

# Ship and Boat Building in East-the-Water

R. I. & S. H. Kirby

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## Notes on the lists

### Completeness

These lists have been compiled primarily from original press reports of launches, or vessels on the stocks, but, where other lists suggest that vessel may have been missed, this list is being supplemented with names found on those lists. The lists consulted are primarily those in:

- Inkerman Rogers *A Record of Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in the Port of Bideford from the Year 1568 to 1938: With a Brief Account of the Shipbuilding Industry in the Town Bideford*: Gazette Printing Service, 1947, hereinafter cited as "Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947";
- Grahame Farr *Ship Building in North Devon*. Maritime Monographs and Reports No. 22. Greenwich, London: National Maritime Museum, 1976, hereinafter cited as "Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976".

Though the process is currently incomplete for Farr's list, the resulting document already references published evidence for the construction of over 180 vessels in East-the-Water shipyards, many of which remain anonymous. The list, however, is certainly incomplete, for inexplicable gaps are still evident in the sequence of launches.

### Evaluating tonnage

Prior to 1854 tonnage, a measure of carrying capacity, had been based on the size of a wine cask (tun), one ten being about forty cubic feet. In 1854 the first British Merchant Shipping Act mandated the use of the Moorsom System of tonnage, based on the internal volume available, and therefore the earning capacity of the ship. Under the Moorsom System required two tonnages, the gross tonnage was the entire space, except for exempted spaces, the second, net tonnage, was what remained after various deductions, and was intended to be a clearer reflection of the ship's earning capacity for taxation purposes. Under the Moorsom System one ton equals one hundred cubic feet, so a ship of 300 tons under the old system would be about 750 tons under the new. It is not always clear, from the newspaper reports, which tonnage is being used, so the reader will have to form their own opinion, or consult other records.

Older Bideford residents, who are familiar with the Kathleen & May, may wish to mentally compare these vessels with her. For that purpose here dimensions are as follows: Gross tonnage N.M., 136; Gross tonnage cargo (burthen), 250; length, 98ft 4 in (30m); depth of hold 10ft (3.1m); Beam 23ft 2½in (7.1m).

### Bideford, Devon, or Bideford, Prince Edward's Island?

Not every ship reportedly built in Bideford was built in Devon. Ships built in Bideford, Prince Edward Island, might subsequently cross the Atlantic, the more confusing when they ended up

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owned in Bideford, Devon. Later reference to the vessels place of origin as “Bideford,” would then be assumed to mean Bideford, Devon, unless the source was specific about the county, or country, of origin. This may explain the odd anomaly in sources, e.g. the appearance of the 1883, 748 ton, P.E.I. built barque *Isabel* on Rogers’ list of vessels built in Bideford, Devon, from which one might (erroneously) conclude that H. M. Restarick must have built her<sup>1</sup>. Corroboration through local news reports, where possible, provides a useful safeguard against such false assumptions.

Grahame Farr also lists a vessel which may also be connected to Prince Edward Island, the 1834-launched smack *Seven Brothers*, 40 tons, which he suggests was built by “Rd. Heard” at Bideford<sup>2</sup>. Richard Heard was probably the property developer and timber merchant of that name, whose son William ran a ship-building yard in Charlotte-town, Prince Edward Island. The possibility should not be ignored, that Richard Heard shipped the vessel over incomplete, then merely completed her in Bideford.

## Calculation of launch dates

When dealing with press reports of launches it is quite normal for them to mention the day of the launch but not its date. The launch date is therefore assumed to have fallen on the nearest earlier occurrence of the day mentioned in the report, with one exception. If the day in question was the day before publication (e.g. launch was on a Tuesday and publication was on a Wednesday) it has usually been assumed that this was likely to have been too late for inclusion, though in the odd case a launch the previous evening clearly made it into the following days paper. In a few ambiguous cases the date of the prior spring tide has driven the choice of date.

## Pre-19<sup>th</sup> C. origins of East-the-Water’s shipyards

In Pigot's 1844 Trade Directory’s listing for Bideford, only one shipbuilder – Evans & Cox – is operating outside of East-the-Water, but ship-building in East-the-Water can be traced back far further back than that.

When, in 1834, Thomas Evans offered the Bridge End shipyard for lease, he advertised it as “an eligible opportunity in one of the oldest Establishments in the county of Devon.”<sup>3</sup>

In 1542 Henry VIII's official antiquary, John Leland, visited the West-country<sup>4</sup>. On visiting Bideford, he noted that in Barnstaple Street, East-the-Water, there was “a praty quick [meaning lively] streate of Smithes and other occupiers for shipp crafte.”<sup>5</sup>

The Exeter Records demonstrate that Bideford’s shipyards could already produce a ship of 250 tons, one having been built there in 1565<sup>6</sup>. Rogers cites the entry as follows<sup>7</sup> “that one J. W. of the citie of Exeter, Merchante, hath at these presents buylded and fynished within the haven of Bidefford one ship of the portage and burden of two hundredth fifty tonnes.” Coming so relatively soon after

1 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 35

2 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 34

3 *North Devon Journal* 29 May 1834 p1 c1; *North Devon Journal* 5 June 1834 p1 c1

4 John Chandler. “John Leland in the West Country” pgs 34 to 49 in Mark Brayshay Ed. *Topographical Writers in South-West England*. University of Exeter Press, 1996. 44

5 Leland, *Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535-1543*, 1907, Part 2, Pg 171-2

6 “North Devon Maritime Enterprise 1560-1640.” *Tudor and Stuart Devon: The Common Estate and Government : Essays Presented to Joyce Youings*. Todd Gray, Margery M. Rowe, Audrey M. Erskine. University of Exeter Press, 1992. Page 121. Pearce Chope (*North Devon Journal* 5 July 1928 p7 c5) gives the date of construction as 1566.

7 Rogers, *Concise History of Bideford*, 1938, pg 10, citing *Calendar of State Papers*, British Museum.

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Leland's account, of 1542, mentioned shipbuilding only in East-the-Water<sup>8</sup>, it is likely that the Barnstaple Street yards were responsible for the 250 ton ship.

To set this size of 250 tons in context, consider that Drake circumnavigated the globe in the Pelican/Golden Hind, a vessel of about 150 tons<sup>9</sup>, whilst, of the 139 vessels operating as privateers between 1589 and 1591 (and therefore available to the crown as a navy), only 16 were over 200 tons<sup>10</sup>. Henry VIII's flagship, Mary Rose, ordered in 1510, was large for its time at 400 tons<sup>11</sup>.

Rogers suggested that the ability to produce a 250 ton ship made Bideford one of the most significant ship-building centres in the west, it having received a certificate for building ships from "the Lord Highe Admyral of England"<sup>12</sup>.

Most of the merchant ships active from Bideford at this period were smaller. Six or seven traded overseas, and they totalled 143 tons. Barnstaple had but three ships (totaling 76 tons), though it appears that some Barnstaple ships were hired to Bristol merchants. Ship ownership was centred on the parish of Northam, where eight vessels were active, the largest being the *Jesus* (80 tons)<sup>13</sup>.

Rogers mentions a boat of 500 tons being built in 1566 at Bideford, but gives no indication of his original source, and it has not been possible to trace it<sup>14</sup>.

The folk-memory of shipbuilding in East-the-Water goes back to Elizabethan times. Major W. Ascott recorded an old local tradition, concerning the shipyard which became Brunswick Wharf, that two ships were built there for Sir Richard Grenville, "for his Virginian venture"<sup>15</sup>.

A plan from around 1717 provides more concrete evidence, showing that three shipwright's yards were active at that time, one near the mouth of Potter's Pill (on the west of the river), and two in East-the-Water, one just north of the east end of the bridge (the Bridge End yard) and the other in the area later occupied by Clarence Wharf/Brook's Yard. It does not show detail far enough to the north to know about the Cross Parks yard, or any potential ship-yard sites on the other side of the river near Cleave Houses.

The latter history of ship-building in Bideford includes many more yards on the west of the Torridge, for the deep water channel moved to that side in the latter 19<sup>th</sup> C. Prior to that the deeper water seems to have frequently favoured the East-the-Water shore, making it far more attractive for ship-builders. The Cross Parks yard probably relied on the deeper water provided by the pill to the north of the rock (as did the yard at Bank End), its closure, shortly before a new Turnpike ran through that area is probably not a coincidence.

## Location of the ship-yards

During the 19<sup>th</sup> C. there appear to have been ship-yards on at least five sites north of the Long

8 Leland, Itinerary of John Leland in or about the years 1535-1543, 1907, Part 2, Pg 171-2

9 Glyndwr Williams. The Great South Sea: English Voyages and Encounters, 1570-1750. Yale University Press, 1997. Pg 23.

10 Richard Bruce Wernham. The Making of Elizabethan Foreign Policy, 1558-1603. University of California Press, 1980. Pg 61.

11 "The History of the Mary Rose – 1511-1545" Mary Rose Museum. Online:<http://www.maryrose.org> Accessed: 29 Apr 2017.

12 Rogers, Concise History of Bideford, 1938, pg 11

13 "North Devon Maritime Enterprise 1560-1640." Tudor and Stuart Devon: The Common Estate and Government : Essays Presented to Joyce Youings. Todd Gray, Margery M. Rowe, Audrey M. Erskine. University of Exeter Press, 1992. Page 121.

14 Rogers, Concise History of Bideford, 1938, pg 11

15 W. Ascott, Random Notes on Old Bideford and District. Bideford: Gazette, 1953. Pg 27

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Bridge. See the table below for my current hypotheses concerning their locations (starts and ends of occupancy are based on the detailed data given later in the text).

Wm. Henry Rogers typed manuscript *Notes on Bideford* reproduce, amongst notes taken from a notebook kept by Vernon Boyle (1858-1926), some reminiscences from T. Murphy, recorded in 1904, when Murphy was 89<sup>16</sup>. They include the following “East-the-Water there were 5 shipyards : Johnson's by the bridge, one where Gabriel's yard now is, then Water' opposite the Terminus Inn, one on the beach where the goods station now stands or a bit further back against the road and one at cross park.” A Barnstaple-street-raised resident of East-the-Water, Derek Barnes, once lived near Gabriel's Yard and, in 2016, pointed out the remains of its wall. From this it is clear that the shipyard mentioned by Boyle was in the southern part of the area now known as Clarence Wharf. The 'yard on the beach' would have been in roughly the location marked for Burnard's quay.

Some limited evidence also exists for ship-building activities along the shore to the south of Torrington Lane. A map of 1776 marks a shipyard on the Nuttaberry Road, Johnson appears to have had timber in that area, and an area there “intended for a shipyard” was once offered for sale. Boat-building was certainly carried out along that southern shore.

Location	Description	Occupant	First appear on records	Last appearance on records
<b>Lower Cross Park Yard</b> (appears on a painting that pre-dates 1832)	Probably at the northern end of Crosspark Rock, a site later occupied by a pottery	William Heard	1791	1793
		William Taylor (incl. Wheaton & Taylor)	1803	1830
<b>Chanter's Yard</b> (anecdotal evidence)	Probably west of the Old Barnstaple Road (on site of an earlier quay known as Burnard's Quay)	Chanter (Possibly Thomas Burnard Chanter, Thomas Burnard's nephew)	1863 (he never seems to have got round to building any ships on it, possibly he just refitted there)	1863 (about when the station approach road would have run across it)
<b>Higher Cross Park Yard</b> (exact locations shown on plans from the period)	In 1832, to the west of the current site of the East of the Water restaurant.	Unidentified shipwrights yard shown on a plan in approximately this position)	c. 1717	c. 1717
	Appears to have expanded northward to be opposite 1 Barnstaple Street by 1842.	William Brook (his occupancy proved beyond doubt)	1824	1846 (a launch in this year identifies the yard as of “the late Mr. Brook”, Mrs Brook put the yard up for sale in Oct 1846)

16 Rogers, Notes on Bideford, Vol 3, Pg 35

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Location	Description	Occupant	First appear on records	Last appearance on records
		Thomas Waters, then William Waters	1846	1873
<b>Clarence Wharf Yard (General area known)</b>	On the site of the modern car-park, probably the southern end	Henry Tucker (moved out of ship-building to focus on malting and bark export).	1791	Tucker died in 1846 (site sold in 1848, with Thomas Waters living there)
	c1850 till c1867 the Bideford Anthracite Company were actively using this area, much of the time with a gantry across it that would have impaired ship-building on the site.			
	The foreshore in this area converted into a dry dock	John Johnson	c 1869	c. 1870
<b>Bridge End Yard</b> (Exact locations shown on plans for the latter period)	Originally west of Embery's Drang, but extended south under Johnson (to take 3 vessels)	Unidentified shipwrights yard shown on a plan in approximately this position)	c. 1717	c. 1717
		John Hoar (house and lands shown in approximately this location on an early, but undated, plan)	-	-
		John Evans	1806? (but may have been elsewhere, with a timber yard here)	c. 1822
		Thomas Evans	1824	1839
		Robert Johnson, then John Johnson	1840	1876
		Henry Morgan Restarick	1877	1886
<b>Torrington Lane Yard</b> (exact location described)	On the site of the old Board School in Torrington Street	John Crocker, boat-builder (certainly in East-the-Water and possibly here)	1839	1841

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Location	Description	Occupant	First appear on records	Last appearance on records
		George Edward Parkin, boat-builder (later of Appledore)	1852	1858
<b>Nuttaberry<sup>17</sup> Road Yard</b> (exact location shown on a plan from 1776)	Just south of Torrington Lane, on the east of the road to Nuttaberry (which possibly post-dated the yard)	Mr. Doubt	1776 (posthumously)	1776

N.B. John & James Metherall do not appear above as it is not clear that they were ever anything but block-makers, despite some suggestion that they also built boats and had a yard on Torrington Street from 1866-1884. Nor is the Gasworks Wharf shipyard included above, as it seems to have been sold within a year of the lease being taken out, possibly because the original leaseholder failed to get any trade.

## William Brook's yard, Cross Park, 1824 till 1846

### Location of the yard

On early plans of the area this yard is shown immediately opposite the Currier's Arms (later the Terminus, now the 'East of the Water' restaurant), and marked as Brook's. The launch of Highlander in 1838 sees Brook beginning to build larger vessels for voyages to Australia, at times apparently also having a second, smaller vessel on the go. The smaller vessels were probably produced in Brook's yard, as it is described, at one point, as "exceedingly compact."<sup>18</sup> This leaves a question as to where the second vessels were produced. It seems likely that they were built on the neighbouring Clarence Wharf site under some arrangement with Henry Tucker, as Henry seems to have ceased launching vessels in about 1825, whilst it is around 1838 Brook ramps up his production.

Grant and Christie suggest that William Brook succeeded William Taylor at the Cross Park shipyard<sup>19</sup>. But it is now known that the periods of operation of Taylor and Brook overlap. It is also clear, from plans and paintings that the Cross Park shipyard was significantly further north than Brook's yard and lay on the northern slope of the land that extended out into the river as Crosspark Rock. A site where a pill (a tributary stream) provided the deeper water that facilitated launching vessels.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

The 1841 Census suggests that William Brook was born c. 1794, a date consistent with his age at

<sup>17</sup> Nuttaberry has various spellings and there is still no consistent approach. As at 2018 the road sign and the Ordnance Survey have "Nutaberry Hill," whilst the official Post Office postcode database and Torrington District Council use (address for Council Tax) "Nuttaberry Hill." The author has adopted the latter.

<sup>18</sup> North Devon Journal 8 October 1846 p1 c4

<sup>19</sup> Alison Grant and Peter Christie, *The Book of Bideford*, Buckingham :Barracuda Books Limited, 1987, page 39

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death. The report of his death in the Western Times gives his name as William Brooks<sup>20</sup>.

The name Wm. Brook is listed in Pigot's Trade Directory of 1822-23 under three occupation categories, Salt Merchant, Coal Merchant, and Lime Burner. Address on each occasion is given as East the Water.

In December 1822, in the parish church at Bideford, one William Brook married, by license, one Mary Boatfield, both being of the parish.

On the parish register entry for the October 1823 christening, at Bideford, of Louisa, to William and Mary Brook, her father's occupation is described as "Merchant"

On the parish register entry for the January 1825 christening, at Bideford, of Mary Boatfield to William and Mary Brooke, her father's occupation is described as "Merchant."

In April 1825, a Mr. Brook, of Bideford, the proprietor, sold three leasehold dwelling houses, together with their gardens, at Hardaway's Head, Barnstaple, and rented by Mr. R. B. Davie, Mr. Beer, and Mr. Thomas Lock, respectively<sup>21</sup>.

In June 1827 the wife of "Mr. Brook, Ship-builder," gave birth to a child<sup>22</sup>. The Bideford parish registers for June show the christening of one William, son of William and Mary Brook, whose father gave his occupation as "Merchant"

He is listed in Pigot's 1830 Directory for Devonshire, under Ship Builders, as "Brook William, East the Water"

On the parish register entry for the July 1831 christening, at Bideford, of William, to William and Mary Brook, his father's occupation is described as "Merchant."

In 1832 Brook was accused of circulating a false report concerning William Tardew Esq. From his published refutation we discover that he was a churchwarden at Bideford<sup>23</sup>.

He is listed in Robson's 1839 Directory for Devonshire, as "Brook William, *Ship Builder*, East the Water"

The 1841 Census lists one "Wm Brook" aged 47, a ship builder, living with his wife Mary, his family and one servant. The premises look to be that later occupied by Thomas Waters, another shipbuilder.

In July 1842, Brook's daughter left home to play in the yard opposite his house, she was last seen with a group of girls playing in a boat, but she never returned. Despite dragging the river, it was some 17 days before the body was finally found floating near the sea locks of the Rolle Canal<sup>24</sup>.

In 1843 he stood for election as a local councillor on the conservative platform, but was defeated<sup>25</sup>.

Brook is listed in Pigot's 1844 Trade Directory under Shipbuilders, when his address is given as East the Water.

William Brook, shipbuilder, died in March 1845, aged 51<sup>26</sup>.

20 "Deaths" Western Times 22 March 1845 p5 c2

21 "Barnstaple" North Devon Journal 29 April 1825 p4 c4

22 "Births" North Devon Journal 29 June 1827 p4 c3

23 "To William Tardew Esq." Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 14 April 1832 p3 c5

24 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 30 July 1842 p3 c4; "Accidents & C." Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 13 August 1842 p3 c4

25 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 2 November 1843 p2 c6

26 "Died" Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 27 March 1845 p3 c2; Western Times 22 March 1845 p5 c2

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The yard closed in about 1846, following William's death, and was sold.

In 1849 the late William Brook's daughter, Mary Boatfield Brook was married to R. E. Rawle merchant of Bristol<sup>27</sup>

In 1863 the late William Brook's eldest daughter, Louisa was married to Lucien Bartholemy, Esq., of London<sup>28</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

On 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1831, the *Betsey*, of Barnstaple, Captain Charles Lake, master, was observed in distress, having seemingly struck the north tail of Bideford Bar. The incident was soon obscured by fog and darkness, but the lifeboat tarried, having first receiving a report that a returning pilot boat had seen nothing amiss, only to then discover that they had found remains of the *Betsey* and that the crew must have perished. Some folk from Appledore then plundered the wreck, one even appearing the next day dressed in the captain's clothes, discarded by Lake as he sought to swim to shore. The press report gives the owners of the *Betsy* as Mr. Samuel Bremridge, of Barnstaple, and Mr. Brooks, of Bideford. Captain Lake, his brother, and a mariner called Shaddick all perished<sup>29</sup>.

In March 1831 one "Mr. Brook, shipbuilder, of Bideford," was engaged in trying to get the *Betsey* off, she having been driven ashore at Appledore, when one of Brook's men, a shipwright named Hanger, was tragically killed, when the *Betsy* heeled, casting Hanger overboard, to be washed out to sea and drowned<sup>30</sup>.

In July 1840 a workman was injured, but two conflicting press reports leave some doubt over quite what happened. The local paper states, Edward Clarke, who was in the employ of Mr. Brook, ship-builder, fell down the hatchway of a vessel, a few days ago, and sustained a dreadful fracture of his leg<sup>31</sup>. An Exeter paper states that a painter named Clark fell through the skylight on board a ship in the yard of Mr. Brook and broke his leg<sup>32</sup>.

In the Bideford Regatta, of July 1845, two prizes in a race for two-oared boats were taken by boats from a new barque, in the late Mr. Brooke's yard<sup>33</sup>.

On October 7th, 1846 the yard was offered for let, with immediate possession, at which time it was described as both a "commodious Shipbuilding Yard" and "exceedingly compact." This "eligible opportunity" for shipbuilders contained a saw-pit of 70 feet by 18, a smith's shop of 34 feet by 20, and spacious lofts" Whilst vessels could lie safely alongside. Applications were invited to his widow, "Mrs. William Brook." The premises were said to have been erected by Brook, specifically for ship-building<sup>34</sup>.

## Ships launched

### Jul 1824, brig *Apollo*, 179 tons (burthen)

Press account confirms a successful launch on 28 July 1824, of a brig, "bearing the name and figure

27 "Marriages" Western Times 16 June 1849 p5 c2

28 Western Times 5 February 1863 p1 c3

29 "Shipwreck, with loss of three lives." North Devon Journal 10 March 1831 p4 c3

30 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 19 Mar 1831 p3 c3

31 North Devon Journal 16 July 1840 p3 c2

32 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 18 July 1840 p3 c3

33 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 10 July 1845 p3 c4

34 North Devon Journal 8 October 1846 p1 c4



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head of Apollo” and of about 180 tons burden, from the yard of “Mr. W. Bock [sic], East-the-Water”<sup>35</sup>. Graham Farr gives her as a Mediterranean trader of 179 tons<sup>36</sup>.

In February 1831 emigrants were invited to book places on the “A. 1. Fine Brig, Apollo” due to sail from Bideford for New York that coming April under the command of T. Bragg, master. Particulars could be obtained from Mr. S. Bremridge, Barnstaple, or Mr. W. Brook, Bideford, suggesting that Brook may have retained a share in this vessel<sup>37</sup>.

### **1825, Louisa, brigantine of 93 tons**

Farr identifies the Louisa as built by Wm. Brook at Crosspark in 1825<sup>38</sup>.

### **Mar 1827, unidentified vessel of c. 125 tons**

On 10th March, 1827 an unidentified vessel, of about 125 tons, going on frame and to be copper fastened, was advertised for sale, “by Private Contract, at Mr. W. Brook’s Yard, Bideford,” Its dimensions: “Length of keel, 62 feet; extreme breadth, 20 feet 4 inches; depth in hold, 12 feet” Applications were invited to Mr. W. Brook<sup>39</sup>.

### **c. Apr 1827, unidentified vessel of c. 96 tons**

On 10th March, 1827 an unidentified vessel of about 96 tons, and ready for completion within a month, was advertised for sale, “by Private Contract, at Mr. W. Brook’s Yard, Bideford,” Its “dimensions: Length of keel, 56 feet; breadth (extreme) 19 feet 3 inches ; depth in hold, 11 feet 2 inches.” Applications were invited to Mr. W. Brook<sup>40</sup>.

### **Apr 1828, brig (Effort?), c. 140 tons (burthen)**

On the 16<sup>th</sup> April Mr. W Brook was reported to have successfully launched a “fine brig, about 140 tons burthen, built for Capt. Shaxton’s use, principally “in the foreign trade.”<sup>41</sup>

Farr identifies a vessel, a brig of 99 tons, as built by Wm. Brook at Cross Park in 1828. It is likely that this was the anonymous brig mentioned in this press report<sup>42</sup>.

### **May 1828, brig *Emma*, 190 tons (burthen)**

On the 7 June 1828 it was reported that, on Saturday evening (31 May<sup>43</sup>), Mr. W. Brook, shipbuilder, of Bideford, launched a finely-modelled brig, of bout 190 tons burthen, named *Emma*, from his yard<sup>44</sup>.

Farr suggests that the Emma was a brig of 124 tons, built at Cross Park by Wm. Brook<sup>45</sup>.

35 "Bideford." North Devon Journal 30 July 1824 p4 c2

36 “Ship Building in North Devon.” Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

37 “To Emigrants” North Devon Journal 17 February 1831 p1 c1

38 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 32

39 “Bideford, – Devon.” Woolmer’s Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 17 March 1827 p1 c4

40 “Bideford, – Devon.” Woolmer’s Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 17 March 1827 p1 c4

41 “Bideford” Western Times 26 April 1828 p4 c2

42 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 33

43 The 7 June being a Saturday, and the report being in the South Devon press, the launch is assumed to have been the prior weekend.

44 Woolmer’s Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 7 June 1828 p2 c4

45 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 33

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### **Apr 1829, brig *Antigua*, 170 tons (burthen)**

A press report in the North Devon Journal describes the launch, at half past six in the evening, and from the yard of “Mr. William Brook, Shipbuilder, East the Water,” of a brig, named *Antigua*, of about 170 tons burthen, and intended for trading with that island. She was launched fully rigged, with her colours flying, watched by “upwards of 2000” cheering spectators, occupying a host of vantage spots throughout the town. Following the launch a large party of his friends were entertained at the builder’s house, whilst the shipwrights provided their own amusement at a neighbouring public house. On Wednesday, 22 April, she sailed for her home port of Belfast, laden with bark. Her master, an Irishman named Wilson, had clearly been well received, whilst in Bideford, as “many hats and hands waved in the air while the vessel was under weigh.”<sup>46</sup>

Farr suggests that the *Antigua* was a snow of 149 tons, built in Bideford by Wm. Brook<sup>47</sup>.

### **1829, unidentified vessel, approx 220 tons**

The keel of a vessel 50 tons larger than the *Antigua* had been laid down within a week of the *Antigua*’s launch<sup>48</sup>.

### **May 1831, unidentified brig**

During a launch (on 19 May 1831) of a brig, by “Mr. brook, ship builder, east the river,” falling timber “dreadfully bruised” the foot of one of his workmen, a man named Hooper, who had already spent the previous winter laid up from a similar incident<sup>49</sup>. The press report gives no name for this brig, but Farr suggests that the *Mary*, a schooner-brig of 100 tons was built in 1832 at Cross Park by Wm. Brook<sup>50</sup>. Farr rejects a possible date of 1832 for the *Mary*, so it is likely that this account refers to her launch.

### **May 1832, sloop *Gleaner*, 34 tons (register)**

A press report indicates that Mr. Brook launched a sloop, named *Gleaner* of about 34 tons register, from his yard, East the Water<sup>51</sup>. The report appeared in a Thursday edition and was reported as having been the prior Thursday (3 May 1832).

### **c. Jul 1832, unidentified vessel**

A very brief report, published on 2 May, indicates that two fine vessels, intended for the coasting trade, had been launched, one from Mr. Brook’s yard, the other from Mr. Evans yard<sup>52</sup>. Farr suggests that the *Martha*, a schooner of 95 tons was launched from Wm. Brook’s yard at Cross Park in 1832<sup>53</sup>. The anonymous vessel of this press report is therefore likely to be the *Martha*.

### **Apr 1833, brig *Star of Brunswick***

In April 1833 the press reported the successful and well-attended launch, from Mr. Brook’s yard, “east the water,” of a “very fine brig”, *The Star of Brunswick*<sup>54</sup>. The report appeared in a Thursday

46 "Bideford." North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 23 April 1829 p4 c2

47 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 33

48 "Bideford." North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 23 April 1829 p4 c2

49 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 21 May 1831 p3 c2

50 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 34

51 North Devon Journal 10 May 1832 p1 c5

52 North Devon Journal 5 July 1832 p4 c4

53 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 34

54 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 2 May 1833 p4 c2

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edition and was reported as having been the prior Thursday (25 April 1833).

### **c. Aug 1833, unidentified brig, 110 tons (register), 175 tons (burthen)**

On 25th July, 1833 a brig was offered for sale, and for launch within a month, from “Mr. Wm. Brook's Yard, in Bideford,” having length of keel 65 feet, breadth, 19 feet 2 inches, and depth in hold of 11 feet 9 inches. She would register 110 tons and carry 175 tons. Whilst she had a 12 inch Quarter Deck. Advertised as suitable for foreign or coasting Trade, she was “*copper fastened below wales.*”<sup>55</sup>

### **1833, schooner *William*, 103 tons**

Farr suggests that a schooner, the *William*, of 103 tons, was built at Cross Park by Wm. Brook in 1833<sup>56</sup>.

### **Jun 1834, schooner *Quicksilver*, upwards of 84 tons**

Local press reported the launch, on Monday (23 June), of *Quicksilver*, a fine schooner, “upwards of 84 tons burthen per register,” from the yard of Mr. William Brook, shipbuilder. Successfully launched, with colours flying, she was intended to trade from Truro<sup>57</sup>.

### **Jan 1836, barque *Laurina*, 205 tons.**

Local press reported that, on the morning of Tuesday (5 Jan) a barque, of “205 tons burthen per register,” and built for “Mr. Wm. Phillips, of Liverpool, merchant,” was successfully launched from Mr. William Brook's yard, east the water<sup>58</sup>. The publication date was a Tuesday, so launch date is assumed to be a week earlier.

The South Devon papers are, for once, more extensive in their coverage, giving the name *Laurina*, suggesting she was 205 ton by register, but built for “Mess. Worrall and Phillips, Merchants, Liverpool.” The account reflects that she had been entered in Lloyd's Register as 12 A 1, a rare occurrence for vessels in the outports<sup>59</sup>.

### **Aug 1836, barque *Gazelle*, 282 tons (register)**

On 30 July 1836 a report mentions the impending launch from the yard of “Mr. W. Brook of Bideford” of a vessel of 400 tons burthen, for “a respected Liverpool and Bristol House.”<sup>60</sup> This is likely to be a reference to the *Gazelle*.

Local press reported the launch, on Monday (29 August), of the *Gazelle*, a barque, of 282 tons register, from Mr. William Brook's yard, east the water. Built for some Liverpool-based merchants, this successful launch was witnessed by “an immense concourse of spectators who lined the quay and bridge.”<sup>61</sup>

*Records of Bristol Ships* suggests she was launched for “Messrs. Ferris, Butler and Co., of Liverpool,” and that “The *Gazelle* dropped from *L.R.* [Lloyd's Register] between 1841-3.”<sup>62</sup>

55 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 3 August 1833 p3 c5

56 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 34

57 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 26 June 1834 p4 c2

58 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 21 January 1836 p4 c4

59 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 30 July 1836 p3 c1

60 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 30 July 1836 p3 c1

61 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 1 September 1836 p4 c4

62 Grahame E Farr Editor. Records of Bristol Ships, 1800-1838 (vessels Over 150 Tons). Bristol: Bristol Record

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **c. Feb 1838, schooner *The William and Mary*, 40 tons (NM), >50 tons (OM)**

Local press reported the launch of *The William and Mary*, a schooner of 40 tons (but which, by the old measure, would have been in excess of 50 tons), built for “W.V. Richards, Esq. of Georgeham,” from Mr. Brook's ship-building yard on the east side of the river<sup>63</sup>.

Farr suggests that a schooner, *William and Mary*, of 40 tons, was built at Cross Park, by Wm. Brook, in 1838<sup>64</sup>.

### **24 May 1838, barque *Highlander*, 500 tons**

Local press reported the well-attended launch, at just past six on Thursday evening (24 May), of a barque, of 500 tons burden, the *Highlander*, built at the yard of Mr. Brook, and set for a maiden voyage to Sydney and New South Wales. The account mentions not only crowds on the quay, the bridge, the new Barnstaple road, and the builder's yard, but also a flotilla of small boats carrying parties wishing to witness the launch<sup>65</sup>.

Farr suggests that a barque, *Highlander*, of 299 tons, was built at Cross Park, by Wm. Brook, in 1838<sup>66</sup>.

