TRADE AND TRAFFIC ON THE TRENT SINCE 1850

In January 2013 the Department of History of the University of Nottingham received an award from the Arts and Humanities Research Council to undertake a co-production project under the Council's Connected Communities Programme on the history of commercial navigation on the Trent since the mid nineteenth century. This is being done in association with the Newark Heritage Barge CIO, the Railway & Canal Historical Society and a number of other voluntary organisations and individuals interested in the history of the river. One of the intended outputs is a full-length academic monograph on the subject. The text that follows is an early draft of a chapter of such a book. It is being made available at this stage in the hope of attracting comment, criticism, corrections and additions. It should not be cited elsewhere. Please send all such comments or other enquiries about the project to Philip Riden (philip.riden@nottingham.ac.uk).

Chapter 000

WHARVES ON THE LOWER TRENT

Introduction

Below Gainsborough, there appear to have been only two landing places of any importance before 1800: West Stockwith, at the mouth of the Idle Navigation on the west bank of the Trent, and Burton Stather, just above Trent Falls on the east bank. Stockwith gained in importance after the opening of the Chesterfield Canal in 1777, which entered the Trent about half a mile south of the junction with the Idle. A second interchange point developed from about 1802 lower down the west bank of the river at Keadby, following the opening of the Stainforth & Keadby Canal, which linked the Trent with the Dun Navigation.[1] After the coming of the railways, West Stockwith declined as a river port with the contraction of traffic on the Chesterfield Canal, whereas Keadby, at a junction of two waterways that

[1] C. Hadfield, *The Canals of Yorkshire and North East England* (1971–2), 290–4. 'Dun' is the parliamentary spelling of the name of the river.

remained important carriers, did not to the same extent.

The development of the modern wharves on the east bank of the Trent appears to stem from the revival of the iron industry around Scunthorpe in the 1850s, although Burton Stather was too far from the ore-field to benefit from this. Initially ore quarried near Scunthorpe was taken by water or railway to be smelted in the Rotherham area, and for this purpose a wharf was established at Gunness, almost opposite Keadby. At a later date some imported ore arrived at a wharf at Flixborough, although the main point of entry was Immingham.[2] The contraction of the steel industry at Scunthorpe in the late twentieth century did not lead to the closure of these wharves, which shared in the general revival of the smaller East Coast ports following the entry of the United Kingdom into the European Economic Community in 1973. At the present time there appear to be seven wharves in use commercially on the Trent below Gainsborough: Beckingham, Although and Keadby on the west bank, and Gunness, Grove Wharf, Neap House and Flixborough on the east bank.

Since the mid nineteenth century the wharves of the lower Trent, which historically (like the landing places on the Humber above Hull and the Ouse) were simply part of the port of Hull, have been grouped into (or included within) several different Customs ports. There was a port of Gainsborough between 1841 and 1881; when that was annulled the lower Trent reverted to being placed within the port of Hull; in the 1980s the wharves on the river from Gainsborough to Burton Stather were formed into a new port of Scunthorpe, which became 'Trent' sometime before 2000. Most recently the name Scunthorpe has been revived. These changes have a bearing on the arrangement of trade and shipping statistics for the lower Trent and have therefore been considered in more detail in the next chapter. The rest of this chapter

[2] D.C.D. Pocock, 'Iron and steel at Scunthorpe', *East Midland Geographer*, 3 (1962–5), 127.

outlines history and current operations of each of the wharves between Gainsborough and Trent Falls which have been in use at any date since *c.*1840.

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Gainsborough

Between 1968 and 1972 two operators were named at Gainsborough in the National Port Council's annual returns, British Waterways Board and the Trent River Authority.[3] In 1973 they were joined by Furley & Co.,[4] Whittons Ltd, Spillers Ltd and Trent Wharfage Ltd, of whom the last-named business was in fact based entirely at Beckingham on the opposite side of the river.[5] Two years later the list had grown to include (as well as BWB and the TRA) Gilyott & Scott Ltd,[6] Whittons & Curtis Ltd,[7] Spillers Grain & Feed Ltd,[8] Trent Wharfage Ltd and John Brash & Co. Ltd, of whom the last named was also at Beckingham. All except BWB and the TRA made tonnage returns to the National Ports Council.[9] Between

[3] *Shipping Statistics* (1968–72). A full account of Gainsborough's river and coasting trade since the mid nineteenth century will form another chapter of this study, to which the brief notes in this section will eventually be moved.

[4] Neither that year nor later were Furley described as a limited company.

[5] NPC, *Shipping Statistics* (1973); see below, Beckingham for Trent Wharfage.

[6] Established 20 April1901 (no. 69897). In June 2013 this company, whose registered office is at Westcarr Lane, Stoneferry, Hull, and had not submitted any accounts to Companies House since those for 1992, was about to be struck off. It was described as a non-trading company.

[7] Neither this name, nor Whittons Ltd, appears on the Companies House database, although Whittons Agriculture Ltd (registered office Europarc Innovation Centre, Innovation Way, Grimsby), registered 25 May 1978 (no. 1370857), who describe their activities as the growing of cereals (except rice), leguminous crops and oil seeds, may well be a descendant of both. This company was in liquidation in June 2013.

[8] This name is also unknown to the Companies House database.

[9] NPC, *Shipping Statistics* (1975); and see below, Beckingham.

1976 and 1979 Gilyott & Scott failed to make returns but the other four companies (including the two at Beckingham) did.[10] In 1983 the operators at Gainsborough, all of whom submitted traffic returns) were listed as RHM Agriculture (NE) Ltd (presumably as successors to Spillers), Trent Wharfage Ltd (who were still at Beckingham), William Gleadell & Sons Ltd and British Waterways Board; John Brash & Co. Ltd were placed correctly at Beckingham.[11]

West Stockwith

The village of West Stockwith, on the west bank of the Trent about three miles below Gainsborough, clearly owes its origin (as a secondary settlement within the parish of Misterton) and subsequent prosperity to its position at the mouth of the Bycarrsdike, the artificial cut which carries the water of the river Idle from near Bawtry down to the Trent. The Idle was navigable in the Middle Ages and later as far as Bawtry, which became a small port from which lead, millstones, iron and hardware produced in north Derbyshire and south Yorkshire were shipped, together with timber from Sherwood.[12] The Idle declined in the mid eighteenth century after the Dun Navigation was opened to Tinsley in 1751, but Stockwith maintained its own position, since it was chosen as the eastern terminus of the Chesterfield Canal, completed in 1777. A large basin was built there, entered from the Trent by a lock 10 ft deep able to take small coasting vessels up to 73 ft long and 18 ft beam.[13] Chesterfield Canal narrow boats passed onto the Trent, carrying coal from north-east Derbyshire to

[10] NPC, *Shipping Statistics* (1976–9).

[11] BPA, *Port Statistics* (1983), 112. Of this list, there is no trace on the current Companies House database (including dissolved companies) of RHM or William Gleadell.

[12] A new account of the trade on the Idle in the early modern period (briefly summarised in this paragraph) will be included in Riden, *Transport and Trade*.

[13] Dimensions from the 1898 Returns, p. 202.

Lincoln and Boston, and probably returning mainly with grain from Lincolnshire. Stockwith also had a small coasting trade in the early nineteenth century, independent of the much bigger trade of Gainsborough, sending off locally grown potatoes, earthenware pottery (made around Chesterfield) and other manufactured goods to London, East Anglia and the North East, and receiving bones (for manure) and shop goods from London. There was presumably also some trade with the ports of the Ouse, Aire and Calder, although this is less well documented. In the early 1830s the duke of Devonshire's tenants at Staveley ironworks, near Chesterfield, tried unsuccessfully to establish a trade in coal to London and King's Lynn from Stockwith, where they built a coal-drop on the riverbank at one corner of the basin. Like Gainsborough, Stockwith lacked Customs facilities to enter or clear foreign-going ships.

In 1847 the Chesterfield Canal was absorbed into the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway, which for some years maintained the canal in good order and ran a small carrying business on it. In 1854, out of total traffic of 120,000 tons, the company carried 7,800 tons.[14] The railway gave up carrying on all its canals in 1891–2,[15] although the Great Central (and later the LNER) were regularly described as carriers by water from West Stockwith between 1904 and 1941,[16] suggesting that the service had been re-established . The Hull firm of Furley & Co. were first recorded as carriers at Stockwith in 1908.[17] In this period

[14] C. Hadfield, *The Canals of the East Midlands (including part of London)* (1970), 196–7 (from MS&LR minutes).

[15] Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 198. The company is listed as a carrier on the canal at Stockwith in *Morris's Dir. Notts.* (1869), 449–50 and in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1888), 1241, whereas in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1894), 659 the MS&LR is merely listed as canal agents. (Throughout this paper county directories have been cited by a conventional short tile.)

[16] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1904), 539, and all later edns to 1941 (p. 878). If this entry was anachronistic in 1904, it continued to be printed in error for an unusually long period.

