

APPRX 1930s

Brunswick Wharf

M 4256
GARRETT

M 5337
GARRETT

7 A 5234
GARRETT

F 5 2525
SENTINEL

REG. NO UNIDENTIFIABLE
SENTINEL

9 KENWORTH RD. BIDEFORD EX 39 3NW 01237

473 577

It's one of Bideford's most prominent waterside spots, and earmarked for a major new development - but what of the history of East-the-Water's Brunswick Wharf?



DEVON TRADING CO LTD. "CLARENCE WHARF"
AN EXTENDED "SIDING" FROM THE QUAYS YARD
TERMINATED AT THIS POINT.
THE "REGISTRATION NUMBERS" OF THE 3
STEAM WAGONS (WHERE IDENTIFIABLE!) ARE AT
TOP OF PAGE.

The Brunswick Wharf area has a long industrial history going back probably to the sixteenth century. Most recall it as a builder's merchants, but when did that begin?

We have to go back to 1886 when William Langham Christie of Tapeley Park in Westleigh sold what was then a shipbuilding yard to John Baker, a Bideford merchant, for £1,500.

At the time the yard was being leased by H.M. Restarick, a local shipbuilder, and the sale document records that he was to be allowed to complete 'two vessels now in the course of building.'

Attached to this sale agreement is an 'Abstract of the Title' which details the history of the area back to 1835. This, along with a map attached to the document, show that the site was put together over the space of a few decades.

In 1835 the quay itself belonged to Jane Willcocks and she sold it to Augustus Saltren Willett for £530. Augustus changed his name to Cleveland on inheriting Tapeley Park and the Lordship of the Manor of Bideford from his great uncle John Cleveland (Saltrens Terrace and Willett Street are named after him). The area was said to be 116' long and 65' broad.

Part of the sale agreement was that 'a space of the breadth of 40 feet at the least'

should always be left clear between Barnstaple Street and the river.

In 1839 Cleveland paid £900 to buy the house and shipbuilding yard 'lately in the occupation of Thomas Evans' which were 115' by 147'.

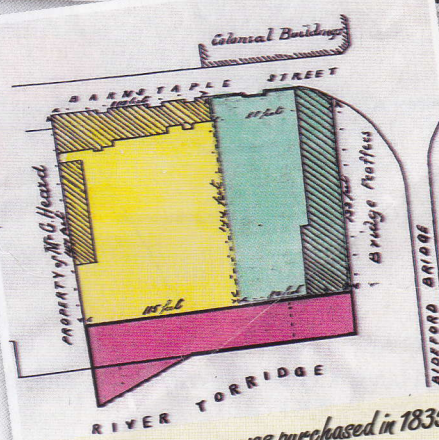
Cleveland died in 1849 without leaving a will and the property passed to his son Archibald, a cavalryman and one of just three officers to survive the 'Charge of the Light Brigade' in the Crimean War in 1854 - though he was killed a month later. Under his will the site passed to his mother Margaret and his sister Agnes who married William Langham Christie in 1855.

In 1864 the Crown Commissioners sold the foreshore in front of the site to her for £140 - thus bringing all the land together at last.

Margaret died in 1883 and William and Agnes sold the area to the Baker family who under the name Devon Trading Co. ran it as a builder's yard to start with and then expanded into selling raw materials. A large terracotta plaque bearing Isaac Baker's name still adorns the building opposite the Royal Hotel. The Bakers eventually sold up with



When the site was used for shipbuilding.



The green area was purchased in 1835, the yellow in 1839 and the red in 1864.

the land going to a large building firm - who then swapped it with the district council for a site at Holsworthy - and to complete the story Torrridge sold it to Simon Maunder the present-day developer.