

CORNELIUS TIEBOUT: HIS LIFE AND ENGRAVINGS

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Abstract

Cornelius Tiebout was one of America's most productive copperplate engravers. His illustrations, published mostly in American adaptations of books previously published in London or Edinburgh, are important as representatives of the emerging distinctly American culture during the first few decades following the war of independence from England. Using resources of the American Antiquarian Society, including manuscript account books of publisher Mathew Carey, and archival materials in the Library of Congress, this article presents a much larger picture of Tiebout and his work than can be found in biographical dictionaries, essays, and compilations that refer to Tiebout's engravings.¹

Even before Cornelius Tiebout arrived in New Harmony, Indiana—on 24 October 1826—his family biographers had lost track of him.² They thought he had moved to Kentucky, and their estimates of his years of birth and death were misleading.³ His extended family back east—and the rest of the world—had scant understanding of the particulars of his life and livelihood and their significance

¹ Essays and compilations that refer to Tiebout's engravings:

- George C. Groce and David H. Wallace, *The New York Historical Society's Dictionary of Artists in America 1564-1860*, Yale University Press, 1957, p. 630.
- David McNeely Stauffer, *American Engravers upon Copper and Steel*, Part 1: Biographical Sketches and Part II: Check-List of the Works of the Earlier Engravers, New York, 1907. Online: <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001482904>.
- Donald C. O'Brien, *Amos Doolittle, Engraver of the New Republic*, New Castle, Delaware, for The American Historical Print Collectors Society, Farmingdale, New York, 2008.
- Donald C. O'Brien, "The Engravers of Philadelphia's Port Folio Magazine", *Printing History*, New Series no. 15, January 2014.
- Gloria-Gilda Deák, *Picturing America 1497-1899*, Princeton University Press, 1988, vol. 1, pp. 93-94, 121-12.

² William Maclure to Reuben Haines, 25 October 1826, Wyck Collection, American Philosophical Society, Box 19, Folder 239.

³ Cornelius Henry Tiebout and Francis V. Morrell, *The Ancestry and Posterity of Cornelius Henry Tiebout of Brooklyn*, printed for private distribution, 1910.

in the history of printing, especially copperplate engraving. The purpose of this article is to present some of those particulars.

Several men named Cornelius Tiebout descended from Jan Tibout, who moved to America before 1656. One of his great-grandsons, Tunis Tiebout (1727- c.1816), married Elisabeth Lamb, also of New York, in 1753, and among their children was Cornelius. Although dates of baptism are known for seven of his siblings, no definitive record appears for Cornelius. Widely published estimates are 1770, 1772, 1773, and 1777.⁴ The estimate 1777, accepted before October 5, 2023, by the Library of Congress and many followers, is doubtful.⁵ It was gleaned from an account that includes many inaccuracies, such as the claim that Tiebout arrived in Indiana on the famous Boatload of Knowledge in January, 1826.⁶ Had that claim been true, his name would appear in the list of passengers.⁷ Moreover, his signed engravings dated 1789 do not appear to be the work of a twelve-year-old. Indeed, his name appears on a 1788 “Plan of the High Court of Parliament”⁸, after one in the British Museum.⁹

The “old” (i.e., before October 5, 2023) Library of Congress LCCN Permalink authorization for Cornelius Tiebout, as retrieved on 1 January 2023, is shown below. An error report stemming from recent research led to the updated and improved Library of Congress Authorities record, which is

⁴ Estimated years of Tiebout’s birth:

- 1770 *New York State Silversmiths*, ed. H. F. Darling, Eggertsville, New York, 1964, p. 176.
- 1772 Josephine Mirabella Elliott, *Partnership for Posterity: The Correspondence of William Maclure and Marie Duclos Fretageot, 1820-1833*, p. 379.
- 1773 Groce and Wallace, op. cit.
- 1773 *Who Was Who in American Art*, 3 vols, Sound View Press, 1999.
- 1773 (formerly 1777) Library of Congress Authorities: <https://lccn.loc.gov/n88080165>.
- 1777 *Benezit Dictionary of Artists*, vol. 13, Gründ, Paris, 2006, p. 940.
- 1777 *Dictionary of American Biography*, vol. 9, ed. Dumas Malone, New York, 1964, p. 530.
- 1777 Union List of Artist Names Online (ULAN) from Getty Research (<https://www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabularies/ulan/>).

⁵ Mantle Fielding’s *Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers*, compiled by Mantle Fielding and James F. Carr, New York, 1965, p. 367.

⁶ Ross Franklin Lockridge, Sr., *The Old Fauntleroy Home*, New Harmony Memorial Commission, 1939, p. 79; <https://archive.org/details/oldfauntleroyhom00lock>. A grandson of the author wrote that Lockridge “didn’t exactly whitewash history, but he certainly edited it. He attempted to bind people to their own local history through heroic narrative.” (Quoted from <https://blog.history.in.gov/the-indelible-ross-lockridges/>).

⁷ Donald Pitzer, “William Maclure’s Boatload of Knowledge: Science and Education into the Midwest”, *Indiana Magazine of History*, XCIV, 1998, pp. 110-135.