[17] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1908), 621–2.

there were about 40 narrow boats in use on the canal,[18] most of them, at least at the eastern end, apparently owned by Furleys, who are said to have given up carrying on the Chesterfield Canal in 1947.[19]

By 1898 traffic on the Chesterfield Canal had halved, to 62,000 tons, of which 39,000 was local, carried between different points on the canal. Only slightly over 11,400 tons passed from the canal onto the Trent and 11,700 tons entered from the river.[20] By 1905 the figures had fallen further, to a total of 45,000 tons, of which 7,200 tons passed through Stockwith onto the canal and 11,400 tons moved onto the Trent in the opposite direction. The other two thirds of the traffic was local. The main goods carried were coal (15,000 tons) and bricks (11,000 tons).[21] The coal would have come mostly from north-east Derbyshire (as it had since the canal opened); there were two brickyards alongside the canal in Misterton in this period and later,[22] although some bricks may have come from further up the line. The closure of Norwood tunnel in 1908 virtually ended traffic above it between Killamarsh and Chesterfield and below it as far as Worksop.[23] Some coal was still brought down to Stockwith from Shireoaks colliery, which lay to the east of the tunnel, and goods were transhipped between

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[18] Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 198 (from *RCCW*)

[19] M. Taylor, *The River Trent Navigation* (2000), 12, 58 (no source cited); Furleys continue to appear as carriers in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* until the 1941 edn (p. 878).

[20] 1898 Returns, pp. 114–15 (Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 197 wrongly assigns these figures to 1888 and conflates them with revenue figures from the Returns for that year).

[21] Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 198 (from *RCCW*).

[22] Both are shown on the 1920 edn of the 1:10,560 OS map and are listed in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* between 1922 1936; only one appears in the 1941 edn.

[23] Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 198.

narrow boats and keels at Stockwith, either in the basin or in the river alongside.[24]

A small amount of traffic continued for a few years after the Second World War, moving warp collected from the Trent at Stockwith to a brickworks alongside the canal at Walkeringham. Here it was dried, ground, sifted and bagged, and the fine, slightly abrasive powder sent to cutlery finishers and silverware manufacturers around the country for use as a polishing agent.[25] This business came to an end in 1955.[26] In this period cargoes were still arriving in barges from Hull at Stockwith, where they were discharged into lorries either from the basin or, if the vessels were too large to pass through the entrance lock, in the river. This traffic continued until at least the 1970s[27] but later ceased and since then Stockwith basin has been used purely by pleasure craft.

Canal and river trade through Stockwith would have declined in the second half of the nineteenth century as through traffic between collieries on the Chesterfield Canal and destinations on the Trent, Fossdyke and Witham fell away.[28] At the same time, the inward movement of grain and manufactured goods would have been transferred to the railways. Some pit timber arriving at Hull from Norway, Sweden and Russia was sent by water to Stockwith to be taken on the canal to collieries along its line, apparently well into the

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[24] Taylor, *Trent*, 56, 58.

[25] Taylor, *Trent*, 60.

[26] Hadfield, *East Midlands*, 198.

[27] Taylor, *Trent*, 57, 59.

[28] For the use of the distinctive Chesterfield Canal 'cuckoo boats' on the Trent between Stockwith and Torksey see M. Taylor, *Dry Cargo Barges on the Humber Waterways* (2007), 30, 41.

nineteenth century.[29]

The coasting trade presumably declined in the same period, although little firm evidence seems to be available. In 1860, in a dispute between a bone boiler and manufacturer of chemical manures at Lambeth and a bone and tillage merchant of Doncaster concerning the delivery of allegedly defective bones at London, Stockwith was described as the 'nearest port for Doncaster'.[30] This stray reference appears to imply that vessels were still calling there and suggests that traders preferred to send goods over twenty miles by road (since there was at that date no railway which would have shortened the journey) for shipment coastwise, rather than by river to Goole and by sea from there. It is, on the other hand, hardly sufficient to suggest that there were still regular contract sailings to London (or elsewhere) from Stockwith as there had been fifty years earlier.

When, a few years later, the Great Northern built a railway between Doncaster and Lincoln, a station was opened at Misterton in 1867. Before then the nearest railway was the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire main line between Sheffield and Grimsby, completed in 1849, which passed a few miles to the south of Misterton and Stockwith on its way to Gainsborough.[31] It may be an indication of the small volume of river trade at Stockwith by this period that neither company thought it worth building a branch to the basin there, which might have given it a new lease of life as a transhipment point between the Trent and the railways.

The small number of boats enumerated at the basin in the census is further evidence of

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[29] E.E. Neale, 'Noted Notts. shipping centre', *Notts. Countryside*, <check month> 1939, 14–15. Most of the information in this article seems to be derived from oral testimony collected by Neale on a visit to Stockwith, which would presumably go back to the 1870s.

[30] *The Times*, 20 Dec. 1860.

[31] R. Butt, *The Directory of Railway Stations* (1995), 100, 161.

the decline of trade on the river and canal in the second half of the nineteenth century. Boats on inland waterways were not separately counted in 1851 and in 1861, although several canal boatmen were enumerated nearby in Chesterfield Terrace, none were living on board vessels in the basin or in the river.[32] Details of the handful of boats occupied in the later censuses (all of which were in the basin, rather than the river) are given in Table 2.[33] It is noticeable that only Chesterfield Canal narrow boats were to be found there in1871 and that in later years there was only one keel on each occasion and no sign of any coasting vessels. Some of the narrow boats had been left in the charge of a mate, possibly while the master had gone to his home nearby. Where all the crew were on board, it can be seen that some boats were being operated by fathers and sons, but it is also noticeable that only in two cases were wives living aboard.

Table 2: Boats in Stockwith Basin on census night, 1871–1901

Year	*Boat*	*Crew (with ages)*
1871	Canal boat	Master (62); wife (62); boy (11).
	Canal boats (pair)	Master (51); grandson (6); mate (son) (21).
	Canal boats (pair)	Master (20); boy (15); mate (son) (18); boatman (son) (16).
	Canal boat	Master (20); boy (17).
1881	Canal boat	Mate (36).

[32] TNA, RG 9/2407, ff. 21v.–22v.; for 1851 see TNA, HO 107/2119, ff. 375–392. It should be noted that Stockwith basin, despite its name, is in Misterton civil parish.

[33] The 1911 census has not yet been included here, since searching the original householder schedules is vastly more time consuming that checking the enumerators' books used up to 1901. Ideally, the whole Misterton and West Stockwith should be checked for each census to locate boatmen living ashore. Figures for the small number of craft in the river at Stockwith on census night (which were enumerated on separate schedules accessible in Ancestry through searching for 'Vessels' as though this was the name of a parish) need to be added to the numbers in Table 2 for a complete picture.

	Gertrude river keel	Master (36); wife (34); mate (32).
	Canal boat	Mate (60).
	Canal boat	Master (63).
1891	*Nellie* sailing keel	Master (37); mate (30).
	Canal Boat No 27	Master (48); mate (son) (19).
	Providence canal boat	Mate (20).
	Canal Boat No 2	Master (19); mate (17).
1901	*Arthur & Ada* canal boat	Master (aged 27); mate (40).
	William & Sarah Ann canal boat	Mate (70).
	Experiment keel	Master (56); mate (son) (20).

Sources: TNA, RG 10/3443, f. 32v. (1871); RG 11/3294, f. 33 (1881); RG 12/2633, f. 90 (1891); RG 13/3111, f. 5 (1901). In 1901 a third canal boat, *Hill's Fountain*, was enumerated at Hill Wharf on the canal just above Stockwith basin (RG 13/3111, f. 5v.). Four of the boats enumerated in 1871 have been assumed to be pairs on the basis of entries in the 'Relation to Head of Family' column of the enumeration.

Although neither the canal nor the river can have been very busy after 1850 compared with before then, contemporaries were clear that much of the trade of Stockwith continued to be connected with shipping until the First World War and to a lesser extent for another generation.[34] This may in fact have been a function of the lack of a railway station nearer than Misterton and the absence of any main road through the village. For example, Stockwith remained one of the calling points for the Gainsborough United Steam Packet Company's steamers to and from Hull until the company was wound up in 1906.[35] In the 1850s the village had a shipwright, lighterman, wharfinger, coal dealer, two rope-makers, a maltster and bone-miller.[36] Although the bone mill is not heard of again, most of the other trades can be

[34] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1855), 124 describes the trade of the place as 'mostly connected' with shipping on the river, a phrase repeated in later edns to 1912 (p. 672); from the 1922 edn (p. 679) until the last in 1941 (p. 878) the phrase is 'partly connected'.

[35] Neale, 'Noted Notts. shipping centre', 14–15; the history of this company will be discussed in a chapter on the trade of Gainsborough in this period..

[36] *White's Dir. Notts.* (1853), 708–9.

found in directories until the end of the century and most had some connection with the canal or river.

Exceptionally, an account book for one firm of Stockwith coal merchants, William and John Cartwright, who were also wharfingers and the Chesterfield Canal company's agents there, survives for the period 1844–51. During these years they were receiving coal by canal from Staveley, Tapton and possibly other collieries near Chesterfield, and from at least one West Riding colliery (Flockton, near Wakefield), which would have come up the river from Keadby, and selling it locally.[37] Their business seemed to have declined in size during the period covered, possibly because collieries in the Chesterfield area could, from 1840, when the North Midland line opened through the town,[38] despatch their coal by rail to an increasing number of destinations, notably London. The firm had disappeared by the mid 1850s, when Charles Harris was the only coal dealer in the village.[39] He is not heard of again and Stockwith seems to have been without a local supplier of coal until W.B. Charman set up in the mid 1890s.[40] He was succeeded by George Charman, whose business closed sometime between 1912 and 1922.[41] The gap between the 1850s and 1890 may have been a result of the opening of Misterton station, since a coal dealer with premises there could more conveniently be supplied by rail than a man in Stockwith dependent on the Trent for deliveries.