### **1838, at least one unidentified vessel, (*Lady of the Isles*?)**

A press account of the launch of the *Milford* (in Jan 1839) states “This is the fourth large vessel built by Mr. Brooks within this last twelve months, making together upwards of 736 tons.” The numbers don't add up but the probability of other launches seems likely

Farr suggests that a schooner, *Lady of the Isles*, of 45 tons, was built at Cross Park, by Wm. Brook, in 1838<sup>67</sup>. This seems likely to be this anonymous vessel

### **Jan 1839, brig *Milford*, upward of 323 tons**

On Wednesday (2 Jan) “Mr. Brooks, East-the-Water” launched the *Milford*, a brig of “upwards of 323 tons,” Captain Davidson, master, and built for a Bristol merchant<sup>68</sup>. That merchant appears to have been Thomas Corey, for he later, when a dispute broke out concerning payment for the vessel, complained that Brook had failed to deliver the ship the previous June, as per the contract. The press report indicates that Corey had paid in instalments, and that the contracted price was £2,752 7s, but that, with Corey having paid the majority Brook refused to accept the contractual balance as being insufficient. When Corey tried to seize the ship and tow her off with a steamer, Brook's men pursued her, attempting to cut the tow-rope, whilst Corey's men continued to fend them off. Eventually, the struggling parties reached Appledore, when Brook capitulated and, as a gesture of good will, agreed to send out the vessel's tiller, which he still had in his yard<sup>69</sup>.

Farr suggests the *Milford* was 325 tons.<sup>70</sup>

Society, 1950. Pg 233

63 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 1 March 1838 p4 c3

64 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 35

65 North Devon Journal 31 May 1838 p4 c4

66 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 35

67 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 35

68 “North Devon” Western Times 12 January 1839 p3 c4

69 “The Late Occurrence at Bideford” Bristol Times and Bath Advocate 16 March 1839 p3 c4

70 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 35

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **1840, *Gemine*, 410 tons (OM)**

Following on from the launch of *George*, from Mr. Thomas Evan's yard (presumably his new one across the river), Mr. Brooks successfully launched the *Gemine*, of 410 tons burthen, by the old measurement. Built for a company of merchants in Liverpool, she was intended for foreign trade. The dual launch of these larger vessels attracted quite a crowd, and was marked by the ringing of the [church?] bells during the ceremony<sup>71</sup>.

### **Mar 1841, unidentified schooner (Pet?)**

On 4 February 1841, a schooner, of 124 tons o.m. and A 1 twelve years, was advertised in Liverpool by "Mr. Wm. Brook, Shipbuilder, Bideford." She was claimed to be complete, ready to launch, and able to be ready for sea in ten days<sup>72</sup>.

The launch of this vessel is probably that of a "fine schooner from the yard of Mr. Brooks, East-the-Water" at half past six on Wednesday (17 March)<sup>73</sup>. It has been assumed that an article with a Thursday publication date is unlikely to mean the day before publication when it speaks of "last Wednesday."

This schooner was possibly the *Pet*, which was described later, in Nov 1841, as the sister ship to another unidentified schooner built in 1841 by Brooks (see below).

### **c. Jan 1842, unidentified schooner of 140 tons o.m**

On 4 November 1841 "Mr. Wm. Brook, Shipbuilder, Bideford" advertised, in Liverpool, the sale of a schooner, of about 140 tons n.m., then in frame, and capable of completion within three months. She was, the advertisement stated, a sister vessel to the Schooner *Pet*, then in Liverpool, under Captain William Shotton<sup>74</sup>.

Another ship on the stocks at this time would not be finished until c. July 1843.

### **c. Jun 1843, unidentified schooner, 131 tons o.m.**

In June 1843, "WM. BROOK, Shipbuilder, Bideford" placed an advertisement, dated May 14th, 1843, in the Liverpool press, for the sale of three vessels. This was the second vessel mentioned in an advertisement, but the one nearest to completion. A schooner, of 131 tons o.m., and dimensions -- Length for measurement 70 feet, breadth 20 feet 9 inches, depth 13 feet 3 inches. Ready for launching<sup>75</sup>.

Brook's yard does not seem big enough for this level of output, so it would be easy to think that he was spearheading the sale for ships produced at other yards. Yet the advert states, following his name "(one concern)," as if to emphasise that Brook was responsible for all the vessels.

### **c. Sep 1843, unidentified Brig**

The third of the vessels mentioned in Brook's advertisement of May 14th, 1843 (and published in June 1843), a brig, dimensions --Length 85 feet, breadth 23 feet, depth 15 feet 6 inches. It had a quarter deck 24 inches in height. To be first class twelve A 1, it had been inspected by one Mr.

71 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 May 1840 p3 c2

72 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 4 February 1841 p3 c3

73 North Devon Journal 25 March 1841 p3 c1.

74 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 4 November 1841 p3 c2

75 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 15 June 1843 p3 c3

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Bailey. In the process of planking, it could be finished in three months<sup>76</sup>.

### **Sep 1845, barque *Alice Maud*, 464 tons**

The first of the vessels mentioned in Brook's advertisement of May 14th, 1843, was 371 tons o.m. and 486 tons n.m., with dimensions: Length 112 feet, breadth 27 feet, depth 19 feet; had a full poop with a topgallant forecastle, a full figure-head, a carved stern and quarter badges; admeasures The advertisement notes that she had been more than 2 ½ years in the building, and had been under the inspection of Lloyd's Surveyor, of London, as first class ship twelve A 1. She was ready for completion in one month<sup>77</sup>. Thus, this ship had been in Brook's yard since approximately January 1841.

It appears that she was not eventually launched until the evening of Tuesday, 16 September, 1845, when the local press reported that "the fine ship so long laying on the stocks in the yard of the late Mr. William Brook" was launched, as the *Alice Maud*<sup>78</sup>.

Several earlier advertisements appear to be attempts to sell the *Alice Maud* in earlier stages of completion, here size seeming to grow in the public imagination, in proportion to the time Brook was taking to sell her.

On 4 February 1841 "Mr. Wm. Brook, Shipbuilder, Bideford" advertised, in Liverpool, the sale of a ship anticipated to measure c. 380 tons o.m. and c. 450 tons n.m. Her dimensions – Length, 112 feet; breadth, 27 feet 6 inches, or thereabouts, depth, 19 feet. She had a full poop, 35 feet in length, with a top-gallant forecastle, of 15 feet. Her frame was of best English oak, and she was ready for planking. Built under the inspection of Lloyd's surveyor, she was to be a first class ship 12 A 1.<sup>79</sup>

On 4 November Brook advertised, again in Liverpool, a vessel with a seemingly identical description, except that she was anticipated to measure 385 ton n.m, and was now planked and could be ready for launch in three months<sup>80</sup>. This seems likely to be the same vessel.

In September 1842, a local press report had noted that, in anticipation of a revival of trade, Bideford's shipbuilders were building speculatively, with Mr. Brook having a vessel on the stocks which would burthen 600 tons<sup>81</sup>. In view of the length of time that it took Brook to complete this vessel, offered for sale, it seems likely that it, and the 600 ton vessel are one and the same. Other vessels, of 280 and 320 tons, mentioned in this report are less certainly attributed to Brooks, but may be the other vessels advertised by him in June 1843.

In June 1843 an Exeter paper announced that in the course of six to eight weeks Mr. W. Brooks [sic], East the Water, would be ready to launch a vessel of 900 tons burthen, Mr. Brooks, it declared, was the owner, sole contractor, and manager from the commencement to the completion<sup>82</sup>.

Graham Farr identifies the 464 ton barque *Alice Maud* as the last vessel attributed to Brooks<sup>83</sup>. He also suggests that she may have been completed by Robert Johnson

The Passengers in History site has records for three voyages by a 463 ton barque called *Alice*

76 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 15 June 1843 p3 c3

77 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 15 June 1843 p3 c3

78 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 18 September 1845 p2 c7

79 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 4 February 1841 p3 c3

80 Gore's Liverpool General Advertiser 4 November 1841 p3 c2

81 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 1 September 1842 p3 c5

82 "North Devon." Trueman's Exeter Flying Post 29 June 1843 p3 c6

83 "Ship Building in North Devon" by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

*Maude*, built by William Brook in Bideford in 1845, dimensions 110.0x24.0 x18.6, demise J. Lidgett, reg. London. These were: one from Melbourne to Port Adelaide (arriving 1 Mar 1849); two from London to Port Adelaide (29 Jun 1854 till 20 Nov 1854, and 8 Apr 1858 till 17 Jan 1859)<sup>84</sup>.

### **1846, *The Mistral***

The Exeter press reported that Saturday (11 July) had seen the successful launch, at the yard of the late Mr. Brook, ship-builder, of a vessel named *The Mistral*, intended for the South American trade<sup>85</sup>.

Farr suggests that a barque, *Mistral*, of 270 tons, built in 1846 was the work of Thomas Evans at Cleave Houses<sup>86</sup>. This contradicts the newspaper account of the launch, but it is possible that Evans oversaw completion of the vessel at Brook's yard.

## Vessels refitted or altered

### **1827, unidentified brig of c. 88 tons (register), 130 tons (burthen)**

In an advertisement dated 10 March 1827, a brig, of 88 tons Register; 130 tons burthen, and 6 years old, was offered "For sale, by Private Contract, at Mr. W. Brook's Yard, Bideford," She was said to be "well found in every respect, and sails very fast."<sup>87</sup>

## Mr Chanter's Yard, Barnstaple Street, ?-1863-?

### Location of the yard

Appears to have been near to the site of the goods station, as a proposal, from 1863, for the new road to the Cross Park station was to run it "in a line from Cross Park Rock and Mr. G Heard's Quay, and reaching from the railway station to Mr. Chanter's ship-yard, through which it bends into East-the-Water street<sup>88</sup>."

In reminiscences from T. Murphy, recorded in 1904, when Murphy was 89<sup>89</sup>, he states, concerning shipyards, that there was "one on the beach where the goods station now stands or a bit further back against the road." A plan dating from between 1832 and 1855, shows a quay in this precise location, marked as belonging to Mr. Burnard.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

The precise identity of the Mr Chanter who occupied this shipyard is still in some doubt, but the earliest currently known owner of its site is believed to be a "Mr. Burnard," who had a quay in about the right position. The juxtaposition of the names of Burnard and Chanter suggest connection with one merchant dynasty in particular, that of Thomas Burnard and his nephew Thomas Burnard

84 "Alice Maud" Passengers In History. South Australia Maritime Museum. Online <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/node/919460> Accessed 20/12/2016

85 "Bideford" Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 18 July 1846 p3 c5

86 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 37

87 "Bideford, - Devon." Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 17 March 1827 p1 c4

88 "Town Council" Wooler's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 4 September 1863 p6 c2

89 Notebook of Vernon Boyle (1858-1926), cited in Wm. Henry Rogers typed manuscript Vol 3, Pg 35

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Chanter. Such a conclusion finds support from a plan, attached to an indenture dated 18 July 1828<sup>90</sup>, which shows that the land to the north of Vinegar Hill was owned by Lewis William Buck, Esq., but leased to Mr. Thomas Burnard.

In 1818, Thomas Burnard, a local merchant, established the shipbuilding settlement of New Bideford (later Bideford), on Prince Edward Island. Through his trans-Atlantic enterprise, he went on to become a very successful merchant and shipbuilder. His nephew, Thomas Burnard Chanter, was born in Torrington and went into partnership with his uncle, from whom, in 1823, he inherited both his shipyard and a variety of other property. After his death Thomas' widow, Mary Elizabeth Burnard (nee English) continued his business, but with less success, as she was declared insolvent c. 1834.

References to Thomas Burnard from the north of East-the-Water are too late for them to refer to Thomas Burnard, the uncle of Thomas Burnard Chanter, but there was a later Thomas Burnard, of Bideford, Merchant, trading at around that time (E.g. One Thomas Vellacott of Bideford, mercer, leased a field to Thomas Burnard of Bideford, merchant, in 1831). This later individual was declared insolvent in 1841. A "Mrs. Burnard, widow of Thomas Burnard, esq. Merchant and banker of Exeter," died in 1845<sup>91</sup>.

As early as c. 1717 there was a ship-building yard, on the western shore, by the mouth of Potter's Pill. The Burnard family appear connected to that site, as, in 1834, it was sold, by "Martha Elizabeth Burnard, of Bideford," . . . "Merchant, Dealer and Chapwoman<sup>92</sup>," Thomas' widow (for her to describe herself as a Chapwoman implies that she was selling as a result of insolvency). The next year Chanter took over the venture.

In 1829, having built up a successful business in New Bideford, Chanter left an agent in charge and returned to Bideford, never to return to Prince Edward Island. Never-the-less he financed the building of at least 35 ships there and carried hundreds of emigrants to Quebec<sup>93</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

Around 1863, Chanter, then a member of the Local Government Board, seems to have been trying to develop on the property, rather than actively use it for ship-building, the advent of Railway Wharf (initiated in 1855 but extended later) presumably having rendered it unsuitable for its original purpose.

## Ships launched

No ships have yet been linked to this yard.

This lack of any reference to ship launches is somewhat surprising, given the contemporary witness that this was an active shipyard. It therefore seems likely that this yard was only ever used for re-fitting existing vessels, or finishing vessels built elsewhere.

90 Indenture of Appointment and Release of a Piece of Land, East-the-Water, dated 18 July 1828, between Messrs Isaac and Vicary and Mr. Thomas Monkley. A deed relating to land at the top of Vinegar Hill.

91 The Gentleman's Magazine. March 1845, page 329

92 North Devon Journal 18 December 1834 p1 c1

93 Basil Greenhill, "CHANTER, THOMAS BURNARD," in Dictionary of Canadian Biography, vol. 10, University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003–, accessed September 28, 2016, [http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chanter\\_thomas\\_burnard\\_10E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/chanter_thomas_burnard_10E.html).



Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## **Mr John Crocker's Boat-building Yard, East-the-Water, 1839-1841**

### **Location of the yard**

The location of this business is unknown, beyond the fact that it was in East-the-Water. It would be logical for it to be above the bridge, as sites below the bridge were valuable for the construction of larger vessels, whilst a boat-builder would have no difficulty getting their vessels under the bridge. A possible location, suggested from the location of his residence, would be one of the yards Near Torrington Lane.

John Crocker is not to be confused with George Crocker, the shipbuilder (whom Robson's 1839 Directory for Devonshire, lists as "Crocker George, Ship builder, Willet St."), who operated on the western side of the Torridge, from a yard near the outflow of Potter's Pill.

### **Biographical background on the boat-builder/s**

From the Bideford parish registers, John Crocker appears to have been baptized at Bideford in 1800, son of Richard and Mary Crocker.

From the Bideford parish registers, John appears to have married Ann Morrish Williams, in the parish church in 1823, by banns. The record of the banns read, at Bideford on 2 Nov 1823, gives him as John Crocker, of Bideford, "Blockmaker"

In April 1828 he appears to be acting as joint executor in the affairs of John Hinks, late of Bideford, Mariner, deceased, whose creditors are requested to contact Robert Goss, of Bideford, Joiner, or John Crocker, of the same place, blockmaker<sup>94</sup>.

This business is listed in Robson's 1839 Directory for Devonshire, as "Crocker John, *Boat builder*, East the Water"

He appears on the 1841 Census as John Crocker, aged about 40, Boat Builder, born in county, living in East-the-Water, with his wife Ann, and what appear to be five children. From studying the direction of travel of the enumerator, the adjacent families, and the history of adjacent properties, his residence appears to have been in Nuttaberry, possibly at no 1 Nuttaberry Cottages.

In November 1842 "John Crocker, of Bideford, block maker, and boat builder," died aged 42<sup>95</sup>.

Ann, the widow of "John Crocker, blockmaker", and "formerly of Bideford", died in 1875 in Swansea<sup>96</sup>.

## **Mr John Evans' Yard, East-the-Water**

### **Location of the yard**

His yard was probably the one which would go on to become Brunswick Wharf, see entry below for Thomas Evans.

94 "Notice to Creditors" North Devon Journal 24 April 1828 p1 c4

95 "Deaths" North Devon Journal 10 November 1842 p3 c1

96 "Deaths" North Devon Journal 10 June 1875 p8 c6

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

The age given on John's parish burial record suggests he was born in 1771.

In 1804 John Evans was employing 4 shipwrights and 6 apprentices, so it is unlikely that he had more than one yard.

In 1801 he married Ann Heay at Bideford parish church, the register confirming that this was by Licence and that both were resident in Bideford parish. Both signed the register. Ann's elder sister, Mary, had married John Cocks, from Torrington, who became a Baptist minister.

In 1817 a shipwright named John Evans (so possibly a relative of the ship-builder, if not the builder himself) removed from Northam parish to Bideford parish<sup>97</sup>.

A John Evans of Bideford is said to have taken over Richard Chapman's yard in 1818, when Chapman fell ill<sup>98</sup>. That individual would appear to be the John Evans whose shipyard Nix places next to Chapman's on the west of the Torridge<sup>99</sup>.

Later in 1818, following Chapman's death, John Evans went on to finance an expedition to Prince Edward Island that led to William Ellis and James Yeo building ships there<sup>100</sup>, and thence to the timber import trade that helped make the fortune of Richard Heard of Colonial House, who emulated the example of Ellis and Yeo.

"Evans, John: Ship Builder" is listed in Pigot's Trade Directory of 1822-23, when his business location is given as "East-the-Water".

In 1826 John's daughter Mary Elizabeth married John How, a prominent Bideford merchant

By the time he signed his will on 7 Jan 1829 a shipyard was not listed as part of John Evans' estate, but as well as having several thousand pounds in cash, he owned two dwelling houses ("in Torrington and in Bideford"), an interest in the Rising Sun, Bideford, as well as shares in six vessels (see Ships Owned section, below)

The will also mentions a gift to his son Thomas of £500, "being the amount of the purchase money advanced on the premises in Butt Garden Street in Bideford aforesaid unto the children of my said Son Thomas Evans equally to be divided between them"

The North Devon Journal of 25 April 1833<sup>101</sup> carried an announcement for the death, on Monday last [April 22], at Bideford, of "Mr. John Evans, formerly ship-builder in that place." The parish records confirm that he was buried in Bideford on the 26<sup>th</sup> April and aged 62.

Given the notes for Thomas Evans below (who appears to be his son), it seems likely that John Evans started out in East-the-Water, then handed that yard into the care of his son, c1824.

The Western Times of 24 Sept 1842<sup>102</sup> announced the death on "Sept. 11, at Great Torrington" of Ann, the wife of the Rev. W. Hill, a Wesleyan minister. Identifying her as the 34 year-old daughter of the late Mr. John Evans, of Bideford. It is possible that she was related to this John Evans. They were married on 20 Apr 1835 in Bideford parish church, when Hill is given as William Hill of Phillock in the County of Cornwall, Widower, and Ann is a spinster, o.t.p.

97 North Devon Record Office (South West Heritage Trust), 1843A/PO 29/13

98 "Ellis, William" Dictionary of Canadian Biography. Online

[http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ellis\\_william\\_1774\\_1855\\_8E.html](http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/ellis_william_1774_1855_8E.html). Accessed 20 Aug 2016.

99 Nix, 1991, pg 393

100 <http://findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi/%25253C/fg.cgi?page=gr&GRid=103860752> Accessed 22 Aug 2016

101 North Devon Journal 25 April 1833 p1 c5

102 Western Times 24 Sept 1842 p2 c4

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## Incidents relating to the yard

None found as yet.

## Ships launched

No ships have been positively linked to this yard yet, but it is possible that any John Evans' vessels built between 1818 and 1824 may have come from here, nor is it clear if Evans was in East-the-Water prior to 1818.

Some vessels have come to light, being offered for sale by John Evans of Bideford. It is not always clear whether these were ships he used for trade, ships he re-fitted, or ships he built.

### **1817, unidentified brig, 57 tons 58-94 (register?), >85 tons (burthen)**

An advertisement dated 27 February 1817, announced a vessel for sale at Mr. John Evans shipbuilding yard. A brig, admeasures 57 tons 58-94 and expected to burthen upward of 85 tons, with dimensions: keel length on ground, 45 feet; length aloft 52 feet 51 ½ inches; breadth (extreme), 17 feet 9 inches; depth 9 feet. She was ready to launch and already fitted with mast, yard, tops, and cap<sup>103</sup>.

## *Ships re-furbished*

### **1819, brig *Caroline*, 132 9-94 tons (register)**

The brig *Caroline*, built in Bideford in 1814 and 132 9-94 tons register, was offered for auction on 6 May 1819. She was, at the time of the advertisement, lying in the yard of “Mr. John Evans, Ship-Builder, Bideford.”<sup>104</sup>

## Ships owned, or part owned

### **1829, brig *William* (eighth share)**

One eighth of the Brig *William* Wm. Beer Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

### **1829, brig *Leonidas* (eighth share)**

One eighth of the Brig *Leonidas* Tho Loveray Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

### **1829, brig *Hero* (quarter share)**

One quarter of the Brig *Hero* Charles Loveray Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

### **1829, schooner *Margaret* (sixteenth share)**

One sixteenth of the Schooner *Margaret* I Davies Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

### **1829, brig *Mary Ann* (eighth share)**

One eighth of the Brig *Mary Ann* of Barnstaple Pearse Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

103 “Bideford, Devon” Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 6 March 1817 p3 c2

104 “To Be Sold By Public Auction” Bristol Mirror 24 April 1819 p2 c3

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### **1829, sloop *Emma* ( quarter share)**

One quarter of the Sloop *Emma* Fishwick Master, left as a bequest in his will, dated 7 Jan 1829

## **Mr. Thomas Evans' Yard, East-the-Water, 1824-39**

### **Location of the yard**

In 1839 Augustus Cleveland, having already purchased the southern end of the quay at Brunswick Wharf, paid £900 for a 115' by 147' plot, occupied by a house and shipbuilding yard, described as “lately in the occupation of Thomas Evans”<sup>105</sup>. This proves the location of his yard, as this was the land on which Restarick's shipyard would later lie, and part of what is now Brunswick Wharf.

On the basis of the biographical evidence presented below, references to vessels launched by Evans, of Bideford, that pre-date May 1838 are assumed to relate to the East-the-Water yard, those after that date, to his Orchard Hill Marsh yard, or possibly to a second yard as discussed below.

Thomas Evans is known to have gone into partnership with George Cox until c. 1845. Cox is later associated with the former Chapman shipyard at Cleave Houses,

Studying the movements of boat-builder George Parkin lends credence to the possibility that the Evans ship-builders may initially have set up further north, in Appledore. This idea arises from the juxtaposition of Cox and Evans properties in the Irsha Street area of Appledore and indications that Cox's shipyard was there at about this period. The evidence is as follows:

1. From a press account of the launch of the Emperor of China in February 1847, it is clear that, at that time, Evans and Cox occupied adjacent premises<sup>106</sup>;
2. In 1858, George Parkin, the boat-builder, moved from East-the-Water into a yard in Appledore, lately occupied by Mr. Cox<sup>107</sup>; Following Parkin's death in 1900, the advertising for the sale of his yard places it adjoining two cottages in Ibex Place, Appledore, stating that he had carried out business on a portion of that property for fifty years (i.e. from 1850)<sup>108</sup>. Parkin had seemingly only been in Appledore since 1858, but this still places a yard, occupied by Cox, in the Irsha Street area, of NE Appledore, in 1858;
3. A third lot was included in the executors' sale of Parkin's property, three cottages in Ibex Court, occupied respectively by Messrs. Arnold, John Evans, and William Evans, at a total annual rental of £11 14s<sup>109</sup>.

### **Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s**

Thomas Evans was baptised on 9 Sep 1803 in Bideford, by his parent's John Evans & Ann. He is not to be confused with the Thomas Evans to whom Inkerman Rogers attributes earlier vessels<sup>110</sup>:

- The 69 ton *Friends*, listed under 1812, but as built at “Shipyard opened in 1814 by Thomas

105 Bideford History . . . with Peter Christie: Brunswick Wharf. My Town Bideford. Issue 28, July 2015. Publishers of the North Devon Gazette, 2015. Page 14.

106 “Bideford” the North Devon Journal 25 February 1847 p2 c7

107 “Boat Building Yard” North Devon Journal 26 August 1858 p4 c4

108 North Devon Journal 19 July 1900 p4 c4

109 North Devon Journal 19 July 1900 p4 c4

110 Inkerman Rogers. Ships and Shipyards of Bideford Devon 1568 to 1938. Bideford Gazette Printing Service, 1947, 26

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Evans, Cleavehouses.”;

- The *Waterloo*, a brigantine, built in 1815 by Thomas Evans, but with no location given.

Circa. 1822, Thomas Evans entered the ship-building trade (for, reminiscing in 1872, he stated that he entered the trade fifty years ago)<sup>111</sup>.

Woolmer's Exeter Flying Post of 23 March 1826<sup>112</sup> carried the announcement of two marriages at Bideford, Mr. John How, merchant, to Miss Evans.<sup>113</sup> and “Mr. Thomas Evans, ship-builder to Miss Jane Lovering, of Tawstock.”

Between 1826 and 1838, Grahame Farr lists numerous vessels attributed to Thomas Evans, listing all of them as built at Cleave Houses<sup>114</sup>. Various press reports of launches and a trade directory entry, detailed below, all serve to contradict that, placing his yard east of the Torridge for at least the 1824 to 1830 period, and depicting him opening a new yard, west of the Torridge, only in 1838.

In 1828 10 Butt garden Street (which was later divided into two) was assigned to Thomas Evans, of Bideford, Shipbuilder by Jane Willcock, widow of Bideford, and Charles Carter, of Bideford, gent<sup>115</sup>.

Thomas Evans is listed in Pigot's 1830 Directory for Devonshire, under *Merchants* as “Evans Thos. (timber) East the Water” and also under *Ship Builders* as “Evans Thomas (& timber merchant) East the Water”

In 1830 a shop in Butt Gardens and a house adjoining it were offered for let by one “Mr. Thomas Evans, Ship-builder, Bideford, proprietor” The shop adjoined the line of the Torrington New Road<sup>116</sup>.

In April 1833 his father, John Evans, died, the Western Times reporting the death as follows “April 22, at Bideford, Mr. John Evans, formerly ship-builder of that place.”<sup>117</sup>

The will of the shipbuilder John Evans mentions a son named Thomas, who was one of his executors<sup>118</sup>. So, assuming that this John was the ship-building Thomas Evan's father, Thomas probably started out independently in East-the-Water, but then moved to the west of the Torridge at some point after his father's death.

On 3 April 1833, just when Thomas might have been in a position to acquire property in Orchard Hill, an area of marsh and several other properties there came up for auction. The marsh, of 6-7 acres and at Orchard Hill, was then the occupation of a Mr. T. C. Giddy.<sup>119</sup>

In May and June 1834 the North Devon Journal carried an obscurely worded advertisement<sup>120</sup>, albeit with premier positioning in the paper, which appears to be Thomas Evan's attempting to lease out, or otherwise dispose of a shipyard. “Ship Building Business to be Disposed of. Any Person commanding a small Capital, desirous of embarking in the above Line, may now have an eligible

111 “Ship Launch and Dinner” North Devon Journal 11 April 1872 p8 c3

112 “Marriages” Woolmer's Exeter Flying Post 23 March 1826 p4 c2

113 The How family would go on to develop a significant business based at Commercial Wharf, upstream of the Long Bridge and on the West bank of the Torridge.

114 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 34-37

115 North Devon Record Office Ref. B260/2

116 “Eligible Situations for Business” North Devon Journal 16 September 1830 p1 c2

117 “Died” Western Times 4 May 1833 p3 c5

118 Will of John Evans, shipbuilder of Bideford, granted probate on 31 May 1833. National archives PROB 11/1815/332

119 “Bideford, Devon” North Devon Journal 14 March 1833 p1 c1

120 29 May 1834 p1 c1; 5 June 1834 p1 c1

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opportunity in one of the oldest Establishments in the county of Devon. For further particulars enquire of Mr. Thos. Evans, Ship Builder, *Bideford*.” As the wording “embarking in the above Line” suggests operating a yard, rather than investing in one, this would seem to rule out this being the yard that Evans continued to operate with Cox. In all probability this was Thomas Evans, acting as John Evans' executor, and selling off his father's yard.

A reference to a Thomas Evans, shipbuilder, is found in April 1836<sup>121</sup>, but without linking him to a location.

On 28 April 1836 the North Devon Journal carried an advertisement for the auction of the Estate and Effects of Mr. John Hatherley and Mr. John Hamlyn. One lot was described as follows: “the Residue of a Term of 21 Years, of which nearly 8 years are unexpired, in all that **Dwelling House, large Timber Yard, Sawpit, and Shed**, Situate on the East side of the River Torridge, in the town of Bideford, lately in the occupation of *Messrs. Hatherly and Hamlyn*, Timber Merchants, and now of *Mr. Thos. Evans*, Shipbuilder, subject to a ground rent of 15l. per annum.”<sup>122</sup> This lease was taken out around 1824, so this lease may be the transaction, dated 1825, in which Mrs. Mary Willcock leased property in East-the-Water to John Hatherly & John Hamlyn<sup>123</sup>.

In Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of 3 September 1836<sup>124</sup>, one Thomas Evans, of Bideford, is offering for sale or rent, a substantial new villa, set in 2 acres at Orchard Hill and known as Woodville House. He also offers five or six acres of adjacent land if required.

In Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of 11 November 1837<sup>125</sup> one Thomas Evans, of Bideford, advertises Rock Cottage, in Orchard Hill for let, again with the offer of adjacent acres. Similar advertisements continue in that paper until the issue of 14 July 1838<sup>126</sup>.

In May 1837 May Woodville House, in Orchard Hill, Bideford, was put up for let, with immediate possession<sup>127</sup>. Similar advertisements appear until June Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 3 June 1837 p1 c2.

On 31 May 1838 the North Devon Journal carried the following: “On the same day [Thursday last] was launched from Mr. Evans's [sic] new yard, a beautiful little fishing prow called the 'Elizabeth,' built for Capt. Braund, of Bucks. This is the first launch from Mr. Evans's new establishment at Orchard Hill Marsh, which comprises of a rope walk, sail loft, & c., &c., complete to fit a vessel out in every respect.”<sup>128</sup>. Orchard Hill Marsh was on, or immediately adjacent to, the site on which the Higher Cleave Houses shipyard developed. The first series OS Map, published in 1809, shows no development beside the shore east of Orchard Hill in that area, whilst marking the area that would become Lower Cleave Houses, as simply Cleave Houses. Such evidence supports the idea that Evans' 1838 yard was not on the site of an earlier one<sup>129</sup>.

By July 1839 Thomas Evans had left his yard in Barnstaple Street and it was offered for lease again, subject to a buyer not having come forward by the date of the auction (2 Sept 1839). The advert describes the lot as a “large and convenient Ship-Builders' Yard, Together with the Dwelling House,

121 North Devon Journal 14 April 1836 p1 c4

122 North Devon Journal 28 April 1836 p1 c4

123 North Devon Record Office (South West Heritage Trust), Ref. BBT/DL/Bundle 82B

124 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 3 September 1836 p3 c6

125 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 11 November 1837 p1 c4

126 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 14 July 1838 p2 c1

127 North Devon Journal 11 May 1837 p1 c1

128 North Devon Journal 31 May 1838 p4 c4

129 Mudge, Barnstaple Union. Sheet 26. 11 Oct 1809. Online:

[http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os\\_unions\\_1830s\\_1840\\_sw/Bideford\\_1830\\_1840](http://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/maps/sheet/os_unions_1830s_1840_sw/Bideford_1830_1840) Accessed 16 Sept 2018

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Blacksmith's Shop, and other Buildings thereon, situate on the east side of the river Torridge, late in the occupation of Mr. Thomas Evans." Applicants wishing for a viewing or more particulars were directed to "Mr. Willcock, the proprietor," or the solicitor"<sup>130</sup>

In May 1840, when two of his apprentices were arrested for stealing bolt copper, he is described as "Mr. Evans, ship-builder, Marshyard, near Bideford."<sup>131</sup>

The year 1840 marked the first report of a Johnson launch from East-the-Water, providing an upper limit for Evans time in East-the-Water. In that year a reference first appears, in the local press, to a Thomas Evans, Ship-builder of Northam<sup>132</sup>.

The 1841 Census has him living with his wife Jane and daughters, Mary, Ann, Elizabeth and Emily, at Orchard Hill Marsh. He is aged 38 and gives his occupation as "Ship Builder." He is not to be confused with another individual of similar name, a Thomas Evans aged c.30 (possibly rounded to ten years), a "Roper's J", on his own in Old Town.

