

River, Canal and Coastal Carriers in the East Midlands *c.1660–1840*



Philip Riden

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in the East Midlands

*c.*1660–1850

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FOREWORD

This short piece of work is a by-product of projected larger study of ‘Transport and Trade in the East Midlands, 1660–1840’, on which I have been engaged for several years and hope shortly to complete with the support of a grant from the British Academy. As part of this work, I have assembled outline biographies of individuals and partnerships who carried goods on the rivers and later the canals of the region (defined fairly loosely as Derbyshire (less the High Peak), Leicestershire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland), and coastwise to and from the ports of Lincolnshire, as a means of better understanding how transport services by water developed over the period in question. I have also prepared a similar biographical dictionary of ‘StageWaggon Carriers in the East Midlands, c.1660–1840’, which I hope shortly to make available in the same form as this booklet.

I am circulating these notes in draft in the belief that they may be of interest to others working in the same field, and in the hope that by doing so I may elicit corrections and additions that can be incorporated in a later version. Accordingly, I would be delighted if anyone who comes across this work and feels they can add or correct anything would get in touch. Equally, I would be grateful if this work was not cited elsewhere without my first being consulted.

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RIVER, CANAL AND COASTAL CARRIERS

J.G. Ames & Company

John Green Ames was a member of the Inland Waterway Association for Apprehending and Prosecuting Felons in 1804, although he appears not to have been a founder member in 1802.¹ In 1818–21 J.G. Ames & Co. were operating services from Cockpit Hill Wharf in Derby through Burton and the Staffs. & Worcs. Canal to Bath, Bristol and elsewhere.² At the end of the decade their services on the same route consisted of a boat to Stourport, Gloucester and Bristol on Tuesday and Friday; another to Worcester, Kidderminster, Cheltenham, Bath and the West of England three times a week; and a slow boat to Bristol every day.³

J. Bache

In the early 1820s a carrier named J. Bache of Measham mills was offering a carrying service on the Ashby Canal to Stockport and Manchester, and also Bolton, Bury, Runcorn and Warrington; to Huddersfield and Leeds; and to Meriden near Coventry.⁴ Some of these destinations were perhaps served by forwarding, unless Bache's business was on a bigger scale than a general lack of evidence for his activities suggests. He appears to have ceased trading by the late 1820s.⁵

Samuel Barnsdall

Samuel Barnsdall was born at Newark in 1807, the son of Joseph Barnsdall and his wife Hannah (Fidler), who were married at St Peter's, Nottingham, the year before.⁶ His father may have been the Joseph Barnsdall of Pilcher Gate, Nottingham, active as a joiner

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1802; 21 June 1804.

² Riden (ed.) 2006, 161–2, 208.

³ Glover 1829, 38–41, where the company is called 'J. & G. Ames'. The form used above is based on the assumption that John Green Ames's name is printed correctly in the subscription list to the Felons Association.

⁴ Pigot 1822–3, 210, in which 'Meriden' can apparently only mean Meriden, and a destination named 'Killingworth' has defeated me (it is presumably not the place near Longbenton in Northumberland).

⁵ There is no entry for Ashby de la Zouch in Pigot 1828–9, but neither Bache nor Measham mills appears in Glover 1829, 85–6.

⁶ Family Search. Samuel was bapt. 17 March 1807; his parents' marriage was registered both at St Peter's on 27 Sept. 1806 and at Newark on 6 Nov. 1806; the second entry was perhaps in the nature of a service of blessing. I can find no other children baptised to Joseph and Hannah in Family Search, which suggests that she may have died young, but nor can I find a burial entry for her. On 18 Jan. 1829 Joseph Barnsdall married Rhoda Frost at St Nicholas, Nottingham: given the rarity of the surname this could be the remarriage of Samuel's father.

and cabinetmaker in the 1790s.⁷ Samuel himself was married at Newark in 1827 to Eliza Newton and between 1828 and 1839 the couple had one daughter and five sons, two of whom died in infancy.⁸ Nothing has been discovered of his career until 1842, when he was recorded as a wharfinger on Millgate in Newark (but unlike most Newark wharfingers was not also a dealer or merchant).⁹ He does not occur as a wharfinger in any earlier or later directory. He appears later to have retired from business and in 1857 was described as a 'gentleman', still of Millgate, when he was obliged to convey his estate to two Newark drapers in trust for them and his other creditors.¹⁰ Samuel died in 1875,¹¹ still living on Millgate, when he left all his estate to his wife Eliza.¹²

The Barnsdalls of Newark were presumably related to the Miss Barnsdall & Co. (qv) who were wharfingers at Nottingham in the 1820s, although the exact connection has not been established.

Miss Barnsdall & Company

In 1822 a firm of this name were wharfingers on Canal Street in Nottingham and were also running a carrying service every week to Newark and Gainsborough.¹³ In 1811 and 1828 what was simply called Barnsdall & Co. were listed as wharfingers at the same address, but not as carriers.¹⁴ The business has not been traced before the former date or after the latter. It appears to be identical with 'Barnsdale & Hooton' of Nottingham, which was one of the firms associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in their scheme of 1824 to offer low through rates for wool from the East Midlands to Leeds and Wakefield.¹⁵

If 'Miss Barnsdall' was single, rather than a widow, she may have been Sarah, the daughter of Nathaniel Barnsdall and his wife Sarah (Clarkson), who was born in 1803 and baptised at Parliament Street (formerly Hockley) Methodist church in

⁷ *UBD*, IV, 50; he also appears in Holden 1811, II, sn. Nottingham, which by rights is after Samuel's parents had moved to Newark. This may be an anachronistic entry copied from the 1805 edn of Holden, when Joseph would still be in Nottingham.

⁸ Family Search.

⁹ Pigot 1842, 17.

¹⁰ *London Gazette*, 14 Aug. 1857, p. 2812.

¹¹ Newark RD, Dec. quarter.

¹² Notts. Archives, DD/H/172/20.

¹³ Pigot 1822, 340–1.

¹⁴ Holden 1811, II, sn. Nottingham; Pigot 1828, 656–7.

¹⁵ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; below, Robert Flower & Son.

Nottingham, as was her elder brother Nathaniel, born the previous year.¹ Their parents were married at Mansfield in 1801.² An argument against this identification is that Sarah would have been only 19 in 1822 and should not by rights have been in business on her own account; two arguments in favour are that her business had the same address as her father's and no other 'Miss Barnsdall' is identifiable in Nottingham in this period. The family were presumably related (although exactly how has not been established) to Joseph Barnsdall, joiner and cabinetmaker of Pilcher Gate, who was married at Nottingham in 1806 and then moved to Newark, where his son Samuel (qv) was later a wharfinger. They may also have been connected with Robert Barnsdall, a boatbuilder of Sawley (Derb.), who was made bankrupt in 1810.³

In 1811 Nathaniel Barnsdall (Sarah and Nathaniel's father) was a raff merchant and boatbuilder with premises on Canal Street.⁴ In 1822 and 1828 he described as a timber merchant.⁵ In the latter year he was an assignee on behalf of the creditors, including himself, of the estate of Michael Anderson, a Nottingham builder.⁶ Nathaniel died in 1834, when he was a senior councilman of the corporation.⁷ His son, Nathaniel Barnsdall junior, served as one of the corporation's two sheriffs for the year commencing Michaelmas 1828.⁸ The firm was still in business in 1842 as Nathaniel Barnsdall & Co., timber merchants and dealers and linseed crushers of Canal Street.

Richard and Robert Barrows

In 1811 Richard Barrows was a wharfinger with premises in Nottingham on High Pavement and at the canal company's wharf on Leenside.⁹ In 1828 a 'Robert Burrows' (who does not appear in the directory as a wharfinger) was running service from Canal Street 'several times a week' to Liverpool, Manches-

ter and parts of Cheshire; Newark and Gainsborough; and parts of the West of England.¹⁰ In 1842 either the same or another Richard Barrows was once again recorded as a wharfinger at Leenside, and 'Richard Burrows', also of Leenside, was running a carrying service three times a week to 'Manchester, Liverpool &c.'. It is difficult to decide whether these entries all refer to the same family.

Berriff and Thorpe families

In the early 1790s a firm named Berriff & Thorpe were in business as maltsters and coal merchants at Newark.¹¹ In 1805 the members of the firm are identified as Ann Berriff and James Thorpe and their address as Millgate.¹² In December that year the partnership was dissolved and James Thorpe announced that he would be continuing the business alone.¹³ Mrs Berriff died in 1819, when she appointed Robert Capes of Gray's Inn (probably a member of the family to which Gamaliel Capes, a Gainsborough wharfinger, also belonged) and Thomas Middlebrook, a Newark coal merchant, as her executors and trustees. She divided her personal estate equally between nine nephews and nieces. The nephews and the unmarried nieces were named Lang, Free or Weightman.¹⁴ This may imply that Ann, who was then a widow, had no children living, although since the will makes no reference to her real estate, she may have made separate provision for them.

It is difficult to identify Ann Berriff's husband, since three married women of that name had children baptised at Newark in the mid eighteenth century, whose husbands were named James, John and Samuel. James Berriff married Ann Walker at Navenby (Lincs.) in 1754; the marriages of John and Samuel have not been located.¹⁵ In 1790 John Berriff and John Weightman of Newark, carpenters, announced the dissolution of their partnership;¹⁶ among the nephews remembered in Ann's will were William and John Weightman.

In 1809–11 James Thorpe was described as a coal merchant and maltster, but not a wharfinger.¹⁷ By 1819 the firm had become James Thorpe & Son, wharfingers and maltsters of Millgate.¹⁸ Three years later they had added coal dealing to their range of

¹ Family Search.

² Family Search; neither Barnsdall nor Clarkson appears in the Mansfield entry in *UBD*, III, 882.

³ *London Gazette*, 30 Oct. 1810, p. 1739; 11 July 1812, p. 1356; 1 April 1815, p. 621. Another connection was presumably the Charles Barnsdall of Nottingham, whose partnership with Thomas Cooke as grocers and tea-dealers in Nottingham was dissolved by mutual consent early in 1834, when Cooke agreed to settle the partnership accounts (*London Gazette*, 21 Feb. 1834, p. 323).

⁴ Holden 1811, sn. Nottingham; he does not appear in the *UBD* entry for Nottingham c.1790.

⁵ Pigot 1822, 339; Pigot 1828, 656.

⁶ *London Gazette*, 8 Feb. 1828, p. 271.

⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 23 April 1834. On 11 June that year the paper reported the marriage of his youngest daughter, Mary, to the Revd Joseph Oldknow, curate of Nevile Holt and Welham (Leics.).

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 8 Oct. 1828. The younger Nathaniel was living in Basford when the 1861 census was taken (Family Search).

⁹ Holden 1811, II, sn. Nottingham. No one named Barrows (or Burrows, with which it appears sometimes to have been confused) is listed in *UBD* under Nottingham.

¹⁰ Pigot 1822, 656–7; he is not listed in the 1822 edn.

¹¹ *UBD*, IV, 58–60. Neither name appears in Bailey 1784 under Newark.

¹² Holden 1805, 225.

¹³ *London Gazette*, 11 Jan. and 1 April 1806.

¹⁴ TNA, PROB 11/1623, ff. 35v.–36v.

¹⁵ Family Search. James and Ann had a son baptised at Grantham in 1757 (who died in 1758) and at least three children baptised at Newark in 1761–70; John and Ann Berriff had two daughters baptised at Newark in 1776–80; and Samuel and Anne Berriff had a daughter baptised there in 1768.

¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 4 Sept. 1790, p. 559.

¹⁷ Holden 1809, 154; Holden 1811, 326.

¹⁸ Pigot 1819, 544–7.

trades;¹ in 1828 they were called wharfingers, coal dealers and carriers by water;² in 1831 they were wharfingers, carriers, maltsters and general merchants;³ and in 1835 their full range of activities was listed as wharfingers, corn dealers, coal dealers, maltsters and carriers by water.⁴ The son who joined the firm during this period, probably around the time he turned 21 in 1813, was a second James Thorpe, born in 1791, the son of James Thorpe and his wife Lydia.⁵ Of the two, only the father would have been old enough to have been in partnership with Mrs Berriff in 1805. His wife Lydia, whom he married at Newark in 1789,⁶ was a daughter and, with her sister Elizabeth, the wife of John Simpson, a Nottingham innkeeper, co-heir of their father Hardwick Taylor under his will of 1796. Lydia and James thus received in 1811 a moiety of a small estate on Millgate in Newark, comprising two houses and a tanyard.⁷

James Thorpe senior died in 1839,⁸ by which time his son James was clearly among the leading citizens of Newark. In 1841, when he was re-elected for a third time as a Conservative town councillor, having served continuously since the Municipal Reform Act of 1835,⁹ he was reported to have bought the house and grounds at Beacon Hill, just outside Newark, from Thomas Fisher for £20,000.¹⁰ He died at a house named Beaconfield on this estate, aged only 52, in November 1843.¹¹ The property appears to have passed to another James Thorpe, who was of Beaconfield in 1850 when he married Mary Anne, the youngest daughter of Edward Spence of Tilworth,

near Hull.¹² He was still living at Beaconfield in the late 1870s.¹³ Lydia Mary, described as the second daughter of the late James Thorpe, was married at Lenton from Beaconfield in July 1851.¹⁴

In the early 1840s the firm was called Thorpe & Sons or James Thorpe & Sons. They had at this date given up carrying and were described variously as coal and coal dealers and timber merchants (as well as wharfingers) or as coal and coal merchants and maltsters.¹⁵ The business was still going in 1864, when it was known as John Thorpe & Co., wharfingers, carriers by water, coal and lime merchants, and corn merchants.¹⁶ It had disappeared ten years later.¹⁷ John Thorpe was presumably a son (or possibly a brother) of the younger James. What may have been a separate business, Thorpe & Co., millers of Newark, was reorganised in 1872, when David Bilson withdrew from the partnership, leaving John and James Thorpe as the remaining members.¹⁸

Thomas Best, William Tunley and their successors

In 1814 Thomas Best and William Tunley established a new service from Wolverhampton to Derby. Tunley ran boats from wharfs and warehouses at Horsley Fields, Wolverhampton, to Bond End in Burton, from where Best continued to Derby. Tunley died in 1818, leaving a son aged only ten, and thereafter the business was continued in Best's name alone, although Tunley's nephew George Morecroft acted as his agent at Bond End wharf.¹⁹

In the early 1820s Thomas Best was operating services from Derby to Liverpool, Manchester and Wolverhampton, although no details were given as to frequency.²⁰ By the end of the decade his service was described more fully. Boats left Pipes' Wharf, Cockpit Hill, on Wednesdays on two main routes, one through the Potteries to Liverpool, Manchester and elsewhere on that line, and the other through the West Midlands to Wolverhampton, Worcester and Bristol. Several other destinations in Wales and the Border Counties could be reached by forwarding from Wolverhampton, which clearly remained the firm's headquarters.²¹

In February 1833 Best's widow Elizabeth thanked customers for their previous support and announced that she was continuing the firm with her nephew

¹ Pigot 1822, 328–30.

² Pigot 1828, 636.

³ Pigot 1831, 116–17.

⁴ Pigot 1835, 283–4; Pigot 1842, 17.

⁵ Family Search.

⁶ Family Search.

⁷ Notts. Archives, DD/T/70/101–103.

⁸ Newark RD, Dec. Quarter 1839. According to Family Search the only baptism entry for him and Lydia in the Newark register is that of James in 1791, which suggests that Lydia died young and he never remarried. There is no burial entry in Family Search for Lydia. His son was described in 1820 as James Thorpe the younger, wharfinger (Notts. Archives, DD/T/126/46), and he himself as James Thorpe senior of Newark, merchant, in Nov. 1838, when his daughter Mary Eleanor, in anticipation of her marriage to William Deeping of Newark, surgeon, conveyed to John Simpson of Nottingham, coach proprietor, as trustee the £1,500 to which would become entitled on the death of her father (Notts. Archives, DD/H/176/1).

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 3 Nov. 1841.

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 12 May 1841.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 8 Nov. 1843; it is the inclusion of his age in this notice that enables his baptism to be identified securely and helps to make it clear that two men named James Thorpe headed the firm in the first half of the nineteenth century. His death does not appear in FreeBMD for the Dec. quarter of 1843 (the only deaths recorded anywhere in England of anyone named James Thorpe in that quarter are in Rochdale and Manchester RDs, and the only entry for James Thorp is in Winchester RD), and there is no PCC will. Beaconfield Farm is about two miles north-east of the centre of Newark.

¹² Notts. *Guardian*, 28 Nov. 1850.

¹³ *London Gazette*, 16 April 1878, p. 2603.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 20 July 1851.

¹⁵ Pigot 1842, 17; White 1844, 353.

¹⁶ White 1864, ooo.

¹⁷ Wright 1874, ooo.

¹⁸ *London Gazette*, 18 Oct. 1872, p. 4955.

¹⁹ Shill 2011, 19–20 (no sources cited).

²⁰ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

²¹ Glover 1829, 38–40.

George Morecroft.¹ Mrs Best later denied that Morecroft had ever been in partnership with either her or her husband and in November that year obtained counsel's opinion in support of her view, stating that she would continue in business alone.² Less than a year later, however, she advertised the coal wharf at Bond End and warehouse at Shobnall previously occupied by her husband for sale,³ and this appears to have marked the end of the firm. Morecroft continued in business as a carrier by water and dealer in cement, lime and plaster of paris at Wichnor Mills near Burton until at least 1846, when he applied to be discharged from insolvency.⁴

After William Tunley's son, also William, came of age he became head of the firm of Tunley & Hodson, with premises at Bond End, from where he carried throughout the line of the Trent & Mersey Canal.⁵ The firm consisted of Tunley, Mary Ann Hodson and Thomas Bothams, of whom the latter retired from the partnership in 1843.⁶ That year Tunley & Hodson of Siddals Lane were running a fly-boat every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday to Burton, the Potteries, Manchester and Liverpool, and a daily fly-boat to London; they mentioned particularly their provision of 'lock-up boats' for the safe conveyance of wines, spirits, tea and other valuable merchandise.⁷ By 1846 the London service had also been reduced to three days a week. The firm had not entered the railway carrying business at Derby.⁸ Also in 1846 John Honor Parker, a London railway carrier with headquarters at the Castle & Falcon, Aldersgate Street, announced that he had arranged with the 'late Firm' of Tunley & Co. to carry from London to Liverpool, Leicester, Nottingham, Burton, Tamworth, Newark, Lincoln, Grantham, Southwell and all parts of the West of England.⁹ This presumably indicates that Tunley's business had also come to an end.

William Boler

In 1835 and 1842 (but not at earlier or later dates) William Boler was described as a wharfinger, corn dealer and coal-dealer of Newark with a corn warehouse on Millgate (but not as a carrier).¹⁰ He appears to have been principally a dealer in corn. Until the

partnership was dissolved in 1827 he had been in business with John Greaves, also of Newark, and Edward Roberts of Manchester as a miller and corn-dealer at both Newark and Manchester.¹¹ At much the same time, another partnership between Greaves and Thomas Boler, also of Newark, as millers and corn-dealers was dissolved, as was a third between Thomas and John Robinson of Newark as brick- and tile-makers, and getters of and dealers in plaster, lime, cement, laths and other building materials, a business which Robinson evidently intended to continue on his own.¹² Thomas Boler was in fact made bankrupt the following year.¹³ William Boler was described as a corn-factor in 1837 when he and Joseph Carter of Toton, boat-owner, took an assignment on behalf of themselves and other creditors of the personal estate of Robert Hilton, a Newark maltster.¹⁴ It is not clear whether this William Boler was identical with a Newark auctioneer of the same name active around the same date.¹⁵

Boston & Wainfleet Steam Navigation Company

This company, which seems to be the first to try to establish a regular service by steam vessel between Boston and London, was promoted in the summer of 1836. In August some of the prospective shareholders visited Glasgow and Liverpool to inspect cattle boats and on their return recommended to the provisional committee that the company's capital be increased to £40,000 to enable them to purchase or build boats of light draught 'adapted to the navigation'.¹⁶ The following month shareholders approved this suggestion and the issue of a new prospectus. This referred to the immense quantities of sheep, cattle, poultry, fish and other articles sent to the London market from Boston and the neighbourhood, and the great consumption of items brought back. It also proposed to increase the company's capital so that it could build or buy, rather than charter, vessels, but at the same time advised shareholders that a proposal from the St George Steam Packet Company of Hull to 'unite in the undertaking' had been accepted.¹⁷ In practice, this meant that the Hull company provided a vessel for the Boston-London line and the Boston & Wainfleet Company had only to provide terminal facilities at Boston (nothing was ever said about doing the same at Wainfleet). The St George Steam Packet Company

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 6 Feb. 1833.

² *Derby Mercury*, 20 Nov. 1833.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 13 Aug. 1834.

⁴ *London Gazette*, 30 Oct. 1846, pp. 3830-1.

⁵ Shill 2011, 20 (no source cited).

⁶ *London Gazette*, 21 March 1843, p. 935.

⁷ Glover 1843, 153, in the list of carriers by water. The entry in the alphabetical section of the same directory (p. 84) is noticeably different: there the service was London was said to run three days a week, and Liverpool, Manchester, Nottingham and all intermediate towns were served by wagon and railway (on p. 153 the firm is not listed as a carrier by railway).

⁸ Bagshaw 1846, 154.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 26 Aug. 1834.

¹⁰ Pigot 1835, 283-4; Pigot 1842, 17.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 11 Dec. 1827, p. 2534.

¹² *London Gazette*, 5 Oct. 1827, p. 2059.

¹³ *London Gazette*, 1 July 1828, pp. 1281-2; Thomas later set up at Lincoln as a miller and brickmaker (*ibid.*, 23 Sept. 1842, pp. 2583-4).

¹⁴ Notts. Archives, DD/H/180/67.

¹⁵ Notts. Archives, DD/H/180/75; *London Gazette*, 21 April 1840, p. 1031.

¹⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 19 Aug. 1836.

¹⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 16 and 23 Sept. 1836.

was incorporated by Royal charter in 1833¹ and had its main office at Hull, from where it ran regular services to London, Leith, Hamburg and Rotterdam.²

A partnership deed was executed later in 1836³ and in January 1837 the company's request to the Commissioners for General Drainage for a mooring at the mouth of the Hobhole Sluice was approved. After the commissioners met, however (observed the *Stamford Mercury*, a keen supporter of the new company), 'through the intervention of those paltry selfish motives, to which "Our town and trade of Boston" have too long been sacrificed, the liberal offer then made has been virtually nullified'. Accordingly, an application was made to the town council, 'who happily do care for the welfare of the town and trade, and the most ample accommodation has by them been promptly afforded'.⁴ The council offered a lease of the east bank of the new cut through Burton's Marsh,⁵ which was (unfortunately as it proved) about three miles from the town itself. A poorly attended and slightly ill-tempered meeting of shareholders followed a week later, at which Charles Handley, one of the MPs for Lincolnshire, spoke strongly in favour of the project, recalling that he had attended a similar meeting at Long Sutton two years earlier at which local graziers had called for better transport to London but then done nothing to secure it. He also extolled the advantages of steam navigation compared with the eight-day journey by road with animals to London. Handley was well received but there was some dissension between the committee and local graziers over the choice of directors.⁶

Over the next few weeks the committee pressed ahead with a call for tenders to build a dock on the bank of the new cut near Hobhole sluice⁷ and the appointment of an agent at Boston.⁸ The *Mercury* helped with a puff referring to the 'Great exertions' being made to complete the arrangements, so that vessels could start running in March; to the 'great public advantage' of the new line of communication; and to the moderate charges expected, especially for livestock.⁹ In April, even though no ship had yet

sailed from it (nor indeed had it been built), proximity to the company's dock was seen as advantage when a nearby house and land were sold.¹⁰ The following month contractors were sought to carry goods from the dock by water to Sleaford and thence by land to Grantham, and by water to Lincoln and Horncastle.¹¹

Not until early June did sailings by the St George Company's steamship *Scotia* begin from Boston to London (there appears never to have been a service from Wainfleet). From then until September 1837 and again between March and August 1838 the company advertised heavily to promote the *Scotia*.¹² She sailed to London overnight and offered accommodation for both cabin and deck passengers, who paid 12s. 6d. and 5s. respectively. There was a separate cabin for ladies with a woman steward. Cattle were carried at 25s. each, sheep at 3s. 6d. (later reduced to 3s. 3d.), meat, poultry and other cargo at 3s. 6d. a cwt.¹³ The opposition fought back. The United Boston Traders, a contract that had run a twice-weekly service to London by sailing vessel since at least 1830, pointed out that the *Scotia* could not moor alongside her own wharf in London, nor could she come up to the town in Boston, so that 'five different removals' were required before goods reached the quay there.¹⁴ In September 1837 the company discontinued lightering goods to and from Hobhole, and Mowbray & Williamson, wharfingers and carriers of Boston, agreed to undertake this work. They also put on an omnibus (built by themselves) to take passengers to and from the town.¹⁵

In August 1838, towards the end of the season, the St George Company announced that the *Scotia* would in future come up to the town and discharge her cargo at the Buoy Yard wharf, South End, on the spring tides.¹⁶ Instead of this being a fresh start, eliminating the need for lighters and omnibuses, it marked the beginning of the end. Later that month the directors of the Boston & Wainfleet Company stated that they were making arrangements for 'resuming the Boston and London Station' but, because the season was so far advanced, the line would not reopen until the spring. Meanwhile, 'they are quite ready to give an

¹ TNA, BT 1/561.

² See numerous advertisements in the *Stamford Mercury*.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 7 and 21 Oct., 9 and 16 Dec. 1836. At least two copies of the deed, executed by 151 shareholders on 10 Dec. 1836, have reached archival custody. One is in an uncatalogued solicitor's collection (Ringrose) in Lincolnshire Archives (Acc. 2004/121:00), the other was acquired in 2007 by the University of Nottingham Library (MS 819). The latter is presumably the copy that made £102 at Bonhams on 13 Nov. that year (lot 464).

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 13 Jan. 1837.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 20 Jan. 1837.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 27 Jan. 1837, which prints the formal minutes of the meeting as an advertisement and a considerably fuller and franker report as a news story.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 27 Jan. 1837.

⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 10 Feb. 1837.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Feb. 1837.

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 14–21 April 1837.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 19 May 1837.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 2 June–14 July, 29 Sept. 1837, 2–30 March 1838, 6–27 April, 4 May–29 July, 6–27 July, 3–17 Aug. 1838.

¹³ Most of the company's advertisements include this price list; the modest reduction in the charge for sheep was announced on 18 May 1838.

¹⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 2 June 1837 (with its customary even-handedness and fearlessness at the prospect of losing a customer, the *Mercury* printed this advertisement next to that of the St George Company, although it only ran for one week). See also United Boston Traders.

¹⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 29 Sept. 1837.

¹⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 17 Aug. 1838.

account of their stewardship to any of the *Shareholders*,¹ but presumably not other critics. The line never did reopen. A special general meeting was called in April 1839 to discuss the affairs of the company and, although in June the *Mercury* suggested that the directors were close to agreeing terms with the General Steam Navigation Company to charter their vessel *Venus*, which drew only seven feet and would be able to come up to the town at spring tides,² a month later the directors admitted that no service would run that season. They hoped it would the following year.³ It was not to be. In March 1840 a special meeting was called to consider dissolving the company, another meeting in July resolved to do so, a third in August considered how to effect this, and in September the components of dismantled wooden warehouses and other building materials belonging to the company were auctioned.⁴ The following January the town council agreed to allow the company to surrender its leases of land alongside the new cut in return for £15 towards the cost of filling up the holes they had made in the bank.⁵ These were presumably the only steps the company had taken towards building a dock.

In the meantime, the same issue of the *Mercury* that reported the dissolution of the company also carried the first of a series of lengthy advertisements offering a service by steam vessel to Hull and London, with the freight on most articles 'the same as was charged by the Boston and Wainfleet Steam Navigation Company'.⁶ The Boston, Hull & London Steam Navigation Company had presumably been waiting in the wings to pounce once it was clear that the old concern could not continue. It was the end of one chapter and the beginning of the next in the tortuous history of efforts to establish regular steam packets to serve the ports of Lincolnshire and the Wash.

John Bradshaw & Sons

A firm of this name was in business on Leenside, Nottingham, in 1842 as wharfingers but not as carriers.⁷

William Brightmore

Although he does not appear in the *UBD* entry for the town, William Brightmore of Gainsborough was in business as a wharfinger there by 1793, when he

became a partner in the newly established Gainsborough Boat Company, as he remained until the firm was dissolved in 1812.⁸ When the company's Trent Port Wharf was advertised to let in December that year, Brightmore was named as the occupier able to show the premises to prospective tenants.⁹

Throughout his time as a member of the Gainsborough Boat Company Brightmore appears also to have traded on his own account. In 1800 he was acting for the owners of the brig *Danby*, described as fitted for carrying cheese, salt etc., which proposed to sail regularly from Maldon to Hull and Gainsborough, where she would take in goods for a number of places in Essex.¹⁰ In 1811 and 1822 William Brightmore & Co. were recorded as wharfingers of Caskgate Lane.¹¹ Possibly after the winding-up of the Gainsborough Boat Company, Brightmore entered into partnership with James Soresby and Charles James Flack, who were wharfingers on the Trent at Cavendish Bridge; the partnership was dissolved in 1830.¹² William Brightmore, who was then living at Morton, near Gainsborough, died in 1839;¹³ letters of administration were granted in respect of his estate two years later.¹⁴

Bristowe & Co.

In 1769 a firm of this name inserted an advertisement in *Aris's Birmingham Gazette* repudiating accusations that they had no accommodation for their customers at Burton, and assuring all concerned that they were able to forwards goods without delay from there, presumably at least as far as Cavendish Bridge, where the company was based, and probably to Gainsborough.¹⁵ Nothing more has been discovered of them.

Sprignal Brown

In the 1790s Sprignal Brown, a Peterborough merchant, was operating one of two passage boats sailing every Friday from Peterborough to Wisbech, returning on Sunday morning. The other one belonged to Thomas Wright Squire and William Squire.¹⁶ Brown is first heard of in Peterborough in 1784, when he was declared bankrupt.¹⁷ His assignees paid a final dividend in 1787,¹⁸ and he evidently re-established himself in business. In the mid 1790s he

⁸ Below, Gainsborough Boat Company.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 17 Dec. 1812.

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 8 May 1800.

¹¹ Holden 1811; Pigot 1822, 244.

¹² *Hull Packet*, 7 Dec. 1830.

¹³ Gainsborough RD, Dec. quarter.

¹⁴ LAO, LCC Admons 1841, no. 4.

¹⁵ Shill 2011, 15, citing *Aris*, 13 Feb. 1769.

¹⁶ *UBD*, iv. 189, 190; and see below, Squire family.

¹⁷ *London Gazette*, 2 Sept. 1784, p. 5; 1 March 1785, p. 118; 17 May 1785, p. 246; 25 July 1786, p. 336.

¹⁸ *London Gazette*, 22 Sept. 1787, p. 444.

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 7 Sept. 1838.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 21 June 1839.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 5 July 1839.

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 20 March, 10 July, 21 Aug., 25 Sept. 1840.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 8 Jan. 1841.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 14 Aug.–18 Sept. 1840; and see Robert Keddey for the Boston, Hull & London Steam Navigation Company.

⁷ Pigot 1842, 50; the firm is not listed in the 1828 edn

can be found witnessing an endorsement of 'Dr Brodum's Nervous Cordial' in the local press,¹ and in 1802 his entire collection of prints, drawings and a few paintings was sold in a catalogue sale by Phillips of New Bond Street.² He seems to have died in 1813.³ By 1820 the packet boat between Peterborough and Wisbech was in the hands of a syndicate of three other Peterborough merchants.⁴

Burton Boat Company

The opening of the Trent between Burton and the previous head of navigation at Wilden Ferry was authorised by an Act of 1699, although the work was not completed until shortly after Lord Paget, the lord of the manor of Burton who had obtained the Act, made an agreement in 1711 with George Hayne of Wirksworth, under which Hayne was to be the undertaker of the navigation for the next 31 years.⁵ As soon as the upper river was opened in 1712 Hayne in turn made an agreement with Leonard Fosbrooke of Shardlow Hall, whose family were long-established traders on the river between there and Gainsborough, under which the two of them effectively sought to control both traffic originating above Shardlow throughout its passage from Burton or Willington to Gainsborough, and carriage up the river to Burton of goods arriving at Shardlow.⁶

The Hayne and Fosbrooke families retained their hold on the upper Trent until shortly after George Hayne's brother Henry died in 1757, when the lease from the earl of Uxbridge passed to Henry's son John and Abraham Hoskins, a Burton attorney.⁷ Five years later, when the navigation lease expired, Hayne and Hoskins refused to pay an entry fine of £3,900 for a renewal and Uxbridge granted a new lease to a syndicate made up of the Birmingham ironmasters, Sampson Lloyd senior and his son, also Sampson Lloyd; a Burton attorney, Isaac Hawkins; two cheese-factors, John Wilkes of Overseal and Robert Palmer of Burton; and Uxbridge's Burton steward, William Wyatt. They took over all the wharfs, warehouses, fulling mills, boats and barges of the previous lessees, paying £2,500 for the lease and £6,000 for plant and goodwill. Wyatt himself reckoned that after laying out about £800 on a new wharf and warehouse, and

doing repairs that were needed, the new company would end up paying Uxbridge nearly £10,000.⁸ The new lessees traded as the Burton Boat Company; it is not clear whether Hayne ever used this name.⁹ In 1774 the company was reported to have twenty barges on the river between Burton and Gainsborough.¹⁰

The choice of Wilden Ferry, rather than Burton, as the eastern terminus of the Trent & Mersey Canal, authorised in 1766, clearly threatened the Burton Boat Company's position as lessees of the upper Trent. The company built a connecting canal between the Trent at Bond End and the Trent & Mersey at Shobnall in 1769–70 at a cost of £3,600¹¹ but its usefulness was destroyed by the refusal of the canal company to build a connecting lock at Shobnall and by the narrow gauge of Trent & Mersey beyond Horninglow. As the furthest point to which Trent barges could navigate, this effectively became the wharf serving Burton.¹² Despite this setback, the boat company continued to operate for some years in competition with the Trent & Mersey and to meet local needs.¹³ In 1776 they secured judgment against the canal company in an action concerning an old watercourse.¹⁴ The Lloyds and their partners considered it worth renewing the lease of the navigation in 1784.¹⁵ In the early 1790s they had nine barges on the route from Gainsborough, the second highest of any company on the river after Henshalls,¹⁶ and in 1795 they registered ten barges and eight canal boats with the Staffordshire clerk of the peace. The barges had a burden of 33 tons and were mostly manned by a master and five men; the narrow boats had a crew of two. Seven of the barges worked between Burton and Gainsborough and the other three carried iron from Burton forge to Shobnall wharf through the Bond End canal. The narrow boats were based at Shardlow, from where they worked services to Froghall (on the Caldron branch of the Trent & Mersey), Stafford, Manchester and Runcorn, and to Birmingham, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Stourbridge and Coventry.¹⁷

In August 1794 the Burton Boat Company brought an action at Nottingham assizes against the Gainsborough Boat Company, claiming damages of £463 12s. 10d., in which they were successful after a trial

¹ *Northampton Mercury*, 16 Feb. 1793, 11 April 1795.

² *Morning Post*, 1 June 1802. This was neither a bereavement nor a bankruptcy sale.

³ The only entry for someone of his distinctive name in Family Search is the burial on 20 Jan. 1813 of 'Sprignal John Brown' in the Minster Close Precincts at Peterborough. This seems likely to be the man in question; there is no PCC grant and I cannot locate a death notice in a local paper. He was certainly dead by 1819 when Ann Brown, at her death aged 78, was described as the sister of the late Sprignal Brown (*Stamford Mercury*, 31 Dec. 1819).

⁴ Below, Simpson, Mewburn & Miller.

⁵ Owen 1968, 240–52.

⁶ Owen 1968, 251–2; below, Leonard Fosbrooke.

⁷ Owen 1968, 253–6; Owen 1978, 15–17.

⁸ Owen 1978, 17; Lloyd 1975, 152–4.

⁹ In his 1968 article on the upper Trent Owen does not use the name of the period before 1762, whereas he does in his book of 1978 (p. 16).