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[37] Notts. Archives, DDHO 29/21.

[38] Butt, *Railway Stations*, 59.

[39] The Cartwrights are not listed in either *White's Dir. Notts.* (1853), 708–9, nor in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1855), 124.

[40] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1895), 376 (he is not in the 1888 edn, not in *White's Dir. Notts.* (1894).

[41] George is listed for the first time in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1908), 621–2; he appears again in the 1912 edn (p. 672) but is not in the 1922 edn.

When the maltings, which stood in the centre of the village close to the river, were put up for sale in 1866 the new station about to be opened at Misterton was mentioned in the particulars, but it was also stated that the freight of barley by water as well as rail was cheap and that malt could be conveyed cheaply by rail or water to Sheffield, Manchester and elsewhere, and by water to Hull and London.[42] The industry continued in the village until the early 1920s.[43] There was also a flax mill in the 1880s and 1890s which employed about 30 hands.[44] A firm of boatbuilders named Hewitt, Burden & Brammer is recorded in 1881[45] and another, William Watson, in 1888.[46] There were eight boat-owners in the village in this period[47] and three in the 1890s.[48] William Tomlinson was first mentioned as a boatbuilder at West Stockwith in 1895;[49] from 1922 the firm was called Tomlinson Brothers;[50] and in 1941 the proprietor was William Francis Tomlinson.[51] At least some of the timber and other raw materials used by these businesses may have arrived by canal or river.

By the 1890s most of the villagers were said to be employed at Morris's chemical

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[42] *Derby Mercury*, 19 Sept. 1866. The building is marked on the 1920 edn of the OS 1:10,560 map (it has since been demolished).

[43] The last occupiers of the maltings, Sandars & Co., are listed for the last time in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1922), 679.

[44] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1881), 300; *White's Dir. Notts.* (1885–6), 591; ibid. (1894), 659; *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1895), 376.

[45] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1881), 300;

[46] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1888), 1241.

[47] *White's Dir. Notts.* (1885–6), 591.

[48] *White's Dir. Notts.* (1894), 659.

[49] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1895), 376

[50] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1922), 679

[51] *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (141), 87–9.

works,[52] which stood alongside the river south of the canal basin, on which it had a wharf and a small pier. The works, which appears to have been engaged principally in copper extraction, were also served by a siding from the Great Northern line at Misterton station,[53] but the choice of site may have been determined by the availability of water for both processing and transport. This business was by far the largest local employer in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth, with about 300 men working there, and for at least part of that period probably put some trade on the river. No details of the traffic appear to be available, which would have come to an end when the works closed in the late 1920s,[54] if not before.

In 1939 it was said that Stockwith had been a very busy village until the coming of motor transport. Now a motor van could take a boat-load of goods in one journey and deliver them to Retford and Worksop in much less time than if they were sent by canal. Several roperies had closed and the chemical works had been dismantled. Most of the villagers got their living as smallholders or as small farmers and fruit growers, although in recent years considerable trade had returned to Newell's engineering works at Misterton, where some Stockwith men worked.[55] Since the Second World War industry has disappeared from both Stockwith and Misterton (which lost its station in the early 1960s),[56] although farming

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[52] *White's Dir. Notts.* (1894), 659.

[53] All three features are shown on the 1922 edn of the 1:10,560 OS map; directories describe the company as 'copper extractors' and the works as engaged in 'copper precipitating'. The firm's Companies House file survives as TNA, BT 31/27660/186751 (registered in 1922).

[54] Morris & Co. (Stockwith) Ltd are listed in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1925), 141–3, but not in the 1928 edn (pp. 142–3).

[55] Neale, 'Noted Notts. shipping centre', 14–15. Ernest Newell & Co. Ltd, cement manufacturers (or 'cement engineers'), first appear at Misterton in *Kelly's Dir. Notts.* (1925), 142–3; their Companies House file does not survive.

[56] Butt, *Railway Stations*, 161.

remains. During the same period the growth of recreational boating on both the Trent and the Chesterfield Canal has breathed new life into the canal basin and presumably helped to sustain the nearby pub.

Keadby and Althorpe

Keadby's history as a landing place on the lower Trent appears to date from the opening of the canal from Stainforth in 1802, which linked the Don and the Trent. The canal had two locks, one at Keadby and the other at Thorne, both 81 ft long and 22½ ft wide, able to take coasting vessels of up to 200 tons as well as smaller keels.[57] It formed an alternative route into the Dun Navigation for craft coming up the river from Hull, and at the same time enabled boats going from the Don to destinations on the Trent above Keadby (or on the same route in the opposite direction) to avoid the river between there and Trent Falls and a section of the lower Ouse. Once the canal was open, Keadby became a calling point for packets running between Gainsborough and Hull, and from 1815 a horse packet was put on between Thorne and Keadby to meet the new steam packets on the Trent.[58] No traffic figures appear to survive for the Stainforth & Keadby Canal during this period, although it is probably safe to assume that the staple trade was coal from collieries in South Yorkshire destined for Gainsborough and other places higher up the Trent, and also Lincoln and Boston.

This traffic in coal was threatened in 1845 by the promotion of the South Yorkshire Coal Railway, which was intended to carry coal from collieries served by the Don and its associated canals to the main north–south lines through the district, the Midland and the Great

[57] Hadfield, *Yorkshire and North East*, 292.

[58] Hadfield, *Yorkshire and the North East*, 293.

Northern.[59] The first section of the new line was opened in 1849.[60] The outcome of negotiations during the intervening years was the fusion in 1850 of the railway with the Dun Navigation, which by that date had acquired the Sheffield Canal, Dearne & Dove Canal and Stainforth & Keadby Canal, thus creating a compact network of 60 miles of waterway. The new company was known as the South Yorkshire Railway & River Dun Navigation.[61] In 1855 the company opened (without parliamentary authority) a single-track branch from Doncaster to Thorne, running in part alongside the Stainforth & Keadby Canal.[62] From Thorne packets continued to run to Keadby to connect with the Gainsborough–Hull service.[63] The following year the company bought an iron screw steamer to operate themselves between Thorne and Keadby and also had a fleet of 16 coal barges.[64] In 1859 they extended their railway from Thorne alongside the canal to Keadby, where a passenger station was opened[65] and in 1860 coal-drops were built on the riverside immediately to the north of the entrance lock from the Trent.[66]

By this date ironstone quarrying had begun around Frodingham on the eastern side of the Trent. Initially the stone was carried to loading places on the river for shipment by barge

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[59] G. Dow, *Great Central* (1959–62), I, 227–8.

[60] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 229–34.

[61] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 234–5.

[62] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 241.

[63] *White's Dir. Lincs*. (1856), 620–1; they are not mentioned in any later directory.

[64] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 242.

[65] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 244, 247.

[66] Taylor, *Trent*, 43–4.

to blast furnaces in the Rotherham area[67] but plans were soon afoot for a bridge over the Trent which would enable the ore to be taken the entire distance by rail. Once plans were made to erect furnaces on the ore-field the need for the bridge remained, but now to bring coking coal from South Yorkshire to the ironworks at Frodingham. The bridge was authorised as part of a scheme, promoted jointly by the South Yorkshire Railway and the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire, to build a line from Keadby through Frodingham to the existing MS&L line at Barnetby, which would give access to the docks at Grimsby. The bridge was opened for freight traffic in 1864, two years after the South Yorkshire Railway was leased to the MS&L, to which it passed outright in 1874.[68] In 1880–2 the MS&L also absorbed the previously independent Trent, Ancholme & Grimsby Railway.[69]

The building of the bridge led to the realignment of the South Yorkshire line at Keadby and the closure of the passenger station, although the coal staithe remained in use. The line between Doncaster and Thorne was also improved.[70] The layout at both Keadby and Gunness was changed again in 1916 with the opening of a new combined road and rail crossing, the King George V Bridge, when a new station named Althorpe (also serving Keadby) was built on the western approach to the bridge.[71]

The coal staithe at Keadby survived these later changes[72] but how much traffic it

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[67] See below, sections on Gunness and Neap House.

[68] Dow, *Great Central*, I, 200, 246; II, 4, 29–30, 43.

[69] Dow, *Great Central*, II, 33.

[70] Dow, *Great Central*, II, 29–30, map on p. 33; Taylor, *Trent*, 49.

[71] Dow, *Great Central*, III, 251–3, 288–92; Taylor, *Trent*, 50–1; *Engineering*, 23 June 1916, pp. 592–4.