In 1841 Thomas Evans formed a partnership with George Cox, a native of Bridport and together they worked his new yard. The partnership lasted until 1845, when Evans left, and George took his son into the partnership<sup>133</sup>. Evans would later relate how he discovered Cox in Bridport and brought him into his business, whilst Cox acknowledged the debt he, and his son, owed to Evans as their mentor<sup>134</sup>.

In 1843 Mr Thomas Evans advertised Woodville, at Orchard Hill, Northam for let, it having been lately let to Carles Bullock, Esq., deceased<sup>135</sup>.

On 25 February 1847, the North Devon Journal carried an account of the faltering launch of the *Emperor of China* from the Yard of George Cox of Bideford<sup>136</sup>. She brought up very gradually on her ways and had to await the next spring tide, before being floated. The article mentions that she was "fitted out with materials manufactured on the adjoining premises by Mr. Thomas Evans, for whom she was originally laid down, but since sold by him to those enterprising merchants of Swansea, Messrs, Jenkins, Bath, and Eaton." "On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup>, the workmen of both establishments (Mr. Cox's and Mr. Evans's[sic]), to a number of about 120, sat down in the evening, at the Assembly Rooms, to a substantial dinner of roast beef and plum pudding, provided by Mr. Parramore, of the 'New Inn,' in his usual excellent style, at the cost of the builders and owners of the ship."

In 1848 one Thomas Evans of Bideford appeared as an expert witness in an arbitration case involving the devaluation of property in Bishops Tawnton caused by railway working<sup>137</sup>.

The 1851 Census has a Thomas Evans, aged 47 and born in Bideford, living with his wife Jane and three daughters, in Butt Garden. His occupation is give as Mayor of the Borough, but scribbled underneath is some difficult text, the first part of which is almost illegible, appearing to say "Sail & Rope maker &" but continues more clearly with "Gen<sup>l</sup> Merchant employing 20 men & 4 boys," though the number of boys is bit indistinct.

130 North Devon Journal 15 August 1839 p1 c2

131 North Devon Journal 28 May 1840 p3 c4

132 Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 23 May 1840 p3 c5

133 Footnote 32 in David Jenkins. From Ship's Cook to Baronet: Sir William Reardon Smith's Life in Shipping, 1856-1935. University of Wales Press, 2011

134 "Ship Launch and Dinner" North Devon Journal 11 April 1872 p8 c3

135 "Bideford, Devon" North Devon Journal 3 August 1843 p1 c2

136 "Bideford" the North Devon Journal 25 February 1847 p2 c7

137 "Brailey v. Taw Vale Railway Company." North Devon Journal 20 January 1848 p3 c1

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

In 1872, upon the occasion of a banquet, to celebrate the launch of *The Royal Irish* from the ship-building yard of Mr John Cox, Mr. Thomas Evans was present. In the speeches Mr. Cox senr. acknowledged the debt of gratitude he and his son owed Evans. "He had great pleasure in proposing the health of a gentleman who was the first to introduce him into this neighbourhood 32 years ago, and he had always given the best advice and counsel when asked, and he and his son had much to thank Mr. T. Evans for their present positions." . . . "Mr. Evans J.P., responding, said he looked upon himself as the father of shipbuilding in Bideford. Fifty years ago he entered upon it, and he well remembered the time referred to by Mr. Cox, nearly 32 years ago, when he saw him first at Bridport as an active young man, and introduced him as a partner at this very port"<sup>138</sup>

Evans connections with Bridport and with rope-making may suggest a link with Henry Morgan Restarick, a later East-the-Water based ship-builder, who also had connections with Cox, Bridport and with rope-making.

Thomas Evans was buried in August 1877, in Bideford<sup>139</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

None have been identified yet.

## Ships launched

### **Aug 1824, schooner *Margaret*.**

In August 1824 the local press reported the launch, fully rigged, and in fine style, of the Schooner *Margaret* from "Mr. Evan's ship-building yard, east the water."<sup>140</sup>

### **Jun 1827, brig *Thomas*, 140 tons (burthen)**

Local press reported the successful launch, on Tuesday (12 June), of the brig *Thomas*, of about 140 tons burthen, from the "yard of Mr. Thomas Evans, east the river." The *Thomas* was built for merchants of St. Ives, Cornwall<sup>141</sup>.

### **Feb 1828, schooner *Navarino*, 60 tons (register)**

On the morning of Saturday (2 February), the schooner *Navarino*, of 60 tons burthen per register, was launched from the yard of "Mr. T. Evan's [sic] yard, East-the-Water."<sup>142</sup>

### **Apr 1828, sloop *Louisa and Rachel*, above 48 tons**

In reporting an incident on 16<sup>th</sup> April, the Western Times mentions that a sloop named *Louisa and Rachel*, of above 40 tons burthen, was launched on that same day, from the yard of Mr. Thomas Evans. Built for some merchants of Padstow, she was intended for the fruit trade<sup>143</sup>.

### **Mar 1829, unidentified brig, upwards of 98 tons**

Local press reported that on Tuesday (10 March), a brig, upwards of 98 tons burthen, per register,

138 "Ship Launch and Dinner" North Devon Journal 11 April 1872 p8 c3

139 "Funeral of Mr. Evans" North Devon Journal 9 August 1877 p8 c1

140 "Bideford." North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 6 August 1824 p4 c2

141 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 29 June 1827 p4 c2

142 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 7 February 1828 p4 c2

143 "Bideford" Western Times 26 April 1828 p4 c2



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was launched from the Yard of Mr. Evans, East-the-Water. Built for some of the members of the Society of Friends, from Padstow, she was intended for the Coasting Trade<sup>144</sup>. No name is given in the report.

### **c. 1829, unidentified vessel, 126 tons**

Mr. Thomas Evans, Shipbuilder, Bideford, in an advertisement dated November 10, 1829, offered a vessel he was currently building for sale. 126 tons register, its dimensions: "Length aloft, 70 feet ; Keel on the ground, 61 feet; Breadth, 20 feet 8 inches ; Depth, 12 feet 4 inches." The advertisement extols the excellence of her well-seasoned timber frame, her cargo capacity and speed, whilst mentioning she was "Copper Butt and Hook fastened to her light mark."<sup>145</sup>

### **Jun 1832, *Reward***

A brief local report mentions that, on Saturday (30 June) Mr. Evans successfully launched the *Reward*, a vessel intended for the coasting trade<sup>146</sup>.

### **c. Feb 1832, unidentified vessel**

A very brief report, published on 2 May, indicates that two fine vessels, intended for the coasting trade, had been launched, one from Mr. Brook's yard, the other from Mr. Evans yard<sup>147</sup>.

### **c. 1834, an unidentified lighter \***

In February 1834, a new lighter was advertised for sale at Mr. Thomas Evans Shipbuilding Yard. She was completely fitted for sea, "with a suite of fore and aft sails, cable, oars, lines, anchors, &c." Built expressly for the lime stone trade on the Taw, she was designed to carry fifteen to twenty tons<sup>148</sup>.

### **1836, schooner *Castle Baynard***

Inkerman Rogers suggests that Thomas Evans, of Cleavehouses, launched a schooner, the *Castle Baynard*.<sup>149</sup> At this period Thomas Evans is described elsewhere as a shipbuilder in East-the-Water, so it is not clear whether Rogers has simply assumed the launch was from Cleavehouses, or had evidence to that effect. Evidence from the local press (see biography above) suggests that Evans did not move to Cleave Houses until 1838.

### **Jun 1837, schooner *Kate*, 120 tons**

"A fine schooner, called the *Kate*, 120 tons register, and almost completely rigged, was launched from the building yard of Mr. Thomas Evans, at Bideford, on Wednesday last [14 June]. She went off the stocks in fine style. She is to be fitted for the Mediterranean."<sup>150</sup>

### **Beyond 1838, a new yard at Orchard Hill**

By 1838 Thomas Evans had moved to a new yard at Orchard Hill, on the western shore of the

144 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 12 March 1829 p4 c3

145 North Devon Journal 19 November 1829 p1 c2

146 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 22 March 1832 p4 c2

147 North Devon Journal 5 July 1832 p4 c4

148 North Devon Journal 6 February 1834, p1 c1

149 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 27

150 Western Times 17 June 1837 p3 c4

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Torrige and he continued building there. The first launch by Robert Johnson from the yard that Evans vacated was in July 1840, suggesting that Johnson had not been in the yard since 1838, so had the eastern yard remained unused? The press description of one further Thomas Evans launch, that of an un-named 406 ton (per register) vessel on the first Saturday of May 1840, suggests that he may have continued to use the East-the-Water site<sup>151</sup>. The intimation that the crowd enjoyed the Evans launch immediately before watching another from Brook's yard (see description for the launch of *Gemine* at Brook's yard) suggests relative proximity. If that was the case, then it is possible that Evans had some agreement with Johnson that allowed him to complete the boat he was working on (such agreements are not unheard of, as Restarick later had one with the new leaseholder when he left this yard). The yards capacity to handle two vessels at once is demonstrated later in Johnson's career.

## ***Ships re-furbished***

### **1829, brig, *Sarah and Eliza*, 160 tons \***

“FOR SALE, at the Ship-building Yard of Mr. Thos. Evans, Bideford, the Good BRIG SARAH AND ELIZA, Burthen per Register 160 Tons, having just undergone a complete repair, is well found in Materials, carries a good cargo and sails fast.

ALSO

A Vessel now Building, ” etc. *see entry for an unidentified vessel, launched c1829, above for the rest of the advertisement*<sup>152</sup>

## ***Ships owned***

The following, which appeared in the North Devon Journal of 17 July 1834 [p1 c5] may refer to Thomas Evans: 'To be sold *by Auction*, on Wednesday, the 23rd day of July, 1834, by four o'clock in the Afternoon, at *Camp's Hotel, Ilfracombe*, The Schooner, “**Two Sisters,**” of **Bideford**, *Burthen per Register, 63 22-94 Tons*. This vessel carries upwards of 85 Tons, is well found in all necessary Stores, sails fast, and is ready for sea immediately. Any further particulars may be known by applying (if by letter, post paid) to *Mr. Evans, Bideford*, or to the *Master* on board the Vessel at *Ilfracombe*. Dated July 9th, 1834.<sup>153</sup>

## **Mr Doubt's Yard, East-the-Water**

### **Location of the yard**

The precise location is shown on a plan from 1776<sup>154</sup>, of a property, bounded on the north by the road to Torrington and on the west by the road to “Nutterberry.” A plot approximately two chains south of the road to Torrington, is marked “The Late Mr Doubt's Yard For His Ship Building,” This plot is bounded on the west by the Road to Nuttaberry (which ran alongside the strand), on the north by the lands of John Rolle Esq., and on the east by a meadow belonging to Mr. Hook.

151 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 May 1840 p3 c2-3

152 North Devon Journal 19 November 1829 p1 c2

153 North Devon Journal 17 July 1834 p1 c5

154 Jewell. A Map of a Small Messuage and Tenement East of the River Torrige Land of Mr Hook. 1776. North Devon Records Office. Ref. 2399f/238/53g to h (individual items in this sequence are not lettered)

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

By 1770 Mr. Doubt had died, but no references to the Doubt surname in Bideford shortly prior to that time. Going further back one finds a John Doubt in East-the-Water, but without being able to prove a connection between him and the shipbuilding Doubt. The following probably all refer to the same individual:

- A plan of c. 1717<sup>155</sup> marks a “Mr Doubt’s Key” in East-the-Water, immediately north of the bridge-end (on land owned by the Bideford Bridge Trust).
- On 26 Jan 1721 the Feoffees of the Bideford Bridge Trust leased a House fronting on the Quay to one John Doubt, merchant<sup>156</sup>.
- A John Doubt of Bideford left a will in 1733.

## Ships launched

None known of, but this is likely at this date

## William Heard's Yard, Cross Park, 1791 till 1793

### Location of the yard

Nothing has been found to help narrow down the location of this yard, beyond the fact that it was at Cross Park

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

Graham Farr identifies William Heard as the earliest known builder at Cross Park<sup>157</sup>.

In 1791 The Universal British Directory of Trade listed “Heard William, *ship-builder*” in its entry for Bideford. Locations were not given in that publication.

The only ship so far attributed to Heard was launched in 1793.

## Ships launched

### 1793, sloop *Ville de Paris*, 15 tons

Graham Farr mentions this 1793 launch by William Heard<sup>158</sup>.

155 Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 8-9 (Fig. 4) [though Fielder suggests an earlier date, later scholars suggest c. 1717]

156 North Devon Records Office Ref. BBT-1/62

157 “Ship Building in North Devon” by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

158 “Ship Building in North Devon” by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

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## John Hore's Yard

### Location of the yard

A very simple undated plan, in a bundle of miscellaneous papers at North Devon Records Office<sup>159</sup>, shows the house of "John Hoar, Ship Builder, Bideford." with, across the street, a Torridge-side plot 54 feet wide and 264 feet long (to low water), bounded to the south by Bartlets Land and to the north by "Marks Land". A stylized bridge is shown on the plan, from the position of which, it may be inferred that this was in the position later occupied by the Bridge End Yard, a conclusion reinforced by the position of Mark's land, as a plan from 1745 infers that John Mark held strand land on Barnstaple Street just north of the yard<sup>160</sup>.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilder

John Hore appears in Bailey's Wester and Midland Directory or Trademen's Useful Companion of 1784 as "Shipbuilder"<sup>161</sup>

John Hore appears on a list of vessel shareholders, from 31 December 1787 as "Shipwright"<sup>162</sup>

John Hore appears in the Universal British Directory for 1791 as "Shipbuilder"<sup>163</sup>

A marriage bond exists for Stephen Willcock Esquire of Bideford and Mary Hore of Bideford, dated 28th November 1801<sup>164</sup>. This was witnessed by Catherine Bartlett.

John Hore appears on a list of vessel shareholders, from 31 December 1803 as "Shipwright/Gentleman"<sup>165</sup>

The daughter of John Hore, the shipbuilder, married Stephen Willcock, one time Mayor of Bideford.<sup>166</sup>

In the same batch of documents as the plan showing Mr. Hore's property, North Devon Records Office hold one leaf of a cover, torn from a notebook, with scribbled genealogical notes. These are mostly for the Willcock family, but include the following "John Hore died 3 June 1812 aged 77 Inscription on the back head brooch." Also given are "Stephen Willcock died 11 Feb 1815" and "Mary Willcock 11 Oct 1838 aged 82."<sup>167</sup>

159 North Devon Records Office, "Plan or Sketch of Land on the River Torridge the Property of Mr John Hoar Ship Builder Bideford" Ref. 2399f/238/53g to h [the individual papers within this series are not lettered]

160 Bowering, Maps of the Several lands belonging to the Long Bridge of Bideford, 1745. North Devon Records Office Ref. 4274-1/1. Folio 7.

161 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491.

162 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491. Citing Devon Records Office 3318/S1

163 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491.

164 Devon Heritage Centre. Devon: Marriage Bonds and Allegations for the year 1801. Ref. DEX/7/b/1/1801/478

165 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491. Citing Devon Records Office 3319 S/1

166 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 336.

167 Bowering, Maps of the Several lands belonging to the Long Bridge of Bideford, 1745. North Devon Records Office Ref. 4274-1/1. Folio 7.

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## **Ships Launched**

In the period during which Hoar operated it is unusual to find information on vessels builders.

### **1791 Schooner/Brigantine Hibernia 61 tons**

Grahame Farr lists a 61 ton schooner/brigantine launched in 1791, attributing her to “Jn, Hore” of Bideford.

## **Johnson's Yard, Barnstaple Street, 1839-76**

### **Location of the yard**

Robert Johnson initially operated from a site opposite Embery's drang, on part of the site which is now known as Brunswick Wharf. John Wood's plan of 1842 shows this early location of the yard, sandwiched between Queen's Wharf, to the north, and, to the south, a wharf owned by Thomas Ley (which was opposite the old workhouse (later the Colonial Buildings), now the northern part of the Royal Hotel.

On 26<sup>th</sup> Feb 1863, Jane Churchward, wife of John Johnson, shipbuilder, Bideford, died of consumption, aged 28, at Brixham<sup>168</sup>.

In 1864 Margaret Cleveland (Augustus Saltren Cleveland's widow) purchased the foreshore in front Johnson's yard, and as far south as the Bridge Trust land, bringing together the land that would become the modern Brunswick Wharf<sup>169</sup>.

In February 1865 it was reported that Messrs. Cawsey were extending the Lady of the Manor's has quay (i.e. Mr. John Johnson's ship-building yard) to terminate at the beginning of the Bridge Trust Quay, in line with the first cutwater of the bridge, and outside the bakery adjoining the bridge<sup>170</sup>. This report would seem to confirm that she extended the wharf onto the newly purchased foreshore.

Difficulties with Johnson's August 1865 attempt to launch the *Florence Danvers* were attributed to the sinking of new made ground, suggesting that she was the first vessel built on this new section of the yard.

By May 1866 his capacity had increased as he could then accommodate three vessels on the stocks<sup>171</sup>.

In November 1867 Johnson appears to have owned a portfolio of property, formerly owned by Henry Tucker, for he offered that ship-builder's house for auction, along with a walled garden, part of which was later used by the railway extension, three cottages off Barnstaple Street, and Clarence Wharf<sup>172</sup>. At which time the facilities on Clarence Wharf are said to be occupied by one “Mr. Mills,” probably Mr. James Mills, a Bideford Merchant, whose name elsewhere crops up in connection with that of Johnson, and for whom Johnson built several vessels. The notice for the auction adds that Clarence Wharf, whilst it contained 158ft in length and 154 in breadth, could be extended 50 feet toward the river, by purchasing a portion of beach from the Crown, which could be obtained on

168 “1863 February Deaths” Hartland and West Country Chronicle 19 July 1938 p28 c3

169 "Bideford History . . . with Peter Christie: Brunswick Wharf." My Town Bideford. Issue 28, July 2015. Publishers of the North Devon Gazette, 2015. Page 14.

170 “Bideford Improvements” North Devon Journal 2 February 1865 p5 c3-5

171 “Shipbuilding at Bideford” North Devon Journal 1 May 1866 p2 c4

172 “Bideford, Devon” North Devon Journal 28 November 1867 p1 c1

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

reasonable terms.

In January 1868, whilst leaving the slipway, the *G. A. Preston* inclined to one side and collided violently with the bridge, causing £30 of damage to it<sup>173</sup>. The collision suggests that her slipway was fairly close to the bridge, and this is consistent with Johnson using the area formerly occupied by Thomas Ley's wharf.

On 27 July 1868 a formal notice was issued, that an application had been received by the Board of Trade, as managers of the rights of the Crown in the foreshore, from “Mr. John Johnson, of East-the-Water, Bideford,” wishing to lease the Crown’s rights and interests in a portion of foreshore adjoining Clarence Wharf, Bideford.<sup>174</sup>

In August 1868 the Board of Trade alerted the Local Government Board to Mr. Johnson's application to lease a portion of foreshore adjoining Clarence Wharf. The Local Board decided to request more information as to Johnson's plans<sup>175</sup>.

Once it transpired that Johnson was intending to construct a dry dock on the foreshore at Clarence Wharf the Town Council seemed keen to support him.<sup>176</sup> This press report also clarified that the Mr. Johnson in question was the one whose shipbuilding yard lay near the bridge.

The dry dock was subsequently used, between 1868 and 1870, for Johnson's work on converting the *Pace* into the *Lady Gertrude*.

In July 1876 an advertisement appeared, offering Johnson’s shipyard for let, for a term of 7 or 14 years, mentioning Johnson as the present tenant.. The yard is described as featuring Saw Pits, Steaming Room, Smith’s Shop, Moulding Lofts, Store Rooms, and offices. The land agent used was a Mr. George Lock of Instow.<sup>177</sup>

An indenture dated 1881 identifies Johnson as the former occupant of the shipyard now occupied by Henry Morgan Restarick. The O.S. map of 1886 shows that, by the time Restarick had taken over the yard, it occupied the section of the shoreline extending south from Queen's Wharf as far as the property now known as the “Baker building,” i.e. southward to the boundary of the Bridge Trust land.

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

Johnson’s yard was initially operated by Robert Johnson, then later by his son, John Johnson.

### Robert Johnson’s background

From the 1851 Census it is apparent that Robert Johnson was born in c. 1795 in Bideford. His baptism would seem to be that of a Robert Johnson on 2 Feb 1794, at the parish church in Bideford, son of Robert Johnson and his wife Tamsilia.

On 3 Feb 1793 Robert Johnson, of Bideford, had married Tamsilia Stevens, of Westleigh, in Bideford, by banns.

The Bideford Anglican parish registers record the burial of a Robert Johnson Senr on 20 May 1826, aged 92. Possibly too old to be Robert, the shipbuilder’s father, but the timing of the latter’s move

173 “An Unsuccessful Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 14 January 1868 p4 c1; Bideford Weekly Gazette 21 July 1868 p4 c4

174 “The Foreshore of Bideford” Bideford Weekly Gazette 4 August 1868 p4 c7

175 “Foreshore and the Late Encroachments” Bideford Weekly Gazette 11 August 1868 p4 c3

176 “Town Council.” North Devon Journal 9 December 1869 p8 c1

177 “To Shipbuilders” North Devon Journal 20 July 1876 p1 c4

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to Newport suggests he may have been effected by this death.

In 1827 the North Devon Journal mentions an incident, in Bideford, involving Captain Rowe, of the Friendship, and rather spirited horse owned by a “Robert Johnson, Esq. of this town.” This may represent a mention of the shipbuilder before he moved to Newport, Monmouthshire.

### **Robert Johnson’s Newport years**

Robert Johnson and his wife Ann were originally in Newport, Monmouthshire, where Robert progressed in his trade from Shipwright to Shipbuilder.

A Wesleyan record exists, from Newport, Monmouthshire, for Robert Johnson, born 18 Mar 1828 and baptised 6 Aug 1828, son of Robert and Ann, of Newport, Parish of St Woolas [sic], his father’s occupation given as Shipwright.

In 1829 Robert’s mother Tamsilla died, buried in the parish of Bideford, the record states her abode as Bideford and her age as 58 years 9 months.

A Wesleyan record exists, from Newport, Monmouthshire, for Charles Johnson, born 29 July 1830 and baptised 29 July 1830, son of Robert and Ann, of Newport, his father’s occupation given as Shipwright.

A Wesleyan record exists, from Newport, Monmouthshire, for John Johnson, born 10 July 1834 and baptised 20 July 1834, son of Robert and Ann, of Canal Parade, Newport, his father’s occupation given as Shipbuilder.

The register of baptisms at St Wollo, Newport, Monmouthshire, lists several children all baptised 15<sup>th</sup> Mar 1837, to Robert and Ann Johnson, of Newport, Monmouth, with father’s occupation given as Ship Builder:

- Robert Henry, born 18 March 1828
- Charles Newman, born 29 July 1830
- John, born 10 July 1834
- Anne Maria, born 22 Jan 1836

Some of these represent re-baptism, possibly as a condition of making Anglican baptism available to their daughter (possibly because it was her mother’s religious persuasion).

### **Robert Johnson, of Bideford, shipbuilder**

The shipyard, as shown occupied by Johnson in Woods' Plan of 1842, had been purchased, in 1839, by Augustus Cleveland, who already owned the adjacent wharf occupied by Thomas Ley. At the time of the purchase (1839) the shipyard area was described as “lately in the occupation of Thomas Evans.”<sup>178</sup> Thus it is unlikely that Robert Johnson could have been operating from the yard before 1839.

Robson's 1839 Directory for Devonshire lists him as “Johnson Robert, *Ship builder* East the Water”

Listed as, John Johnson, in Pigot's 1844 Trade Directory under Shipbuilders, when address given as East the Water.

Listed as Johnson, Robert & Son, in White's 1850 Trade Directory, under both Blockmakers and Shipbuilders, when address given as East the Water.

178 Peter Christie. “Brunswick Wharf” My Town Bideford, August 2015, pg 14

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

On the 1851 Census Robert and Ann are listed with their son John and two younger daughters. Robert is shown as aged 56 and born in Bideford, a Ship Builder employing 24 men. Under occupation, John is simply shown as 'At home.'

At Torrington, on the 7th Feb 1852, Robert Henry, son or Mr. Robert Johnson ship-builder, of Bideford, was married to Fanny, daughter of Mr. William Durk [Dark?], builder, of Torrington.

The Johnsons are listed in Slater's 1853 Trade Directory under Ship Builders (as Johnson & Son), when their address was given as East the Water.

### John Johnson takes the helm

Where the builder's Christian-name or first initial is given, the launches are consistently attributed to Robert Johnson up until 1854, but to his son, John Johnson, thereafter.

Robert Johnson died in 1855 and his will was granted probate on 28 March 1855. His estate was large enough for his will to be proved at Canterbury.

The North Devon Record Office (South West Heritage Trust) holds an arrangement, dated 8 Jun 1855, regarding settlement of his estate by Ann Johnson, his widow and administratrix<sup>179</sup>. The other parties include:

- William Newman Johnson, of Swansea, Glamorgan, Surveyor at Lloyds
- Robert Henry Johnson, of Bideford, mariner
- Charles Newman Johnson, of Bideford, accountant
- John Johnson, of Bideford, shipbuilder
- Emma Johnson, of Bideford, spinster
- Mary Newman Johnson, of Bideford, spinster
- Stephen Cleverly Willcock, of Bideford, wine merchant
- Robert Easton Yelland, of Bideford, banker

In Oct 1856 John Johnson broke his collar-bone and sustained other injuries in a fall from a ship he was working on<sup>180</sup>.

On 9 March 1857 Mr John Johnson, shipbuilder, married Jane, eldest daughter of the Rev. J. Ryan, Wesleyan minister, at Bideford<sup>181</sup>. Jane Newton Ryan having been born in Liskeard in Cornwall, according to the 1861 Census, her birth having been registered in 1841, in that place.

On 3 November 1859, at Brixham, Mr. John Johnson, shipbuilder, of Bideford, married Jane Churchward Smith, eldest daughter of Nicholas Smith, Esq., shipowner, of Brixham<sup>182</sup>.

The Bideford Weekly Gazette of 2 Oct 1860 announced the birth of a son, on 27<sup>th</sup> at Springfield Terrace, to the wife of Mr. John Johnson, ship-builder"<sup>183</sup>

In 1861 the burial, in Bideford parish, of a Tamsilla Johnson, of East-the-Water, aged 23 years, was recorded. She was probably the Tamsilla daughter of George and Elizabeth Johnson, baptised in Bideford in Nov 1838. Tamsilla being a rare name, George Johnson, whose occupation was

179 ref. B127-6/740

180 North Devon Journal 2 Oct 1856 p5 c5

181 "Marriages" North Devon Journal 21 March 1867 p8 c5

182 "Marriages" Western Times 5 November 1859 p5 c1; "Marriages" North Devon Journal 10 November 1859 p8 c6

183 Bideford Weekly Gazette 2 Oct 1860 p4 c6



## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

recorded as labourer, was probably therefore a relative.

In Feb 1863 John Johnson's wife, Jane Churchward, died of consumption, aged 28, in Brixham<sup>184</sup>.

By January 186, according to the local Surveyor, Mr. Johnson's obstructions in East-the-Water, had been removed<sup>185</sup>.

In December 1867 Johnson put most of the former Anthracite Mining Company's Barnstaple Street properties (including Clarence Wharf, various cottages and dwellin ghouses, and the garden in which the engine house stood) up for auction. Being described in the advertisement as "the Proprietor"<sup>186</sup>. The advertisement reports that "Mr. John Johnston" was personally in occupation of one of the lots, an extensive walled garden, about 376 by 165 feet.

In June 1868 the Local Board considered viewing "Mr Johnson's old house, East-the-Water" with a view to possibly purchasing it<sup>187</sup>. In July of the same year the matter was raised again as "Mr. Pollard again brought forward his motion in reference to the inconvenience resulting from the present unsightly building known as Mr. Johnson's old house, East-the-Water" moving that "Mrs. Cleveland be offered a sum of £65 for setting back the house, even with Mr. Heard's premises." This motion being carried<sup>188</sup>. In December 1868 the setting back for £65 was agreed with Mr. Lock, the steward to the Lady of the Manor<sup>189</sup>.

### John Johnson's dry-dock

On 4 August 1868 the Bideford Weekly Gazette carried an official notice that Mr John Johnson, of East-the-Water, had applied to the board of trade to lease the rights of the crown in a certain portion of the Foreshore adjoining Clarence Wharf, at Bideford<sup>190</sup>.

The North Devon Journal 9 December 1869 reported that a special meeting of the Town Council was held to consider Mr Johnson's application to construct a dry dock, an application to purchase the necessary foreshore having already been made to the Board of Trade<sup>191</sup>. A plan was produced and unanimously approved, as the council considered that "carrying it out would effect a public improvement, and be beneficial to the navigation of the river."

The 1871 Census lists, at 52C High Street, Bideford, John Johnson, aged 35, Shipbuilder, born Newport, Monmouthshire, together with his wife Jane N. Johnson, aged 29, born Liskeard, Cornwall, a visitor and a servant.

On 4<sup>th</sup> January 1873, Robert Johnson's widow, Ann, died, aged 73, at the home, in Bodmin, of her son-in-law, the Rev. Richard Allen, a Wesleyan Minister<sup>192</sup>.

On 14 November 1873, at Malvern, William Newman Johnson, eldest son of the late Robert Johnson, shipbuilder, Bideford, died aged 51<sup>193</sup>.

In Oct 1874, Mr. Johnson's shipyard was one of several premises connected to a supply of water

184 "Seventy-five Years Ago" Hartland and West Country Chronicle 19 July 1938 p28 c2

185 "Local Board of Health" North Devon Journal 12 January 1865 p8 c3

186 North Devon Journal 12 December 1867 p1 c1

187 "Bideford Local Board" North Devon Journal 4 June 1868 p8 c3

188 "Improvements East-the-Water" North Devon Journal 16 July 1868 p8 c1

189 "Bideford Local Government Board" Bideford Weekly Gazette 1 December 1868 p4 c3

190 "The Foreshore of Bideford" Bideford Weekly Gazette 4 August 1868 p4 c7

191 "Town Council." p8 c1

192 "Deaths" Western Times 8 January 1873 p2 c3

193 North Devon Journal 20 November 1873 p8 c6

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from the mains<sup>194</sup>.

The North Devon Journal of 15 March 1877 contains an advertisement for the sale, by auction, of the whole of the stock and stock-in-trade of the yard, in which it is stated that Mr. John Johnson is leaving the neighbourhood<sup>195</sup>.

Listed in the 1878-79 White's History, Gazetteer & Directory as a shipbuilder. Business address given as Barnstaple Street, with home address given as Springfield Terrace. Restarick took over in 1877, so the 1878 directory entry was already in the pipeline and was therefore not changed.

### **John Johnson in California**

As John Johnson is not to be found on the 1881 Census of England it is possible that he moved to Wales or even further afield.

In 1905 the Western Times carried a notice for the death of a John Johnson, of Bideford, on July 22, in San Francisco.<sup>196</sup>

In a report of the 1859 launch of The Flying Cloud, John Johnson is referred to as John N. Johnson, though no middle name is given on his baptismal records. The Findagrave database has a record for one John Newman Johnson, born in England, who died on Jul 22, 1905 in California, USA, age 69 (i.e. born c. 1834), buried at Cypress Lawn Memorial Park, Colma, San Mateo County, California<sup>197</sup>. After 1937 burials in San Francisco's prestigious Laurel Hill cemetery were relocated to Colma.

Newman is frequently used as a middle name in the shipbuilding John's family, so it seems almost certain that the John Newman Johnson who died in San Francisco must be the John Johnson, of Bideford, shipbuilder, who left Bideford in about 1877. What happened in-between has yet to be investigated.

### **Incidents relating to the yard**

In March 1840 one Abraham Pinkham, of Westleigh, was killed when he slipped whilst carrying timber and the timber crushed his head<sup>198</sup>.

