



DONCASTER CIVIC TRUST NEWS

Doncaster and Its Environment

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Two Hundred Years of Banking

Two Hundred Years of Banking in Doncaster

Imposing bank buildings are such an important part of our High Street that it is difficult to imagine the town without them, yet just over 200 years ago such banking services as existed were provided by enterprising shopkeepers.

Banking has a long history. The Jews were the earliest money lenders. Lombard merchants from northern Italy settled in London and established themselves as money lenders after the expulsion of the Jews in the 12th century. The law, about the middle of the 17th century, legalised the giving and taking of interest. Goldsmiths' shops were the equivalent of banks of deposit. In 1694 the Bank of England was established.

In country towns the business of turning a goldsmith's note into cash was entrusted to the principal shopkeeper or innkeeper. Some tradesmen thought it worthwhile to extend their business to include the practice of exchange, deposit and loan. It has been suggested that Thomas Ellis, merchant, six times Mayor of Doncaster, and founder of St. Thomas's Hospital in 1557, came into this description of banker.

The history of banking in Doncaster is involved but for many years the banks were controlled by well known local families such as the Heatons, the Ellisons, the Cookes, the Childers and the Becketts.

Two Early Failures

One person who was definitely engaged in the practice of banking was Thomas Gill. He was the grandson of Phillip Gill, coffee house keeper, Mayor in 1713, and son of Phillip Gill, grocer, tallow chandler and "sope boiler", Mayor in 1764. In the 1760's Phillip, the younger, was established in French Gate, only a few doors from the Baxter Gate corner. Thomas lived on the opposite side of the street. In 1770 Thomas bought a house in High Street almost opposite the Mansion House where he carried on the business of grocer and banker. The land tax return of 1775 shows he owned three tenements in Bower's Fold and a close in the Chequers (near Waterdale). However misfortune struck and a commission of bankruptcy was issued against him in 1779.

By the following year he had returned to French Gate to a house adjoining his mother's. Here he continued his trade of grocer. He announced in the Yorkshire Advertiser of February 17, 1787, that he had for sale fine new red and white Dutch clover seed, saint foin, rye grass, rib, and best Norfolk turnip seed. The window tax return of 1789 shows he had two female servants but in 1792 he was sued by William Heaton, banker, for £13,000. On August 21 Thomas Gill was conveyed from the Common Gaol to the Fleet Prison. In 1793 he was made bankrupt. He died at Tickhill in 1797, aged 63 years.

We know Thomas Gill issued his own notes by an item in the Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Lincolnshire Gazette of August 2, 1795, warning that several notes of 5 gns. and £10 each, dated Doncaster 1777, signed Thomas Gill, and payable there on demand or 14 days after sight at Thomas Wilton's, 35 Cannon Street, London, had been offered for payment in this country but were of no value, the parties concerned having been made bankrupt, several years previously.

Thomas had ten children of whom four girls and one boy survived infancy. Cordelia, the youngest girl, lived in Prince's Street but in 1842 removed to the bow fronted house in Hall Gate, at the corner of Prince's Street, previously lived in by Henry Bower, president of the Subscription Library. She made numerous gifts to charity. She died in 1851, aged 77 years. A memorial window to her in St. George's church was destroyed in the fire of 1853.

Thomas's only surviving son, Henry, practised in Beverley and Hull as a surgeon but he died in 1814, aged 37 years. He left an only daughter, Catherine, who married the Rev. Charles Mottram, vicar of St. George's, Kidderminster. She inherited property from her aunts, including a close in the Chequers which was occupied for many years as a paddock by Lord Glasgow. In 1868 a new street was laid out across it from Waterdale to Hyde Park. The street was called Catherine Street and a short street off it was called Gill Street.

In 1774 Thomas Gill was churchwarden at the parish church with William Heaton. The Heatons had been established in Fisher Gate as tanners since the start of the 17th century. They were prominent in public affairs and occupied the mayoral chair seven times between 1720 and 1792. William Heaton was five years younger than Thomas Gill and was a mercer. He was also an entrepreneur - in 1778 he built the round shambles in the market place on the site of the Boot and Shoe Inn. The shambles contained 26 butchers' stalls and were demolished for the building of the market hall in 1847. In addition he was a banker.

William Heaton was Mayor in 1789. The window tax return for that year shows he had two female servants, a male servant and a two wheel carriage. He occupied extensive premises opposite the Butter Cross - the site of the property is now occupied by Littlewood's store.

His banking operations were no more successful than Thomas Gill's. In 1793 he was £20,000 in debt and his possessions were confiscated. His property in the market place, a house in St. George Gate, 15 cottages and a malt kiln in Fisher Gate, the round shambles and 18 acres of land were put up for auction. His furniture, china, silverware, mercery, linen and woollen goods were disposed of at a three day sale. In 1795, D. Boys, bookseller, announced he was removing to the shop, late Mr. Heaton's Bank.

The cause of William Heaton's downfall is uncertain. We know he sued Thomas Gill for £13,000 in 1792. An interesting possibility is that he was involved in the Rev. Edmund Cartwright's experiments with the power loom and wool combing machinery at Doncaster. Edmund Cartwright said his chief sorrow at his financial failure was not for his own loss but for that of his friends who had joined in his ventures. The upper classes of the town were not favourably disposed towards his experiments, considering them improper for a clergyman. So it seems that he turned to men of commerce for assistance.