[72] Taylor, *Trent*, 43–4; Dow, *Great Central*, III, map on p. 286.

handled by this date is unclear. In 1889 the MS&L lost its south Yorkshire waterways to the newly established Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation,[73] which in 1898 made only an aggregate return of traffic on its entire network.[74] All that can really be assumed is that far less coal, and far fewer goods travelling between south Yorkshire and the Humber ports, went by canal through Keadby by the end of the nineteenth century than had been the case fifty years earlier. Rather oddly, coal merchants or dealers (and also potato merchants) only appear in directories at Keadby from 1905.[75] Some coasting and possibly foreign trade survived, since there was a Customs officer in the village until after the First World War.[76] There was also enough trade on the canal and river for Keadby to have one or two rope- and twine-makers until at least the 1880s,[77] a mast- and block-maker,[78] and a ship's chandler (or at some dates two).[79] Some tradesmen in the village were also described as vessel owners[80] and in 1905 James Kellett was in business at Keadby as a tug broker.[81] In the same year (but not

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[73] Dow, *Great Central*, II, 220.

[74] 1898 Returns, pp. 100–1.

[75] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 325–6; it is possible that coal dealing was combined with other trades before that date.

[76] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1919), 313–14 (and similar entries in all earlier directories back to 1856).

[77] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 496–7; the trade is not mentioned in later edns.

[78] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 496–7.

[79] First recorded in *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1872), 432–3; two are listed in *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1913), 336, one in 1905 and 1919 edns.

[80] e.g. Robert Ledger (also a shopkeeper) and Abraham Oates in *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 325–6. These dual occupations may simply not have been recorded in other edns.

[81] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 325–6 (neither this name nor the occupation appears in earlier or later directories).

earlier or later) James Scott Guest was described as a boat builder there.[82] The Gainsborough United Steam Packet Company's Hull steamers called daily at Keadby until at least the 1880s but by 1905 only 'occasionally', which remained the case until after the First World War.[83]

The canal at Keadby evidently remained quite an important mooring place for keels carrying goods on the Trent and the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation. On census night in 1901 the occupiers of 32 boats were enumerated there, of which 30 were keels.[84] The other two were a river pilot and what appears to have been a small steamer, named the *Blue Bell*, which had been left in the hands of its mate and engineer.[85] One of the keels also only had the mate on board but in every other case the master was in charge. Three of the masters were working on their own account (one of whom returned himself as a coal merchant as well as captain of a keel) and two more described themselves as employers, leaving 24 men who were working for others. Of the 29 masters, 21 had their wives on board with them, either with or without children (and in one case a married daughter had two small grandchildren with her), two were working with a son as mate and one with a nephew, four had mates who were not apparently related, and one, a 50-year-old widower, had his daughter, aged 18, on board. One of the younger married masters (aged 26, with a wife of 25 and children aged three and two) had a mate on board, as did the oldest (aged 73) and his wife (56). The youngest master was 20 and the median age of the group was 44; 20 of the 29 were under 50.

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[82] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 325–6.

[83] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 496–7; ibid. (1905), 325–6; and later edns to 1919 (pp. 313–14). The GUSP Co. was wound up in 1906 but presumably another company continued the service.

[84] The following analysis is based on TNA, RG 13/4420, ff. 45v.–47.

[85] The checker has written 'barge' alongside the entry, as he has for all the keels, but keels did not usually carry an engineer. The *Blue Bell* was, however, in the canal, not the river, at Keadby and so cannot have been a very large vessel.

The coal staithe at Keadby was taken over by J. Wharton (Shipping) Ltd when the company was founded in 1938, although the business later moved to Grove Wharf on the east bank of the Trent.[86] Whartons appear to have been tenants of the railway, since between 1968 and 1979 the wharf operator at Keadby was listed as the British Railways Board. BRB made no return of traffic at Keadby to the National Ports Council during this period, although their entry in the NPC's annual volume of statistics was flagged to show that there had been traffic there in 1965 or later.[87] The entry had been dropped by 1983.[88]

A later development, on the south side of the entrance lock, was the building of a new wharf, opened in 1986 by Associated Waterway Services Ltd, a joint venture between British Waterways and a private company. The only services offered were in the handling of sea-going craft and nothing was transhipped to or from the canal. The wharf attracted imports of steel away from Goole, which were sent from Keadby by road to Rotherham, instead of being taken by barge up the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation.[89]

The former AWS wharf was later acquired by PD Ports Ltd, a distant descendant of Powell Duffryn Ltd, which until 1947 controlled most of the South Wales coal industry. The company moved its resources into other activities after the nationalisation of the coal mines, including shipping, and in 1992 acquired the ports of the river Tees and Hartlepool. After various reconstructions, the present company was created in 2006; its ultimate owner is

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[86] Taylor, *Trent*, 28, 43, 47; and see below, the section on Grove Wharf.

[87] N PC, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1968), 271–8, and later volumes to 1979.

[88] BPA, *Port Statistics* (1983), 112.

[89] Taylor, *Trent*, 47.

Brookfield Asset Management, a Canadian concern.[90] At present, the Keadby wharf has one general cargo berth, able to accommodate vessels up to 3,000 dwt, which handles steels, forestry products and dry cargo; the estate has 42,800 sq. ft of covered warehousing and additional open storage areas, including designated terminals for steels and forest products.[91]

One other twentieth-century development near Keadby should also be mentioned. This was at Althorpe, on the west bank of the river just upstream from the King George V bridge, where a wharf for discharging petroleum was opened in the 1930s.[92] This took over a site previously occupied by a margarine factory and in the early 1960s was in the hands of Jet Petrol.[93] It appears to have been out of use in the late 1960s and 1970s, when it fails to appear in the National Port Council's annual list of ports,[94] but in 1983 Gunness Wharf Ltd was the operator there.[95] Althorpe has since passed through the same hands as Gunness and become a satellite facility for RMS Trent Ports' Gunness and Flixborough wharves on the opposite site of the river.[96]

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[90] Details from the Wikipedia entry for PD Ports; a better reference would be desirable. The North Lincolnshire Council website names the operator as PD Port Services, part of the PD Ports Logistics and Shipping Group.

[91] Taken from the company's website, www.pdports.co.uk

[92] Taylor, *Trent*, 20 (where it is stated that the first petroleum wharf on the Trent was opened at Colwick, near Nottingham, in 1923, followed by others, including Althorpe; a date of opening before the Second World War is therefore implied, rather than stated).

[93] Taylor, *Trent*, 50–1 (assumed to be the same wharf as that mentioned in the previous reference, but if the site was converted from a margarine factory this may not be the case: query, have there been two petrol wharves at Althorpe?).

[94] NPC, *Shipping Statistics* (all vols., 1968–79).

[95] BPA, *Port Statistics* (1983), 112.

[96] See below, sections on Gunness and Flixborough.

Burton upon Stather

Although William White's description of Burton in 1872 as 'in ancient times the metropolis of the busy Trent'[97] is clearly fanciful, it is probably fair to regard the village as the main landing place on the east bank of the river below Gainsborough before modern developments. The ferry across the Trent to Garthorpe, which survived into the twentieth century,[98] was presumably long established, while a grant of a weekly market and two fourteen-day fairs each year to Thomas earl of Lancaster in 1314[99] suggests an attempt to establish a town near the mouth of the Trent. Although the market was long defunct by the mid nineteenth century,[100] the fairs survived until the 1880s.[101] The Gainsborough–Hull packets called daily at Burton until the start of the twentieth century[102] and later, after the service was reduced, in the summer months.[103] In 1865 there was sufficient traffic at the Stather to justify the building of a pier there.[104]

The pier was built by the Wray family, who *c*.1814–16 established a shipyard at Burton, moving there from Alkborough, two miles lower down the river.[105] William Wray,

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[97] *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1856), 609.

[98] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1919), 116–17 (and all earlier directories).

[99] *Calendar of Charter Rolls*, III, 242.

[100] *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1856), 609.

[101] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 345–6; they were described as discontinued a few years in the 1889 edn, pp. 96–7.

[102] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 118–19 (and earlier edns).

[103] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1909), 122–3 (and later edns until at least 1919).

[104] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1868), 66–7.

[105] R. Clapson, *A Lincolnshire Shipyard: Burton upon Stather* (2007), 11–12; and see this book generally for a full account of the company and the yard.

the founder of he business at Burton, died in 1840, when the yard passed to two of his sons, John and Thomas. They were then employing about a dozen men and boys. Thomas appears to have withdrawn from the business within a few years and in 1851 it was in the hands of John and his son William. John retired in 1861 and his son William took charge of a yard which then had about 40 employees and was building bigger ships for a wider range of customers than when first established.[106] Vessels of up to 300 tons were built in this period.[107] In the early 1860s, however, the company became embroiled in a serious dispute with a customer over delays in delivery and in 1868 both William and his father were made bankrupt.[108] The business recovered from this setback and, like other local yards, switched to building fishing smacks rather than general cargo vessels.[109] In 1871 William Wray had 61 men and three apprentices at the yard, and at home had four living-in servants.[110] He died suddenly that year, when his widow Ellen took over and installed the yard foreman as manager, although by 1881 her son John, then aged 21, had joined the business.[111] Throughout this period the shipyard must have been by far the largest employer in Burton.

In 1884 the elder John Wray (William's father) died aged 89, at which point the business passed into the hands of Joseph Garside, who appears to have foreclosed on a mortgage.[112] He continued the business for a few years on a reduced scale: in 1885 the yard

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[106] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 13–30.

