

A History of the Fishergate Glassworks

Essay by Peter T Wilson which won the Rosenfield Cup for Local History. 1954/55

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VOLUME I

THE GLASS INDUSTRY

INTRODUCTION

This volume is concerned almost entirely with the industry which was carried on, and is carried on, on the Fishergate site, though brief references are made to some of the earlier factories and a more detailed reference to the Lead industry, which I have included here for reasons which will become apparent to the reader.

Much detail on the Fishergate industry has been lost due to the dissolution of the firm in 1923, when the old ledgers and accounts would be destroyed. However, much remains in the care of the public libraries, and I am grateful for the assistance given by the librarians of York Public Library and by Mr. W. L. Pratt, Chairman of the National Glass Works (York) Ltd.

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The Cattle, Meek, Prince, Preet, Spence, Pratt and Wilson families, besides many others. Various other subjects of interest to the reader also occur.

CHAPTER 1

Other glass manufacturers and glass workers in York.

The first glass workers in York were the makers of the stained glass during the building of the present Minster in the 14th century. The most renowned of these men was William de Auckland, who was in the city in 1351. When, in 1352, he joined the Guild of St. Mary's, to which he gave thirty shillings, he was described as a mercer by trade. It is believed he was the father of William Auckland, of Walmgate, who died intestate in the 15th century. The letters of administration were granted to John Auckland, freemason, on the tenth day of November, 1496.

In 1557, the art of making bottles and vessels of crystal glass was introduced into England by merchants from Venice, and, under monopolies granted by Charles II, the industry was firmly established in the latter half of the century (17th). In 1730 there was an attempt to establish the art in York. This attempt was made in Walmgate on a site opposite the residence of the late Mr. Malcolm Spence to whom I refer later. The only glass worker of note during the eighteenth century was William Peckitt 1731-95, who in an inartistic age, had great difficulty in keeping alive the apparently dying art.

The next references are found in 1774, when Mathias Wisser, a glass grinder, became a freemason of the city and in the same year David Doeg, a looking glass maker, voted in the election. George Thomas also made looking glasses at this time and he may have been a junior partner of Doeg. It is very much doubted that they were glass makers, probably only cutting the glass and framing it.

APPENDIX

Chapter 1

Early glass stainers in York.

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Year</u>
John de Selby	1359
John de Preston	1361
John de Kyrkeby	1367
William de Brotton	1371
John de Burgh	1375
John de Broghton	1375

We know from the records of the Cathedral of Durham that glass was made in York between 1424 and 1425.

Doeg and Thomas

In the 1807 election David Doeg of St. Saviourgate voted and in that of 1830 one George Thomas, a looking glass maker of Coney Street voted.