¹⁰ Shill 2011, citing *Aris*, 31 Jan. 1774.

¹¹ Lloyd 1975, 251.

¹² Owen 1978, 18–19; cf. Riden (ed.) 2006, 23 for a contemporary view.

¹³ Lloyd 1975, 174–5.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 26 July 1776.

¹⁵ Lloyd 1975, 251.

¹⁶ *UBD*, III, 141.

¹⁷ Owen 1978, 19.

lasting ten hours.¹ Almost two years later an appeal by the Gainsborough Company on a writ of error was heard in the Exchequer Chamber before the justices of the Common Pleas, when the assize court's judgment was unanimously upheld and the Burton Company confirmed in their award of £622 (including costs). The *Derby Mercury* expressed the hope that the verdict 'will in future establish the laudable custom of upgate boats slackening their lines, when required by other boats capable of passing them, for want of attention to which, the considerable damages in this case were incurred'.² One wonders if there was rather more to it than that.

Traffic on the upper Trent gradually declined and in 1805 the Burton Boat Company reached an agreement with Hugh Henshall & Co., then the largest carrier on the Trent & Mersey, under which through traffic between Burton and Shardlow ceased.³ By 1807 Sampson Lloyd was the sole proprietor of the Burton Boat Company and until 1849 his family continued to receive an annuity from the Trent & Mersey.⁴

Calcraft and Huddlestone families

In 1784 E. & W. Calcraft were recorded as raff and coal merchants at Newark.⁵ About ten years later what was presumably the same firm was known as Calcraft, Brown & Huddlestone, merchants and wharfingers.⁶ In 1805 William Calcraft only was in business with John Huddlestone on Castlegate, still as merchants and wharfingers.⁷ Huddlestone himself first comes to notice in Newark in 1787, when his appointment as the local agent of Royal Exchange Assurance was announced, a position he held until at least 1791.⁸ There had been a further change of name by 1809, to Huddlestone & Turner, raff merchants and wharfingers.⁹ In 1819 John Huddlestone was in business on his own as a wharfinger and merchant.¹⁰ In October that year he announced the dissolution of his partnership with Jeremiah Newton at Newark in the business of iron merchants (trading as John Huddlestone & Co.):¹¹ no other reference has been

found to his involvement in this trade. Huddlestone was listed in 1822 as a wharfinger and timber merchant at Castlegate, and also (for the first time) as a carrier, offering a service to Gainsborough every week.¹² A few years later he took his son, Thomas Creswick Huddlestone, born in 1803,¹³ into partnership and in 1828 the firm was named as John Huddlestone & Son, wharfingers, coal dealers and timber merchants, and also carriers by water.¹⁴ In 1824 John Huddlestone was one of two Newark wharfingers and carriers included in the scheme promoted by Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough to quote low through rates for wool from various East Midland towns to Leeds and Wakefield.¹⁵

Huddlestone died in October 1828¹⁶ and thereafter his son was in business alone. Thomas described himself as a wharfinger, coal dealer and timber merchant, also offering conveyance by water to all parts daily, in the 1840s.¹⁷ In 1858–60 Thomas and also his sister, Anne Garton Patterson,¹⁸ were involved in Chancery litigation against James Nicholson, who made a claim against them as a creditor to their late father's estate.¹⁹ T.C. Huddlestone was still trading from Castlegate Wharf in the mid 1860s as a wharfinger and carrier by water, and also as a coal, lime and timber merchant.²⁰ He later retired and went to live with three of his grown-up (but unmarried) children at Croydon,²¹ where he died in 1888.²²

It seems fairly clear that both the Calcrafts and the Huddlestones regarded themselves principally as merchants, and only incidentally offered a carrying service, possibly purely as agents using boats owned by others.

Gamaliel Capes

Gamaliel Capes was baptised at Pontefract in 1735, the son of Matthew Capes.²³ In 1763 he mar-

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Aug. 1794.

² *Derby Mercury*, 5 March 1796.

³ Farey 1811–17, I, 470; III, 428; Owen 1978, 20. Shill 2011, 19 states that the Burton Boat Company's business was absorbed by T. & M. Pickford; neither he nor Owen cites a source.

⁴ Lloyd 1975, 251–2.

⁵ Bailey 1784, II, 415.

⁶ *UBD*, IV, 58–60.

⁷ Holden 1805, 225.

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 20 Dec. 1787, a notice repeated inserted with Huddlestone listed as an agent until at least 31 March 1791. It is possible that he gave up the agency when he went into business with Calcraft.

⁹ Holden 1809, 325; the same entry appears in Holden 1811, 154. There is no partnership dissolution notice in the *London Gazette* in the intervening years.

¹⁰ Pigot 1819, 544–7.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 2 Oct. 1819, p. 1746.

¹² Pigot 1822, 328–30.

¹³ Bapt. at Newark, 20 Sept. 1803, the son of John and Ann Huddlestone (Family Search). I have failed to locate his parents' marriage in Family Search.

¹⁴ Pigot 1828, 636.

¹⁵ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; below, Robert Flower & Son. The other Newark man involved was J.A. Jackson (qv).

¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 20 Jan. 1860, p. 200. I cannot locate his burial in Family Search and there is no PCC probate grant.

¹⁷ Pigot 1842, 17; White 1844, 353. The appearance of the name 'John Huddlestone & Son' in Pigot 1835, 283, is probably anachronistic, unless Thomas kept the old name on for a few years.

¹⁸ Who married Thomas Patterson esq. at Newark on 26 Nov. 1829, when she was described as the eldest daughter of the late Mr John Huddlestone, merchant.

¹⁹ TNA, C 51/505/H179, C 15/535/N43; *London Gazette*, 20 Jan. 1860, p. 200. I can find nothing in the *Gazette* or elsewhere to suggest that John Huddlestone died insolvent or bankrupt.

²⁰ White 1864, ooo.

²¹ Family Search (1881 Census).

²² Croydon RD, March quarter, aged 84.

²³ Family Search.

ried Ann Halenby at Whitgift,¹ on the south bank of the Ouse a few miles upstream from Trent Falls. The couple settled at Gainsborough, where eight of their children were baptised between 1764 and 1777.² It has proved impossible to identify Ann's parentage but it may be that her father gave Gamaliel a start as a sloop owner, if he was in the same line of business on the Ouse; Gamaliel may initially have been his father-in-law's agent at Gainsborough. In 1784 he was described as a coal merchant of Gainsborough.³ By the early 1790s Capes was by some way the largest sloop owner at Gainsborough, with about half a dozen vessels trading between there and Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.⁴ Gamaliel was not himself a master of any of his boats but one of the masters was William Capes.⁵

Gamaliel died suddenly at Gainsborough in September 1804, aged 69.⁶ His business evidently passed to his son, also Gamaliel, then aged 32.⁷ The younger Capes was declared bankrupt early in April 1809⁸ and in June the following year his assignees (for whom George Capes, a solicitor of Epworth, was acting) advertised his freehold estate in Bridge Street, Gainsborough, for sale by auction, including a six-bedroom house, an adjoining coal yard, a riverside warehouse of three storeys plus attics (55 ft × 63 ft), and another warehouse (64 ft × 29 ft), with a counting house, spacious vaults and grounds, 'admirably calculated for a Wine-Merchant, Wharfinger, Corn-factor, &c.'. The house was described as newly erected and both the warehouses were 'Modern-Built', possibly suggesting that Gamaliel had been drawing rather more from the business than his father had, confident that trade on the river would continue to expand. The sale also included five sloops.⁹ The family's problems appear to have gone back some years and taken an equally long time to resolve: in June 1813 the Court of Chancery made an order requiring the elder Gamaliel Capes's creditors to prove their claims,¹⁰ and as late as 1824 his son was petitioning for relief as an insolvent debtor. He was then described as formerly of Gainsborough, afterwards of Butterley Park (on the Cromford Canal in Derbyshire), 'writer', and then of the city of Lincoln,

'gentleman'.¹¹ The Gainsborough business, however, appears to have come to an end with his bankruptcy in 1809.

Cavendish Bridge Boat Company

From 1774 William Crosby was advertising the sale of London porter and timber from his warehouse at Cavendish Bridge. In 1776 he advertised a carrying service from his warehouse in Great Charles Street, Birmingham, three times a week to meet his other boats (presumably Trent barges) at Cavendish Bridge, from where he carried goods to Gainsborough. The passage from Birmingham to Gainsborough was said to take eight days, except when navigation was disrupted by frost or floods. Crosby had a warehouse at Cavendish Bridge from which he sold London porter and timber. Either then or later Crosby joined forces with the Cavendish Bridge Boat Company, which leased his Birmingham warehouse.¹²

In April and May 1780 John Webster, one of Derby's first bankers, offered to sell or let wharfs and warehouses on both sides of the Trent & Mersey Canal at Shardlow, in the occupation of the Cavendish Bridge Boat Company. The advertisement extolled the advantages of the position, at the junction of the canal with the Trent and on the main road from Derby to London. 'A very considerable Business is now, and has been for several Years, been carried on at these Wharfs', Webster stated, adding that there were 'above twenty Boats' belonging to the company in full employment on the canal. The property included an elegant house with gardens and 30 acres of meadow, and three other houses. All the buildings had been erected within the previous six years,¹³ which presumably dates the establishment of the business to c.1774,¹⁴ matching when Crosby began to advertise as a dealer at Cavendish Bridge.

Despite the confident tone of the advertisement, this may have been a distress sale by Webster, who possibly acquired the business after the previous owners had defaulted on a loan. In January 1781 both Webster (described as a 'banker and money scrivener') and Crosby (of Cavendish Bridge, wharfinger) were themselves declared bankrupt.¹⁵ Webster was later replaced as an assignee in the bankruptcy of George and Mary Bruckfield, drapers of Derby, of

¹ Family Search.

² Family Search.

³ Bailey 1784, 688.

⁴ The Lindsey registration papers (LAO) list Capes as owner of seven sloops in 1795; *UBD* says that he had six; five were included in the sale by his son's assignees in bankruptcy in 1809.

⁵ This is not the name of any of the sons born to Gamaliel and his wife.

⁶ *Hull Packet*, 18 Sept. 1804; LAO, Stow Wills 1805–6, no. 10.

⁷ Bapt. at Gainsborough 28 March 1772 (Family Search).

⁸ *London Gazette*, 7 and 22 April 1809.

⁹ *Hull Packet*, 20 May, 13 June 1809.

¹⁰ *London Gazette*, 1 and 15 June 1813.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 10 April 1824.

¹² Shill 2011, 16, citing *Aris*, 20 Jan. 1776 for the carrying service and unspecified issues of the *Derby Mercury* for the trade in porter and timber; he cites no source for the connection between Crosby and the Cavendish Bridge Boat Company.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 21, 28 April, 5, 12, 19 May 1780.

¹⁴ In the advertisement for the later sale of January 1782, the buildings were said to have been erected within the previous seven years.

¹⁵ *London Gazette*, 20 Jan. 1781, and 6 and 20 Oct. 1781 (Webster); 30 Jan. 1781 (Crosby, as cited by Shill 2011, 16).

whom he was presumably a creditor.¹ This suggests that he may have been brought down by the failure of some of his customers. In May 1781 the boat company's estate was put up for sale by auction by his assignees. On this occasion, in addition to the property at Shardlow, the sale included the Spot Warehouse at the upper end of St Peter's parish in Derby, and another warehouse in Birmingham, with a counting-house and wharf adjoining the canal, both of which were held on lease, with 15 and 14 years respectively remaining. This also helps to date when the business was set up. The Derby warehouse may be the one which thirty years earlier Thomas Drake of Derby and John Bridden of Wilden Ferry were planning to open at the Spot.² The moveable stock of the business in 1781 included six Trent boats, with masts, standing and rigging, in good repair, ten canal boats, a lighter and materials for building, repairing, loading and unloading boats.³ Some boats had obviously already been disposed of. By no means all the lots were sold on this occasion, and in January 1782 Webster's assignees put up the Shardlow and Derby estate for sale again.⁴

The business seems to have continued, possibly on a reduced scale, after these sales. In the early 1790s the author of the Gainsborough article in the *Universal British Directory*, which appears to be based on up-to-date first-hand knowledge, stated that the Cavendish Bridge Company had four boats on the Trent trading between there and Shardlow.⁵ It is not heard of again under this name. Webster secured a discharge from his bankruptcy in 1791.⁶

James and John Clark and Edward Hales

In 1805 James Clark was in business as a coal merchant on Millgate, Newark.⁷ A few years later he was joined in partnership by Edward Hales as a corn, coal and timber merchant.⁸ This firm, described as wharfingers, corn factors and coal, lime and raff merchants, was dissolved in 1810, when Clark was said to be of Balderton and Hales of Newark.⁹ The following year Clark alone was listed as a corn, coal and timber merchant¹⁰ and in 1812 was acting as Gabriel Brittain's agent at Newark and Nottingham for the sale of Crich lime, as was Hales.¹¹ Hales appears to have been principally a corn factor and was described thus when he was declared bankrupt in

1822.¹² The year before a corn merchant in King's Lynn had consigned nearly 400 quarters of barley to him to sell, which he had sold on to another agent in Derby (named in the newspaper as 'Clarke', although there is no reason to believe that this was James Clark). When Hales became bankrupt the merchants were unable to recover their corn, nor Clarke the money he had paid Hales, although he was obliged to pay damages to the merchant.¹³

By 1819 James Clark had brought his son into the firm, who were then described as coal and raff merchants of Millgate.¹⁴ They were listed as wharfingers as well as corn merchants, maltsters and timber merchants in the 1820s and early 1830s, and carriers by water to all parts.¹⁵ James Clark died in 1841¹⁶ and the following year John Clark (presumably the son who had earlier joined the firm) was listed as a wharfinger, corn and coal dealer and timber merchant, but not as a maltster or carrier,¹⁷ although in 1844 he was said to be a maltster.¹⁸

John Clark must have died some time in the following twenty years, since in 1864 Mary Ann Clark had a wharfinger's business on Millgate, and was also a coal and lime merchant, timber merchant and (as Mrs J. Clark) a corn merchant.¹⁹ She was presumably John's widow.²⁰ No-one named Clark was engaged in any of these businesses in Newark ten years later,²¹ and Mrs Clark seems to have died, aged 70, in 1875.²²

John Clarke

In the early 1820s John Clarke appears to have been, by some distance, the leading wharfinger at Boston, controlling most of both the coasting and inland trade of the port. In 1821 he was appointed

¹² *London Gazette*, 11 Jan. 1823, p. 56; 7 Feb. 1824, p. 224, 20 March 1827, 11 Dec. 1827, p. 2546.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 22 March 1826.

¹⁴ Pigot 1819, 544-7.

¹⁵ Pigot 1822, 328-30; Pigot 1828, 636; Pigot 1831, 116-17; Pigot 1835, 283-4.

¹⁶ The change in the name of the firm occurs between the publication of Pigot's Directories of 1835 and 1842. The only death registration for a James Clark in Newark RD between the Sept. quarter of 1837 and the end of 1842 occurs in the March quarter of 1841; there is no death notice in the *Derby Mercury* or PCC grant for Clark to confirm this identification.

¹⁷ Pigot 1842, 17.

¹⁸ White 1844, 353.

¹⁹ White 1864, 000.

²⁰ The only possible entry in the civil register for Newark RD which could represent their marriage occurs in the Dec. quarter of 1837, when John Clark married Mary Ann Read, and there are no earlier entries in Family Search. The only reason for doubting this identification is that, if the death in Newark RD of Mary Ann Clark in 1875, aged 70, refers to the same person, she was a fairly old bride in 1837.

²¹ Wright 1874, 000.

²² Newark RD, Dec. quarter 1875. There is no other possible death entry in the Newark register for Mary Ann, although she may of course have died elsewhere.

¹ *London Gazette*, 29 Jan. 1782.

² Below, Derby Boat Company.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 4 and 25 May 1781.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 10 and 17 Jan. 1782.

⁵ *UBD*, III, 141.

⁶ *London Gazette*, 8 Feb. 1791.

⁷ Holden 1805, 226.

⁸ Holden 1809, 324.

⁹ *London Gazette*, 2 Oct. 1810, p. 1570.

¹⁰ Holden 1811, 154.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 4 June 1812.

agent for a newly established contract of seven vessels intending to provide a weekly packet service to and from Upper Irongate wharf in London, using shallow drafted ships that could get up to Boston wharf at all times. As part of this commission, he undertook to 'get arrangements made so as that goods for Lincoln, Granham, and all places adjacent to Boston, will be forwarded with the utmost dispatch'.¹

The extent to which he was able to arrange onward transmission by river and canal is clear from Pigot's directory of 1822, in which Clarke was said to be running services as far as Liverpool in one direction, Leicester in another, and Cambridge in a third, as well as a long list of intermediate destinations on those routes. These included Holbeach, Huntingdon, Stamford, Spalding, Peterborough, King's Lynn and Wisbech; Horncastle, Sleaford, Lincoln, Gainsborough, Newark and Nottingham; Derby, the Potteries and Manchester; and Leicester, Loughborough and Market Harborough. A few of the local services (to Sleaford, Horncastle and King's Lynn) carried passengers as well as goods. Clarke was also wharfinger for coasting services to Newcastle and Shields.² He was still in business as a wharfinger at Packhouse Quay in 1830, but was apparently no longer running a single carrying service to any inland destination, and no contract sailings to London are listed at all.³ Clarke had disappeared completely ten years later, by which date Boston once again had regular sailings to London but direct services to inland destinations were much reduced.⁴

Clayton family

In 1819 Nathaniel Clayton of Lincoln, the owner of a packet sailing between there and Boston, was in trouble on two occasions. In July he was allowed to pay 2 guineas compensation and make a public apology after he forced open the sea gates at the lock at the Grand Sluice in Boston, when the tide was running up, 'to the great danger of injury to the said gates' and other works;⁵ two months later he was fined 20s. and costs for running his packet violently against the *Favourite*, steam packet, in the Witham, which was 'much damaged' as a result.⁶ By 1826 Clayton had become the owner of a steam packet

himself, the *Countess of Warwick*,⁷ previously owned by Charles West junior (qv).

Clayton is said to have died in 1827⁸ when the boat passed to Mary Clayton, presumably his widow (but not, as explained below, the mother of Clayton's son Nathaniel). In 1828 the *Countess of Warwick*, by this date one of several steam packets plying between Lincoln and Boston, was involved in a dispute with another boat, the *Duke of Sussex*, whose master was named Smith. A lock-keeper near Lincoln refused to admit Smith's boat on the ground that he had used his engine to sail the first seven miles from Lincoln (instead of horses), thus threatening to damage a newly built and 'very expensive' embankment on this stretch of the Witham. Mrs Clayton's boat (which was said to be under her command, although it seems unlikely that she would actually have been at the wheel) was trapped behind Smith's and both were delayed for two hours. Smith eventually agreed not to steam down this section of the river but was said immediately to have broken his word. The *Stamford Mercury* noted that the other packets had for some time been legally bound not to use their engines within certain limits, which had resulted in a heavy weekly expense for horses. The paper suggested that if the packets used their engines at no more than half power, they would not damage the banks and probably cause less swell (because of their shallow draft) than heavily laden sailing vessels in full sail.⁹

Mary Clayton was still the owner of the *Countess of Warwick* in 1830, when she was part of a syndicate of three independent owners forming the 'Old' or 'United' steam packet company who were in competition with at least three other boats on the Lincoln-Boston route, on which they offered a daily service in each direction.¹⁰ In 1831 the younger Nathaniel Clayton, the master of Mrs Clayton's *Countess of Warwick*, was fined £5 at Lincoln Sessions for assaulting William Porter of the *Victory* after a 'hard race between them' from Boston, which Clayton narrowly won. He proceeded to boast of his victory to Porter, threatening to 'mash' his boat. When Porter did not respond to this provocation Clayton struck him and a fight ensued.¹¹

Nathaniel Clayton the younger is traditionally said to have been born in 1811, the son of Mary Clayton, and to have returned to Lincoln (having worked for a

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 6 April 1821.

² Pigot 1822-3, 238-9.

³ Pigot 1830, 75-6.

⁴ Pigot 1841, Lincs. 16. The commonness of the name does not make Clarke's fate easy to trace but he is not in the 1841 census at Boston. The death of a John Clarke was registered in Boston RD in the Sept. quarter of 1839, which may be the wharfinger, but I can find no bankruptcy notice in the *Gazette*, nor is there a PCC grant.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 2 July 1819.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 29 Oct. 1819; below, John Temperton, for the *Favourite*. The description of the *Favourite* as a steam packet implies that Clayton was master of a sailing vessel.

⁷ Wright 1982, 63.

⁸ Wright 1982, 63; there is no burial entry in Family Search around this date.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 Aug. 1828.

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Sept. 1830, 19 Nov. 1830, 28 Oct. 1831; the other two owners were John Temperton (*Favourite*) and Richard Swain (*Witham*); see John Temperton for full details of the service. The rival boats mentioned in contemporary newspaper reports, apart from the *Duke of Sussex*, were the *Victory* (William Porter) and the *Duchess of St Albans*.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 8 July 1831.

time for the Butterley Company) to become master of the family packet after the death of his father, also Nathaniel.¹ In fact, although Mary was the elder Nathaniel Clayton's widow, she was apparently his second wife and therefore the younger Nathaniel's stepmother. Nathaniel was the son of Nathaniel and Catherine Clayton and was baptised at Scotton in 1813.²

In 1835 Mary Clayton seems to have intended to withdraw from the steam-packet business, when she advertised the *Countess of Warwick* for sale, 'well-found in stores of every description, and in full trade'. The 12 hp engine and boiler were said to be in good condition.³ Either the sale did not go ahead, or possibly Nathaniel bought the boat from his stepmother. In 1837 he married Hannah Shirtcliff at Lincoln⁴ and in 1841 the couple were living at Waterside South, with two servants in the house, when Nathaniel was still a steam packet master.⁵ He was master of the *Celerity*, an early iron boat, in 1842.⁶ In that year he joined in partnership with Joseph Shuttleworth (1819–83),⁷ who the same year married Sarah Grace Clayton. She appears to have been Nathaniel's half-sister.⁸ Shuttleworth had a boatyard in Lincoln, which the two men converted into a foundry and engineering works, gradually extending the site as the Stamp End ironworks. The company specialised in portable steam engines.⁹ Clayton & Shuttleworth grew into one of the largest such businesses in Lincolnshire: in 1881, when Clayton was High Sheriff of the county (and was also a city magistrate and deputy lieutenant of the county), he was employ-

ing 1,295 men.¹⁰ In 1876–8 he and his wife met much of the cost of a new hospital for Lincoln, which was built near their home at Eastcliff House.¹¹ Nathaniel Clayton died in 1890, leaving personal estate sworn at £1.36 million.¹² He had come a long way from his appearance before the city magistrates as a headstrong eighteen-year-old.

Benjamin Codd & John Hydes

In the early 1790s Messrs Codd & Hydes were operating six sloops and keels between Gainsborough and Leeds, Wakefield, Bradford etc., carrying wool etc. and bringing back coals.¹³ The partnership between Benjamin Codd of Glentworth and John Hydes of Gainsborough, coal merchants, was dissolved in 1794,¹⁴ when Codd undertook to settle all accounts. This presumably indicates that he was intending to continue in business on his own, and in 1795 Benjamin Codd, still said to be of Glentworth, registered three sloops at Gainsborough, which he described as trading to Hull, Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Halifax, Doncaster and Rotherham.¹⁵ He is the only owner for which register entries survive who included the last two places, on the Don Navigation, alongside those on the Aire & Calder or beyond, although Mark Winn, who appears as a boat owner in *UBD* but not in the registration papers, was also trading with Rotherham. Early in 1796, however, Codd advertised four sloops for sale, the *Friends*, *Goodwill*, *Providence* and *Thomas* for sale, and of which were said to have been employed in the coal trade to a great extent,¹⁶ and this may mark the end of his venture into sloop owning. The business had certainly come to an end by 1811.¹⁷

¹ Wright 1982, 63.

² Family Search, in which there is no baptism of a Nathaniel Clayton in Lincolnshire in 1811. The baptism of Nathaniel son of William and Mary Clayton at Stickford in Oct. 1812 is a red herring, since when the steam packet master was married at Lincoln in 1837 his father's name was given as Nathaniel. The best solution to this conundrum is to assume that Mary was the elder Nathaniel's second wife, an idea supported by the baptism entry for Sarah Grace Clayton (Mrs Joseph Shuttleworth) cited below. Either Nathaniel went through life believing he was two years older than he actually was (since the age-reporting in the census and in his death registration is consistent with a date of birth of 1811), or he was baptised when he was two years old.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 16 Oct. 1835.

⁴ Family Search.

⁵ TNA, HO 107/651/20, f. 13v.; the daily steam packet service to Boston was then still running (Pigot 1841, Lincs. 17) but Pigot does not name the vessels involved.

⁶ Wright 1982, 63.

⁷ Wright 1982, 65.

⁸ Joseph Shuttleworth married Sarah Grace Clayton (the daughter of Nathaniel Clayton) in March 1842; she was baptised at St Swithin's, Lincoln, in March 1817, the daughter of Nathaniel Clayton and his wife Mary (Family Search). Although I cannot locate Nathaniel and Mary's marriage in Family Search, nor the death of Nathaniel's first wife Catherine, Sarah's baptism and marriage entries appear to support the idea that her mother was Nathaniel's second wife.

⁹ Wright 1982, 85.

¹⁰ TNA, RG 11/3243, f. 69; Nathaniel and Hannah were then resident at Eastcliff House, Lincoln. In 1851, when they were visiting farming friends who had 400 acres at North Mimms (Herts.), Nathaniel returned his occupation as engineer and ironfounder (HO 107/1712, f. 74); in 1861 he and his wife and three daughters were enumerated at the Great Northern Railway Hotel, King's Cross, when he gave his occupation as engineer (RG 9/118, f. 3); and in 1871 he was at Newland House, Lincoln, when he settled for 'Magistrate for the City' (RG 10/3374, f. 63v.). Despite their wealth, the Claytons never had more than four servants living in on any census night and never moved to a country estate.

¹¹ Wright 1982, 235.

¹² Cal. Grants, 1891 (he died on 21 Dec. 1890). When Shuttleworth died in 1883 he left just over half a million (Cal. Grants, 1883).

¹³ *UBD*, III, 141. Codd does not appear elsewhere in *UBD*, presumably because he did not live in Gainsborough, John Hyde (spelt thus) is listed as a coal merchant.

¹⁴ *London Gazette*, 5 April 1794 (in which Hydes is spelt thus).

¹⁵ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

¹⁶ Found on a website, 'The Brown's [sic] of Lincolnshire', referring to advertisements in the *Stamford Mercury* for a sale at the Ship Inn, Gainsborough, on 27 Feb. 1796. The three sloops registered by Codd in 1795 are not given names.

¹⁷ Holden 1811, sn Gainsborough.

The sloop owner and coal merchant appears to be the Benjamin Codd who was baptised at Glentworth in 1744, the son of John Codd and his wife Mary.¹ He was described as a grazier of Glentworth in 1778² and died in 1819, when he was of Gainsborough.³ There was also a Gainsborough attorney named Benjamin Codd active in the 1790s and 1800s,⁴ who was presumably related to the grazier,⁵ and it is just possible that it was he who owned the sloops, although the registration papers of 1795 argue against this. The attorney is probably the Benjamin Codd of Gainsborough gentleman who died there in 1841, leaving all his estate to his wife Sarah.⁶

Although Hydes's name is spelt thus in the 1790s, he appears to be identical with the John Hyde who occurs as an auctioneer of Gainsborough in the early nineteenth century. It is noticeable that several of his advertisements state that further particulars of the premises to be sold might be had from Benjamin Codd, attorney (or later Messrs Barnard & Codd).⁷ In 1811 Hyde was listed as the surveyor of taxes at Gainsborough.⁸

The best conclusion that can be drawn from the limited evidence is probably that Benjamin Codd was a Glentworth grazier who decided it was worth investing in a few sloops, not least because he would have been familiar with the wool trade to the West Riding, and briefly went into partnership with a man then dealing in the main return cargo from the Leeds, Wakefield and Rotherham areas.

Cowley, Batty & Co.

In 1846 a firm of this name was operating a boat from Soresby's Wharf, Morledge, Derby, to Birmingham, Warwick, Coventry, Banbury and Oxford once

¹ Family Search.

² LAO, 1 DIXON 1/E/54.

³ *Hull Packet*, 23 Feb. 1819; LAO, Stow Wills 1819–21, no. 29 (Benjamin Codd of Gainsborough senior).

⁴ TNA, C 12/227/8; C 202/191/13 (and see *London Gazette*, 22 Feb. 1803); *Derby Mercury*, 26 May 1803; *London Gazette*, 17 May 1803; *Hull Packet*, 16 and 23 Aug., 29 Nov. 1803, 24 Jan. 1814. Codd was commissioned captain of the Gainsborough Volunteer Infantry in 1805 (*London Gazette*, 25 May 1805).

⁵ He cannot, it seems, have been his son. According to a website, 'The Brown's [sic] of Lincolnshire', Benjamin Codd of Glentworth (b. 1744) marr. at Glentworth in 1766 Charlotte Bassett and several of their children were baptised at Glentworth. I cannot find this marriage on Family Search, which does however record the baptism of Benjamin son of Benjamin Codd and Charlotte at Gainsborough in 1780. This child obviously could not be practising as an attorney in the town only ten or fifteen years later.

⁶ TNA, PROB 11/1944, ff. 56r.-v. His death was registered in Gainsborough RD in the March quarter of 1841.

⁷ LAO, 1 DIXON, 20/1/1; and see the advertisements in *Hull Packet* cited above.

⁸ Holden 1811, sn. Gainsborough; Codd himself does not appear in this directory, probably because he was an attorney, rather than a trader.

a week.⁹ It is not listed in earlier Derby directories. The similarity of the only route served and the slight orthographic similarities suggest that the name be a poor form of Crowley & Hicklin (qv).

Crowley, Hicklin, Barry & Co.

In the 1830s and early 1840s Crowley, Hicklin & Co. were running fly boats from Braunston wharf 'continually during the week' to London, Birmingham, Derby, the Potteries, Manchester, Liverpool, Sheffield Wolverhampton and Oxford.¹⁰ In 1843 the firm was operating a fly-boat service from Lister's Wharf, Siddals Lane, Derby, every Tuesday and Friday to Birmingham, Warwick, Coventry, Banbury and Oxford. The company is not listed at Derby in earlier directories. At the same date Lister & Co. of Siddals Lane were carriers by rail to Birmingham and to stations on the North Midland line to Leeds, and beyond to Hull and Selby.¹¹ The similarity of the only route served and the slight orthographic similarities in the name suggest that the name of the firm in the previous entry may be a poor form of Crowley & Hicklin.

Although the latter company is mentioned in Northampton directories only from 1830 and in Derby directories only in the 1840s, it appears to be the successor of Crowley & Co., a Wolverhampton firm which is said to have begun a carrying service to the East Midlands in 1812.¹² Another source states that it evolved from the Wolverhampton Boat Company, established c.1803.¹³

John and Hannah Cutts

In 1822 John Cutts was a wharfinger at Leenside, Nottingham, and was running a carrying service to Gainsborough on Mondays and Thursdays.¹⁴ He died the following year, aged only 33, 'generally known and deeply regretted'.¹⁵ The name is too common to identify his birth for certain, but he may have been the son of Henry Cutts who was baptised at Selston in January 1789,¹⁶ in which case his father was in turn probably the man who became the first clerk to the Cromford Canal Company, established later that year.¹⁷ The business evidently passed to Hannah

⁹ Bagshaw 1846, 152–3.

¹⁰ Pigot 1830, 133; Pigot 1841, Northants. 8.

¹¹ Glover 1843, 153, 22.

¹² Shill 2011, 19 (no source cited).

¹³ Hanson 1975, 20.

¹⁴ Pigot 1822, 340–1. He does not appear under Nottingham in Holden 1811.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 26 Feb. 1823.

¹⁶ Family Search. There is no other close match in Family Search in the Nottingham area, although if this is the right John he was in fact 34 when he died, rather than in his 34th year as the *Mercury* stated.

¹⁷ Riden 1990, 124.

Cutts, probably his widow,¹ who was at Leenside in 1828 and 1842. In neither year, however, was she also acting as a carrier.²

Deacon & Co.

In 1841 this firm, which was one of three carrying businesses by land and water in which Daniel Deacon of London was concerned, was running daily boat services from Loughborough to Birmingham, Bristol, Manchester, Liverpool, London, Gainsborough and Hull. The company were operating these routes in association with German Wheatcroft & Son from Wood's wharf, North Street; two other companies, Pickfords and James Sutton & Co., were running similar services from other wharfs in the town.³

Deacon, Harrison & Co.

In 1814 Deacon, Harrison & Son, who were well-established as road carriers between London and Yorkshire, reorganised their services following the opening of the Grand Union Canal by offering to transport goods by canal on the southern half of the journey. For a few years they had an exchange point on the Cromford Canal at Codnor Park, but by the early 1820s had moved this to Leicester. From their wharf at Belgrave Gate they were sending goods south by canal three days a week and north twice weekly.⁴ The northbound service appears to have been entirely by road. This was certainly their practice by the end of the decade, when southbound departures continued to leave Leicester three days a week. Northbound, their boats ran to Shardlow twice a week, from where goods were forwarded by Soresby & Flack of Shardlow to Derby, the Potteries, Manchester and Liverpool in one direction, and Birmingham, Stourport, Bristol and Bridgwater in another.⁵ They were not sending goods down the Trent, which makes it clear that the northern half of the London–Yorkshire service (i.e. from Leicester northward) was by road.

¹ I cannot locate a marriage for John and Hannah in Family Search, but in 1828 she can obviously not have been the adult daughter of a 33-year-old who died five years before.

² Pigot 1828, 656–7; Pigot 1842, 50. The only death registration for a Hannah Cutts in Nottingham RD between 1840 and 1880 occurred in the June quarter of 1852, when John's widow, if she was much the same age as her husband, would have been aged about 60. There was no death notice in the *Derby Mercury* and no PCC grant for Hannah.

³ Pigot 1841, Leics. 38; and see also the other three companies mentioned above; the two following entries for Deacon's other business; and the corresponding entries in *Stage Waggon Carriers* for full details of Deacon and his partners' bimodal carrying activities.

⁴ Pigot 1822–3, 220; and see the entry for Deacon, Harrison in *Stage Waggon Carriers* for full details of their road-carrying services and the early years of bimodal carrying.

⁵ Pigot 1828–9, 493; below, Soresby & Flack.

Deacon, Wade & Co.

Deacon, Harrison & Co. appears to have been wound up in the 1830s, when some of their routes passed to a new firm, made up of Daniel Deacon and Richard Wade of Uppingham, who continued to carry by both road and canal.⁶ In 1841 Deacon, Wade were carrying by water from Leicester to London three times a week, to Nottingham twice a week, to Oxford, Banbury and Northampton twice a week, to the Potteries (but apparently not beyond) twice a week, and to Worcester, Bristol and the West three times a week. Most of these services appear to have been run in association with Pickfords and Pickering & Waters.⁷

Derby Boat Company

This partnership, which for about sixty years appears to have carried most of the traffic on the Derwent, was established in 1731, when a syndicate of eight Derby tradesmen, most of whom seem to have been boatbuilders, made an agreement with five of the ten undertakers who opened the river to navigation in 1720–1. The original syndicate accepted that they had met with great difficulties in their task and had reaped no benefit from the large sums laid out, while the owners and masters of boats on the river had met with 'many unforeseen difficulties and losses'. The new company would manage all the boats on the Derwent and Trent built by its members, who put up a joint stock of £800 in eight equal shares. The agreement was to last initially for seven years and any member who acquired a share or interest in any other boat trading on the two rivers would be excluded from the company.⁸ Four years later the new company successfully brought an action against Nottingham corporation, objecting to their attempt to levy a toll at Trent Bridge.⁹ The corporation returned to court in 1737 as plaintiffs against the boat company but, after six hours' deliberation, the jury rejected their case.¹⁰

In April 1755 the boat company complained that several traders who had bought large quantities of grain in Lincolnshire and elsewhere to make up for a shortage of supply at Derby had sent the corn loose in boats up the river, and refused to accept liability for damage or loss.¹¹ The following year, after grain riots in the town, the mayor defended himself against accusations of engrossing by offering to open the books of the boat company, which would show the quantity he had bought at a distance, brought up the

⁶ See the entry for the firm in *Stage Waggon Carriers* for full details of their road carrying, and also the entry on Richard Wade.