[107] *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1856), 610, repeated in all later directories.

[108] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 35.

[109] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 36–8.

[110] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 31, 39.

[111] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 41–52.

[112] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 52–3; *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1889), 96–7.

was said to employ about 40 hands; in 1889 the figure was 30.[113] Garside was of Worksop, where he built up a very successful business as a timber merchant.[114] Among his customers were a number of Humber boatbuilders, to whom he supplied oak on extended credit, secured on mortgages over their yards.[115] It seems that by foreclosing on one of these mortgages he enlarged his own business into shipbuilding and also branched into ship-owning. By 1891 Garside was living at Carlton House, a large property on Carlton Road on the northern edge of Worksop, with his third wife, two sons and a daughter, a cook and four other indoor servants. Another servant was living in a lodge and there were three gardeners in a two-roomed bothy in the grounds.[116] He died two years later, at Buxton (where he was presumably either on holiday or had gone for his health), aged 72, leaving personalty eventually sworn at £336,000, when he was described as a timber merchant.[117]

In 1892 Garside gave up the business at Burton and sold the entire stock, although he retained the freehold of the yard. By this period timber boatbuilding on the Humber was in decline and the smaller yards either closed or switched to repairing wooden boats, since they lacked the capital to re-equip to build iron or later steel vessels. The premises at Burton stood

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[113] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 3450–6; ibid. (1889), 96–7.

[114] He was enumerated as a 'sawyer', living at Low Town in Worksop, in 1841, with his first wife and a month-old daughter (TNA, HO 107/852/10, f. 7v.). His career would make an interesting case-study in a poorly recorded industry.

[115] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 29; Mr Clapson (pers. comm.) adds that as late as the Second World War his grandfather was buying oak from Garside's successors to build minesweepers and other wooden vessels for the Admiralty; he has been told that Garside supplied oak to most of the Lincolnshire shipyards, all from Sherwood.

[116] TNA, RG 12/2644, f. 119, where Garside listed his occupations as timber merchant, farmer, shipbuilder, sand merchant and ship-owner (in that order). Despite his wealth he eschewed the simple option of 'gentleman'.

[117] Calendar of Grants (1893).

empty for nearly three years until they were let to two Hull steam-engine builders, John Francis Henry Escreet and Frederick Richmond, although the business closed almost at once, early in 1896.[118] Two other tenants, John Smith Dower and George Depledge, briefly tried to build iron ships there but their business failed in 1897. The Escreet family then reappeared at Burton and for a few years from *c*.1898 J.F.H. Escreet was in business at the yard with William Myers Escreet as marine engineers, iron- and brass-founder and boiler-makers, although with only a handful of employees. The company built launch, yacht and barge engines and boilers and offered a patent slip for vessels up to 120 feet in length.[119] J.F.H.Escreet was made bankrupt in 1900; a first and final dividend was not made until Christmas 1908, when his creditors received 10s. in the pound.[120]

All the occupiers of the shipyard presumably obtained some or all of their raw materials — timber, iron, steel, brass etc. — by water, either down the Trent or via the Humber or Ouse. In particular, Garside sent oak logs from Worksop on the Chesterfield Canal to Stockwith, where they would have been transhipped into keels to be taken to Burton (and other yards) to be sawn into planks.[121] Similarly, the two or three coal merchants, and the timber merchant, potato merchant and oilseed cake and tillage merchant listed in directories in the second half of the nineteenth century probably also had supplies delivered in the same

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[118] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 59; no-one is listed as the occupier of the yard in *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1896), 109–10.

[119] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 59–61; the business is listed in *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 118–19 but not in the 1909 edn, pp. 122–3. Even the first of these entries may be in error, given Escreet's bankruptcy in 1900.

[120] *London Gazette*, 23 Oct. 1900, pp. 6517, 6528; 26 Oct. 1900, p. 6591; 25 Dec. 1908, p. 9917.

[121] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 29; Chesterfield Canal narrow boats certainly sailed up the Trent from Stockwith to Gainsborough and beyond, but are unlikely to have ventured downstream to Trent Falls, much less into the Humber.

way, while the small brick- and tile-works which existed in the parish (in the hands of several different operators) in the same period may have sent some of their products away by river.

One reason for the survival well into the nineteenth century of waterborne trade of this sort (and for the limited development of Burton generally) was the poor access the village enjoyed to the railway network. The Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire's Gainsborough–Grimsby line, opened in 1849, was too far away to be of any use, and it was only in 1866 that the station at Frodingham was opened on the Trent, Ancholme & Grimsby Railway's line between Keadby and Barnetby,[122] which was still five miles from Burton. Not until 1906 was there a station in Burton parish, at Thealby on the North Lindsey Light Railway,[123] which ran north from Scunthorpe and eventually reached the Humber at Winteringham Haven in 1907 and Whitton in 1910.[124] Even Thealby station was over two miles from Burton village. It is presumably an indication of the limited amount of commercial activity at Burton that a line was never built from Scunthorpe to the village, nor did a project to extend the North Lindsey Light Railway come to anything. Such a scheme was promoted in 1904–5 by the Great Central, by which the Whitton branch of the North Lindsey line would continue to Alkborough and Burton. The section as far as Alkborough was authorised, although not built; the final length to Burton was successfully opposed by a local landowner. But this was mainly a device to prevent the Lancashire & Yorkshire Railway securing powers to extend the Axholme Joint Railway, a light railway on the opposite side of the Trent which it owned jointly with the North Eastern Railway. The Lancashire & Yorkshire proposed to build a line from Fockerby, crossing the Trent by a bridge or tunnel to Burton, and either ending at a

[122] Butt, *Railway Stations*, 100.

[123] Butt, *Railway Stations*, 228.

[124] Dow, *Great Central*, III, 115, 249; Butt, *Railway Stations*, 249.

junction with the North Lindsey line at Whitton or continuing to Barton on Humber. The idea was abandoned and instead the two main-line companies came to an agreement over the joint use of the line at Winteringham.[125]

After the Escreets' business came to an end *c.*1908 the former shipyard remained unoccupied until 1922, when Power Petroleum, established that year as distributors of petrol, mainly imported from Russia, converted the site into a tank depot, from which they delivered petrol and other products delivered by coaster from Rochester. These were then taken up the Trent by tanker barge. The depot closed in 1934, when Power Petroleum was acquired by Shell-Mex and BP Ltd.[126] During the Second World War a slipway was built at Burton to test the launching of amphibious vehicles, which can still be seen.[127]

The site then remained empty for another long period, until it was bought by Victor Waddington in 1969, with the aim of converting the former shipyard into a wharf for discharging coasters, from which goods could be transferred into barges. He piled the river frontage, built a large warehouse and installed a portal crane. An operating company was formed jointly by the British Waterways Board and John Midgely & Son Ltd, with a wharf manager appointed by BWB. Mobile crane and other handling equipment were owned by a second company, BOS shipping, which acquired land between the shipyard site and the Ferry House inn, on which an office block was built. The main customer was Aros Line, operated by Sten Siöwall AB of Västerås in Sweden, which imported timber and forest products from

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[125] Dow, *Great Central*, III, 112–15, 249, 286.

[126] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 66; The Power Petroleum Co. Ltd was registered on 10 Aug. 1922 (no. 183681) and was only dissolved on 23 Sept. 2011 (Companies House WebCHeck). A short history of the company, which appears to be well-founded but lacks any references, can be found on the website, www.vintagegarage.co.uk/histories.

[127] See the Burton Heritage Group's website (http://burtonstatherheritage.org.uk).

that country, pine from Portugal, and steel from Sweden and occasionally Germany. For a time the wharf, named King's Ferry Wharf from the ferry which had operated between Burton and Garthorpe, was handling 80,000 tonnes a year but Waddington's hope that goods would be transhipped into inland craft never materialised.[128] He is said to have been warned by Hull dockers, then at the height of their power, that if he loaded a single barge there he would never be allowed to enter Hull docks again.[129] As a result, road transport had to be used on narrow, minor roads, including the village street at Burton, to reach the nearest trunk roads at Scunthorpe. BWB sold their stake in the joint company to Midgely, which eventually sold BOS Shipping to Sten Siöwall; the wharf itself did not extend onto the property owned by BOS. A proposal by BOS to install rail access to the existing branch at Flixborough Wharf was not approved by planners and, as coasters became bigger, the restrictions of length and draft at Burton wharf meant that Aros moved elsewhere.[130]

The operating company, King's Ferry Wharf Ltd, named after the ferry which ran from Burton to Garthorpe, first made returns to the National Ports Council statistics in 1973 and continued to do so until at least 1983.[131] The company was dissolved in 1991.[132]

The wharf was later taken over by Charles M .Willie & Co. (Shipping) Ltd of Cardiff,

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[128] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 66–7.

[129] Taylor, *Trent*, 38.

[130] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 67; and see below, for Flixborough Wharf.

[131] National Ports Council, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1973), vol. I, list of ports and operators; it does not appear in any earlier lists, but is in the 1983 edition of *Port Statistics* issued by the Dept for Transport and British Ports Association.