CHAPTER 11

THE SITE

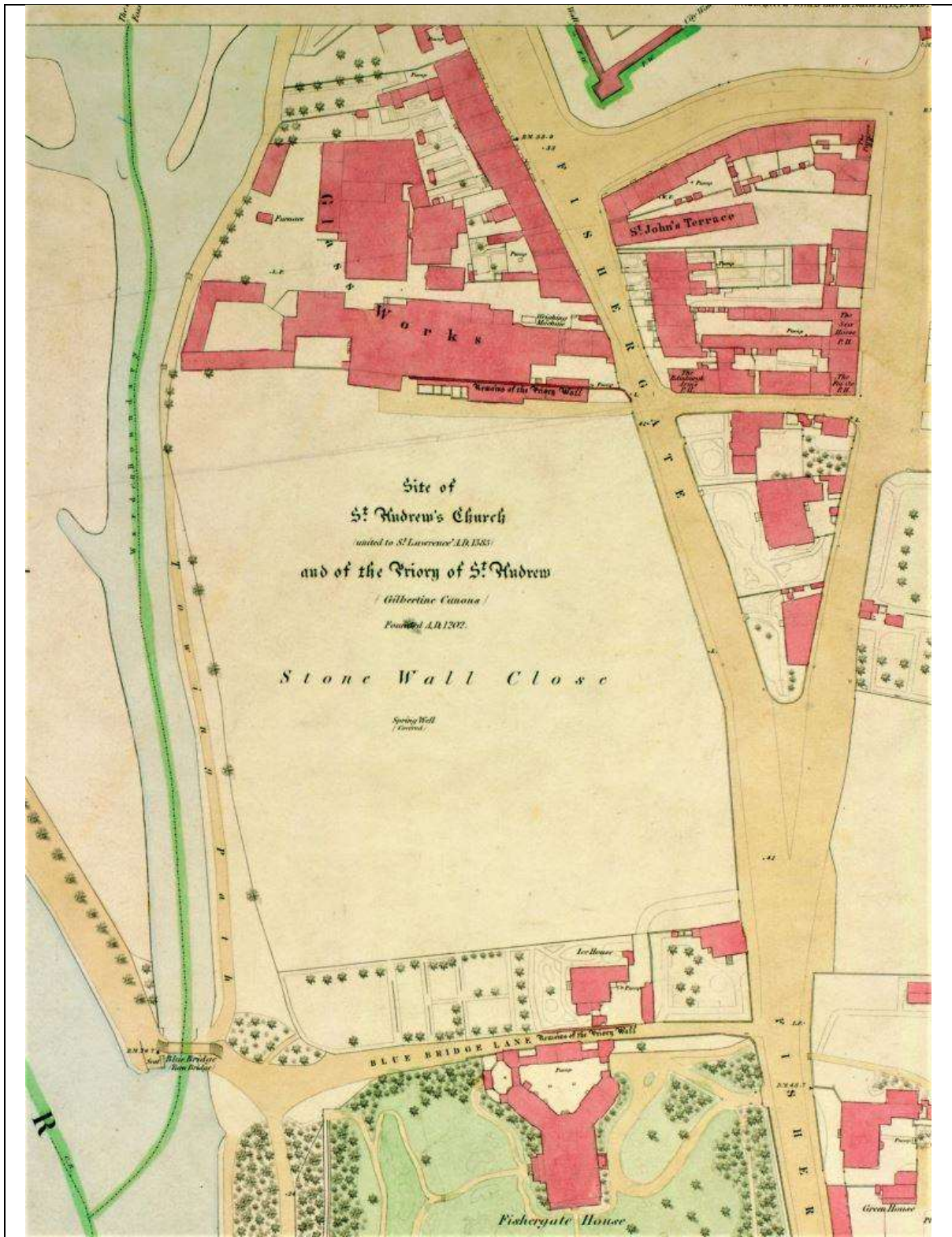
Part of the fishergate glass factory was in olden times the property of the Priory of St. Andrew, which was built on land known, in the eighteenth century, as Stone Wall Close. This religious house was founded by Hugh Mardac in 1202 and when its three monks surrendered on November 28th, 1538, to the lieutenants of Henry VIII and his chancellor, Thomas Cromwell, it had a yearly income of £57 - 5 - 9d. Amassed from gifts and bequests of ancient tithes, ~~xxx~~ rights and lands during the course of three hundred and thirty-six years, the income of the monks was so large that, had they been laymen, the king could have forced them to take out patents of knighthood. A knighthood involved the payment of a fee to the royal exchequer. Leyland says that this priory was situated opposite the nunnery of St. Clements on the other bank of the river and that legend had it that these two religious houses were connected by tunnel. Legend this must remain, for little substantiates this doubtful feat of medieval engineering.

When the glassworks was being extended some years ago, workmen found a very small coffin, about eighteen inches square, made of loose flagstones. They opened it and found, embedded in the soil which had penetrated the coffin, a skull with a hole in one side of the head and a ring which was probably an earring. Nearby was found a medallion with an ecclesiastical device on it.

Eventually the land of the priory in the Parish of St. Lawrence and on the west side of Lulford Road became divided into two fields: Scut (or Scutt) Close to the north and, to the south separated by a stone wall from Scut Close, Stone Wall Close. The former is mentioned in the will of Edward Wilson, whose brother Thomas was an ancestor of later managers of the glass factory. Under the conditions of Mr. Edward Wilson's will the land eventually passed to his nephew Daniel Peck.

Scut Close, along with Long Close in Walmgate, within the City walls became the legal inheritance of Daniel Peck and his wife Sarah on December 20th, 1779. On June 22nd, 1882, Henry Myers and Edward Wolley undertook, for £10, to sell these lands for the best price possible in order that the money obtained might be put to better use, than the land, to benefit the children of Mr. and Mrs. Peck. Scut Close, at this time, was in the tenure of James Fryer, an innholder, by virtue of a lease of 21 years granted to him by Edward Wilson in June, 1763, taking effect from the previous March. The rent was twelve guineas per year. After advertisements in two York weekly newspapers, Mr. Hearon, who owned Hearon Close, to the north of Long Close, made the best offer. On June 2nd, 1884, the land was sold to Mr. Hearon for £556; Mr. Hearon was a tea and china merchant in the city. Scut close consisted of 2 acres, 2 roods and 3 perches, and Long Close of 3 acres, 1 rood and 19 perches. Six days later, Mr. Mr. Hearon sold Scut Close to John Wallis for £241 - 10 - 0d. and it remained in his hands until 1894. ? 1774

The land to the south of Scut Close, at one time belonging to a Mrs. Johnson, was in 1794 the property of Sir William Eden, bt. (an ancestor of Mr. Anthony Eden, a minister of Britain during the late war and again since 1952) It then passed to his heir, Sir Robert, sometime before 1819 and in 1852 it was the property of Sir William Eden but subsequently the Glass Company obtained it, only to sell a large part during a financially difficult period.