⁷ Pigot 1841, Leics. 30.

⁸ Notts. Archives, DD/BB/85.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 7 Aug. 1735.

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 17 March 1736/7.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 18 April 1755.

river and immediately sold.¹

The opening of the Trent & Mersey Canal, which at Swarkestone passed within four miles of Derby (compared with a journey of six or seven miles to Wilden Ferry by road, or about ten miles by river), may have persuaded the boat company, as proprietors of the Derwent Navigation, to attempt to sell their business. In January 1783 they advertised for sale by private treaty two boats of 30 tons burden, two of 20 tons and two lighters, with masts, rigging, tarpaulins, ropes and other equipment; and offered to let for up to three years five-eighths of the tonnage and wharfage of the Derwent received under the Act of 1720, together with 'several large and extensive Cheese Warehouses' and other buildings, and also five-eighths of the profits from Borrowash corn mill, near the mouth of the river, held under a lease from the earl of Harrington.² In December the same year Sutton & Birkinshaw, who had a carrying business at Cavendish Bridge, announced that they had taken the 'Old Cheese Warehouse' at Derby, late in the possession of the Derby Boat Company, and would henceforth despatch cheese and other goods consigned to them at Derby for Gainsborough from the Old Wharf there, while continuing to take in other goods at their Cavendish Bridge warehouse.³ This arrangement came to an end just over three years later when William Stretton (who appears previously to have been employed by the boat company) announced that he had taken over the Old Cheese Warehouse on the Derwent Navigation wharf (apart from Messrs Evans & Co.'s apartments) and would deliver cheese to Gainsborough by water throughout in new boats, as well as other goods destined for Newark, Lincoln, Gainsborough, Hull and London. He was also continuing to deal in timber at the wharf, offering ladder and scaffold poles, wainscot logs and board, deal timber and deals of all lengths and thickness.⁴

The other occupier referred to in 1787 was evidently Thomas Evans & Sons, who had a rolling and slitting mill on the river at Cockpit Hill.⁵ A few years later the Derby Boat Company was said to be owned by Messrs Evans & Stretton and John Stretton was in business as a wharfinger and raff merchant in the town. The company sent a great deal of cheese and lead by barge to Gainsborough and brought back deals, slate etc.⁶ They then had five boats trading with

Gainsborough⁷ and it was said that boats were 'frequently' built at the wharf for this trade.⁸ In 1792 W. Stretton & Sons were advertising the carriage of goods in their boats from Derby to Gainsborough for 15s. a ton.⁹

The Derwent Navigation could clearly not compete with the Derby Canal and under the terms of its Act of 1793 the canal company was to buy all its rights, wharfs and warehouses for £3,996, a purchase concluded in March 1794.¹⁰ This must also have marked the end of the Derby Boat Company, although Thomas Evans himself appears to have continued a carrying business alongside his other interests for some years longer.¹¹

Dean and Hall families

In 1784 John Dean was a wharfinger at Gainsborough and was also 'agent to the cheesemongers in London' there,¹² presumably meaning he was engaged in receiving cheese sent down the Trent from Burton or Willington and forwarding it by coaster to London.¹³

In the early 1790s Messrs Dean, Berry & Hall were said to have two vessels sailing regularly between Gainsborough and Leeds.¹⁴ In 1795 Joseph Dean and John Hall, both of Gainsborough, registered what were presumably the two boats in question, both 40-ton sloops, as trading to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.¹⁵ John Hall was master of one of them, while Dean can be identified as a wharfinger and Thomas Berry as a builder in Gainsborough.¹⁶ The business had evidently come to an end by 1811, when neither Dean nor Hall appears in Holden's Directory. There was at that date a firm of wharfingers in Gainsborough named Joseph Hall & Co.,¹⁷ who were still in business, with premises on Bridge Street, in 1822.¹⁸ The earlier company appears to have been a partnership between a wharfinger, a boatmaster who later became a wharfinger, and a sleeping partner who withdrew early on.

In 1820 what may well have been a successor concern, Messrs Dean & Beaumont, wharfingers and commercial agents of Double Row, Gainsborough, announced a steam packet service from their Bridge

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 10 Sept. 1756.

² *Derby Mercury*, 23 Jan. 1783.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 18 Dec. 1783; below, James Sutton, for Sutton & Birkinshaw.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 18 Jan. 1787; Stretton was named as the person dealing with enquiries in the advertisement of 1783.

⁵ Riden (ed.) 2006, 4, 104 etc.; Pilkington 1789, II, 176–7; the mills are shown on the inset Derby street plan on Burdett's county map of 1767.

⁶ Riden (ed.) 2006, 73, 86.

⁷ *UBD*, III, 141.

⁸ Pilkington 1789, II, 177.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 6 Dec. 1792.

¹⁰ Hadfield 1970, 33.

¹¹ See below, Thomas Evans & Sons.

¹² Bailey 1784, 688.

¹³ See generally Henstock 1969, 39–44.

¹⁴ *UBD*, III, 141.

¹⁵ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

¹⁶ *UBD*, III, 141–3. The inclusion of two of the partners but not the third suggests that *UBD* consistently does *not* list masters of sloops, as opposed to their owners.

¹⁷ Holden 1811.

¹⁸ Pigot 1822, 244.

Street wharf to York, stating that the *Countess of Scarborough* had been fitted up in a 'most superior style' for the conveyance of goods and passengers between Gainsborough, Selby and York, and all places adjacent at either end of the line (including Leeds, Harrogate, Knaresborough and Ripon). The service was then twice-weekly, leaving Gainsborough on Wednesday and Saturday and returning from York on Thursday and Monday.¹ This advertisement may mark the start of the service, since the company were also seeking a 'steady young man' as an engineer (with the sensible warning, 'no one considered who has not been used to a steam packet engine', even though this may have been quite a rare skill in Gainsborough in 1820). Within a couple of years the service had apparently been increased to daily, with a departure for York at 9 a.m. every morning, and was then the only scheduled packet service from Gainsborough to York.² On the other hand, in the same year the *Countess* was said to call at Selby on its way up to York on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday mornings only, and pass on its return passage from York on Wednesday, Friday and Monday mornings.³ The service was not mentioned at all in the York directory for 1822.⁴

C.M. Douglas & Co.

This firm appears only in Glover's Directory of 1829, as the successors to James Holt & Co., with a long list of places served from Cockpit Hill in Derby three times a week, and two others (Birmingham and Nuneaton) once a week. In two cases (Bristol and Wolverhampton) the service appears to have been operated in conjunction with a firm named Swaine & Co., who appear alone in the same list providing a service on Tuesdays to Birmingham.⁵ Swaines themselves are not listed elsewhere in the directory as carriers. Many of the places on the list of those served three times a week, such as Chapel en le Frith, Tideswell, Wirksworth and Chesterfield, must have been reached by waggon, not boat, and in other cases, for example Mansfield, it is difficult to decide whether the journey would have been partly by water and partly by land, or entirely by waggon (or railway). The company seems to have given up trading, certainly as carriers, by the early 1840s.

Thomas Drake & John Bridden

In November 1752 Thomas Drake of Derby and

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 18 Oct. 1820. The vessel was named after Henrietta Willoughby, second daughter of the 5th Lord Middleton, born in 1766, who in 1787 married Richard Lumley-Saunderson, later 6th earl of Scarborough. He died in 1832, she in 1846 (*Complete Peerage*, XI, 513).

² Pigot 1822, 244, 246.

³ Pigot 1822, 683

⁴ Pigot 1822, 721.

⁵ Glover 1829, 38–40, 44.

John Bridden of Wilden Ferry announced that from 1 March the following year they would carry goods by land from Derby to Wilden Ferry on the same terms as the Derby Boat Company charged for carriage on the Derwent (under their Act of 1720, a maximum of 1s.) and send them by boat to there to Gainsborough, thus avoiding the problem of either too much or too little water in the river. They also planned to open a warehouse at the Spot in St Peter's parish in Derby.⁶ Nothing more is heard of this scheme, which illustrates the limitations of the Derwent as a navigation, although in 1757 Thomas Drake's warehouse was one of two at Cavendish Bridge from which cheese and linen cloth were stolen.⁷

George Drewery

George Drewery of Bridge Street, Gainsborough, was recorded as a wharfinger and commercial agent in 1822.⁸

Ella, Coleman & Co.

The firm known for most of its life as Ella, Coleman & Co. originated, probably in 1778, as soon as the Soar Navigation was opened, as a partnership between William Cradock and Michael Ella trading as wharfingers and dealers in timber, iron etc. at the head of the navigation at Loughborough.⁹ Either or both men may previously have been involved in the same business at Cavendish Bridge or elsewhere on the Trent, or may have brought goods by land carriage from there to sell at Loughborough, but no direct evidence for this has been found.¹⁰ Certainly in the 1790s, Ella was also an innkeeper at Loughborough.¹¹ In 1788 Cradock, Ella & Co. advertised the sale of sea-coal at their wharf in Loughborough (which shows that coal from the North East was reaching the town to compete with Derbyshire coal brought down the Erewash Canal), adding that 'Blacksmiths may be constantly supplied with that Article, of the very best Quality, and on the most reasonable Terms'. They were also selling imported bar iron, deals, fir timber and wainscot boards,¹² which would have entered at Hull. It is not clear whether Cradock, Ella were directly engaged in foreign trade or were

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 17 Nov. 1752.

⁷ Shill 2011, 14–15, citing *Derby Mercury*, 21 Oct. 1757.

⁸ Pigot 1822, 244.

⁹ The notice dissolving the original partnership (*Derby Mercury*, 4 Jan. 1794) gives the partners' full names; James Foster's complaint in 1792 about his treatment as the firm's former clerk states that he began in that post on 21 April 1778, which is about the time the navigation was completed.

¹⁰ In an advertisement in 1816 (*Leicester Journal*, 12 June) the firm thanked customers for more than forty years' support, which would take the business back to the early 1770s or before, but this may have been no more than a loose reference to a date of foundation contemporary with the opening of the Soar Navigation.

¹¹ *UBD*, III, 577.

¹² *Northampton Mercury*, 3 and 10 May 1788.

buying from merchants at Hull.

An isolated reference to a 'Loughborough Boat Company' in the early 1790s, which had three vessels trading up the Trent from Gainsborough,¹ presumably as far as Loughborough, almost certainly relates to Cradock, Ella & Co.

In 1792, after an extension of the navigation up to Leicester had been authorised, the firm were clearly contemplating establishing themselves there as soon as the canal was finished. This led to a dispute with their clerk, James Foster, who had been in their service since 1778 and was poached by another firm with similar plans. Cradock, Ella & Co. stated that 'they are determined to spare no Pains or Expence' to accommodate their customers, who would be 'provided with Sheds, Warehouse, and other Conveniences' at Leicester 'for the Reception of Wool, Groceries, and all other Goods that may be entrusted to their Care, and also with a good Assortment of Iron and Deals'.² By this date the two original partners had been joined by James Douglass, who appears to have been a wine and brandy merchant,³ although the name of the firm was not changed until 1793, when Cradock, Ella & Douglass of Loughborough were advertising the sale of millstones alongside deals and Memel and Norway timber and logs.⁴

There was a further reconstruction of the business at the beginning of 1794 when the Leicester Navigation was opened. William Cradock withdrew from the partnership and was replaced by a Leicester ironmonger named J. Poynton (quite possibly one of the firm's customers), whose shop at the corner of High Street became the firm's first office in the city.⁵ They also established themselves at a new wharf in the Friars, near the North Gate, 'where convenient and extensive Warehouses are erecting for the Reception of Wool, Cheese, Grocery, and all Goods consigned to their Care' and from where goods would be taken by their own boats (the first reference found to the firm having its own vessels) to Nottingham, Newark and Gainsborough (for all parts of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire), Cavendish Bridge, Derby and Birmingham, and the lines of the Erewash and Cromford canals. They stressed that they would be continuing to trade from their existing wharf at Loughborough and would extend their route to Market Harborough as soon as the canal was complete to the town,⁶ a

somewhat premature promise, as it turned out.

By May 1794 they had 'completed large and extensive Warehouses, for the Reception of Wool, Cheese, &c. upon their Wharf', from where goods would be despatched to Shardlow and Gainsborough. Cheese-factors were advised that 'Weights and Scales, with proper Attendants' were available at the wharf and that business would be conducted both there and at Poynton's shop.⁷ When the Forest Line of the Leicester Navigation was opened in the autumn of 1794, 'and by Consequence the whole Line for the Conveyance of Coal, as well as Merchandize', Ella, Douglass & Poynton immediately announced that a stock of Leicestershire and Derbyshire coal and sea-coal would be kept at 'Soar Wharf, near the North Gates', together with timber, deals, fir laths and iron. Once again, the conveyance of wool, cheese and groceries from Leicester to Shardlow and Gainsborough in their own boats was specifically mentioned, and the firm was still selling Derbyshire millstones.⁸

Poynton seems to have withdrawn from the partnership in the 1790s, to be replaced by Thomas Burbidge.⁹ In 1800 the firm was using the style 'Ella, Coleman, Douglass, Burbidge & Co., Proprietors of the Vessels trading from Leicester to Gainsborough', although from that year onwards it was more commonly shortened to Ella, Coleman & Co. By this date they had appointed an agent at Debdale wharf, near Gumley, at the southern end of the unfinished Leicestershire & Northamptonshire Union Canal, opened three years earlier. As well as selling coal there, the agency was particularly aimed at developing wool traffic from around Market Harborough: when it was first established the firm placed an advertisement addressed 'To Woolstaplers, &c.' in the *Northampton Mercury* for at least a five-week run.¹⁰ Later in 1794 Ella, Coleman stressed that they were the proprietors of the only vessels trading between Leicester and Gainsborough, in which they carried wool from Debdale wharf 'for all parts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, &c.', as well as delivering 'Derbyshire Coals of the best Quality' for sale at the wharf.¹¹

In 1812, three years after the canal finally reached Market Harborough, Ella, Coleman announced the start of a service between there and Leicester once a week, with a boat arriving at Market Harborough every Monday evening and returning on Thursday morning: 'All Wool and Goods for the Northern and

¹ *UBD*, III, 141.

² *Northampton Mercury*, 18 and 25 Aug. 1792.

³ He is not listed at either Leicester or Loughborough in *UBD*; he may be the James Douglass, wine and brandy merchant, listed at Leicester in Holden 1811, II.

⁴ *Northampton Mercury*, 7 Dec. 1793.

⁵ The Leicester trade list in *UBD*, III, 599 includes Poynton & Co., ironmongers and wharfingers, High Street, but no other entry for the firm.

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 9 Jan. 1794; *Northampton Mercury*, 4 and 11 Jan. 1794.

⁷ *Northampton Mercury*, 17 May 1794.

⁸ *Northampton Mercury*, 8 Nov. 1794.

⁹ Burbidge's Christian name is taken from a partnership dissolution notice of 1837 (see below) on the assumption that the same member of the family was involved throughout.

¹⁰ *Northampton Mercury*, 3 May – 7 June 1800.

¹¹ *Northampton Mercury*, 27 Sept. and 11 Oct. 1800.

Western Counties will be forwarded immediately, and those for Leicester will be delivered the next Day'. The firm had also put another vessel on the service to and from Gainsborough, so that a boat would arrive at Leicester every other day.¹ The firm's headquarters at Leicester was now said to be near Belgrave Gate, where they were still selling Norway timber,² although in 1811 they appeared in Holden's directory only under Loughborough, as wharfingers and carriers on the canal.³

At this date the two other partners in the firm (apart from Burbidge) were Charles Coleman and Richard Ella, both of Leicester.⁴ Charles Coleman was a hosiery manufacturer in a firm named Coleman, Burbidge & Co.⁵ This presumably in turn explains Burbidge's involvement and both may only have been sleeping partners in the carrying business. Richard Ella described himself as a confectioner when he died in 1822.⁶ From about 1815 the company's full name was Ella, Coleman, Foster & Co.⁷ The new member was James Foster (1777–1854),⁸ who in 1838 referred to his having spent 'upwards of forty years' with the firm,⁹ although evidently not all as a partner. In a company some of whose members' main business interests lay elsewhere, Foster may have been appointed as a managing clerk and rose gradually in status. He kept up the company's membership of the Leicester Society (or later Association) for the Prosecution of Robbers and in the early 1830s was on its committee.¹⁰

In 1816 the company continued to describe themselves as 'wharfingers and carriers by water, also, dealers in deals, timber, iron &c.', and mentioned 'an arrangement lately made', by which they were able to deliver goods from London, by way of Gainsborough, 'more expeditiously and at a lower rate than has before been done'. This suggests an

¹ *Northampton Mercury*, 11 and 18 April; *Leicester Journal*, 17 and 24 April 1812.

² *Leicester Journal*, 22 May 1812, 27 May 1814.

³ Holden 1811, II, sn. Loughborough.

⁴ Both are listed (together with the firm) as members of the Leicester Society for the Prosecution of Robbers (*Leicester Journal*, 11 May 1810, 15 May 1812, 14 May 1813). Burbidge was not a member of the society but his continued membership of the firm is inferred from the partnership dissolution notice of 1837 cited below.

⁵ Holden 1811, II, sn. Leicester.

⁶ TNA, PROB 11/1664/331.

⁷ *Leicester Journal*, 12 May 1815, another report of the annual meeting of the Leicester Society, including a membership list.

⁸ Foster reported his age as 60–64 in 1841 and 72 in 1851; his death notice in 1854 says 77, which appears to be correct (see below for references). He gave his birthplace in 1851 as Castle Donington, where James son of George Foster and his wife Grace was baptised on 2 Nov. 1777 (Family Search). He was therefore not directly related to his namesake, the firm's clerk between 1778 and 1792.

⁹ See below for the sale of the business in 1838.

¹⁰ *Leicester Journal*, 6 May 1831, 4 May 1832, 7 June 1833, 6 June 1834, 5 June 1835.

alliance with one of the Gainsborough wharfingers to obtain lower rates for the coastwise passage and journey up the Trent from London to Leicestershire, enabling this route to compete with that by canal from London which had finally been completed two years earlier with the opening of the Grand Union. At the same time Ella, Coleman promised to forward wool for Yorkshire and goods for any part of the kingdom expeditiously from their wharfs at Leicester, Loughborough and Market Harborough, and noted that at Loughborough they kept a stock of deals (Memel and Norway), American timber, wainscot, ladder poles etc., and a 'constant assortment' of English and foreign iron, hoops, steel etc.¹¹ Two years later they reminded readers of the *Northampton Mercury* that their Market Harborough boat continued to arrive there every Monday evening and depart on Wednesday, carrying flour, grain and other goods to Leicester, for delivery to customers there on Friday; and that wool for Yorkshire was forwarded the same day from Leicester in their own boats to Gainsborough. They evidently faced some competition, since customers were asked to send a consignment note addressed to them with all wool sent to Market Harborough, 'to prevent its getting into other Hands'.¹²

In the early 1820s Ella, Coleman & Co. of Belgrave Gate, Leicester, were running services from there to Gainsborough and all parts of Lancashire and Yorkshire daily, to Shardlow twice a week, and to Market Harborough every Saturday; in the Loughborough entry in the same directory Manchester and Rochdale were particularly mentioned as destinations in the North West.¹³ If they were using their own boats on the Trent & Mersey Canal they must have added narrow boats to their earlier fleet of broad-beam barges. By the end of the decade they had expanded further, with a daily service (which would also have been by narrow boat, given the limitations of the Grand Union Canal) from Leicester to London, as well as Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, the Potteries 'and all parts of the North and West of England'. From Loughborough boats left for Manchester two or three times a week, but there was now a daily fly-boat service to Nottingham.¹⁴ In 1828 there were two separate instances of theft of wool from their boats.¹⁵

In 1824 Ella, Coleman were one of a number of wharfingers on the canals connected with the Trent working in association with the leading Gainsborough firm of Robert Flower & Son to deliver wool quickly and cheaply to the West Riding. Flowers quoted

¹¹ *Leicester Journal*, 12 June 1816.

¹² *Northampton Mercury*, 27 June 1818.

¹³ Pigot 1822–3, 220, 225.

¹⁴ Pigot 1828–9, 493, 497.

¹⁵ *Leicester Journal*, 13 June 1828; *Stamford Mercury*, 20 June 1828; *Leicester Chronicle*, 2 Aug. 1828.

prices of 8s. 9d. and 7s. 8d. per sheet for wool from Market Harborough and Leicester respectively to Leeds or Wakefield, which they received at Gainsborough, carried by a daily sailing packet to Selby, and forwarded from there by Aire & Calder fly-boats. They claimed that by this route wool and other goods could be delivered to the West Riding as quickly as by land carriage and at a third of the cost.¹

Ella, Coleman's extensive network of services, built up over half a century, came to an end quite abruptly in the mid 1830s, either because of competition from Pickfords and Deacon, Harrison, two larger national companies who also ran boats from Leicester on similar routes,² or because of the impending arrival of the Midland Counties Railway, or simply because the two principals wished to retire while they still had a business to sell. In November 1837 Thomas Burbidge and James Foster dissolved the partnership, with Foster undertaking to settle accounts.³ The following March he announced the sale of the firm to James Sutton (i.e. the Shardlow Boat Company), for whom it would have represented an extension of his network south of the Trent and the removal of a competitor on the river itself and the route to the North West. Otherwise 1838 hardly seems a propitious year for any canal carrier in the East Midlands to expand.⁴ It was said at the time that Ella, Coleman had been in business at Melton Mowbray as well as Leicester, Loughborough and Market Harborough, although their own advertisements make no mention of this.⁵ As well as notices in the Leicester press, Foster and Sutton also announced the change in two Leeds papers and the *Bradford Observer*, illustrating the importance to the company of the transport of wool from Leicestershire to the West Riding.⁶

Foster appears to have retired after selling the business and in both 1841 and 1851 can be found living next door to the Hind inn at 47 London Road, Leicester, with a couple of servants, describing himself as either 'Independent' or a proprietor of land.⁷ He died in 1854, aged 77, 'after a long

affliction ... highly respected', and left £50 to Leicester Infirmary in his will.⁸

A small part of Foster's old business survived, presumably in other hands (unless Sutton retained the name for one of his minor routes). In 1841 Ella, Coleman was still sending a 'market boat' every Wednesday from Market Harborough to Leicester, from where goods were forwarded to Loughborough, Shardlow, Nottingham, Newark, Gainsborough, Hull, Lincoln, Boston, Derby, the Potteries, and all parts of Yorkshire and the East Coast.⁹ The onward journey from Leicester may have been by rail, or by one of Sutton's boats. This feeder service presumably survived because the southern section of the Midland Counties Railway ran to a junction with the London & Birmingham line at Rugby, and not through Northampton, as the promoters of a line between there and Leicester via Market Harborough had urged.

Thomas Evans & Sons

In the second half of the eighteenth century Thomas Evans had a rolling and slitting mill at on a branch of the Derwent at Cockpit Hill, and in the 1780s appears to have acquired (with William Stretton) part of the business of the Derby Boat Company.¹⁰ In 1814 the surviving partners in the firm of Thomas Evans & Sons, timber and iron merchants and carriers by water, dissolved the partnership.¹¹ The partners in question were Walter, William and Samuel Evans, together with John Keeling, who appears afterwards to have gone into partnership as a wharfinger and timber merchant (but not a carrier) with a man named Humpston.¹²

Robert Flower & Son

Robert Flower can first be connected with Gainsborough in 1771, when he married Mary Langford there.¹³ By 1784 he was established as a wharfinger in the town,¹⁴ and in 1789, together with Messrs Smith & Mozley and Caleb Maullin, he was acting for the ships forming the Old Contract service to London.¹⁵ He was listed as a wharfinger (but not a boat owner) in the early 1790s.¹⁶ His son Robert, born in 1773,¹⁷ later joined him in the business and must have taken it over when he died in 1808, leaving

¹ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; see below, Robert Flower & Son.

² See the entries for those two firms.

³ *London Gazette*, 17 Nov. 1837.

⁴ See below, James Sutton, who remained in the carrying business until the 1850s. He replaces Ella, Coleman in the entries for Leicester and Loughborough in Pigot 1841, Leics. 30, 38, which is his first appearance in either place.

⁵ There is virtually no directory material for Melton in this period, apart from a brief reference to goods being forward to Oakham and Shardlow in the early 1820s by John Judd, wharfinger (Pigot 1822-3., 230).

⁶ *Leicester Journal*, 30 March; *Leics. Mercury*, 31 March; *Leicester Chronicle*, 31 March; *Leeds Mercury*, 7 April; *Leeds Times*, 7 April; *Bradford Observer*, 12 April 1838.

⁷ TNA, HO 107/604/3, f. 6; HO 107/2088, f. 15v. Although the name is not rare, these two entries (clearly relating to the same address) are the only close match anywhere in Leicester.

⁸ *Leicester Journal*, 21 July 1854; 13 July and 7 Sept. 1855. He was 'gent.' in his death notice but promoted to 'Esq.' when the infirmary governors recorded his legacy. His will must have been proved locally; there is no PCC grant.

⁹ Pigot 1841, Leics. 46.

¹⁰ See above, Derby Boat Company.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 19 Nov. 1818.

¹² See below, Keeling, Humpston & Co.

¹³ Family Search.

¹⁴ Bailey 1784, 1689.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 2 April 1789.

¹⁶ *UBD*, III, 141-3.

¹⁷ Bapt. at Gainsborough, 19 June 1773 (Family Search).

personal estate valued at £1805 10s. 6d. (including household effects worth £200, £450 in cash and book debts of £1,155 10s. 6d.).¹ The firm continued to be known as Robert Flower & Son.²

In the early 1820s Flower's wharf was the station for the steam packet *Nottingham*, then running between Gainsborough and Hull.³ This was probably the wharf, which had a frontage of 120 ft to the Trent and included a timber yard, a warehouse, a small dwelling house and a counting house, of which they were tenants when it formed part of an estate offered for sale in 1826. The sale also included what was described as a 'mansion' adjoining the wharf and fronting Lord Street, late in the occupation of Henry Smith, and a three-storey warehouse next to the wharf, still occupied by Smith, which had underground communication to the cellars of the mansion.⁴ Flower appears to have bought these premises, since they are mentioned in his will a few years later.⁵

In 1824 Robert Flower & Son announced what appears to have been an ambitious scheme to quote low through rates for wool from Nottinghamshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire and Warwickshire to Leeds and Wakefield (and also the other centres of the woollen industry in the West Riding. This involved collaboration with wharfingers and carriers at Leicester, Nottingham, Warwick, Birmingham, Coventry, Newark, Grantham, Shardlow and Cavendish Bridge,⁶ and with others at Selby, Wakefield and Leeds. Flowers had established a daily sailing packet from Gainsborough to Selby, connecting there with the Aire & Calder fly-boats, which took the wool to Leeds and Wakefield. The other firms listed evidently carried the wool as far as Gainsborough. By this means, Flower claimed, goods could be delivered at Leeds or Wakefield from Coventry and Warwick (the southern limit of the venture) in about a week or ten days, and from Gainsborough in two or three days. As well as wool, corn, malt, wood, hops, iron and other articles produced in the counties listed 'will be brought into the West-Riding of Yorkshire as quickly as heretofore by Land Carriage, and at ONE-THIRD of the Expense'. Flower also stated that his firm had extensive connection with 'all the Wool Marts' in

Lincolnshire, Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire',⁷ although merchants in some of these would probably still have found land carriage a more direct means of sending their wool to the West Riding.

The younger Robert Flower died in June 1830, aged 58, 'a man much and deservedly respected'.⁸ He left a widow, Sarah, and four daughters, of whom only one, Sarah Lee, was married (to William John Hall)⁹ and the other three were within age. Flower appointed Matthew Scooby and Fletcher Mercer of Gainsborough, together with John Wade of Hull, to act as trustees to continue his business and manage his property until his youngest daughter was 21, paying annuities of £300 to his widow and £100 to Mrs Hall, and maintenance to the other three girls. The trust was to be wound up and the capital distributed when his last daughter, Caroline, came of age in 1841.¹⁰ The trustees presumably acted accordingly and thus Flower's business appears to have come to an end, although a reference to 'Mr Flower's wharf' in 1837¹¹ suggests that it was then still active. By 1856 Flower's Wharf on Caskgate Street was in the hands of Copley Brothers, wharfingers and sharebrokers; it was still the station for steam packets to Hull and London three days a week and to Newcastle twice a week, but the family were no longer connected with the business.¹²

Fosbrooke family

The Fosbrookes appear to be the earliest identifiable carriers on the Trent between Wilden Ferry and Gainsborough. The first member of the family to live at Wilden Ferry was Leonard Fosbrooke (1598–1658), who leased the ferry from the Coke family of Melbourne in 1641. In that year he was said to keep three or four boats on the river each of 10 or 12 tons burden which he used to carry

⁷ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824.

⁸ *Hull Packet*, 1 June 1830, where his age was given as 54. When he was buried at Gainsborough on 29 May it was given as 58 (Family Search), which fits his baptism entry of 1773.

⁹ They were married at Gainsborough in 1827 (Family Search)

¹⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1798, ff. 169–171v. Flower's four daughters were born in 1809 (Sarah Lee), 1814 (Jane), 1816 (Frances Ann) and 1820 (Caroline) (Family Search, which reveals that while Sarah was baptised within a few months of her birth, Jane and Frances Ann were baptised on 5 June 1827, when they were aged 13 and 10, and Caroline on 6 June, aged seven). Jane died unmarried aged 24 in Sept. 1838, three weeks after Frances Ann married Edward Cane Jepson at Gainsborough (Family Search). I have failed to identify either a marriage, burial or death registration for Caroline, but she appears to have attained the age of 21 without either dying or marrying, which should have led to the winding up of the trust.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 1 Feb. 1837.

¹² White 1856, 185, 187; J.E. Copley is listed on p. 185 as a ship and sloop owner of Caskgate Street.

¹ LAO, Stow Wills 1808, no. 17; Inv/217/14.

² Holden 1811; Pigot 1822, 244.

³ Pigot 1822, 246.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 21 Nov. 1826.

⁵ TNA, PROB 11/1798, ff. 169–71v. (transmitted from the local court, where a copy survives as LAO, Stow Wills 1828–30, no. 70), in which Flower refers to premises in Caskgate Street lately purchased from Mr Smith and another vendor.

⁶ The other firms on Flowers' list included here were Ella, Coleman & Foster, Thomas Hopkinson, John Huddleston, J.A. Jackson, John Simpson, Soresby & Flack, James Sutton & Co., and N. & G. Wheatcroft.

lead between Wilden and Nottingham. The small tonnage suggests that these were shallow drafted craft able to negotiate the unimproved upper river but too small to continue beyond Nottingham to Gainsborough. Fosbrooke was succeeded by a son, also named Leonard, who *c.* 1670 bought an estate at Shardlow, adjoining Wilden Ferry, and in 1684 built Shardlow Hall there.¹

After the Trent above Wilden Ferry was opened to navigation under Sir William Paget's Act of 1699, Fosbrooke made an agreement with Paget's undertaker, George Hayne, by which the two men effectively secured control of all traffic originating from, or destined for, anywhere between Wilden Ferry and Burton. Hayne was to hand all traffic he carried down from Burton or Willington to Fosbrooke at Wilden for onward shipment to Gainsborough or elsewhere, and Fosbrooke was to give Hayne all the goods he brought up the river intended to go beyond Wilden.² In 1714 the two men attempted to secure a new Act to consolidate their control of both sections of the river, which was strongly opposed and failed to pass the House of Lords. Both Hayne and Fosbrooke, who renewed their agreement the same year, were condemned for attempting to engross the trade of the Trent.³ Fosbrooke retired in 1720 and Hayne made a new agreement with his grandson and heir, a third Leonard (d. 1762). The two families retained control of the upper Trent until Hayne's lease expired in 1762, when it granted to a new syndicate which traded as the Burton Boat Company.⁴ They can never have monopolised the trade of the river below Wilden Ferry, and perhaps never secured complete control of the through trade from Burton to Gainsborough, since well before 1762 other companies were running boats below Wilden Ferry and in at least one case (the Nottingham Boat Company) had a warehouse on the upper river at Willington.⁵ The ferry at Wilden was superseded by Cavendish Bridge, authorised in 1758 and completed three years later, and the main focus of trade moved a short distance from Wilden Ferry to Shardlow itself after the Trent & Mersey Canal was opened between there and Great Haywood in 1770 (and throughout in 1777).⁶

John Foster and George Dixon

From *c.* 1819 John Foster and George Dixon were in partnership in Newark as wharfingers on Northgate and as cornfactors and maltsters on Castlegate; in 1828 they also described themselves as coal dealers

and carriers by water.⁷ In October of the latter year their partnership, as maltsters, corn merchants and wharfingers, was dissolved.⁸ Foster afterwards continued in business with a man named Bishop, who has not been further identified, still in premises on Northgate, as wharfingers, maltsters, coal dealers and carriers by water, until *c.* 1835.⁹ The business had come to an end by the early 1840s.¹⁰

George Dixon died in 1833, describing himself in his will as a maltster, which suggests that Foster had run the wharfinger's side of the business. Dixon's will led to a lengthy dispute between members of his family, which reached the Court of Chancery in 1846 and was only resolved by a decree in 1849 and a further probate grant.¹¹

Furley family, John Goodger and the Cross family

William Furley can first be located at Gainsborough in 1781, when he married Mary Peatfield there.¹² Mary must have died within a few years, for in 1787 William, as a widower, married Dorothy Lee at Gainsborough.¹³ In 1784 he was in partnership with John Goodger as Goodger & Furley, wharfingers, at Gainsborough.¹⁴ The two were listed separately as wharfingers there in the early 1790s, when Goodger, but not Furley, was a freeholder.¹⁵ In 1796 Ashcroft wharf, offering a river frontage of 75 yards and an area of 2,825 square yards and a good crane for loading timber etc., lately in the occupation of Messrs Goodger & Furley, was advertised to let.¹⁶ The partnership between the two men continued until it was dissolved in March 1801, following the death of both men intestate, when their respective administratrixes, Sarah Mottram and Furley's widow Dorothy, announced that the business would be continued by Mrs Furley alone.¹⁷ William Furley died in May 1800, aged 49, 'deservedly regretted by all

⁷ Pigot 1819, 544–7; Pigot 1822, 328–30; Pigot 1828, 636.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 24 Oct. 1828, p. 1937.

⁹ Pigot 1831, 116; Pigot 1835, 283–4.

¹⁰ Neither man is listed in Pigot 1842 or White 1844 under Newark. Two men named John Foster died in Newark RD around this date (Sept. quarter 1844 and June quarter 1845; there is no PCC probate grant for either).

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 8 June 1849, p. 1893 (reciting Dixon's date of death); TNA, PROB 11/2102, ff. 258v.–260 (will proved at York, 17 Aug. 1833; second grant in PCC, 3 Nov. 1849).

¹² Family Search. Beckwith 1967, 15, notes a reference in a Hull port book for 1704 to a Richard Furley as master of the *Lilley*, sailing from Hull to London, who was presumably an ancestor of the William Furley who died in 1800.

¹³ Family Search (in which I cannot locate a burial for a Mary Furley in the intervening years).

¹⁴ Bailey 1784, 689.

¹⁵ *UBD*, III. 141–3.

¹⁶ *Nottingham Journal*, 22 Oct. 1796.

¹⁷ *London Gazette*, 17 March 1801, p. 312.

¹ Heath 1984, 2–4; *Burke's Landed Gentry* (1952 edn), 695–6.

² Owen 1968, 251–2.

³ Owen 1968, 253–4.

⁴ Above, Burton Boat Company.

⁵ Below, Nottingham Boat Company.