[132] Companies House WebCHeck (no. 1073532, dissolved 6 Aug. 1991). Another company named Kings Ferry Wharf Ltd (no. 3234491) was registered 6 Aug. 1996 (as Linefile Ltd, name changed 8 Oct. 1996) and has since been dissolved, but its registered office is 17 St Andrews Crescent, Cardiff, which suggests it is unrelated to the company operating the Burton wharf.

who were established operators in the Portuguese trade. The company originated in Cardiff in 1912 as exporters of coal and importers of pit props, and set up the present shipping company in 1938.[133] They remain in business as ship-owners, ship managers, chartering brokers, ship's agents and liner operators, running services between the UK and several different parts of the world, including both short-sea and longer routes.[134] Although the wharf at Burton is 61 metres long and offers the deepest water of any landing place on the Trent,[135] these advantages continue to be offset by poor road access, whereas the wharves higher up the river are much closer to the M180 and M181 motorways. Because of this, and the difficulty of mooring large ships, Willie eventually moved to Goole and gave up the Burton site. In 2007 only the former office block on the BOS Shipping site was still in use.[136] The wharf itself has since been taken over by a road haulage company and there is currently no shipping activity there.[137]

Gunness

When the ironstone at Frodingham was first rediscovered in the 1850s it was initially

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[133] i.e. Charles M. Willie & Co. (Shipping) Ltd, Celtic House, 6 Ocean Way, Cardiff (no. 342418, 17 July 1938).

[134] Information from www.williegroup.co.uk. There is no entity named Willie Group on the Companies House register and it appears to be merely a trading name.

[135] According to the website, wwwports.org.uk.

[136] Clapson, *Lincolnshire Shipyard*, 67.

[137] Information kindly supplied by Mr Clapson. The road haulage company appears to be Kingsferry Wharf - (RSL) Ltd (no. 06084103, registered 6 Feb. 2007), whose registered office is Tamarisk, Carrhouse Road, Belton, Doncaster. The first part of the name suggests a connection with Burton Stather; the second half implies a link with the RSL group of companies. In origin this group is a descendant of the transport department of Robinson & Son Ltd of Chesterfield, which was spun off as a separate business some years ago.

taken by horse and cart to Chatterton's wharf on the Trent just north of Neap House, where it was loaded onto barges to be taken by via the Stainforth & Keadby Canal and the Dun Navigation to furnaces at Elsecar. In 1861 this arrangement was superseded by two lengths of narrow-gauge railway, with a self-acting inclined plane linking the two to take the ore down the Lower Lias escarpment, which ran to a new wharf at Gunness, opposite Keadby. In 1860–1 a certain amount of calcining was done at Gunness in an effort to reduce the cost of transporting the low-grade ore to furnaces in South Yorkshire.[138] At about the same time plans were announced for the building of furnaces alongside the Trent at Gunness, to which coking coal would be brought either by canal or the South Yorkshire Railway.[139] In the event, this project did not go ahead, and the first furnaces in north Lincolnshire were erected on the ore-field itself, at Frodingham, in 1864, although the choice of the name Trent Ironworks presumably reflects earlier ideas as to location. In the same year Keadby bridge was built over the Trent. It was not opened to passenger traffic for another two years, by which time the Trent, Ancholme & Grimsby Railway had been completed from the river crossing to join the Manchester, Sheffield & Lincolnshire Railway at Barnetby. This line replaced the narrow-gauge tramway on a slightly different alignment, although a siding was built to serve the river wharf. The siding was retained when the line was rebuilt again in 1916, to cross the river by the King George V Bridge, which stands short distance upstream from the site of the bridge of 1864.[140]

As D.C.D. Pocock observed half a century ago, the decision to build the first blast

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[138] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 128.

[139] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1861), 95, 126; see above, Keadby and Althorpe, for the South Yorkshire Railway.

[140] See above, Keadby and Althorpe, for the details, and the maps in Dow, *Great Central*, II, 35 and III, 286 for the siding.

furnaces on the ore-field, rather than alongside the Trent, a policy followed by all but one of the later companies which developed iron and steelworks at Scunthorpe, was arguably mistaken.[141] One obvious result was that thousands of acres of ore-bearing land were sterilised; other land was lost following the development of the town of Scunthorpe immediately west of the main group of works. Later, as imported ore was increasingly used alongside native ironstone, costs were raised by a rail-haul of 19 miles from the nearest deepwater port at Immingham, whereas if the works had been built on the Trent the ore could have been brought to tidewater wharves immediately alongside the blast furnaces, as at Middlesbrough. There would have been a similar saving in the coastwise movement of finished products or, as was more commonly the case in the early years of the north Lincolnshire industry, semi-finished iron being taken elsewhere for further manufacture. Moreover, the distance from the South Yorkshire coalfield which supplied coking coal for the furnaces would have been slightly reduced, and more use might have been made of the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation if the coal could have been carried from he collieries to the ironworks in one bottom. As it was, the Scunthorpe industry suffered from poor arrangement of railway facilities for much of its history and a potentially large traffic in both raw materials and finished products was lost to the lower Trent.

The landing place at Gunness retained the name Ironstone Wharf and throughout the second half of the nineteenth century directories repeated the statement that iron ore was shipped from there. This seems unlikely, since once furnaces were established at Scunthorpe all the ironstone quarried in the district is understood to have been smelted locally. A wharf

[141] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 127; the one company which built works off the ore-field and later built a railway to a wharf on the Trent was Lysaghts: see the section on Frodingham wharf.

manager is mentioned in 1872[142] but not in later years, nor is there any sign of other industrial development, apart from the establishment of works by the Yorkshire & Lincolnshire Tar Distillation Co. Ltd at the wharf *c.*1910[143] to produce coal-tar as a by-product of coke-making at the steelworks.[144] A passenger station was opened at Gunness in 1869 but closed in 1916 when the railway was realigned;[145] the coal dealers mentioned in some directories during that period may well have operated from the station yard and received deliveries by rail rather than water. No other traders — in timber, potatoes, oilseed cake or the like, as can be found at Burton Stather in this period — are listed in directories and the only consistent feature in every edition is the Ironstone Wharf Inn, which was also a farm.

The wharf presumably remained in the ownership of the iron and steel company for which it was built until 1936, when a separate Gunness Wharf Ltd was established.[146] It is not clear to what extent the wharf was being used by the local steelworks in this period. A description of the Appleby-Frodingham plant in the mid 1950s makes no mention of Gunness

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[142] *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1872), 456.

[143] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1913), 289; it does not appear in the 1909 edn (p. 282).

[144] The company resolved to go into members' voluntary liquidation in 1930, a process not completed until 1937 (*London Gazette*, 10 Oct. 1930, p. 6193; 12 March 1937, p. 1693); its Companies House file does not survive in TNA, BT 31. This liquidation may have been to enable the assets to be transferred to Yorkshire Tar Distillers, formed in 1926 by the amalgamation of several smaller firms. The older company is well known to railway modellers, since Slaters and Hornby have produced replicas of two of the company's tanker wagons, one rectangular and the other cylindrical, finished in an attractive red oxide livery with the lettering 'Gunness on Trent, GC Railway'. This suggests that it mainly used the railway, rather than the river.

[145] Butt, *Railway Stations*, 111.

[146] Companies House, no. 317585 (17 Aug. 1936).

and refers only to the internal rail and road transport serving the works,[147] which at this date (unlike Normanby Park) was not using imported ore.[148]

Gunness Wharf Ltd, which was listed as the operator there between 1968 and 1983 (and possibly for longer both before and after),[149] seems to have been taken over by the Faber Prest group either in or shortly before 1991, when the company was renamed Faber Prest Ports Ltd. Four years later it became Faber Prest Distribution Ltd. The Scunthorpe business appears to have been divested from Faber Prest in or about 1998, when the company reverted to its original name.[150] Faber Prest itself was purchased that year by the American company Harsco Corp,[151] which may have led to the change.

An entry for 'Frodingham', with no operator named and no recorded traffic, was included in the National Port Council's *Shipping Statistics* between 1968 and 1979 but had disappeared from the successor series, *Port Statistics*, by 1983. It appears to be a duplicate for Gunness.

Gunness Wharf remains in commercial use today, still owned by Gunness Wharf Ltd, and is one of three sites on the lower Trent (the others being Flixborough, on the east bank a couple of miles further downstream, and Althorpe on the west bank almost opposite Gunness)

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[147] *Appleby-Frodingham Steel Company. Branch of The United Steel Companies Limited, Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire* (nd), 77. (This bland but well illustrated and thus moderately useful eulogy has a printer's date of 10/55 on the unnumbered verso of p. 127.)

[148] Ibid., 26; below, under Flixborough for Normanby Park.

[149] NPC, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1968), 271–8, and later vols. to 1979; *Port Statistics* (1983), 112.

[150] These changes have been noted from the free Companies House WebCHeck service; further details of changes of name and ownership could presumably be obtained from an examination of Companies House file no. 317586.