⁸ Cornelius Tiebout, “Plan of the High Court of Parliament”, foldout inserted between the May and June 1788 issues of *American Magazine*, owned by the American Antiquarian Society and listed in its Catalogue of American Engravings.

⁹ https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1978-U-1960.

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Tiebout, Cornelius, 1777-1832

LC control no.	n 88080165
Descriptive conventions	rda
Personal name heading	Tiebout, Cornelius, 1777-1832 <i>Browse this term in LC Authorities or the LC Catalog</i>
Variant(s)	Tiebout, C. (Cornelius), 1777-1832 Tiebout, 1777-1832
Birth date	1777
Death date	1832
Found in	L'Enfant, P. C. Plan of the city of Washington, 1792: map recto (Tiebout) LC database, 7-7-88 (hdg.: Tiebout, Cornelius, 1777-1830; usage: del. C. Tiebout, sculpt.) Tooley's dict. of mapmakers, 1979 (Tiebout, Cornelius, Amer. engraver, N.Y., fl. 1789-1810) Lockridge, R.F. The old Fauntleroy home, 1939: p. 79, etc. (Cornelius Tiebout; engraver; dwelt in the Fauntleroy home at New Harmony, Ind., with his daughter Caroline, and Thomas Say, the zoologist; began engraving at age 13, portraits at age 16; studied in London 1795-7; sett. Phila. 1799; m. Esther Young; lost his fortune in 1825 and his family and biographers lost track of him; became instructor of engraving at New Harmony community's School of Industry 1826 until his death; b. N.Y.C. 1777; d. New Harmony 1832; buried in Woods Graveyard in New Harmony) MWA/NAIP files (hdg.: Tiebout, Cornelius, 1777-1832; note: several sources, including DAB, erroneously note birth ca. 1773, and death ca. 1830 in Kentucky, where he was believed to have gone in 1825 and died in obscurity) Brewer, G. The juvenile Lavater, 1815: frontispiece plate (Tiebout)

Note that this “old” Library of Congress statement explicitly negates “ca. 1773” as Tiebout’s year of birth and fails to recognize 1770 as another published possibility. Also, there are two United States Census records that imply that Tiebout was born before 1777: the 1800 census shows only one person named Cornelius Tiebout in Philadelphia, aged 26-44, with a probable wife aged 16-25 and a male of age under 10 (cf. Esther and Joseph), and the 1820 census shows a single Cornelius Tiebout, over 45, with a probable wife aged 26-44, and children. Yet another indication that Tiebout was born before 1777 occurs in a memorial to one of Tiebout’s friends, Alexander Anderson: “Cornelius Tiebout was very little older than young Anderson”—who was born on 21 April 1775.¹⁰

Tiebout’s siblings were born during 1754-1767. Sponsors for the baptisms of four siblings were

¹⁰ John Benson Lossing, *A Memorial to Alexander Anderson, M. D., the First Engraver on Wood in America*. Read before the New York Historical Society, Oct. 5, 1870”, New York, 1872, p. 37; <https://archive.org/details/cu31924030676419>.

Sara Burger and Eva Burger, presumably of the family of Tiebout's grandmother Elisabet Burger of New York.¹¹ Possibly they were related to silversmith John Burger (1747-1828), to whom Tiebout was apprenticed in the 1780s.

One of Tiebout's earliest engravings is the title page of *Amphion*, erroneously dated 1780.¹² Perhaps it was published in 1789, as that date appears in handwriting on a back endpaper of *Amphion* in the British Library.¹³ An introductory page of *Amphion* is partially quoted here:

To the Patrons of Genius and Lovers of Divine Music

The subscribers, after a series of incessant application to the study of the art of Engraving and Copperplate Printing, have acquired, without the aid of a teacher, a knowledge of those useful branches of business, which hath enabled them to lay before the Public, the following COLLECTION of CHURCH MUSIC.

...The price of this Book being set as low as possible, and the proprietors (who are not yet arrived at an age of maturity) having been at great pains and expence, in acquiring their present knowledge of engraving and printing, flatter themselves their ingenuity and industry will meet the patronage of their fellow citizens.

...We are with great submission, the Public's Humble Servants, JOHN BURGER, Jun., CORNELIUS TIEBOUT.

Regarding the assertion that the Subscribers had learned business on their own, Tiebout's fellow-subscriber and proprietor, John Burger, Jr., was a son of the silversmith and a business partner with Tiebout.¹⁴ Also of interest is the allusion to the age of maturity. Writing with the first US copyright law (1790) in mind, Irving Lowens surmises that the age of maturity may have then been regarded as 20 years. Lowens concludes that "According to the standard of the age in which they lived, our enterprising teen-aged tune-book compilers did nothing dreadfully unethical, and they deserve more

¹¹ Tiebout and Morrell, op. cit., p. 21. The source, cited as "Collegiate Church Records", refers to the Reformed Dutch Church in New York City. The Reference Staff of the New York Public Library found Tiebout's siblings in *New York Genealogical and Biographical Society Collections, Vol. 3: Baptisms, Reformed Dutch Church New York 1731-1800*, but not Tiebout himself. His marriage is recorded in the church's record of marriages:

<https://ia600505.us.archive.org/4/items/recordsofreforme01coll/recordsofreforme01coll.pdf>, page

¹² *Amphion or the Chorister's Delight, containing a select number of psalm tunes hymns and anthems, from the most approv'd authors, in three parts, fitted to the psalms used in the church in general: Besides the necessary rules of psalmody.* 'Compiled engraved and printed by J. Burger Jun^r and C. Tiebout: New York, 1780'.