⁶ Heath 1984, *passim*.

who knew him'.¹ The firm was still described as Goodger & Furley in the local paper in December 1801.² In 1811 it was recorded as D. & R. Furley,³ i.e. Dorothy and her son Richard, born in 1788,⁴ who in 1812 married Mary Ann, the daughter of William Cross, a farmer of Gringley (Notts.).⁵ Richard's mother died in 1815.⁶

By the early 1820s the Furlleys appear to have had at least two separate businesses in Gainsborough, Goodger & Furley, wharfingers and commercial agents, and R. & W. Furley & Co., merchants, both of Bridge Street,⁷ although it is possible that the use of the former name by this date was anachronistic. They had also established a shipbuilding yard at Trent Port, on the Nottinghamshire bank of the river opposite Gainsborough.⁸

After his mother died, Richard Furley was joined in these enterprises by his brother William, born in 1790,⁹ and members of his wife's family, although the bankruptcy in 1832 of his father-in-law, William Cross, by then a merchant rather than a farmer, led to their partial withdrawal. In October that year Cross's commissioners in bankruptcy, of whom Richard Furley was one, announced the sale of two substantial estates. One consisted of a freehold farmstead named Peartree Hill in Beckingham, previously occupied by Cross, with 210 acres of land; the other consisted of five farmhouses and buildings at Misterton Carr, let with 150 acres, and a further 65 acres in Misterton, Beckingham and Gringley. Most of this land was also freehold.¹⁰ In November 1833 James Cross withdrew from the partnership trading as Richard & William Furley & Co., merchants and rope manufacturers, which would henceforth be continued by the Furley brothers alone;¹¹ and in June the following year Henry Cross ceased to be a member of Furley Brothers & Cross, shipbuilders of Trent Port Shipyard in the parish of Beckingham, where again

Richard and William would keep on the business.¹² Finally, in December 1835, Richard Furley advertised to let what appears to part of his premises in Bridge Street, described as vaults, with a counting house, packing room and yard adjoining the Trent, then in the occupation of Edward Cross.¹³ They were advertised again in July 1837, with no tenant named,¹⁴ suggesting that Cross had left. All three men were presumably relations (possibly brothers) of Mrs Furley.

Newspaper reports and advertisements illustrate the growing scale of the Furlleys' business in these years. In 1827 one of their steam tugs, coming up the river 'at a tremendous rate', collided with and sank a vessel belonging to 'a poor boatman' named Hunt of West Butterwick, who was loading potatoes and onions at a staith near Butterwick. 'Mr Furley' (presumably Richard) refused to compensate the man, who claimed £50 for the vessel and about £40 for the cargo, unless taken to court. The case was heard at Lincoln assizes the following March, when judgment was given for the plaintiff, who was awarded £80.¹⁵ Later that year another steam tug, named *Atlas*, was launched from Furley's yard, which was designed to carry merchandise and tow vessels up and down the river between there and Hull.¹⁶ The boat was still in service in 1832, when it caught fire while lying in the river opposite Furley's wharf at Gainsborough.¹⁷ In 1829 Richard Furley was advertising his services as agent for the steam tug service,¹⁸ and the following year as agent at both Gainsborough and Hull for the steam packet *Lowther*, running from Selby, Goole and Hull to Yarmouth and Norwich.¹⁹ She was either joined or superseded in 1833 by the *Ormrod*, offering a service for passengers and goods from Selby, Goole and Hull to Yarmouth once a week.²⁰ Furlleys continued to build vessels in these years:²¹ in 1831 they launched the *Royal William*, 293 tons burden,²² and also built the *Lord Nelson*, 91 tons, with two 30 hp engines, for the Hull and Lynn trade, which

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 29 May 1800; I cannot locate a corresponding baptism c.1751 at Gainsborough in Family Search, which groups Furley with the much commoner surname Varley and thus makes it more difficult to establish a strong match.

² *Hull Packet*, 29 Dec. 1801.

³ Holden 1811; Goodger is not listed at all in the directory under Gainsborough.

⁴ Bapt. Gainsborough 14 July 1788 (Family Search).

⁵ *Hull Packet*, 24 Nov. 1812; Family Search.

⁶ *Hull Packet*, 6 June 1815.

⁷ Pigot 1822, 244.

⁸ This is clear from the references to launchings cited below; the firm was omitted from the Gainsborough entry in Pigot 1822, presumably because it was situated in Nottinghamshire. Beckwith 1967, 15 states that Richard Furley established the shipbuilding business in 1812, but does not cite a source.

⁹ Bapt. at Gainsborough 4 March 1790 (Family Search).

¹⁰ *London Gazette*, 16 Oct. 1832, pp. 2305–6. Pear Tree Hill stands to the north of the Beckingham–Bawtry road a little to the west of Beckingham village.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 26 Nov. 1833; *Hull Packet*, 29 Nov. 1833.

¹² *London Gazette*, 10 July 1834, p. 1081.

¹³ *Hull Packet*, 18 Dec. 1835.

¹⁴ *Hull Packet*, 7 July 1837.

¹⁵ *Hull Packet*, 18 March 1828.

¹⁶ *Hull Packet*, 18 Nov. 1828.

¹⁷ *Hull Packet*, 8 May 1832.

¹⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 15 July 1829.

¹⁹ *Hull Packet*, 30 March 1830 (and again 4 Jan. 1831).

²⁰ *Hull Packet*, 2 Aug.–13 Sept. 1833.

²¹ In addition to the references given here, a website (www.humberpacketboats.co.uk) lists the following references (taken from the *Stamford Mercury* for the dates indicated) to ships launched from Furlleys' yard: brig *Newark* (11 Feb. 1825), schooner *Flora* (29 July 1825), brig *Nottingham* (12 Jan. 1827), steamship *The Atlas* (14 Nov. 1828, i.e. the steam tug whose launching was also reported in the *Hull Packet* as cited in the text), brig *Rapier* (11 Jan. 1833), brigantine *Princess Royal* (16 April 1841).

²² *Hull Packet*, 22 Feb. 1831.

Richard Furley advertised for sale five years later.¹ The *Lord Nelson* was back in service between Gainsborough and Lynn in 1837–8, with Richard Furley of Gainsborough and Furley & Co. of 80 Highgate Street, Hull, acting as agents.² Also in 1830 Furley was the agent at Gainsborough (but not at Hull) for the steamer *Iris*, running between Yarmouth, Hull and Goole.³ By 1840 the firm are said to have had a wharf at King's Lynn.⁴

Richard Furley's standing as one of Gainsborough's leading merchants and wharfingers was emphasised by his inclusion in 1834, with John Tidd, in a delegation that made a case to the Vice-President of the Board of Trade that Gainsborough should become an inland bonding port and be recognised by the Customs as a port of entry. The minister indicated that he would no doubt agree to the first request and would consider the second.⁵

Furley died in 1839 aged 50,⁶ leaving the whole of his estate to his brother William and brother-in-law George Cross in trust to continue his trades and businesses and make provision for his wife and children.⁷ This they clearly did and in the mid 1850s the family appear to have owned four separate businesses in Gainsborough. Richard's widow Mary Ann (who died in 1876, aged 87),⁸ her surviving son William (who died in 1857)⁹ and Richard's son William Cross Furley (1825–89)¹⁰ were described as merchants of Bridge Street, where in addition the firm of William & Richard Furley were ship and sloop owners, merchants and freemen of the Russia Company, and Richard Furley & Co. were wharfingers. William Cross Furley was separately listed as an iron shipbuilder, engineer etc. of the Phoenix Works, Lea Road.¹¹

Gainsborough Boat Company

In 1793 Humphrey Moore and James Soresby of Shardlow (who had previously each traded on their own account there), Ralph Turner of Hull and William Brightmore of Gainsborough announced that they had formed a partnership to be known as the

Gainsborough Boat Company 'for conducting the Business, of Wharfingers, and for carrying Goods between Hull, Gainsboro', Shardlow, Horninglow, and the intermediate Places'. Goods would be exchanged at Horninglow with Hugh Henshall & Co. Their premises at the opposite end of the line were at Trent Port Wharf, on the Nottinghamshire bank of the river opposite Gainsborough, where they acquired the business of Caleb Maullin of Gainsborough (who was retiring), including wharfs, warehouses and vessels.¹² This sale must have taken place after the Gainsborough entry for the *UBD* was compiled, which does not include the Gainsborough Boat Company among the eight concerns (with a total of 50 boats) carrying on the Trent from Gainsborough upwards. Caleb Maullin is listed in the directory as a wharfinger but not as a boatowner.¹³

About a year after the company was established it was the defendant in an action brought by the Burton Boat Company at Nottingham assizes, ostensibly about one of its boats failing to slacken their lines when it was being passed by another belonging to the Burton Company, which claimed £463 12s. 10d. in damages. The Gainsborough Company lost at first instance, appealed and lost again, and were left with damages and costs of £622.¹⁴ In 1800 the three partners were sued by John Pepper of Nottingham, a soapboiler for whom they had taken on board their sloop, the *Hull Packer*, a parcel of kelp for Gainsborough. Both vessel and cargo were lost in the Humber and Pepper sued for the value of the goods (£110 10s.), claiming that the defendants could not absolve themselves of the risk of loss by issuing a notice denying liability. The jury at Nottingham assizes found in favour of the plaintiff, but awarded only £11 1s. damages.¹⁵

In 1802 the company was one of the original subscribers to a newly established Inland Navigation Association for Apprehending and Prosecuting Felons,¹⁶ and remained a member in 1804.¹⁷ The company was wound up, apparently voluntarily, in 1812,¹⁸ and in December that year Trent Port Wharf was advertised to let.¹⁹ Throughout its life, William Brightmore continued to trade on his own account as a wharfinger at Gainsborough.²⁰

Gainsborough United Steam Packet Co. Ltd

¹ *Hull Packet*, 9 Dec. 1836.

² *Hull Packet*, 19 and 26 May, 2 June 1837, 27 July 1838.

³ *Hull Packet*, 14 Sept. 1838.

⁴ Beckwith 1967, 15 (no source cited).

⁵ *Hull Packet*, 30 May 1834.

⁶ Buried Gainsborough 9 May (Family Search); death registered in Gainsborough RD, June quarter.

⁷ TNA, PROB 11/1918, ff. 257–258.

⁸ Gainsborough RD, June quarter.

⁹ Gainsborough RD, June quarter.

¹⁰ Bapt. 3 Jan. 1825 at Gainsborough, the son of Richard and Mary Ann Furley (Family Search); died Gainsborough RD, Dec. quarter 1889 aged 64.

¹¹ White 1856, 177–9, 184–5. The website referred to above (www.humberpacketboats.co.uk) notes the launching in 1856 of an iron yacht built by W.C. Furley for Capt. Hickman Bacon, citing the *Stamford Mercury*, 30 May 1856.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 8 Aug. 1793.

¹³ *UBD*, III, 141–2.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Aug. 1794, 5 March 1796; above, Burton Boat Company.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 8 May 1800.

¹⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Oct. 1802.

¹⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 21 June 1804.

¹⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 15 and 22 Oct. 1812.

¹⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 17 Dec. 1812.

²⁰ See above, William Brightmore.

The company was established in 1819.¹ In 1841 it made an agreement with the River Trent Steam Packet Company, which was proposing to launch a service between Nottingham and Gainsborough, by which the two would offer a through service to Hull, with passengers changing boat at Gainsborough.² The company was registered under the Joint Stock Companies Act of 1844 and re-registered with limited liability under the 1856 Act in 1860.³

In 1873 a correspondent to the *Hull Packet* noted that the new proprietor of the jetty at Burton Stather proposed to discontinue the 2d. a head charge to excursionists landing there, and hoped that the Gainsborough United Steam Packet Company would meet this concession⁴ (and presumably agree to call there). The same paper announced the launching in 1884 of a new screw steamer for the company, named *Trent*, 102 ft overall, 17 ft 3 in. beam, 7 ft 6 in. depth of hold, 'intended for the passenger and goods coasting trade'. She was built by Head & Riley at their Groves shipyard at Hull.⁵ The company's most famous vessel appears to have been the PS *Scarborough*, 150 ft overall and licensed for 300 passengers. Built by Lewis & Stockwell of Blackwall, she was launched in 1866, visited the port from which she was named regularly between then and the First World War, and features on numerous postcards.⁶

In 1906 the company, whose chairman at the time was J.H. Etherington Smith, was voluntarily wound up.⁷

Sarah (or Susannah) Gurnill

In the early 1790s there were two vessels trading regularly between Gainsborough and York.⁸ One of these was evidently the 58-ton sloop registered at Gainsborough in 1795 by Sarah Gurnill,⁹ who appears (as Susannah Gurnill) as the only 'York trader' in the Gainsborough trade list in *UBD*.¹⁰ The business had clearly come to an end by 1811.¹¹ Mrs Gurnill was presumably related to (but was apparently not the wife of) Samuel Gurnill (or Gurnhill) of Gainsborough, an engraver, whose will was proved in 1815, in which he left the whole of his

estate to his nephew, also Samuel Gurnill, a brazier of Gainsborough.¹² Part of his estate was a legacy of £100 left by his kinsman, Benjamin Gurnell (or Gurnill) of the city of York, gentleman, whose own will was proved in 1814 (a couple of weeks before Samuel made his will).¹³ Both testators appear to have been single when they made their wills. Benjamin's main beneficiary was an illegitimate son named Benjamin Seymour, then living on Tottenham Court Road, and neither will mentions a Sarah or Susannah Gurnill. Benjamin did, however, leave £100 to Captain Thomas Gurnell of Gainsborough. He was probably the master (but not necessarily the owner) of the *Resolution*, whose departure for York with a master named as Gurnill was noted twice in 1808–9 in the *Derby Mercury's* weekly list of coasters clearing from Gainsborough,¹⁴ even though this was not strictly a coastal passage.

William Halford

In the 1790s William Halford's boats were carrying goods between Bourne and Spalding every Tuesday. This service appears to have been an adjunct to Halford's main business as a hair and sackcloth maker,¹⁵ hemp- and flax-dresser and rope-maker.¹⁶ Nothing more is heard of him and by the early 1820s Alexander Eadon (qv) was carrying from Bourne to Spalding and Boston.

Thomas Hayes

Thomas Haynes was an agent and wharfinger at Gainsborough in the early 1790s;¹⁷ a 'Thomas Hames' who was a cheesemonger there in 1811¹⁸ may be the same man.

Hugh Henshall & Company

The firm of Hugh Henshall & Co. was established by some of the committeemen of the Trent & Mersey Canal to operate a carrying service on the canal to help develop traffic in its early years, prevent the formation of combinations among independent carriers, and make it possible to vary the freight rates on different parts of the canal, since the canal company was bound by its Act of incorporation to charge the same tolls throughout. It took its name from that of the engineer who completed the building

¹ Lincolnshire Archives Committee, Archivist's Report 1972–3, p. 13. There are papers relating to the company in LAO, 2BD 1G/23–24, a deposit by the Gainsborough solicitors, Burton & Dyson.

² *Derby Mercury*, 8 Sept. 1841; and see also the other company.

³ TNA, BT 41/466/1806; BT 31/247/1408.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 23 May 1873.

⁵ *Hull Packet*, 12 Sept. 1884.

⁶ As reproduced on several websites, with greater or less accompanying text.

⁷ *London Gazette*, 15 June, 14 Dec. 1906.

⁸ *UBD*, III, 141.

⁹ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

¹⁰ *UBD*, III, 141–3.

¹¹ Holden 1811, sn. Gainsborough.

¹² TNA, PROB 11/1565 (proved 20 Feb. 1815). Sarah (or Susannah) Burnill was presumably a *femme sole* (probably a widow) if she was trading on her own account. The beneficiary of Samuel's will appears as 'Sam Gumhill', brazier and tinman, in Holden 1811.

¹³ TNA, PROB 11/1560, ff.181v.–182, proved 13 Sept. 1814. Samuel's will is dated 30 Sept.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 24 Nov. 1808, 21 Dec. 1809.

¹⁵ *UBD*, v. 25.

¹⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 19 Aug., 30 Dec. 1791.

¹⁷ *UBD*, III, 141–3.

¹⁸ Holden 1811.

of the canal after James Brindley (Henshall's brother-in-law) died in September 1772.¹

In May 1772, in what appears to be the earliest reference to the carrying business, Josiah Wedgwood noted that five crates of pottery were to go to Stone (then the western limit of navigation on the Trent & Mersey) and from there by Henshall's boats down the canal and the Trent to William Fletcher, wharfinger at Gainsborough, who was to forward them to Hull.² In August that year the company was quoting prices for carrying cheese to Gainsborough from Shardlow, Horninglow, Bromley (near Lichfield) and Stone.³ Two years later Henshalls introduced a service from Birmingham and Stourport to Manchester and Liverpool, catering for two main traffic flows: one to Birmingham, Bristol and the West of England by way of the Severn, and the other to Derby, Nottingham, the east coast towns and London by way of the Trent.⁴ When the Trent & Mersey was opened throughout in the summer of 1777 Henshalls advertised a long list of services, principally from Manchester and Liverpool to Shardlow and places beyond on the Trent, or to Birmingham and elsewhere in the West Midlands, including Stourport.⁵ Their position in the Manchester area was threatened for a time in the 1780s by a dispute with another carrying firm established by the Duke of Bridgewater's agent John Gilbert and a land carrier named Worthington.⁶

In common with other carriers, Henshalls also traded in goods on their own account. In 1784 they advertised a large quantity of good quality Memel timber for sale at a reduced price, together with a quantity of deals 10–20 ft long.⁷

Like Humphrey Moore (qv) and possibly other carriers, Henshalls offered a service between Lancashire and London using the Bridgewater and Trent & Mersey canals as far as Shardlow and then road carriage south. At the end of 1786 T. & M. Pickford, hitherto road carriers on Manchester–London route through Cheshire and Staffordshire, purchased this portion of Henshall's business as a means of entering the canal trade.⁸ They did not, however, take over Henshall's service between Shardlow and Gainsborough, for which in March 1787 (once the towing path was complete) they sought proposals for 'Haling their Boats with Horses' on the Trent in three stages: from Gainsborough to Carlton, Carlton to Gunthorpe, and Gunthorpe to Shardlow.⁹ Henshalls also retained

wharfs and warehouses at Horninglow on the Trent & Mersey near Burton.¹⁰ In the early 1790s the firm had a commanding position on the Trent & Mersey, handling most of the traffic passing from the canal onto the Trent, and in 1795 registered 75 barges with the Staffordshire clerk of the peace.¹¹ At about the same date they had twelve boats trading between Gainsborough and Shardlow, more than any other company on the route.¹² In 1805–11 they were listed in Holden's Directories as carriers at Shardlow on the Trent & Mersey Navigation and also other canals and rivers.¹³ Henshall himself died in 1816¹⁴ but the firm continued to trade as the carrying arm of the Trent & Mersey until the canal company was taken over by the North Staffordshire Railway in 1846.¹⁵ Henshalls are not, however, recorded in directories at Shardlow after 1811.

Henshalls maintained an agency at Gainsborough probably from their establishment. In the 1770s and 1780s they were represented by Caleb Maullin, who was tenant of Trent Port Wharf on the Nottinghamshire bank of the river there and retired from business in 1793.¹⁶ Henshalls may then have taken over part of Trent Port Wharf, since when the property was advertised to let in 1835 enquirers were directed to Henry Moore at the canal office at Stone¹⁷ on the Trent & Mersey, where Henshalls had their headquarters.

John Hill

John Hill junior of Misterton registered a 35-ton sloop at Gainsborough in 1795, of which John Hill was named as master, who may or may not have been the same man. He gave the route of the vessel as from Gainsborough to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.¹⁸ Hill is not named as a boat owner in *UBD*, and does not appear in the trade lists for Gainsborough either there or in Holden's Directory of 1811.

W. & E.T. Hollingshead

William and Edward Thomas Hollingshead appear to have been principally timber merchants, who did some carrying for a short period. In 1809–11 they were described as timber merchants, maltsters and carriers on the Trent, with premises on Thorntree Lane in Derby, between St Peter Street and Mor-

¹ Lindsay 1979, 88, 43–4.

² Lewis 2006, 108.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Aug. 1772.

⁴ Turnbull 1979, 78.

⁵ Lindsay 1979, 49.

⁶ Turnbull 1979, 79; Lindsay 1979, 88–91

⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 8 July 1784.

⁸ Turnbull 1979, 79; and see the entry for Pickford's below.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 15 March 1787.

¹⁰ Riden (ed.) 2006, 29.

¹¹ Turnbull 1979, 79.

¹² *UBD*, III, 141.

¹³ Riden (ed.) 2006, 104, 112, 124.

¹⁴ Lewis 2006, 111.

¹⁵ Lindsay 1979, 96–7 (where Henshall's date of death is given incorrectly), 117.

¹⁶ Bailey 1784, II, 412; and see the entry for Maullin in the Gainsborough section.

¹⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 10 June 1835.

¹⁸ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

ledge,¹ whereas in 1814 they appear only as timber merchants and maltsters.² In fact, the Hollingsheads were made bankrupt (as raff merchants) in February 1813³ and in June that year their estate was sold by their assignees, including a timber yard, maltings, a pub (the Bishop Blaze) and a number of houses, but no boats or other equipment connected with a carrying business.⁴ They were discharged the following month.⁵

Thomas Holmes

A wharfinger of this name was in business on London Road in 1822, but not as a carrier.⁶ He does not occur in earlier or later directories and the name is too common to identify satisfactorily in other sources.

James Holt

Holt appears in Pigot's Directory of 1818 as a carrier by water from Cockpit Wharf to London, through Burton and all the line of the Trent & Mersey and Staffs. & Worcs. canals, departing on Tuesdays and Fridays.⁷ By 1822 he was offering daily services to Burton and the Potteries in one direction and Nottingham in the other; a service to Sheffield was presumably by wagon (or possibly by boat to Buckland Hollow and by road from there).⁸ By 1829 his business had been taken over by C.M. Douglas (qv). James Holt has no apparent connection with the national firm of carriers, Kenworthy & Holt, who also served Derby.

John Hopkins

John Hopkins of Gainsborough registered a 45-ton sloop at Gainsborough in 1795, of which he was also master. He gave the route of the vessel as from Gainsborough to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.⁹ Hill is not named as a boat owner in *UBD*, and does not appear in the trades lists for Gainsborough either there or in Holden's Directory of 1811.

Thomas Hopkins

In 1841 Thomas Hopkins was running a boat every Friday from Thames Street in Leicester to Market Harborough, presumably in competition with

Ella, Coleman & Co., who had operated on this route for much longer.¹⁰

Thomas Hopkinson

In 1824 Thomas Hopkinson of Grantham was one of the wharfingers and carriers included in the scheme promoted by Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough to quote low through rates for wool from various East Midland towns to Leeds and Wakefield.¹¹

Hurst & Carby

In 1831 George Hurst and Robert Carby were in partnership as carriers by water from Newark with premises on Northgate.¹² Unusually, they were not also listed as wharfingers. When the partnership was dissolved two years later they were described as coal dealers and carriers.¹³ The carrying appears to have been done by Hurst, who gave his occupation elsewhere as either 'boatman' (in 1832) or boat-owner (in 1842).¹⁴ Carby, on the other hand, was first a bookkeeper (in 1819), then a grocer (1832) and afterwards a coal merchant (1842).¹⁵

John Jackson and John Armstrong Jackson

In the early 1790s John Jackson was in business at Newark as a wharfinger and dealer in coal and corn.¹⁶ He appears to have been living in the town since the mid-1770s, since he was married there to Hannah Armstrong in March 1775 and their first child, John Armstrong Jackson, was baptised (twice) in December that year and January 1776.¹⁷ Jackson is not, however, listed under Newark in Bailey's directory of 1784. He was described merely as a merchant in 1805,¹⁸ and in 1809–11 the firm was named Jackson & Son, wharfingers and merchants.¹⁹ His son, J.A. Jackson, was married in 1812 at Glaston (Rutland) to Jane Dougal, and between then and 1830 the couple had at least nine children.²⁰

In 1814 John A. Jackson announced the dissolution of a partnership with his younger brother Isaiah Jackson of Normanton, in the parish of Southwell, trading as wharfingers, coal merchants,

¹⁰ Pigot 1841, Leics. 30; and see above, Ella, Coleman & Co.

¹¹ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son.

¹² Pigot 1831, 117.

¹³ *London Gazette*, 13 Sept. 1833, p. 1679.

¹⁴ Notts. Archives, DD/H/6/6–7; DD/H/73/21.

¹⁵ Notts. Archives, DD/H/73/20; DD/H/6/6–7; DD/H/73/21

¹⁶ *UBD*, IV, 58–60.

¹⁷ Family Search; the son was baptised first at Farndon and a month later at Newark.

¹⁸ Holden 1805, 226.

¹⁹ Holden 1809, 325; the same entry appears in the 1811 edn.

²⁰ Family Search records the baptisms (all at Newark) of four daughters and four sons between 1816 and 1830, and also the marriage of Robert, son of John Armstrong Jackson, at Sevenoaks in 1841, whose baptism I cannot locate.

¹ Riden (ed.) 2006, 112, 124; the firm does not appear in the 1805 edition of Holden's Directory and the Edward Hollingshead, maltster and carpenter, listed under Derby in *UBD* (ibid., 84), was perhaps their father.

² Riden (ed.) 2006, 137.

³ *London Gazette*, 9 Feb. 1813, pp. 321–2.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 10 and 24 June 1813.

⁵ *London Gazette*, 17 July 1813, p. 421.

⁶ Pigot 1822, 340.

⁷ Riden (ed.) 2006, 161–2, 206.

⁸ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

⁹ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

maltsters, hop growers, farmers and millers.¹ The first two of these activities had presumably been carried on by John at Newark and the remainder by Isaiah at Normanton. The two continued together for a little longer as millers at Southwell and when that partnership was dissolved in 1815 it was Isaiah who agreed to settle the accounts, suggesting that he was intending to continue the business.² It is possible that the elder John Jackson died around this time,³ leaving the family's various activities to his two sons, who subsequently decided not to continue in partnership. Certainly in 1819–22 John Armstrong Jackson alone was listed as a wharfinger (only) at Northgate in Newark.⁴ He was also in 1822 said to be operating a carrying service to Gainsborough weekly and to Shardlow occasionally.⁵ In 1824 he was one of two Newark wharfingers who was associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in their scheme to offer low through rates for wool between the East Midlands and Leeds and Wakefield.⁶ In 1828–31 Jackson was recorded as a wharfinger, coal dealer and corn dealer, and in the latter year as a carrier as well, as he was in 1835.⁷ In 1842–4 he was described as a wharfinger and coal merchant at Castle Wharf, and was still offering conveyance of goods daily by water to all parts of the country.⁸ J.A. Jackson died early in 1845⁹ and this appears have marked the end of his business.¹⁰ As in the case of the other Newark wharfingers of whom anything meaningful can be discovered, the Jacksons appear to have been principally coal and corn merchants and only incidentally carriers, or agents for boat-owners.

John Judd

In the early 1820s John Judd was working as a wharfinger at Melton Mowbray, where the Melton Mowbray and Oakham canals met, and from where goods could be sent by water to Shardlow and Oakham.¹¹ No carrier as such is named and Judd may have been either the agent to one or both of the canal companies, finding independently owned boats as required, or he may have been in business as a carrier

on his own account. He is not heard of again working on the canal but appears to turn up many years later working as a tailor and living in Leicester Street in Melton, by an odd coincidence living next door to William Willis, who had also once been a wharfinger and carrier on the canal and was now also a tailor.¹² Judd was born in Melton Mowbray in 1792, which suggests that he was not connected with the Banbury family of carriers named Judd.¹³

Robert Keddey

Robert Keddey (or Keddy) was born at Hull in 1783, the son of John Keddey.¹⁴ He appears to have been married twice. With his first wife he had at least two daughters, Anne, who died in 1831 aged 11, and Betsey, who was slightly younger.¹⁵ In 1824 Robert married, at York, Nanny Roe, with whom he had another daughter, Lavinia Mary, born in 1825.¹⁶ His second wife was dead by 1841, when Robert was living with his two surviving daughters and two female servants on Anlaby Road, Hull.¹⁷ Ten years earlier his address had been Elm Tree House, near Hull.¹⁸

Robert may have started in business with a man named Martin, but in about 1823 the two went their separate ways. Keddey described himself as a shipping agent and insurance broker when he thanked customers for their support for his 'Norwich, Yarmouth, and Hull New Shipping Company'. This was a contract of three ships providing a 'near weekly' service between Hull and Norfolk.¹⁹ He also acted as agent at Hull for several similar ventures involved in

¹ *London Gazette*, 12 Feb. 1814. Isaiah was bapt. at Newark on 4 Oct. 1786, the son of John and Hannah Jackson (Family Search).

² *London Gazette*, 7 Feb. 1815, p. 219.

³ There is no burial entry for a John Jackson of Newark in Family Search around this date, or a probate grant in PCC.

⁴ Pigot 1819, 544–7; Pigot 1822, 328–30.

⁵ Pigot 1822, 330.

⁶ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son. The other Newark wharfinger involved was John Huddlestone (qv).

⁷ Pigot 1828, 636; Pigot 1831, 116–17; Pigot 1835, 283–4.

⁸ Pigot 1842, 17; White 1844, 353.

⁹ Newark RD, March quarter; there is no probate grant in PCC.

¹⁰ No-one named Jackson appears as a wharfinger etc. in White 1864 under Newark.

¹¹ Pigot 1822–3, 230.

¹² TNA, HO 107/2091, f. 225v.; below, Peach & Willis. John Judd cannot be located at Melton Mowbray in 1841 using Ancestry's index.

¹³ John was baptised at Melton Mowbray on 24 Oct. 1792, the son of John Judd and Sarah Draycott (Family Search, in which the surname is well attested in and around Melton from at least the early eighteenth century). See *Stage Waggon Carriers* for the main entry for the Judds, who built up an extensive business carrying by land and water in the Midlands before being made bankrupt in 1811.

¹⁴ Family Search. The name continued to be spelt inconsistently throughout's Robert's life in both newspaper advertisements and elsewhere. It was Keddy in the 1841 census but Keddey in his death notice in 1849. I have used Keddey here but the choice is rather arbitrary.

¹⁵ Anne's death was reported in the *Yorkshire Gazette*, 3 Dec. 1841; Betsey's age was given as 15–19 in the 1841 census (see below). I cannot locate a baptism for either in Family Search but both girls were clearly born before Robert married in 1824 and seem unlikely to have been illegitimate. The presence of both Betsey and Lavinia in his household in 1841 precludes the possibility that there were two different men called Robert Keddey.

¹⁶ Family Search.

¹⁷ TNA, HO 107/1231/7, f. 13v.

¹⁸ *Yorkshire Gazette*, 3 Dec. 1831.

¹⁹ *Norfolk Chronicle*, 22 and 29 Nov. 1823.

both river and coastwise carrying.¹ The vessels employed between Hull and Norfolk were evidently sailing ships but in April 1827 he announced the establishment of a weekly service by the steam schooner *Graham* between Hull and King's Lynn (or twice weekly if sufficient goods offered), with forwarding twice a week by another packet from Lynn to Boston. This was advertised as far afield as Leeds and Birmingham as well as in Hull and Norfolk.² The vessel employed had only five months earlier suffered a boiler explosion when working as a ferry between Grimsby and Hull, in which six people died and many other were seriously injured. An inspection revealed that part of the boiler plating was one-sixteenth of an inch thick instead of five-sixteenths as it had been when new, and warrants were issued for the arrest on a charge of manslaughter of the engineer and one of the owners.³ Keddey and the master (and another part-owner), Thomas Cruddis, escaped a similar fate and Cruddis remained master of the *Graham* when she began trading to Lynn.

Keddey continued to expand his business. In 1829 he announced a service by the 'beautiful and powerful' steam vessel *Suffolk* from Hull to Newcastle, where she would meet another ship that would take goods and passengers on to Leith (for Edinburgh).⁴ The following year the *Suffolk* was put on the Lynn station as well, enabling Keddey to advertise a through service from there to Hull, Scarborough, Whitby, Newcastle and (by forwarding in the *Ardincaple*) to Edinburgh.⁵ In 1831 he commissioned a new steamship, the *Sovereign*, to ply between Hull and Selby,⁶ and four years later was one of the promoters of a steam service between Goole, Hull and Newcastle, which also called at Whitby and Scarborough.⁷ In 1838 he advertised the setting-up of the Louth, Grimsby & Hull Steam Packet Company, which had a capital of only £2,000 in £5 shares and simply operated a ferry between Grimsby and Hull, having chartered the *Sovereign* from Keddey.⁸ The company was dogged from the start by controversy

over disorderly Sunday sailings and racing with rival boats,⁹ and in November 1839 the *Sovereign* was deliberately set on fire.¹⁰ Two months later the company announced the sale of fifty-nine sixtieths of the ship and stated that a new concern would henceforth be running a steam packet on the Grimsby-Hull line.¹¹

Keddey is first mentioned as the owner of a vessel named the *Forager* in 1836, when he announced a service from Hull to Wisbech and King's Lynn.¹² Three years later he offered the ship for sale (through a Liverpool auctioneer, although she was lying at Hull). It was stated that the *Forager* had been built (presumably some years earlier) by Furlley & Co. of Gainsborough for themselves 'and a company'. She had been laid up for some time before being rebuilt and schooner rigged in 1836. In 1839 she had recently had a new boiler by the St George Company installed and the engine (with a cylinder 33 in. bore by 42 in. stroke) refitted. She drew only 4 ft when loaded with coals and stores, carried upwards of 50 tons at sea or 70 tons in the rivers, drawing no more than 6 ft when loaded with the higher figure. She was 'a most desirable vessel for the coasting and river trade, having proved herself an excellent sea boat when recently plying between Hull and Lynn'.¹³ The *Forager* failed to sell and a year later Keddey employed her in a new venture.

In August 1840, when the dissolution of the Boston & Wainfleet Steam Navigation Company was announced, a new concern, the Boston, Hull & London Steam Navigation Company, immediately advertised very similar services.¹⁴ Aware, they claimed, of the complaints of the traders of Boston and Spalding at the irregularities and delays in sailing between those ports and Hull, and of similar grievances on the part of Hull merchants unable to do business with Boston and Spalding, the directors of the new company had resolved the place the *Forager* on the line between Boston and Hull. Arrangements had been made to forward goods from Boston to London 'by one of those splendid Steam Vessels belonging to the Hull Steam-Packet Company'. Goods would be sent from Hull to Leeds or any part of Yorkshire either by railway or by sailing vessel, so that corn or other cargoes would reach Leeds or Wakefield in about four days after leaving Boston (and would complete the journey in the opposite direction in the same time). Goods consigned to Custom House Quay in London for the Hull Steam

¹ He can be found, for example, as agent for the London Cheesemongers contract and another carrying from Hull to Boroughbridge and Ripon in one bottom (*York Herald*, 12 Feb. 1825). In later years he appears frequently in the *Hull Packet* as an agent for various contracts and for the sale of vessels; I have not collected them all.

² *Hull Packet*, 24 April 1827; *Leeds Intelligencer*, 26 April 1827; *Birmingham Gazette*, 30 April 1827; *Bury and Norwich Post*, 2 May 1827.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 17 Nov. 1826.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 26 May 1829; *Newcastle Courant*, 20 June 1829.

⁵ *Hull Packet*, 6 April 1830.

⁶ *Hull Packet*, 3 May 1831

⁷ *Newcastle Journal*, 28 Feb. and 29 Aug. 1835; *Sheffield Independent*, 6 June 1835.

⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 22 June 1838.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 28 Sept. 1838, 19 and 26 April, 3 May 1839

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 22 Nov. 1839.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 31 Jan. 1840.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 26 Aug., 9 Dec. 1836.

¹³ *Liverpool Mercury*, 18 Oct. 1839.

¹⁴ Above, Boston & Wainfleet Steam Navigation Company.

Packet Company's vessels would arrive at Boston within 48 hours of leaving London. Prices were quoted for livestock, meat, fish, poultry and butter from Boston to London, with a note that the freight on all other goods would be same as the Boston & Wainfleet Company had charged. Freight from Hull to Boston would be the same as that charged by sailing vessels and goods for Spalding would be forwarded by barge from Boston at the same rates. This offer appears to imply that until this date there had been no regular service by steam packet between Hull and Boston. The company ran this advertisement for six weeks.¹

Five agents were listed, including Thomas Green at Boston, W.J. Hall & Co. at London, John Moats at Spalding and William Grainger at Hull, but it seems clear that the moving force behind the venture was Robert Keddey. Indeed, how far this concern was a 'company' in any real sense, as opposed to a trading title for Keddey and his associates, is unclear. No list of shareholders ever appeared in the press, nor any notices of annual general meetings.