1852 OS Map of the Glassworks Site

Appendix to Chapter II

The Will of Edward Wilson

This will dated the third day of February, 1761, appointed Jonathan Hogwood, haberdasher of small waxes, and Thomas Wilson, his brother and a bookseller, executors.

Mr. Wilson gave to his son-in-law, Christopher Wharton, all his furniture, etc. in the house of Christopher Wharton with the exception of the furniture in Mrs lodging room which was to be sold and the money added to his general estate (This probably means that on the marriage of his daughter, Edward Wilson gave her his house and then lodged with her, though he kept the furniture in his name) The residue of the estate, after the payment of all expenses and debts, was placed in trust to his daughter, Mary Wharton, for life, and on her death it was to be used for the maintenance, benefit and education of her lawful children until they were all of age when it was to be divided equally amongst them. If she should die without issue, or that her issue should die without children before reaching the age of twenty-one then the money was to revert to his nephew Daniel Leck.

Mary Wharton died in June 1777 and her only son, Christopher, on or about March 27th, 1779; the conditions of the will were fulfilled and amongst the properties Daniel Leck received were two freehold closes in the Parish of St. Lawrence, Fishergate, and a small house occupied by Mark Lowther in Middle Water Lane, St. Mary's, Castlegate.

CHAPTER III

THE ESTABLISHING OF THE FIRST FACTORY IN FISHERGATE

It has long been believed that the factory began production in 1797. All the York Directories from 1803 state that the industry began in this year (1797) under the partnership of Messrs Hampston and Prince. To substantiate their claim is a tumbler (now in Mr. W. L. Pratt's collection of York glass) which shows a picture of the first glass factory and is dated 1797. Hargrove has stated that the first chimney was erected in 1794 but in reference to the products of the factory, his earliest information is for 1797 when, he says, they made flint glass vessels and common phials. To this the directories add drinking glasses which are probably wine glasses, made from fine Lynn sand, pearl ashes and red lead, using coal fuel.

We can dispose of the evidence in the directories on the grounds that they made at least one serious mistake; in the ownership of the first factory. John Hampston was not a founder of the firm, and it was not until 1804 that Mr. Hampston became a legal partner. Prior to this year, he had loaned to Mr. Prince money to pay half the expense of the machinery. Therefore, the only evidence that the factory began in 1797 is the glass tumbler, but for its establishment in the years between 1794 - 7 we have much evidence. In the first place, the land was bought by Mr. Prince in 1794; secondly, James Smith, a glass manufacturer, came to the city also in 1794 probably with a view to managing the concern; thirdly, the first chimney was erected in 1794 and fourthly under the limited, ~~and~~ irregular and corrupt franchise of 1796, three glass blowers were able to vote in the city's general election -

James Johnson	Lord Mayor's Walk
James Ryan	Long Close
Thomas Wilson	Walmgate

The implications of this information is that the factory began production in the year 1795 or 1796. The tumbler will, therefore, mark an important date in the firm's history: I suggest that in 1797 the first building programme was completed.

¹The chimney was pulled down in 1875.

²On 22nd January, 1794, Mr. Waller and his wife released Scout Close to John Prince for £350. They made a profit of £108 - 10 - 0

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John Prince

John Prince was a son of John Prince, a builder of Skeldergate. One of his brothers was called Willigm.

By trade John was a goldsmith and Jeweller and as early as 1770 was in partnership with John Hampston. In that year the York Courant announced the return of the partners from London with new stock. In 1797 and again in 1798, he was a chamberlain of this city and in 1783 had represented Walgate Ward. It is believed that he married Sarah Nicholson, sister of a fellow chamberlain of 1788. Having voted in the election of 1774, he does not appear to have exercised his right after that year.

He died in Fishergate on May 4th, 1835.

The Site in 1804

When Hampston became a partner in 1804 the site was 14 yards wide and 126 yards, two feet long (from the road to the river). To the south adjoined the land of Sir William Eden, bt. formerly this land had belonged to Mrs. Johnston.

The Deed of May 4th, 1804

Signed by John Prince and John Hampston it laid down that the surviving partner could buy the share of the deceased for a fixed amount to be assessed by James Rusby, a bricklayer, and William Scruton. The latter died soon afterwards. The value of the land and buildings was £1,150 and that of the raw materials, stock in hand, etc., was £1,250; thus the cost of a half share would be £1,200.

