

From Mr. Pickernell.

Hexham Bridge Office, July 24, 1778.

I can now give you a particular account of the damage we have received from the high water, which came on us last Tuesday night and Wednesday morning.

The pier which I last founded at the south side is undermined at the west point, and settled down considerably. I measured the water and found the gravel to be taken away about 18 inches below the bottom of the caisson. The foundation of the fourth pier from the south abutment is taken out at the south end, and nearly half along the pier, so as to let the west point, or cut-water, settle about 18 inches. The gravel is taken out in some parts, as nearly as I can find, two feet six inches lower than it was when the beton was laid on the bed of the river, and several stones are taken out of the cut-water part of the pier. The water came with such velocity as to undermine the girdle-stones, and force up betwixt them and the pier so as to force the girdle-stones two feet from the pier. In some parts the iron cramps which were laid into the base courses have confined that part together, or else, I believe, all the cut-water part of the pier would have been entirely swept away by the violence of the stream. Though the water was not very high, I never saw it so strong.

I cannot see that the fourth pier from the north has received any damage, except that the bed of the river round the sinking stones at the west end of the pier is in part taken away; though, I believe, had it been as high as the other it must have suffered the same fate. The third foundation from the north abutment has suffered the same as the second from the south abutment. The gravel is taken out from under the west cut-water about 18 inches, and the point is settled down. Indeed I had not the good fortune to have the girdle course laid round the west part of the two foundations, as we could not get them at the quarry fast enough. None of the foundations which were laid last season have received any damage.

I am, &c.

J. PICKERNELL.