[151] *The Independent*, 5 March 1998.

operated by RMS Trent Ports, which is in turn part of a larger operation, RMS Humber Ports, based at Goole. This concern was created in its present form by a 'secondary management buyout' in 2007. The company's three Trent ports handle coasters of various sizes and stock a variety of mainly bulk and steel-based imports and exports.[152] Gunness can accommodate vessels up to 100m. in length, with a sailing draft of up to 5.3m. on spring tides. The berth is serviced by mobile crawler cranes of up to 20 tonnes SWL for general grab or hook work. Loading shovels assist for the handling of bulk cargoes and a dedicated weighbridge and lorry wheel-wash for bulk cargoes are available. Gunness provides a total of 4180 sq.m. of covered storage and additional space outside on hardstanding, supplemented by the satellite facility at Althorpe, which has eight warehouses ranging in size from 929 sq.m. to 2600 sq.m., together with extensive outside storage for bulk and packaged products.[153] Gunness also has a purpose-built facility to receive and process ferro-alloys, and is able to screen, grade, store and distribute materials onward within the UK by road. The company has its own fleet of vehicles but, unlike Flixborough, Gunness is no longer rail-connected.[154]

Flixborough

Like Burton a mile or so to the north, the village of Flixborough grew up on slightly higher ground a short distance away from the river, on which a separate hamlet, Flixborough Stather, marks the site of an early medieval landing place. There was a ferry over the river to

[152] This information is taken from www.rms-humber.co.uk, which does not state from what entity the buyout took place (or indeed exactly what a 'secondary management buyout' is).

[153] These figures are all taken from the entry for Gunness on www.ports.org.uk.

[154] This additional detail is from www.northlincs.gov.uk, which includes brief information about all the commercial wharves within the local authority's area; see also below, Flixborough.

Amcotts, which survived into the twentieth century.[155] The Gainsborough to Hull steam packets were said in 1861 to 'pass' Flixborough (presumably calling as required),[156] in the 1880s and 1890s to call on Tuesdays and Fridays (i.e. market day in Gainsborough and Hull respectively),[157] and in the 1900s and 1910s to call occasionally.[158] The licensee of the Ferry Boat inn, Anthony Read, was also described as a coal merchant in the 1850s but not in later years.[159] He was presumably supplied by water and may have given up dealing in coal once the station opened at Frodingham in 1866, about three miles away, from which coal could probably have been brought more easily by cart.

The modern development of Flixborough wharf stems from the decision in 1906 by John Lysaght Ltd of Newport to develop what proved to be the last of the integrated steelworks in north Lincolnshire, to enable them to control supplies of sheet and bar for their mills in South Wales. Normanby Park, the only works in Scunthorpe to be built off the ore-field, began operations in 1912 and in 1919 passed with the rest of Lysaght's works to GKN, of which it became an autonomous subsidiary.[160] Normanby Park was initially served by the North Lindsey Light Railway, which was connected at its southern with the Great Central line to Grimsby and Immingham in one direction and Sheffield and the south in the other, and at

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[155] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1919), 181–2 (and all earlier directories from 1856).

[156] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1861), 92.

[157] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1885), 395; ibid. (1889), 150; ibid. (1896), 169.

[158] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 182–3; and later edns to 1919, pp. 181–2.

[159] *White's Dir. Lincs.* (1856), 611–12; Read is listed as a licensee only in *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1861), 92, and later edns to 1885 (p. 395).

[160] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 129; E. Jones, *A History of GKN*, II (1990), 31–4, 51–4 and ch. 2 passim.

its northern end ran to small wharves on the Humber at Winteringham Haven and Whitton,[161] from where steel could be sent by coaster to the company's works on the Usk at Newport.[162] A wharf at Flixborough Stather, about a mile and a half from the works, was included in Lysaght's original plans for Normanby,[163] but only in 1938 was the company reported to be extending its internal railway system to the river, where a wharf was under construction.[164] The wharf was opened in 1939, designed to handle both imports of ore and exports of finished steel.[165] In the1940s the Flixborough Shipping Company was established, with offices alongside Keadby lock. In 1953 the company, having previously bought secondhand vessels, commissioned their first new craft from Dunstons of Thorne, two motor barges and four dumb barges, all Sheffield size. These were used mainly to bring coal from Denaby on the Sheffield & South Yorkshire Navigation to Flixborough wharf, from where the coal was moved by rail to the steelworks.[166] This traffic continued into the following decade.[167] In the early 1960s the wharf was being used mostly for the import of foreign ore, of which about 60,000 tons arrived annually. No mention was made of outgoing traffic by water.[168]

There was some development of subsidiary industry at the wharf in its early years.

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[161] Dow, *Great Central*, III, 112–15.

[162] Jones, *GKN*, II, 34 (where Whitton is wrongly placed on the Trent).

[163] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 127.

[164] O.D. Kendall, 'Iron and steel industry of Scunthorpe', *Economic Geography*, 13 (1938), 276.

[165] Taylor, *Trent*, 20, reproduces a postcard published to mark the opening.

[166] Taylor, *Trent*, 23.

[167] Taylor, *Trent*, 39.

[168] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 127.

During the First World War a manufacturer of basic slag, Alexander Cross & Sons Ltd, established works there.[169]

In 1968 Flixborough wharf was being operated by Lysaght's Scunthorpe Works Ltd.[170] The following year the name was changed to British Steel Corporation (Normanby Park), which continued to be used until at least 1979; in 1983 (two years after Normanby Park steelworks closed)[171] it was simply British Steel Corporation.[172] The history of the wharf, during the period of the renationalised steel industry and later, appears to follow the same course as Gunness, with British Steel's logistics operations being transferred to the Faber Prest group. Unlike Gunness, however, Flixborough was not owned by a separate company until 1983, when Flixborough Wharf Ltd was established,[173] presumably as a subsidiary of Faber Prest. The timing may be linked to the closure of the steelworks in 1981 when Flixborough wharf would have lost its original function. Certainly in the 1990s Flixborough was in the hands of Faber Prest Ports Ltd, who were running trip workings between the wharf and the former Appleby-Frodingham steelworks using ex-British Rail diesel locomotives.[174] Operations must then have passed by the same route as at Gunness, so that today Flixborough is one of three wharves in the RMS Trent Ports unit of RMS Humber Ports,[175] although

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[169] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1919), 181–2; the company is not listed in the 1913 edn (p. 194) and its Company House file does not survive.

[170] NPC, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1968), 271–8.

[171] P. Anderson, *Railways of Lincolnshire* (1992), 87.

[172] National Ports Council , *Shipping Statistics* (1978–79); *Port Statistics* (1983), 112.

[173] No. 1762380 (18 Oct. 1983).

[174] The only authority for this statement at present is the caption to a photograph of one of the locos (taken on 10 July 1995) found on the Flikr website.

[175] See above, section on Gunness.

ownership remains with Flixborough Wharf Ltd. The wharf, which specialises in handling steel and bulk cargoes, can accommodate vessels up to 100m. long, with a sailing draft of 5.5m. on spring tides. The berths are serviced by overhead gantry cranes, capable of lifting up to 35 tonnes, and a mobile crawler crane for general grab or hook work. Loading shoves assist in the handling of bulk cargoes and a dedicated weighbridge and lorry wheel-wash for bulk cargoes are available on the site. Flixborough operates a dedicated steel terminal of 13,380 sq.m. and in all 20,800 sq.m. of warehousing is available. Unless Gunness, which has lost its rail connection, Flixborough has two locomotives to move traffic to and from the Network Rail line, and large sidings in which over 50 wagons can be shunted. A complex of lines within the site means that wagons can be moved alongside the quay for easy access to vessels or shunted inside the steel terminal for overhead crane work.[176]

Grove Port and Neap House

The wharf known as Chatterton's near Neap House, from which ironstone from Frodingham was initially shipped in the late 1850s,[177] was presumably identical with what was described in the 1900s as a staithe or landing place at Neap House for farm produce.[178] It continued to be used in the twentieth century for transhipping cargoes from coasters to inland craft, including grain for Stanley Ferry, near Wakefield. Other cargoes were unloaded here for onward movement by road.[179]

In the1950s J. Wharton (Shipping) Ltd, which when first established operated from

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[176] This description is taken from www.ports.org.uk.

[177] Pocock, 'Scunthorpe', 128; above, section on Gunness.

[178] *Kelly's Dir. Lincs.* (1905), 279–80; ibid. (1909), 282; ibid. (1913), 289.

[179] Taylor, *Trent*, 40.

the former South Yorkshire Railway coal staithe on the north side of Keadby lock,[180] built a new wharf about half a mile upstream from Neap House on a previously unoccupied site.[181] Initially, the wharf was known as 'Scunthorpe', where from 1968 until at least 1979 Whartons and also LSD Transport (1944) Ltd and Lysaght's Scunthorpe Works Ltd (from 1969 British Steel Corporation (Normanby Park)) were listed as operators. All made traffic returns to the NPC in this period.[182] By 1983 J. Wharton (Shipping) Ltd were the only operator at what was now called Grove Wharf, although a second wharf had been built (or possibly reopened) at Neap House and was being operated by Trenship Agency Ltd, established in 1974;[183] both companies made returns to the British Ports Association.[184]

By about 2000 Grove Wharf was handling 2 millions tons of traffic a year.[185] The company, founded by Joseph Wharton, was established in 1938[186] and remained a family business until it was sold in 2005 by his grandson J. Steven Wharton (1944–). Both Steve Wharton and his father have at different dates had a controlling interest in (and served as chairman of) Scunthorpe United Football Club.[187] In 2000 the company was said to have 'recently' bought Neap House wharf, adding three more berths to the eight at Grove.[188] The

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[180] Taylor, *Trent*, 43; above, section on Keadby and Althorpe.