In July 1849, one of Mr. Johnson's apprentice, shipwrights, named Dark, was helping hoisting a frame to the mast, when the rope broke and the tackle fell, lacerating leg and nearly severing his big toe. Some of those working alongside him were also hurt, but not seriously<sup>199</sup>.

In August 1851, a carpenter named Wm. Hillman, of Northam, fell from a scaffold, at the side of a ship, 24 feet on to a log below, dislocating his hip. Taken home on a cart, a surgeon attended, dealt with the dislocation, and the patient was said to be doing well<sup>200</sup>.

An advertisement for a vessel built in 1855 (see below) mentions that a W. N. Johnson, of Swansea, could be approached for details, possibly a relative.

In September 1856, John Johnson, shipbuilder, together with Mr. Perkin, boat-builder, were charged

194 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 1 October 1874 p2 c2

195 North Devon Journal of 15 March 1877 p1 c2

196 "Deaths" Western Times 11 August 1905 p15 c7

197 Memorial# 134312826 Online: <https://www.findagrave.com> accessed 13 October 2017

198 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 19 March 1840 p2 c6

199 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 19 July 1849 p8 c1

200 Western Times 23 August 1851 p6 c6

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with obstructing the highway in East-the-Water with the timber, boats, &c. connected with they building yards<sup>201</sup>. A parallel account clarifies that the obstructed road was that leading from Torrington old road to the beach, and that Johnson was fined 13s. 9d (including expenses)<sup>202</sup>.

An account of the launch of the *Wild Flower* in 1856 demonstrates that soon after the railway arrive in Bideford (1855) Johnson was already bringing timber in by rail<sup>203</sup>.

The launch of *The Flying Cloud*, in September 1859, saw the vessel move prematurely and two hands injured, one potentially fatally, by the timber sent flying as the supporting timbers cracked<sup>204</sup>.

In October 1859, Johnson took drastic steps to deal with a lazy apprentice, and took him to court: "William Hookway, a young man about 22 years of age, was charged by Mr. Johnson, shipbuilder, East-the-Water (to whom he is apprenticed), with absenting himself from his employment. Hookway had been in the habit of leaving his work in this manner, and Mr. Johnson had repeatedly remonstrated with him but to no purpose, and he at length, unwillingly brought him before the magistrates. He was sent to Exeter Gaol for a month."<sup>205</sup>

On 22 Jan 1861 the local press reported that complaints had been raised, by Mr. Pollard, a neighbour on Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard, concerning some steaming apparatus used for bending timber. This steam box, which abutted on the public thoroughfare, and lay just opposite to Pollard's house, was claimed to be causing "a most intolerable stench." Pollard had been reluctant to bring the complaint, but, with the smell and the damage to his property caused whilst loading timber into the box, he had felt compelled to, as Johnson generally laughed off his repeated complaints. The board both upheld the complaint and expressed surprised that it had not been brought sooner. After instructing that a notice for removal of the box be served, a deputation was sent to wait on Mr. Johnson, there being "no wish on the part of the Board to interfere with the industrial occupations of the inhabitants."<sup>206</sup>

In January 1861 Mr. Johnson's shipwrights decided to take the matter of a lazy colleague into their own hands. The miscreant, an 18 year old apprentice, named Hookway, had become "notorious in the shipyard for his lazy habits." Despite imprisonment as a corrective for them he had again told Johnson that he would not work, so his "mates" took matters into their own hands. Seizing him, they covered him in tar, and polished that off with grease, before lashing him to a handcart and parading him through part of the town. Part way up the high street escaped and fled, the jeers a laughter of the crowd still echoing in his ears<sup>207</sup>.

In March 1861 Mr. Johnson offered to re-locate his steaming apparatus, level with the wall. The Board were not impressed, but granted Mr. Johnson a delay of three months in which to remove it<sup>208</sup>. Apparently this was at Johnson's own request, to allow for the completion of a vessel<sup>209</sup>.

In September 1861 the Local Board were once again discussing Mr. Johnson's steam boiler, which, despite the ship now having been launched, still had not been removed. A motion was passed, to get the surveyor to remove it without any further notice<sup>210</sup>

201 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 11 September 1856 p5 c5

202 "Bideford" Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 13 September 1856 p8 c3

203 "Ship Launch" North Devon Journal 22 May 1856 p8 c1

204 "Bideford" Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 3 September 1859 p7 c4

205 "Refractory Apprentice" Bideford Weekly Gazette 4 October 1859 p4 c1

206 "Local Government Board" Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 Jan 1861 p4 c2

207 "Judge Lynch in Bideford" Bideford Weekly Gazette 29 January 1861 p4 c3

208 "Bideford" Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 29 March 1861 p7 c3

209 "Local Government Board" Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 September 1861 p4 c3

210 "Local Government Board" Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 September 1861 p4 c3

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Later that month the Surveyor reported that Mr. Johnson had removed the steam apparatus<sup>211</sup>.

In December 1861, one of Mr. Johnson's employees, one George Harvey, was instantaneously killed by falling timber, whilst superintending the unloading of it from a railway truck. No blame was attached to anyone. The deceased, a steady man, left only a wife, who kept a huckster's shop, East-the-Water."<sup>212</sup>

In January 1865, one Thomas Mock, a gentleman troubled by a daughter who had been unable to eat for the previous six months, was identified, in a press account of his predicament, as foreman at Mr. Johnson's shipyard<sup>213</sup>.

In January 1867, when the freezing conditions were so severe that no work was possible, Mr Johnson, gave each of his men and apprentices 4s. Each, "as a sort of stop-gap till they could resume work."<sup>214</sup>

In October 1867 Mr. Randolph Beer, an apprentice to Mr Johnson, found himself before the magistrates "for absenting himself from his work," having been in the habit of absence on the plea of illness. It transpired that on two instances he had even procured medical certificates, for which he paid 2s. 6d., and 4s. 6d. respectively. Moreover, on the day of his summons Beer had procured a medical certificate of illness, despite claiming that he had intended to return to work on that same day. On another occasion Beer had been found to have attended Barnstaple Fair at a time when he claimed to be unwell. The Magistrates dismissed the case, but not without expressing their opinion that medical men ought to exercise care in granting such certificates of illness<sup>215</sup>.

Following the *G. A. Preston's* problematic launch the Bridge Trust brought a claim for damages, on the basis that Mr. Johnson had been negligent, in part, by launching when there was insufficient water, whilst Mr. Johnston brought a counter-claim, that recent changes to the bridge had shifted the gut away from his yard and to the opposite side of the river<sup>216</sup>.

In November 1869 a dinner for some forty people was held at Mr. Dannell's New London Inn, the assembled company comprising "the shipwrights belonging to Mr. Johnson's yard, with several respectable inhabitants of East-the-Water." The Mayor of Shamwickshire<sup>217</sup> attended, in his official robes, and the foreman of the yard, Mr. James Mock, occupied the chair. This convivial evening included the usual toasts, and a bumper was drunk to the health of the Mayor of Shamwickshire, to which his worship duly responded<sup>218</sup>.

In June 1870 the local press reported that "Mr Johnston[sic], shipbuilder" entertained his employees to a drive to Ilfracombe in a "break and four," whilst providing the necessary "etceteras" for the occasion."<sup>219</sup>

In March 1887 an advertisement appeared for the sale, at auction, of the whole of the stock and stock-in-trade of Mr. Johnson's yard, as Mr. Johnson was leaving the area.<sup>220</sup> The advertisement

211 "Bideford" Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 20 September 1861 p7 c2

212 "Shocking Death of a Man at the Railway Station" North Devon Journal 12 December 1861 p5 c4

213 "Extraordinary Case of Abstinence From Food" North Devon Journal 2 February 1865 p5 c3

214 "Relief of the Poor" Western Times 25 January 1867 p5 c3

215 "Apprentices that ran away from their Masters" Ref. Wednesday, October 16, 1867 District News – Bideford. Post by Nevis. MyZone, Genealogy forum. Thu Nov 13, 2014. Online: <http://www.mzawf.org/viewtopic.php?f=33&t=877> Accessed 13 Jul 2016.

216 "Damage to Bideford Bridge by a Vessel in Launching" North Devon Journal 21 May 1868 p3 c3-4.

217 A local mock official appointed annually by East-the-Water's shipwrights

218 "Dinner to Mr. Johnson's Shipwrights" North Devon Journal 18 November 1869 p8 c1

219 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 30 June 1870 p6 c3

220 North Devon Journal 15 March 1877 p1 c2

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lists the following items: a large quantity of Oak, Elm, and Beech Logs and Planks; several thousand feet of Pitch Pine, Yellow Pine, Mahogany, and Teak Boards, in various thicknesses; several Pieces of Elm, suitable for keels; Yellow Pine in Baulk; 20,000 Tree Nails; a lot of 3-inch Pitch Pine Plank; Wedges; New Mast; Spars; Shipwright's Tools; Tackle and Blocks; several Tons of Galvanized Wire and Hempen Rope; Iron Bolts; Galvanized and common Round and Flat Iron; a quantity of Felt; Iron Boiler and Steamer, with fittings complete; 5 Crab Winches; several Fathoms of New and Old Chain; a quantity of Blacksmith's Tools; about 10 Tons of Smith's Coal; 3 Blacksmith's Bellows; 4 Anvils; 3 Vices; Drilling Machine; Hydraulic Machine, capable of lifting 200 tons; Oils, Paint, and White Lead; Hand-cart; Timber Wheels; "and a quantity of articles used in a large Shipbuilding Yard, too numerous to particularise." As the Yard was to be cleared by Lady-day the whole lot was to be sold.

## Ships launched

### Jun 1840, schooner *Isabelle*, 125/109 tons

On the 2 July 1840 a local newspaper reported the launch of a neat schooner named *Isabelle*, from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on the previous Wednesday (24 June), stating that this was the first vessel launched since Johnson took over the yard. She was 125 old measure and 109 new. As large crowd gathered to watch the launch, and she went off in fine style. Her owners were named as Irwin, Dale, and Co.<sup>221</sup>

### 1841, schooner *Waterlily*, 84 tons

The *Waterlily* is identified by Roger Banfield as of 84 tons, built in 1841, by Robert Johnson, East-the-Water, Bideford, and registered from 1843 till 1849 in Bideford.<sup>222</sup>

### Jan 1841, *Sincerity*, 165 tons

On the 30 January 1841 a local newspaper reported the launch, on Wednesday (27 January), of a "fine vessel" named *Sincerity*, from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water. Built for Captain Gitting, her Master, and 165 tons, old register measure, her fine launch was watched by many on from the quay and bridge<sup>223</sup>.

Another press report, published on the 6 February 1841, but further afield, mentions a vessel launched on Monday from Johnson's yard. As 6 Feb 1841 was a Saturday, the previous Monday would have been 1 February, so this launch may be a different one, but as launches tended to coincide with spring tides it appears that both this and the preceding report may refer to the *Sincerity*, the Western Times having received the copy too late to insert it in the proper week. This account adds that several guns had been discharged at day break to announce the forthcoming launch, that she was schooner rigged, and that her builder had "sold her at a large price within a few hours after she was launched" though the purchaser is not named. She is given as 160 tons register<sup>224</sup>.

221 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 2 July 1840 p3 c1

222 Roger Banfield. Two Bideford-built schooners of the Nineteenth Century. Bideford Buzz. Posted 12 July 2017.

<http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed: 15 Feb 2018

223 "North Devon." Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 30 January 1841 p3 c6

224 "Launch" Western Times 6 February 1841 p3 c5

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### **Jan 1842, smack *Prince of Wales*, 52 tons**

On the 27 January 1842 an Exeter newspaper reported the launch, on “the evening of the Prince of Wales birthday”, of a “fine vessel” from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, ship builder, of Bideford. She was named *Prince of Wales*, in honour of the young Prince's baptism<sup>225</sup>.

A local press report of the same launch, published on Thursday, 27 January, confirms the builder as Robert Johnson and that the launch was on “Tuesday afternoon last” (i.e. 25 January). It describes her as a fine smack of 52 tons register, and “built of the best British materials, and of superior workmanship” She was to join the Bideford and Bristol Shipping Company, commanded by Capt William Burnard, a well known mariner. It being a particularly special day, this successful launch, which was at 4 p.m., took place “amid the firing of cannon, ringing of bells, and the loud acclamations of hundreds of spectators,” and with “her banners floating in the breeze.”<sup>226</sup>

### **Jul 1843, schooner *Maria*, 90 tons**

On Thursday 3 August 1843 an Exeter newspaper reported the launch, on Thursday last (27 July), of “a most splendid and finely modelled schooner,” named *Maria*, from the building yard of Mr. Robert Johnson, ship-builder, East-the-Water. The launch was without the slightest of accident. Intended for coasting and fruit trade, the 90 ton *Maria* had been built under the inspection of her part owner, and master-to-be, Captain Hinks, of Bideford.<sup>227</sup>

### **May 1846, sloop or schooner, *Arrival* or *Rival***

On the 16 May 1846 a local newspaper reported the launch of a fine sloop named *Arrival*, from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on the previous Tuesday (12 May). As it was a market day, several hundred spectators lined the bridge and quay. She was intended for the Liverpool trade<sup>228</sup>.

Inkerman Rogers' listing for 1846 for *Rival*, a 78 tons schooner attributed to Robert Johnson, probably refers to the same vessel<sup>229</sup>, the name he gives being coincidentally close to that in the newspaper article above.

### **May 1848, unidentified vessel**

On Saturday 16 May 1846 a Devon newspaper reported the successful launches “yesterday (Thursday),” i.e. 14 May<sup>230</sup>, of a fine, but unidentified, vessel by Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, along with “one by Mr. Cox, on the West Side ; also one by Mr. Green, at Appledore, in this port [Bideford]; and another in Barnstaple.”<sup>231</sup>

### **Nov 1848, schooner *Eleanor Hughes*, 100 tons**

On the 30 November 1848 a local newspaper reported the launch of a fine schooner, named *Eleanor Hughes*, from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on “Tuesday morning last” (28 November). Of 100 tons burthen, and owned by Mr. Thomas Hughes, of Newport, she was

225 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 27 January 1842 p3 c6

226 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 27 January 1842 p2 c6

227 “North Devon” Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 3 August 1843 p3 c6

228 “North Devon.” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 16 May 1846 p3 c5

229 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 27

230 This date might seem rather too close to publication for the story to have reached South Devon in time, but the 14 May, being just after a full moon, would have been a propitious time for this launch

231 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 8 April 1848 p8 c2

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intended for the fruit trade<sup>232</sup>.

The Western Times confirms the launch date of the 28<sup>th</sup> November and that the vessel was 100 tons register. It further comments that Johnson “is famed for turning out as handsome and as well finished vessels as any in the Bristol Channel, as experience shows.”<sup>233</sup>

### **Feb 1849, schooner *Catherine*, 94 tons**

On 15 February 1849 a local newspaper reported the launch of a fine schooner, named *Catherine*, from the building yard of Mr. Robert Johnson, on “Saturday morning last” (10 February). Of 94 tons NM, the coppered and copper-fastened *Catherine* was built for the Mediterranean Trade<sup>234</sup>.

### **Jul 1849, brig *Vivid*, 280 tons**

On 26 July 1849 a local newspaper reported the successful launch of a fine schooner, named *Vivid*, from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on “the morning tide of Tuesday” (24 July). Of 280 tons burthen, purchased by Messers. Tyer and Co., of Brixham, and to be commanded by Mr. Samuel Tyer, she was intended for the Mediterranean trade<sup>235</sup>.

Inkerman Rogers attributes her to Robert Johnson<sup>236</sup>.

### **c. Nov 1849?, unidentified schooner, c. 130 tons o.m.**

In November 1849 “Mr. R. Johnson, Shipbuilder, Bideford.” advertised two vessels for sale at Bideford. The first, a schooner, able to be ready within a month, was about 130 tons O.M. ; length 77 feet ; breadth, max, 19 feet 6 inches ; depth, 11 feet 4 inches. The vessel, being constructed under special survey, and intended to be class A 1 for twelve years at Lloyd's. Claimed to be a handsome model of the very best materials and partially copper-fastened, combining fast sailing with a good cargo” The second vessel, probably the one launched in March 1850 below<sup>237</sup>.

### **Feb 1850, schooner *Devon*, 180 tons OM**

In November 1849 “Mr. R. Johnson, Shipbuilder, Bideford.” advertised two vessels for sale at Bideford. The first, described above, the second, also under construction, was a brig or schooner, of about 190 tons O.M. length, 88 feet ; breadth, 22 feet ; and depth 14 feet. The vessel was building under special survey for A 1 twelve years at Lloyd's<sup>238</sup>.

The above is assumed to relate to “a handsome vessel” mentioned in two accounts of a launch from Robert Johnson’s yard, on the day the *Tartar* steamed away with the *Rajah of Sarawak*, bound for Liverpool, a vessel was launched by Cox & Evans, and the *Artistic* was towed to the pool of Appledore from Barnstaple<sup>239</sup>. That day being Wednesday (27 Feb), according to the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of 2 March 1850, but Tuesday (26 Feb) according to the North Devon Journal of 28 February 1850<sup>240</sup>. The latter is the more likely to be correct.

On 9 March the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette reported that an 180 ton vessel, the *Devon*, had been

232 “Ship Launch” North Devon Journal 30 November 1848 p2 c6

233 “Bideford” Western Times 2 December 1848 p7 c5

234 Ship Launch, North Devon Journal, 15 February 1849, page 3, col 5

235 “Bideford.” North Devon Journal 26 July 1849, p8 c1

236 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 27

237 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 20 November 1849 p1 c4

238 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 20 November 1849 p1 c4

239 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 2 March 1850 p4 c2

240 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 28 February 1850 p5 c3

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towed down the river at Bideford on the previous Monday (5 March), noting that she had been built by Mr. Johnson for a company at Dartmouth.<sup>241</sup> It seems reasonable to assume that the *Devon* was the ship launched less than a week earlier.

Rogers identifies the *Devon* as a schooner of 107 tons, but without identifying her builder<sup>242</sup>.

### **Jul 1850, brig *Caroline Schenk*, 300 tons**

On 13 July 1850, the local press reported the recent launch, on Wednesday evening last (10 July), of the *Caroline Schenk*, a splendid brig, of 300 tons burthen, registered in London, and built for Messrs. Houndsell, Schenk, and Houndsell, of London, by shipbuilder Robert Johnson, of Bideford. Christened by a Miss Mudge of Torquay, and launched amidst cheering spectators, roaring canons and the sound of a brass band, the whole was witnessed by Lord Gough, from his yacht (just one of the numerous vessels on the river that day). This vessel was intended for the Newfoundland and Brazil trade<sup>243</sup>.

### **Jan 1851, schooner *Abeona*, 180 (or 130) tons**

On 23 January 1851 the local press reported the launch, “on Tuesday morning last” (21 January), of the new schooner *Abeona*, built at the yard of Mr. Johnson, East the Water, and of 180 tons burthen. Her owner, Mr. Smith, of Brixham (who was on board), intended her for the Mediterranean trade<sup>244</sup>.

The launch was also reported in the *Western Times*, where she is given as “130 tons register,” the owner is given as “Mr. N. Smith, of Brixham,” both huzzas and the roaring of canons were said to accompany the launch, and Johnson was credited with a reputation that extends to Wales as well as South Devon<sup>245</sup>.

### **1851, unidentified brig, c. 220 tons o.m., 195 tons. n.m.**

“At BIDEFORD. A BRIG, of the following dimensions :-Length for measurement, 96 feet ; breadth extreme, 22 feet 3 inches ; depth in hold, 14 feet ; about 220 tons O.M., and 195 tons. N.M. Also” . . . a schooner (see below) . . . “These vessels are building under special survey, of the best materials; are partially copper-fastened, and intended to class A 1 twelve years at Lloyd's ; their models are handsome, and, on account of their great length, they will combine fast sailing with good carrying qualities. Apply to Mr. R. Johnson, Shipbuilder, Bideford<sup>246</sup>.

### **1851, unidentified schooner, c. 170 tons o.m., 150 tons n.m.**

“At BIDEFORD, A BRIG” . . . as detailed above . . . “Also, a SCHOONER:-Length for measurement, 89 feet ; breadth extreme, 20 feet 6 inches ; depth in hold, 12 feet ; about 170 tons O.M., and 150 tons N.M. These vessels are building under special survey, “. . . etc as detailed for the brig of c. 220 tons (entry above)<sup>247</sup>.

### **Aug 1851, clipper-built brig *Earl of Derby*, 300 tons**

A press report from August 1851 identifies that a clipper-built brig, *Earl of Derby*, 300 tons, was

241 “Bideford” *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* 9 March 1850 p4 c1

242 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 28

243 “Bideford Launch” *Western Times* 13 July 1850 p7 c3

244 *North Devon Journal* 23 January 1851 p4 c4

245 “Bideford” *Western Times* 25 January 1851 p5 c5

246 *Shipping and Mercantile Gazette* 29 April 1851 p1 c3, with similar in 16 May 1851 p1 c3 & 25 Feb 1851 p1 c3

247 *Shipping and Mercantile Gazette* 29 April 1851 p1 c3



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launched from the East-the-Water yard of “Mr. Rd. Johnston,” [sic].<sup>248</sup>

'On Wednesday [20 Aug] there was launched from the ship-building yard of Mr. R. Johnson, a clipper built brig of 300 tons burthen, named the “Earl of Derby,” built for Messrs. Jas. Wearne and Co. of St. Ives, Cornwall, intended for the Brazil trade ; the following are the dimensions of this splendid craft—length over all 106 feet; breadth of beam, 22 feet ; depth of hold, 14 feet. She glided into the water at 7 o'clock, amidst the huzzas of hundreds of spectators. Of her sailing qualities there can be no question, in symmetry of form she is a perfect model, and adds greatly to the renown of the builder, whose skill in naval architecture is well-known<sup>249</sup>.

### **Oct 1851, clipper-built schooner *John Pardew*, 250 tons**

“On Saturday morning [11 Oct] this lovely clipper-built schooner, of 250 tons register, was launched from the yard of Mr. Robert Johnson. She is the property of Mr. John Pardew, of Plymouth, and is named after her owner. As she glided from the stocks amidst the huzzahs of stentorian voices, she received her name from Mrs. Pardew. She stands A 1 12 years at Lloyd, [sic]and is destined for the Mediterranean trade. We have no hesitation in saying that she is one of the most perfect specimens we ever beheld, well worthy the pride of her owner (whe [sic, who] makes her carry a *fac simile* of his bland and honest countenance as her figure head), and *must* be a great recommendation to her builder.”<sup>250</sup>

### **1852, unidentified brig, 250 tons o.m.**

“At BIDEFORD. A BRIG of about the following dimensions, viz.:—Length for measurement, 107 feet ; breadth extreme, 22 feet 3 inches ; depth, 14 feet four inches ; 250 tons O.M.; will class A 1 twelve years at Lloyd's; is building of the very best materials; has laid four months in frame for seasoning; is a very sightly, handsome craft, and will sail remarkably fast. She is partly planked, and, if required, can be completed in three months. Also” . . . a schooner (see next entry) . . . “Apply to Mr. R. JOHNSON, Shipbuilder, Bideford”<sup>251</sup>.

### **1852, unidentified schooner (*Flora?*), 130 tons o.m., 100 tons n.m.**

“Also, in the same yard, a Clipper SCHOONER, of the following dimensions, viz.:— Length for measurement, 82 feet ; breadth extreme, 18 feet 6 inches ; depth, 10 feet ; 130 tons O.M., 100 N.M. Is a very handsome model, and will be one of the fastest vessels ever turned out by the builder. Can be sent to sea in a month. Both vessels will be fitted out in the most modern and approved style. Apply to Mr. R. JOHNSON, Shipbuilder, Bideford.”<sup>252</sup>

Rogers lists “a splendid schooner” by the name of *Flora* as launched by Robert Johnson in 1852, but gives no details for her burthen<sup>253</sup>. She is probably the unidentified vessel of the newspaper report, but there is insufficient information to be sure.

### **Feb 1853, clipper-built schooner *Cezimpra*, 170 tons**

“The schooner launched from Mr. Johnson's, on the 24<sup>th</sup> [February 1853], is clipper-built, 170 tons burthen, the property of E.T. Fernandez, Esq., and is intended for the Mediterranean trade, and as

248 “August 1851” North Devon Journal 29 August 1901 p2 c5

249 Western Times 23 August 1851 p6 c6

250 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 16 October 1851 p5 c2

251 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 20 August 1852 p1 c4

252 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 20 August 1852 p1 c4

253 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 29

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she bounded upon her watery home, she received the name 'Cezimpra.'"<sup>254</sup>

### **Mar 1853, clipper-built schooner *I'll Try***

“On Thursday last [24 March] a beautiful clipper-built schooner was launched from the yard of Mr. Robert Johnson. On taking her first plunge upon the briny element she received the rather strange cognomen of 'I'll Try,' from the builders, who intend sailing her themselves in the coasting trade.”<sup>255</sup>

Lloyd's Register for 1861/62 lists *I'll Try* (Captain Collins), as a schooner fastened with iron bolts, 86 tons using old measurements and 65 tons using new measurements, built 1853, repairs to damages in 1859. Owner R. Johnson, registered Bideford, sailed on coasting trade.

### **Mar 1853, brig *Georgiana***

“On the following Tuesday [29 March, as after the schooner *I'll Try*], a noble and stately looking brig named the 'Georgiana,' the property of George Bragington, Esq., was launched from the same yard [i.e. Robert Johnson's]. The morning was beautifully fine, and a large concourse of persons assembled on the bridge and on the Quay to watch the launch of the gallant craft. We hear the lovely daughter of Mr. Bragington, whose name she bears, was present and assisted at the ceremony. She is a splendid model and fully maintains the celebrity of her builders.”<sup>256</sup>

“On Monday a fine brig was launched from Mr. Johnson's building yard, East-the-Water. She received the name of *Georgiana*, and fully sustains the character of the builder for symmetry and excellence”<sup>257</sup>.

### **Oct 1853, clipper-built brigantine *Alice Jane*, 280 tons**

In October 1853 the local press reported “There has been launched from the building yard of Mr. R. Johnson, a clipper-built brigantine of 280 tons burthen. The symmetry of this splendid craft needs no comment—the skill of the worthy builder is so well-known both in North and South Devon. She was named *Alice Jane*, by her respected owner, Geo. Bragington, Esq., banker.”<sup>258</sup>

### **1853-4, at least one unidentified vessel**

One of three built for Bragington. See account for the *Clara Louisa* below, the other being the *Alice Jane* (above)

### **Jan 1854, clipper-built brigantine *Clara Louisa*, 300 tons**

“On Tuesday last [31 January] there was launched from the building yard of Mr. Robt. Johnson a beautiful clipper-built brigantine, of 300 tons burthen, a. 1 12 years at Lloyd's, named *Clara Louisa*, built for Messrs. Bragington, being the third built in the same yard within the last twelve months for this enterprising firm. This splendid craft is pronounced perfect ; and from appearance she looks a regular racer, and is the admiration of all nautical men.”<sup>259</sup>

Rogers gives a vessel of the same name, of 214 tons, with date of March 1843, and attributed to Robert Johnson<sup>260</sup>

254 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 3 March 1853 p8 c2

255 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 31 March 1853 p8 c2

256 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 31 March 1853 p8 c2

257 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 2 April 1853 p8 c3

258 “Bideford” Western Times 15 October 1853 p7 c6

259 “Bideford” Western Times 4 February 1854 p6 c6

260 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 29

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**1854, unidentified schooner (*Sarah Fox?*), c. 116 tons o.m., 90 tons n.m.**

“At BIDEFORD, DEVON. A Schooner, of the following dimensions:-Length for measurement, 76 feet ; breadth ex., 18 feet 6 inches ; depth, 10 feet 3 inches ; about 116 tons O.M., and 90 tons N.M.; is partially copper-fastened; a slightly handsome craft, and calculated to sail fast; can be completed, with a good outfit, in a fortnight. Apply to R. JOHNSON, Shipbuilder, Bideford, Devon.”<sup>261</sup>

Rogers' lists an R. Johnson built schooner named *Sarah Fox*, of 100 tons, dated June 1854<sup>262</sup>. This may be the unidentified vessel of these news reports.

**1855, unidentified vessel, c. 63 tons O.M.**

“At BIDEFORD (DEVON), in the Shipbuilding Yard of the late Mr. R. Johnson, A new VESSEL, of the following dimensions :- Length for measurement, 53 feet; breadth extreme, 16 feet 8 inches; depth, 8 feet 4 inches; about 63 tons O.M. She is nearly ready for launching ; will sail well, shift without ballast, and carry a good cargo. For particulars apply to JOHN JOHNSON, Bideford; or to W. N. JOHNSON, Swansea.”<sup>263</sup>

Details for an identical vessel appeared in an advertisement a couple of months later, but adding the details “she is a good model, will sail well, and carry a fair cargo; is ready for launching.”<sup>264</sup>

**1855, unidentified barque, c. 330 tons O.M., 281 N.M.**

“At BIDEFORD (DEVON), in the Shipbuilding Yard of the late Mr. R. Johnson, A BARQUE, building under special survey, to class A 1 twelve years :- Length for measurement, 118½ feet; breadth extreme, 24 feet 6 inches; depth, 15 feet 4 inches; about 330 tons O.M., and 281 tons present N.M.; she is a slight craft, will sail fast, and carry a good cargo ; can be completed in a month.” The advertisement then inserts details for the 63 ton vessel listed above, before adding “Both vessels will be put out of hand in the most approved style.” Once again it is a case of “For particulars apply to JOHN JOHNSON, Bideford; or to W. N. JOHNSON, Swansea.”<sup>265</sup>

**1855, schooner *Alma*, 106 tons**

Rogers' lists the 106 ton schooner *Alma* as built in Robert Johnson's Yard, East-the-Water in 1855<sup>266</sup>

**Apr 1855, clipper-built brig *Prothsea*, 200 tons**

Builder given as Robert Johnson of Bideford, and year of construction as 1855. Built for G Lidstone & Co. of Kingsbridge.<sup>267</sup>

Rogers' lists an April 1855 Robt. Johnson built brig named *Prothsea* of 200 tons, quoting “One of the most beautiful clipper-built vessels that ever left the notable shipbuilding port of Bideford” but without giving a source<sup>268</sup>.

261 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 21 July 1854 p1 c5 & 8 August 1854 p1 c5

262 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 27

263 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 29 June 1855 p1 c5

264 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 6 August 1855 p1 c3

265 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 6 August 1855 p1 c3

266 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 29

267 Muriel and David Murch & Len Fairweather. Sail and Steam in Salcombe Harbour, 1987. Citing page 11 at “Index to photographs[sic] in Sail and Steam in Salcombe Harbour”

Online:[http://www.our4bears.net/parishes/Salcombe/Salcombe\\_Sail&Steam.htm](http://www.our4bears.net/parishes/Salcombe/Salcombe_Sail&Steam.htm) Accessed: 20/12/2016

268 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 30

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### **Jan 1856, clipper barque *Louisa Bragington*, 500 tons**

“Another beautiful clipper Barque, 500 tons burthen, was on Thursday last [10 January] launched from the well known yard of Mr. J. Johnson. She belongs to W. Bragington, Esq , and is designed for the South American Trade, —she was named the Owner’s wife 'Louisa Bragington.' This vessel is a perfect model of marine[?, the word is rather smudged] architecture, and reflects the highest credit on [smudged]nted builder, A supper was provided in the [smudged] in good style, at the Newfoundland Inn, for the work men of the yard.”<sup>269</sup>

About a month after the launch, “the 'Tartar,' tug, towed the new barque, 'Louisa Bragington,' from Mr. Johnson's Yard on Monday, for Cardiff, where she is to take on iron for South America”<sup>270</sup>.

### **Feb 1856, clipper built schooner *Gilbert Wheaton/Gilbert Whitton*, 180 tons**

"On Saturday last [9 February], another splendid clipper built Schooner was launched from the yard of Mr. J. Johnson. The vessel is named the Gilbert Wheaton, 180 tons, built for Capt. Bradley, of Brixham, for the fruit trade.”<sup>271</sup>

The Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of 16 February 1856 (p8 c1) also reported the launch, giving the name as *Gilbert Whitton*, and stating that she was “going up the Mediterranean next week, for a cargo of nuts.”