The service was advertised again early in 1841, with virtually the same agents in each port (J. Brown had replaced Grainger at Leeds, but with the same address, 5 Dock Basin) and a promise to carry at the same freights as the sailing vessels. There was no mention of a service between Boston and London (although this was advertised later in the year)² but a long list of places in south Lincolnshire was given, to which goods sent to Boston or Spalding could be delivered. The company also announced that to provide more accommodation they had engaged a sailing vessel, the *Phæbe*, to run between Hull and Boston and to be towed when necessary. This notice was immediately followed by another listing the whole range of Keddey's business, with the telltale phrase 'one concern' at the end, confirming that the 'Boston, Hull & London Steam Navigation Company' was no more than a trading style for him and his associates, and probably only a small part of his business. Keddey thanked his customers for their support 'so long given' for his river vessels and listed the old-established contracts under his care, sailing from Hull to London (weekly), Ipswich (every ten days), Colchester (fortnightly), Leith (weekly), Alnmouth (fortnightly), Stirling (once a month), Leeds and Liverpool (every two or three days), Ferrybridge and Pontefract (weekly), York, Ripon and Boroughbridge (every four or five days), to Whitby and Newcastle (weekly), and to Sutton Bridge (weekly). The Newcastle service was provided by the 'Fine Steam Schooner', *Streanshalh*, and that to Sutton Bridge by the *Two Sisters* (method of propulsion not stated); the rest were presumably

contracts made up of several vessels.³

Keddey seems to have abandoned the Hull–Boston service at the end of the 1841 season and nothing more is heard of the 'company' running it. There was no fresh advertisement at the beginning of 1842. In June that year, however, in association with Thomas William Clark at Sutton Bridge and William Rawling at Wansford (on the Nene above Peterborough) Keddey announced that, 'The Trade of Sutton Bridge and Wisbech, and the adjoining places, being desirous of having a Steam Conveyance between those Ports and Hull, the Proprietor of the fine Steam Schooner FORAGER, will place that Vessel on the Station'. She would sail once a week in each direction and, as in 1841, the sloop *Phæbe* would provide additional capacity for heavy goods if required. Goods would be forwarded from Sutton Bridge to nearby towns and villages by land and also by boat to places on the Nene Navigation up to and including Northampton, and to Stamford, Oakham and Uppingham. The last three were not of course on the Nene and were presumably served by land carriage from the nearest wharf on the river. From Hull wool and corn would be sent up the rivers by sailing vessel, or wool could, if required, be sent by rail for delivery at Leeds, Wakefield, Bradford or Halifax the following day.⁴

To emphasise this last point, a short news item was placed in the *Stamford Mercury* a couple of weeks later reporting that the *Forager* had left Sutton Bridge on 7 July with a cargo of wool, which was forwarded by railway from Hull to Leeds the same evening and part of it was delivered at Wakefield, Halifax and Bradford the following morning.⁵ In August the promoters, who now included agents at Whitby, Newcastle and London as well as Sutton Bridge and Wansford, announced a change in timetable. Because the Leeds and Wakefield fat-stock markets were held on Wednesday, the *Forager* would in future sail from Sutton Bridge every Monday and sheep and other stock would immediately be forwarded to the markets by railway on her arrival at Hull. She would if required make two return journeys a week and the *Phæbe* would continue to carry heavy goods as necessary.⁶ After this last notice, nothing more is heard of the steam packet service from Hull to Sutton Bridge, which seems to have been given up. Keddey tried again to sell the *Forager*, 'in the highest state of Repair' ready to carry 60 tons to sea, in 1843.⁷ He was still trying a year later, when Sutton Bridge

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 14–28 Aug., 4–18 Sept. 1840.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 20 and 27 Aug., 3 and 10 Sept. 1841.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 26 Feb. 1841, *Yorkshire Gazette*, 20 Feb. 1841, *Leeds Intelligencer*, 27 Feb. 1841.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 24 June 1842; *Stamford Mercury*, 24 June and 1 July 1842; *Lincolnshire Chronicle*, 24 June 1842.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 July 1842.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 26 Aug. 1842.

⁷ *Hull Packet*, 25 Aug. and 1 Dec. 1843

was served by two sailing vessels, the *Phæbe* and the *John*, but there was no mention of a steam ship on the station.¹

Keddey remained active on other routes until his death. In 1843 he announced that he had established a number of his own river vessels in 'White's Trade' between Hull, Doncaster and Sheffield (via the Stainforth & Keadby Canal), from which goods would be transferred to his weekly London contract sailings.² A year later he had two, and sometimes three, vessels a week on this contract, which was 'now called "Keddey's" as well as "White's" Trade'. The boats of the 'Hull, York, Boroughbridge and Ripon Union Contract' also continued to work in conjunction with the sailings from Hull to Chamberlain's Wharf. The earlier list of all the destinations his contracts served had been enlarged to include Bradford (every two or three days), Wakefield (every three or four days) and Malton (every week).³

Robert Keddey died in June 1849, aged 64, described as a merchant and wharfinger of Hull (although no newspaper advertisements ever referred to the first of these activities). In August his son-in-law, Thomas Colgan, announced that he was continuing the business. He had also succeeded Robert as the vice-consul for Spain at Hull,⁴ a rather odd appointment, since the port had few dealings with southern Europe and no evidence has been found that Keddey had any. He must have been appointed some time between March 1843 (when the post is not mentioned in a newspaper advertisement listing his services) and February 1844, when it is.⁵ Thomas Colgan, who was born in Limerick, married Lavinia Keddey in 1846 and two years later her half-sister Betsey married William Colgan, presumably Thomas's brother.⁶ William and Betsey were living in Limerick when they had a son in March 1849,⁷ although either this baby or his father appears to have died very soon afterwards.⁸ Thomas also suffered misfortune. His wife Lavinia died in 1847⁹ and he evidently remarried shortly afterwards, since in January 1849 he and his new wife had a daughter, who was christened Lavinia Betsey. She died aged six

months¹⁰ and her mother must have died as well, since in 1851 Thomas was a 28-year-old widower living at 47 George Street in Sculcoates with a housekeeper. He gave his occupation as merchant and ship-owner.¹¹

Keeling, Humpston & Co.

John Keeling was for a time in partnership with the Evans family in the firm of Thomas Evans & Sons of Derby, timber and iron merchants and carriers by water, which was dissolved by mutual consent of the surviving partners (including Keeling) in 1814.¹² He was either a partner or an employee of the firm in 1805.¹³ Possibly after this company came to an end he set up in business with a man named Humpston, since Keeling, Humpston & Co. are listed as wharfingers and timber merchants of Morledge between 1818 and 1829;¹⁴ there is no evidence that they were also carriers. What may be the same business is listed as John Keeling & Co., wharfingers, in 1822.¹⁵

Kenworthy & Holt

This national firm had limited contact with Derby, from where it ran a daily service from the wharf on Cockpit Hill to Burton on Trent, Manchester and Liverpool in the early 1820s.¹⁶ By the end of the decade there were only two departures a week, on Monday and Thursday evenings, on the same route.¹⁷ In 1846 the firm, now known as J. Kenworthy & Company, were carrying only by land and railway from Derby, with services to London, Lancashire and Yorkshire.¹⁸

Leggott family

In 1795 Richard Leggott senior of Althorpe registered at Gainsborough what was described as a sloop (but of only 17 tons burden), of which Richard Leggott jun. was master. The trading route was from Gainsborough to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby. At the same time a man named simply as Richard Leggott of Althorpe registered two other small boats, with a combined burden of 35 tons, as trading from Gainsborough to Hull, Selby etc. The master of one of the vessels was James Leggott; the other master was named as 'John Eggart', which

¹ *Hull Packet*, 9 and 16 Feb. 1844.

² *Hull Packet*, 10 March 1843

³ *Hull Packet*, 9 and 16 Feb. 1844.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 10 and 31 Aug. 1849.

⁵ Cf. *Hull Packet*, 10 March 1843 and 9 and 16 Feb. 1844.

⁶ Family Search; Thomas's enumeration in 1851 (see below) gives his birthplace.

⁷ *Hull Packet*, 16 March 1849.

⁸ There is a death registration in Sculcoates RD in the March quarter of 1849 for a William Colgan, but no corresponding notice in the *Hull Packet* to establish who this was. According to Ancestry's indexing, William and Betsey Colgan were not enumerated anywhere in England and Wales in 1851, which suggests they stayed in Ireland.

⁹ Sculcoates RD, June quarter.

¹⁰ *Hull Packet*, 2 Feb., 10 Aug. 1849.

¹¹ TNA, HO 107/2361, f. 644v. I cannot find either the registration of Thomas's second marriage or the death of this second wife, but I fail to see what other sequence of events fits the evidence of the registration certificates that can be found and Thomas's enumeration in 1851.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 19 Nov. 1818; see also Thomas Evans & Sons.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 18 July 1805.

¹⁴ Riden (ed.) 2006, 160–1; Glover 1829, 47.

¹⁵ Riden (ed.) 2006, 208.

¹⁶ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

¹⁷ Glover 1829, 38–40, 47.

¹⁸ Bagshaw 1846, 154.

could have been a misheard form of John Leggott. Since the family did not live in Gainsborough they do not appear the directories of the 1790s or 1811, nor are they included in the list of regular traders from Gainsborough at the former date.¹

Thomas Hacket Massey

Thomas Hacket Massey was born in 1785 at Swarkestone, the son of John Massey and his wife Mary.² By 1830 Thomas was living at Newark, when he and his wife Ann had a son, also christened Thomas Hacket.³ Three years later two firms of which Massey was a member were dissolved. One was a partnership between him, George Wright, Charles Doncaster, John Isaac Marfleet, Jonathan Massey and Elijah Massey as corn millers, flour dealers and corn merchants, trading as George Wright & Company (where is not stated); the other was a partnership between him, Marfleet and Edward Massey as maltsters and corn factors at Newark.⁴ Jonathan was Thomas's older brother, born in 1781; Elijah Edward cannot definitely be identified.⁵

In 1842 Massey & Son of Town Wharf, Northgate, were wharfingers, coal dealers and corn dealers.⁶ The 'Son' can hardly be the boy baptised in 1830 but who it was is not clear. In 1844 the firm was named as Thomas Hacket Massey & Co., still of Town Wharf, wharfingers, corn merchants, coal merchants and maltsters.⁷ The business had come to an end by 1864.⁸ The fate of the older T.H. Massey is unclear;⁹ his son was living at Farringdon, near Alton (Hants.) when the 1901 census was taken.¹⁰

Caleb Maullin

Maullin first comes to notice in April 1777 when, returning from Nottingham to Gainsborough (by road), he found a boat moored near Gunthorpe to escape the high wind, on which two men were drawing porter from a half-hogshead and replacing it with water. The master and part of the crew were

asleep. Unaided, Maullin secured the two offenders, engaged a post-chaise, and drove to Sir Gervase Clifton (presumably the nearest magistrate), who committed the men to Nottingham gaol to await the next quarter sessions. Maullin was then agent to Hugh Henshall & Co. at Gainsborough,¹¹ as he was in the 1780s.¹²

Maullin's life continued to be attended by excitement a week later when he married, at Gainsborough, Mrs Mary Lacey, a wharfinger there, of whom the *Derby Mercury* wrote: 'Her remarkable Care, Spirit, Vigilance, and Assiduity in Business, for many Years past, ranks her amongst the most Worthy of her Sex, and deserving of one of the best of Men, to be the Partner of her Cares'. Their marriage was marked not only by the ringing of the church bells, but all the ships moored at Gainsborough, 'both Old and New Contracts', hoisted their colours and fired their guns, while 'the Publick gave every Demonstration of Joy'.¹³ Caleb's own pleasure at the match may have been enhanced by his acquisition of his bride's business, which (on later evidence) appears to have included the wharf known as Trent Port on the Nottinghamshire bank of the Trent opposite Gainsborough. In August 1777 he announced that, encouraged by the support of his friends and the public, he had entered into an agreement with the owners of the twelve ships making up the Old Contract sailing between Gainsborough and London, one of which sailed from Gainsborough every ten days, and from London every weight, 'loaded or not loaded', and which were associated with the eleven 'Contract Sloops', one of which sailed to Hull every four days. He was also connected with vessels constantly trading to Ipswich, Colchester, King's Lynn, Bridlington, Newcastle, Newhaven and Poole coastwise; Leeds, Halifax, Bradford and Wakefield on the Aire & Calder Navigation; Rotherham and Sheffield on the Don; Bawtry on the Idle; Brigg on the Ancholme; Torksey and Lincoln on the Fosdyke; and Chesterfield, Worksop, Retford and Stockwith on the Chesterfield Canal. He offered 'Noblemen, Merchants, Tradesmen &c.' a large wharf, warehouse and crane, 'well constructed to the immediate Dispatch of Business', close to the river, where ships and other vessels could load or unload expeditiously or safely.¹⁴

In 1787 Maullin was involved in a rather odd dispute with two fellow Gainsborough wharfingers, Ralph Coddington and Aaron Smith. Coddington

¹ *UBD*, III, 141–3; Holden 1811, sn. Gainsborough.

² Family Search.

³ Family Search. I cannot locate the marriage of T.H. Massey senior and Ann in Family Search.

⁴ *London Gazette*, 5 Nov. 1833, p. 2016.

⁵ Family Search locates the baptism of Jonathan at Swarkestone on 19 April 1781, the son of John and Mary Massey; I cannot find Elijah's baptism in Family Search; and the only possible match for Edward is the appearance of a man of this name at Thrumpton in the 1841 census, when he was said to be aged 53. He could therefore have been Samuel's younger brother, born c.1788.

⁶ Pigot 1842, 17; the firm does not appear in the 1835 edn.

⁷ White 1844, 353.

⁸ White 1864, ooo.

⁹ There is no death registration in Free BMD for a man of this name between 1840 and 1900, which suggests that his death was registered as 'Thomas Massey', too common a name to identify without other evidence.

¹⁰ Family Search.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 25 April 1777.

¹² Bailey 1784, II, 412.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 2 May 1777. The fulsome tone of this item and the earlier one makes it tempting to suggest that, in addition to representing Henshalls at Gainsborough, Caleb may also have been the local correspondent of the *Mercury*.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 29 Aug. 1777.

claimed that while he was ill in bed, Maullin showed him a letter in which it was alleged that Smith had been circulating a report that Coddington had died, and claiming that during his lifetime Smith had provided Coddington with warehouse room and that his servants had transacted the whole of Coddington's business, without asking for any payment. Coddington accordingly inserted an advertisement in two newspapers denouncing Smith's actions. After he recovered from his illness Coddington asked Maullin to produce the evidence on which he had based his claims, which he refused to do, leading Coddington to believe that Maullin had invented the stories about Smith to damage his business and character. Coddington published another notice in the papers demanding that Maullin produce the letter or identify the author, 'otherwise I shall treat such Infamy and Baseness as it really merits'.¹

When the owners of the Old Contract ships sailing between Gainsborough and London advertised an increase in the frequency of the service (from once every ten days to once every seven) in 1789, the wharfingers they dealt with at Gainsborough included Caleb Maullin, as well as Smith & Mozley and Robert Flower.² He was listed as a wharfinger (although not a boat owner) in the *UBD* under Gainsborough and reappears under Hull as the Gainsborough agent for a contract of six sloops (barely half the number he claimed to act for in 1777) sailing between the two places, for which Thomas Martinson was the Hull agent.³ These entries must have been assembled before the summer of 1793 when Maullin announced his retirement, advising his friends that he had sold his premises, wharfs, warehouses and vessels, all of which, together with his business as a wharfinger at Trent Port, to a newly established partnership which was to trade as the Gainsborough Boat Company.⁴

Thomas Middlebrook, Benjamin Rogers and Thomas Mansford

In 1818 Thomas Middlebrook, Benjamin Rogers and Thomas Mansford, all of Newark, gave notice of the dissolution of their partnership as wharfingers and corn and coal merchants at Newark under the firm of Middlebrook, Rogers and Mansford.⁵ What may be either a successor business or an out-of-date reference to the same one appears as Middlebrook & Mansford of Millgate, wharfingers, and as Middlebrook & Mansford, corn factors, in Pigot's Directory of 1819.⁶

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 13 Dec. 1787.

² *Derby Mercury*, 2 April 1789.

³ *UBD*, III, 142, 336–8. John Smith was listed under Hull as the Gainsborough agent for a contract of eight sloops on this route.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 1 and 8 Aug. 1793; and see the entry for the Gainsborough Boat Company.

⁵ *London Gazette*, 24 March 1818, p. 546.

⁶ Pigot 1819, 544–7.

None of the principals appear in the 1822 edition of the same directory.

Two of the three partners were related. Thomas Middlebrook married Elizabeth Mansford at Southwell in 1809.⁷ He was probably the son of William and Elizabeth Middlebrook baptised at Newark in 1780,⁸ and she seems likely to have been the daughter of Francis and Lydia Mansford, baptised at East Retford in 1787.⁹ She had a brother Thomas, baptised in 1786, who might be assumed to have become a partner with his brother-in-law, although this Thomas appears to have died in infancy.¹⁰ An alternative identification is the Thomas son of Thomas and Elizabeth Mansford baptised at Southwell in 1790,¹¹ who were presumably related to the East Retford family. Benjamin Rogers, who married Ann Musham at Newark in 1799,¹² does not appear to be related to the other two.

John Mills and partners

John Mills, a Stamford wine and spirit merchant, was in partnership with William Johnson of Spalding as wharfingers at Spalding around 1820 and possibly before,¹³ offering to carry from there to London, Hull and Stamford every week.¹⁴ In 1824 the partnership was dissolved and Mills announced that he would be continuing the business with Edward Holeywell as his agent at Spalding.¹⁵ Four years later Mills and Holeywell in turn dissolved their partnership as wine and spirit merchants at Spalding, selling the stock and premises to Henry Dean, 'late brewer to Messrs William Squire and Co. of Peterborough'); there was no mention of the wharfinger's business.¹⁶ Mills died in 1832,¹⁷ when the Stamford wine merchant's business passed to his only son, also John, who announced that he intended to continue it 'in the same respectable and steady manner' in which it had been carried on for 'upwards of 30 years'.¹⁸ Once again, there is no reference to carrying on the Welland or coastwise, which appears always to have been a minor concern for Mills, run by an agent or partner as an adjunct to his main business.

⁷ Family Search.

⁸ Family Search.

⁹ Family Search.

¹⁰ Family Search, which connects a baptism on 8 Sept. with a burial three days later.

¹¹ Family Search.

¹² Family Search; I have not located Benjamin's baptism at Newark.

¹³ The earliest reference to the firm I have found is in the *Stamford Mercury*, 6 April 1821; Mills is described as a wine merchant of Stamford in the paper on 17 Sept. 1819 and frequently thereafter.

¹⁴ Pigot 1822–3, 264.

¹⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 16 and 30 April 1824.

¹⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 11 Jan. 1828.

¹⁷ TNA, PROB 11/1805/353.

¹⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 18 and 25 Jan. 1833.

John Moats

John Moats was born at Spalding in 1797, the son of William Moats and his wife Bridget.¹ In 1820 he was married, at Spalding, Eleanor Lavidge of Pinchbeck; both were then 23.² John appears then to have been a clerk in the counting-house of a Spalding merchant named John Markillie, who died early in 1825.³ By 1830 he was in business on his own account, when he joined with a firm of Hull wharfingers, Holden & Sampson, to act as agent for regular contract sailings between Spalding and Hull, on which a vessel would depart from each port at least once every three weeks. The advertisement gives the impression that this was a new service, stating that 'Shippers of Goods from Leeds, Wakefield, Barnsley, Sheffield, &c. will find this a cheap and expeditious conveyance to Spalding, Stamford, and to all places adjacent thereto'.⁴ This contract was presumably in part the service referred the same year as carrying from Spalding to London and all parts of Yorkshire, with vessels sailing every ten days.⁵

From about this time, which appears to be roughly when John Mills of Stamford (qv) gave up carrying from Spalding, Moats appears to have been the leading, and possibly the only, wharfinger in the town for the next quarter of a century. He also built up a considerable business as a merchant in the local staple trades. Fortunately for the historian, he was also a man who believed in extensive advertising, especially when faced with competition, but also merely to keep his name before the public. Only a few months after he had announced the setting up of the Spalding–Hull service the arrival of a ship from Hull within 24 hours was thought worthy of a public announcement;⁶ a year later, when he had evidently begun acting for ships coming from the North, he reminded shippers of goods from Newcastle to Spalding, Deeping and Stamford that a vessel was ready to take in goods there.⁷ In May 1833 he was advertising the sale of 'best Sea Coals' brought in his own vessels direct from the collieries, and also the appointment of an agent at Stamford, Henry Smith, to

handle goods send up or down the Welland.⁸ Both signed a notice a month later announcing the establishment of a London–Spalding contract of six ships, five of them owned by their masters, one of which would sail from Beal's Wharf, London, every seven days, whether loaded or not, with goods for a list of 19 places in Lincolnshire, including Burghley House, as well as Oakham and Uppingham.⁹

This new venture appears to have been set up in competition with a London–Boston contract which had been in existence since at least 1830, with Thomas Collis as the agent at Boston, which also claimed to be the most expeditious for goods destined for a much longer list of places on both the Witham and Welland (including Spalding and Stamford) and beyond, as far as Nottingham, Newark, Grantham and Melton Mowbray inland (as well as Oakham and Uppingham) and Alford and Wainfleet on the coast north of Boston.¹⁰ Possibly because of the competition, early in 1834 Moats and Smith ran lengthy advertisements in the *Stamford Mercury*, listing freights for some 75 different goods (in some cases with several different prices depending on how they were packed) for both the sea passage to Spalding and the journey by river to Stamford. Many of the prices on both schedules, they claimed, had been reduced. A vessel would continue to load every Wednesday, and shippers were particularly asked to consign goods to Beal's Wharf, to avoid their being 'mis-sent to Boston'.¹¹ In May 1835 the owners of the vessels making up what was called the 'Old Shipping Contract' agreed to reduce their freights by a third,¹² although this decision was reversed the following January, when the heavy expense of boating goods by lighter from Fosdyke to Spalding (because there was insufficient water in the river for larger vessels to come up to the town) was blamed.¹³ One reason for the reduction may have been the appearance of a rival, the Albion Wharf Company of Spalding (where J.A. Parr was agent) and Stamford (where W. Baker was agent), which in April 1835 set up a contract of eight ships sailing from Botolph's Wharf, Lower Thames Street, to Spalding and Hull. They offered to carry 'at such prices as shall meet the depression of the times' and to forward from Spalding to Stamford and elsewhere by either land or water carriage. They also refuted a rumour mentioned at a meeting in Spalding that one of their vessels had been refused insurance by the Lloyd's agent in the town.¹⁴

This competition continued for a few years longer.

¹ Family Search: baptism at Spalding 24 Sept. 1797.

² Family Search; *Stamford Mercury*, 13 Oct. 1820. The only baptism in Family Search that could be Eleanor's is an entry at Scalford (near Melton Mowbray) on 4 Dec. 1796, when her parents were named as William and Frances Lavidge. She was returned as not born in Lincs. in 1841, which is consistent with her having been born in Leics.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 4–18 Feb. 1825; in 1822, when John acted as receiver for William Moats the younger of Spalding, mariner (who was perhaps his brother, rather than his father), debtors and creditors were asked to settle with him at Mrs Markillie's counting-house (ibid., 18 Jan. 1822)

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 12–26 March 1830.

⁵ Pigot 1830, 117.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 11 June 1830.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 8 April 1831.

⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 31 May 1833.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 14 June 1833.

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 11 June 1830.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 10–17 Jan. 1834.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 15–22 May 1835.

¹³ *Stamford Mercury*, 15–22 Jan. 1836.

¹⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 May 1835.

In March 1838 Stephen Sharp of Wansford, on the Nene Navigation, announced that he had purchased two more boats to cater for his growing business and insisted that customers in Oundle, Uppingham and Oakham could save one or two shillings a hundredweight by sending goods to and from London via Wisbech, a journey 'which will very seldom exceed a fortnight' from the day of sailing. He was agent for a contract that was running vessels from Hall & Co.'s Wool and Customhouse Quays in London, for which James Harrison in Wisbech, Holden & Sampson in Hull and Jacksons in Gainsborough acted as agents; in addition, once a fortnight a ship sailed from Newcastle direct to Wisbech. Moats countered this with another list of sea freights from London to Spalding and by boat from there to Stamford, pointing out that the savings claimed by other routes were fallacious since many of his rates were less than 2s. a cwt in total for the entire passage from London to Stamford.¹

Early in 1839 Moats pointed to the 'great improvement' already noticed in the Welland below Fosdyke Bridge as a result of works being undertaken by the Welland Trustees. When these were complete, the river would 'become again the legitimate as well as the best and cheapest line of transit' for goods destined for all places adjacent, especially Deeping, Stamford, Oakham and Uppingham.² In the meantime, he had perhaps been losing business to wharfingers at Boston and Wisbech. Since the freight from London to both must have been about the same as to Spalding, their success in attracting trade from inland towns may have depended to some extent on the state of the respective rivers (Witham, Nene and Welland) both upstream and down. If sea-going vessels could come up to the town wharfs the cost of transshipping into lighters would be avoided. Despite the possible handicaps of a variable water supply in the Welland between Spalding and Stamford,³ and difficulties in keeping the Outfall below Spalding clear for larger vessels, Moats appears to have triumphed and in 1841 was the only carrier by water, either coastwise on the river, at Spalding.⁴

Alongside his work as a wharfinger, Moats had been building up trade at Spalding as a merchant. During the 1830s he advertised the arrival at his wharf of 'Foreign Linseed Cakes', 'fresh-made

English Cakes' and rape-seed cakes for manure,⁵ and was importing coal from both the North East and the West Riding, as well as lime. Thus in 1840 he had for sale a 'constant supply of the best Sea and Silkstone Coals'.⁶ In 1837 he had some coal stolen in 1837 from a barge in the river at Boston Scalp.⁷ He was also in partnership, until early in 1839, with William Munton of Fletland (in Greatford) as corn and oil-cake merchants, commission agents and warehousemen at Spalding and as millers at Newstead.⁸

The end of this partnership, followed shortly afterwards by Munton's bankruptcy, possibly coupled with competition from rivals at Boston and Boston, may have marked the start of problems for Moats which culminated in a composition with his creditors in 1841. Although this appears not to have been publicly announced at the time,⁹ everyone in business in a town the size of Spalding would have known of it. In July that year a granary occupied by Moats and (by that stage) Munton's assignees, capable of storing 1,500 quarters, was put up for auction,¹⁰ and in November what appears to have been the whole of Moats's premises were advertised to let by tender by the joint stock bank in Spalding. The estate included a granary capable of holding 1,700 quarters (which could be the one offered for sale four months earlier); another holding 500 quarters with ware-room, counting-house, stable and coalyard adjoining; a wharf on the Welland with a 'very powerful' crane; and another coalyard capable of holding 300 tons. Lighters, a cart and other moveables were available at a fair valuation, and immediate possession was offered.¹¹ In September 1842 his 'very substantial and commodious' house in Double Street, in a 'most admirable situation' for any gentlemen wishing to 'embark in a Mercantile Business', or equally suitable as a family home, was put up for sale by auction.¹²

By some means Moats recovered from this setback and appears to have continued trading from the same premises and to have stayed in Double

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 7–14 Nov. 1833, 13–20 Jan. 1837, 7–14 Aug. and 25 Sept. 1840.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 7–14 Aug. 1840.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Nov. 1837, 12 Jan., 23 Feb. 1838; the detail in which this theft and the subsequent trial at Quarter Sessions was reported may simply reflect the *Mercury's* high editorial standards, or Moats may have taken the view that all publicity is beneficial and taken steps to ensure the very full coverage.

⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 15–22 Feb., 1 March 1839; *London Gazette*, 22 Feb. 1839, p. 384.

⁹ I can find no notice in either the *Mercury* or the *Gazette*, but the episode came out in Moats's examination in bankruptcy in 1854 (*Stamford Mercury*, 3 Nov. 1854).

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 9–23 July 1841.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 5–12 Nov. 1841.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 23 Sept. 1842.

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 16 March 1838; determined to be fair to both advertisers (and presumably not wishing to lose the custom of either), the paper inserted these notices next to each other in the same issue.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 15 Feb. 1839.

³ In 1835 Moats specifically referred to the plentiful supply of water in the river, enabling him to forward goods without delay to Stamford (*Stamford Mercury*, 13–20 March 1835), and in 1838 to the 'greatly improved state' of the Welland (*ibid.*, 16 March 1838). This suggests that at other times there were problems.

⁴ Pigot 1841, Lincs. 78.

Street.¹ From 1843 the same extensive advertising reappears in the *Mercury*, whether to sell 40 tons of 'true Scotch Red' seed potatoes imported from Perth;² or a 'constant supply' of Sea, Silkstone, Oven and Pit Coals', and freshly burnt lime from his own kiln;³ or to advertise the weekly contract sailings from London (where they moved from Beal's Wharf to Stanton's Wharf, Tooley Street, in 1843), and those to Hull (with three vessels) twice a month.⁴ Continuing the openness with which he seems always to have advertised his prices, in 1843 Moats was offering coal direct from the Primrose and Woodside Wallsend collieries delivered at Stamford wharf at 23s. 6d. a ton, as well as Silkstone, Victoria, Keppax and Gawber Hall coals.⁵ The same year he appointed a new agent at Stamford, who was moving from the wharfs at Wansford on the Nene.⁶ Moats imported cheap coal for brickmakers from the North East⁷ and in 1845 secured a contract to supply Stamford workhouse with best sea coal from Pelaw Main at 21s. 6d. a ton.⁸ He was also importing wheat and possibly other grain into Spalding.⁹

Towards the end of the decade Moats seems to have branched out, possibly because he realised that the arrival of the railway at Spalding – the line from Peterborough to Boston, Lincoln and the north was opened in October 1848 – would affect both the coasting trade and business on the river. In May 1849, after the Welland Trustees reduced their tolls by half, he announced that he was reducing his freights between Spalding and Hull for most goods by between 15 and 25 per cent.¹⁰ Meanwhile, in 1847 he had acquired an agency for the Royal Farmers' Insurance Company¹¹ and in the summer of 1849 secured an appointment as sole agent for the sale in Spalding and its neighbourhood of Abraham Howe & Co.'s Trent ales and bitter. This 'fine old English Beverage', suitable for families as a dinner ale or for giving to farm workers at harvest time, was available

from his stores at a shilling a gallon.¹²

Also in 1849 he became agent to Messrs Millns, Holland, Hunt & Co., who had taken over a steam-powered bone-mill at Spalding.¹³ Whereas nothing more is heard of either of the other two agencies, Moats pushed the fertiliser business hard, with characteristically generous use of press advertising. A couple of months after his appointment, he announced a reduction in the price of ground bones and was also selling imported guano and sulphuric acid (for dissolving bones) from the mill, as well as turnip seed and rape and cole-seed.¹⁴ He continued to sell coal on his own account.¹⁵

Moats also remarried in these years, in circumstances that perhaps shed some light on his character. His first wife died in 1845¹⁶ and two years later he married Maria Lavidge, who can only be Eleanor's younger sister, born in 1799.¹⁷ A few years earlier Maria, who had not been married before, was a servant in the household of William Westmoreland, a chemist at Billingborough.¹⁸ Since marriage to a deceased wife's sister was at the time illegal as well as contrary to Canon Law,¹⁹ it is perhaps not surprising that the wedding took place at the Collegiate Church in Manchester, rather than Spalding or Billingborough. On the other hand, Moats was quite happy to publish the news a few weeks later in the *Stamford Mercury*, as if to say that he did not care what his neighbours thought of him after the event.

While Moats was still promoting the fertiliser business, renewed and ultimately fatal problems became apparent. Early in 1853 his warehouses, other buildings, wharf, crane and coalyard were advertised to let, either from year to year or for a term of years, with the suggestion that among the trades for which they might prove useful was the manufacture of sugar from beetroot, both beet and chicory being readily obtained locally.²⁰ In December that year there was a break-in at Moats's office, in which no money was taken but a number of papers and account books were

¹ I have not found direct evidence of this, but when his business finally collapsed in 1854 the premises then offered for sale (his warehouse, wharf etc. and his house in Double Street) appear from the descriptions then given (see below) to be the same as those put up for sale in 1841–2. Oddly, although he was clearly living in Spalding in 1851, he cannot be found in the census there (or indeed anywhere in England and Wales) under either his own name or any of the more likely misreadings by Ancestry's indexers.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 3 and 17 March and 14 April 1843.

³ *Stamford Mercury*, 10 March 1843; the kiln is specifically mentioned in advertisements in the issues of 3 and 24 May 1844.

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 10–31 March, 28 April, 12 May 1843.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 1–8 Sept. 1843, 26 May and 2 June 1848.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 29 Sept. 1843.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 5 July 1844, 26 May and 2 June 1848

⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 20 June 1845.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Nov., 29 Dec. 1848, 5 Jan. 1849

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 11–18 March 1849.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 9 July 1847.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 3 Aug. 1849.

¹³ *Stamford Mercury*, 22–30 March, 13 April 1849.

¹⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 25 May, 1 June, 2–9 Nov. 1849, 29 March, 3–31 May, 7–14 June 1850, 9–30 May 1851, 23–30 April, 14 May 1852, 22 April 1853.

¹⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 8–22 June 1849, 31 May, 7–14 June 1850, 23–30 May 1851.

¹⁶ Spalding RD, Sept. quarter. There appears to be no notice in the *Stamford Gazette*.

¹⁷ The newspaper announcement (*Stamford Gazette*, 30 July) merely names her as 'Miss Lavidge' but the civil register supplies a Christian name. Both are so rare that Maria must be the daughter of William and Frances Lavidge who was baptised at Scalford on 24 Jan. 1799 (Family Search).

¹⁸ TNA, HO 107/615/11, ff. 10r.–v.

¹⁹ The law of the state was changed to permit such marriages in 1907 (7 Edw. VII c. 47).

²⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 25 March, 1 April 1853.

burnt and destroyed.¹ The following April what was now the firm of Millns, Hunt & Jennings (John Holland having died and his share withdrawn) stated publicly that Moats was no longer their clerk and was not authorised to receive money on their behalf.² In September 1854 he was declared bankrupt, when his trade was given as coal merchant and wharfinger.³ This time there was escape. Within a month his entire stock in trade was put up for auction, including a light waggon, a cart, a weighing machine, corn and coal sacks, tarpaulins, ropes, chains and similar items; office furniture; stocks of coal, Hull cement, yellow ochre and three kilderkins of Salt & Co.'s bitter ale; and a superior gang of lighters to carry 60 tons and a ketch (35 tons), with cloths and stores.⁴ Three weeks later his house in Double Street and two life policies were offered for sale by the mortgagee in fee.⁵

It was at his examination early in November 1854 that the significance of the unexplained break-in a year earlier became apparent. Moats, whose liabilities totalled about £9,500, had had the whole management of Messrs Millns, Holland & Co.'s business and kept their books. Two months before the break-in he had made up the accounts and submitted them to Millns, who told him that because of the death of one of the partners the accounts should be balanced. Before Moats could do this, the accounts were burnt during the break-in. He had attempted to supply the information needed to balance his own account with the company, and eventually an arbitrator found that he owed £700. He denied having anything to do with the destruction of the books.⁶ In December Moats was given a certificate⁷ and creditors received an initial dividend of 4s. 6d. in the £.⁸ Meanwhile, his household furniture was sold without reserve and a renewed attempt was made to sell or let his house.⁹ Only in 1857 was the payment of a final dividend announced,¹⁰ by which time Moats's business had obviously come to an end. It is impossible to be certain why. Perhaps the arrival of the railway so badly damaged his wharfinger's business that he could not support himself purely by selling fertiliser, or perhaps he had overreached himself in that line as well. After the collapse of his business at Spalding, Moats and his wife moved to Manchester, where he found work with a debt collector whose business he tried to take over. He failed almost at once and by September 1858 was in Lancaster gaol as an insolvent

debtor.¹¹ It is not clear when he died;¹² Maria died in Manchester in 1869.¹³

Humphrey Moore

Moore was in business as a wharfinger at Shardlow by 1781 (if not before), when he was advertising for land carriers to deliver goods between Shardlow and London from the canal wharf, offering a full loading and ready money on delivery. He repeated the offer in 1782 and in 1783 promised 'an advanc'd Price ... on Account of the Dearness of Road Charges, and great Quantities of Goods beforehand'.¹⁴ Transhipment at Shardlow for goods going to London from the Potteries or elsewhere on the Trent & Mersey Canal must have been an interim arrangement between the opening of the canal in 1777 and the completion in 1790 of the link to the Thames at Oxford via the Coventry and Oxford canals. The route would have been a quicker and safer, if more expensive, alternative to shipment down the Trent to Gainsborough and from there coastwise to London. Similarly, for goods sent down from London for places on the Trent & Mersey or beyond, and perhaps on the Trent itself as far as Newark, it was an option instead of the coastwise passage to Gainsborough.

