcastle and bought by the bookseller Robert Robinson, who in turn sold them to Rev. Thomas Hugo. Up to about 1870 therefore the probable history of this block is clear: Bewick/Davison/Robinson/Hugo. There is therefore a gap in its history till its purchase by Mr. T. J. Bell. As the block is in good condition it seems to have lain unused in private hands all this time. In my opinion therefore, we have in our possession a block engraved by Thomas Bewick

¹¹ I am indebted to the librarian of the North Shields Public Library for the opportunity to inspect their copy (L761/R1454) of this work. A reproduction also appears on Plate 139, fig. 5 in R. Hutchinson *1800 Woodcuts of Thomas Bewick*. This has been reproduced from what

must have been a less than satisfactory impression in a copy of Hugo's volume.

¹² P. C. G. Isaac, *William Davison of Alnwick* (London 1968) p. 11. See also *The Library* (fifth series) XXIV No. 1 (March 1969).

himself, which has only been published by Hugo in 1870, in a work copies of which are now rare.^{13*}

JOHN PHILIPSON

¹³ As is often the case with 19th c. wood-blocks this one is not of uniform height. Under a printing pressure of 50 lbs p.s.i., it is 0.017" over type-high at one end and 0.013" over at the other. On modern precision presses blocks prepared for the soft packing and mechanical latitude of Bewick's day are often difficult to print. The illustration on Plate XXXIV has been printed from a wax-moulded electro made direct from the original block.

* Since writing the above note I have had the opportunity, through the courtesy of the Director of the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne, and under the guidance of Mrs. M. Ellison, to inspect certain of the day-books of Thomas Bewick. On March 9, 1816 is entered the sale to *The Antiquarian Society* of a *Wood Cut, of their seal*—£2.2.0, and on 12 December 1818 a charge to Mr. Emerson Charnley *To Engraving a View of the Old Exchange of Newcastle on Wood*—£4.4.0.