¹³ Irving Lowens, "Amphion: Another Piracy from Andrew Law?", in *Richard S. Hill: Tributes from Friends*, compiled and edited by C. J. Bradley and J. B. Coover, Detroit Studies in Music Bibliography, no. 58, Detroit, 1987, p. 195.

¹⁴ "Burger & Tiebout.—Copper Plate Printing and Engraving, are performed at Mr. Burger's No. 153 Water-street, near the Crane-Wharf. The engraving by Cornelius Tiebout, The printing by John Burger, Jun. A specimen of their abilities may be seen at their shop..." *New-York Weekly Museum*, June 18, 1790.

praise for their initiative than blame for their reliance upon wiser and more experienced tunesmiths of their time.”¹⁵

Although it is possible that *Amphion* appeared *before* 1789, it is certain that 1789 is the year that Tiebout’s engraving of the title page of Christopher Colles’s *Survey of the Roads of the United States of America* appeared. In that year, it is thought that Colles’s daughter, Eliza, learned from Colles’s engraver, Tiebout, how to engrave map plates.¹⁶ Copperplate engraving required elaborate and painstaking procedures that are now little known.¹⁷ Among online introductions to this bygone art is one from the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.¹⁸

Another of Tiebout’s engravings from 1789 is a Plan for the City of New York. A copy can be downloaded from <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3804n.ar111300/>, with options for enlarging the image considerably; this is *very* helpful for any detailed examination of the Plan, which appeared in several editions of the New York City directory beginning in 1789, published by T. and J. Swords.¹⁹

Thomas and James Swords also published *The New York Magazine; or, Literary Repository*, from 1790 to 1797.²⁰ This monthly has been described as “one of the four most important magazines of its time”. “Illustrated with costly copperplate engravings”, the subscribers included George Washington, John Adams, and John Jay. During the *Magazine’s* first year, twelve plates by Tiebout were included; during 1791 there were thirteen; in 1792, twelve; and in 1793, nine. In 1793, Tiebout moved to England. All 47 images are indexed in Stauffer and Fielding, with dates, titles, and details.²¹

Tiebout was one of several New York engravers whose work appears in early American editions of the Bible. One of them was Amos Doolittle (1754-1832). Six plates by Doolittle are included in John Brown’s Bible of 1792, along with three plates by Tiebout, entitled Moses Before the Burning Bush, Samson Killing the Lion, and Elijah and Elisha; the first two of these show a date of 1790.²²

Much has been written about Doolittle. He and Tiebout each engraved 14 plates, among a total of 60, for William Durell’s publication of *Josephus*, essentially a reprinting of the Maynard edition

¹⁵ Lowens, op. cit., p.198.

¹⁶ Walter William Ristow, “Eliza Colles, America’s First Female Map Engraver”, *The Map Collector*, 10, 1980, pp. 14-17.

¹⁷ *The Grove Encyclopedia of Materials and Techniques in Art*, edited by G. W. R. Ward, Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 618-620.

¹⁸ <https://www.metmuseum.org/about-the-met/collection-areas/drawings-and-prints/materials-and-techniques/printmaking/engraving>.

¹⁹ New York City Directories, including 1789: <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/new-york-city-directories#/?tab=about>

²⁰ *New York Magazine*:

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=njp.32101065353961&view=thumb&seq=1>

²¹ Stauffer, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 520-533 and Mantle Fielding, *American Engravers upon Copper and Steel*, vol. 3, Philadelphia, 1917, pp. 271-284.

²² John Brown, *The Self-Interpreting Bible*, New York, 1792.

published in London, except that new plates were engraved for Durell's edition.²³ The book is a history of the Jews, as recorded by Josephus, who is said to have died in Rome in 100 AD. A biographer of Doolittle writes, "In examining the plates closely, it is readily seen that the quality of the work varies considerably. For example, Doolittle plates are far inferior to those of Tiebout. The former are crudely drawn and engraved entirely in line, whereas Tiebout enhanced his line with etching. A cursory examination divulges that Tiebout was a superior craftsman even before studying in London."²⁴

During 1801-1816, Tiebout engraved plates for several more Bibles. A count of 69 such plates, including later states, along with publication details and titles of the plates by other engravers, can be found in a list compiled by O'Callaghan.²⁵ An example from O'Callaghan is the following list of engravings in the Bible published by Mathew Carey in 1801:

Abel offering Sacrifice	Tiebout
Judgment of Solomon	Tanner
David playing on the Harp	Tiebout
Shepherds worshipping the Infant	Tiebout
The Master of the Vineyard chiding the dissatisfied Laborer	Tanner
The Resurrection	Tiebout
The Good Samaritan, (etched by James Akin)	Tiebout
The Woman of Samaria	Tanner
He that is without Sin among you, let him first cast a Stone at her	Tanner

Regarding the four engravings by Benjamin Tanner (1775-1848), another account of early American Bibles states that Tanner was a pupil of Tiebout.²⁶

During the summer of 1793, yellow fever swept through Philadelphia, and Mathew Carey published a pamphlet, *History of the Yellow Fever*, of which "immense numbers" were sold.²⁷ In a note dated 6 January 1794, Carey wrote to Tiebout regarding Tiebout's purchase of four dozen of these pamphlets on 21 October 1793. Apparently "Tiebout either found a ready market for them in New York City or took them to London for resale."²⁸ The date of Tiebout's purchase establishes that his arrival in London, recorded as 1793 in several accounts, probably occurred after October. The reason usually given for his move was to study stipple engraving under James Heath (1757-1834); however, Tiebout already had at least two stipple engravings published before moving to

²³ Flavius Josephus, *The Whole Genuine and Complete Works of Flavius Josephus*, translated by G. Maynard, New York, 1792-94.

²⁴ O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 41.

²⁵ Edmund Bailey O'Callaghan, *A List of Editions of the Holy Scriptures and Parts Thereof Printed in America Previous to 1860: With Introduction and Bibliographic Notes*, Albany, New York, 1861. Online: <https://archive.org/details/listofeditionsof00ocalrich>.

²⁶ *Early Bibles of America*, third edition, edited by J. Wright, New York, 1894, pp. 242-3.

²⁷ Earl L. Bradsher, *Mathew Carey, Editor, Author and Publisher*, New York, 1966, p. 51.

²⁸ O'Brien, *op. cit.*, p. 27.

London.²⁹ Although little is known about Heath's mentoring, he is well known to have collaborated with the Philadelphia-born London artist Benjamin West (1738-1820).³⁰ While in London, Tiebout resided in West's home-and-studio at 14 Newman Street.³¹ Having been elected President of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1792, West occupies "a central position in the history of the English print".³²

One of West's paintings shows his sons, Benjamin Jr. and Raphael, and Tiebout made a stipple engraving based on the painting. Prints of the engraving were published by the firm of Cornelius and [brother] Alexander Tiebout, 250 Pearl Street, New York, with the date 20 November 1796.³³ Many years later, Cornelius's daughter Caroline passed along one of the images to a grandson. Part of her accompanying handwritten note is quoted here: "When my Father was a young Man, he went to London to learn his profession (Engraving), boarded for four [sic] years in the house of Benjamin West the Painter... . My Father always retained a pleasant recollection of the happy days he passed in London."³⁴ Perhaps West's influence on Tiebout surpassed that of Heath.

Records of six engravings by Tiebout in London are known. Four are listed in Stauffer, one in Fielding, and one in neither. The earliest is of special interest. Stauffer writes of it, "In December, 1794, he engraved and published in London his large print of 'Anthophile' after a painting by J. Green."³⁵ Elsewhere, Stauffer praised this work and another: "... on Dec. 15, 1794, he published in London a well-executed stippleplate [of "Anthophile"]. In April, 1796 [sic, actually, 1795], Tiebout published in London his quarto portrait of John Jay. This is probably the first really good portrait engraved by an American-born professional engraver."³⁶

According to Fielding, "Anthophile" is a stipple engraving, of size 11.5×7.1; that is, 11 5/16 in. × 7 11/16 in.³⁷ Recent searches for a copy of this image in US and UK libraries and art collections have been unsuccessful. The other five London engravings are portraits:

- John Jay, 1 April 1795. (Stauffer 3179)

²⁹ "J. Ankarström", *New York Magazine*, January, 1793; listed as stipple, 3163 in Stauffer. Also "Mrs. Hallam", *The Dramatist*, New York, 1793; listed as stipple, 1594 in Fielding.

³⁰ David Alexander and Richard T. Godfrey, *Painters and Engraving*, New Haven, Yale Center for British Art, 1980, p. 68.

³¹ Kaylin Haverstock Weber, *The studio and collection of the "American Raphael": Benjamin West, P. R. A. (1738-1820)*, PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 2013. Also K. Weber, "A Temple of History Painting", in E. B. Neff and M. Postle, *West and Copley in a Transatlantic World*, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, 2013.

³² Alexander and Godfrey, op. cit., p. 32.

³³ Stauffer, op. cit., 2, no. 3198, pp. 526-7.

³⁴ Henry K. Guynes, "The Simon Wattles Kellogg Family of Robertson County, Texas", typescript in the Working Men's Institute Library, New Harmony, Indiana, undated, p. 2.

³⁵ Stauffer, op. cit., 1, pp. xxvi-xxvii.

³⁶ Stauffer, op. cit. 1, pp 271-2.

³⁷ Fielding 1608, p. 273.