William Heaton was four years older than Edmund Cartwright whose connection with Doncaster was through his wife, Alice, daughter of Richard Whitaker, grocer. His premises opposite the Butter Cross he sold to Thomas Heaton, father of William, and it was in Richard Whitaker's former shop that William Heaton established his bank. Edmund Cartwright came to Doncaster in 1786, a year after his wife's death and took up residence in a house in Baxter Gate (now Wade's store) opposite the end of St. George Gate and only a few yards from William Heaton's premises.

The first factory for the use of Cartwright's machines was erected off Wood Street in 1787 by Copley, Wrightson and Caley. Copley was Thomas Copley of Nether Hall, Wrightson was Thomas Wrightson, a draper on Goose Hill, where now stands the corner of the fish market, and Caley was Francis Caley, a surgeon, also living near the Butter Cross in a house adjoining the Black Bull. Mrs. Wrightson and Mrs. Caley were sisters. Francis Caley and William Heaton were cousins.

In 1786 Cartwright, Gill, Wrightson and Heaton were amongst those connected with the establishment of Sunday Schools in Doncaster. In 1787 Cartwright opened a factory in Fisher Gate adjoining the wharf of Henry Heaton, William's elder brother. William Foreman was employed as clerk in Cartwright's factory for some years and in 1791 and 1792 occupied a house of William Heaton's in St. George Gate. Perhaps it was more than a coincidence that William Heaton and Edmund Cartwright failed financially within a few months of each other.

The Establishment of the Old Bank

Henry Heaton was three years older than his brother William. He was a waggoner and wharfinger and was Mayor in 1779 and 1792. Tomlinson includes a list of Mayors in his history of Doncaster. He describes Henry Heaton as draper and banker in 1792. This is open to doubt for Henry Heaton resided in Fisher Gate until his retirement in 1800 and there is no evidence of him being engaged in the drapery business. His involvement in banking is uncertain. His sister Margaret married Abraham Ellison, a merchant of Thorne, in 1773 and the Ellisons were involved in the establishment of the first successful bank in Doncaster.

In 1785 a co-partnership was formed for the exclusive business of money bank. The partners were Richard Ellison of Thorne (Abraham's elder brother), George Cooke of Street (Eden) thorp, Childers Walbanke Childers of Cantley Lodge and Thomas Swann of Doncaster. Richard Ellison was a partner in Smith, Ellison & Co. bankers of Lincoln and Thomas Swann came from a family connected with banking in York. The bank was generally known as Ellison & Co. and operated from a house in the High Street, probably no. 25. Thomas Swann, the resident partner, was described as a smart man who always carried a cane.

In 1788 only three years after its foundation, the bank moved to more extensive premises. These occupied the site of Thomas Gill's banking shop and banking has continued on this site down to the present day. George Whitaker bought Thomas Gill's premises in 1779 and it was probably he who rebuilt them in an Adamesque style. His brother, John Whitaker, wine merchant and Mayor in 1778 and 1784, built a similar elegant house on the opposite side of High Street, between the Mansion House and Cleveland Street.

The French Wars (1793-1815) led to a series of financial crises which resulted in the failure of many banks but the support of two of the principal local landed families, the Cookes and the Childers, enabled the Doncaster Bank to survive.

Richard Ellison died in 1792 and his place was taken by his son John. The partnership becoming Cooke, Childers, Swann and Ellison. It was known as Cooke & Co., this changed to Yarborough & Co. in 1802 on George Cooke taking the additional surname of Yarborough. Childers Walbanke Childers died in 1802 and his place was taken by his eldest son John Walbanke Childers of Carr House. Thomas Swann died in 1803, aged 59 years and Leonard Walbanke Childers, second son of Childers Walbanke Childers became a partner. He resided at the bank until his marriage in 1807 to Sarah Ann, daughter of Sir Charles Kent of Grantham House when he removed to Finningley Park.

In 1810 John Ellison died and in 1812 John Walbanke Childers died. The partnership was reformed as Yarborough, Childers, Foljambe and Parker which acquired the Worksop bank of Sir Thomas Woollaston White. George Parker was the brother in law of John Ellison and the two had been in partnership at Thorne as timber merchants. His brother Hugh Parker was a founder of the banking firm of Parker, Shore and Co, Sheffield (established 1774, failed 1843). George Parker married Diana Elizabeth, daughter of George Cooke Yarborough.

In January 1818 George Cooke Yarborough died, aged 80 years. He was the last of the original partners and served 33 years. His place was taken by his great nephew Sir William Bryan Cooke, the eighth baronet, of Wheatley, aged 35 years. He became the leading figure in the bank for more than 33 years.



25 High Street, Doncaster

The New Bank

Just seven years after William Heaton's failure a new bank opened, only a short distance from where his banking shop had been. The New Bank opened 25 August 1800 on Goose Hill, near the Butter Cross. The partners were John Leatham, James Jackson, Thomas William Tew, and Edward Trueman. A few months previously the bank had established itself at Pontefract and in 1808 it acquired a branch at Wakefield.

The Doncaster partners were James Jackson and Thomas William Tew, the latter being the husband of James Jackson's cousin, Caroline. James Jackson was born in 1767 the son of James Jackson, a waggoner (Jackson's waggons left the Rein Deer Inn every day for London) and his wife Mary, daughter of John Patrick who had an extensive waggon trade on the Great North Road. T. W. Tew was a Pontefract solicitor who resided, for a time, at Bawtry Hall. James Jackson was Mayor in 1803 and 1814.