It is interesting to note that in 1807 and 1818 at the elections, one William Walker of Cow Lane, Smithfield, London and formerly of Snowhill, London, a glass stainer by trade exercise his vote. He was probably working on the Minster glass.

CHAPTER IV.

The early history of the factory

The setting up on the factory must have cost John Zinco more than he had anticipated for John Hampton paid half the cost of setting up the factory. It was not however until June, 6th, 1804 that Mr. Hampton paid John Zinco £37 : 7 : 6d. and became his legal partner in the Glass Company. The money paid ~~for~~ for his share of the land on which the factory was built while the residue of Scot Glass remained the property of John Zinco. The same day ~~was~~ he became a partner in the firm John Hampton made his will. He appointed his son, John, John Zinco, Samuel Wormald, a tanner, and Robert Cattle his trustees in the event of his death which took place the next year. It had been arranged for Robert Cattle to buy his share in the firm, but on the day following his death, August 13th John Zinco, by virtue of a deed dated May 4th, 1804, exercised his prerogative and purchased the share of the deceased for £1,000. Robert Cattle had become a partner in the Jewellery firm in 1796 and in 1807 this partnership broke up leaving Robert Cattle to continue the Jeweller's shop in Coney Street.

York Courant, Ninth of November, 1807

"The partnership of John Zinco and Robert Cattle lately carried on under the firm of "Hampton, Zinco and Cattle, Jewellers and Silversmiths" in Coney Street York, was dissolved on the first day of November, inst.

All persons having any demands upon the said co-partners are requested to apply to R. Cattle in Coney Street, York, who is authorised to receive and settle the same.

John Zinco
R. Cattle.

York, Nov. 6th. 1807.

and in the same newspaper,

"R. Cattle

Goldsmith, Jeweller, Watchmaker, and Engraver, York asks the nobility, gentry and public, to favour him with their patronage at the old premises of Zinco and Cattle in Coney Street.

York, November 6th. 1807.

As can be expected the early factory produce only poor quality white glass table ware. Its early difficulty was soon enhanced by the burden of Government taxes levied to raise money for the wars with Napoleon. These taxes greatly increased the prices of its products and consequently affected a reduction in its sales. To the general historian this advertisement in the York Herald of January 20th, 1813 will be of interest :-

"Mr Lignum wishes to inform his customers that the recent 100 percent duty on glass will put up prices."

In 1813 three excise men, working in shifts were employed day and night taking note of the glass produced and every six weeks the firm had to pay 14 - 18 - Od. duty on every hundred weight of broken or un-broken glass that it produced. The glass became taxable on leaving the Leer which was a slow cooling oven where the glass was placed after shaping. By cooling the glass slowly it would not crack when exposed to the atmosphere. Not only did they pay a duty on the glass but an annual license, costing £120 was required to be allowed to make the glass. This did a great deal of harm to the stained glass makers who produced only a small amount of high quality glass each year. At this time the men worked shifts for twenty four hours of the day because they clay fusing pots could not be allowed to cool or they would crack; on Friday, Saturday and Sunday they fused the "metals" into glass and the rest of the week blew it. The production of blown or cut glass bottles and vessels. The cutting of glass ceased to have commenced in 1809 when Edward Yeoman became a freeman glasscutter of the city of York. Another freeman was John Brotherton (1818) who was the only glass maker to vote in the election of that year.

On January the first, 1819 John Krince leased the factory to Henry Frest for one year at a rental of one guinea per acre and the next day he sold him half share in the firm for £2,000. John Krince still has an interest in the firm as late as 1834 when Hargrove tells us that he travelled ^{in 1834} selling his own products. On November 9th 1832 John Krince sold to the glass firm an area of land, 1020 square yards in all, which extended twenty three feet north of the factory. In the deed Henry Frest is named as having paid John Krince, £256, and there is a reference to these two having bought jointly some land to the south of the factory from Sir William Eden. This confirms Hargrove's statement by proving that the two men were partners.

Hargrove tells us that in 1822 the factory passed into the hands of Charles Priestley but he did not have the progress he had hoped for, whilst other York historians state that it passed into the hands of Charles Priestley and lead a somewhat chequered existence until 1835 when Joseph Spence formed the York Flint Glass Company, which within a few decades was to give employment to 30 women and 255 men. These statements are correct but they fail to make any reference to those eventful years; however we can excuse them for they were general historians on York.