The parallel account in the North Devon Journal names her owner as “Messrs. Baddeley, shipowners, of Brixham,” gives her tonnage as 121 tons burthen<sup>272</sup>.

### **May 1856, brigantine *Wild Flower*, 152 (or c. 200?) tons**

“On Tuesday last [20 May] from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. John Johnson a very superior-modelled brigantine was launched, of about 200 tons, and received the Name of the Wild Flower. She is the property of the builder's brother, Robert Johnson.”<sup>273</sup>

“Launches are so frequent on the banks of our beautiful river, that they cease in some degree to attract public attention. The launch of the *Wild Flower*, however, of Tuesday evening was an exception, the day so bright, the noble river so calm, as if waiting in the best possible mood to receive the new nursling to its bosom, attracted the attention of the dullest. It was market day too which added to the number and variety of spectators. At about six o'clock she went off the stocks from Mr. Johnson's yard, East-the-Water, with her masts up and gaily decorated with the flags of all nations, without lurching in the least degree to one side or the other—floating as upright as a bolt, although there were from fifty to sixty humans on board. She is a schooner of 152 tons burthen, clipper built, and intended for Capt. Johnson, brother to the builder. There is another in progress in the same yard; indeed it is amongst the pleasantest of the sounds and sights in this charming neighbourhood to hear the click of the caulker's mallet, and to see the rising bulk of some noble argosy and there the weather-beaten craft careening, proving that peace is not going to check maritime speculation. The superiority of the North Devon build, timber, and other qualities appears to be duly appreciated by the mercantile community; the wants of the builder being accommodated too by supplies of oak and elm, from the neighbourhood of Bridgewater and Taunton, brought here by rail.--The public is not a little indebted to the spirited individuals, who embark their skills and

269 “Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 15 January 1856 p1 c1

270 “Ship Launch” North Devon Journal 14 February 1856 p8 c1

271 “Ship Launch” North Devon and East Cornwall Gazette 12 February 1856 p1 c1

272 “Ship Launch” North Devon Journal 14 February 1856 p8 c1

273 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 27 May 1856 p1 c1

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capital in speculation so advantageous to the community”<sup>274</sup>

Belonging to “Mr. Johnson, ship builder, of East-the-Water,” lost off the Gulf of Venice on Thursday, 20 Jan 1859<sup>275</sup>.

“A telegraphic message was delivered here on Thursday last, that a vessel belonging to Mr. Johnson, ship builder, East-the-Water, the Wild Flower, had been lost off the Gulf of Venice.”<sup>276</sup>

### **1856, schooner *Renown*, 69 tons**

"On Saturday week last, a beautifully built schooner, which received the name of *Renown*, was launched from the yard of Mr. John Johnson, east-the-water. She is the property of Capt. Griffiths, of Port Cawl, who intends her for the Iron Oar [sic] trade.”<sup>277</sup>

Rogers' lists an Robt. Johnson built schooner named *Renown*, of 69 tons, dated 1856 [Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30]

### **Mar 1857, clipper-built schooner *Sarah Smith*, 340 tons**

“On Thursday morning last [12 March], a beautiful clipper-built schooner which received the name of *Sarah Smith* was launched from the yard of Mr. John Johnson, east-the-water. She is about 340 tons burthen, built for a Mr. Smith of Brixham, and is intended for the Sidney [sic] trade. All who have seen the ship have pronounced her a perfect model.”<sup>278</sup> The corresponding article in the North Devon Journal calls her a “finely modelled brig” and mentions that she was launched “between seven and eight o'clock, after some little reluctance in leaving her berth”, “came off the stocks full rigged,” and that the owner was a “Mr. Nicholas Smith.”<sup>279</sup>

Rogers' lists her as a brigantine of 195 tons, dated 1857, and attributed simply to “Johnson”<sup>280</sup>

### **Jun 1857, clipper-built *Try Again*, 140 tons**

“On Tuesday last [23 June] a very handsome clipper-built ship was launched, from the yard Mr. John Johnson, east-the-water. She went off the stocks very steadily, and received the name of *Try Again*. She is about 140 tons burthen, and belongs to the builder's brother, Mr. William A. Johnson, of Swansea. There is another on the stocks which will receive the name of *Try On*.”<sup>281</sup>

### **Sep 1857, schooner *Criteria*, 125 tons**

'On Wednesday last [2 September] a beautiful clipper built schooner, 125 tons burthen, was launched from Mr. John Johnson's yard, East-the-water. As she moved from the stocks she received from Miss M. Johnson. the name “*Criteria*,” and was loudly cheered by spectators. She is built for Capt. Braddely, of Brixham, and is bound for this port to Cardiff, from whence she will proceed to St. Michaels.”<sup>282</sup> The Western Times adds that she is 125 tons, N.M.<sup>283</sup>

274 “Ship Launch” North Devon Journal 22 May 1856 p8 c1

275 “Wreck” North Devon Journal 27 January 1859 p5 c1

276 “Wreck at Sea” Bideford Weekly Gazette 25 January 1859 p4 c2

277 “Ship Launch” Gazette 28 October 1856 p1 c1

278 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 17 March 1857 p1 c1

279 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 19 March 1857 p8 c2

280 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

281 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 30 June 1857 p1 c1

282 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 8 September 1857 p1 c1

283 Western Times 5 September 1857 p7 c2

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Rogers' lists her as 126 tons<sup>284</sup>.

### **1857 brigantine *Georgiana***

Rogers' lists a brigantine *Georgiana* as launched in 1857 by Johnson, but without further detail<sup>285</sup>.

### **Nov 1857, elliptic stem-schooner *Sanspariel*, 170 tons**

'Launch of an Elliptic Stem-schooner from Mr. Johnson's Yard, East-the-Water. – The sister craft to the *Criteria*, was launched on Thursday [5 November] amidst loud hurrahs. She was named “*Sanspariel*” by Miss Johnson. Her model is beautiful, some say surpasses the *Criteria*. She has not quite so much shear as this vessel has, but these trifels are mere ,atters of taste. She looks alive in the water, and reflects the highest credit to her builder. Capt. Baddley no doubt feels proud as he stands on her deck, and well he might, for she is the admiration of all nautical men in the port. She is 170 tons O.M., and will sail for Brixham.<sup>286</sup>

### **Mar 1858, schooner *Circe*, 220 tons**

‘On Tuesday evening last [30 March], beautifully modelled schooner of about 220 tons, was launched from the yard of Mr. John Johnson. As she glided from the stocks she received the name of “*Circe*,” and was fondly cheered by a large number of people who were present. She was built for Capt. Wm. Green, of Brixham, and is intended for the Mediterranean trade<sup>287</sup>.

The western Times account gives her burthen as 250 tons and her name as *Ciree*. It adds that Capt. Green intends to command her<sup>288</sup>.

### **Jun 1858, schooner *Jane Davies*, 160 tons**

“A very handsomely-modelled schooner of about 160 tons burthen, was launched on Teusday evening last [1 June], from the yard of Mr. John Johnson, and received the name of *Jane Davies*.”<sup>289</sup>

There appears to be a transcription error in the same paper's later recap of this information, 'The schooner “*Jane Davies*,” of 100 tons, was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Johnson, of Bideford<sup>290</sup>

### **Sep 1858, brigantine *Crest of the Ocean/Wave*, 250 tons**

“To-morrow evening [Wednesday, 8 September] is fixed for the *launch* of the beautiful brigantine, at present on the stocks in the yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-water. She is a beautiful specimen of shipbuilding, burthen 250 tons, and has been purchased by Mr. J. N. Mills, of Bideford, who intends to use her for the Mediterranean trade; her name will be *Crest of the Ocean*.”<sup>291</sup>.

The North Devon Journal of 9 September 1858<sup>292</sup> appears to be reporting the same launch when it states “On Wednesday evening, a large concourse of people assembled to witness the launch of a beautiful clipper schooner from the yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water. She is built for Messrs.

284 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

285 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

286 “Bideford” *Western Times* 7 November 1857 p7 c3

287 “Schooner Launch” *Gazette* 6 April 1858 p1 c1

288 “Bideford” *Western Times* 3 April 1858 p7 c5

289 *North Devon Journal* 3 June 1858 p8 c1

290 “North Devon Fifty Years Ago; June 1858” *North Devon Journal* 18 June 1908 p6 c4

291 “Ship Launch” *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 7 September 1858 p1 c1

292 “Launch” p8 c4

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Miles and Co., and is intended for the fruit trade. As she glided into her adopted element, she received the name of *Crest of the Wave*.”

In January 1859 rumours circulated that appear to apply to her, under the name *Crest of the Wave*: “A telegraphic message was delivered here on Thursday last, that a vessel belonging to Mr. Johnson, ship builder, East-the-Water, the *Wild Flower*, had been lost off the Gulf of Venice. We have since heard a rumour that a beautiful vessel, *Crest of the Wave*, recently launched from the yard of Mr. Johnson, has also been lost.”<sup>293</sup>

On April 4 1859 a boat called *Crest of the Ocean* arrived at Pill and Kingroad and passed to Bristol<sup>294</sup>, and then on the 25<sup>th</sup> April a *Crest of the Ocean* arrived in Cardiff, under Captin Jago, and bound for Palermo, in Southern Italy.<sup>295</sup> This boat seems to be plying the intended route for Johnson's boat.

At around this time there was a particularly celebrated clipper called *Crest of the Wave*, a much larger boat than this, and trading with Australia<sup>296</sup>.

### **Oct 1858, schooner *William S. Green*, 200 tons**

“Schooner Launched.--On Saturday [9 October], a neat looking craft was launched from the yard of Mr. Johnson, at East-the-Water. amidst the hearty cheers of all present. She entered the water beautifully, and when afloat evidenced the naval architectural skills of her builder. She was named the *William S Green*, the baptismal ceremony being performed by Miss. Johnson, of Swansea. She is destined for the general coasting trade, is 200 tons burden, and is the property of C. Green, Esq., of Yonghall, Ireland. She is to be commanded by Capt. Eastaway.”<sup>297</sup>

### **Jan 1859, barque *Yedora*, 480 tons**

“Mr. Johnson, of Bideford, launched from his ship-building yard on Friday [1 January] a barque 480 tons b.m., christened the *Yedora*. Mr. James Mills, of Bideford, is the owner of the vessel, which is intended for the general trade.”<sup>298</sup>

### **1859, clipper brigantine *Stanley*, 145 tons**

“Launch from Mr. J. Johnson's Ship Yard, East-the-Water.--On Saturday last a beautiful, modern, clipper brigantine was launched from the above yard. She, [sic] glided of in dashing style, and displayed the taste and skill of her builder. She is built for Mr. Gilbert W. Baddley, of Brixham, intended for the fruit trade, 145 tons N.M. The baptismal ceremony was performed by Miss C. L. Baddley, (the owner's daughter), who gave this beautiful craft the name *Stanley*.”<sup>299</sup>

### **Aug 1859, brig *Flying Cloud*, c. 300 tons**

'On Monday [29 August], a fine brig was launched from the yard of Mr, Johnson, East-the-Water. She started, however, from her position, before the “shores” were knocked away, and two young men named Richard Hoare and Thomas Moulton, were injured. The vessel received the name of

293 “Wreck at Sea” Bideford Weekly Gazette 25 January 1859 p4 c2

294 “Pill and Kingroad” Western Daily Press 5 April 1859 p4 c3

295 “From Lloyd's Books, April 25” Public Ledger 26 April 1859, p10 c4

296 “Spray of the Ocean” Western Times 9 February 1856 p1 c4

297 “Schooner Launched” Western Times 16 October 1858 p7 c4

298 Western Times 5 January 1869 p8 c1

299 “Bideford” Western Times 9 July 1859 p7 c6

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

*Flying Cloud*, is built for Mr. Mills, merchant, and reflects great credit upon her builder.<sup>300</sup> Trueman's Exeter Flying Post of 8 September 1859<sup>301</sup> reported that the injured men were “going on favourably.”

“Ship Launch. – A brig of about 300 tons, intended alternately for the Mediterranean and South African trade, was launched on Tuesday morning [30 August], from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. John N. Johnson, Bideford. The vessel shows some fine points of naval architecture, and as a whole is very creditable to the skill of her builder. She has been built for Mr. Mills, of this town, is classed A 1 at Lloyd's for twelve years, and has been named *The Flying Cloud*, after a celebrated American clipper. An unfortunate accident happened at the launch, which, it is feared, will result fatally. As soon as the shores on her quarter were loosened, and before the shipwrights could get forward to knock away the dog-shores, the vessel started down the stocks toward the river, cracking the timbers that temporarily held her and precipitating huge pieces in various directions. Mr. Thomas Melton, the foreman of the smithing department, who was at the stern was struck on the forehead by one of the dog-shores and knocked senseless to the ground, while one of the shipwrights, named Richard Hoare, was struck on the back of the head with tremendous force by one of the timbers, and rendered insensible to the blow. The latter, who is a single man, was at once removed to the London Inn, opposite, where Mr. Pridham, surgeon, attended him, and he now lies with little hope of recovery. Mr. Melton was removed to his house, where it was ascertained that his injuries were not of so serious a character, and under skilful medical treatment, it is thought he will soon recover. About a dozen men who were assisting with the launch had a narrow escape from similar injuries.”<sup>302</sup>

Thankfully, a week later, both injured men were said to be “going on favourably.”<sup>303</sup>

Rogers' lists her as of 222 tons, and built in 1859 by R. Johnson & Son<sup>304</sup>. Robert Johnson died in 1855 and evidence from primary sources suggests that John Johnson stopped using Johnson & Son at that point, commencing trading in his own name. Rogers continues to list vessels attributed to R. Johnson & Son or, more worryingly, just R. Johnson, up until 1862. These listings appear anachronistic, but without knowing their source it is difficult to interpret them.

### **Feb 1860, schooner *Jehu*, 162 tons N.M., 210 tons O.M.**

“On Thursday last [23 February], the schooner *Jehu*, built for Mr. N. Smith, of Brixham, was launched from the ship-yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-water. The launch was a perfectly successful one, and when afloat, the proportions of the new schooner were much admired by nautical men. She is 210 O.M., and 162 tons N.M.; will be commanded by Captain John Smith; and is intended for the fruit trade.”<sup>305</sup>

Rogers attributes the 1860 schooner *Jehu* to R. Johnson (even though he died in 1855), giving it as 150 tons<sup>306</sup>

### **Jul 1860, smack *Kate*, 90 tons**

“The inhabitants of Bideford have this week witnessed two launches from the shipbuilding yard of

300 “Bideford” Western Times 3 September 1859 p7 c4

301 p3 c5

302 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 3 September 1859 p7 c4

303 “Bideford” Exeter Flying Post 8 September 1859 p5 c3

304 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

305 “Ship Launch” North Devon Journal 1 March 1860 p5 c2

306 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30



## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Mr. John Johnson, East-the-Water. The first, on Tuesday evening [3 July], was a smack, about 90 tons burden, named *Kate* ; she was built for Mr. Jago, of Hayle, Cornwall, and is intended for the coasting trade.” . . . “Both vessels reflect great credit on the taste and skill of the builder.”<sup>307</sup> See below for the second launch, which was that of the *Tirsah*.

### **Jul 1860, schooner *Tirsah*, 140 tons**

“The inhabitants of Bideford have this week witnessed two launches from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. John Johnson, East-the-Water.” . . . “On Wednesday [4 July], shortly after six o'clock, a schooner, of remarkably good figure and build, about 140 tons register, was successfully launched, in the presence of a large crowd of spectators. She received the name of *Tirsah*, and is designed by her owner, Mr. Thomas Richards, of Aberystwith, for the Mediterranean trade. Both vessels reflect great credit on the taste and skill of the builder.”<sup>308</sup> See above for the second launch, which was that of the *Kate*.

### **1861, unidentified clipper-built schooner, 170 tons O.M.**

“At BIDEFORD. A Clipper SCHOONER, of the following dimensions : – Length of keel and forerake, 88 feet; breadth extreme, 20 feet 7 inches; depth in hold, 11 feet 4 inches; 170 tons O.M.; building under special survey for twelve years' class; a handsome model, calculated to be very fast, and carry a good cargo; well adapted for the fruit trade. Can be ready in a few weeks. Apply to the builder, JOHN JOHNSON, Bideford.”<sup>309</sup>

### **1861 smack *Rainbow*, 78 tons O.M., 41 <sup>45</sup>/<sub>100</sub> tons N.M.**

“At BIDEFORD. THE new fast-sailing Smack RAINBOW, classed eight years from 1<sup>st</sup> of next month : – Length of keel and forerake, 58 feet; breadth, 17<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub> feet; depth, 8 feet; 78 tons O.M. and 41 85-100 tons N.NM.; burthen, 75 tons dead weight; a long bottom with two fine ends, shifts and sails without ballast, takes the ground well, sails remarkably fast, and now ready for sea except provisions. Apply to JOHN JOHNSON, Bideford.; building under special survey for twelve years' class; a handsome model, calculated to be very fast, and carry a good cargo; well adapted for the fruit trade. Can be ready in a few weeks. Apply to the builder, JOHN JOHNSON, Bideford.”<sup>310</sup>

### **Jul 1861, clipper-built schooner *Lightning***

'Yesterday [8 July] evening splendid clipper built schooner, the “Lightning,” was launched from Mr. Johnson's *shipyard, East-the-Water*. She is beautiful specimen of naval architecture, and has been purchased by Messrs. Murphy and Balsdon, of this town.’<sup>311</sup>

Rogers appears to quote the news article above, but to have wrongly assumed the Mr. Johnson referred to was R. Johnson (who was already dead)<sup>312</sup>

### **1861, schooner *Baraleel***

Rogers attributes an 1861 schooner named *Baraleel* to “Robt. Johnson & Son” (but, assuming she was Johnson built, then, by this date, John Johnson must have been her builder), but with no further

307 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 7 July 1860 p6 c6

308 “Bideford” Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 7 July 1860 p6 c6

309 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 14 January 1861 p1 c4

310 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 27 June 1861 p1 c1

311 “Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 9 July 1861 p4 c1

312 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

details<sup>313</sup>.

### **1862, barque *Gabriel Toro*, 369 tons**

Rogers attributes the 1862, 369 ton barque *Gabriel Toro* to John Johnson<sup>314</sup>

### **Mar 1862, barque *Copiapo*, 430 tons**

“A beautiful vessel was launched from the building yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-water, on Thursday morning last [20 March]. She was named the Copiopo, and is, we are informed, intended to trade between this country and South America with copper ore. The owners are Messers. Ogilvie and Moore, of London.”<sup>315</sup>

A parallel account in the North Devon Journal gives the additional detail that she was “430 tons burden, O.M., and is intended for the West Coast trade.”<sup>316</sup>

A painting, thought to depict this launch, hangs in the Burton Art Gallery, Bideford.

The Flying Dutchman once carried copper ore from the port of Copiapo, but the trade's preference was for the barque. "The classic copper barque of the mid 19 century was of between 400 and 500 tons – witness the 430-ton Copiapo or the 460-ton Guayacan, both laid down at Bideford in the 1860s and clearly intended for the Chilean run. A wooden hull was almost always preferred. Iron-hulled vessels could be bigger but that was not necessarily an advantage in smaller ports with limited dock facilities on the Pacific coast. Besides, copper ore could have a corrosive effect on iron hulls. Likewise, steamers seldom featured in the copper trade.”<sup>317</sup>

### **Aug 1862, schooner *Catherine*, 180 tons**

"On Monday evening [11 August] a fine schooner, 180 tons burden, was successfully launched from the yard Mr. Johnson, of this town. She was named the Catherine, and is intended for the Mediterranean trade.”<sup>318</sup>

Rogers has her as 186 tons<sup>319</sup>

### **Nov 1862, schooner *Western Star***

“A schooner was this evening (Wednesday [5 November]) launched from the shipyard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water. She received the name of *Western Star*, on entering her destined element.”<sup>320</sup>

See the Feb 1864 launch, from the same yard, of her sister ship, *Eastern Star*, for details of ownership.

Rogers has a 207 ton *Star* (*Eastern Star*), dated 1862<sup>321</sup>. He seems to have confused the name of this

313 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 30

314 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

315 Bideford Weekly Gazette 25 March 1862 p4 c2

316 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 20 March 1862 p8 c2

317 Chris Evans. "Welsh History Month: Why I'm in ore of the copper barque" WalesOnline. 2013.

Online:<http://www.walesonline.co.uk>. Accessed 11 Jul 2016.] The Guayacan was built by Cox, and claimed to be 800 tons burthen in the report of its launch. ["Bideford" 10 July 1863 - Western Times p8 c5

318 "Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 August 1862 p4 c2

319 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

320 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 6 November 1862 p5 c1

321 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

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vessel with that of her sister ship. The builder he gives is also wrong, for Mr. Johnson here referred to could only have been John Johnson, his father having already died.

### **1862, unidentified brig, 210 tons**

Rogers attributes an 1862 unidentified 210 ton brig to John Johnson<sup>322</sup>.

### **Jun 1863, dandy-rigged *Daring*, c. 110 tons**

'On Wednesday [3 June] there was launched from Mr. Johnson's ship-building yeard, East-the-Water, a vessel of about 110 tons burthen, named the *Daring*. She is what is termed dandy rigged—a sort of rig seldom seen there. She is the property of Mr. Mill [sic Mills], of this town. The weather being fine the spectators were many, and she glided into her destined elements in graceful style, the river being “placid as a summer sea when not a breath of wind flies o'er its surface.”<sup>323</sup>

Advertised for sale at auction on 6 Nov 1865 at the Newfoundland Inn, Bideford, she is described as a 'newly-built dandy-rigged vessel, called the “*Daring*,” Of or belonging to the port of BIDEFORD, Captain T. Lamey, Master, now lying at the Quay, East-the-Water, Bideford. Burthen per Register 62 85/100 tons, CARRIES 106 TONS. Her stores may be inspected by applying on board. For inventories and further particulars, of Mr. Johnson, shipbuilder, Mr. J. N. Mills, merchant, or of Mr. JESSE MILL, auctioneer, Bideford and Appledore. Dated 16<sup>th</sup> October, 1865.<sup>324</sup> 85/100 was 85 superscript with 100 underneath in subscript, but with no line between.

Rogers lists an 1863 Ketch of 48 tons called *Daring* but does not give a builder<sup>325</sup>.

### **Aug 1863, brigantine *Cazique* (or *Cazigine*), c. 192 tons N.M.**

“A fine three-masted brigantine, built by Messrs. Johnson, of East-the-Water, was launched on Saturday evening last [29 August]. She is about 192 tons N. M., and is named the *Cazique*. Soon after starting from the launch she hitched and hung at her forefoot. A hawser was however carried across the river, and being well tightened and with the aid of powerful screws to the stern, the vessel ultimately glided off, to the gratification of a large number of spectators who thronged the bridge and the bank of the river.”<sup>326</sup>

Rogers describes her as a 3 masted barquentine of 192 tons, built by John Johnson<sup>327</sup>

### **Feb 1864, brig, *Eastern Star*, of tonnage 350**

'A fine brig called the “*Eastern Star*,” was launched from Mr. Johnson's yard, about 8 a.m. on Thursday [11 February]. Her owner is the same as that of the “*Western Star*” (launched from here a few months ago,) Mr. Popham, of Exeter; but she hails from London, and is intended to go to South America with machinery, returning with coffee. She is 350 tons burden, 105 ft. in length, 23 1/2 ft. beam, and 13 depth, and her captain is Mr. Nathaniel Burnard, of this town.<sup>328</sup>

The parallel account in the North Devon Journal is identical.<sup>329</sup>

322 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

323 “Launch” *Western Times* 9 June 1863 p7 c4

324 “Port of Bideford, North Devon” *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 17 October 1865 p4 c6

325 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

326 “Ship Launch” *Woolmer's Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* 4 September 1863 p6 c2

327 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

328 “Launch at East-the-Water ” *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 16 February 1864 p4 c1

329 *North Devon Journal* 18 February 1864 p8 c1

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The sister ship, *Western Star*, was launched in Nov 1862, so slightly more than a “few months ago”

The following may also refer to this boat, as the details are attributed to a boat built by Johnsons, but, if so, then she was no longer being used for her originally intended purpose. “102.7 x 23.3 x 12.9,” known voyages include one from Freemantle to Port Adelaide (25 Aug 1878)<sup>330</sup>

### **May 1864, schooner *Uganda*, 137 tons register, 230 tons burden**

'On Friday evening last [6 May], a schooner of 137 tons register and 230 tons burden, being 91 ft. long, 21 ft. beam, 12ft. depth of hold, was launched from Mr. Johnson's yard. She is built for Henry Williams, Esq., of Truro, for the foreign and coasting trade, is under the command of Capt. Bartlett, and classed A1 for 12 years. Name “Uganda.”<sup>331</sup>

Name changed to Maudianne on 21<sup>st</sup> Nov 1919. For substantial additional details, under this latter name, see “J H Bennetts, Penzance, Cornwall”<sup>332</sup> On that site she is given as “133.1 tons; Register Tonnage 111.98”

Rogers lists a 129 ton 1864 schooner called *Uganda* which he attributes to Johnson<sup>333</sup>

### **Aug 1864, schooner *John Farley*, 180 (or 160) tons**

'There was launched from the building yard of Mr. John Johnson on Tuesday evening [2 August], a beautiful little vessel, schooner rigged, of 180 tons burthen and a perfect model of naval architecture. She was admired by all for her symmetrical form, and pronounced by competent judges to be a regular “clipper.” She has been built for James Bishop, Esq., of Looe, Cornwall, is intended for the foreign and coasting trade, and will be commanded by Capt. J. Walters, of Looe, who had a full inspection of her fit-out. As she glided into her proper element she received the name of John Farley from the captain's wife, who performed the ceremony amidst the hurras [sic] of hundreds of spectators. The vessel is a credit not only to the worthy owner and the captain who commands her, but especially to our enterprising townsman, Mr. John Johnson, in whose yard two other ships are laid of 700 tons, both of which are already bespoke.<sup>334</sup>

The Western Times also reported the launch, but gave the tonnage as 160 and her intended purpose “the copper ore trade”<sup>335</sup>

Rogers lists the 1864, John Johnson built schooner John Farley as 99 tons<sup>336</sup>

### **Jan 1865, barque *Beatrice*, 454 tons**

“Yesterday morning [30 January] a splendid barque was successfully launched from the ship-yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, Bideford, and named *Beatrice*, London. She is 454 tons register, and is built for Messrs. Popham and Co. A more splendid launch could not be witnessed, she glided into her destined element slowly and majestically amid the hurrahs of the spectators who lined the new bridge, and from which a splendid view was obtained.”<sup>337</sup>

Another, more local, account, seemingly of the same launch, gives details that are at odds with the

330 “Eastern Star.” Passengers in History. <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/node/924842>, accessed 6/4/2016

331 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 12 May 1864 p4 c3

332 “J H Bennetts, Penzance, Cornwall” Online: <http://freepages.family.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~treevecwll/jhb.htm>  
Accessed 4 Aug 2018

333 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

334 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 9 August 1864 p4 c3

335 “Bideford” Western Times 5 August 1864 p8 c2

336 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 31

337 “Bideford” Western Times 31 January 1865 p3 c2

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above, as well as some additional details: she was 650 tons burden; overall length 148 feet, length of keel was 138 feet, depth 17ft 6 in, beam 27ft 3in; built for S. B. Power, Esq. of London, for use in the South American copper ore trade, being under Capt. Squires, of Paignton. She was classed A.1 for 13 years<sup>338</sup>.

### **1865, *Caradon*, 112 tons**

Rogers attributes the 1865 launched, 112 ton *Caradon* to John Johnson<sup>339</sup>

### **Sep 1865, barque *Florence Danvers*, 600 tons**

As Johnson's tried to launch her she got stuck part way down the slip, had to be shored up to prevent her being strained, and, after two failed attempts to tow her off with a tug, had to wait for the next spring tide. A lengthy account of this is presented in the Bideford Weekly Gazette of 29 August 1865<sup>340</sup>.

The writer observed "It will be remembered that the quay in front of the yard has been extended lately, and in consequence the slip had been laid over a good deal of ground newly made."

The article noted "She was built for the South American copper ore trade," and her value was estimated at £10,000.<sup>341</sup> On the next spring "This very fine barque was launched from Messrs. Johnson's yard yesterday afternoon [4 September]. It was a beautiful and most successful launch, and gave great pleasure to everybody there."<sup>342</sup>

The Western Times recollects the failure of the earlier launch "A barque, named the *Florence Danvers* was launched from the yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on Monday evening. An attempt was made to launch her at the last spring tide, but in consequence of the sinking of some new ground upon which she was built, she would not go off, although a steam tug from Swansea, and battering rams were used. A new launch having been put in, she now went off in prime style amidst the hurrahs of thousands of anxious spectators. She is built for Messrs. Power and Co., of Swansea, is 600 tons burthen, and intended for the copper ore trade."<sup>343</sup>

The Western Morning News also picked up on the launch reporting "On Monday evening [4 September] a large barque, about 600 tons burthen, was successfully launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Johnson, at Bideford. She is named *Florence Danvers*, is built for Messrs. Power and Co., of Swansea, and is intended for the copper ore trade. This is the second vessel of the kind Mr Johnson has built for the same owners within the last eighteen months."<sup>344</sup>

For 1865 Rogers lists *Florence Danvers*, a barque of 492 tons, attributing her to Johnson<sup>345</sup>

### **Jan 1866, smack *Dolphin*, 40 tons**

'Last evening [19 January] the launch the beautifully modelled smack, "*Dolphin*," built by Mr. Johnson of this town for the Deep Sea Fishery Company, was successfully accomplished. There was fine tide, and the launch was a splendid one. As the vessel slipped from her stocks her "christening" was administered by Miss Ley, daughter of J. P. Ley Esq. Chairman of the Company, amid the

338 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 2 February 1865 p5 c3

339 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

340 "Failure at a Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette of 29 August 1865 p4 c1

341 "Failure at a Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette of 29 August 1865 p4 c1

342 "The *Florence Danvers*" Bideford Weekly Gazette 5 September 1865 p4 c3

343 "Bideford" Western Times 8 September 1865 p6 c4

344 "Ship Launch at Bideford" Western Morning News 7 September 1865 p2 c6

345 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

salutes of cannon, the excellent music of the Rifle Corps Band, and the cheers of hundreds who thronged the bridge and quays to witness the sight. In possessing a vessel so well designed and built, and so particularly suited to its work, we congratulate the Deep Sea Fishery Company, and we trust the enterprise of the Directors and Officers will meet with merited success.<sup>346</sup> This was the first trawler built for the Bideford Deep Sea Fishing Company<sup>347</sup>.

On the 24 April 1866 a correspondent to the North Devon Journal noted<sup>348</sup>, concerning the new local fishery company “One smack has been bought already, to be used as a tender, &c., and a new and larger vessel, completely fitted, will be launched at the next spring tides, from Mr. Johnson's yard.”

The North Devon Journal for 1 May 1866<sup>349</sup> noted that “At Mr. Johnson's yard no less than three vessels are on the stocks in a forward state, one of which was expected to be launched yesterday.” Messrs. Cox were doing slightly better with four vessels on the stocks.