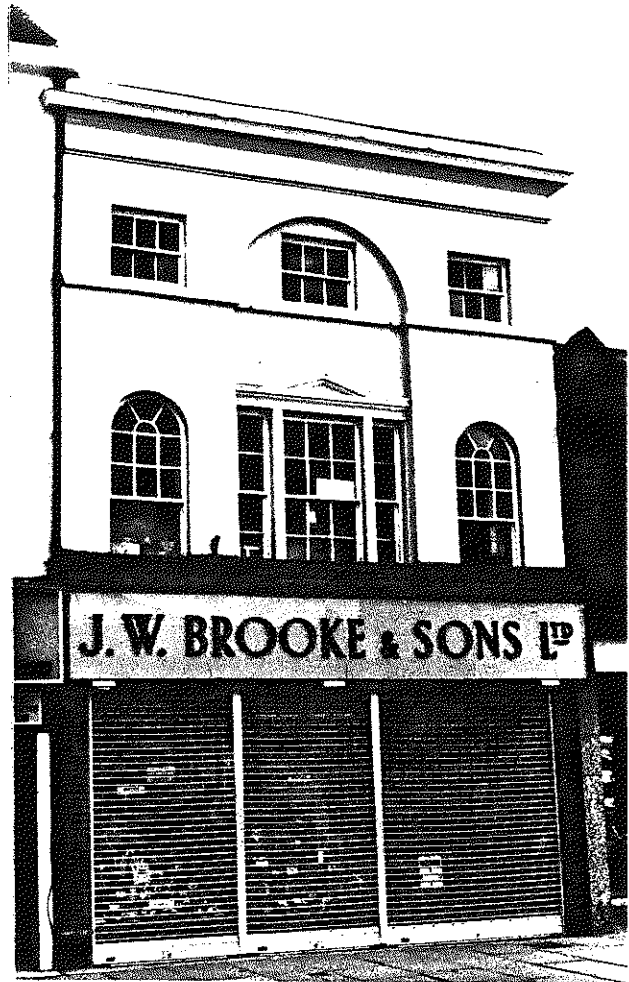
In 1812 the New Bank moved to High Street taking the house that had been Alderman John Whitaker's. James Jackson lived at the bank until his death in 1821 when T. W. Tew removed from Bawtry to Doncaster. Prior to 1812 James Jackson lived in an elegant house at the top of Hall Gate (40).

A directory of 1822 lists the bank as Leatham, Tew, Trueman, Tew & Co. Edward Tew, son of T. W. Tew had been made a partner. In 1823 John Leatham of Pontefract died, aged 84 years. He was a member of the Society of Friends. Other members of the family joined the bank which was generally known as Leatham, Tew & Co. T. W. Tew died in 1832, aged 67 years, having been a partner in the bank for 32 years. Edward Tew was living at 17 South Parade in 1829 but may have moved to the bank after his father's death but by 1837 he had moved to Heath, near Wakefield.

The New Bank, High Street, 1812-1847

The bank had a large garden extending to Cleveland Street. Lady Carlingford once occupied a house on the site. In 1614 Charles I dined with Lady Carlingford and planted a pear tree in the garden.

The tree was removed in 1841 to make way for the 11 houses which still front Cleveland Street, though they are now occupied as shops.



The New Bank, Goose Hill, 1800-1812

This is probably a re-fronting of an older building.



Competition and Union

The New Bank developed as a serious rival to the Old Bank and in a few years acquired the account of the Doncaster Corporation. However the Old Bank was strengthened by the entry of William Bryan Cooke on 1 January 1819, the partners becoming Cooke, Childers, Foljambe, and Parker. W. B. Cooke married Isabella Cecilia Viviana Middleton, daughter of Sir William Middleton of Belsay Castle, Northumberland, in April 1823 and two months later he succeeded to the baronetcy on the death of his father Sir George Cooke.

In 1823 George Parker purchased the Streetthorpe and Armthorpe estates of his late father in law, George Cooke Yarborough, and took up residence at Streetthorpe having previously lived at Woodlands and Wilsic.

Leonard Walbanke Childers removed from Finningley Park in 1817 and probably lived at the bank. He was elected a common councilman in 1806 and in 1822 he was elected Mayor. On 6 June 1822 the Corporation resolved that its bank account should be moved to Childers & Co.

In 1825 the bank had branches at Doncaster, Worksop and Retford. In 1826 the Corporation moved its account from Sir W. B. Cooke & Co. back to Leatham, Tew & Co. The following year Leonard Walbanke Childers died, aged 57 years. This ended the Childers connection with the Old Bank.

The partnership was reformed as Cooke, Foljambe, Parker and Walker. The date of Thomas Walker's entry into the bank is not certain but he was a very young man. His father was William Walker of Wilsic who was deputy recorder of Doncaster and was held in high regard in the town. William Walker's sister in law was married to George Parker's brother, Hugh Parker.

Sir W. B. Cooke was active in the public life of the town. In November 1835 he chaired a public meeting called to consider the steps to be adopted to secure the election of persons of liberal and reform principle to the Town Council. In 1836 the old Corporation was dissolved and elections were held for a reformed Town Council. Sir W. B. Cooke headed the poll, George Parker was also elected and Thomas Walker was elected an Alderman.