- Alexander Leslie, Earl of Lennox, 1 September 1795, after Cornelius Johnson. (Stauffer 3183)
- Lord Newark (David Lesley). 12 Sep 1795. (Stauffer 3184)
- Sir Conrad Ruthven, 1 February 1796; line engraving in the National Portrait Gallery, London (not listed in Stauffer or Fielding)
- Alexander Erskine, plenipotentiary for Sweden, 28 February 1796, line engraving in National Galleries of Scotland; after Isaac Herbert (Stauffer 3170)

After Tiebout's return to New York in 1796, he continued engraving in both stipple and line.³⁸ His close acquaintances included Alexander Anderson (1775-1870), physician and engraver, known as the first American wood engraver.³⁹ Anderson had engraved seven wood plates for Maynard's *Josephus*, mentioned above. His diary dates Tiebout's return to New York as 16 August 1796, and the diary mentions Tiebout and his brother Alexander repeatedly.⁴⁰ Anderson had been apprenticed to Dr. Joseph Young (1735-1814), brother of Dr. Thomas Young (1731-1777).⁴¹ In his diary entry for 5 February 1799, Anderson mentions the courtship of Tiebout and Thomas Young's daughter, Esther, to whom Tiebout was married on 20 April 1799. They named their firstborn Joseph Young Tiebout (1800-1833). It appears, however, that Anderson was mistaken about the identity of Esther's father. Esther is not listed among Thomas Young's children.⁴² Instead, she is cited as the daughter of Isaac Young, a brother of Thomas Young, in a list of heirs of Joseph Young. The exact wording is "Esther, daughter of brother, Isaac, deceased and wife of Cornelius Tiebout."⁴³

Anderson made a number of wood engravings for Bibles published by Mathew Carey. Their correspondence reveals the milieu in which Carey published Tiebout's biblical plates. Both Tiebout and his brother Alexander are mentioned several times in the Alexander-Carey correspondence.⁴⁴

Possibly the last dated record of Tiebout's residence in New York is a letter dated 17 December

³⁸ General Catalog of the American Antiquarian Society: <https://catalog.mwa.org/index.html>

³⁹ Groce and Wallace, op. cit., p. 8.

⁴⁰ Jane R. Pomeroy, "Alexander Anderson's Life and Engravings before 1800, with a Checklist of Publications Drawn from His Diary": <https://www.americanantiquarian.org/proceedings/44517733.pdf>.

⁴¹ Stefan Bielinski, "Dr. Joseph Young": <https://exhibitions.nysm.nysed.gov/albany/bios/y/joyoung.html>.

⁴² Henry Herbert Edes, "Memoir of Dr. Thomas Young, 1731-1777", in *Transaction (1906-1907) of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts*, v. XI, Boston, 1910, pp 2-54; the list is on p. 51.

⁴³ Ray C. Sawyer, *Abstract of Wills Probated in the Common Pleas Court: also known as Mayor's Court, 1819-1892*, New York, 1989. Copied from New York 'County Clerk's Office, Hall of Records, New York City.

⁴⁴ Jane R. Pomeroy, "Bookmaking and Bible Illustration in the Early Republic: Letters between Mathew Carey and Alexander Anderson", Part 1, *Imprint*, 31, no. 1, Spring 2007, 25-36; Part 2, *Imprint*, 31, no. 2, Autumn 2007, pp. 2-15.

1799.⁴⁵ A genealogical record indicates that his son Joseph was born in Philadelphia on 4 March 1800. In that year, not only did Tiebout and engraver Benjamin Tanner move from New York to Philadelphia, but also, the US capital moved from Philadelphia to Washington, DC. A few years later, the engraver Francis Kearny (1785-1836) also moved from New York City to Philadelphia, where a weekly magazine, *Port Folio*, which featured the work of several engravers, had been founded.⁴⁶

One of the best-selling novels in nineteenth-century America was Susanna Rowson's *Charlotte Temple, A Tale of Truth*. In 1809, Carey published the eighth American edition, including a frontispiece by Tiebout, which "provided an emotional touchstone for readers, and soon other printers began to include frontispiece portraits and other illustrations in their editions of *Charlotte Temple*."⁴⁷

Several engravings by Tiebout are represented in *Port Folio*. In a history of Philadelphia, it is noted that he "did a great deal of work as an engraver in the early part of this century. A cottage scene, after a painting by W. Bigg, which he furnished the Portfolio [sic] in 1810, attracted much attention for being larger than the usual size, a mechanical contrivance of Tiebout's invention enabling the artist to execute most of the work without using the common graver."⁴⁸

Beginning in 1813, Tiebout attached the initials A.C.S.A. after his signature on a few of his engravings, signifying Academician in the Columbian Society of Artists, founded in Philadelphia.⁴⁹

Cornelius Tiebout's name first appears in Philadelphia city directories in 1801, where he is listed as an engraver and print seller. His address in 1803, when his daughter Caroline was born, was Chestnut near 8th, and from 1806 to 1814, Locust near Eighth. Beginning in 1818 and continuing until 1822, the firm Tanner, Kearny & Tiebout, bank note engravers, is listed with address 10 Library [Street]. Further listings for Cornelius Tiebout were 218 Walnut for 1817-19, 299 Vine for 1820-22, 1 Clover for 1823-24, and 8 S. 12th for 1825. The number of listings for engravers shows a sharp drop from 66 in 1824 to 39 in 1825. These data suggest that not long before Tiebout moved his family to New Harmony, conditions for his continuing livelihood in Philadelphia had declined. Regarding the bank note firm, Tiebout "is said to have made considerable money in his business, but he lost most of this in some disastrous speculation..."⁵⁰

⁴⁵ Cornelius Tiebout to Mathew Carey, Lea & Febiger Records, Box 16.