In 1787 Moore advertised for several boatmasters to navigate between Shardlow and Gainsborough, offering 'constant Employment' in return for 'Security for their Fidelity'.¹⁵ This extension of his business may have been prompted by the creation of a towing path on the Trent between Wilden Ferry and Gainsborough, since Hugh Henshall & Co. advertised at the same time for 'Proposals for Haling their Boats with Horses' on this stretch of the Trent, referring enquirers to (among others) Moore at Shardlow.¹⁶

¹¹ In June 1858 Moats announced the dissolution of his partnership with John Groves at 16 David Street, Portland Street, Manchester, as public accountants and publishers of the *Commercial, Mercantile and Trade Protection Circular*, when it was stated that Moats alone would continue the business (*London Gazette*, 8 June 1858, p. 2844). After he was imprisoned he was described in more modest terms as formerly of Bury New Road, Cheetham, Manchester, a lodging-house keeper, clerk and canvasser for Charles Edwin Stubbs, publisher of the *Trade Protection Circular* at Manchester; afterwards in partnership with Groves as publishers and debt collectors; and most recently as a publisher and debt collector on his own account, with an office in John Dalton Street (*ibid.*, 14 Sept. 1858, p. 4156; 24 Sept. 1858, p. 4281).

¹² Neither he nor his wife can be found in the 1861 census as indexed by Ancestry, but neither is there a definite match for his death in the civil registers down to 1900. The deaths of only two men named John Moats are registered in this period, one in Loddon RD (Norfolk) in 1857 and other in Ecclesall Bierlow RD (i.e. greater Sheffield) in 1862. It is presumably possible that after he got out of Lancaster gaol he abandoned his wife and emigrated.

¹³ Manchester RD, June quarter, aged given as 69.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 4 May, 30 Aug. 1781; 21 Nov., 12 and 26 Dec. 1782; 13 and 20 March 1783.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 15 March 1787.

¹⁶ Above, Hugh Henshall & Co.

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 23 Dec. 1853.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 7–14 April 1854.

³ *London Gazette*, 19 Sept. 1854, p. 2887.

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 13 Oct. 1854.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 27 Oct. 1854.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 3 Nov. 1854.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 22 Dec. 1854.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 29 Dec. 1854, p. 4288.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 and 29 Dec. 1854.

¹⁰ *London Gazette*, 14 April 1857, p. 1361.

In 1793 Moore entered into a partnership with James Soresby of Shardlow, Ralph Turner of Hull and William Brightmoore of Gainsborough to form the Gainsborough Boat Company. The new firm immediately took over Trent Port Wharf, on the Nottinghamshire bank of the river opposite Gainsborough, which Caleb Maullin of Gainsborough was disposing of on his retirement from business.¹ The following year Moore advertised for a clerk at Shardlow, whose duties would involve examining and reshipping goods at the wharf.² Moore may have continued to trade on his own account at Shardlow alongside this partnership, since directories of 1805–14 list Humphrey Moore & Co. as wharfingers at Shardlow and carriers between there and Gainsborough and on the Trent & Mersey, Staffordshire & Worcestershire and Birmingham canals, although in 1809 and 1811 he was said to be trading ‘under the firm of the Gainsborough Boat Company’. In 1809–14 the same directory names George Moore as a salt merchant at Shardlow,³ who could presumably have been a relation. Neither man appears there in later directories.

Morris, Herbert & Co.

In 1841 (but not in earlier editions of Pigot’s directories) this company were sending boats twice a week from Moira, Measham and Market Bosworth on the Ashby Canal to London, Coventry, Liverpool and most other parts of the country.⁴ This appears to have been a feeder service to their main route between London and the North West using the Coventry Canal, since when the partnership between Thomas Morris and John Herbert was dissolved the following year, the firm were described as common carriers between London, Liverpool, Manchester, Coventry and other places.⁵ They may have realised that canal carrying on this route had little future once the London & Birmingham and Grand Junction railways were open.

Newark Boat Company

In 1753 this concern suffered two misfortunes. In January one of its employees was murdered on his way home from Nottingham and robbed of £70 which he had collected there on its behalf;⁶ and two months later another man was charged with feloniously running off with £100 or more which he had likewise received at Nottingham for the company (he was

acquitted of the felony but detained for debt).⁷ What was presumably the same business had four boats working on the river between Gainsborough and Shardlow in the early 1790s.⁸ It does not appear to have any later history.⁹

— Norman

An otherwise unidentified firm named only as ‘Norman’ was recorded in 1841 as running a weekly service from the New Bridge wharf in Northampton to Birmingham.¹⁰

Nottingham Boat Company

In April 1744 John and James Huthwaite and Robie Swann, trading as the Nottingham Boat Company, announced that they had taken the warehouse on the upper Trent at Willington, previously in the tenure of Henry Hayne, who controlled the navigation, which they intended to open the following month to receive ‘all Sorts of Goods and Merchandize’ for conveyance up or down the Trent, to and from Gainsborough and places adjacent to the river.¹¹ The second of the partners is presumably the man who was elected an alderman of Nottingham in 1737,¹² and the first may be the John Huthwaite who died at Horsley (Derb.) in 1771;¹³ James Huthwaite was also dead by 1774.¹⁴ The company still had the wharf at Willington in 1753, when they and Benjamin Ward, another wharfinger there, lost a large quantity of deals, oaks and other timber in floods on the river. Both advertised for their return, the company naming Thomas Lowe as their representative at Willington.¹⁵

What appears to be the same company was among the larger carriers on the river in the early 1790s, with eight boats trading between Gainsborough and Shardlow¹⁶ (or possibly beyond, if they still had the warehouse at Willington). It was still trading c. 1811¹⁷ but it not heard of (under this name) after that date.¹⁸

J.A. Parr

For a few weeks in April and May 1835 the

⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 16 March 1753.

⁸ *UBD*, III, 141.

⁹ The name of the firm does not appear in any later directories (or in Bailey 1784). It could presumably have been the business owned by Thomas Shittlewood and Thomas Toder, although I have found no evidence for a connection.

¹⁰ Pigot 1841, Northants. 20.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 20 and 17 April and 4 May 1744.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 9 Feb. 1737.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 8 March 1771.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 15 April 1774 (marriage of his eldest daughter, who had a fortune of £6,000).

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 24 Dec. 1753.

¹⁶ *UBD*, III, 141 (under Gainsborough; the company is not listed under Nottingham).

¹⁷ Holden 1811, II, sn. Nottingham.

¹⁸ It is not listed (as a company) in any edition of Pigot’s Directory.

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 8 Aug. 1793; and see also Gainsborough Boat Company; Soresby & Flac; Caleb Maullin and William Brightmoore.

² *Derby Mercury*, 6 and 13 March 1794.

³ Riden (ed.) 2006, 104, 113, 124, 136.

⁴ Pigot 18421, Leics. 6, 13, 43.

⁵ *London Gazette*, 1 July 1842, p. 1808.

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 12 Jan. 1753.

Albion Wharf Company of Spalding and Stamford ran advertisements in the local paper for a service from Botolph's Wharf, Lower Thames Street, sailing regularly every Wednesday and carrying goods 'at such prices as shall meet the depression of the times'. They would also forward goods to Deeping and Stamford and hoped to establish a service from Hull. Eight ships are listed as making up the contract between London and Spalding, and two wharfingers, J.A. Parr at Spalding and W. Baker at Stamford. The advertisement also refuted a rumour 'maliciously mentioned' at a meeting at the White Hart in Spalding that some of the vessels in the contract had been refused insurance by the Lloyd's agent in the town, whereas all eight had been accepted at the lowest rates.¹ Nothing more is heard of the company or of Parr,² which seems to have been a shortlived attempt to challenge John Moats's dominant position in both the coasting and river trade in these years. It may even have been he who started the rumour.³

Peach & Willis

In 1841 a firm of this name was running a fly-boat service three times a week from Burton End in Melton Mowbray to Loughborough, Shardlow, Nottingham and Gainsborough.⁴ William Willis was a wharfinger in his early thirties living at Wharf House with a wife, five young children and one servant.⁵ Joseph Peach was away from home on census night that year but his wife Eleanor, then in her late thirties, and their four young children were living in King Street, Melton Mowbray, with two servants. Mrs Peach returned her occupation as spirit merchant,⁶ which was in fact her husband's business. Two years earlier Joseph Peach had dissolved his partnership with a local tanner, currier and fell-dealer named Henry Hind Brown, when they announced that they would be continuing in business in their respective trades, each on his own account.⁷ The carrying business seems a strange venture to establish at so late a date on a canal whose traffic can hardly have justified the use of fly-boats and the partnership

was dissolved in September 1843.⁸ By 1851 William Willis had become a tailor and was living in Leicester Street in Melton, still with a wife and large family but no servant.⁹ Joseph Peach remained in business in the town as a wine merchant until his death in November 1853 aged 58.¹⁰ His widow died the following June, aged 50.¹¹

Pickering & Waters

In 1841 Pickering & Waters were one of three firms (the others being Pickfords and Deacon, Wade & Co., both much bigger and longer established concerns) who appear to have been operating services from Leicester jointly, or at least on the same days each week. The routes served were to Birmingham, Bristol, Worcester and all parts of the West three times a week, to Liverpool, Manchester and all parts of Lancashire and the North twice a week, and to the Potteries three times a week.¹²

T. & M. Pickford & Co.

Pickfords, originally land carriers on the route from London to the North West, entered the canal carrying trade in 1786 by acquiring the portion of the business of Hugh & Henshall & Co. which operated a service down the Bridgewater and Trent & Mersey canals from Manchester to Shardlow, from where goods were taken to and from London by road.¹³ In 1818 they were said to be despatching boats from Cockpit Hill wharf in Derby three days a week to London, Coventry, Oxford, Bristol and Worcester, and all intermediate places on those lines, and on two days a week to Manchester, Liverpool and other places on that route.¹⁴

Within a few years the service had been considerably expanded (unless Pigot's directory of 1818 does not give a full picture). In 1822 they were offering a daily service on the Trent & Mersey and Bridgewater line to Manchester and Liverpool, on the Leicester and Grand Junction line to London, on the Coventry and Oxford canals to Oxford, and on the Staffs. & Worcs. line as far as Worcester, from where goods were forwarded to Bristol, Bath and elsewhere in the West of England. They were also delivering,

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 April–22 May 1835.

² There are no more references to either in the *Mercury* or anything in the *London Gazette* and I cannot find a man named Parr in the 1841 census in or near Spalding.

³ Above, John Moats.

⁴ Pigot 1841, Leics. 50.

⁵ TNA, HO 107/588/2, f. 53v.

⁶ TNA, HO 107/588/1, f.10.

⁷ *Leicester Journal*, 10 May 1839. H.H. Brown was either Joseph's brother-in-law or his father-in-law. Eleanor Peach's maiden name was Brown: she was born in 1804, the daughter of Henry Hind Brown and his wife Sarah (Whalley), among whose other children was a son, named after his father, born in 1797. Eleanor and Joseph were married at Melton on 31 May 1827 (Family Search). Without this connection there is no obvious reason for a wine merchant and a tanner to be in partnership with each other.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 16 Jan. 1844, p. 151; *Leicester Journal*, 19 Jan. 1844.

⁹ TNA, HO 107/2091, f. 225v. By what may just be an odd coincidence, the Willises were living next door to John Judd, also a tailor, aged 58, who appears to be the man recorded as a wharfinger at Melton in the early 1820s (see above, John Judd).

¹⁰ *Leicester Journal*, 2 Dec. 1853. I cannot find the family in Melton (or indeed anywhere else) in the 1851 census using Ancestry's indexing.

¹¹ *Leicester Chronicle*, 1 July 1854.

¹² Pigot 1841, Leics. 30.

¹³ Turnbull 1979, 79, and the earlier chapters of this book generally for the history of Pickfords in this period.

¹⁴ Riden (ed.) 2006, 161.

presumably at least in part by land carriage, to Mansfield, Chesterfield, Sheffield and principal towns in the West Riding. They were not running a service on the Trent beyond Nottingham.¹ In 1829, with a wharf at Cockpit Hill and a warehouse and van office on St Peter's Street in Derby, Pickfords were still offering much the same range of daily canal boats, but for London and Manchester referred customers to their caravan, which passed through Derby every day and from which they offered to forward goods from London to all parts of the South of England, or coastwise, and from Manchester and Liverpool to the North of England, Scotland, Ireland and the Isle of Man. Bristol and Bath continued to be served by a forwarding arrangement from Worcester. The company had one agent in Derby with an office on Siddals Lane and another at their Cockpit Hill and St Peter's Street premises.²

Only in 1843 were Pickfords' services from Derby described as fly-boats (although this may well have been the case at an earlier date). There was then a daily fly-boat services to London via the Grand Junction line; to Manchester and intermediate places on the Trent & Mersey, Bridgewater and associated canals; and to Birmingham, Oxford, Bristol and other principal towns to the south-west of Derby. There was now a service three days a week to Gainsborough and Hull, which had evidently been introduced since 1829. Pickfords were also carrying by rail from Derby on all three lines radiating from the town to London (via Leicester and Rugby), Nottingham, Sheffield and the North East, and Birmingham and Bristol. Their offices were then on Siddals Lane and Park Street.³ Their fly-boat services remained unchanged in 1846, including one three days a week to Gainsborough for Hull, but their railway services had now extended to towns beyond London, including Dover, Hastings and Southampton.⁴ Pickfords still had an agent at Shardlow at this date,⁵ but this appears never to have been a major depot for the company.⁶

Thomas Porter and Edward Asling

In 1830 Thomas Porter and Edward Asling, both of Boston, announced the establishment of a steam packet service between there and Lincoln to be undertaken by the *Duchess of St Albans*. The boat would leave Boston at 7 a.m. and return from Lincoln at 3 p.m., meeting coaches at both places. The fares were 3s. single in the front cabin, 2s. in the rear

cabin; parcels and packages would be conveyed and refreshments were available. The promoters stressed that the service had no connection with 'the Steam-Packet Company' (i.e. John Temperton, Nathaniel Clayton and Richard Swain), which inserted an advertisement in similar terms immediately underneath the one for the *Duchess* in the same issue of the paper.⁷

George Richardson

In 1818 George Richardson was operating a carrying service twice a week from Morledge Wharf in Derby to Gainsborough and from there to Hull and London.⁸ Three years later he announced that 'by a recent arrangement' (presumably with a larger carrying firm) he could convey goods to 'all parts of the kingdom' from Smithfield Wharf in Derby.⁹ In 1822 he advertised a daily service to Newark, Gainsborough, Hull and London, and also, rather oddly, to Coventry.¹⁰ A few years later he was living in a newly erected house at Grove Terrace on Osmaston Road, and trading as a maltster and brickmaker as well as a wharfinger.¹¹ In October 1829 one of his boats was robbed of some old timber being taken from County Hall to Nottingham.¹² Two months later, in what may be the first sign of financial problems, he sold a quantity of brickmaking materials from a yard on Burton Road without reserve.¹³ Richardson was declared insolvent in April 1831 and bankrupt the following month.¹⁴ His assignees offered two houses and a factory for sale in May 1832,¹⁵ his wharf, warehouses and counting house were to let a year later,¹⁶ and in November 1833 the assignees made a renewed effort to sell the factory on Albion Street.¹⁷ A first and final dividend was paid in September 1834,¹⁸ whereupon Richardson immediately announced that, 'at the suggestion of many friends', he was setting up again as an auctioneer, accountant and agent, adding that his wharfinger's and carrying business to Gainsborough would be carried on as usual.¹⁹ Whether either of these statements proved to be true is less clear. In April 1835 a new firm, Messrs Wingfield & Wheeldon, announced that they had taken the wharf on the Morledge previously occupied

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Sept. 1830; below, John Temperton for the rival service.

⁸ Riden (ed.) 2006, 161–2, 208, 210.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 25 April 1821.

¹⁰ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 27 Feb. 1828; Glover 1829, 49.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 28 Oct. 1829.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 16 Dec. 1829.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 11 and 25 May 1831.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 9 May 1832.

¹⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 1 May 1833.

¹⁷ *Derby Mercury*, 27 Nov. 1833.

¹⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 17 Sept. 1834.

¹⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 29 Oct. 1834.

¹ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

² Glover 1829, 38–40, 41, 48, 49.

³ Glover 1843, 152–3, 62.

⁴ Bagshaw 1846, 154.

⁵ Bagshaw 1846, 161.

⁶ Holden's Directories of 1805–14, which include some Shardlow entries under Derby, do not list an agent for Pickfords there (nor, for that matter, at Derby).

by Richardson,¹ who is not heard of after this date. His business had certainly come to an end by 1843, when it fails to appear in Glover's Derby Directory, and he may in fact have been dead by then.²

John Robinson

John Robinson of Gainsborough registered a 45-ton sloop there in 1795, of which he was also master. He gave the route of the vessel as from Gainsborough to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.³ He is not named as a boat owner in *UBD*, and does not appear in the trade lists for Gainsborough either there or in Holden's Directory of 1811, although George Robinson & Co., merchants etc., and William Robinson, flax dealer, are recorded at the latter date. An Elizabeth Robinson of Double Row, wharfinger and commercial agent, mentioned in 1822,⁴ might be the successor to John Robinson.

Daniel Robinson

Daniel Robinson was listed as a wharfinger of Hermit Street, Sneinton, Nottingham, in 1842,⁵ but not in earlier or later directories. There is no evidence that he ever offered a carrying service.

William Roworth

William Roworth served with the 44th Regiment in England, the Netherlands and the West Indies in 1794–6, writing letters home to his wife Mary in Nottingham and his parents at Northwich (Ches.), including one describing the taking of St Lucia in 1796.⁶ After he left the Army he became a wharfinger (but not a carrier), with premises on London Road in Nottingham in 1822 and 1828.⁷ He was presumably the Alderman Roworth who died in 1834 whilst still a senior member of the corporation.⁸ He was suc-

ceeded by his son William, who was mayor of Nottingham in 1839–40⁹ and died in 1844.¹⁰ His son and heir, a third William Roworth, born in 1814,¹¹ was a corn merchant in the town and at Boston,¹² and died in 1875.¹³ It is quite possible that the first William Roworth may also have been principally a merchant rather than a wharfinger.

Stephen Sharp

Stephen Sharp was born at Romsey (Hants.) in 1812 and baptised at the Abbey Independent church there.¹⁴ In the early 1830s he was working as a drawing master at Peterborough, where his first wife, Mary Anne, died in April 1834, aged 22.¹⁵ In June the same year, after a very short interval, Stephen remarried. The event took place at Lydden, near Dover (a long way from Peterborough), and his new wife was Elizabeth Kennard Longthorne.¹⁶ Stephen's youngest sister, Susanna Grace Sharp, died in London in January 1835, an event which he inserted in the *Stamford Mercury*,¹⁷ even though she had no connection with the area.

In 1837 Sharp made an odd change of career, when he moved to Wansford and announced the establishment of a packet boat service between there and Wisbech, where he would meet vessels arriving from London, Hull, Gainsborough and Newcastle, thus providing 'cheap, and expeditious conveyance for goods' from those places to Stamford, Oakham, Uppingham, Oundle 'and all places in the neighbourhood'.¹⁸ Stamford, of course, stood on the Welland and was served by boats meeting coasting vessels at Spalding, where John Moats was in this period the chief, if not only, wharfinger, handling both coastwise and river trade.¹⁹ Undeterred, Sharp named his boat the *Stamford* and insisted that he

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 22 April 1835.

² The *Derby Mercury*, 8 May 1839, recorded the death of Katherine, daughter of the late George Richardson and niece of the late Henry and Samuel Richardson esqs., bankers of this town. An electronic search of the paper failed to locate a death notice for Richardson himself. If this is the right man, he was a brother of two of Derby's early bankers. No death in the name of George Richardson was registered in Derby district between the Sept. quarter of 1837 and the December quarter of 1840.

³ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

⁴ Pigot 1822, 244.

⁵ Pigot 1842, 50.

⁶ Notts. Archives, DD/RW/I/1–25; and see this small collection of family papers generally. I cannot locate William and Mary's marriage in Family Search but their son William was baptised on 22 June 1789 at Castle Gate Independent chapel, Nottingham. The only other baptism in Family Search for the couple is that of Martha, born 2 June and baptised 27 June 1810 at Sion Independent chapel, Fletchergate, Nottingham

⁷ Pigot 1828, 340; Pigot 1828, 656.

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 23 April 1834. There is no PCC probate grant, although there seems to have been a family dispute over his estate in 1836 (TNA, C 13/3030/22), in which the plaintiff was Ann Roworth. She was possibly a second wife: in 1828 a William Roworth married Ann Evans at St Peter's, Wolverhampton

(Family Search).

⁹ Notts. Archives, DD/RW/2/2.

¹⁰ Death registered in Nottingham RD, June quarter 1844.

¹¹ Born 17 Nov. 1814 and baptised at Sion, Fletchergate, 16 Jan. 1815, the son of William Roworth (II) and his wife Sarah (Family Search).

¹² Notts. Archives, DD/RW/2/6–7, of which the latter is a rare survival: William's account book for corn purchases and sales, 1844–51, with some additional entries dated 1860.

¹³ Death registered in Nottingham RD, Dec. quarter 1875, aged stated as 65 (it was in fact 70 or 71).

¹⁴ Family Search.

¹⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 4 April 1834; I cannot locate their marriage for certain in Family Search, although it must have taken place within the previous couple of years.

¹⁶ Family Search; on the face of it the interval after the death of Mary Anne seems too short to make this identification firm, but in 1841 and 1851 Stephen was definitely married to a woman named 'Eliza' and this is the only possible match in Family Search.

¹⁷ 16 Jan. 1835.

¹⁸ *Stamford Mercury*, 21 April 1837. For irrefutable evidence that the promoter of this service was the former Peterborough drawing master, see below.

¹⁹ Above, John Moats.

could deliver goods shipped from London to Stamford in a week or ten days, and in less time from Hull and Gainsborough. A connecting service sailed every Saturday from Wool Quay, London, where Hall & Co. were his agents; another from Hull every fortnight, where he was using Holden & Sampson as agents; and a third (at unstated frequency) from Gainsborough, where he had engaged a wharfinger named Jackson (as successor to Dean & Beaumont) to act for him. His Wisbech agent was James Harrison.¹ That summer he was advertising the sale of best Newcastle coal at Wansford wharf at 29s. a ton and second quality at 27s.²

Over the next year or so Sharp and Moats engaged in a good deal of competitive advertising in the *Stamford Mercury*.³ In March 1838 Sharp announced that he had bought two more boats and claimed that traders in Oundle, Uppingham and Oakham would save one or two shillings a hundredweight by sending their goods via the Nene and deliveries would 'very seldom' exceed a fortnight from the day of sailing. He continued to offer a weekly service from London; the Hull and Gainsborough service was now also weekly; and he was shipping from Newcastle to Wisbech direct once a fortnight.⁴ In July, by which time the Newcastle service had been increased to once every ten days, he pointed out that by shipping to and from Wisbech traders avoided 'that most dangerous Part of the River for small craft, Sutton Bridge'.⁵ Within a few months his policy had completely changed: he now had no connection with Wisbech (where many delayed had 'lately unavoidably taken place') and had instead joined forces with W. Skelton & Co. of Sutton Bridge. He had put another gang of four lighters on the river, so that there was always one lying at Sutton to receive goods and avoid any delay. The Newcastle service had reverted to fortnightly and the connection with Gainsborough was not mentioned.⁶ In May 1839, however, he was offering to receive goods from Gainsborough and Goole via Hull.⁷

Sharp's venture into carrying on the Nene failed either later in 1839 or in 1840, probably because he could not compete with John Moats's longer established business on the Welland. This was not Moats's only advantage: he appears to have been able to offer lower rates than Sharp on much the same route. Although the dates are not closely comparable, in the early 1840s Moats was selling coal at Stamford at 23s. 6d. a ton, several shillings less than the price

Sharp announced in 1834. By the time six miles' land carriage from Wansford to Stamford had been added, Sharp's coal could not possibly have sold there. Nor would it have been competitive in Oakham (which is several miles closer to Stamford than to Wansford), or Uppingham (which is about equidistant from the two), and even in Oundle (which is nearer Wansford than Stamford) once the difference in price at the river wharf had been taken into account.

Moats may have suffered from competition from Sharp and possibly also wharfingers at Boston, since he was forced to make a composition with his creditors in 1841, but by that date Sharp had gone back to his earlier career as an artist. He moved to Stamford, where he was enumerated in the census that year at Barn Hill with his wife, three children and two servants.⁸ He was offering drawing classes at the Stamford Institution⁹ and designing writing paper for a local stationer.¹⁰ In September 1842, however, he too had to make an assignment to his creditors, who proceeded to sell his household goods.¹¹ Sharp recovered from this setback, setting up as a picture framer, carver and gilder, looking glass manufacturer, restorer of pictures, and (rather oddly) retailer of cigars.¹² This venture failed within a couple of years and in July 1844 he was in Lincoln gaol as an insolvent debtor.¹³ Undeterred, he re-established himself as a mapseller in Stamford, and also tried to promote a printing press and sugar crusher which he claimed to have invented.¹⁴ He was living in Belton Street in 1851, with his wife and two children still at home, but no servants, describing himself as an artist and professor of drawing and painting.¹⁵

Joseph Shenton

In the early 1820s Joseph Shenton (1783–1833), trading from the public wharf on the Leicester Navigation at Belgrave Gate in Leicester, was said to be running a daily service to Bristol, Gainsborough, Manchester and Liverpool, and all parts of the North.¹⁶ This man, who on occasions used the name Joshua, appears to have been principally an agent for various road carriers in Leicester, rather than a waggon-owner.¹⁷ His brief involvement in water carrying may also have been as an agent, rather than

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 21 July 1837.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 25 Aug. and 1 Sept. 1837.

³ See under John Moats for his advertisements in this period.

⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 9 and 16 March 1838.

⁵ *Stamford Mercury*, 6 July 1838.

⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 7 and 21 Dec. 1838, 4 Jan. 1839.

⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 17–24 May 1839.

⁸ TNA, HO 107/625/6, f. 16.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 Jan. 1841.

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 19 Aug. 1842.

¹¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 16 Sept. 1842.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 22 March 1844.

¹³ *Stamford Mercury*, 5 July 1844: it is this notice, which traces his career over the previous ten years, that confirms the inherently improbable idea that an artist would try to set up as a river carrier.

¹⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 29 Sept., 10 Aug. 1849, 18 Oct. 1850.

¹⁵ TNA, HO 107/2094, f. 234. I have not traced him beyond the census of this year.

¹⁶ Pigot 1822–3, 220.

¹⁷ See *Stage Waggon Carriers*, sn.

principal.

Thomas Shittlewood and Thomas Toder

In 1775 Thomas Shittlewood and Thomas Toder, both of Newark and in partnership as merchants, were declared bankrupt.¹ Toder was granted a certificate in March the following year,² although four months later the creditors of the two men were considering whether to deal with their estates separately or jointly.³ Both appear to have resumed business on their own and in 1784 were listed separately in Bailey's Directory as coal merchants and wharfingers.⁴

Thomas Shittlewood appears to have been the older of the two, assuming he was the man who, with his wife Hannah, had two children baptised at Newark in 1771–3, and three others baptised at Rolleston (Notts.) in 1764–8.⁵ Thomas Toder and his wife Ann had at least six children baptised at Newark between 1774 and 1781, all of whom were given with the middle name Linthwaite, which may have been Ann's maiden name.⁶

It is not clear whether further bankruptcy proceedings in 1786 against Thomas Shittlewood, on this occasion described as a wharfinger,⁷ were a continuation of those begun in 1775 or reflect a second failure on his part. A final dividend in the bankruptcy of Toder and Shittlewood as merchants was declared as late as 1790.⁸ Neither seems to be heard of after this date.⁹

James Simpson

In 1818 James Simpson was said to be offering a service from Derby to Nottingham, Newark, Gainsborough and Hull on Mondays and Fridays from an office at Cockpit Hill wharf shared with J.G. Ames.¹⁰ No other reference to the business has been found. It is possible that the name is an error for John Simpson, who was operated a carrying service from Nottingham from the early 1820s until at least the

early 1840s.¹¹

John Simpson

John Simpson was a wharfinger of Castle wharf, Nottingham, in the early 1820s, and also a carrier, offering services every week to Loughborough, Leicester and London; Derby, Belper, Cromford and Pinxton; Grantham and Gainsborough; and Liverpool and Manchester.¹² He was one of the wharfingers associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in his scheme of 1824 to quote low through rates for wool from the East Midlands to Leeds and Wakefield.¹³ In 1828 Simpson was running a service three times a week to Birmingham, Bath and Bristol, alongside those to Leicester and London, and Derby, Liverpool and Manchester, but not the others mentioned a few years before.¹⁴ In November 1830 Simpson, then of Brewhouse Yard, Nottingham, was declared bankrupt.¹⁵ Although he was granted a certificate of conformity two months later,¹⁶ his commissioners did not declare a dividend until 1833.¹⁷

Simpson seems to have recovered from this setback and was still in business in the early 1840s, from Park wharf, running boats to Gainsborough, Hull 'and all parts of the East of England' and daily on the Birmingham–Bristol route, but not to London.¹⁸ Simpson appears in fact to have been the only full-time carrier (as opposed to wharfingers who did some carrying as a subsidiary business) with a business based at Nottingham in the first half of the nineteenth century, as distinct from companies with headquarters elsewhere which ran some services from or through the town. Apart from the bankruptcy proceedings of 1830–33, the name is too common to trace with confidence in other records.¹⁹

Simpson, Mewburn & Miller

From 1820, if not before, a firm of this name was running the *Nene Packet* every Thursday and Friday from Peterborough to Wisbech, which returned from there (departing from opposite the Hare & Hounds,

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 13 Oct. 1775; *London Gazette*, 14 Nov. 1775, p. 7.

² *London Gazette*, 19 March 1776, p. 4.

³ *London Gazette*, 2 July 1776, p. 3.

⁴ Bailey 1784, 415–16, where Shittlewood's name is spelt Shuttlewood. The same modification occurs in the case of the place-name (near Bolsover in north-east Derbyshire) as it begins to appear in print more often. The *Gazette* notices all use the spelling used in the text here.

⁵ Family Search. I cannot locate a marriage between Thomas Shittlewood and a woman named Hannah in the years before 1764.

⁶ Family Search. I cannot locate a marriage between Thomas Toder and Ann Linthwaite in the years before 1774.

⁷ *London Gazette*, 7 Feb., 21 Oct. 1786.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 10 July 1790.

⁹ Neither appears in the Newark section of *UBD*, IV, 58–60 and I cannot locate burial entries for either in Family Search.

¹⁰ Riden (ed.) 2006, 161.

¹¹ See next entry.

¹² Pigot 1822, 340–1.

¹³ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son.

¹⁴ Pigot 1828, 656–7.

¹⁵ *London Gazette*, 19 Nov. 1830, p. 2438; 14 Dec. 1830, p. 2627.

¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 11 Jan. 1831, p. 65.

¹⁷ *London Gazette*, 5 April 1833, p. 682.

¹⁸ Pigot 1842, 50, 53. This could, of course, be a different John Simpson.

¹⁹ It is just possible that the wharfinger was the John Simpson of Nottingham, innholder, whose wife Elizabeth was, with her sister Lydia, the wife of James Thorpe of Newark, wharfinger, coheir of their father Hardwick Taylor of Newark gent. in 1811 (Notts. Archives, DD/T/70/101; see also James Thorpe), but there is no firm evidence for the connection.

North Brink) on Wednesday and Sunday mornings at 8. It called at Whittlesea on its up and down the Nene.¹ The partnership made up of William Simpson, John Willan Mewburn and John Miller, 'for many years ... General Merchants, at the City of Peterborough', was dissolved in 1830.² Simpson and Miller appear to have remained in business together, at least to run the packet service, which is listed under their names in the Peterborough directory of 1841.³ William Treaton of Peterborough, for several years captain of the *Nene Packet*, apparently took his own life in 1831.⁴ Mewburn died in 1851, describing himself as a wine merchant of Peterborough;⁵ Simpson appears to have died three years before.⁶ Running the packet boat was presumably a minor part of their business, as it had been in the 1790s for two of their predecessors, Sprigal Brown and T.W. and William Squires (qqv), who were also Peterborough merchants.

John Sleath and his partners

In 1822 William Hill and John Sleath were in business as wharfingers and corn factors from premises on Canal Street, Nottingham. They were also offering a carrying service on Wednesdays and Saturdays to Liverpool and Manchester.⁷ The following year they announced the dissolution of their partnership by mutual consent.⁸ The two men appear to have been related and may originally have been from London. In 1815 Samuel Hill, William Miller Hill and John Sleath Hill announced the retirement of J.S. Hill from the partnership which had been trading as Samuel Hill & Sons, ship and insurance brokers of London.⁹ J.S. Hill was then aged 23: born in London in 1792, he married in 1814, at St Martin in the Fields, Mary Selina Chase.¹⁰

John Sleath of Nottingham is next heard of in 1828, in partnership with Joseph Smith and John Jackson, in business at Nottingham as corn factors,

flour dealers and wharfingers under the name of Sleath, Smith & Co., but no longer offering a carrying service to the North West.¹¹ This firm was in turn dissolved in 1830, when the partners announced that the 'Corn-Commission trade' would be carried on by Smith and Jackson (of whom the latter may or may not be identical with a Newark wharfinger of the same name active there a few years earlier), trading as Joseph Smith & Co., and the flour trade would be continued by Sleath on his own account.¹² All three were obviously giving up the wharfinger's business and none are heard of again in this connection.

John Smalley

John Smalley was recorded as a wharfinger of Hermit Street, Sneinton, Nottingham, in 1842,¹³ but not in earlier or later years.

Joseph Smith & Sons

The firm of Spilsbury & Smith were established as wharfingers at Horninglow by 1783.¹⁴ The following year Joseph Smith of Sinai Park, in the hamlet of Branston a mile west of Burton, announced that his partnership with Benjamin Spilsbury of Willington as boat-masters was dissolved with effect from Michaelmas that year, and that all creditors should apply to Joseph Smith & Sons at Horninglow warehouse, 'by whom the said Trade of Navigation will be carried on in future'.¹⁵ Although Smith was living at Burton in 1784, when his daughter Mary was married that year to Henry Walmsley Hammond, a Hull merchant, the ceremony took place at Gainsborough,¹⁶ which may

¹¹ Pigot 1828, 656.

¹² *London Gazette*, 13 July 1830, p. 1445.

¹³ Pigot 1842, 50.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 2 Dec. 1783.

¹⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 9 Dec. 1784.

¹⁶ Family Search (29 Dec. 1784). Henry (who did not consistently use his middle name) was listed as a merchant of Blanket Row, Hull, c.1790 (*UBD*, III, 348). Their daughters Mary Ann, Elizabeth and Charlotte were baptised at Hull in 1786, 1788 and 1790, and a son, Henry, in 1795 (Family Search). Henry Hammond died in 1795 or 1796, leaving a will (dated 31 July, proved 9 May 1796: TNA, PROB 11/1275, ff. 82v.-84v.) appointing his brother William (of Camberwell, Surrey) and brother-in-law John Smith of Gainsborough executors and trustees. He left his house in Postern Gate to Mary as long as she remained his widow and put most of his estate into a trust for her benefit. His business continued and was recorded as Messrs Hammond & Co. in 1805 (*Hull Packet*, 30 April) and as Hammond & Smith of Postern Gate and North Side Dock in 1811 (Holden 1811, III, sn. Hull), suggesting that John Smith of Gainsborough was then a partner, perhaps with Henry's brother William. Mrs Hammond did not remarry and, after living for a time at Ferriby, near Hull, settled at Camberwell, where she died towards the end of 1838 (death registered in Camberwell district, Dec. quarter; will dated 30 Dec. 1837, proved 19 Jan. 1839: TNA, PROB 11/1905, ff. 225v.-226). She received small legacies from her father Joseph Smith in 1805, her brother John Smith in 1811 and her nephew Joseph Peters Smith in 1838 (see their wills cited elsewhere in this entry and in that for John Smith of Gainsborough). Her trust fund, then in the hands of her nephews

¹ *Cambridge Chronicle & Journal*, 20 Oct. 1820 (an advertisement whose wording implies that this was an existing service, not a new one, but no earlier newspaper references have been found); Pigot 1823, 43; Pigot 1830, 52, 147. The Wisbech directory entry of 1830 also mentions Mary Harris's luggage boat, which left from the same place every Sunday and Thursday for Whittlesea and Peterborough.