In the year 1826 the first definite evidence occurs that Charles Priestley was in any way whatsoever connected with the firm. On June the twelfth of that year he paid Henry Frest £3000 for his

The four shift system was begun in 1797 and the workers had to work alternate shifts; therefore twelve hours a day in the crowded, ill ventilated, and hot atmosphere of the factory of that time.

Along with seven others, he was taken on as an apprentice for two years at one shilling and sixpence a day. He was set to work in the warehouse of the bottle department and he worked from 6-0 a.m. to 5-30 p.m.

His brother and his son were both solicitors.

The directory tells us in 1867 of Bannister Dent, a clerk living in Leather Street and in 1886 he is described as Bannister Dent, a solicitor of 16 Blake St.

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The Lear

The Lear is a hunting word used to describe any wood, copice, or even forests in which stags could find refuge. Layrethorpe in the Middle Ages was one of the city's entrances into the forest of Galtr which would be a lear. Still further back in history Layrethorpe would be a village or thorp which did not join up to the city, thus Layrethorpe will mean the village situated on the edge of a forest. Similarly we can assume that the oven, called the lear, was at one time wood burning, and that the wood came from a forest or lear, hence the name a lear oven.

The York Guide of 1818.

This book while talking about glass contains the following statement which I consider to be very interesting.

'The chemist asserts that there is no substance or body but may be vitrified, that is, converted into glass. By intense heat, even gold itself gives way to the sun's rays collected in a burning glass and becomes glass.'

The names green and blue vitriol for ferrous and copper sulphate may come from this source. The chemist considering the crystals to be glass.

Henry and Edward Crest and others.

Henry Crest, like John Cress, was a trustee to the will of Daniel Knowles. In 1821 he became a freeman of York

He made his will in the twenty second day of May, 1834 and it was proved in the Probate Court of York on January 15th, 1837. Under this will he left his property in the Parish of Huntington to Samuel Crest and the rest of his estate equally amongst his brothers Edward, Samuel and John and his sisters, Elizabeth and Mary Ann Crest. His brothers, William, a non-beneficiary, and Edward Crest were appointed executors.

Edward Crest was a chemist and druggist who married Elizabeth, daughter and co-heiress of Samuel Shablar, sheriff in 1783-4. John Wright was the other sheriff in that year.

Radclyffe

The father of Edward Radcliffe was a millowner of Camfield Hall, near Alfreton, and his mill, wamman Tansley Mill, was near Matlock

Workmen at the factory, 1830-4.

In the 1830 Directory the following skilled craftsmen are mentioned.

Joseph Benson	glass maker	
David Alexander	"	"
John Barnold	"	" and stainer.
William Settle	"	"

In the 1830 election under the old limited franchise James Ryan, glass maker, of Long Cross Lane and John Smith, glass blower, of Skeldergate, voted. But under the franchise of the first Reform Act of 1832 the following voted in 1834.

Henry Atkinson	Glass maker	Cattle market
Joseph Benson	Glass maker	Coney Street
Joseph Barnett	Glass cutter	College St.
James Johnson	Glass maker	Lord Mayor's Walk
James Ryan	Glass maker	Long Cross
Thomas Wilson	Glass maker	Scam Street
William Settle	Glass maker	
Thomas Sagar	Glass blower	Tanner Place
John Smith	Glass blower	Skeldergate.

The Cattles .

Christopher Cattle was a barber and perfumer in the City of York. He became a freeman in 1788, was sheriff in 1803-4 and died on the 9th, September 1830, aged 56. In 1810 he lived in Blake Street. He married three times :-

- a. Sarah Chadwick of Leeds, a. Sept. 1797
a. August 1798 aged 29.
- b. Elizabeth Wetherell of Acorn Grange. She was the widow of Thomas Walker, Glover of York. a. July 1801
a. July 1802
- c. Jane Wilkinson, daughter of Thomas Wilkinson who was the sheriff in 1792-3. She died on June the 13th, 1842, aged 71.

Robert Cattle, brother of the above, was a son of James Cattle of Sheriff Hutton. He settled in York in 1782 and on Dec. 31st, 1795 he joined the firm of Messrs. Hampton and Arince, Jeweller and Silversmiths in Coney Street. When John Arince hit this firm in 1807 Robert became the sole proprietor.

He was first elected a councillor in 1803 and in 1837 he was a member for Gulluhall. Sheriff in 1816-7 he was elected an alderman on the twentieth of December, 1837 and re-elected on the ninth of November 1839. Robert was Lord Mayor in 1840-1 and the next year he became a J. J. He died on October 14th, 1842, aged 70 at Groves House where he had lived as early as 1818.

Messrs. Cattle and Co. rented the navigation of the Toss in about 1818 but though I believe Robert Cattle was the senior partner of this firm I cannot at the time of writing confirm the fact. Later investigations on another section of this book, should yield an answer.