⁴⁶ O'Brien, op. cit.

⁴⁷ Spencer D. C. Keralis, "Pictures of Charlotte: The Illustrated Charlotte Temple and Her Readers", *Book History*, 13, 2010, pp. 25-57.

⁴⁸ John Thomas Scharf and Thompson Westcott, *History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884*, vol. 2, p. 1057.

⁴⁹ Smithsonian Archives of American Art: <https://www.aaa.si.edu/collections/columbian-society-artists-records-10173>.

⁵⁰ *Mantle Fielding's Dictionary of American Painters, Sculptors and Engravers*, compiled by J. F. Carr, New York, 1965, p. 368.

Elsewhere, it is written that Tiebout “accumulated considerable property in Philadelphia but lost most of his assets through investments in a blacking or carbon manufactory.”⁵¹ The word *blacking* here refers not only to shoe blacking—later called shoe polish—but also black ink used in engraving.⁵²

Along with Tiebout’s financial losses, there were other difficulties, such as the death of his wife Esther in 1823 and the loss of two of their young children.⁵³ The banknote firm had closed. Possibly Mathew Carey’s retirement in 1825, preceded by the increasing role of his son in the Carey publishing business, was a factor. In addition to these circumstances, copperplate engraving was increasingly being replaced by steel engraving and other advances in imaging.

To understand why Tiebout moved to New Harmony, it is helpful to consider its history. In 1814, George Rapp (1757-1847) led his followers, the Harmonists, to the site that is now the town of New Harmony. In 1824 social reformer Robert Owen (1761-1858) purchased New Harmony, and the Harmonists returned to Pennsylvania. Owen’s plan for New Harmony as a social experiment with emphasis on education attracted the interest of the wealthy philanthropist and ‘father of American geology’, William Maclure (1763-1840), who was the President of the Academy of Natural Sciences of Philadelphia.⁵⁴

Among the scientists associated with the Academy was Thomas Say (1787-1834).⁵⁵ Another was Charles Alexandre Lesueur (1778-1848).⁵⁶ On January 23, 1826, Owen, Maclure, Say, Lesueur, and educator Marie Duclos Fretageot (1783-1833), along with others, arrived in Mount Vernon, Indiana on the previously mentioned Boatload of Knowledge, and the next day they traveled to New Harmony.

Although Owen’s social experiment failed within two years, Say, Lesueur, and Fretageot continued to live and work in New Harmony, where Madame Fretageot managed Maclure’s financial affairs and schools, and Say was in charge of scientific activities including printing and engraving, while, for health reasons, Maclure resided in Mexico.⁵⁷

As early as 1817, while still in Philadelphia, Say had begun publishing his *American Entomology*. A copy of this very rare preliminary book can be seen online.⁵⁸ The 1817 attempt includes six colored illustrations that show no engraver’s signature. The project continued, with the

⁵¹ Guynes, op. cit., p. 3.

⁵² James S. Mason Blacking Company, Philadelphia: https://susina.org/the_Masons.html.

⁵³ Guynes, op. cit., p. 1.

⁵⁴ <https://faculty.evansville.edu/ck6/bstud/maclure.html>

⁵⁵ <https://faculty.evansville.edu/ck6/bstud/say.html>

⁵⁶ <https://faculty.evansville.edu/ck6/bstud/lesueur.html>

⁵⁷ Elliott, op. cit., p. 371.

⁵⁸ <https://archive.org/details/americanentomolo00sayt/page/n21/mode/2up>.

publication of *American Entomology* in three volumes. The first appeared in 1824.⁵⁹ Therein, the six illustrations appear, again without signatures, along with illustrations based on engravings signed by Tiebout. The year, 1824, shows that Tiebout was already Say's engraver while both still resided in Philadelphia. Volume 2 appeared in 1825, with 18 engravings by Tiebout, of which several were based on drawings by Lesueur.⁶⁰

Several months before Tiebout's arrival in New Harmony, Maclure wrote that "Mr Say has written for his engraver and family, as I formerly advised, and supposes in case he agrees to come he must be assured of admittance as a necessary workman for Lesueur & Says publications. His name is Tyebout, with his 2 sons, one daughter, & daughter in Law all occupied in printing, coloring, &&tc."⁶¹ (Two of the family were Joseph Tiebout and wife, who settled in Cincinnati. The two who arrived in New Harmony with Tiebout were his daughter Caroline, 20, and son Henry, 5.)