Sir W. B. Cooke was chosen the first Mayor of the reformed Town Council and at the end of his year in office he was thanked for his conciliatory disposition, his general urbanity and his engaging suavity of manner to all classes. He was succeeded as Mayor by Thomas Walker who appears to have been the last banker to hold this office.

In 1838 Richard Dennison, the Council's Steward and Treasurer died. He received a salary of £250 a year, lived at the Mansion House, was allowed one female servant and was provided with coals. The Council, lumbered with the debts of the old Corporation, decided to economise and appointed Henry Frederick Jordan committee clerk at £60 a year to keep the books and accounts of the Council and to collect the water rates and tolls and Charles Jackson, of the New Bank, was appointed Treasurer (unpaid).

Charles Jackson was the third son of James Jackson and entered the New Bank after the death of T. W. Tew in 1832. Charles Jackson was born in 1809; he was educated at Richmond, Yorkshire, trained as a barrister and was a member of Lincoln's Inn. In December 1832 he was elected Clerk to the Commissioners of Sewers of Hatfield Chace in place of the late T. W. Tew. He was proposed by W. B. Wrightson and seconded by Edmund Denison, and defeated a candidate proposed by Sir. W. B. Cooke. Charles Jackson had an interest in local history and after his election as Borough Treasurer was allowed access to the Corporation's archives. In August 1840 he had a fortunate escape from injury when he was driving his gig down the hill at Cusworth and a swarm of hornets flew out of the hedge and settled on his horse which galloped away, out of control, but it was brought to a halt on the Friars' Bridge.

George Parker died in 1839, aged 65 years. By this time the Old Bank had established a branch at Thorne. The census of 1841 shows that Thomas Walker and his wife were living at the bank with three menservants and four female servants. Charles Tootle, banker's clerk, and his wife and daughter were also living at the bank; they had one female servant.

Charles Jackson and Thomas Walker, who were of a similar age, were made justices of the peace in 1836. In 1842 Charles Jackson married Caroline Parker, daughter of Hugh Parker and niece of the late George Parker. The Jacksons took up residence at 50 Hall Gate, the house built by Joseph Lockwood, sculptor, for his own occupation. Caroline's sister Alice was married to the brother of Thomas Walker.

Charles Jackson and Thomas Walker seem to have been friends for they often appeared at public meetings together. Thomas Walker was an active supporter of the proposed Great Northern Railway. In 1845 he had a disagreement in a Town Council meeting with Sir Isaac Morley, a director of the Midland Railway Company which was opposed to the Great Northern, following which Thomas Walker resigned from the Council.

The Great Northern Bill (London & York) was bitterly opposed in its passage through Parliament. Public meetings were held in the town at which Thomas Walker and Charles Jackson spoke and petitions were presented to Parliament in the Bill's favour. On the Bill's successful passage through Parliament in 1846 both men were part of a small deputation that went to see Mr. Cubitt, the engineer, to impress upon him the advantages of Doncaster as the site for the Plant Works.

In September, 1846, a public dinner was held in the Mansion House in honour of Edmund Denison and Robert Baxter; Thomas Walker was chairman and Charles Jackson was vice chairman. In view of the collaboration between the two men it is no surprise that the union of the Doncaster banks of Sir William Cooke and Leatham, Tew & Co. was announced on 31 December 1847. The house of Sir William Cooke was joined by Granville Harcourt Vernon of Grove Hall, near Retford and Charles Jackson. The Wakefield and Pontefract banks of Leatham, Tew & Co. continued as before, eventually being taken over by Barclay's Bank in 1912.

One reason for Sir William's willingness to amalgamate was his failing health, another reason was competition from the joint stock banks. For many years banks had been limited to a maximum of six partners. The Bank Act of 1826 allowed the formation of joint stock banks, with the right to issue notes, outside a 65 mile radius of London and in 1833 they were allowed to do business in London. The first of the joint stock banks to become established in Doncaster was the Yorkshire District Banking Co. which opened a branch in the Magdalens on 22 November 1834. In February 1836 it removed to the premises of Mr. Wright, druggist, at 3 High Street. By the end of its second year in existence the Yorkshire District Banking Co. was paying an 8% dividend and had branches in 20 of the principal towns of the county. The bank got into difficulty through mis-management but was successfully re-organised as the Yorkshire Banking Co.

The bank notes of Sir W. B. Cooke & Co. bore a representation of the ancient cross of Ote de Tilli and those of Leatham & Co. a rampant lion with a banner which formed the crest of the old municipal borough.

The Savings Bank

A meeting was held on 28 September 1817 to consider the propriety of establishing a Savings Bank for the benefit of the labouring and industrious classes. A committee of local gentlemen was appointed to undertake the management of the bank and Yarborough, Childers, Foljambe and Parker were appointed treasurers. The bank opened in a room in the Town Hall, in the Magdalens, on 13 October 1817. Opening hours were from 12 to 1 on Mondays and 10 to 11 on Saturdays. In spite of the limited opening hours the bank had deposits of £10,000 by the end of the first year. The minimum deposit was one shilling, the maximum £30 in any one year, interest was paid on deposits once they had reached 16s. 8d.

The Savings Bank operated from a room in the Town Hall until March 1833 when it took the dining room of Mr. Casson's house in Baxter Gate. At the general meeting in April 1842 it was decided to erect a building on a site contiguous to the Butter Cross but in July 1842 it was resolved that the premises of Mr. Chatham, opposite the Mansion House be bought for the new building. The first stone was laid on 6 March 1843. The architects were Hurst & Moffatt of Doncaster and the stone was given by Colonel Fullerton of Thrybergh from his Denaby quarries. Accommodation for the bank secretary was incorporated in the building. In 1894 when the Savings Bank was compulsorily wound up and the business transferred to the Post Office Savings Bank there were 5,000 depositors.