CHAPTER V.

The York Flint Glass Company,
1835-1864.

After the disastrous failure of Charles Priestley, Joseph Spence sponsored the founding of the York Flint Glass Company of which Joseph Spence, James Meek and Thomas Backhouse, Thomas Price, and James Brevin were the leading members. James Brevin, a former employee of the old firm became manager and when he died in 1857 Thomas Backhouse and Thomas Price both withdrew from the firm. George Wilson who had become a freeman of the city in 1834, now became a member of the firm.

The first meeting of the shareholders was held on October 2nd, 1835 and each member of the new firm had to place a fixed sum of money at its disposal within the month. The money, with a further additional sum within three months, had to be deposited in the York City and County Bank. It is apparent that the firm intended to enlarge its premises and in 1839 a second furnace was built for the firm which at that time was known as James Meek and Co., Glass manufacturers of White gate.

In the Directory of the 1845 the firm is referred to has been founded by Meek, Spence, Backhouse and Price; in this case the information given in the introductory paragraph is wrong. However I think that the answer is that Backhouse and Price did withdraw for the 1839 Directory makes no reference to their introduction in interest in the firm.

The firm this time prospered and in 1851 it had an office in London at 6 Harrington Street. The next year it was again enabled to enlarge its premises. (There is a very interesting map of the new factory on page). The firm was now making tumbler, cruet, decanters and table ware and was commencing to make itself a name in the chemical field by producing high quality graduated glass measures and containers. Railway lenses were made at this time for the G.N.E.R. and other railway firms. There was however the burden of government taxes still to be overcome.

In 1852 on the 23rd November, James Meek, Joseph Spence and George Wilson appointed Joseph Rowntree trustee of the firm: certain limitations were of course laid down, but generally meaning in the event of the death of one or more of the partners Joseph assumed control of the firm and acted as a receiver. The firm at this time owned land and works in the City of York, at Leeds and at Haxton; the

The son of Thomas Price became a recorder of the city.

estate here was sold to the Leeds and Yorkshire Land Building and Investment Co. Ltd in August 1961. The factory at York according to an agreement made by Thomas Meek and in October 1835 covered 6161 square yards. The land to the south of it was occupied by Sir William Sten and to the north by William Silberford.

Alexander Meek, son, died in 1862 and since neither Spence nor Wilson had a son they formed a limited liability company in 1864.

Joseph Spence.

The only information that seems to have been preserved concerning this man is that in 1846 he was living at 10 Chancery Lane. Around 1776 there was a stationer called Robert Spence living in the Chancery and in some respects this tends to improve my theory concerning the relationship of Joseph Spence with the Spence who was a member of the stationer, firm of Wilson, Spence, and Dawson. (see the appendix on the Wilsons, Page 4....)

James Meek.

was a farmer of Brompton and latter Kelfield. He married Martha, the daughter and co-heiress of Mr. Newham of Billingham by whom he had a son, James Meek, so commonly known as James Meek, and

1. James Meek, son, married Ann Pearson of Bramham on the 23rd of March, 1813. He died in September, 1861, aged 70. In 1853 he became an alderman, having been elected on the last day of the previous year, and subsequently he was re-elected twice (1855 and 1859). In 1856 he became the first Lord Mayor of the city under the new local government system and he was again the Lord Mayor in 1848-9 and 1850-1. In 1841 he was made a J.P. Sometime around 1873 James Meek, son, built Middlethorpe Lodge and he died here on the 15th December, 1861, at the age of 72. He left at least two sons.
2. The younger of these sons was John Meek, a councillor for Southam Bar in 1841 and 1848.

The eldest son of James Meek, *Knt.*² was born on the 28th of July 1815 and he married :-

- a. Hannah, daughter of John and Mary Kettlewell of Auster Dalby.
- b. Eleanor, only child of Matthew Smith of Scarborough. She died in September, 1874, when aged 51.

A currier like his father, he was elected an alderman on the proposal of James Richardson, in 1853 and he was five times re-elected the last was in 1873. He was thrice the Lord Mayor of York in 1855-6, 1861-6 and in 1866-7. For his services to the city he won a knighthood which the Queen conferred on him on July 7th, 1869.

4. Henry Alfred Meek, recorder of York, 1894-1911, was the second son of Sir James. Born in 1859 he gained an M.A. at Oxford and in 1876 became a barrister of the Inner and Middle Temple. In 1903

¹ Rumour has it that Middlethorpe Lodge is to be pulled down.