A major project in New Harmony was the publishing of an American edition of Michaux's *North American Sylva*. Maclure had purchased the 156 copper plates in Paris in 1819.⁶² In 1829, Madame Fretageot wrote, "Mr. Tiebout is now occupied printing twelve of each plate of Michaux on our drawing paper. He has already printed 13 [plates] of each which are now coloured by our scholars. They really do it very well... As the colouring will require a great deal of time it is well to begin beforehand." Tiebout had previously reconditioned the plates.⁶³ The first American edition was published in New Harmony, finally, in 1841.

In December 1829, Maclure wrote to Madame Fretageot about a shipment of "Copper-plate printing press for Mr Tybout of the School. Likewise the Boxe of paper and quils..., which comes in good time for Says or Lesueurs work, tho I apprehend Lesueurs must be the work that begins the Harmony scientific publishing as Mr Says Insecs are not come in, they are so fragile..."⁶⁴ These "Insecs" were for Say's ongoing research, rather than for the third volume of *American Entomology*, which was published in Philadelphia in 1828. For the three volumes, Tiebout based his engravings on drawings by Titian Ramsey Peale (28 plates) and C. A. Lesueur (9 plates), and others, and Tiebout was the engraver of most of the 54 plates.⁶⁵

⁵⁹ <https://archive.org/details/americanentomolo11824sayt/page/n9/mode/2up>.

⁶⁰ <https://archive.org/details/americanentomolo03sayt>.

⁶¹ William Maclure to Marie D. Fretageot, 21 July 1826; quoted in Elliot, op. cit., p. 404.

⁶² Ian MacPhail and Marjorie Sutton, "William Maclure as Publisher in the New Harmony Reform Tradition", *Indiana Magazine of History*, XCIV, 1998, pp. 167-177; <https://scholarworks.iu.edu/journals/index.php/imh/article/view/11675/17058>.

⁶³ Elliott, op. cit. p. 493.

⁶⁴ Maclure to Fretageot, 29 December 1826, quoted, with Maclure's misspellings, in Elliott, p. 446.

⁶⁵ Harry B. Weiss and Grace M. Ziegler, *Thomas Say, Early American Naturalist*, Springfield, Illinois, 1931, p. 191.

In contrast to most of Tiebout's earlier engravings, his work in New Harmony resulted in *colored* illustrations, using the "French method", which includes "stipple engravings, partially printed in color and finished by hand. (The first time this French method was successfully used in America.)"⁶⁶ In New Harmony, Tiebout re-inked the plates of Michaux's *Sylva* and supervised the hand-coloring of an estimated 23,400 pages of illustrations (150 copies, each having 156 plates). Tiebout also used the slow and elaborate French method to produce, in New Harmony, illustrations for Thomas Say's *American Entomology* and *American Conchology*. For details about the French method, see Part 10 of Cornelius Tiebout Engravings: https://www.cornelius-tiebout-engravings.org/part_10.html.

As early as 8 November 1828, Tiebout is referred to as "old Mr Tiebout" or "slow" in the Maclure-Fretageot letters, and this description occurred several times before Tiebout's death.⁶⁷ Possibly, after the trauma of his last years in Philadelphia, Tiebout suffered from depression and illness.

In Say's *American Conchology*, the artist's signature for all but two of the 68 plates is "Mrs Say", that is, Lucy Sistaire Say (1801-1886). Lesueur drew the other two. Unlike *American Entomology*, Say's *American Conchology* was published in New Harmony.⁶⁸ Tiebout engraved the first 32 plates. His "slowness" made it necessary for L. Lyon and I. Walker to finish the engravings for the book.⁶⁹ The latter engravings are remarkably poor. Within months after the publication of *American Conchology*, Say wrote, "Mr. Tiebout is certainly very ill; I consider his life in much danger. His brother died lately in N.Y. & has bequeathed him some property."⁷⁰ It seems likely that the cause of Tiebout's death was consumption (tuberculosis). In a letter dated 20 February 1832, Achilles Fretageot in New Harmony wrote to Madame Fretageot in Paris:

My dear mother I once again take up the pen to communicate to you my feelings as well as all the news I can muster up. I have been sitting up with poor Mr. Tiebout for the last 2 or three nights and I believe he is in a very low situation I believe his complaint is consumption and also hard drinking. Dr. Sexton attends him.⁷¹

⁶⁶ Gordon Dunthorne, *Flower and Fruit Prints of the 18th and early 19th centuries*, Washington, D. C., 1938, p. 175, in reference to Tiebout's stipple plates in William P. C. Barton's *Flora of North America*, published by Mathew Carey and Sons, Philadelphia, 1821-23.

⁶⁷ Elliott, op. cit., pp. 519, 582, 633, 912.

⁶⁸ Thomas Say, *American Conchology*, New Harmony, 1830; <https://archive.org/details/americanconcholo00sayt>

⁶⁹ Weiss and Ziegler, op. cit., p. 193.

⁷⁰ Thomas Say to William Maclure, 4 February 1832, barely legible with zooming at <https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/p15078coll22/id/1612>, page 4, just after the appearance of the date, Feb 4th 1832.

