

Charles Waterton's Creations

Waterton was keen on preserving wildlife as 'stuffed' specimens, but he would also construct his own creations using bits from a variety of birds and animals and then give them very odd titles that often had a satirical motive.

Here are three examples:

John Bull and The National Debt

A porcupine in a tortoiseshell with an almost human face is so weighed down by the National Debt of £800 million that it is overcome by six devils.



The Nondescript



Made from the skin of a howler monkey Waterton sometimes pretended this was a new species of animal he had discovered or a caricature of a customs officer who had charged him import duty on the animal skins.

Martin Luther After His Fall

Horns and an odd grin on this gorilla are Waterton's view as a Catholic of the Protestant Martin Luther. The gorilla was 'Jenny', a young female, that arrived in England in 1855 and was exhibited as part of Mrs Wombwell's Travelling Menagerie – one of the largest educational menageries of the time. Waterton visited her many times and when she died her body was sent to him for preserving.