² *London Gazette*, 1 June 1830, p. 1074.

³ Pigot 1841, Northants. 26.

⁴ *Morning Chronicle*, 11 June 1831.

⁵ Death registered in Billesdon (Leics.) RD in Dec. quarter of 1851 (indexed in FreeBMD as 'John William Mewburn' but the name is Willan in the *Gazette* notice of 1830 and in his will (TNA, PROB 11/2146/59)).

⁶ The only PCC grant that might match the name is that for William Simpson of Milton (Northants.), 3 Nov. 1849 (TNA, PROB 11/2103/45). There is no PCC grant for John Miller.

⁷ Pigot 1822, 340.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 21 Oct. 1823, p. 1770.

⁹ *London Gazette*, 4 July 1815, p. 1325.

¹⁰ Family Search.

have been where the family had previously lived.

In the early 1790s what was called the Horninglow Boat Company had five boats operating on the Trent between Gainsborough and (presumably) Horninglow, the wharf on the Trent & Mersey Canal nearest Burton and the limit of navigation for wide-beam barges.¹ No other references have been found to a company of this name and it appears to be identical to that recorded under Burton in *UBD* as Messrs Joseph Smith & Sons, with wharfs and warehouses at Horninglow. Joseph and William Smith were separately listed as merchants, and Joseph was still living at Sinai Park.² Joseph Smith & Sons were original subscribers to the Inland Waterway Association for the Apprehending and Prosecuting Felons in 1802 and were still members two years later.³ The company had both narrow boats, running from Burton to Birmingham, the Potteries and Manchester, and Trent barges going to Gainsborough.⁴

Joseph Smith died in 1805 leaving the moiety of his freehold dwelling house, warehouse and other buildings with the wharf and dock for repairing boats at Willington, then in the possession of him and his son, and his moiety in a copyhold dwelling house and warehouse, wharf and garden on the Trent & Mersey at Shelton (Staffs.), to his son William Smith and grandson Joseph Peters Smith, subject to a payment equal to one third of the value these estates to his other son John, who was then in business on his own account at Gainsborough.⁵ Joseph also left his one-fourth share in the 'Navigation Business' and his one-third share in the boats, barges, vessels, goods and effects belonging to it, to his son William, subject to his paying John one-fourth of the value of the business and a third of the value of the shares in the boats etc., and to paying Joseph's grandsons, J.P. Smith, Henry Smith and John Smith, a sum equal to

a third of his fourth and third shares.⁶ He also left £200 to his daughter Mary, the widow of Henry Walmsley Hammond, a Hull merchant whom she had married in 1784,⁷ and £600 to be divided between her children. A nephew named Thomas Smith of Derby received an annuity of £25. His household goods were to be shared between the three grandsons (making it clear that Joseph died a widower), and his ready money was to be divided between his sons John and William (who were to have a third each and act as executors) and the three grandsons, who were to share the other third.⁸

Joseph Peters Smith died at Burton upon Trent in 1838;⁹ he was then either a widower or had never married. He left £1,000 to Mrs Ann Hodson, widow, with whom he was lodging, and a similar sum to his aunt, Mary Hammond, then of Camberwell Grove (Surrey). All the rest of his estate was to be divided equally between his two brothers, Henry Smith of Gainsborough, and John Smith of 'Welton Garth' (Yorks.), including 'all such parts of my Real Estate as are immediately connected with my Trades or Business or used or occupied therein or therewith', but he does not say whether he was still connected with the carrying trade.¹⁰

Joseph & Aaron Smith

In December 1773 Joseph & Aaron Smith's wharf at Gainsborough was robbed of 'sundry Crates of Earthen Ware', although the offenders were detected by a Customs officer and detained.¹¹ Three years later the firm announced that they had repaired and extended into the Trent their original wharf, known as the Old Wharf or Ives's Wharf, situated in the centre of the town, 'and most commodious for public Business, as Vessels may at all times load and unload'. The occasion for making this announcement seems to have been the establishment of another

Anthony and William Hammond, was worth £6,715 at the time of her death. She left £1,000 to each of her daughters Marianne (as she is called in the will), who was then the wife of Walter A. Urquhart, and Elizabeth, who had remained single and was also to have the household contents at Camberwell, suggesting that she lived with her mother. Charlotte, the girl baptised in 1790, died in London in March 1805 (*Hull Packet*, 19 March), when she was described as the youngest daughter of the late H.W. Hammond.

¹ *UBD*, III, 141.

² Riden (ed.) 2006, 23, 32, 28–9.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1802; 21 June 1804.

⁴ Shill 2011, 17 (no source cited; perhaps the Staffs. boat register of 1795).

⁵ TNA, PROB 11/142, ff. 268v.–170v.; below, Gainsborough for John Smith. J.P. Smith was baptised in 1784, the son of Joseph Smith and his wife Ann (Family Search). His father must have been a third son of the testator of 1805 who had predeceased his father and for this reason J.P. Smith inherited, along with his uncles William and John, a share of his grandfather's estate.

⁶ J.P. Smith's will of 1838 cited below demonstrates that Henry and John were brothers of his (i.e. all three were sons of the late Joseph Smith and his wife Ann); neither was the son of William Smith, who appears to have been childless. By 1811 Henry was in partnership with his uncle John Smith in Gainsborough (see the entry for this branch of the family in the Gainsborough section).

⁷ Family Search. Henry son of H.W. Hammond was bapt. at Holy Trinity, Hull, 29 Jan. 1795 (*ibid.*), and in 1805 Charlotte Hammond, the youngest daughter of the late H.W. Hammond esq. of Hull, was married in London (*Hull Packet*, 19 March 1805). The latter entry suggests that Mary was Henry's second wife. The *Hull Packet* of 30 April reported the death of a clerk to Messrs Hammond & Co. of Hull, merchants.

⁸ TNA, PROB 11/1432, ff. 268v.–270v.

⁹ Burton RD, June quarter.

¹⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1900, ff. 32v.–33. The only Yorkshire parish named Welton is in the East Riding, 9½ miles west of Hull; the place-name (or house-name) in the will has not survived on the modern 1:50,000 map. In his will Smith simply uses the title 'Esquire', with no indication of any occupation or profession.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 10 Dec. 1773.

wharfinger's business by John Smith and Joseph Mosley, who had stated in the press that they had taken a wharf and warehouse late in the possession of Joseph & Aaron Smith.¹ The two latter responded by inserting their own advertisement in the *Derby Mercury* for no fewer than seven consecutive weeks, stressing that the wharf taken by the other firm had been in their own possession 'for the short Remainder of another Person's lease'.² The tone of the exchanges might suggest that Aaron and Joseph were not related to John Smith, although John's father's name was Joseph and he appears to have lived at Gainsborough before moving to Burton on Trent. Perhaps there was a family rift that was later healed, since when Joseph Smith of Burton died in 1805 he treated his son John on exactly the same terms as his other surviving son and his grandson, the eldest son of a son who had predeceased him.³

In 1780 Joseph Smith announced that the partnership between him and Aaron Smith had been dissolved and that 'he had declined all Wharfage Business', transferring it to Aaron, who was continuing on his own account⁴ and who was recorded as a wharfinger at Gainsborough in 1784.⁵ Three years later Aaron Smith was involved in a curious dispute with Caleb Maullin, another Gainsborough wharfinger, in which a third man, Ralph Coddington, initially accused Smith of propagating a rumour that he (Coddington) was dead, in order to obtain his business, and by claiming that while he was alive Smith's servants had transacted all Coddington's business and provided him with warehouse room without asking any rent. Coddington made these claims, whilst he was ill in bed, on the basis of a letter shown him by Caleb Maullin. After he recovered, Coddington concluded that the letter had been forged by Maullin and that the allegations against Smith had no foundation. He published a further advertisement asking Smith's pardon and calling on Maullin to identify the author of the letter.⁶ Nothing more has been discovered of Aaron Smith's business at Gainsborough.⁷

John and Henry Smith of Gainsborough

John Smith and his partner Samuel Mosley announced in April 1776 that they had taken a wharf and warehouse in Gainsborough, late in the possession of Joseph & Aaron Smith, where they

would be carrying on the business of wharfinger, thus prompting a hostile reaction from the other firm.⁸ In 1782 Smith & Mosley were acting as agents at Gainsborough for the New Contract ships sailing between there and London,⁹ and in 1789 (as Smith & Mozley) were one of three Gainsborough wharfingers handling business for the Old Contract ships.¹⁰ Samuel died in 1789 and in January 1790 John and Samuel's widow Sarah announced that the partnership, trading as wharfingers and shipbuilders of Gainsborough, had been dissolved with effect from 1 January 1789, and that since that date it had been carried on by Smith alone, as it would be in future.¹¹ In the early 1790s John Smith was listed as a freeholder and wharfinger at Gainsborough.¹²

The discrepant spelling of Samuel's surname implies that he was related to John Mozley, who was in business in Gainsborough in the early 1790s as a printer and bookseller.¹³ John was dead by 1796, when the dissolution of a partnership between him, his son Henry and William Sheardown of Doncaster for printing and publishing the *Doncaster, Gainsbro' and Retford Gazette* was announced.¹⁴ Four years later a partnership between Henry and George Mozley of Gainsborough as printers and booksellers was dissolved, when it was stated that Henry would be continuing in business alone.¹⁵ In 1815 Henry Mozley (1773–1845) moved his family and business to Derby, where he was later to print and publish Stephen Glover's unfinished *History of Derbyshire* (1829) and some of Glover's other books. He was the father of Thomas Mozley (1806–93), a Church of England clergyman and writer of various works, including *Reminiscences* of his childhood in Gainsborough and Derby. According to Thomas, it was John who changed the spelling of the family name from Mosley.¹⁶ This statement, together with what is known of when he was in business with John Smith, suggests that Samuel Mosley (later Mozley) may have been John's brother.¹⁷

John Smith was the son of Joseph Smith (d. 1805), the owner of a carrying business on the Trent and

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 19 and 26 April 1776; and see preceding entry.

⁹ *Derby Mercury*, 11 July 1782.

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 2 April 1789.

¹¹ *London Gazette*, 30 Jan. 1790, p. 68, which spells Samuel and Sarah's surname 'Mosley'. She was unable to sign the *Gazette* notice.

¹² *UBD*, III, 141–3.

¹³ *UBD*, III, 141–3.

¹⁴ *London Gazette*, 31 Dec. 1796.

¹⁵ *London Gazette*, 15 Nov. 1800.

¹⁶ Mozley 1885, 61–3; *Oxford DNB*, sn. Thomas Mozley.

¹⁷ Mozley 1885, 61–3 does not mention Samuel, nor suggest that any of his family had been wharfingers, a class of which he is rather dismissive (pp. 65–6). If the deduction suggested in the text is correct, John Smith's partner would have been Thomas Mozley's great uncle.

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 19 and 26 April 1776.

² *Derby Mercury*, 3–31 May, 7–21 June 1776.

³ See the entries for Joseph Smith & Sons under Burton upon Trent and for John and Henry Smith in this section.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 23 June and 7 July 1780.

⁵ Bailey 1784, 689.

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 13 Dec. 1787.

⁷ There is no burial at Gainsborough in the period 1780–1800 for him in Family Search, no PCC probate grant, and no bankruptcy notice in the *London Gazette*.

later the Trent & Mersey Canal based at Horninglow, near Burton upon Trent. From c.1784 Joseph lived at Sinai Park, just outside the town, but before then may have lived at Gainsborough, since his daughter Mary was married there in 1784.¹ In 1777 John married, also at Gainsborough, Mildred Groombridge, who had been born in the town in 1759.² The couple had at least three children: Elizabeth, who in 1796 became the eighteen-year-old second wife of William Watson Bolton of Hull, then aged 34; Mary, born in 1779, who in 1805 married the curate of Gainsborough, the Revd Charles Bolle Massingberd (d. 1827);³ and Mildred, who died within a few months of her birth in 1781.⁴ John's first wife must have died young,⁵ and in the 1790s he had three children with a second wife, Eliza, the daughter of William Cox of Derby and later Culland, near Derby: Maria (born in 1797), John (1799) and Edward William (1805).⁶

John Smith was recorded as a wharfinger and freeholder in Gainsborough in the early 1790s.⁷ Among his customers was the Burton brewer, Benjamin Wilson, for whom he acted as a forwarding agent for ale arriving from Burton and destined for Hull.⁸ He was also the Gainsborough agent for the larger of two contracts of sloops sailing to and from Hull, comprising eight vessels, for which Jewitt & Thorley were the Hull agents.⁹

When John's father died in 1805, he left his share of the carrying business on the upper Trent at Willington and Horninglow to his son William and to Joseph Peters Smith, the oldest son of his other son Joseph (who had obviously predeceased his father), but they were to pay John a sum equal to a third of the total value of the concern.¹⁰ By 1811 John had taken into partnership in his wharfinger's business his nephew Henry, another son of his late brother Joseph, although he alone was also recorded as a merchant and shipbuilder.¹¹ On the other hand, Stark in 1817

referred 'the yard of John and Henry Smith', from which he claimed that vessels of 600–800 tons had frequently been launched and where, 'even in the present depressed state of trade, no inconsiderable quantity of trade is done'.¹² A search of the *Stamford Mercury* yields details of at least ten ships built by Smiths between 1814 and 1828, although where the tonnage is given, none was larger than 400 tons.¹³

John Smith died in 1811, leaving his widow Eliza all his household goods, including a carriage and horses, and £100 apiece to his three nephews, Joseph Peters, Henry and John Smith, as well as £400 to his 'faithful servant and shipbuilder' William Arnold, and annuities of £10 each to four female members of his first wife's family. Eliza was also left the family home, the Old Hall, for her life, which on her death was to pass to their son John, subject to his paying his brother Edward £1,000.¹⁴

John left the remainder of his estate in trust and the sums involved indicate how successful he had been, even though he appears to have died quite young. He appointed his brother William Smith of Burton on Trent, two of his wife's brothers, Edward Soresby Cox of Brailsford, near Derby, and Thomas Cox of Derby, and John Stuart of Gainsborough as trustees to realise all his personal estate, including his shares in vessels and the trade and navigation of those vessels, and also his shares in the Hull Dock.¹⁵ From the proceeds they were to invest £20,000 to provide an income for his widow, £4,000 for the benefit of his son-in-law William Watson Bolton of Hull and his wife Elizabeth, £6,000 for his daughter Mary, and £8,000 for his unmarried daughter Maria. The capital was to be distributed to the children of the immediate beneficiaries when they came of age, or in the case of Maria, she herself was to have the capital at the age

¹² Stark 1817, 209.

¹³ The list, given on the website www.humbersteampacketboats.co.uk, includes the following (with the dates of the newspaper referred to): *The Moscow* (12 Aug. 1814), brig *Sarah* (2 Dec. 1814), *Favourite*, 400 tons (21 Feb. 1817); an unnamed vessel of 363 tons (28 Feb. 1823); brig *The Henry* (14 Jan. 1825); steam passenger vessel *The Mercury* (15 April 1825); steam packet *The Bradford* (6 Jan. 1826); steam packet *The Dart* (11 Aug. 1826); a steam packet *The Royal Charter* for use as a ferry between Barton and Hull (31 March 1826); and a packet *The Pelham* for the Grimsby & Hull Steam Packet Co. (22 Feb. 1828). This list does not include the Gainsborough–Hull packets mentioned in a later note.

¹⁴ This and the next two paragraphs summarise the provisions of John's lengthy and detailed will (TNA, PROB 11/1528, ff. 252–257v.), in which he refers to his two sons as 'youngest' and 'eldest', although as far as I can establish he had only the two boys. On one occasion Edward is called his 'second son', which seems to confirm this.

¹⁵ *UBD*, III, 327–8 prints a list of holders of the 120 shares in the Dock Company, established under an Act of 1774. The John Smith esq. on that list (and the others named Smith) is probably a member of the banking family of London and Nottingham, not the testator here, who perhaps acquired his share later in life, as he became better established as a merchant trading through Hull.

¹ See under Joseph Smith & Sons. The identification of Joseph as John's father is clear from the two men's wills.

² Family Search.

³ Family Search; and see CCED for Massingberd.

⁴ Family Search. W.W. Bolton, baptised at Hull in 1764, married Ann Wilkinson at York in 1789 (*ibid.*).

⁵ Possibly in childbed with her third daughter, although I cannot locate her burial in Family Search.

⁶ Family Search; Glover 1829b, II (1), 141, where Eliza's name is given wrongly as Elizabeth. The couple also had another son christened John, who was born and died in 1794, and it is possible they lost another child between 1799 and 1805.

⁷ *UBD*, III, 141–3.

⁸ Owen 1978, 44.

⁹ *UBD*, III, 336–8; Caleb Maullin acted for a smaller contract of six boats, and there were two owner-masters in the trade.

¹⁰ TNA, PROB 11/1432, ff. 268v.–270v.

¹¹ Holden 1811, sn. Gainsborough. Henry appears in the older Joseph Smith's will of 1805 as one of his grandsons, but can be identified as the late Joseph Smith's son (not William Smith's) from his brother Joseph Peters Smith's will of 1838 (TNA, PROB 11/1900, ff. 32v.–33).

of 21. In 1816, when she was nineteen, Maria married Henry Cox, the son of John Cox of Derby, who was himself only 21.¹ In 1830 Henry and Maria were living at Parkfield, Derby.²

After accounting for £38,000 in this way, John left the income from the residue of his personalty to the maintenance of his son John and Edward, and their sister Maria, until each came of age, without prejudice to his co-partnerships. These his trustees were to continue until Edward turned eighteen in 1823. Both boys were then to decide whether they wished to join their cousin Henry in the business. If they chose to do so, they were to be given their father's share, equally divided between them, as soon as they came of age (i.e. immediately in John's case, since he would have turned 21 in 1820, and in 1826 in Edward's). If they declined, the trustees were to convey this half of the business to Henry, subject to his paying the full value of the share. The proceeds thus raised were to form part of John's residual estate and divided between John, Edward and Maria.

In 1822 the family business was still in the hands of Henry Smith alone. He was described that year as a wharfinger and a shipbuilder of Lord Street, from where two of the three steam packets then running between Gainsborough and Hull departed, the *Albion* and the *British Queen*, and also the *Maria*, a steam tug.³ In 1826 an 'excellent mansion' fronting Lord Street, late in the occupation of Henry Smith, 'well calculated for the residence of a genteel family', was included in a sale of property in Gainsborough, some of which was occupied by Robert Flower & Son. Among the other lots were a three-storey warehouse adjoining the river, with an underground connection to the cellars of the house on Lord Street, and a wharf and yard extending from Caskgate Lane to the Trent, all in the occupation of Henry Smith, and two four-storey warehouses on the wharf, occupied jointly by Smith and Samuel Sandars, a corn merchant.⁴

Later directory entries suggest that John Smith's two sons chose not to become partners and that Henry instead brought his own son into the firm. In 1846 Henry Smith & Son had a large warehouse, coal

wharf and boatbuilding yard on the Trent & Mersey Canal at Willington.⁵ Ten years later the company was still in business under the same name as merchants and ship-owners of Bridge Street, and wharfingers and shipping agents of Lord Street (but were no longer shipbuilders). The Hull packet left their wharf on Lord Street every morning at 8.30.⁶

John Smith of Wellingborough

In 1826 John Smith announced that he had recently taken the wharf belonging to the Nene Commissioners (Western Division) on the south side of Wellingborough Bridge and, 'at a very considerable Expense', erected there a dwelling house, warehouse, stables, granaries, weighing machine, crane and everything else needed 'for carrying on a very extensive Mercantile Concern, and capable of storing one thousand Quarters of Corn'. He proposed to establish a regular service by water between Wellingborough and Northampton, serving Higham Ferrers and a number of villages around Wellingborough. One barge would leave Northampton on Monday morning and arrive at Wellingborough on Tuesday morning, from where he would immediately make local deliveries. The barge would return to Northampton that afternoon with corn and other goods to reach Northampton in time for the cargo to be shipped by Pickfords, Worster or any other carrier to London, Birmingham, Liverpool or elsewhere. A second barge would leave Northampton on Wednesday evening and work to a similar timetable. If passage by water was obstructed by frost or flood, Smith would use his own waggons to move goods by road. Heavy goods could be delivered within Wellingborough for 6d. a cwt and corn at 1s. a quarter, including the voyage either way. Smith added that he had on sale at Wellingborough and his other wharfs at Irthlingborough, Stanwick and Denford supplies of Staffordshire and Derbyshire coals, sea coals, deals and timber.⁷

This was an ambitious project, which seems to have failed within a few years. The Wellingborough entry in Pigot's directory of 1830 makes no mention of Smith, nor of any regular conveyance by water to and from Northampton.⁸

Soresby & Flack

James Soresby was in business at a warehouse at Cavendish Bridge in 1777, selling Whitbread's London porter in casks of 36, 27 and 18 gallons, together with deals, deal poles, deal timber, wainscot

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 28 Nov. 1816; Family Search.

² Glover 1829b, II (1), 141.

³ Pigot 1822, 244, 246 (the third packet left from Robert Flower's wharf). According to www.humberpacketboats.co.uk (which does not cite a source) all three ships mentioned above were built at Smith's yard. The *Albion* was of 75 tons burden with 24 hp engines supplied by the Horsley Iron Co.; the *British Queen*, also 75 tons, had 20 hp engines by Brunton of Birmingham; and the *Maria*, 80 tons, had 24 hp engines by the Horsley Company. All appear to have been built in 1818–19, when Smiths also launched the *Coburg*, 75 tons, with 24 hp engines by the Horsley Company, which ran between Southampton and Cowes.

⁴ *Hull Packet*, 21 Nov. 1826. The other tenant is named in the particulars merely as 'Mr Sanders' but was probably Samuel Sandars, listed in Holden 1811 as a cornfactor and maltster and in Pigot 1822, 244, as a corn merchant of Bridge Street.

⁵ Bagshaw 1846, 217.

⁶ White 1856, 184–5, 187.

⁷ *Northampton Mercury*, 9 Sept. 1826.

⁸ Pigot 1830, 151–2. Trying to locate a bankruptcy notice for a man named John Smith in the *Gazette* over even a short period is hopeless.

boards and logs, mahogany and Cheshire salt.¹ From 1776, if not before, he was also clerk to the trustees of Cavendish Bridge itself,² completed in 1761. In 1793 he was one of the original partners, together with Humphrey Moore, also of Shardlow, William Brightmore of Gainsborough and Ralph Turner of Hull, in the Gainsborough Boat Company, which took over Trent Port Wharf at Gainsborough and exchanged goods with Hugh Henshall & Co. and other carriers at Shardlow and Horninglow.³ Soresby appears to have died c.1796, when another James Soresby, who seems likely to have been his son, continued in business with William Charles Flack, and Soresby & Flack thanked their customers that year for the 'many favours' conferred on their late partner, Mr Soresby.⁴ The firm were members of the Inland Waterway Association for Apprehending and Prosecuting Felons in 1804 but not among the original subscribers two years earlier.⁵

W.C. Flack died in 1830, having arranged with Soresby that the partnership should continue for seven years after the death of either of them.⁶ Later that year Flack's son, Charles James Flack, and Soresby announced the dissolution of their partnership as wharfingers with William Brightmore of Gainsborough.⁷ Soresby died almost exactly seven years after the elder Flack, leaving the bulk of his estate to his son James Stevenson Soresby.⁸ His death was followed within a few months by that of C.J. Flack,⁹ which led to the dissolution of the partnership and an announcement that the firm was to be continued by J.S. and William Soresby.¹⁰

In 1805–11 Holden's directories list Soresby & Flack as wharfingers and carriers on the Trent & Mersey Navigation at Shardlow.¹¹ In 1805 the firm advertised a good assortment of Honduras and Spanish mahogany for sale at their wharf at Cavendish Bridge.¹² A warehouse at Swarkestone, at the junction of the southern arm of the Derby Canal with the Trent, is mentioned in 1813¹³ and by 1816, if not before, they had a wharf at the Morledge in Derby.¹⁴

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 11 April 1777, 5 March 1779.

² *Derby Mercury*, 6 Sept. 1776 (and regular advertisements after that date).

³ *Derby Mercury*, 8 Aug. 1793.

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 11 Aug. 1796; there is no PCC probate grant for a James Soresby around this date.

⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1802; 21 June 1804.

⁶ TNA, PROB 11/1773, ff. 328–9.

⁷ *Hull Packet*, 7 Dec. 1830.

⁸ TNA, PROB 11/1880, ff. 350r.–v.

⁹ TNA, PROB 11/1890, ff. 279–80; Flack's death was registered in Shardlow district in the Sept. 1837 quarter. His house was advertised to let in Nov. (*Derby Mercury*, 22 Nov. 1837).

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 4 Oct. 1837.

¹¹ Riden (ed.) 2006, 105, 114, 125.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 5 Dec. 1805.

¹³ *Derby Mercury*, 21 Oct. 1813.

¹⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 11 April 1816.

In 1818–23 Soresby & Flack were operating carrying services from their Derby wharf to Manchester via the Potteries daily; to Gainsborough via Nottingham and Newark twice a week; and to Birmingham once a week.¹⁵ In 1824, when they were said to be of Cavendish Bridge, rather than Shardlow, they were one of a number of firms associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in their scheme to quote low through rates for wool between a number of East Midland towns and Leeds and Wakefield.¹⁶

By the late 1820s the firm's services had considerably expanded, with a slow boat every day and a fly-boat every other day from Derby to London; to the Potteries, Manchester and Liverpool; to Birmingham, Dudley, Wolverhampton, Worcester, Stourbridge, Shrewsbury, Shifnal, Gloucester and Bristol; and to Gainsborough, from where goods were forwarded to Hull. Other services ran to Nottingham and Gainsborough two days and week and to Burton one day.¹⁷ From Shardlow they ran fly-boats four days a week to Derby, Leicester, Loughborough and Manchester, and to all places on the Trent & Mersey and Bridgewater canals.¹⁸ At least some of these services were being operated in association with Deacon, Harrison & Co., who were principally road carriers between London and the West Riding, and who since the completion of the Grand Union Canal in 1814 had in addition carried by water between London and Leicester as part of that service. In the late 1820s they were also advertising a northbound service from Leicester to Shardlow, from where Soresby & Flack were forwarding for them. In turn, Deacons may have been providing the boats for Soresby & Flack's Shardlow–London service south of Leicester.¹⁹

The firm remained in business as timber merchants. In 1831 they were offering for sale by auction St Domingo, Spanish and Honduras mahogany, including 50 large logs and 12,000 ft of mahogany and rosewood veneers.²⁰

Trading as James S. & William Soresby from premises in Siddals Lane, Derby, the firm were still running daily fly-boats to London in the early 1840s and a twice-weekly service of stage-boats (mostly via their other wharf at Shardlow) to London; down the Leicester line as far south as Northampton; down the Trent to Gainsborough; through the West Midlands to Coventry and beyond to Bristol; and through the

¹⁵ Riden (ed.), 2006, 161, 162, 208, 210

¹⁶ *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son.

¹⁷ Glover 1829, 38–40 (the original entry refers to slow boats and fly-boats to Hull, but presumably these themselves went no further down the river than Gainsborough).

¹⁸ Glover 1829, 97.

¹⁹ Pigot 1828–9, 493; and see above, Deacon, Harrison & Co.

²⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 30 March 1831.

Potteries to Manchester and Liverpool.¹ They were not listed as railway carriers from Derby in either 1843 or 1846,² although at the latter date they were said to be general carriers to all parts by canal and rail from Shardlow,³ possibly meaning from Trent Junction on the Midland Counties Railway, a few miles to the east. In 1846 their fly-boat service from Derby to London had been reduced to three days a week, but their stage-boats were now running four days a week to the same range of destinations as three years earlier.⁴

Nathaniel Spicer

Nathanier Spicer of West Ferry (i.e. Owston Ferry) (Lincs.) registered a 46-ton sloop at Gainsborough in 1795, giving the extent of navigation as from Gainsborough to Trent Falls, Selby, Leeds and Wakefield. The master of the vessel was Ezekiel Spicer, also of West Ferry.⁵ Nathaniel is not named as one of the regular traders from Gainsborough in *UBD*, nor (since the family did not live in the town) in the trade lists either there or in Holden's directory of 1811.

Benjamin Spilsbury

Benjamin Spilsbury of Willington was in partnership with Joseph Smith of Burton in the early 1780s but from 1784, when the partnership was dissolved,⁶ either continued to trade on his own account or may have retired from business. Certainly by the mid nineteenth century, when the Revd Francis Ward Spilsbury owned 'a neat residence near the Trent' at Willington, the family had become small landowners.⁷ In 1815 Benjamin left a rent charge of £5 issuing out of a building in Willington and a piece of land used as a wharf, upon trust that they should distribute the money to poor men and women of the parish.⁸ Spilsbury died at Willington in 1818.⁹ In 1846 what may have been the wharf in question, together with a large warehouse and boatbuilding yard, was in the hands of 'Messrs Smith & Son' of Gainsborough.¹⁰ This was the firm then headed by Henry Smith, the grandson of Joseph Smith. It is not clear whether the wharf on which Spilsbury laid the rent charge in 1815 was the one which Joseph Smith left in his will in 1805 to his son William,¹¹ or

whether there were two different properties involved.

J. Spinks

In the early 1790s J. Spinks, a Gainsborough coal merchant, had two sloops and keels sailing to Leeds, Bradford etc. with wool etc. and bringing coal back in return.¹² No registration papers survive for either of his vessels and the name does not appear in Holden's Directory of 1811.

Squire family

In the 1790s one of two passage boats sailing weekly between Peterborough and Wisbech was being operated by Wright Thomas Squire and William Squire, both Peterborough merchants; the other was in the hands of a third merchant in the town, Sprignal Brown, who appears to have died in 1813.¹³ W.T. Squire died in 1802, aged 53, when he was described as a banker and merchant of Peterborough.¹⁴ He was evidently succeeded by a son of the same name, who died only eight years later, aged 26.¹⁵ His early death appears to have thrown the family's affairs into some disarray and the hands of the Court of Chancery for several years. In 1819 the court advertised for the creditors of the younger Squire to prove their debts;¹⁶ in 1826 William Walcot Squire tried to sell the tolls of the navigation of the Nene between Peterborough and Oundle, which the family were evidently leasing;¹⁷ and in 1827 the court ordered their peremptory sale by auction, when they were said to have produced an average of £830 gross over the last six years.¹⁸ Meanwhile, in 1817 William Squire, W.W. Squire, Samuel Sprigg and Christopher Jeffery, all of Peterborough, dissolved their partnership as merchants, maltsters and common brewers.¹⁹ At some stage in these proceedings the family must have given up the Wisbech packet boat, which in the early 1820s was in the hands of another syndicate of Peterborough merchants, trading as Simpson, Mewburn & Miller (qv).

Samuel and Daniel Stone

In 1818 Samuel Stone was in business as a wharfinger at Derby Old Wharf, as was Daniel Stone in the 1820s.²⁰ They appear not to have been carriers and the business is not heard of after 1829.

¹ Glover 1843, 152–3.

² Glover 1843, 152–3; Bagshaw 1846, 154.

³ Bagshaw 1846, 162.

⁴ Bagshaw 1846, 154.

⁵ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 9 Dec. 1784; Shill 2011, 17 (no source cited).

⁷ Bagshaw 1846, 217; both Benjamin and F.W. Spilsbury were granted game licences in 1806 (*Derby Mercury*, 2 Oct.).

⁸ Bagshaw 1846, 217.

⁹ Family Search.

¹⁰ Bagshaw 1846, 217; below, Gainsborough.

¹¹ Above, entry for Joseph Smith & Sons.

¹² *UBD*, III, 141, where he is simply called 'Mr Spinks' in the list of boat owners. The initial and occupation have been supplied from the Gainsborough trade list.

¹³ *UBD*, IV, 189, 192; above, Sprignal Brown.

¹⁴ *Northampton Mercury*, 27 March 1802; TNA, PROB 11/1373/201.

¹⁵ *Norfolk Chronicle*, 7 July 1810; there is no PCC probate grant.

¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 24 Aug. 1819, p. 1520.

¹⁷ *London Gazette*, 10 June 1826, p. 1412.

¹⁸ *London Gazette*, 2 Jan. 1827, p. 6.

¹⁹ *London Gazette*, 27 Dec. 1817, p. 2659.

²⁰ Riden (ed.) 206, 161, 208; Glover 1829, 51.

Sutton & Birkinshaw

In 1783 Messrs Sutton & Birkinshaw of Cavendish Bridge announced that they had taken the Old Cheese Warehouse and other buildings at Derby, previously in the possession of the Derby Boat Company, and would henceforth send cheese and other goods consigned to them at Derby Old Wharf to Gainsborough by water throughout, although they would continue to take in goods at their Cavendish Bridge warehouse on the Trent.¹ They seem to have given up the Derby warehouse about four years later, when the Derby Boat Company was revived under new ownership,² but this announcement may mark the first appearance locally of the Sutton family. Robert Birkinshaw seems to have been principally a timber merchant,³ living at a house on the Castle Donington side of Cavendish Bridge which was advertised to let in 1788, together with a piece of land alongside the river then being used by him as a wharf and for the sale of timber and deals.⁴ His departure may mark the end of his partnership with a man who may or may not have been the James Sutton who was later a carrier at Shardlow.⁵

James Sutton & Co.

The founder of the later carrying firm is first heard of at Shardlow as the licensee of the Navigation Inn in 1803⁶ (and possibly before) and as a salt merchant and member of the firm of Broughton & Sutton, salt proprietors of Shardlow and Lawton in Cheshire in 1805.⁷ Broughton & Sutton were founder members of the Inland Waterway Association for Apprehending and Prosecuting Felons in 1802 and remained members in 1802.⁸ James Sutton seems likely to have come from Lawton when the Trent & Mersey Canal opened to establish an agency for the salt business, and to have moved from there into general carrying, possibly by acquiring the business of the Shardlow Boat Company⁹ with which he was later associated. By 1811 he owned sufficient land at Shardlow to obtain a game certificate.¹⁰ Sutton died in 1830 at his

¹ *Derby Mercury*, 18 Dec. 1783.

² See above, Derby Boat Company.

³ *Derby Mercury*, 24 April and 1 May 1783 (timber for sale at Somercotes near Alfreton), and 20 July 1786 (fine oak timber for sale from Kedleston Park).

⁴ *Derby Mercury*, 24 April 1788.

⁵ Birkinshaw appears to have remained in the timber business locally: in 1805 he was in correspondence with T.W. Edge of Strelley (Notts.) about timber cut on his estate there (Notts. Archives, DD/E/14/95).

⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 28 April 1803.

⁷ Riden (ed.) 2006, 103, 111, 114, 122, 136.

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 14 Oct. and 11 Nov. 1802; 21 June 1804.

⁹ An electronic search of the *Derby Mercury* fails to locate any further information about this concern, which may have been established about the time the canal was opened.