⁷¹ This four-page letter can be read online:

<https://webappl.dlib.indiana.edu/metsnav3/wmi/index.html#mets=https%3A%2F%2Fpurl.dlib.indiana.edu%2Fiudl%2Fworkingmens%2Fbranigin%2Fmets%2FVAA4026-0372&page=3>. Dr. Samuel Sexton is mentioned in *The North American Journals of Prince Maximilian of Wied, May*

According to a family history (*cum multis erroribus*), Tiebout died on 24 February 1832. Caroline Tiebout and Simon Wattles Kellogg had been married in New Harmony on 24 February 1831. Their first child died the same day as Tiebout and was buried with him.⁷² According to one account, the burial was in a graveyard on the property of George Woods. The graveyard no longer exists. The administrator for Tiebout's estate was Simon W. Kellogg with a bond of \$3000 with four signers, including [Judge] James O. Wattles and Thomas Say, dated 29 March 1832.⁷³

During Tiebout's years in New York and Philadelphia, he and others engraved mostly American adaptations of books that had already been published in London or Edinburgh. The production of these books was essential to the livelihoods of American engravers. Examples include the editions of the *The Holy Bible*, *Works of Josephus*, Mavor's *Voyages* (24 volumes), Rees's *New Cyclopaedia* (41 volumes), *The Emporium of Arts and Sciences* (periodical, 5 volumes), *The New Edinburgh Encyclopedia* (23 volumes), and Gregory's *Dictionary of Arts and Sciences* (3 volumes). In contrast to these essentially English books were distinctly American books and journal articles written by natural scientists in Philadelphia (B. S. Barton and W. P. C. Barton) and both Philadelphia and New Harmony (Say and Lesueur).

Tiebout must have known Say and Lesueur very well. In New Harmony, they worked in Community House No. 2, commonly called the Store because this large building, completed by the Harmonists in 1822, also served as a store, managed by Madame Fretageot.⁷⁴ Beginning in 1826, No. 2 served as the "main headquarters of teachers of Maclure's School of Industry and families of some of them," and much else.⁷⁵ According to some records, Mr. and Mrs. Say, as well as Tiebout (and presumably Caroline and Henry) resided in a house that was later named the Fauntleroy Home, as noted on a plaque (that mistakenly calls Tiebout English).⁷⁶ Elsewhere Say's residence in the house is noted, as is Tiebout's work, without mention of Tiebout's residence.⁷⁷

It is likely that Maclure, Say, Lesueur, and Madame Fretageot were much less aware of Tiebout's former productivity and stature among American engravers than was Mathew Carey, who paid so handsomely for Tiebout's engravings. Tiebout can now be recognized as one of America's most productive engravers. For example, the Catalog of American Engravings (up to and including 1820) of the American Antiquarian Society shows Amos Doolittle with 238 items, Benjamin Tanner with 533, Peter Maverick with 260, David Edwin with 294, William Kneass

1832-April 1833.

⁷² Guynes, op. cit., p. 3.

⁷³ Posey County [Indiana] Order Book Probate, Books C and D, Feb. 1828–May, 1834, p. 239.

⁷⁴ Elliott, op. cit. p. 890.

⁷⁵ "Chronicle of Community House No. 2", in *Interpreter's Manual-1975*, Working Men's Institute, New Harmony.

⁷⁶ Plaque: https://digitalarchives.use.edu/digital/collection/D_Blair/id/4523/

⁷⁷ Lockridge, op. cit. pp. 79-81.

with 504, and Cornelius Tiebout with 531. At the Library of Congress, the “Study collection of 18th and 19th-century American book illustrations and portrait prints”, consisting of 4,416 prints, lists only five engravers who are individually represented by more than 100 prints: George B. Ellis with 106 prints, Peter Maverick with 109, Benjamin Tanner with 100, James B. Longacre with 149, and Cornelius Tiebout with 162.

“Hand-engraving upon copper...as an art is dead, never to be revived;” wrote Stauffer, “but it must always be honored for its intrinsic merits...and for its loving traditions.”⁷⁸ He provided notes for about 700 American engravers and singled out Tiebout as a particularly significant representative of the art.⁷⁹

Indeed, the work of Cornelius Tiebout played a significant role in the life of Americans. Consider the ubiquity of visual media today, and then consider the fact that during Tiebout’s lifetime, comparable visual images reached the public primarily via engraved images. One aspect of these considerations is the fundamental importance of the many editions of Bibles and other books in early America, and the illustrations therein. Another is the highly commercial foundations for engraving, as exemplified by the publishing firm of Mathew Carey. It is not surprising to read that “In 1822, engraving in America was the only ‘paying art’—that is to say, the only branch of art for which there was a public demand.”⁸⁰ A third aspect is the availability and endurance of engraved prints, in contrast to original art. Unfortunately, much of the art that Tiebout’s engravings were “after” is now lost or privately owned. One could say that *when art is lost, engravings last*.



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⁷⁸ Stauffer, *op. cit.*, 1, p.xxxi.

⁷⁹ Stauffer, *op. cit.*, 1, p. xxi, xxvi.

⁸⁰ John Durand, *The Life and Times of A. B. Durand*, New York, 1894, p. 46.