The Savings Bank was the corner section, between the pilasters.

The premises were acquired by the Yorkshire Penny Bank in 1895. At first the bank was open on Monday and Saturday only. After a few years it adopted normal banking hours. The two storey extension to Scot Lane was added in 1906, the architect was F. Masters of Doncaster. Some years ago the cornice to the extension was removed revealing the old buildings behind.

The extension to High Street dates from 1923. The bank dropped the Penny from its name in 1959.



Cooke's Bank becomes Beckett's Bank

Following the union of the Old Bank and the New Bank Thomas Walker moved to Warmsworth, in 1853 he removed to Hall Cross House, the site of which is near the Civic Theatre and in 1859 he purchased the Woodlands.

Charles Jackson took up residence at the Old Bank. In 1846 the Town Hall in the Magdalens was demolished to make way for the new market building and the ruins of the church of St. Mary Magdalene were found incorporated in the structure of the Town Hall. The ruins were taken away but Charles Jackson rescued part of a column, a capital and a base which he placed in the garden of the bank. They remained there until 1902 when building work required their removal and they found their way to the garden in Regent Square.

Sir W. B. Cooke died in 1851, aged 69 years, widely mourned by the townsfolk. The partnership was reformed and comprised Isabella Cecilia Viviana Cooke (widow of Sir W. B. Cooke), Granville Harcourt Vernon of Grove Hall, Thomas Walker, Charles Jackson and Henry Beilby William Milner of West Retford House. F. T. Foljambe died in 1847 - his brother G. S. Foljambe married Harriet, daughter of Sir William Mordant Milner of Nun Appleton, and it was Sir William's second son, H. B. W. Milner who was taken into the bank.

In 1862 Charles Edward Stephen Cooke, second son of Sir W. B. Cooke, succeeded his mother in the bank. He was born in 1829, was educated at Eton and St. John's College, Cambridge, after which he entered the Admiralty Office and became Private Secretary to the Chief Lord of the Admiralty. He lived at 23 South Parade, the property now occupied by Dibb & Clegg, solicitors.

Charles Jackson was actively involved in the life of the town; he was on the committee for rebuilding St. George's Church after the fire of 1853 and was a charity trustee as well as being president of the Subscription Library. However he was badly hit by the failure of Overend Gurney & Co., a leading banking company, in 1866 and retired from the banking scene. He was succeeded as Borough Treasurer by C. E. S. Cooke. In 1867 the bank of Cooke & Co. came to an end after 82 years in existence. Thomas Walker and G. H. Vernon retired and C. E. S. Cooke and H. B. W. Milner joined Beckett's Bank of Leeds which took over the banks of Cooke & Co. at Doncaster, Worksop and Retford.

Beckett & Co. was established by John Beckett of Barnsley. He joined a Leeds bank in 1772 as a junior partner and became senior partner in 1790. He was created a baronet in 1813. The bank was carried on by his sons Christopher and William, and after Christopher's death in 1847 his other sons Thomas and Edmund joined the partnership. Edmund took the additional name of Denison, lived in Doncaster and became chairman of the Great Northern Railway Co. The construction of the line, the greatest railway project ever to be undertaken in this country, demanded his full attention. He summoned his third son, William, from Cambridge to join the bank. By the time the amalgamation with Cooke & Co. came about Edmund Denison was senior partner.

The change of company brought about a new look for the Old Bank. Its stuccoed front may have been elegant but it was out of fashion. The bank was given a new stone facade and the interior was made more impressive by removing the bedroom over the banking hall; B. S. Brundell was the architect.

Edmund Denison, or Sir Edmund Beckett, as he became in 1872, died in 1874. His second son, Christopher, joined his brother, William, in the bank. Charles Cooke remained as resident partner at Doncaster. In 1874 he married Lady Mary Louisa Stewart, second daughter of the ninth Earl of Galloway, and removed to St. Catherine's, Loversall.

In 1894 Charles Cooke gave £11,000 for the building of St. Peter's Church, Bentley, as a memorial to his parents. At the time of his death in 1895 he was the senior partner in the bank; Christopher, deputy chairman of the Great Northern Railway, having died in 1884 and William having been killed by a train in 1890. Rupert E. Beckett, aged 24 years, son of William and grandson of Edmund Denison, took over as resident partner and became Borough Treasurer. He lived at the Lodge, South Parade, for several years.

More Competition

The power of the joint stock banks was growing and many of the private banks were taken over in the process.

By 1890 it was realised that the area around Doncaster was going to be mined for coal. Cadeby colliery was opened in 1893. Doncaster's development into a thriving shopping, trading and banking centre for the new coalfield area was forecast.

The Yorkshire Banking Co. rebuilt its premises at 3 High Street in a more imposing style in 1885 (right), architect F. Masters of Doncaster. The upper floors were not designed as offices but as living accommodation for the manager.

In 1886 the London & Yorkshire Bank arrived in Doncaster, adapting a house, known as the Friary at the corner of High Street and Priory Place, formerly lived in by Dr. Dunn. Shortly after the York City and County Bank took premises at the corner of Baxter Gate and High Street.