Rogers lists her as 40 tons<sup>350</sup>

### **Jun 1866, brig *Zingara*, 330 tons.**

“On Wednesday evening [13 June] a fine modelled brig was launched from the ship-yard of Mr. John Johnson, named *Zingara*, 330 tons builder's measurement. Mr. James Mills, of Bideford, is the owner, and Mr. Perry, of Appledore, master. She is intended for general trade.”<sup>351</sup>

Rogers lists her as 203 tons and attributes her to John Johnson<sup>352</sup>

### **1866, *Annie Harris*, 154 tons**

Rogers lists an 154 ton *Annie Harris*, built in 1866 and attributed to Johnson<sup>353</sup>

### **Oct 1866, schooner, *Naomi*, 126 tons**

“Ship Launch. – On Teusday morning [9 October], a schooner of a beautiful model was launched from Mr. Johnson's yard East-the-Water. Burthen 200 tons ; owner Mr. Balson, of Wear Gifford.”<sup>354</sup>

The above launch appears to be the vessel referred to in this advertisement for sale - 'TO BE SOLD by Private contract, the SCHOONER “NAOMI” of Bideford, now discharging a cargo of gas coal. She was built by Mr. Johnson, at Bideford, in October, 1866, and is metal-fastened from keel to gunwale. She is clipper built, sails very fast, registered 126 tons carries 230 dead weight, and can be moved without ballast. Will be sold cheap. Apply to Mr. J. Balsdon. Monkleigh.’<sup>355</sup>

Rogers lists her as 127 tons and attributes her to John Johnson<sup>356</sup>.

346 “Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 1 May 1866 p4 c2

347 "North Devon Fifty Years Ago" North Devon Journal 20 January 1916 p3 c3

348 “The Bideford Fishery Company” North Devon Journal 24 April 1866 p3 c2

349 “Shipbuilding at Bideford” North Devon Journal 1 May 1866 p2 c4

350 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

351 “Ship Launch” Western Times 15 June 1866 p5 c5

352 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

353 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

354 “Bideford” Western Times 12 October 1866 p8 c5

355 Western Times 17 March 1871 p1 c3

356 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **Mar 1867, schooner *British Gem*, 150-160 tons N.M.**

'On Wednesday evening [20 March], fine and well-built schooner was launched from the yard of Mr. J. Johnson, East-the- Water. The vessel is the property of Mr. Thomas Trewin, member of the Town Council, and this, we understand, is his first venture in this direction. She has been christened the "British Gem," is about 150 tons, and is intended for the general trade.<sup>357</sup>

The parallel account in the North Devon Journal gives her as *British Gem* and provides similar details except it has her "about 160 tons N.M."<sup>358</sup>

Rogers lists her as the 107 ton *British Jem* and attributes her to John Johnson [Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32]

### **May 1867, fishing smack *Morning Star***

"An excellent fishing smack, named the Morning Star, was launched on Thursday evening [2 May] from Mr. Johnson's yard. East-the-Water. It is of good build, well-proportioned, and intended for the fishing trade of Dartmouth."<sup>359</sup> An identical piece was carried in the North Devon Gazette<sup>360</sup>.

Rogers lists her as a 39 ton cutter and attributes her to Johnson<sup>361</sup>.

### **1868, *Elite*, 214 tons**

Rogers lists the 1868 launch of the 214 ton *Elite*, attributing her to Johnson<sup>362</sup>

### **Jan 1868, barque *G. A. Preston*, 350 tons**

On the 14 January 1868 the local press reported the launch, from the yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, 'On Wednesday last' (8 January), of the "G. A. Preston," a well-built and beautifully-modelled barque of 350 tons, christened by Miss Balch. The vessel had been purchased by Captain Pring and others, of Brixham, who intended to use her for general trade, however, on leaving the slip, the vessel listed sideways, and violently ran into the bridge, with force sufficient to break the "iron plating" [i.e. the parapet], and to cause other damage costing nearly £30. The vessel escaped more lightly, sustaining no serious injury, but it was an alarming moment for both those on board, as well as those spectating from the bridge and quay<sup>363</sup>. Johnson found himself in court, with damages awarded against him<sup>364</sup>.

The Western Times account of the incident suggests the launch gave way on one side and that only £20 of damage was caused. In addition, it notes that she went off full rigged<sup>365</sup>.

### **May 1868, schooner *Busy Bee*, 59 tons**

'A fine-modelled schooner christened "Busy Bee," was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Johnson, East-the-Water, on Tuesday evening last [5 May]. The vessel, which is the property of Mr. J. Popham, of Appledore, is about 100 tons burden.<sup>366</sup>

357 "Launch of a New Schooner" Bideford Weekly Gazette 26 March 1867 p4 c5

358 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 21 March 1867 p8 c2

359 "Launch" North Devon Journal 9 May 1867 p8 c2

360 "Launch" North Devon Gazette 7 May 1867 p4 c3

361 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

362 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

363 "An Unsuccessful Ship Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 14 January 1868 p4 c1

364 Bideford Weekly Gazette 21 July 1868 p4 c4

365 Western Times 10 January 1868 p8 c5

366 "Ship Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 12 May 1868 p4 c4

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Rogers lists her as 59 tons<sup>367</sup>

In October 1881 news arrived in Bideford of the loss of the "Busy Bee, of this port, Captain J. Gammon, of Appledore, with all hands," property of Mr. Popham, of Appledore, and bound for Waterford, from Newport.<sup>368</sup>

### **Nov 1869, barque *Zayda*, 200 (or 224) tons**

'On Friday morning, shortly before daylight [5 November], a splendidly-modelled [sic] barque of 200 tons register was launched from Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard, East-the-Water. The vessel, which is intended for the Brazilian trade, and of which Mr. James Mills, of Bideford, is the owner, glided from the bearings into the water in excellent style, and was christened "Zayda" by Miss Mills, daughter of the proprietor.<sup>369</sup>

Rogers lists her as 224 tons<sup>370</sup>

### **Dec 1869, barque *Zedora*, 480 tons B.M.**

"On Thursday morning last [31 December] fine vessel, tons, named Zedora, was launched from Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard, East-the-water. Mr. J. Mills is the owner, and she is intended for general trading purposes."<sup>371</sup>

"Mr. Johnson, of East-the-water, launched from his shipbuilding yard, on Friday, a barque 480 tons b.m., christened the *Zedora*. Mr. James Mills, of Bideford, is the owner of the vessel, which is intended for general trade."<sup>372</sup>

Rogers lists her as 269 tons<sup>373</sup>

On 11 February 1875, a Barque named "Zedora (John Hodge) was on voyage from Maritius to Adelaide in ballast and a crew of 10, when she was lost off Rottnest, Mewstone Reef." 269 tons (GNT)<sup>374</sup>.

### **Apr 1869, brig *Asteria*, tonnage 224 gross, 211 net, 400 burden.**

'On Wednesday morning [28 April] a fine double top-sail brig, christened the "Asteria," was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. J. Johnson, East-the-water. She is 118 feet in length, 400 tons burden, and is intended for the Brazilian Trade, Mr. Nicholas Smith, of Brixham, being the owner. The vessel, which is a well modelled one of its kind, went off the stocks in capital style, and the morning being fine, the launch was witnessed by a large number of people.<sup>375</sup>

The North Devon Journal account adds "Her tonnage is 400 tons burden, 220 register ; length, 118 feet; 24 feet beam ; and 13 feet deep"<sup>376</sup>.

Rogers lists her as 211 tons<sup>377</sup>.

367 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

368 "The Storm" *North Devon Journal* 27 October 1881 p8 c1

369 "Ship Launch" *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 9 November 1869 p4 c3

370 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

371 *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 5 January 1869 p4 c3

372 "Ship Launch" *North Devon Journal* 7 January 1869 p5 c1

373 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

374 Jan Lettens. *Zedora*. *WreckSite*, 2015. Online: <http://wrecksite.eu/wreck.aspx?53949> Accessed: 20/12/2016

375 "Ship Launch" *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 4 May 1869 p4 c4

376 "Bideford" *North Devon Journal* 29 April 1869 p8 c2

377 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32



Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Online references refer to a Johnson built, 1869-launched, brig called *Asteria*, give tonnage as 224g 211n. 118.2 x 24.2 x 12.9, and known voyages include Mauritius – Port Adelaide (6 Feb 1883) and Newcastle, NSW – Port Adelaide (5 Aug 1882)<sup>378</sup>.

### **1869, smack *Darey*, 99 tons**

Rogers lists an 1869, 99 ton, smack called *Darey*, attributing her to Johnson<sup>379</sup>.

### **1869, barque *Delamere***

'The barque "Delamere" was launched from Mr. Johnson's Shipbuilding yard at Bideford.<sup>380</sup>

### **Oct 1870, brig *Annie Harris*, 156 tons**

'On Wednesday morning [12 October], about seven o'clock, a fine new brigantine, the "Anne Harris," [sic] was skilfully *launched* from Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard, East-the-water. She is a well-built handsomely-modelled vessel of 156 tons register, and has been purchased for general trading by Mr. Harris, of Bristol, who gave her the name of his wife.<sup>381</sup>

Rogers lists her as "*Annie Harris*"<sup>382</sup>

An *Annie Harris* of Bristol turns up in later shipping reports.<sup>383</sup>

### **1870. schooner *Forward*, 131 tons**

Rogers lists an 1870 built, 131 ton, schooner called *Forward* attributed to Johnson<sup>384</sup>

It has not been possible to find any indication of this launch in the press, so, in the light of their being a near identical vessel listed under 1873, it remains possible that they are the same ship, but Rogers' entry for 1870 is due to an incorrect date on a register.

### **Mar 1871, schooner *John Clark*, 194 tons**

"A beautifully modelled schooner of about 176 tons has been launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Johnson, Bideford. She has been built for Mr. Isaac, of Liskeard, and is intended for the copper ore trade. The owner being a teetotaller the usual custom of christening by a bottle of wine was dispensed with and water substituted. The ceremony was performed by the owner's nephew John Clark, after whom she is names the *John Clark*."<sup>385</sup> The launch took place on Tuesday evening [7 March]<sup>386</sup>

The Western Times reports 'A fine looking schooner, of nearly 200 tons burthen, named "John Clark" was launched in admirable style, on Tuesday evening, from Mr. Johnson's yard East-the-Water. The owner, whose name she bears, is Mr John Clark, of Love, Cornwall, who has had several vessels built in this port. She is intended for the copper ore trade, having been transferred to Mr. Isaac, of Liskeard.<sup>387</sup>

378 "Asteria." Passengers in History. <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/node/920355>, accessed 6/4/2016

379 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

380 "August 1869" North Devon Journal 4 September 1919 p7 c4

381 "Ship Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 18 October 1870 p4 c2

382 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

383 e.g. "Shipping Intelligence" Western Daily Press 25 August 1875 p7 c6

384 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

385 "Launch." North Devon Journal 16 March 1871 p6 c2

386 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 9 March 1871 p8 c5

387 "Bideford" Western Times 10 March 1871 p8 c4

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Rogers lists her as 194 tons<sup>388</sup>

### **1871, barque *Aretas*, 248 tons**

Rogers lists an 1871 built, 248 ton, barque called *Aretas*, which he attributes to John Johnson<sup>389</sup>

### **Nov 1871, barque *Astera*, 300 tons**

“A large and handsome barque was launched, fully rigged and coppered, on Tuesday [14 November] from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Johnson, Bideford.”<sup>390</sup>

“A New Barque, named the *Astera*, a handsome vessel of about 300 tons, was launched from Mr. Johnson's ship-building yard on Tuesday morning [14 November] during high water. The launch was a most successful one.”<sup>391</sup>

Rogers lists an 1871, 300 ton, barque *Astera*, launched fully rigged, attributing her to John Johnson<sup>392</sup>

### **Feb 1872, schooner *Choice Fruit*, 125 tons**

“A new schooner, named *Choice Fruit*, 125 tons register, was launched from Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard on Saturday [10 February]. She is intended for general trading purposes and her owner is Mr. Badd ley [sic] of Brixham.”<sup>393</sup>

### **Jun 1872, schooner *Successful*, 127 tons**

“Launch of a Schooner. - On Saturday [22 June] a new schooner. [sic] was launched from Mr. Johnson's yard, East-the-Water. Mr. H. Williams, St Austell, Cornwall, is her owner She is 127 tons register and her name is “Successful.’ [sic]”<sup>394</sup>

### **Jan 1873, schooner *Forward*, 136 tons**

“A schooner, 136 tons register, was launched Thursday [2 January] from Mr. Johnson's yard. She was christened *Forward*, has been purchased by Mr. Pearce, of Brixham, and is intended for the Rio trade.”<sup>395</sup>

The equivalent notice in the *Western Times*<sup>396</sup> gives her owner as “Mr. W. R. Pearce,” and her intended purpose as the “Rio Grand trade.”

Rogers lists an 1873 built, 131 ton, schooner called *Forward* attributed to Johnson<sup>397</sup>

### **Jun 1873, barque, *Aureola/Oreola*, 288 tons**

“A handsome barque has been launched from Mr. Johnson's yard, East-the-Water. Her name is *Oreola*. She is about 450 tons burthen, and her owner is Captn. John Turner, of Northam. The

388 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

389 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

390 “West of England News” *Western Morning News* 17 November 1871 p3 c1

391 “Bideford” *Western Times* 17 November 1871 p8 c4

392 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

393 “Bideford” *Western Times* 12 February 1872 p4 c2

394 “Bideford” *Western Times* 25 June 1872 p5 c4

395 “Bideford” *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette* 10 January 1873 p7 c3

396 “Bideford” *Western Times* 3 January 1873 p8 c3

397 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

launch was witnessed by a large number of spectators.”<sup>398</sup>

On Thursday evening [12 June] a handsome new barque of 450 tons burthen, named Aureola, was launched from Mr. Johnson's Shipbuilding yard, East-the-Water, Bideford. Her owner is Mr. John Turner, of Northam, who has had her built for general trading purposes. The launch, which was a very successful one, was witnessed by many of the inhabitants.”<sup>399</sup>

Rogers lists her at 288 tons<sup>400</sup>

### **1874, brig, *Western Belle*, 239 tons (GRT) 229 (NRT)**

117.2 x 24.9 x 12.6. Built by J Johnson of Bideford. Known voyages include The Bluff, NZ – Port Adelaide (9 Nov 1887)<sup>401</sup>

### **Jun 1874, brigantine *Caroline*, 160 tons**

“Launch of a New Vessel.-- On Monday [15 June] a handsome new three-masted brigantine was launched from Mr. Johnson's yard, East-the-Water. She is 160 tons register, named Caroline, and her owner is Mr. G. W. Baddely, of Brixham.”<sup>402</sup>

Rogers lists her as 158 tons<sup>403</sup>

### **1874, smack *Annie*, 46 tons**

Rogers lists an 1874 built, 46 ton, smack called *Annie* which he attributes to Johnson<sup>404</sup>

### **Apr 1875, three-masted barquentine *May Cory*, 163 tons (NRT)**

“Last evening [7 April] a handsomely-modelled barkentine[sic] was launched from Mr, Johnson's yard at Bideford. She is owned by Mr. J. Sommers James, of Plym-villa, Lairn, and is intended to be employed in the coasting trade for his own cargoes. She glided off in a beautiful manner, and was named May Cory by Miss Cadd, daughter of the Bideford Postmaster. She is classed A 1 13 years at Lloyd's, and is 233 tons builder's measurement. Length 106 $\frac{1}{3}$  feet; breadth, 22-8 feet; depth 11-10 feet; and will be commanded by Captain William Pomery, of Plymouth. An immense concourse of spectators witnessed the launch, and cheered lustil[sic] on the vessel entering the water”<sup>405</sup>. The fractional part of the length given in this article is unclear and could be 1/3, 1/5, or 1/8, the former seeming the more likely.

'On Wednesday a barqueantine was launched from the ship-building yard of Mr. Johnson. The ship is owned by J. James, Esq., Plymouth. She is 300 tons burthen, and is named the “May Cory,” The christening ceremony was performed by Miss Cadd, daughter of our respected Postmaster.”<sup>406</sup>

Attributed to Johnson of Bideford and 163 tons (NRT)<sup>407</sup>

398 “Bideford” Western Times 17 June 1873 p8 c6

399 “Launch of a New Vessel” North Devon Journal 19 June 1873 p8 c1

400 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

401 “Western Belle.” Passengers in History. <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/node/939064>, accessed 6/4/2016

402 “Bideford” Western Times 19 June 1874 p7 c2

403 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

404 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

405 “Mail and Shipping News” Western Morning News 8 April 1875 p3 c7

406 “Bideford” Western Times 13 April 1875 p2 c4

407 Lars Bruzelius. Barquentines. The Maritime History Virtual Archives, 2008. Online:

<http://www.bruzelius.info/Nautica/Ships/Barquentines.html> Accessed: 20-12-2016

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Rogers lists an 1875 built, 163 ton, brigantine called *Mary Cory* which he attributes to Johnson<sup>408</sup>. It is likely that this is the same ship.

Shipping intelligence from the latter 1870s seems to identify both a May Cory and a Mary Cory, the former as brigantine, the latter usually as a schooner. e.g.

- April 1877, Lizard, "Passed West.--Three-mast schooner Mary Cory, of Plymouth"<sup>409</sup>;
- July 1876, Cardiff, arrived "4th—Mary Cory, from Plymouth."<sup>410</sup>;
- Feb 1877, Plymouth, arrived 3<sup>rd</sup> "Mary Cory, schooner, Sargeant, with burnt ore for Newport"<sup>411</sup>;
- Dec 1877, Passed east ,off the Lizard, "threemast brigantine May Cory, of Plymouth"<sup>412</sup>;
- Sep 1878, Arrived Portishead Pier, "May Cory (Bennett), Plymouth"<sup>413</sup>.

These may be the same vessel, but *May Cory* seems the more commonly mentioned, and the name consistently used for the brigantine. The following, from April 1902, would seem to confirm that *May Cory* is correct. The "three masted barquentine May Cory, 135 tons register. Cardiff to Fareham with coal, arrived at Plymouth with the loss of mainmast, mizzen topmast, fore topgallant mast, and sails, and with the rail, stanchions, and bulwarks on the starboard bow smashed in and sails carried away, having been in collision with the Norwegian baque Hamingja, of Lillesan, in ballast." . . . "The May Cory was built in Bideford in 1875, and for some years was owned at Plymouth, but now belongs to Arklow, and her port of registry is Liverpool"<sup>414</sup>

### **Dec 1875, unidentified barque, 420 tons**

"On Wednesday [15 December] a very successful launch took place of a handsome barque (copper bottomed), from the yard of Mr. Johnson, shipbuilder, East-the-Water She is 420 tons burden, the property of Capt. Vinson of Salcombe, and intended for the India trade"<sup>415</sup>

Rogers lists an 1874 built, 439 ton, brigantine called *Caroline* which he attributes to Johnson<sup>416</sup>. It is likely that this is the same ship, but there is no direct equivalent to this launch listed by Rogers.

### **Aug 1876, ketch *Julia*, 100 tons**

'A beautifully modelled ketch was launched for Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard on Tuesday last [8 August]. She is 100 tons burthen, and is owned by Mr. Mac Mahon, of Newport, Mon., and on gracefully gliding into her destined element she received the name of "Julia" from the niece of the owner.'<sup>417</sup>

Rogers states that she was 58 tons, built for Capt. Lamey, and the last ship built by John Johnson<sup>418</sup>. Press reports prove the latter statement to be incorrect, for one further ketch was launched in Dec 1876.

408 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33.

409 "Mail and Shipping News" *Western Morning News* 12 April 1877 p3 c7

410 "Mail and Shipping News" *Western Morning News* 6 July 1876 p3 c8

411 "Mail and Shipping News" *Western Morning News* 5 February 1877 p4 c7

412 "Mail and Shipping News" *Western Morning News* 24 December 1877 p4 c6

413 "Shipping Intelligence" *Western Daily Press* 4 September 1878 p6 c4

414 "Disabled Barquentine at Plymouth" *Western Morning News* 8 April 1902 p5 c3

415 "Bideford" *North Devon Journal* 16 December 1875 p8 c2

416 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

417 "Bideford" *North Devon Journal* 10 August 1876 p8 c1

418 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **Dec 1876, ketch *H F Bolt*, 61 tons**

“A ketch was launched from Mr. Johnson's shipbuilding yard on Tuesday morning last[5 December].”<sup>419</sup>

As the date of the launch of the *H. F. Bolt* is not known beyond it being in 1876, and newspaper reports only identify two ketch launches from Johnson in that year, it seems likely that the anonymous ketch of this press report was the *H. F. Bolt*.

The Shipping and Mercantile Gazette of 26 December 1876<sup>420</sup> carried a table of newly allocated International Code Signals. This includes the code WVCK allocated to the “H. F. Bolt of Bideford,” 61 tons. This is the earliest reference found to the name of this boat in the national press, and is consistent with the vessel only recently having been launched.

Rogers lists an 1876 built, 62 ton, ketch called *H. F. Bolt* which he attributes to John Johnson<sup>421</sup> He lists *H. F. Bolt* before the *Julia*, but this seems purely a matter of alphabetic precedence within the vessels for 1876.

By late December she is no longer “of Bideford” but appeared as “H. F. Bolt, Jewell, Plymouth” when she sailed from Newport<sup>422</sup>

The *H F Bolt* was initially involved in the coasting trade. E.g. In March 1877 the *H F Bolt* arrived at Pill and Kingroad from Kinsail<sup>423</sup>. In May 1877 the *H. F. Bolt*, of Bideford, was sighted, at anchor, of Beachy Head, Sussex<sup>424</sup>. On 3 Oct 1877 the *H. F. Bolt*, of Bideford, departed Swansea, bound for Pont Audemer (Normandy, France)<sup>425</sup>. In September 1878 the *H. F. Bolt* of Bideford passed east off the Lizard, Cornwall<sup>426</sup>. In July 1879 the *H. F. Bolt*, of Bideford, was seen off Swansea and, some days later, passing east off the Lizard, Cornwall<sup>427</sup>. In November 1879 the *H.F. Bolt*, of Bideford, passed east off Prawle Point, in south Devon<sup>428</sup>

From July 1882, however, comes a report that “*H F Bolt*” sailed from Newport, bound for Newfoundland<sup>429</sup>.

In the 1890s she once again appears to be involved in the coasting trade. E.g. on 13 April 1893 the 62 ton, *H. F. Bolt*, of Bideford, sailed from Port Talbot, Swansea, with a cargo of manure<sup>430</sup>. On 18 Oct 1894 the 62 ton *H. F. Bolt*, of Bideford, arrived at North Dock, Swansea, with a cargo of gravel<sup>431</sup>.

In November 1900 the Clovelly lifeboat was called out in a gale and rescued the four man crew of the “*F. H. Bolt*” of Bideford, which had become disabled<sup>432</sup>. Is this a coincidence of name, or does this signify the loss of the Johnson built vessel? If this is the same vessel, then presumably she was salvaged.

419 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 December 1876 p8 c1

420 “International Code of Signals” Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 26 December 1876 p2 c6

421 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 33

422 “Shipping Movements” Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 29 December 1876 p3 c3

423 Western Daily Press 15 March 1877 p6 c6

424 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 8 May 1877 p4 c9 – p5 c1

425 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 4 October 1879 p4 c10

426 South Wales Daily News 21 September 1878 p4 c3

427 South Wales Daily News 2 Jul 1879 p4 c3, 12 July 1879 p4 c3

428 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 22 November 1879 p4 c9

429 Lloyd's List 10 July 1882 p8 c1

430 South Wales Daily News 17 April 1893 p8 c6

431 South Wales Daily Post 19 October 1894 p4 c7

432 Bideford Weekly Gazette 13 November 1900 p2 c4

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

On March 29<sup>th</sup> the "Ketch H. F. Bolt, Fishwick, Bideford" sailed from Sharpness, with a cargo of salt<sup>433</sup>.

In 1905, en-route with a cargo of wheat from Bristol to Barnstaple, she struck the anchor of the hospital ship *Nymphen*, was stove in and sank. "The ketch (captained and owned by Capt. Fishwick, of Appledore), was subsequently raised and taken to Appledore,, with the cargo, which was badly damaged."<sup>434</sup>

In 1920, the ketch named H. F. Bolt, owned by Wm. Fishwick, of Appledore, was damaged in an incident, that cast light on her later use. At Barnstaple County Court, Wm. Fishwick, of Appledore, sought to obtain from the Bideford, Bristol, and Steamship Company ,£40, alleged damages to the ketch H. F. Bolt, of which he was the owner and master. On April 4<sup>th</sup> the ketch H. F. Bolt had arrived at Bideford with coal for Messrs. I. Baker and Son. and berthed a little to the north of the proper discharging wharf (which was, for I. Baker and Son., Brunswick Wharf, East-the-Water). The *Devonia*, owned by the Steamship Company had been berthed to her north, and due to an uneven lay, appears to have slid into the stern of the H. F. Bolt as the tide ebbed<sup>435</sup>.

In February 1831, an obituary for Capt. Wm. Fishwick stated that "For 30 years he sailed the ketch *H. F. Bolt*, one of the last vessels built at Johnson's (now Brunswick Wharf)"<sup>436</sup>

The Mercantile Navy List of 1936 gives her official number as 76713 registered tonnage as 51, and her registered managing owner as Adrian W. Beecham, "Clopton," Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick.

Broken up in 1945, she is said to have been the last ketch to trade without the aid of an engine. Her hulk is still said to lie on the Appledore shore

## Vessels of unknown date

### Surprise, (100 ton schooner or 49 ton smack)

Grahame Farre has suggested that Johnson built a 49 ton smack, called *Surprise*, for Captain James Braund of "Bucksh"[sic Bucks Mill], in which he made the voyage to New Zealand<sup>437</sup>. Farre's account could do with verification, as, from the New Zealand end of the voyage, Captain Braund's granddaughter, Mavis Braund, is on record stating, of her grandfather, that he was born in Bideford to a family that originated from Bucks Mill, and that "In 1857 he bought the 100 ton cutter *Surprise* from England to Auckland."<sup>438</sup> Her statement is potentially reliant on information from Braund's obituary in the *Auckland Star*, which gives the same information, but expresses the date less precisely, as "about forty years ago," i.e. c. 1857<sup>439</sup>.

433 Gloucester Citizen 31 March 1904 p4 c6

434 "The Sinking of an Appledore Ketch" North Devon Journal 29 June 1905 p3 c3

435 Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 15 September 1920 p1 c6

436 Hartland and West Country Chronicle 2 February 1931 p10 c2

437 Roger Banfield. Two Bideford-built schooners of the Nineteenth Century. *Bideford Buzz*. Posted 12 July 2017.

<http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed: 15 Feb 2018

438 "Captain James Braund and his wife Mary." Story. Online: <https://discover.stqry.com/v/5-graves-of-interesting-people/s/3b4316cc-5b9e-4d70-97c8-4d7e939e9e8a> Accessed: 15 Feb 2018

439 "Sudden Death of Captain Braund." *Auckland Star*, Volume 28, Issue 33. 9 February 1897 p5 c4

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

## Re-fitted at the yard

### 1844, schooner *Alice*, 49 tons

“BIDEFORD. THE Schooner ALICE, 49 tons register, carries 73 tons, sails well, of an easy draught of water ; under went extensive repairs in 1844, stands Æ 1\* at Lloyd's. For particulars apply to Captain Richard Yeo, or to Mr. JOHNSON, Shipbuilder, Bideford.”<sup>440</sup> From the prominence of Mr. Johnson's name in the advertisement, it seems likely that he was responsible for the repairs of 1844, though this is not guaranteed to be the case.

### 1848, schooner *Thomas and Nancy*, 97 tons

Registered in Padstow and British built, on 4 Jan 1848 she was “now laying at Mr. Johnson’s ship-building yard, Bideford,” awaiting sale, by auction, on 20 Jan, by Mr. Heard. Details were available from “Mr. THOMAS ELLIS, or Captain RICHARD YEO, Bideford, Mr. William Clibbett, Appledore, or to Mr. Tredwen, Avon-cottage, Padstow, Cornwall.”<sup>441</sup> It seems likely that the ships presence at the ship-yard indicated that Johnson had undertaken work on her.

### Sep 1851, barque *Chamois*, 195 tons

“The barque ‘Chamois,’ Captain Pentreath, master, was launched on Thursday last [11 September], from the yard of Mr. Jonston, shipbuilder, where she was lengthened, and has undergone considerable repairs and alterations. The master treated the men handsomely in the evening of the same day. She is now lying alongside the yard, and looks extremely well.”<sup>442</sup>

“*The Chamois*. – The little ‘Tartar’ towed down this fine bark [sic] on Monday from the yard of Mr. Johnson, builder. She is now lying in the Pool, in company with three other large craft, which make Appledore look very gay.”<sup>443</sup>

The Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle for 1850<sup>444</sup> contains list of those recently passing a voluntary masters examination. It contains one H.C. Pentreath, present or last service being on the *Chamois*, 195 tons.

### 1867, smack *Times*, 80 tons

Of Bideford. Advertised as repaired and re-fitted and ready for immediate use<sup>445</sup>.

### Mar 1870, barque *Lady Gertrude* (formerly *Pace*), 850 tons

In December, 1868 the Austrian barque *Pace* (of Fiume<sup>446</sup>), was wrecked off Westward Ho! The hull was then purchased, whilst still embedded in the Northam Sands<sup>447</sup>. It was only with “considerable difficulty” and “indomitable perseverance” that the *Pace* was recovered and moved to Bideford<sup>448</sup>,

The *Pace* had suffered considerable damaged, but she was restored to nearly new built status, as the

440 Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 19 March 1846 p1 c1

441 “Bideford, Devon” Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 15 January 1848 p1 c2

442 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 18 September 1851 p5 c1

443 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 2 October 1851 p8 c4

444 Nautical Magazine and Naval Chronicle. London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1850. pg 505

445 North Devon Gazette, 17 Sep 1867

446 “A Bideford Vessel on Fire.” Western Times, 13 September 1871. Cited at “Serafino Turcich, died 1868” Mariners and Memorials <https://marinersandmemorials.wordpress.com/serafino-turcich-died-1868/> Accessed:20/12/2016

447 “Ship Launches” Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 March 1870 p4 c2

448 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 25 March 1870 p6 c6

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

A. 1 English barque, *Lady Gertrude*, 850 tons burden<sup>449</sup>.

On 22 March 1870, the local press reported the launch of the *Lady Gertrude* “during the high tides of the past week.” A large number of people having been allowed to inspect the interior of the vessel prior to her launch, and crowds having assembled on the bridge and on the quay to watch the event. She was successfully towed out of Mr. Johnson's dock, East-the-Water, on Friday morning [18 March]<sup>450</sup> A large company were assembled on board, including many from Torrington, friends invited by the owners, Messrs. Johnson, Holwill, and Trewin.<sup>451</sup> some of whom partook of an excellent breakfast on board<sup>452</sup>.

On the same day, and on the following one the Rolle Canal Company's yard and Mr. Waters' yard, in East-the-Water. Also launched vessels<sup>453</sup>.

In 1871 the Lady Gurtrude was once again in trouble, for she was fifty-two days out, and not far from Rio de Janeiro, when her cargo of coal caught light. A passing steamer, responding to hails, evacuated the crew, whilst one of her Majesty's vessels also sought to render assistance. The Lady Gurtrude was scuttled (to extinguish the fire), but subsequently recovered and taken into port<sup>454</sup>.

## Owned by the Johnsons

**1856, brigantine *Wild Flower*, 200 tons**

Built by Johnsons, see entry above for more details.

**1853, schooner, *I'll Try***

Built by Johnson's and owned by them until at least 1861/2. See entry above for more details.

## Metherall, Boat Builder, Torrington Street, c. 1866 till after 1884

### Location of yard

In Torrington Street.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilders

1866 is the approximate date at which James Metherall would later claim his father started his business in East-the-Water<sup>455</sup>.

The 1871 Census has John Metherall, blockmaker, at 40 Torrington Street, aged 53

In July 1873 a bideford draper took “Metterall, blockmaker, Bideford,” to court to retrieve £4 9s.

449 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 25 March 1870 p6 c6

450 “Ship Launches” Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 March 1870 p4 c2

451 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 25 March 1870 p6 c6

452 “Ship Launches” Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 March 1870 p4 c2

453 “Ship Launches” Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 March 1870 p4 c2

454 “A Bideford Vessel on Fire.” Western Times, 13 September 1871. Cited at “Serafino Turcich, died 1868” Mariners and Memorials <https://marinersandmemorials.wordpress.com/serafino-turcich-died-1868/> Accessed:20/12/2016

455 Bideford Weekly Gazette 1 July 1884 p4 c5



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Id.. Metherall was ordered to pay 4s a month<sup>456</sup>.