¹⁰ *Derby Mercury*, 19 Sept. 1811 (and regularly thereafter).

home, Broughton House in Shardlow, aged 63.¹¹ He was succeeded by his son, also James Sutton, who by 1837, when he provided a site at the entrance to the house for a new church, had moved to Shardlow Hall,¹² said to have been built in 1682 by Leonard Fosbrooke (d. 1709), also a carrier on the Trent.¹³ The younger James Sutton is said to have been born in 1800 and to have died in 1868.¹⁴ In 1846 he was resident at Shardlow Hall and his mother Mary, was also living in the village. In 1839 she purchased from E.A. Holden, the lord of the manor, the advowson of the new church which her husband had helped to found.¹⁵

In 1816 'J. Sutton and Shardlow Boat Company' announced that, in addition to their regular stage boats between Gainsborough and the Potteries, Manchester and Liverpool, they had established a service of fly boats between Shardlow, Manchester and Liverpool. Boats would leave Castlefield, Manchester on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, and from Shardlow on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday. Goods for Liverpool would arrive at Preston Brook on Thursday, Saturday and Monday (i.e. two days after leaving Shardlow). Goods from Liverpool would be shipped from Preston Brook every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday; would arrive and deliver in the Potteries on Wednesday, Friday and Monday (i.e. one day after leaving Preston Brook); and would reach Shardlow a day after leaving Staffordshire. Sutton & Co. then had offices at Duke Dock in Liverpool, Castlefield in Manchester, Preston Brook and unspecified wharfs on the Trent & Mersey Canal as well as their principal office at Shardlow.¹⁶ By c.1818 they also had a wharf at Cockpit Hill in Derby.¹⁷

In the early 1820s James Sutton, still in association with the Shardlow Boat Company, was despatching boats daily from Derby down the Trent to Nottingham, Newark, Gainsborough and Hull; to Lincoln, Boston, Grantham, Horncastle and Sleaford in Lincolnshire; and to Loughborough, Leicester, Melton Mowbray and Market Harborough in Leicestershire; there is no mention of the fly-boat service on the Trent & Mersey.¹⁸ James Sutton & Co. were tenants of part or all of Trent Port Wharf, on the Nottinghamshire bank of the Trent at Gainsborough,

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 29 Dec. 1830.

¹² *Derby Mercury*, 16 Aug. 1837. Glover 1829, 97 gives both Broughton House and Shardlow Hall as the homes of the elder James Sutton.

¹³ Craven and Stanley 2001, 192.

¹⁴ Craven and Stanley 2001, 192; the only death certificate for a 68-year-old man of this name that year was issued in the December quarter in Christchurch (Hants.) registration district.

¹⁵ Bagshaw 1846, 160, 162.

¹⁶ *Derby Mercury*, 2 May 1816.

¹⁷ Riden (ed.) 2006, 161.

¹⁸ Riden (ed.) 2006, 210.

at this date.¹ In 1824 Sutton & Co. were one of a number of carriers and wharfingers associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in their scheme to quote low through rates for wool from the East Midlands to Leeds and Wakefield.²

More extensive services from both Derby and Shardlow were listed in 1829. From Derby these included a daily fly-boat to Manchester and Liverpool and a forwarding service ('by a new arrangement') to Cambridge, Huntingdon and Peterborough, as well as boats to the same places on the Trent and in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire as a few years earlier. The company was also offering a service two days a week to Pinxton and Mansfield, presumably by canal to the former and the railway (opened in 1819) to the latter.³ From Shardlow there were fly-boats to Manchester, down the Trent to Gainsborough, and to the same list of places in Lincolnshire and Leicestershire as from Derby, as well as a general service to all places on the Trent & Mersey and Bridgewater canals. The firm of Broughton & Sutton were still in business at Shardlow as 'saltmen'.⁴ The connection with Cheshire continued into at least the early 1830s, when James Sutton advertised grazing to let at Lawton Park.⁵

In 1838 James Sutton & Co., still also known as the Shardlow Boat Company, bought all or most of the business of Ella, Coleman & Co. of Leicester, who had built up an extensive network of services to London, the North West and Gainsborough. The acquisition gave Suttons a presence south of the Trent which they had previously lacked and at the same time eliminated a competitor on the river itself between Shardlow and Gainsborough, and on the Trent & Mersey Canal route to Manchester and Liverpool.⁶ In 1841 Suttons were running services from Leicester to London daily; to Birmingham, Bristol, Worcester and all parts of the West three days a week; and to the Potteries, Liverpool, Manchester and all parts of Lancashire and the North three days a week. From Loughborough they had boats going to the same range of destinations and also offered a service to Gainsborough and Hull.⁷ These were all operated by Ella, Coleman a few years before.

Sutton & Co. (with no mention of the Shardlow Boat Company) were still carrying by canal from Derby in 1843, with stage-boats four days a week to

Shardlow, Loughborough, Leicester and Coventry; four days a week to Nottingham, Newark and Gainsborough (and from there to London by sea); once a week to Pinxton, Buckland Hollow and Cromford; and once a week to Birmingham, Wolverhampton etc. They were also continuing the fly-boat service three days a week to Manchester and Liverpool. In addition, the firm were carrying by rail from Derby on the Midland Counties to Nottingham and Leicester, on the Birmingham & Derby to Birmingham, and on the North Midland to stations to Leeds. Using other companies they were sending goods to Manchester, London and 'all parts of Yorkshire'.⁸ The firm offered a similar range of routes from Loughborough, with daily services to Birmingham and Bristol, Gainsborough and Hull, and Manchester and Liverpool, as well as London.⁹

By 1846 the firm had become Sutton, Clifford & Hawkins of Shardlow, general carriers and salt merchants; James Clifford was then resident at Broughton House.¹⁰ From their Derby wharf at Cockpit Hill they were running fly-boats three times a week to Manchester and Liverpool via the Trent & Mersey Canal, to Loughborough and Leicester via the Soar and Leicester Navigation; and to Coventry, presumably via the Staffs. & Worcs. and Coventry canals. They sent a stage-boat down the Trent four days a week to Gainsborough, from where they forwarded goods for London by sea; another to Birmingham and Wolverhampton twice a week; and a third to Pinxton, Buckland Hollow and Cromford once a week. They were also carrying by rail on all three lines serving Derby: to London, Birmingham, Leicester, Nottingham, and all places in Yorkshire accessible by the North Midland Railway.¹¹

Richard Swain

In 1830, and possibly for some years before, Richard Swain was the owner of the *Witham*, described as the original steam packet operating on the river from which it was named between Lincoln and Boston. It had then recently 'received such very material improvements in her machinery' that she was the equal of any packet on the *Witham*, including the *Victory*, which she had recently overtaken and outpaced.¹² Swain was one of three independent owners of steam packets operating together as the 'Old' or 'United' steam packet company to provide a daily service in competition with at least three other boats.¹³ The syndicate had been in existence since at

¹ Pigot 1822, 244.

² *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son.

³ Glover 1829, 38–40.

⁴ Glover 1829, 97.

⁵ *Derby Mercury*, 25 Sept. 1833, where Lawton Park is wrongly said to be in Staffs.; it is just over the border in Cheshire.

⁶ See above, Ella, Coleman.

⁷ Pigot 1841, Leics. 30, 38; it is odd that the Gainsborough and Hull route is not mentioned under Leicester.

⁸ Glover 1843, 152–3.

⁹ Pigot 1841, Leics. 38.

¹⁰ Bagshaw 1846, 161–2.

¹¹ Bagshaw 1846, 154.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 28 Oct. 1831.

¹³ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Sept., 19 Nov. 1830. The other owners were John Temperton (*Favourite*) and Nathaniel Clayton (*Countess of Warwick*); see under Temperton for full details of the

least the early 1820s.¹ How long Swain remained concerned is less clear. In 1830 he was also licensee of the Steam Packet pub on the Witham at Lincoln and remained the tenant in 1838, when he also had a coalyard nearby.² The steam packets were still running in 1841, but Pigot's directory does not name the vessels or their owners.³

Swaine & Co.

This firm is listed in Glover's directory of 1829 as carriers to Nottingham from Siddals Lane in Derby. They appear to have been road carriers working in association with the canal-carrying firm of Douglas & Co., and were not themselves carriers by canal.⁴

Taylor & Lloyd

A firm of this name, of Bridge Street, Gainsborough, were listed as wharfingers and commercial agents in 1822.⁵

John Temperton

John was baptised at Misterton in 1789, the son of Joseph and Mary Temperton,⁶ and in 1810 married Elizabeth Ato at Sempringham.⁷ Between then and 1829 the couple had ten children, at least two of whom died young. The first three were baptised at Misterton in 1813–17, the next two at Boston in 1819–21, and the other five at St Swithin's, Lincoln, in 1823–9.⁸ The family were still living in that parish in 1833 when Elizabeth died after a long illness, aged 43.⁹ John was a member of the Lincoln Old Association for the Prosecution of Felons until at least 1834,¹⁰ but seems to have died shortly afterwards.¹¹

service. The rivals named in the *Mercury* around this date were the *Duchess of St Albans*, *Victory* (William Porter) and the *Duke of Sussex*.

¹ Pigot 1822–3, 238.

² *Stamford Mercury*, 28 May 1830; 21, 28 Dec. 1838, 4 Jan. 1839.

³ Pigot 1841, Lincs. 17.

⁴ Glover 1829, 41; above, Douglas & Co.

⁵ Pigot 1822, 244.

⁶ Family Search. The parish included West Stockwith and it is possible the family lived there, although the village had its own chapel of ease.

⁷ Family Search.

⁸ All the baptisms can be found in Family Search; two boys' names were used twice (William Ato in 1815 and 1817 and John Maiden in 1823 and 1828), implying the first born in each case died in infancy.

⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 19 June 1833.

¹⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 25 June 1830, 1 July 1831, 27 June 1834 (lists of members of the association).

¹¹ There is no sign of him in the 1841 census and no burial in Family Search. The only death of a John Temperton in the civil registers before the date of the census was in Gainsborough RD in the Dec. quarter of 1840. John's two youngest children were living with Elizabeth's parents at Pointon, near Sempringham, in 1841 (TNA, HO 107/622/6c, f. 5), his 14-year-old daughter was a servant in a farmer's house in Aslackby (HO 107/614/9b, f. 2), his second son was a servant in a household in Crowle (HO

In 1821, about the time he and his family moved from Boston to Lincoln, Temperton announced that he had purchased a share in the *Favourite* steam packet from 'Mr Smith', and would continue to carry passengers and goods between Boston and Lincoln.¹² The *Favourite* was one of three independently owned steam packets jointly providing a daily service on this route.¹³ A year later Temperton announced the dissolution of his partnership with Robinson Dayles in the packet and indicated that he would be continuing the business alone.¹⁴ A poster of c.1830 advertised one-day round-trips in the *Favourite* between Lincoln and Boston at 3s. a head and noted that the vessel was fitted with 'Pool's patent paddle wheels'. John Temperton was described as master as well as owner.¹⁵

By this date others had started up in competition with Temperton, Swain and Mrs Clayton, who were describing themselves as the 'Old Steam-Packet Company' and insisted that their boats were the 'swiftest and most commodious' on the Witham. One of the three left the Grand Sluice in Boston at 7 a.m. to arrive at Lincoln in time to meet coaches to Newark, Nottingham, Barton upon Humber, Hull and Gainsborough; and another left Lincoln at 11 a.m. after the arrival of coaches from all parts. Their Boston agent, Mr Jackson of the Peacock in the Market Place, had undertaken not to take in parcels for the rival packet, the *Duchess of St Albans*, and goods could also be left with E. Clements in Wormgate. The company undertook to put on an extra service from Boston during Lincoln races, leaving at 5.30 a.m. and returning in the afternoon after the last race.¹⁶ The following year, now calling themselves the United Steam-Packet Company, the three owners announced that the 'original Packet', Richard Swain's *Witham*, had been refurbished and was now the equal of any boat on the river. As evidence of this, she had

107/631/18, f. 51), and his eldest son was a blacksmith in West Butterwick (HO 107/641/20, f. 25) (where there were other people named Temperton in 1841). This all suggests that John returned to the Gainsborough area after his wife died, that the family were not very wealthy, and that the older children, apart from one son who had gained a trade, had to look for places as servants.

¹² *Stamford Mercury*, 10 Aug. 1821. The vendor could have been one of the Gainsborough wharfingers named Smith but the name is obviously impossible to trace for certain without other evidence.

¹³ Pigot 1822–3, 238; Pigot 1830, 76; an advertisement in the *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Sept. 1830, establishes that the others were owned by Richard Swain (*Witham*) and Mary Clayton (*Countess of Warwick*) (qqv).

¹⁴ *Stamford Mercury*, 12 and 19 April 1822.

¹⁵ LAO, LCM/13/11; the master must have been Temperton himself, since his son John Maiden Temperton was only about two in 1830.

¹⁶ *Stamford Mercury*, 24 Sept. 1830. A packet named the *Duke of Sussex* was also competing for trade on the river at this date and was involved in a stand-off with Mrs Clayton's *Countess of Warwick* in 1828 (see above, Mary Clayton).

recently 'overtaken, passed, and considerably distanced the *Victory*'.¹ Also in 1831 the times of sailings were altered slightly (8 a.m. from Boston and 10.30 from Lincoln) to connect with the Nottingham and Gainsborough coaches at Lincoln.²

A steam packet was still leaving Sluice Bridge in Boston for Lincoln at 7.30 daily except Sundays in 1841, but none of the vessels involved was named in Pigot's directory.³ Temperton's business must have come to an end with his death in the mid or late 1830s.

Matthew Thompson

Matthew Thompson was recorded as a shipowner of Gainsborough in 1811.⁴

Samuel Thorpe and Robert Marshall

In 1822 Samuel Thorpe and Robert Marshall were in business as wharfingers on Canal Street in Nottingham and were also running carrying services every week to Derby, Grantham, Pinxton and elsewhere.⁵ They appear also to have owned (or were acting as agents for) one of the two pioneer steam packet services then running from Nottingham to Gainsborough via Newark, said to be provided by 'Thorpe & Gainsborough' of Canal Street, leaving every Wednesday and Saturday at 8 a.m.⁶

This partnership was dissolved in November 1822, when the two were described as coal, coke and corn merchants and wharfingers.⁷ Early in 1823 both men were declared bankrupt, listed on this occasion as wharfingers and coal dealers of Nottingham.⁸ Both were granted certificates later that year,⁹ although a first and final dividend was not paid until November 1826.¹⁰

The two were back in business as wharfingers by 1828 but no longer in partnership. Thorpe stayed at Canal Street and was running services 'several times

a week' to Derby, Grantham, Liverpool and all places adjacent. He was still a wharfinger there in 1842 but was no longer doing any carrying.¹¹ Marshall on the other hand set up in premises on London Road and in the late 1820s was offering services on a much larger scale three times a week to London, Liverpool, Manchester, Derby, Leicester, Birmingham, Bath, Bristol 'and almost all parts of England'.¹² He died in 1831, when his business appears to have been taken over by James Sutton, the Shardlow carrier,¹³ who in 1835–6 sued Frances Marshall (probably Robert's widow),¹⁴ George Marshall senior and junior and several others in the Chancery.¹⁵ These actions must have concerned Robert Marshall's estate, since in 1836 the court was still trying to locate his creditors.¹⁶

Charles West junior

In 1825 a man of this name described himself as owner of the steam packet *Countess of Warwick*, one of the boats sailing daily between Boston and Lincoln.¹⁷ This service had been in operation since at least 1822, provided by three independently owned vessels, one of which ran in each direction every day.¹⁸ In 1824 the engineer of the *Countess* was a young man of 'nearly 20',¹⁹ which does not suggest a great deal of experience with a steam engine. By 1828 the vessel was in the hands of Mary Clayton.²⁰

Thomas West

Thomas West was a wharfinger in Newark in the early 1790s.²¹ He is not recorded in earlier or later directories and the name is too common to trace satisfactorily elsewhere.

Nathaniel & German Wheatcroft

The Wheatcroft family's extensive involvement in canal carrying began with Abraham Wheatcroft, a

¹ *Stamford Mercury*, 28 Oct. 1831. Two months earlier, Nathaniel Clayton, the commander of the *Countess*, was fined £5 at Lincoln Sessions for assaulting Thomas Porter, commander of the *Victory*, after a close race between the two ended in a fight on the quay at Lincoln (*Stamford Mercury*, 8 July 1831).

² *Stamford Mercury*, 19 Nov. 1830.

³ Pigot 1841, Lincs. 17.

⁴ Holden 1811.

⁵ Pigot 1822, 340–1. Neither name appears in Holden 1811 under Nottingham.

⁶ Pigot 1822, 341. The name of the firm is almost certainly an error, since it is not found elsewhere in the directory. Pigot also listed the *Robin Hood* steam packet running to Newark and Gainsborough from the Canal Inn every Monday and Thursday at 8 a.m., for which the agent was Thomas Smith, who is not listed as a wharfinger. Thorpe & Marshall's boat is not named but these appear to be two different services.

⁷ *London Gazette*, 26 Nov. 1822, p. 1940.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 1 March 1823, p. 344.

⁹ *London Gazette*, 2 Sept. 1823, p. 1460.

¹⁰ *London Gazette*, 9 May 1826, p. 1108; 17 Nov. 1826, p. 2738.

¹¹ Pigot 1842, 50. Thorpe has not been traced for certain beyond this date, but in the 1841 census a Samuel Thorpe was enumerated in St Mary's, Nottingham, aged 50–54, and in 1861 what may be the same person was still living in St Mary's, aged 76. These two entries give a date of birth in the late 1780s, consistent with Thorpe's first appearance as a wharfinger in 1822. The only death registered in Nottingham RD for a Samuel Thorpe between 1860 and 1880 was in the March quarter of 1862.

¹² Pigot 1828, 656–7.

¹³ See James Sutton & Co. He is listed for the first time as a carrier from London Road in 1842, and is the plaintiff in the Chancery litigation of 1835–6.

¹⁴ A Robert Marshall married Frances Winfield at St Nicholas, Nottingham, on 1 April 1821 (Family Search).

¹⁵ TNA, C 13/348/23, C 13/560/18 and 21, C 13/567/16.

¹⁶ *London Gazette*, 16 Feb. 1836, p. 315; 15 April 1836, p. 692.

¹⁷ *Stamford Mercury*, 26 Aug. 1825.

¹⁸ Pigot 1822–3, 238; see above, Richard Swain (owner of the *Witham*) and John Temperton (*Favourite*) for the other two.

¹⁹ *Stamford Mercury*, 10 Sept. 1824.

²⁰ *Stamford Mercury*, 15 Aug. 1828; above, Mary Clayton

²¹ *UBD*, IV, 58–60.

yeoman farmer of Crich, who had at least five boats on the Cromford Canal from the time it opened in 1794, and nine by 1802.¹ His son Nathaniel established a general carrying business on the canal in 1803 and the following year advertised a service from Cromford to Derby, although his main route was to Nottingham. By 1809, when he was joined in the business by his brother German, Nathaniel had three decked and covered boats, running to Nottingham, Derby and Birmingham, and 15–20 open boats in the stone and coal trades, some of which also served Derby. The family also ran a boatyard on the canal at Whatstandwell. By 1822 the company had 15 boats with floors and covers out of a total fleet of 35. The first reference to their running fly-boat services comes in 1820, when they were sending two boats a week to London via Leicester, taking only six days for the round trip. In 1824 N. & G. Wheatcroft of Nottingham were one of the firms associated with Robert Flower & Son of Gainsborough in their scheme of 1824 to quote low through rates for wool from the East Midlands to Leeds and Wakefield.²

The firm were also road carriers. By 1813 what had probably begun as a service to and from Sheffield, connecting at Buckland Hollow, had been extended to Barnsley; by 1822 they were running to Wakefield and Leeds, and later served Bradford as well. Their waggons also ran three times a week between Sheffield and Birmingham, via either Chesterfield (or Mansfield and Nottingham), Derby, Burton, Lichfield and Walsall.³ Wheatcrofts leased the canal company's warehouse at Cromford from 1815 and built their own on a leasehold site at Buckland Hollow in 1813.

The original partnership was dissolved in 1823 when the business was divided into two so that Nathaniel and German could take their sons into new partnerships.⁴

Nathaniel Wheatcroft & Son

Nathaniel Wheatcroft, in partnership first with his son John, who died in 1835, and later by his grandson, also Nathaniel, ran a general carrying service from Cromford and Buckland Hollow (building his own warehouses at both places) to Nottingham, but concentrated on carrying and trading in bulky goods such as timber, coal, corn and slate. In 1827 he introduced a service between Cromford and Shardlow, and began a twice-weekly service to the Potteries, delivering stone and returning with

Cheshire salt. By 1828 he had about 25 boats, of which about a third had decks and covers.⁵ Once the railways opened he gave up his twice-weekly services to Nottingham and the Potteries but in the early 1850 was still advertising a road carrying service three times a week to Manchester and Liverpool. Increasingly, however, he concentrated on the coal and corn trades, opening depots on the Midland Railway's Matlock–Buxton and Duffield–Wirksworth lines as well as the Cromford & High Peak Railway. He kept boats on the Cromford Canal mainly to service these trades, although after the canal was acquired by a constituent of the Midland Railway in 1852 its new owners built up their own fleet of boats, buying at least one from Wheatcroft. The partnership was dissolved in 1884, although the family continued to trade on the canal for a few years longer before moving into other businesses in the Cromford and Wirksworth area.⁶

German Wheatcroft & Sons

German initially took three sons into partnership but one left in 1831. Like Nathaniel, he had warehouses at both Cromford and Buckland Hollow. In addition to boats taken over from the earlier business, German registered 34 new narrow boats between 1824 and 1846 for general carrying, and two pairs of boats were acquired to carry coal and stone to Nottingham. Other boats may have been used only on the Cromford Canal and not registered under the Trent gauging scheme. In 1827 the company started a service on the Trent from Nottingham to Newark and Gainsborough, for which it bought its first broad-beam barge. It later had a service between Shardlow and Gainsborough and acquired another three Trent barges. In 1835 it was advertising a daily service from Nottingham to London via Gainsborough.⁷

By the late 1820s German Wheatcroft was running road services from Birmingham to Bromsgrove, Worcester, Gloucester and Bristol, at least some of which were using fly-waggons or fly-vans. In about 1830 he introduced a van three days a week to London. The firm was then providing services by road and canal to Chesterfield, Sheffield, Leeds and elsewhere in the West Riding; to Mansfield, Newark and Nottingham; to Derby, Burton, Lichfield, Birmingham and as far south-west as Bristol; and to Leicester and London.⁸ It appears to have been the sole general carrier on the Mansfield & Pinxton Railway and the principal, if not only, carrier of through traffic on the Cromford & High Peak Railway, on which in 1833 it briefly ran a passenger service. German's sons established a quarrying

¹ Boyes 2009, 130–4 for most of the remainder of this paragraph. Except as indicated, this and the next two entries here broadly follow the conclusions of this very thorough article.

² *Leeds Intelligencer*, 24 July 1824; above, Robert Flower & Son.

³ See Wheatcrofts' entry in *Stage Waggon Carriers* for a fuller account of their road carrying.

⁴ Boyes 2009, 130–4.

⁵ Boyes 2009, 134.

⁶ Boyes 2009, 140–1.

⁷ Boyes 2009, 134–5.

⁸ Boyes 2009, 135–6.

business around Middleton on the High Peak line.¹

The opening of the High Peak Railway and the Macclesfield Canal in 1831 made the Peak Forest Canal part of two competing routes between the Midlands and Manchester. Pickfords immediately transferred their traffic from the Bridgewater Canal to the Macclesfield; Wheatcrofts attempted to develop a route from Nottingham via Cromford and the railway to Whaley Bridge, and also in 1833 announced a service from Manchester to Chapel en le Frith, using the Peak Forest Canal's tramway, and from there to Sheffield by waggon. Pickfords retaliated with a service from Manchester to Whaley Bridge by canal and then by road to Sheffield.²

German Wheatcroft died in 1841 and his two sons still in the business dissolved the partnership the same year, leaving David to continue as a sole proprietor, trading as German Wheatcroft & Son. As soon as the railway opened at Derby, David began carrying on all three lines, to Sheffield, Nottingham, Birmingham and London. As soon as the railways began to take over local canals, however, he sold his interests to their new owners or their carrying subsidiaries. In 1846 he disposed of ten boats, about 90 wagons used for road services from Manchester and on the High Peak and Peak Forest railways, with horses and ancillary equipment for £1,800; and sold his carrying business on the Cromford Canal to the carrying arm of the Grand Junction Canal Company. He continued to run a service by canal three days a week from Buckland Hollow to Nottingham and Leicester into the early 1850s and was still described as a canal carrier in 1857. After selling his canal interests David Wheatcroft expanded his stone quarrying business in the Cromford area.³

William Wilkinson

In 1795 William Wilkinson of Gainsborough registered a 45-ton sloop, of which he was owner and master, giving the extent of navigation as from Gainsborough to Selby, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Halifax and Sowerby.⁴ In the *UBD*'s list of traders from Gainsborough in the early 1790s he was said to have a 'sloop and keel', which did not trade to any particular port but went where they were wanted.⁵ He does not appear in the Gainsborough trade list in either *UBD* or Holden's Directory of 1811.

Robert Willson & Co.

In 1809–11 (but not in 1805) Holden's Directory listed a service from Shardlow to Boston by Robert

Willson & Co.⁶ The firm appears to have no later history. The uncommon spelling of the owner's name in 1809 (it is rendered 'Wilson' in 1811) possibly suggests a connection with John Willson, a master and part-owner of sloops and keels at Horncastle in the 1790s.

Wilson & Co.

A firm of this name was listed in 1841 as running a weekly service from Abbey Bridge wharf in Leicester to Leeds, Hull, Goole and all parts of Yorkshire,⁷ presumably by transshipping to Humber keels at Gainsborough.

Wingfield & Wheeldon

In April 1835 a firm of this name announced that they had engaged the premises at Morledge wharf late in the occupation of George Richardson (who had been made bankrupt a few years before), where they were carrying on the business of wharfingers and carriers between Derby and Gainsborough. Mr Wheeldon, the advertisement noted, had been actively engaged in this business for thirty years, in the employment of Messrs Evans (i.e. the Derby Boat Company) and subsequently Messrs Keeling & Co.⁸ The firm was apparently still in business in 1843, carrying by water to Gainsborough, 'Stafford' (probably meaning the Potteries) and Shropshire,⁹ but had closed down by 1846,¹⁰ when their former wharf on the Morledge, with warehouse, stabling and crane, by then in other hands, was offered for sale.¹¹

Mark Winn

In the early 1790s Mark Winn was running two sloops and keels between Gainsborough and Rotherham.¹² He and Benjamin Codd were the only boat owners serving the Don Navigation, although Codd was also trading with places on the Aire and Calder. No registration papers survive for Winn's vessels, and he does not appear in the trade lists for Gainsborough in either *UBD* or Holden's Directory of 1811.

George and Thomas Withers

These two brothers appear to have begun their working life in partnership with their father Joseph as nurserymen and seedsmen in Newark, trading as Joseph Withers & Sons.¹³ The family had previously

⁶ Riden (ed.) 2006, 114, 126.

⁷ Pigot 1841, Leics. 30.

⁸ *Derby Mercury*, 22 April 1825; and see under Derby Boat Company, Keeling & Co., and George Richardson.

⁹ Glover 1843, 93 (in the alphabetical directory; the company are not listed as carriers by water from Derby on pp. 152–3).

¹⁰ They are not listed in Bagshaw 1846, 128–9 or 154–5.

¹¹ *Derby Mercury*, 11 Feb., 29 April, 6 May 1846.

¹² *UBD*, III, 141.

¹³ *London Gazette*, 14 Oct. 1817, p. 2123.

¹ Boyes 2009, 136–7.

² Boyes 2009, 137–8.

³ Boyes 2009, 139–40.

⁴ LAO, Lindsey Boat Registration Papers.

⁵ *UBD*, III, 141.

lived at Horncastle, where George was born in 1790 and Thomas two years later.¹ This business came to an end in October 1817,² shortly after George married Ann Brown of Barnby in the Willows (Notts.) in February 1815 and his brother married her sister Elizabeth in March the following year.³ Joseph's two sons agreed to form a new partnership as nurserymen, with premises at Newark and Winthorpe, for a term of 99 years from Michaelmas 1817.⁴ By 1822, however, either in place of or in addition to this business, George and Thomas had set up as wharfingers.⁵ In the late 1820s, trading as George & Thomas Withers, they were also coal dealers and carriers on the river, with premises on Millgate.⁶

George Withers died in about 1830, aged around 40,⁷ and in 1835 his executors and his brother Thomas dissolved the partnership⁸ and the business was wound up.⁹ Thomas Withers had by this date gone back to his original trade as a nurseryman and seedsman, and in March 1831 leased 110 acres at Balderton from E.S. Godfrey of Newark for seven years at £270 a year.¹⁰ By 1836 he had returned to Lincolnshire and was living at Fenton when he sold what must have been the property in Newark used for the wharfinger's business, consisting of a house and warehouse on Millgate, five tenements nearby called Gordon Square, and two other tenements adjoining Millgate, but excluding a crane and fixtures belonging to Withers & Company. The sale, for £3,300, was to Joseph Brown and William Ragsdale of Newark.¹¹

Worster, Stubbs & Bland

Richard Worster was born c. 1781¹² and appears to have been the son of another Richard Worster, a licensee who in 1795 moved from the Wheatsheaf at

West Haddon to the Boot inn at Daventry, from where he moved again in 1801.¹³ Either then or a few years later he went to Long Buckby wharf on the newly opened Grand Junction Canal, where he became a wharfinger and licensee of the Grand Junction Arms.¹⁴ His son seems to have set up in business as a carrier on the canal as soon as it was open throughout in 1801,¹⁵ either from the start or within a few years in partnership with Matthew Stubbs of Braunston.¹⁶ Richard later brought into the business his stepson, Thomas Bland (c.1801–45)¹⁷ and a much younger brother, William Worster, born in the late 1790s, who for most of his working life kept the Grafton Arms in Blisworth.¹⁸ In 1835 William took the tenancy of the canal wharf at Blisworth in addition to the pub.¹⁹

When W. & J. Johnson of Northampton announced the establishment of a carrying business between there and Kettering in 1825 they stated that their waggons would meet at Northampton Worster & Co.'s boat, by which meat, butter and all kinds of merchandise could be regularly carried to the London markets.²⁰ By 1830 Worster, Stubbs & Bland were also carrying between Northampton and London by road, although they appear always to have been principally canal carriers.²¹ They were said to be running fly-boats 'to all parts of England' daily from

¹³ *Northampton Mercury*, 12 Dec. 1795; 14 and 28 March 1801.

¹⁴ *Northampton Mercury*, 25 March 1809 (marriage of his daughter Rachael); 15 June 1811 (sale at the inn).

¹⁵ When his brother sold the business in 1848 it was said to have been trading for 'more than forty years' (*Northampton Mercury*, 11 and 18 Nov. 1848); it can hardly have begun until the canal was finished.

¹⁶ Identifiable as the second partner from his will and partnership dissolution notice of 1847 (see below).

¹⁷ Since very little Northants. material is available on Family Search, the best way into the relationship between Richard Worster and Thomas Bland is through their wills (see below). The explanation that best fits the evidence there is that Thomas's mother was Elizabeth Clark, who married firstly another Thomas Bland; after he died young she married as his first wife Richard Worster the younger (the carrier); she then died and in 1834 he married Jane, described as the daughter of Mrs Abbey (*Northampton Mercury*, 26 July 1834). Thomas and Elizabeth had two children, Thomas (the partner in the carrying business) and Mary, who in June 1834 married Edmund York Abbey (Family Search). Richard and Elizabeth had at least five children: two sons who predeceased their father (leaving his stepson Thomas Bland heir to part of his estate in 1842) and three daughters, whom Thomas Bland describes as his half-sisters in his will, whereas Mary is correctly identified as his full sister). Richard and Jane had no issue.

¹⁸ William returned his age as 45–49 in 1841 (TNA, HO 107/813/2, f. 4v.), when he was still at the Grafton Arms; numerous notices for sales etc. at the pub in the *Northampton Mercury* identify him as landlord; the earliest I have found is in the paper for 20 Sept. 1823.

¹⁹ *Northampton Mercury*, 3 Oct. 1835.

²⁰ *Northampton Mercury*, 30 April 1825.

²¹ Pigot 1830, 142; and *Stage Waggon Carriers* for their road carrying.

¹ Family Search; their mother's name was Hetty.

² *London Gazette*, 14 Oct. 1817, p. 2123.

³ Family Search.

⁴ Notts. Archives, DD/H/180/10.

⁵ Pigot 1822, 328–30; they do not appear at all in the 1819 edn of Pigot.

⁶ Pigot 1828, 636; Pigot 1831, 116–17.

⁷ George Withers and his wife Ann had two daughters and three sons baptised at Newark between Nov. 1815 and 1823 (Family Search). The eldest son was christened Thomas Brown Withers in 1818, which strengthens the identification of his parents' marriage entry at Barnby. I have not located a burial entry for George and there is no PCC probate grant, but he appears to have died before his brother executed the lease of March 1831 cited below.

⁸ *London Gazette*, 8 and 19 Nov. 1833.

⁹ The firm is not listed as wharfingers in Pigot 1835, 283, but on p. 284 it is included, perhaps in error, as carriers. It does appear anywhere in the 1842 edn.

¹⁰ Notts. Archives, DD/H/180/12.

¹¹ Notts. Archives, DD/H/180/13–14.

¹² In his death notice (*Northampton Mercury*, 19 Jan. 1842) he was said to have died in his 62nd year. I cannot locate a baptism in Family Search.

Market Harborough in the late 1820s.¹

The first of the partners to die was Matthew Stubbs, whose will was proved in 1836. He left his wife Caroline a life interest in his estate, which was to pass to his two daughters at her death. Although the will makes no reference to his involvement in the carrying business, his executors (one of whom was Thomas Bland) retained his partnership until 1847.² Richard Worster died in 1842, again leaving most of his estate to his widow Jane, but only until she remarried, when it was similarly to be divided between his three daughters (the surviving children of his first marriage to Elizabeth Bland). His share in the carrying business was explicitly included in these arrangements. He appointed as trustees his brother William, his stepson Thomas Bland, and his two sons-in-law, Edmund York Abbey (strictly speaking a stepson-in-law) and Nathaniel Potterton, the husband of his daughter Amy; his other two daughters married shortly after their father's death.³ Worster was 61 when he died and was the subject of a warm tribute for his integrity in business and support for the Church at Long Buckby.⁴

The third partner, Thomas Bland of Surney Lodge, Long Buckby, died in 1846, describing himself in his will as a merchant. He left his estate (including his share in the carrying business) in trust for the benefit of his sister Mary and his half-sisters Elizabeth, Amy and Alice (i.e. Richard Worster's children by his first wife, who was also Thomas's mother).⁵ The main acting trustee was his brother-in-law James Simcock Shaw, who was also an executor of Matthew Stubbs's will and a beneficiary of Richard Worster's, and may well have been the firm's most senior employee. In this situation, with the prospect of six daughters at some point wishing to be paid their share of the business (none of whose husbands seems to have been interested in joining it), Shaw and Richard's brother William probably had little choice but to dissolve the existing partnership and reconstruct the company. Early in 1847 the elder William Worster and two sets of executors announced that, with effect from 1 January 1846, the firm was to comprise William, his son (also William Worster) and Shaw, and would be known as Worster & Co.⁶ At about the same time the new company stated that they were continuing to carry daily by

water between Northampton and London⁷ but towards the end of 1848 announced the sale of the business to the Grand Junction Canal Company. The canal company was then buying a number of carriers on their line (including the canal-carrying interests of Pickfords and Wheatcrofts, which were both much bigger businesses than Worsters) to create their own carrying department. Worsters thanked their customers for their support over more than forty years and, for their part, the Grand Junction assured the public that Worsters' services would be continued 'with the same regularity and attention' as before by 'Mr Stubbs'.⁸ This was presumably Thomas Stubbs, one of Matthew Stubbs's executors, who was evidently kept on as manager at Northampton.

¹ Pigot 1828–9, 501.

² TNA, PROB 11/1862, ff. 176–7, and see below.

³ TNA, PROB 11/1960, ff. 176v.–177v.; Elizabeth Worster married Henry Scrase in 1842 and her sister Alice married Henry Wyatt Cottle a year later (FreeBMD).

⁴ *Northampton Mercury*, 29 Jan. 1842.

⁵ TNA, PROB 11/2038, ff. 229–31.

⁶ *Northampton Mercury*, 16 Jan. 1847 (notice dated 9 Jan. 1847 clearly backdating the dissolution and reconstruction by twelve months; the same notice did not appear in the *Gazette* until 2 March).

⁷ *Northampton Mercury*, 16 Jan. 1847.

⁸ *Northampton Mercury*, 11 and 18 Nov. 1848.