² In 1869 Sir James Meek enlarged the Lodge.
³ Of his important part in bringing about the fall of George Hudson, the Railway King, I speak here to make no reference, but the story, "According Brass" gives an accurate and very true picture of the relationship of these two men.

he became a K.C. The same year he married Josephine Hill of Lambrook Square, London West.

The Wibbons.

1. Edward Wilson... see appendix to Chapter II.

2. Thomas Wilson, brother of the above Edward, was the son of Thomas Wilson, a shoemaker. He was married in York Minster on the 7th of January 1733 to Dorothy Dawson. Taking his father into partnership, along with one Spence he founded a printing and wholesale book selling business with premises in High Ouse Gate. They founded in 1751 the York Herald which was published under the name of Wibbon, Spence and Dawson. The firm was later known as Thomas Wilson and Son's.

The Spence who was a member of the firm was probably Robert Spence who in the year 1776 was to be found residing in the Lavant. He joined the freemen of the city as a Stationer. Whether or not there is any relationship between him and a Joseph Spence who founded the York Glass Company in 1835 I cannot say. Perhaps there was for we know that a descendant of Thomas Wilson did join the Glass Company and in the next volume we are to see that a Buckhouse joined the firm of Rowntree. This indicates that in York, as elsewhere, families tended to cling to each other in business.

Thomas Wibbon was sheriff of the city in 1760-1 and he died on October 24th, 1790 at the age of 59.

3. Thomas Wilson, son of the above Thomas, married Dorothy Bilton of Leales Hall. His mother-in-law was Tamar, a daughter of William Wood of Halifax. He became an alderman of York in 1750 and the next year was Lord Mayor, he again held this office in 1806. He died on August 20th, 1837 at Aulford.

4. Joseph Bilton Liddel Wilson was the eldest son of the above Thomas

Thomas Wood Wilson was the second son of the above Thomas. He died at 'The Cave', Aulford, on April 14th, 1858 at the age of 65 and was buried in Aulford. He became an alderman in 1834 and the next year was Lord Mayor under the old system of Local Government. On the closure of his term of office he was re-elected an alderman for a further six years.

Stclair Wilson was a son of the above Thomas, he married Jane, a daughter of Alderman Joseph Buckle in October 1830, at Aulford Church. He died intestate on September 15th, 1842.

5. George Wilson was the son of the above Thomas Wood Wilson or of Stclair Wilson and since it was Alderman Buckle who proposed him to the aldermanic bench in 1853 the latter is more probable. He was a sheriff in 1851-2 and as early as 1848 became a councillor for Castlegate. 1854-5 saw him Lord Mayor but in November 1859

he resigned from the aldermanic bench on account of ill-health. He then left Gate Helmsley where he had been living for some time and he built himself a house adjoining Scaevott, on St. Nicholas Lane. It was probably James Mack, M.P., who persuaded him to live here. Sometime before 1871 he became a J.C. but death permitted him to enjoy this privilege for little time.

CHAPTER VI

The Limited Company : 1864 - 1929

Mr. A. H. Spence, a brother or nephew of Joseph Spence and cousin to Malcolm Spence who was the managing director of the firm around 1910, became joint managing director with Francis Hutchisson, George Wilson and Joseph Spence. I am unable to account for there being four managing directors; I must, however, state that this information came from several sources, all dated 1864 or 1865 and that no one source contained references to more than two managing directors. Perhaps this is due to the misunderstanding~~xx~~ of the principles of the liability companies of that time. The glass works was one of the first limited liability companies in ~~this~~ industry. Joseph Spence died in 1872, Francis Hutchisson emigrated to New Zealand in 1880 and fourteen years later, George Wilson retired, to die in 1909.

The new company began to exploit the chemical industry, and soon its travellers were journeying far and wide to sell its famous "York Measures". The firm was the original patenter of "phototype" recess labels.

Sometime about 1897, Malcolm Spence became Managing Director of the firm and in 1910 he retired from this post, though remaining consulting engineer. Mr. Wilson-Clark now became Secretary and Joint Commercial Manager with Mr. W. W. Langwell. Mr. Langwell gained his experience on the continent as well as in Great Britain. In 1910, Sir Joseph Sykes Rymer,¹ a well known local figure, was Chairman of the Board of Directors; - himself, Malcolm Spence, John Tatham Ware, Charles A. Ridgway and Wilson Clark. It was his wife, Lady Rymer, who opened the new steam plant on August 26th, 1901. She was presented with a souvenir wine glass, which is now part of Mr. Pratt's collection.