Listed in the 1878-79 White's History, Gazetteer & Directory as John Metherall, a block maker [for ships' rigging]. Address given as Torrington Street.

The 1881 Census has John Menesall [sic], aged 63, blockmaker, at 18 Torrington Street (apparently the same property that was no. 40 in 1871 and may have changed its number again since then).

In 1884 John's son James, took over the business, following the death of his father. A notice published by James Metherall, informed the public that he had succeeded to his father's East-the-Water based business of "Boat Building, Block Making, Turning &c.," which his late father had carried on for eighteen years, and soliciting their continued support<sup>457</sup>.

In September 1890 one James Alfred Metherall, of Bideford, blockmaker, fled the town to avoid a summons for neglecting his daughter Beatrice. He was apprehended in Hull, convicted and accepted a sentence of two months with hard labour, rather than pay a fine<sup>458</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

None identified.

## Boats

None identified.

## Henry Morgan Restarick's yard, Barnstaple Street, 1877-86

### Location of the yard

Restarick's yard followed on from Johnson's on the site now known as Brunswick Wharf.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilder

Restarick's home town was Axminster, but he moved to Bridport as a young man<sup>459</sup>.

After coming to Bideford he worked in the offices of Messrs Cox and Son, shipbuilders, at Cleavehouses.<sup>460</sup>

He married Miss Louttid.<sup>461</sup>

In 1877 Restarick launch the first vessel from his East-the-Water yard.

In 1878 one "Mr. H. M. Restarick, Bideford," was named, in the sale of Cox's yard, as the point of contact for viewing it<sup>462</sup>.

456 "Bideford County Court" North Devon Journal 17 July 1873 p2 c5

457 "Boat Building, Block Making, Turning &c., James Metherall" Bideford Weekly Gazette 1 July 1884 p4 c5

458 "Neglect of a Child at Bideford" Bideford Weekly Gazette p5 c3

459 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

460 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

461 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

462 Gloucester Journal 23 February 1878 p4 c3

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

In the 1879 local elections the four available places on the town council were contested by six candidates, equally split between teetotallers under Restarick and pro-drinkers under Mr. Ascott of the New Inn. On the announcement of the results, scuffles broke out and the police were summoned. Restarick's suggestion, that the rates could be reduced by 'doing away with the public houses' was particularly poorly received by some of his audience<sup>463</sup>.

After the failure of Cox and Son., Restarick secured the Rope-walk site, going into business as a rope-maker. That business was relinquished about 1896-7, and the site disposed of to Messrs. Cooper and Co. who built a Collar Works upon it.<sup>464</sup>

In May 1880 the North Devon Journal reported the Bideford Local Board's concern that a new building had been constructed by Restarick in East-the-Water, without having first submitted plans to them<sup>465</sup>.

Around 1883 Restarick's rope-making business was at the centre of the so-called "Battle of the Posts,"<sup>466</sup> in which the public disputed the right of Restarick's business to use some newly installed posts along the strand, as the posts interfered with traffic<sup>467</sup>. These posts, clearly shown on the 1888 Ordnance Survey mapping, were eventually removed only some time after Restarick's death.

In June 1887, when, to celebrate Victoria's jubilee, Restarick erected three commemorative arches on the strand, the local press regretted to report that one 'was defaced by an inscription, harking back to the "Battle of the Posts", "These posts must stand, not one shall be removed."<sup>468</sup>

In 1889 he was listed in Kelly's directory as a ropemaker<sup>469</sup>.

In February 1893, it was announced that Henry Morgan Restarick had decided to convert his rope-making business into a limited company, to allow for expansion, re-equipping, and product diversification. The share capital, of £12,000, was in the form of 2,400 £5 shares. Restarick himself would invest heavily, and the venture was backed by various influential parties as directors<sup>470</sup>.

A Wesleyan for many years, he pursued his evangelical work independently in later years, first at Orchard Hill, then, with Postmaster Mr. Cadd, in a loft at Queen's Wharf. When the congregation grew out of the loft, this led to the erection of The Bethel, in Torrington Street<sup>471</sup>.

His last year was, according to the report of his death<sup>472</sup>, marked by physical suffering that rendered him petulant with his fellow Poor Law Guardian, but prior to that he had done sterling work in their midst for twenty years. "He championed the cause of the Workhouse inmates with zeal and untiring energy, and secured an amelioration of their lot—more privileges, and a few luxuries, and pleaded continuously for a more human and humane regime." Restarick had also been "an Alderman, Chairman of the School Board, Justice of the Peace, Bridge Feoffee, a Governor of the Grammar School, a Poor Stock Trustee, a representative of Bideford on the Port Sanitary Authority, and on the Board of the Taw and Torridge Fishing Conservators." He joined the School Board in 1886, became chairman in 1889, and was re-elected continually to the time of his death. In 1876 he was

463 "Town History." Bideford Town Council. Online:<http://www.bideford-tc.gov.uk/your-history-and-our-friends/bideford-history/town-history?start=3>, accessed 21/3/2016

464 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

465 North Devon Journal 13 May 1880 p8 c2

466 "The Battle of the Posts at Bideford" North Devon Journal 14 October 1886 p8 c1

467 W. Ascott. Random Notes on Old Bideford and District. Bideford:Gazette, 1953, pg 9;

468 "Jubilee Rejoicings At Bideford" Bideford Weekly Gazette 23 June 1887

469 "Bideford" Kelly's Directory, 1889

470 "Bideford and North Devon Rope and Twine Company" Exeter Flying Post 4 February 1893 p6 c2

471 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

472 "Death of Alderman Restarick J. P." Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

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returned at the head of the poll for the Town Council. He served two terms as mayor (1889-90, 1890-91). Restarick championed temperance reform, and was prominent in the Independent Order of Rechabites (a friendly society that promoted total abstinence from alcoholic beverages).

At the time of his death, around new year 1899, Alderman Restarick was residing in Bridgeland Street. His death had been very sudden, such that a reporter commented “one can scarcely realise that the strenuous man, who was battling for what he thought the right against hopeless odds just a week since, should now be struck down.” Restarick was remembered as a fighter for causes, but, the reporter suggested “whatever enterprise he undertook, he had no unworthy personal interest to serve, no desire to get a pull for his own ultimate gain”<sup>473</sup>

Restarick was laid to rest in a vault in the Old Church Cemetery, next to his wife<sup>474</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

To celebrate the successful launch of the steam yacht built for Lord Alfred Paget from Mr. Restarick's yard last week, a dinner was given to all those employed in her construction, to the number of 110, Saturday last at the Bath-rooms, Westward Ho. The dinner was a substantial one, and thoroughly enjoyed by the guests<sup>475</sup>.

In July 1883 the Local Government Board wrote to the Local Board concerning Mr. Restarick's two projections at his yard. Restarick responded that his projections were only “two junks for a launch, where he launched vessels there” and, after offering to remove them if the Local Board considered them a nuisance, he added “it was only twelve feet out and rested on the sand it did not cause any obstruction to the navigation of the river or to the water going through the arches.” The Local Board supported him in this, and resolved to respond accordingly<sup>476</sup>.

At Michaelmas of 1886 Restarick quit the yard, the premises having been let to Mr. J. Baker, but Restarick went on to complete Fair Fanny, which was launched in September 1886, after which the press reported him “very busy” clearing out the yard<sup>477</sup>.

On 13 October 1886 the remaining materials of the yard (“A large quantity of firewood, oak sidings, oak and elm plank, pine and other board, yellow and white deals, a quantity of edging and slabs, also a quantity of teak cuttings &c.”) were auctioned off<sup>478</sup>.

It is possible that, at the time Restarick's yard closed, a further schooner had been laid down, for, in 1887, Restarick's former foreman, Mr. John Whitfield, built the sailing barges *Jubilee* and *Queen*, making use of “floors and frames laid down for a schooner which had never been completed.” Whitfield had taken over the empty yard at Cleave Houses, formerly occupied by Cox<sup>479</sup>.

## Ships launched

### Nov 1877, smack *Kitten*, 57 tons

The first vessel built by Mr. Restarick was a smack for the North Sea Fishing, launched on Thursday (8 November), for her owners, the London merchants Messrs. Hewett and Company. With

473 “Death of Alderman Restarick J. P.” Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

474 “Death of Alderman Restarick J. P.” Bideford Weekly Gazette 3 January 1899 p5 c5-6

475 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 11 July 1878 p2 c5

476 “Bideford” Western Times 3 July 1883 Exeter P6 c5

477 Bideford Weekly Gazette. 21 Sep 1886 p4 c6

478 Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 October 1886 p4 c2

479 Alison Grant and Roger Hughes, North Devon Barges, North Devon Museum Trust, 1975, 15

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the said of a small bottle of milk, one Miss Whitefield, she was christened *Kitten*<sup>480</sup>.

Rogers has her at 57 tons<sup>481</sup>.

### **1877, others? (possibly *Alarm, Alert, Fairy*)**

As the capacity of the Restarick's yard allowed for three vessels to be developed simultaneously, it is likely that the *Kitten* was not the only one launched at about this time. Rogers' list provides three candidates, all ketches of a tonnage typical of later output, all listed under 1877, the *Alarm* and the *Fairy*, both 59 tons, and the 58 ton *Alert*<sup>482</sup>.

### **May 1878, schooner *Mona*, 120 (or 64) tons**

On Thursday (2 May) the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Restarick saw the launch of the schooner *Mona*, of about 120 tons register, owned by a Liverpool firm, and intended for the Irish coasting trade<sup>483</sup>.

Rogers has her at 64 tons<sup>484</sup>.

### **1878, screw schooner *Amy*, 165 tons**

The *Amy* was built, at the yard of Mr. H. M. Restarick, for Lord Alfred Paget, and launched "with the customary bottle of wine." She was 109'6" and schooner rigged, with two inverted direct acting engines, nominal 40 horsepower, and register 165 tons. It had local specialists brought in for the painting, upholstery and marblwork<sup>485</sup>.

The work on the *Amy* resulted in its painter taking Restarick to court for failing to pay for work done, a case which attracted interest when Lord Alfred Paget was called to appear in the court<sup>486</sup>.

Rogers has her at 84 tons and notes that she was re-name *Jupiter*<sup>487</sup>.

### **1878, ketch *Bonnie Boys*, 58 tons**

Rogers lists this vessel, and the four 58 ton ketches that follow without a builder<sup>488</sup>. From comments in the press release for a later launch, it seems likely that these were some of the eight built for Messrs. R. Hewet and Co., of Trinity Square, London prior to the 7 April 1881<sup>489</sup>.

### **1878, ketch *Butterfly*, 58 tons**

See notes for *Bonnie Boys* above<sup>490</sup>.

### **1878, ketch *Curbit*, 58 tons**

See notes for *Bonnie Boys* above<sup>491</sup>.

480 "Launch" North Devon Journal 29 November 1877 p8 c2

481 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 34

482 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 34

483 North Devon Journal, 9 May 1878

484 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 34

485 "Launch of a Steam Yacht." North Devon Journal, 4 July 1878, p6 c2

486 "Bideford County Court" North Devon Journal 13 February 1879 p2 c2-4

487 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 34

488 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 34

489 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

490 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

491 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

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**1879, ketch *Industry*, 58 tons**

See notes for *Bonnie Boys* above<sup>492</sup>.

**1879, ketch *Sincerity*, 58 tons**

See notes for *Bonnie Boys* above<sup>493</sup>.

**1879, yawl-yacht, 12 tons**

length 36ft., width 11ft., depth 6 ft.<sup>494</sup>

**Jan 1879, barquette *Winifred*, 200 tons (192n)**

Restarik's yard launch the *Winifred*, Barquette of tonnage 200g 192n. 119.2x24.1x10.8. Known voyages include Mauritius to Port Adelaide (14 Jan 1881) and Hobart Town to Port Adelaide (2 March 1880)<sup>495</sup>.

**1880, ketch *Alacrity*, 59 tons**

Rogers lists this vessel without a builder<sup>496</sup>. From comments in the press release for a later launch, it seems likely that it was one of the eight built for Messrs. R. Hewet and Co., of Trinity Square, London prior to the 7 April 1881<sup>497</sup>.

**1880, ketch *Pilot*, 59 tons**

Rogers lists this vessel without a builder<sup>498</sup>. From comments in the press release for a later launch, it seems likely that it was one of the eight built for Messrs. R. Hewet and Co., of Trinity Square, London prior to the 7 April 1881<sup>499</sup>.

**c. 1880, unidentified ketch, 58 tons**

Implied to make up the number of vessels known to be launched for Messrs. R. Hewet and Co., of Trinity Square, London prior to the 7 April 1881<sup>500</sup>.

**Apr 1881, unidentified ketch, 58 tons**

“On Friday evening (1 April) a beautifully modelled ketch, 58 tons register was launched from the ship-building yard of Mr. H. M. Restarick, East-the-River. She was built for Messrs. R. Hewet and Co., of Trinity Square, London, and is intended for the North Sea Fisheries. This is the ninth vessel of the same description Mr. Restarick has built for the same firm, and we understand that he has received orders for more.”<sup>501</sup>

492 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

493 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

494 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 34

495 “Winifred.” *Passengers in History*. <http://passengersinhistory.sa.gov.au/node/939330>, Accessed 6/4/2016

496 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 35

497 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

498 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 35

499 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

500 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

501 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 7 April 1881 p8 c1

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### **1881, ketch, auxiliary screw *Bessie Clark*, 44 tons**

Rogers has the 1881 built, 44 ton, ketch with auxillary screw, *Bessie Clark*, attributed to Restarick<sup>502</sup>  
In WW2 she served as a barrage balloon vessel<sup>503</sup>

### **1882, ketch *Clyde***

Inkerman Rogers attributes to Restarick in 1882<sup>504</sup> (for the suggestion that the *Clyde* might have become the *Bjarn Olafsson*<sup>505</sup>, see below under 1884).

### **Aug 1883, smack (mission ship) *Cholmondeley*, 64.37 tons**

“Launch of a Mission Vessel. --On Tuesday evening (21 August) the smack *Cholmondeley* was launched from Mr. H.M. Restarick's shipbuilding yard, East-the-Water. This vessel has been built for the Thames Church Mission (Deep Sea Fisherman's Branch), and to-day a Dedication Service will be held commending the vessel to the care and blessing of Him to whose service she is devoted. Most of the clergy of the town and the neighbourhood will take part in the service. The *Cholmondeley* is a beautiful craft, 70ft. 6in. long by 19ft. 3in. wide. Her registered tonnage is 64.37.”<sup>506</sup>

By November 1887, when the *Cholmondeley* returned to Yarmouth, having incurred damage in a storm and lost her second mate, she was one of eight “medical Mission vessels in the service of The Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen amongst the North Sea fleets.” The report of this incident stressed the especial need for the Mission's ships to operate in the stormy season, as “the presence of a cruising dispensary is especially necessary in the stormy season.”<sup>507</sup>

During the first world war she was converted into a Q-ship, and, as the *George L. Muir*, served from July 1917 until the cessation of the war (11/11/1918)<sup>508</sup>.

Duncan Fielder's History of Bideford suggests that a 64 ton vessel, called *Bridesmaid*, built by Restarick was used as a Q-ship, but I can find no record of such a vessel (either in the press reports of Restarick's launches, or an entire-site search of the [www.naval-history.net](http://www.naval-history.net)), so *Bridesmaid* may have been an interim name used for this vessel<sup>509</sup>.

### **Apr 1884, smack (mission ship) *Edward Auriol***

‘On Saturday evening [12 April] the smack “Albert Auriol” [sic] was successfully launched from Mr. H. M. Restarick's shipbuilding yard. She is intended for the work of the Thames Church Mission in the North Sea. A dedication service was held on Easter Monday on board the vessel, preceded by special services on Easter Sunday at the Bethel, when prayer was offered for the success of the Mission, with particular reference to the “Albert Auriol” [sic] It will be remembered that a short time ago Mr. Restarick built a smack named the “Cholmondeley,” also for the Thames

502 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 35

503 “Bessie Clarke; 30-3095 ” Braunton Museum. Ehive.

Online:<https://ehive.com/collections/4561/objects/167486/bessie-clarke> Accessed:28 Nov 2017

504 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 34

505 *The Mariner's Mirror* Volume 37, 1951 - Issue 3 p247 c1

506 “Bideford” *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette Daily Telegrams* 23 August 1883 p3 c5

507 *North Devon Journal* 3 November 1887 p2 c1

508 “World War 1 at Sea - Ships of the Royal Navy, 1914-1919; WARSHIPS, Part 2, Old Sloops to Assault Ships”

(Based on "British Warships 1914-1919" by F J Dittmar & J J Colledge) The National Museum Royal Navy.

Online: <http://www.naval-history.net/WW1NavyBritishShips-Dittmar3WarshipsB.htm> Accessed:24 Jun 2017

509 Duncan Fielder, *History of Bideford*, 1985, 81

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Church Mission. The event aroused in this locality considerable interest in the Mission, and the news of the launching of another vessel intended for the “gospel fleet” will be received with much satisfaction.<sup>510</sup> In various publications the name of this vessel appears to have been given as Edward Auriot or Edward Auriol. Edward Auriol appears to be correct, as the Reading Mercury of 31 May 1884<sup>511</sup> states “In response to invitations issued by the council of the Thames Church Mission a large company assembled on Saturday on the new mission-smack Edward Auriol, which is intended for use in the special mission to deep sea fishermen. Furthermore, the Thames Church Mission used that name in their advertising of the time, in 1888 requesting funds to support the work of 'the new steam launch Edward Auriol'<sup>512</sup>, a ship that was seemingly a replacement for Restarick's, as it is attributed to the builder Edwin Clark and was delivered in 1888<sup>513</sup>. The boat may have been named after Edward-Auriol Hay Drummond, D.D., dean of Booking, Prebendary of York and Southwell, and chaplain to the King<sup>514</sup>.

### 1884, unidentified vessel (Clulov?)

At the time of the launch of the *Edward Auriol* there appears to have been another vessel being built speculatively in the yard, for the following advertisement appeared in July 1884 – “SAFE & PROFITABLE INVESTMENT is now offered SHARES OF £25 EACH May be taken in the NEW VESSEL In the Ship Building Yard, East-the-Water. It will be well secured, and is estimated to pay 20 TO 25 PER CENT. Full particulars may be had on application to H. M. RESTARICK, Bideford.”<sup>515</sup>

The Denmark Shiplist for 1950 includes one 103 ton gross, 159 ton (Ladning m. m.), Bjørn Olafsson (ex. Clulov), said to have been built in Bideford by H. M. Restarick in 1884<sup>516</sup>. This may be this vessel.

It has been suggested that the *Bjarn Olafsson* might be a re-named *Clyde*, but it seems more likely to be this unnamed vessel, as the *Clyde* was launched in 1882<sup>517</sup>.

### May 1885, smack *Sparkling Nellie*

'Mr. H. M. Restarick, shipbuilder, has a contract for five smacks designed for the Columbia fishing fleet. The fleet is to have its headquarters at Great Yarmouth, and is intended for the supply of the Columbia market which has been started mainly through the exertions of Baroness Burdett-Coutts, with the object of providing cheap fresh fish for the poor of North and East London. The first of these five smacks was launched on Friday evening last [15 May]. She takes the name “Sparkling Nellie,” and was christened by Miss Whitefield. She is built along the lines of a model with which Mr. Restarick has taken first at Yarmouth Exhibition and other prizes, and she is one of the “tightest” and prettiest little vessels we ever saw, The building of the other four smacks will be pushed forward as rapidly as possible, as is also the erection of another vessel for the Thames

510 “Thames Church Mission” North Devon Journal 17 April 1884 p6 c2

511 “Condensed Intelligence” Reading Mercury 31 May 1884 p7 c2

512 “Thames Church Mission” St James's Gazette 14 December 1888 p14 c3

513 A. M. Langford. “Steamboat-builders of Brimscombe” (part 1).” Pages 33-41 in Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology Journal. Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology, 1987. Pg 35.

514 John Burke. A General and Heraldic Dictionary of the Peerage and Baronetage of the British Empire, Volume 2. H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1833 Pg 41.

515 Bideford Weekly Gazette 1 July 1884 p4 c1

516 Danmarks Skibsliste 1950 [Denmark Ship List 1950]. Ministeiet for Handel, Industri og nSofart [Ministry of Trade, Industry, and Sea]. Kobenhaven [Copenhagen]: Ministeiet for Handel, Industri og nSofart .1950. Page 76.

517 The Mariner's Mirror Volume 37, 1951 - Issue 3 p247 c1

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Church Mission.<sup>518</sup>

### **1885, unidentified smack ?**

Basil Greenhill mentions in 1951 that the smack *Keflavik*, listed in Danmarks Skibsliste for 1850, was Bideford built, and it has since been suggested this might have been one of several unidentified smacks produced at this time<sup>519</sup>.

### **1885, smack (mission ship) *Sir Edward Birkbeck*, 88 tons**

Launched on 12th August 1885 and dedicated a week later (17 Aug) by the Bishop of Exeter. She was built for the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen. The Western Times carried a lengthy account of the proceedings, including the following details of the vessel: "The smack measures 80 feet long by about twenty feet wide, with a registered tonnage of 88 tons, the total cost of building and fitting being about £2,000."<sup>520</sup>

The *Sir Edward Birbeck* was one of seven ships sunk by *UC-75* on 3 May 1917, and its wreck lays 16 miles SE of the Stag Rocks, between Rocky Bay and Yougnal, Co. Cork<sup>521</sup>.

"SM *UC-75* was a German Type UC II minelaying submarine or U-boat in the German Imperial Navy (German: Kaiserliche Marine) during World War I."<sup>522</sup>

### **Feb 1886, smack *Maud of Scotland***

'About seven o'clock on Saturday morning [20 February] another fishing smack was successfully launched from Mr. Restarick's shipbuilding yard, East-the-Water. She is a very stiff and shapely little craft and was christened "Maud of Scotland." She has been built for Mr. Burdett-Coutts (husband of the Baroness Burdett-Coutts), and is intended for the North Sea Fisheries.'<sup>523</sup>

### **1886, ketch *Johnny Toole*, 84 tons**

Claimed to have been built by H. M. Restarick, Bideford in 1886, the *Johnny Toole* was sunk by German submarine U 105 on 29 Apr 1918, en route from Newport to Ballycotton<sup>524</sup>. The Newport vessel appears to be that mentioned in the Western Times of 28 December 1912<sup>525</sup>, a ketch named *Johnny Toole*, captained by C. J. Harris of Appledore, driven ashore at Queen Anne's Battery, Plymouth, and, being cast ashore again and holed during attempts to re-float her. At the time she was laden with concrete and thought to be lost, but this Bideford built lass was of stern stuff and after unloading her and patching the hole she was returned to service<sup>526</sup>.

### **Sep 1886, smack *Fair Fanny*, c. 99 tons**

"A new smack, christened "Fair Fanny," was launched from Mr. Restarick's Yard, East-the-Water, Tuesday evening last [16 September]. Miss Ethelinda Chubb, of Grenville House, performed the christening ceremony, wishing success to the Fair Fanny. The vessel is built for W. Burdett Coutts,

518 "Shipbuilding" North Devon Journal 21 May 1885 p8 c1

519 The Mariner's Mirror Volume 37, 1951 - Issue 3 p247 c1

520 "The North Sea Mission: Dedication of a Vessel at Bideford" Western Times 19 August 1885 p3 c2

521 Wrecks of Co. Cork. <http://www.irishwrecksonline.net/Lists/CorkListG.htm>, accessed 1 Jun 2016

522 SM *UC-75*. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SM\\_UC-75](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/SM_UC-75), accessed 1 Jun 2016

523 "Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 23 February 1886 p8 c1

524 "Johnny Toole" uboat.net, Online:[http://uboat.net/wwi/ships\\_hit/3190.html](http://uboat.net/wwi/ships_hit/3190.html) Accessed 17 July 2017

525 "Gallant Rescue at Plymouth" Western Times 28 December 1912 p4 c4

526 "Johnny O'toole" Submerged. Online: <https://www.submerged.co.uk/gotaway-toole.php> Accessed 17 July 2017



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Esq.”<sup>527</sup>

'Another launch took place from Mr. Restarick's yard, East the Water, last week, and this will probably be the last, as the yard has been let to another tenant, and Mr. Restarick has to clear out by the 29<sup>th</sup> of the month. The vessel was a double masted smack, of nearly ninety nine tons register, and is intended for the North Sea Fishery, having been built for W. Burdett Coutts, Esq. She was christened “Fair Fanny” by Miss Ethelinda Chubb (of Miss Yeo's School).<sup>528</sup>

This is the last ship known to have been launched from East-the-Water.

There is a local Bideford tradition that the last boat launch from East-the-Water collided with the bridge, causing minimal damage. If it happened, there is no mention of it here. Many years earlier, in 1868, the launch of the G. A. Preston from Johnson's yard had hit the bridge<sup>529</sup>, but that was due to a subsidence of the slipway superstructure, presumably on the bridge-ward side. Nothing similar was reported in 1886 and, on balance, it seems unlikely that anything happened. It seems probable, moreover, that the tradition of an incident in 1868 could have arisen from a simple typographic error, the transposition of 86 for 68, thereafter being indiscriminately propagated.

### **Erroneous attributed launches (Orchis, Ortona, Orleigh, Orenie)**

Duncan Fielder's History of Bideford states that “The Restarrick Yard won a contract to build four standardised cargo ships of 482 tons each,” Orchis in 1918, followed by Ortona, Orleigh and Orenie<sup>530</sup>. The contract was actually won by R Cock & Sons, to which firm these vessels should have been attributed.

## **Re-fitted or repaired by Restarick**

### **1884, Helstone**

In a case brought for compensation, regarding partial loss of a cargo of clay, because the Helstone, owner Mr. Finch, was not ready to sail with the spring tide. The defendant stated that “the agreement was made in the yard of Mr. Restarick, shipbuilder, of Bideford, who had the vessel in his hands undergoing repairs”<sup>531</sup>.

## **Parkin's Boat-building Yard, Torrington Street, c. 1847? to 1858**

### **Location of the yard**

Prior to its use as a Board School, the school premises near the bottom of Torrington Lane, opposite the Blacksmith's Arms, was known as “Parken-house and Boat Building yards.”<sup>532</sup>

527 Bideford Weekly Gazette. 21 Sep 1886 p4 c6

528 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 23 September 1886 p8 c3]. The account in the Bideford Weekly Gazette adds that the premises had been let to Mr. J. Baker. [21 September 1886 p4 c6

529 “An Unsuccessful Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 14 January 1868 p4 c1; Bideford Weekly Gazette 21 July 1868 p4 c4

530 Duncan Fielder, History of Bideford, 1985, 81

531 “Claim for Damages to Cargo” North Devon Journal 19 October 1884 p8 c5-6

532 “Bideford” Western Times 15 February 1876 p6 c4

## Biographical background on the boat-builder

In about 1847, according to a later notice, George Edward Parkin began building boats in Bideford<sup>533</sup>.

In July 1852, when a seven-year-old lad, son of Mr. Dannell, hatter, of Bideford, got into difficulties whilst bathing east-the-water, and was in danger of being swept away, “Mr. George Parkin, boat-builder” . . . “immediately jumped from the wall at the back of his house, and rescued him from a watery grave.”<sup>534</sup>

In 1857, when the *True Blue* came second in its class at the Regatta, her entrant is given as “Parkin, Bideford.”<sup>535</sup> The account goes on to state “The *True Blue* up to that period had easily beaten all comers, and her owned, Mr. Parkin, the boat builder, East-the-Water, felt severely defeated.” A re-match was promptly called, in which the *True Blue* soundly triumphed.

In October 1857 George was sworn in as one of Bideford’s special constables, along with his neighbour from across the street, Robert Barrow, and several others<sup>536</sup>.

In April 1858, Edward Henry Parkin, son of Mr. G. Edward Parkin, boat-builder, Bideford, married, at Swansea, Ellen, second daughter of Captain Davison, master of the bark [sic] *Gratitude*, of Sunderland<sup>537</sup>. Another source gives Ellen’s father’s name as Samuel Davison<sup>538</sup>.

In August 1858 the following appeared in the North Devon Journal, “BOAT BUILDING YARD , *APPLEDORE*. GEORGE EDWARD PARKIN Respectfully informs his Friends and the Public, that he HAS REMOVED from *Bideford* (where he has carried on his Business for the past eleven years) to *Appledore*, in the Yard lately occupied by Mr.Cox, Shipbuilder.

G. E. P. trusts that the reputation he has acquired as a Boat Builder, will ensure him a continuance of the support he has hitherto received, and for which he tenders grateful thanks>

SHIP’S BOATS, WHERRIES, Four or Six-Oared GIGS Carvel-built, with Steam Timbers, at the shortest notice.” [“Boat Building Yard” North Devon Journal 26 August 1858 p4 c4]

In April 1859 a “G. E. Parkin, boat-builder, Appledore” submitted a lengthy account of attempts to save men from a recent wreck, using it to point out the wants of current lifeboats and solicit for support to for him to produce a better one<sup>539</sup>.

In December 1860 Parkin’s prompt intervention helped save an elderly man named Reed who had become stuck up to his waist in mud between the Sand Hills and Crow Ridge, with the tide flowing fast<sup>540</sup>.

It seems that Mr. Parkin made something of a habit of life-saving, as a press report from Nov 1862 observed. When, on 12 November (“Wednesday last”), a little boy, Thomas Berry, son of Thomas Berry, a pilot, fell into the water, Mr. G. E. Parkin, boat-builder, heard the cries of distress and springing off the slip, rushed to the rescue of the drowning boy. Leaping beyond the ground swell, which lashed the sea wall, he grabbed the child just as he was sinking beneath a boat. The reporter goes on to suggest “it should be mentioned to his honour that this is the twenty-sixth life he has

533 “Boat Building Yard” North Devon Journal 26 August 1858 p4 c4

534 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 15 July 1852 p8 c4

535 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 16 July 1857 p5 c4-5

536 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 15 October 1857 p5 c4

537 “Marriages” North Devon Journal 22 April 1858 p8 c5

538 “Marriages” Western Times 24 April 1858 p5 c4

539 North Devon Journal 7 April 1859 p8 c1-2; “Appledorian to the Rescue” North Devon Journal 30 August 1859 p4 c5

540 “Braunton” North Devon Journal 27 December 1860 p5 c3

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rescued from a watery grave. Surely such a man is entitled to the gold medal of the Royal Humane Society.”<sup>541</sup>

In Nov 1862 it was announced that “Mr. G. E. Parkin,” of Appledore, had secured a contract for “another pilot boat of large dimensions for the port of Cardiff.”<sup>542</sup>

In August 1865 “Mr. Parkin, Sen., boat builder of Appledore” and “Mr. Parkin, jun., of Instow” took place in an amateur pair-oared boat race.”<sup>543</sup>

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> August 1871 Parkin jumping into Swansea Dock and saving the life of Matthew Dowley, this being his twenty ninth rescue, it earned recognition by the Royal Humane Society. His active participation in several dangerous lifeboat rescues was, no-doubt, also taken into account in making the award. Additional names can be put to some of those he rescued: Reed, Rudd, George Isaac, Cawell, Stanbury, William Johns, Thomas Jenkins<sup>544</sup>.

A more detailed account of Parkin’s life-saving activities may be found in the letter he wrote to the local press, published in August 1879<sup>545</sup>, in which he defended himself against public accusation that he knew nothing about lifesaving.

## Incidents relating to the yard

In June 1853 a particularly informative advertisement appeared, for “Mr. G. E. Parking” “East-the-Water, Bideford” offering to build boats, and listing some of his particular prize-winners he had built (see section on boats built, below). The advertisement contained the offer “G. E. P. will engage to build Four or Six-oared Gigs for persons requiring them, to compete with any other boat of the same dimensions; and will further agree, should the Boat not beat her competitors to take her back and build another in her place.” He also mentions the use of “his improved method for building CARVEL BOATS, with Steamed Timbers, extending from one Gunwale to the other, being much lighter and stronger than the old plan of crooked and naturally grown Timbers.” It is clear, from the advertisement, that a range of boats were kept for sale or hire and that they made ships boats, yacht gigs, carvel or clench built boats, ship's lifeboats, as well as repairing boats and making oars and spars<sup>546</sup>.