[181] Taylor, *Trent*, 41–2.

[182] NPC, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1968), 271–8, and later vols. to 1979.

[183] No. 1194056 (17 Dec. 1974).

[184] BPA, *Port Statistics* (1983), 112.

[185] Taylor, *Trent*, 41–2.

[186] Companies House WebCHeck (company no. 345885, registered 4 Nov. 1938).

[187] These details are culled from a Wikipedia article on J.S. Wharton.

[188] Taylor, *Trent*, 41–2.

two sites are owned and operated as one by Groveport Logistics Ltd, established in 2005.[189] The previous operator at Neap House, Trenship, was dissolved in 2013.[190]

Groveport is the largest privately owned inland port in the United Kingdom, offering sea access via the Humber estuary to within three miles of the motorway network.[191] The port offers a port-based distribution hub and the company's activities include chartering, ship's agency, stevedoring, warehousing and road transport. The site extends to 190 acres (79 ha.) and has twelve berths, which can accommodate vessels up to 100m. long, with a draft of 5.5m. on spring tides and air draft of 30m. (i.e. the air draft of the Humber road bridge). There is covered warehousing totalling 19,200 sq.m., with overhead cranes, and surfaced open storage areas of 450,000 sq.m. There are 45 heavy-lift quayside cranes of up to 40 tonnes lift capacity, as well as loading shovels and conveyors, an internal site transport fleet (as well as a large road transport fleet), and fully computerised 50-tonne weighbridges. Groveport offers what the company describes as 'fantastic access' to the European waterways. It handles cargo to and from Western Europe, Scandinavia, the Baltic, Mediterranean and North Africa, with destinations extending from Bergen in the north to Dakar in the south, and as far east as St Petersburg and Istanbul.

Groveport specialises in handling steels, forest products, dry bulk products, bags and pallets and scrap metals. Some 360,000 sq.m. of open storage is allocated to steel long products, including 22,000 sq.m. served by overhead Goliath cranes, with forklift trucks of up

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[189] No. 5410792 (1 April 2005). According to www.ports.org.uk Groveport Logistics operates the site but the owners are Wharton Grove Wharf Ltd. There is no company of this name currently on the register.

[190] Companies House WebCHeck.

[191] The information in this paragraph and the next is taken from the company's website, www.groveport.co.uk.

to 21 tonnes capacity also available. For hollow sections and tubes there is 19,000 sq.m. of covered warehousing under overhead cranes and further covered warehousing available; and for steel plates and strip there is a fully insulated warehouse, overhead cranes with a capacity of up to 30 tonnes and specialist coil-handling grabs. The company and its predecessors have built up an expertise in handling forest products since first offering a Scandinavian liner service in the 1960s. Timber, pulp, paper and board are handled in a 13,000 sq.m. forest products terminal surrounded by 20,000 sq.m. of surfaced open storage; a further 40,000 sq.m. of similar storage is allocated to forest products, all served by forklift trucks. Regular liner services continue to operate from Scandinavia and the Baltic. The handling of dry bulk products also dates back to the port's early history when much of the traffic was grain and coal. Such cargoes now include coal products, minerals, sands, animal feeds, biomass and products for recycling, for which the port can offer 30,000 sq.m. of covered warehousing, extensive surfaced open storage and high-bay reinforced concrete bay both inside and outside. The company also has decades of experience of handling bagged and palletised products, and can transfer dry bulk goods into bags at the port as required by customers. Another 30,000 sq.m. of covered warehousing is available in this case, together with conveyors and hoppers. Finally, the company had for many years handled scrap materials, including shredded (frag) scrap, and has dedicated quayside storage for this work, served by a comprehensive range of handling equipment including cactus grabs.

Beckingham

The other modern wharf development on the Trent, although on a smaller scale than Groveport and located several miles higher up the river on the west bank, is at Beckingham, where in 1965 the derelict premises of a shipbuilding company, J.S. Watson, were bought by

Clarence and Bernard Stockdale of Tuxford, who the following year established Trent Wharfage Ltd., intending to use the site for warehousing.[192] A subsidiary, Gainsborough Shipping Co. Ltd, was established in 1968.[193] Beckingham was not, however, listed by the National Ports Council as one of the wharves in use on the Trent until 1973. Thereafter it was listed under Gainsborough and made annual traffic returns to the NPC and later the British Ports Association.[194] The location was chosen to avoid the difficulties which then existed at Hull docks. In 1974 the wharf was blockaded by Hull lightermen during the period in which they successfully sought to prevent the introduction of the BACAT system into the Humber waterways network.

Trent Wharfage was later acquired by Kenneth Wilson and a firm named Bungay & Co.,[195] and in 1996 was bought by Michael Parkes. He appears to have established a new company that year, TW Logistics Ltd, which now operates the wharf at Beckingham, dedicated berths at Scunthorpe, and the port of Mistley and a subsidiary storage facility at Wrabness, both in Essex.[196] At Beckingham (which the company describes as its 'Gainsborough' wharf, although it is in fact on the opposite side of the Trent), the 200m.

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[192] Except as indicated, the information in this paragraph is taken from an article on the website of the Beckingham and Saundby Local History Society (www.beckingham-northnotts.org.uk/history/shipyard.html), most of which is concerned with the site when it was used as a shipyard. Trent Wharfage Ltd was registered on 3 March 1966 (no. 872875).

[193] No. 936212 (29 July 1968).

[194] NPC, *Digest of Port Statistics* (1973), vol. I (and in later years to 1979; it does not appear in earlier volumes back to 1968); British Ports Association, *Port Statistics* (1983).

[195] Thus the website cited in n. 192; there is no company of this name currently on the register.

[196] TW Logistics Ltd was registered on 23 Jan. 1996 (no. 3150116); the details of its operations that follow are taken from the company's website (www.twlogistics.co.uk), which also includes its activities at Mistley and Wrabness.

quayside is capable of accepting small coasters and barges of up to 1000 tonnes cargo.[197] There are 12,000 sq.m. of covered warehousing, including specialised bays for bulk cargoes, and 5 acres of open storage. The company's 'dedicated approved berths' on both the Trent and Humber, which it describes as being at 'Scunthorpe',[198] can take vessels of up to 3500 tonnes on a maximum draft of 5.5m. There are 13,000 sq.m. of covered warehousing and open storage, both adjacent to the berths and close to the port.

The main cargoes handled at Gainsborough and Scunthorpe are dry bulks (ferro-alloys, industrial minerals, refractory powders, wood pellets and pig iron), forest products, steels and other metals, and bagged, unitised and palletised goods. In addition to the usual range of wharfage, storage and road transport services, TWL is also a specialist in materials processing. Services offered include the manufacture of cement-bound briquettes (from ferro-manganese, ferro-silicon, silicon carbide, fluorspar etc.) and ovoids (from ferro-alloys, other minerals and waste materials, using various binding agents), crushing, milling, grinding and screening. The materials handled include ferro-alloys, various minerals, carbon products, waste materials, products for the ceramics and refractory industries, zircon sand, chromate sand, silicon and ash. In particular, TWL is a leading UK processor of zircon sand and flour. The sand is used in the aerospace, automotive, ceramics and refractory industries, in

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[197] This sentence follows the statement on the company's website, but it is not clear whether either 'coaster' or 'barge' is strictly correct. Is this wharf in fact used by foreign-going vessels? There appears to be no transhipment to or from barges at Beckingham, or indeed any barge traffic there at all.

[198] The location of these is unclear. The Scunthorpe address given on the company's website is Ferry Road West, which is close to (but does not adjoin) the wharves at Grove House and Neap operated by Groveport (but is several miles from the Humber). The address (together with the phrase 'dedicated wharves') suggested that TWL may lease some of Groveport's wharves for their exclusive use, but this needs checking on the ground with the companies in question. The capacity figures quoted next could refer to either Groveport or the RMS wharf at Gunness.

investment casting, and in the manufacture of iron and steel, as well as the production of synthetic zirconium and zirconium chemicals. In the case of all these products the company offers onward distribution in bulk or bags, and zircon, of which TWL is a major supplier both within the UK and globally, can be loaded into containers or vessels for re-export.

At about the same time as Trent Wharfage was set up, John Brash & Co. Ltd, established in 1932,[199] bought the area of the west and north of the old shipyard and opened a timber yard specialising in tile laths.[200] The company made traffic returns to the National Ports Council from 1975 (which were placed under Gainsborough) and to the British Ports Association in 1983 (when the address was given as Beckingham).[201] In 1976 two subsidiary companies were registered, John Brash (Haulage) Ltd and John Brash (Timber Treatment) Ltd, both of which are currently dormant.[202] The parent company continues to trade.

[199] No. 269605 (26 Oct. 1932).

[200] See n. 192.

[201] NPC, *Shipping Statistics* (1975–9), vol. I; BPA, *Port Statistics* (1983), 112. (1974 NPC volume not checked.)

[202] Nos. 1247150 and 1247932, registered on 4 and 9 March 1976 respectively.