Though the firm was considered very modern in 1912, when it had three gas furnaces and gave employment to 255 men and women who made bottles for chemists, doctors, hospitals, museums and for laboratories it was necessary for Mr. Pratt to try to modernise the firm after the first world war. Mr. Pratt, father of the present Chairman, bought the firm during the war on the orders of the Ministry of Munitions. During the period 1918 - 1923 ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ new machinery was installed by the firm and several patents were taken out on new discoveries that had been made. These attempts ~~XXXX~~ at modernisation were, however, of no avail and the firm had to close down.

¹ Mr. Wilson Clark was a relative of George Wilson.

² They made over three thousand different designs of Glass Vessels.

APPENDIX

to

Chapter VI

Patents held by the Glass Company

On May 25th, 1898, the York Glass Company and James Butler, both of Fishergate, York, took out the patents on a measuring jar, which was for use in the chemical and light industries. This jar has a large base holding 50 cc's of liquid and a ~~XXXX~~ long narrow stem of ~~XXXX~~ like volume. By this arrangement, without having a high centre of gravity, which would make it liable to be upset, the jar can measure very accurately between 50 and 100 cc's. James Wilson lived at 18, Fishergate, York. (It is very interesting to note that I know persons who went to school with his daughters. I sincerely hope that, in writing this short history, I shall remind many people of their friends of old, or even near and distant relatives or ancestors).

Between December, 1919 and October, 1923, Mr. W. L. Pratt, with the assistance of his father, C. H. Rankin and Mr. Blumensauer took out at least four patents concerning the delivery of molten metal from a tank furnace.

John Tatham Ware

died in April 1923.

He was a well known and eminent solicitor in York, a director of the Yorkshire Insurance Co, and a staunch churchman and conservative. His father was H. J. Ware, the solicitor, and his son is the Coroner of York.

Sir Joseph Sykes Rymer

A member of an old York family of civic leaders, he was born in 1832 and died on 18th February, 1923. He married in 1864, Sarah Leedham whose father was John Leedham, a ship owner in York. In August, 1926, a memorial window was unveiled to his memory in the Guildhall.

Father of the Corporation for over fifteen years, he first entered the council for Monk Ward in 1868, and remained one of its representatives until his election to the aldermanic bench. Sherriff in 1882-3 he was thrice Lord Mayor between 1887 and 1908, and it was for his public services that he was awarded a knighthood in the New Year's Honours of 1901.

During his period of office as Sherriff, it was his duty to invite the Prince of Wales to lay the foundation stone of the Public Library, and as Lord Mayor, 1887-8, he conferred the honorary freedom

of the city upon the Duke of Clarence and Avon. He was a member of the civic party when Prince Eddie opened new locks on the Ouse at Naburn. When the Royal Agricultural Society had its show at York in 1901, he entertained the Prince and Princess of Wales during their visit and he again had the privilege of making members of the Royal family honorary freemen.

He was Chairman of many companies and a director of numerous others. A conservative in politics, he was leader of the York conservatives between 1899 and 1908.

*See my history of Naburn

CHAPTER VII.

The factory of to-day; its prospects for the future.

When the factory closed down in the year 1923 due to the failure of the workers to adapt themselves to machinery, in place of the old craft methods, the firm was heavily in debt. It therefore sold all the unbuild up land to the south of the factory and a cinema and a Working Men's Club was built upon the land. Its financial problems were successfully settled by becoming an associate company of the National Glass Company, Ltd. to which it had owed £25,000.

In 1929 the firm was restarted by Mr. W.L. Dratt who became chairman of the new board of Directors. Since then the firm has prospered and has completely re-equipped and almost completely re-built the old premises; the rebuilding includes a new production departments and warehouses.

The firm continues to make mainly glass containers for medical and food products and at the moment it is able to give employment to over 600 men and women. The most surprising thing in this age of progress is that the firm still obtains sand from the original quarries. It uses fine Lynn sand from King's Lynn in Norfolk, Sodium Carbonate from Cheshire, and lime from the Buxton area. The great advantage of these raw materials are that they are all home produced. The products are sent all over Great Britain and the factory makes a large contribution to the export trade.

It would appear at the present time that the firm has very good future prospects because of :-

- a. Glass containers are essential to the country owing to there being no substitute for them for certain uses.
- b. The raw materials are almost completely produced in this country. This does not apply in the case of the alternative forms of containers, that is to say, tin cans and cardboard cartons; the main raw materials for both of which have to be imported. Further, the consumption of glass has risen steadily for many years past, and there appears to be no reason why this should not continue.

Here my brief picture of a growing industry must end but I am pleased to say that the present picture of affairs indicates a very good future for York.

The board of Directors, 1934 :-

W.L. Dratt.
S.J. Sellars

Sir Ivo Thomson bt.
Brig. H.A. Macpherson
H. Townsend.