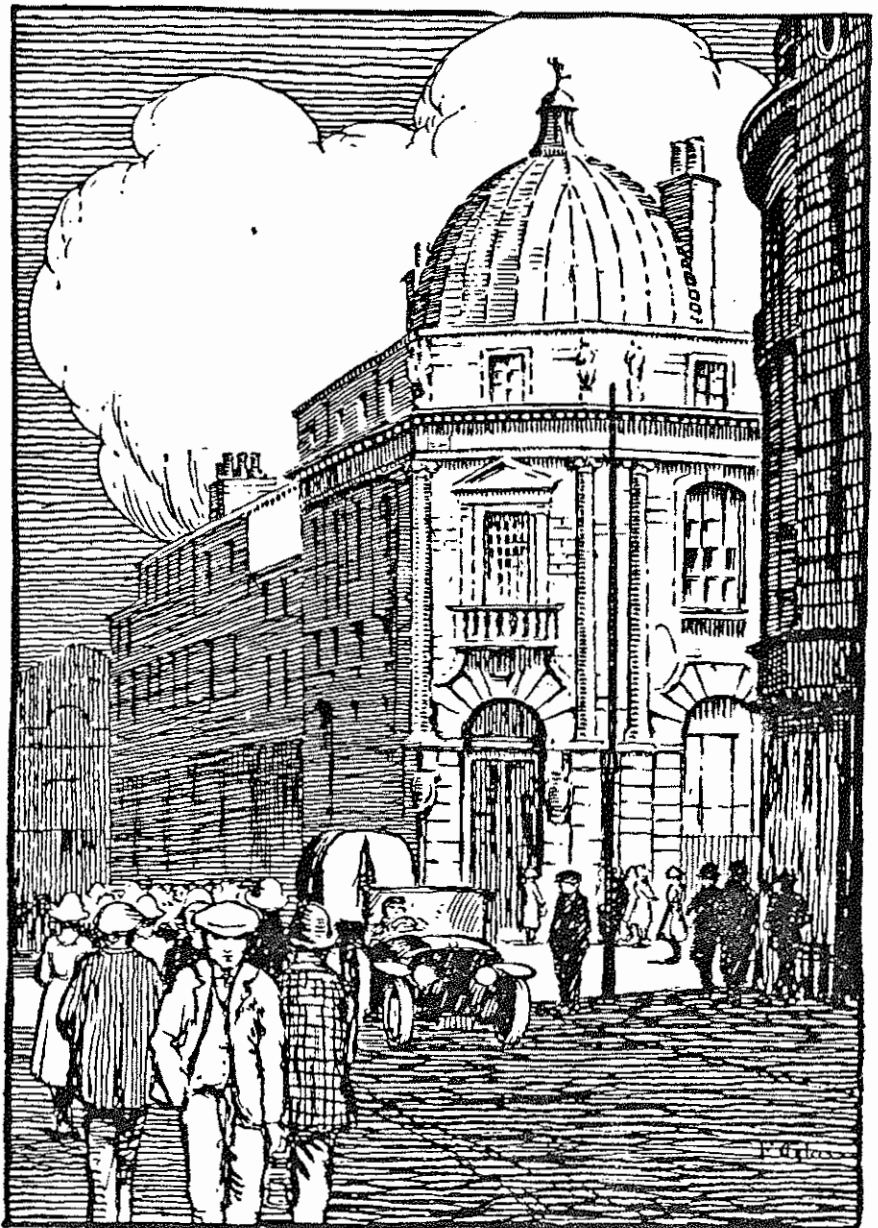
In 1895 the York City and County Bank acquired the property between its bank on the corner of Baxter Gate and the Yorkshire Banking Company's premises, and erected a new building to the design of Walter Brierley of Demaine and Brierley of York.

It was the first time that white Portland stone had been used in Doncaster. The building with its statuary and green, copper clad dome, topped by the figure of the winged Mercury, the god of trade, holding a herald's staff, was an attractive addition to the town centre.

The bank occupied only part of the ground floor. The Home & Colonial Tea Company had a shop in Baxter Gate and Richard Ecroyd Clark had a stockbroker's office in High Street.

The reaching of coal at Bentley and Brodsworth in 1908 coincided with the arrival of more banks.

The Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Bank built premises at 21 Baxter Gate and Barclay & Co. took shop premises at the corner of French Gate and St. Sepulchre Gate and converted them into a bank.



James 24

778 line.

Just behind them in the rush to gain a foot hold in the booming town were Lloyds Bank which took premises at the corner of Baxter Gate and St. George Gate and the National Provincial Bank of England which established a branch at 7 Baxter Gate.

How Rupert Beckett reacted to the challenge to the Old Bank's supremacy we do not know but he must have been concerned when the National Provincial Bank of England acquired the premises adjoining the Old Bank, at 13-14 High Street, immediately opposite the Mansion House. The property, once owned by Sarah Tootle and Benjamin Lamplough a hatter, was then Hinchcliffe & Allott's, outfitters. In 1912, C. H. Brodie, the first London architect to design a Doncaster bank, converted the premises and put on a substantial stone facade.



The Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Bank: 1908 designed by Phillip Brundell (an early member of the Doncaster Civic Trust). The bank was taken over by London County Westminster & Parr's Bank which later sold it Martin's Bank who were taken over by Barclay's Bank who disposed of the property.

In 1912 Lloyd's Bank rebuilt 55 High Street, at one time the office of Robert Baxter, the solicitor to the Great Northern Railway Co. in its early days. The new bank was designed by Sidney Kitson of Leeds and the design was exhibited at the Royal Academy. It was the first commercial building in Doncaster to have a lift. There is a lot of inventive detail and the panels between the first and second floor windows seem to float. The architect wanted to express the fact that unlike earlier buildings with columns which were load bearing this building was different and had steel stanchions to carry the weight.

In 1914 the Sheffield Banking Co. opened a branch in the Clock Corner building, 1 Baxter Gate.

An Amalgamation of Banks

Towards the end of the 19th century a process of amalgamation set in with the result that in a few years the ordinary banks were gathered together into five great organisations: Barclay's, Lloyd's, Midland, National Provincial and Westminster banks.

The Yorkshire Banking Co. amalgamated with the London City & Midland in 1902. Its neighbour, the York City & County Bank amalgamated with the London Joint Stock Bank in 1912. The two London banks united in 1921 with the cumbersome title of the London Joint City & Midland, which was soon shortened to the Midland, which now had two adjoining banks in the town.

It enlarged the banking space in the Baxter Gate corner building by taking in the shop and the ground floor office, concentrated its business there, and in 1925 disposed of the former Yorkshire Banking Co's premises to Barclay's Bank.

The London County Westminster & Parr's Bank, shortened to the Westminster in 1923, first appeared in Doncaster in 1920 when it took over the Nottingham & Nottinghamshire Bank. However its great success came at the end of 1921 when it gained control of Beckett's Bank which at the time was one of the last private banks in existence and had 37 branches.

Rupert Beckett remained resident partner at the Old Bank until 1921 when he became a director of the Westminster. The man who spent so many years on the spot where Thomas Gill had engaged in his ill fated banking enterprise became one of the most important bankers in the country - after some years as vice chairman he was appointed chairman of the Westminster Bank in 1930 and only retired in 1950 at the age of 79 years. He remained a director until his death in 1955. He was Borough Treasurer until 1927 when Doncaster became a county borough.



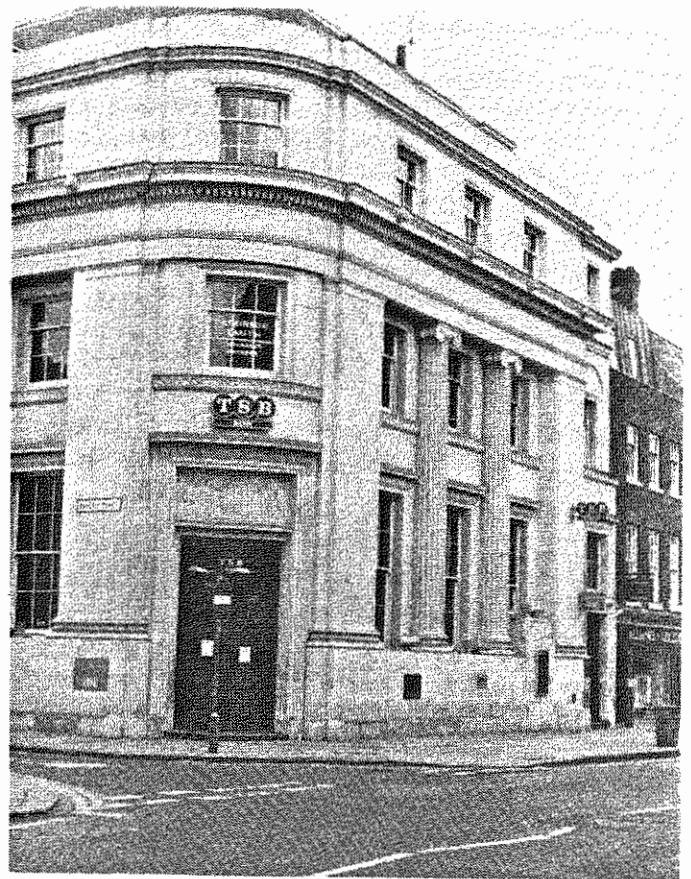
Lloyd's Bank, 1912



William Deacon's Bank, 1923

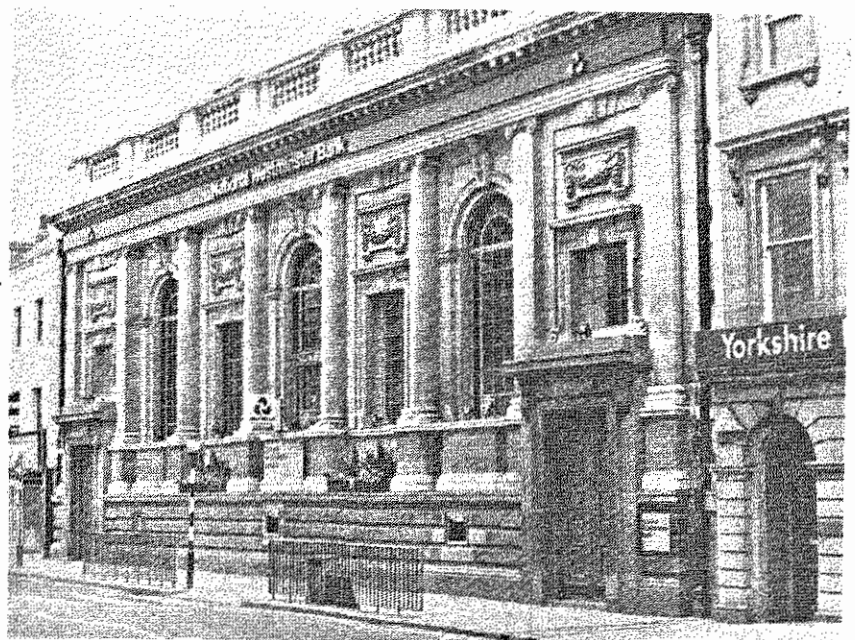
In 1923 Doncaster was a very prosperous town - new collieries were at work all round the area, the Plant Works produced the "Flying Scotsman" and the Doncaster Regional Plan forecast the region would become one of the chief manufacturing centres in the north of England. It is not surprising that three of the town's most substantial bank buildings were planned at this time.

William Deacon's bank was built in St. Sepulchre Gate to the design of W. Cecil Jackson of Chesterfield. In 1904 the London & Yorkshire Bank at the corner of High Street and Priory Place became the Union of London & Smith's Bank. The National Provincial Bank of England at 13/14 High Street joined with the Union of London & Smith's Bank in 1918 to form the National Provincial & Union Bank of England which soon after absorbed the Sheffield Banking Co. It was decided to build a new bank on the site of the old London & Yorkshire Bank, taking in the plot of an adjoining property in High Street. The business of the London & Yorkshire was transferred to the National Provincial Bank of England whilst the rebuilding took place. The new bank opened in 1924 when the business of all three banks was merged there. The new bank was a handsome structure with fine Ionic columns. It was designed by a leading London architect and is an excellent example of the work of Harold Arnold & Son, contractors of Doncaster. The Corporation paid £400 for the Bank to round the corner.



The Old Bank's premises were now barely adequate to meet the needs of the growing town and a plan was prepared to return it to its leading position. This involved acquiring the adjoining bank premises recently vacated by the National Provincial & Union Bank of England, demolishing it and constructing half of the new bank on the site, transferring the business to the completed half, demolishing the Old Bank and the building of the second half on its site. The National Provincial Bank of England building was demolished in 1924, only 12 years after its formation. The building work took four years to complete and the new bank was opened on 30 April 1928. The architect was Walter Brierley of York who designed the York City & County Bank of 1897. He was referred to as the Lutyens of the North. His design was exhibited at the Royal Academy where it was regarded as reaching the high water mark of bank design.

The handsome classical elevation accords well with the Mansion House which it reflects in its round headed windows, carved heads and festoons of fruit and flowers. However the chief glory of the building is its magnificent banking hall which is a double cube, 90' x 45' x 45', and which was considered by Inigo Jones, the great Renaissance architect to be an ideal proportion. Unfortunately Brierley never saw the finished effect, he died in 1926.



It seems that once again the town was indebted to the Becketts. Edmund Beckett Denison brought the Great Northern Railway and the Plant Works to the town, his eldest son, Lord Grimthorpe, took a leading part in the rebuilding of St. George's church and the building of St. James', St. Mary's and St. Jude's, and his grandson, Rupert Beckett was connected with the building of the town's grandest bank.

The Last 60 Years

Further amalgamations took place. In 1968 the National Provincial and the Westminster merged to form the National Westminster, and in 1969 Barclays Bank absorbed Martin's Bank. The National Westminster decided to concentrate its business at the Old Bank and the premises of the National Provincial were put on the market. In 1976 a planning application was made for the demolition of the building and for the redevelopment of the site for offices but the listing of the building as being of special architectural interest by the DoE saved the day. The York County Savings Bank opened a branch in Priory Place in 1925 and in 1932 moved to Lockwood House, 50 Hall Gate. It organised saving schemes in schools. In 1975 it was incorporated into the Trustee Savings Bank of Yorkshire and Lincolnshire. The Trustee Savings Bank moved into the National Provincial Bank premises in 1977. In 1986 the Trustee Savings Bank was privatised.

Post war prosperity and the expansion of the town centre led to the banks opening further branches. Barclay's Bank opened a branch in Kingsway House, Hall Gate, in 1960. In 1973 Barclay's acquired Jackson's Garage in Hall Gate and erected new bank premises, which do little for the street scene. The bank opened in February 1974 when its Kingsway House branch closed. Dreams of a new civic centre encouraged banks to move to the Waterdale area. Lloyd's opened a branch in Waterdale in 1965 and the National Westminster opened a branch in Kingsgate in 1969.



Barclay's Bank, Hall Gate, 1974

The Yorkshire Penny Bank dropped the Penny from its name in 1959. It is now owned by Barclay's, Lloyd's, National Westminster and Royal Bank of Scotland. In 1965 it opened a branch at 21 Printing Office Street. When this proved inadequate the Yorkshire Bank moved not towards the civic centre site but towards the Arndale Centre. It acquired the site of the Elephant Hotel in St. Sepulchre Gate. It erected new premises, faced in York stone, which opened in 1977. An unusual feature is the positioning of the banking hall on the first floor. This branch has proved to be more successful than those that moved towards Waterdale.



Yorkshire Bank, St. Sepulchre Gate, 1977

This article has to be concluded on a sad note. The National Westminster Bank has decided it requires more space and has applied for permission to insert a mezzanine floor across part of the magnificent banking hall. The Trust believes the extra accommodation could be provided by building over the car park at the rear of the bank. The spoiling of Brierley's masterpiece would be a poor way for the Bank to mark its 200th anniversary.

E. L. Braim

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