In Sept 1856 Parkin was in trouble for blocking one of East-the-Water's access points to the shore with timber and boats. “Clear the Way.--Mr. John Johnson, ship-builder, and Mr. George E. Parkin, boat-builder, were summoned for landing boats and timber on the road leading from Torrington old road to the beach.--The complaint, which was preferred by Richard Balch, assistant surveyor of the highway, was considered sufficient to justify the bench in fining Mr. Johnson 13s. 9d., and Mr. Parkin 8s. 9d., including expenses.”<sup>547</sup>. A parallel account has “Mr. John Johnson, shipbuilder, and Mr. Perkin, boat-builder,” charged with obstructing the highway with “boats, timber, &c. in connexion with the building yards, East-the-Water.” with Mr Johnson fined 10s and Mr Perkin 5s<sup>548</sup>.

In Dec 1856 the following advertisement appeared. “APPRENTICE WANTED. GEORGE EDWARD PARKIN, BOAT BUILDER, *Bideford*, has a Vacancy for an Apprentice; a steady lad of about

541 “Appledore” North Devon Journal 13 November 1862 p8 c5

542 “Appledore” North Devon Journal 13 November 1862 p8 c5

543 “Barnstaple” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 18 August 1865 p6 c2

544 “Appledorian to the Rescue” North Devon Journal 30 August 1945 p4 c5

545 “Original Correspondence” North Devon Journal 21 August 1879 p5 c5

546 North Devon Journal 9 June 1853 p1 c5

547 “Bideford” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 13 September 1856 p8 c3

548 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 11 September 1856 p5 c5

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14 years of age. Terms may be known on application.”<sup>549</sup>

In 1856 this apparent overspill of materials and advertisement for extra staff both point to a healthy business.

In February 1858 the North Devon Journal carried the following advertisement “BOATS FOR SALE. GEORGE EDWARD PARKIN, Boat Builder, East-the-Water, *Bideford*, has on Sale the following Boats, &c.:— One GOOD SECOND-HAND BOAT, Oak-built, Copper fastened, with sails and oars complete. She will accommodate eight or ten persons. A SIX-OARED GIG, 30 feet in length, with Oars and all Requisites complete. A TWO OARED GIG, 28 feet in length. A GOOD SECOND-HAND BARGE, about 20 Tons burthen. A NEW 30 FT. WERRY, very light and handsome, calculated for Summer use. Plank 3-16th of an inch thick in length. *Life and Ships' Boats built to order in any Style.*”<sup>550</sup>

## Boats built (in East-the-Water)

### 1852, pilot-boat, *Recovery*

In response to a false report that he had built the Appledore pilot boat *Teaser*, which had upset and killed four people, Geo. Edward Parkin, concerned that the “rumour is calculated to injure me in business,” wrote “November 1st, 1851, I agreed with W. Yeo, Esq., of Appledore, to build the pilot-boat *Recovery*, which picked up the survivors. I engaged to build her to the satisfaction of Mr. Joseph Cox, the pilot, and if she did not give him satisfaction to take her back, and build another. February, 5th, 1852, the boat was built and tried by the Appledore pilots, and Cox declared she sailed like a mirr [sic<sup>551</sup>], and was a perfect beauty.”<sup>552</sup>

### bef. Aug 1852, pilot-boat, *True Blue*

“First Class Six-oared Prize Pilot Boat, 'TRUE BLUE,' 30ft. in Length, 4ft. 8in. Beam, and 2 ft. in Depth, with Lug and Mizzen Sails. This boat was built by Parkin and Son, for the Instow Regatta held July 14<sup>th</sup>, 1852, and won the PURSE OF SOVERIGNES. She ran under Canvas, from Bideford Bridge to Barnstaple Bridge, a distance of 12 miles, in the short space of One Hour; and is one of the Fastest and Dryest Pilot Boats ever rowed or sailed within the limits of the port.”<sup>553</sup>

### bef. Jun 1853, gig, *Hero*

“Two-oared Prize Gig, 'HERO,' 20ft. in Length, and 3ft. 3in Beam, built by Parkin and Son, and carried off the SILVER CUP, from the sand Regatta”<sup>554</sup>

### bef. Jun 1853, gig, *Heroine*

A further Parkin-built boat, *Heroine*, featured in the Instow regatta of 1853<sup>555</sup>

549 North Devon Journal 25 December 1856 p8 c4

550 North Devon Journal 25 February 1858 p1 c5

551 Possibly a “Mur,” a colloquial name for a seabird

552 “To the Editor of the ‘North Devon Journal’” North Devon Journal 25 December 1856 p5 c4

553 North Devon Journal 9 June 1853 p1 c5

554 North Devon Journal 9 June 1853 p1 c5

555 “Instow” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 9 July 1853 p8 c4

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## Boats Built (in Appledore)

Parkin continued to build boats in a new yard at Appledore

### Jun 1863, pilot-boat *Surprize*, 25 tons

“On Tuesday last [2 June], there was launched from the building-yard of Mr. George Parkin, of Appledore, a pilot-boat, for the port of Cardiff, named the *Surprize*. She is 25 tons burthen, and owned by Messrs. Symons and Wright. It is gratifying to find that the workmanship and beauty of Mr. Parkin’s boats gives general satisfaction.”<sup>556</sup>

## William Taylor's yard, Cross Parks, ?-1803 till 1831-?

### Location of the yard

Appears to have been near Crosspark Rock, possibly adjacent to, or preceding, the pottery there. Several other ship-building sites are often referred to as at Crosspark, but these have all been identified as further south than Crosspark Rock and all seem reasonably accounted for by other occupants during this period.

### Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

Given the date of his marriage, William was probably born between 1770 and 1780, in which case the following register entries from Littleham may refer to his parents' marriage and his baptism (though the family may be too poor, and it may be better to seek his birth nearer to Exeter.

- 19 Apr 1767, Littleham William Taylor, Labourer, & Susanna Witheridge, Spinster, both OTP, Anglican<sup>557</sup>;
- 13 Mar 1774, Littleham, baptism of William ye son of William & Susannah Taylor<sup>558</sup>.

On 27 November 1801 William Taylor, ship builder, of the parish of Bideford, in the county of Devon, married Christian Nicholas, now residing within the parish of St Kerrian in the city of Exeter, by license, at St Petrock, Exeter. Witnessed by Elizabeth Nichols, Thomas Nicholas, and William Nichols. (the variations in the spelling of Nichols/Nicholas follow the original).

On 1 January 1803, the Bideford registers record the christening of John Nichols, son of William Taylor and his wife Christian.

In 1804 a return to the Admiralty recorded that the yard had 5 shipwrights and 9 apprentices<sup>559</sup>. The return lists Richard Chapman, George Crocker, John Evans, William Taylor and Henry Tucker as based in Bideford.

The Bideford parish registers list the christening, on 10 Dec 1806, of Catharine, daughter of William Taylor and Christian, his wife<sup>560</sup>.

The Bideford parish registers list the christening, on 25 July 1808, of Hannah Maria, daughter of

556 “Appledore” North Devon Journal 4 June 1863 p8 c2

557 South West Heritage Trust 1176A/PR/1/6

558 South West Heritage Trust 1176A/PR/1/3

559 Nix, 1991, page 394, citing 'An Account showing the Number of Shipwrights, and also Apprentices Employed in the Merchant Yards of Great Britain: According to the Returns of the Admiralty, in House of Commons Sessional Accounts: Papers and Accounts. VIII, 1805, (193), pp. 467 sqq

560 South West Heritage Trust 799A/PR/1/6

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William Taylor and Christian, his wife<sup>561</sup>.

Trewman's Exeter Flying Post of 16 November 1809 carried notice, dated Bideford, October 18, 1809, that the ship-building business, formerly carried on in Bideford and under the firm of Wheaton and Taylor, had expired and been dissolved on 25 Sept 1809, and from that point the business would be continued on by William Taylor alone<sup>562</sup>. It is currently unknown at what point this partnership had formed, but any vessel prior to this point, and attributed to William Taylor, may possibly have been built by Wheaton & Taylor, with Taylor signing off the vessel.

The Bideford Parish registers list the christening, on 31 Aug 1810, of William, son of William Taylor and his wife Christian

Listed in Pigot's Trade Directory of 1822-23 under Ship-builders. Address given as East the Water.

In 1826 the eldest daughter of "Taylor Esq., ship-builder, of Bideford" married Captain Callespey [sic=Gillespie] of the ship *Cosmo*, of Bristol<sup>563</sup>. The marriage was on 29 Jun 1829, and the daughter was Catharine. The *Cosmo* was likely to have been the ship of that name built by Taylor in 1825 and later registered in Bristol, on which Captain Gillespie served as master until at least 7 April 1830<sup>564</sup>.

In November 1827 it was reported that "the Saltern's Rock, Taylor" had arrived, at Bideford, "from St-John's, New Brunswick, with a cargo of pine timber, &c."<sup>565</sup> The brig had not long been launched (see below), so this was, perhaps, her maiden voyage.

On 24 Feb 1828 the Parish Registers of Bideford list the marriage of John Mollard to Maria Taylor, in the presence of William Taylor and Catherine Taylor. William Taylor's son-in-law, courted, then married, the builder's daughter during the construction of the *Saltern's Rock*, and Taylor gave his daughter a half share in the vessel as her dowry<sup>566</sup>.

In May 1828 the brig *Salterns Rock*, Taylor master, arrived at Halifax (Canada), from Cork, carrying eighty passengers<sup>567</sup>.

On 9 September 1828, Mary, "daughter of Mr. Taylor, shipbuilder, Bideford" died on board the *Cosmo*, "on her passage from New York, bound for Bristol." Mary was accompanying her husband, Capt. Gillispie, the ship's master<sup>568</sup>.

William Taylor is listed in Pigot's 1830 Directory for Devonshire, under Ship Builders, as "Taylor William, East the Water."

It is far from clear what happened to William Taylor beyond the 1826-30 period. But Devon Archives and Local Studies Service hold an Estate Duty Office Will, dated 1833, for one William Taylor of Exter.

A William Taylor was buried at Bideford on 18 August 1823 and there was a burial of a William Taylor, aged 82, in Bideford on 15 Nov 1834.

561 South West Heritage Trust 799A/PR/1/6

562 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 16 November 1809 p4 c4

563 "Marriages" Bristol Mirror 22 April 1826 p3 c5

564 Grahame E Farr Editor. Records of Bristol Ships, 1800-1838 (vessels Over 150 Tons). Bristol: Bristol Record Society, Vol. 15. 1950. pg 116

565 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 29 November 1827 p4 c2

566 Barbara Dorey. "Re: Mollard from Crowan, Cornwall" 21 March 2004.

Online:<http://www.genealogy.com/forum/surnames/topics/mollard/7/> Accessed:30 Dec 2016

567 Lucille H. Campey. Atlantic Canada's Irish Immigrants: A Fish and Timber Story. Dundurn, 2016

568 "Died" Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 1 November 1828 p3 c3

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Beyond about 1831 the *Saltern's Rock* was captained by John Mollard.

The 1841 Census has a Richard Taylor, yeoman, with wife Christian, aged 55, at Caddsdwn, Bideford.

## Incidents relating to the yard

Several of the ships attributed to Taylor in recognised works appear on an Admiralty document reproduced by Inkerman Rogers that suggests that Chapman of Cleave Houses was engaged to build them. Further review of the original source evidence would be desirable, as, in some cases it contradicts Rogers' evidence and is reasonable proof that Taylor was the eventual builder (for example see the entries for *Comet* and *Beelzebub* below). If Rogers reproduction is accurate then it may indicate that Chapman was either sub-contracting work to other Torridge based builders, or overseeing their work.

## Ships launched

### 1803, Brigantine *Pillhead*, 117 tons

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### 1805, Brigantine *Miners*, 84 tons

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### 1806, Brigantine *Underhill*, 84 tons

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### Apr 1807, 'Thai' Class fire-ship, *HMS Comet*, 444 tons

William Taylor built "at least one 'Thai' Class fire-ship, the '*Comet*.' Length 108 feet, 9 inches" (fairly similar to the *Kathleen* and *May* in length). "She was ordered in 1805, her keel laid in 1806, and launched on 25 April 1807. In 1808 she was reclassified as a sixth-rate sloop and sold in 1815." Fireships, whilst built for that specific purpose, were fully armed, so able to function as a fighting ship until needed as a 'bomb'.

"'*Comet*' carried sixteen 24-pounders or 32-pounders on the upper deck, two 9-pounders and eight 18-pounders on the spar deck and two 9-pounders on the forecastle." Internally she contained a series of vertical box-like compartments, effectively chimneys to facilitate the fire once it was set. Skilful and courageous sailors were needed to position the vessel close enough to the enemy to be effective, especially as most of ship's crew, of about fifty were taken off, leaving the captain and his skeleton crew to engage with the enemy, before fleeing the inferno in a rowing boat<sup>569</sup>.

A display in Appledore Maritime Museum has her at 444 tons.

Various plans for the *Comet* (1807) are available at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich<sup>570</sup>. These attribute the ship to Taylor, for example one which has the title "Plan of the Lowerdeck for the Fire Ship building by Mr Taylor of Biddeford by Contract"<sup>571</sup>. They also hold "A 24 page

569 Roger Sugar. "Shipbuilding in Bideford." <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/history/shipbuilding-in-bideford/> accessed 6/4/2016

570 Online:<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/85349.html> Accessed:30 Dec 2016

571 Online:<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/85350.html> Accessed 26 Feb 2017

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contract for Comet (1807), a Fireship (later Sloop), between the Admiralty and William Taylor of Bideford in the County of Devon. Signed and dated 26 September 1805. Box container ADMB0774<sup>572</sup>.

### **Oct 1807, brig sloop, *HMS Carnation*, 383 tons**

“Saturday was launched at Bideford, the *Carnation* sloop of war, pierced for 18 guns<sup>573</sup>”

Launched on 3rd October 1807, 18 gun Cruizer class Brig Sloop, *Carnation* “Of 382 tons she was one of the most numerous type of warship in the age of sail. Unfortunately, she was captured by the French exactly one year later, on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 1808.”<sup>574</sup>

A display in Appledore Maritime Museum has her at 383 tons.

### **1808, schooner *Traveller*, 102 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1809, brigantine *Marys*, 106 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1811, brig *Kangaroo*, 210 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1812, cruizer-class brig-sloop *HMS Fairy*, 386 tons**

*HMS Fairy* was a Cruizer-class brig-sloop, built by William Taylor at Bideford and launched in 1812<sup>575</sup>, the account of her action on the Potomac in 1814 makes interesting reading<sup>576</sup>.

A display in Appledore Maritime Museum gives her as 386 tons.

### **1812, schooner *Fame*, 130 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1812, sloop *Venus*, 58 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1813, brigantine *HMS Mastiff*, 184 tons**

Appledore Maritime Museum possess a copy of an Admiralty draft, dated 15th December 1812, of *HMS Mastiff* built for them by William Taylor, 1813. There is also a very fine model of the ship on display there. The display notes that this was 184 tons, a ten gun Confounder-class brig (one of 89 in that class), commissioned on 25th September 1813.

572 Online:<http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/459226.html#gh5rLCdRO7O7MQvD.99> Accessed 26 Feb 2017

573 “London, Friday, Oct 9” Bath Chronicle and Weekly Gazette 15 October 1807 p1 c1

574 Roger Sugar, “Shipbuilding in Bideford.” <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/history/shipbuilding-in-bideford/> accessed 6/4/2016

575 Wikipedia, citing Winfield, Rif (2008). *British Warships in the Age of Sail 1793–1817: Design, Construction, Careers and Fates*. Seaforth. ISBN 1-86176-246-1.

576 see the Wikipedia entry [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS\\_Fairy\\_%281812%29](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/HMS_Fairy_%281812%29)



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The initial cost to her builders was £3,707<sup>577</sup>

From the display in Appledore Maritime Museum it is evident that the Mastiff served as a survey vessel from August 1825 until 1850. At which time, a later press report identifies her as a steamer. Though it seems unlikely that she had been built as such.

An article in the Exeter and Plymouth Gazette of 4 September 1847<sup>578</sup> suggests she had a narrow escape during her survey work, it reads as follows: “Letters from the Orkney Isles announce the probable loss of the government steamer Mastiff, Commander Lieut. A. B. Beecher, off the island of Sandor, 12 miles from Kirkwall Bay. She has for some time past been engaged in the surveys of the coast, in the vicinity of the Orkneys. On the morning of Tuesday, while lying at anchor of the island of Sandor, a gale came on, and she was driven from her anchor and carried ashore, a violent sea beating over her for many hours afterwards. The whole of the crew and officers were saved. Very little chance remains of preserving the steamer, which is full of water, and has sustained considerable injury. The Mastiff was an old vessel, having been launched at Bideford in the year 1813 ; she was nearly 200 tons burden.”

The Maritime Museum display indicates that by January 1851 she had been broken up.

### **1813, bomb vessel HMS Belzebug/Beelzebug/Belsebug, 334 tons**

A Bomb vessel called Belzebug, 10, was built in Bideford and completed in June 1813, at a total cost (hull and sails) of £9761. She was retired in 1820 when she was broken up. She is the only ship with a name like Beelzebug listed on the Sailing Navies web site. Her captain was William Kempthorne.

One William Taylor of Bideford “partitioned the Navy Board in January 1814 concerning his losses in the building of the bomb vessel call the Belzebug of 325 tons” Taylor claimed that, through his inexperience of this type of vessel and the quantity of wood required, his estimate had been too small, and he had therefore been required to sink fifteen hundred pounds in completing her, for which he was appealing for reimbursement<sup>579</sup>.

The National Maritime Museum's collections contain a “28 page contract for Beelzebug (1813), a Bomb Vessel, between the Admiralty and William Taylor of Biddeford in the county of Devon, signed and dated 3 August 1812”<sup>580</sup>.

A 10 gun bomb vessel, built by William Taylor, Bideford, acquired on 30/7/1813 and broken up on 23/9/1820. As built 102ft 8in 84ft 2 ¼ inches x 12ft 11¼ inches. 334m. Was in action at the bombardment of Algiers on 27/8/1816. Bomb vessels were specially adapted to carry mortars for bombardment of cliff-top forts<sup>581</sup>.

A ship named 'Beelzebug' features on Maggie Curtis' Bideford Port Memorial plaques (on her explanatory web site for that work, she indicates that the vessel is 'The “Beelzebug” Warship built at Crosspark, East the Water for the Navy”<sup>582</sup>.

577 Rif Winfield. *British Warships in the Age of Sail 1793 – 1817*. Seaforth, 2014. No page numbers

578 “Loss of H.M. Steamer Mastiff” Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 4 September 1847 p7 c5

579 B. F. Hills. “Shipbuilding for the Royal Navy at Sandwich in the eighteenth Century.” Pages 195-230 in *Archaeologia Cantiana*, Volume 94, Kent Archaeological Society. 1979. Pages 225-226.

580 Catalogue entry for object id. ADT0010 , online <http://collections.rmg.co.uk> Accessed:3 Jul 2016.

581 Rif Winfield. *British Warships in the Age of Sail 1817-1863: Design, Construction, Careers and Fates*. Seaforth, 2014

582 Maggie Curtis. “The Making of the Bideford Port Memorial Ceramic Trade Maps.” <http://www.maggiecurtis.co.uk/trade-maps>. Accessed 6/4/2016

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

A display in Appledore Maritime Museum gives her name as Belsebub.

Inkerman Rogers' entries for the Beelzebub are confused. In an annex he has a ship of that name supposedly provided to the Navy by Robert Chapman in 1802, with no corresponding entry in his list of ships. In his list of ships he has an entry, in sequence between two entries for 1760, but giving the one entry two dates, 1760 and 1800<sup>583</sup>. From Rogers' accompanying statement, "one among other warships built at Crosspark Rock, East-the-Water," it seems clear that this vessel was one of those built by William Taylor in the early 1800s, for the 18<sup>th</sup> C. name of the rock was Salterns Rock. William Taylor is not known to have built more than one Beelzebub, and that is the subject of this entry. Subsequent references to the Beelzebub having dated from 1760 are, therefore, likely to be based on Roger's erroneous entry.

### **1813, Brigantine *Pacific*, 135 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1814, Brigantine *Aurora*, 154 tons**

A display at Appledore Maritime Museum identifies a brigantine called Aurora, of 154 tons, as being launched in 1814 by William Taylor. A newspaper report from that year confirms that he had a vessel of that sort of size on the stocks - "A VESSEL now building, and nearly ready to launch, of the following dimensions, viz. Length of keel 64 feet, on deck 73 feet 6 inches, breadth 22 feet 6 inches, depth 13 feet 10 inches, will register 156 tons. This vessel is built with seasoned timber, of large dimensions, and unusually thick plank. For particulars apply to Mr. W. Taylor, Ship Builder, Bideford, Devon ; or to J. Lachlan, Broker, 32, Great Alie-st. Goodman's Fields<sup>584</sup>.

### **1814, Schooner *Elizabeth*, 116 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1814, Schooner *Enterprize*, 125 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1814, sixth rate sloop *Falmouth***

The National Maritime Museum holds "A 34 page contract for Falmouth (1814), a 20-gun Sixth Rate Sloop, between the Admiralty and Mr William Taylor of Bideford in the County of Devon. Signed and dated 24 December 1812."<sup>585</sup>

The *Falmouth* (or more correctly an imagined representation of her) features prominently on the various of the stamps of Tristan da Cunha, for she was used to garrison the island<sup>586</sup>.

### **1815, Schooner *Dove*, 84 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1815, Brig *Jane*, 168 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

583 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 23

584 "Private Contract" *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser*. London. 23 May 1814 p4 c3 & 20 June 1814 p4 c2

585 <http://collections.rmg.co.uk/collections/objects/459243.html#GgZ8SbjrSZdO2eve.99> Accessed 26 Feb 2017

586 "Tristan da Cunha Discovery & Settlement 1506 – 1817" *Tristan da Cunha Website*. Online:

<http://www.tristandc.com/history1506-1817.php> Accessed 16 Sep 2018

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

**1815, unidentified vessel, 82 tons**

“For Sale, and nearly ready for Launching, A VESSEL, Of the following dimensions:”  
Length of Keel for Tonnage, 53ft 5in; Extreme breadth, 19ft 13½in; Depth in hold 10ft 2½in. “And admeasures 82 tons 67-94.” The advertisement continued to mention another vessel, which may be the Rover, below. Then completes with “For particulars apply to Mr. William Taylor, ship-builder, Bideford. Dated February 10th, 1815.”<sup>587</sup>

**1815, Brigantine Rover, 101 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum.

Possibly the vessel advertised with another unidentified one in February (see above) the advertisement reading “Also to be SOLD, A VESSEL, about 100 tons register, which can be completed in two months. For particulars apply to Mr. William Taylor, ship-builder, Bideford. Dated February 10th, 1815.”<sup>588</sup>

**1818, Sloop Venus, 53 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1819, Brigantine Hazard, 53 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1820, Sloop Margaret, 54 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1820, Sloop Swiss, 34 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1820, Schooner Two Brothers, 87 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1821, Sloop Perseverance, 49 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1822, Schooner Fracess Ann, 101 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1822, Sloop Rising Sun, 39 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1823, yawl Fly, 60 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

587 “For Sale” Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 16 February 1815 p1 c4

588 “For Sale” Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 16 February 1815 p1 c4

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **1824, brig *Friends*, 122 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **Jun 1824, brig *Rocket*, 212 tons (burthen)**

On 12 June 1824 (“Saturday last”) “Mr. Taylor, Bideford,” launched the 212-ton burthen brig *Rocket*, John Stanley, master, for Newman, Hunt, and Co. of London, who intended to use her for the Newfoundland and Mediterranean trade<sup>589</sup>.

### **Feb 1825, ketch *James Lyon*, 137 tons**

“On the 7th Instant [of February], a fine vessel the *James Lyon*, of Bristol, of 137 Tons, was launched full rigged, from Mr. Taylor's Yard, East-the-Water Bideford ; she went off in fine style, and glided majestically down the river, and now lies at the Pool of Appledore, waiting for a fair wind, for a foreign voyage.”<sup>590</sup>

A display in Appledore Maritime Museum identifies this as a Ketch

### **c. Sep 1825, ship *Cosmo*, 409 tons**

The considerable history for the ship given, in Farr's *Records of Bristol Ships*, includes the ships measurements and description, from her registration on 28 Sept 1825: “409 <sup>21</sup>/<sub>94</sub> tons; length 113 ' 9"; breadth (below) 28' 4½"; depth 19' 4". 1 deck; 3 masts; ship rig; square stern; false galleries; bust head.” and “Owners : Edward Bevan, merchant, 22 shares ; William Cross, merchant, 21 shares; and Francis Holladay, mariner, 21 shares; all of Bristol”<sup>591</sup>. On 4 March 1826, the Bristol Mercury reported that “the *Cosmo*, which sailed from this port on 4<sup>th</sup> December, arrived off Sierra Leone in the short space of 17 days, the quickest passage ever known. She is shortly expected to return, when this fine vessel is to be immediately engaged as a regular trader to New York.”<sup>592</sup> On 24 July 1841 the Bristol Mercury carried a report that she had made New York to Bristol in 17 days<sup>593</sup>.

The Bristol Mercury of 12 April 1828 stated that the *Cosmo* (Gillespie), on her last [regular New York] voyage made Bristol to New York in 25 days.

In 1840 she was changed to a barque rig, and in 1855 she was sold to a Sunderland Ship-owner, and registered there<sup>594</sup>, before another spell on the Bristol register, from which she disappeared between 1859 and 1860<sup>595</sup>. With her new rigging she made the journey from New York to Bristol in 17 days in 1841<sup>596</sup>.

### **1826, brig *Salus*, 169 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

589 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 17 June 1824 p4 c3

590 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 11 February 1825 p4 c2

591 Grahame E Farr Editor. Records of Bristol Ships, 1800-1838 (vessels Over 150 Tons). Bristol: Bristol Record Society, Vol. 15. 1950. pg 116

592 Farr, 1950. Op. Cit. pg117

593 Farr, 1950. Op. Cit. pg 118

594 Farr, 1950. Op. Cit. pg 117

595 Farr, 1950. Op. Cit. pg118

596 Farr, 1950. Op. Cit. pg116

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

**1826, brig *Three Sisters*, 88 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**1826, brig *William & Elizabeth*, 79 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**Jan 1827, brig *Drake*, 150 tons**

“On Tuesday morning [16 January] the Brig Drake was launched from Mr. Taylor's Yard, Crosspark, burthen 150 tons. She is a very elegant vessel, and likely to be a swift sailer. She is built for Cap. W. Cook, late of the Lumber Brig Apollo, intended for the Coasting and Foreign Trade.”<sup>597</sup>

A display in the North Devon Museum Trust's Maritime Museum at Appledore gives her as 95 tons, but lacks any citation for this information.

Rogers' attributes does not identify her builder, but gives her at 164 tons<sup>598</sup>.

**1827, smack *Gurnet*, 15 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

**May 1827, brig *Saltern's Rock*, 142 tons**

“On the 26th Instant [26 May], was launched from the Yard of Mr. W. Taylor, a fine Brig named Saltern's Rock, burthen about 200 Tons. She was completely rigged and ready for sea. The evening being fine, the launch attracted a large concourse of spectators.”<sup>599</sup>

Saltern's Rock was the earlier name of Crosspark Rock, an outcrop just north of Taylor's yard.

The following advertisement appeared in the North Devon Journal for 18 May 1827<sup>600</sup> “For *St. John's, New Brunswick*, That Fine New Brig SALTERN'S ROCK, J. Taylor, Master, 142 Tons Register, has room for a few Steerage Passengers, will sail the first week in June. For Particulars apply to Mr. W. Taylor, Shipbuilder, Bideford, of at the North Devon Journal Office, Barnstaple. May 2d, 1827.”

On 24 June 1828 the Saltern's Rock, Taylor. arrived in Halifax, from Cork<sup>601</sup>

On 11 May 1829 the Saltern's Rock, Taylor, arrived in Cork from St. John's, New Brunswick<sup>602</sup>.

On 11 Sept 1828 The North Devon Journal<sup>603</sup> reported the arrival of the Saltern's Rock, Taylor, at Appledore, Port of Bideford, from St. John's, New Brunswick. She arrived on Sept 7<sup>th</sup><sup>604</sup> About a month later she sailed again from Appledore, under Davison<sup>605</sup>.

On the 1 April 1830 the North Devon Journal<sup>606</sup> reported that the Saltern's Rock, Mollard, had arrived at Bideford from Plymouth.

597 North Devon Journal 19 January 1827 p4 c2

598 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 26

599 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 1 June 1827 p4 c2

600 North Devon Journal 18 May 1827 p1 c1

601 Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser. London. 25 June 1828 p4 c2

602 Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser. London. 18 May 1829 p4 c1

603 North Devon Journal 11 Sept 1828 p4 c4

604 Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser. London. 10 September 1828 p3 c4

605 North Devon Journal 8 October 1829 p4 c3

606 North Devon Journal 1 April 1830 p4 c3

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On 16 Sept 1830 the North Devon Journal<sup>607</sup> reported the arrival, in Bideford, of the Saltern's Rock, Mollard, from Prince Edward's Island. Lloyd's List for 17 September 1830<sup>608</sup> gives her arrival date as the 14<sup>th</sup> and the same details for her master and the ports involved.

Lloyd's List of 31 July 1829<sup>609</sup> gives Saltern's Rock, Davison, as arrived in Bermuda from Cork.

On the 11 May 1829 the "Saltern's Rock, Taylor," sailed from Cork on 11<sup>th</sup> May, bound for St. John's (New Brunswick)<sup>610</sup>

After 1829 Taylor no longer appears as captain of the Saltern's Rock. Henceforth it appears to be captained by one Mollard.

In 1831 the Saltern's Rock, Mallard [sic], from Bilboa, arrived at Scilly on May 13<sup>th</sup><sup>611</sup>

On Feb 13 1834 the Saltern's Rock. Mollard [sic], arrived in Liverpool from New York<sup>612</sup>.

### **Aug 1827, brig *Swallow*, 148/200 tons**

In August 1827 William Taylor launched the 200-ton *Swallow*, from his yard at Crosspark (on 16 August, "Last Thursday" in the report). She had been built for some London based merchants, who intended to use her for foreign trade, her first planned voyage was under Captain Grills: to Newfoundland with coal; from there to London with fish. On 17 Augusts 1827 she was reported alongside the quay, having her bottom coppered, and due to sail within a week<sup>613</sup>.

A display at Appledore Maritime Museum gives her as a ketch of 148 tons.

### **Feb 1828, schooner-brig *Brothers*, 84 tons**

"Bideford.--" . . . "And on Tuesday morning [5 February] at Mr. Taylor's yard, Crosspark, was launched the schooner-brig Brothers, Capt. Mollard, of St. Ives, 80 tons burthen per register<sup>614</sup>.

A display at Appledore Maritime Museum gives her as 84 tons.

### **Apr 1828, sloop *James & Louisa*, 17 tons**

"[As well as other launches on April 16<sup>th</sup>] a small sloop, at the yard of Mr. Taylor, for Mr. Braund, of Bucks"<sup>615</sup>

Source of the name and burthen is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum, the newspaper article is assumed to refer to this vessel.

### **1829, brig *Shepherdess*, 127 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1830, schooner *Little Cosmo*, 57 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

607 North Devon Journal 16 Sept 1830 p4 c2

608 Lloyd's List 17 September 1830 p2 c3

609 Lloyd's List 31 July 1829 p3 c4

610 "Shipping Intelligence" Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser. London, 18 May 1829 p4 c1

611 Morning Post. London. 17 May 1831 p4 c2

612 "Liverpool" Morning Post. London. 15 Feb 1834 p3 c3

613 North Devon Journal 17 August 1827 p4 c3

614 North Devon Journal and General Advertiser 7 February 1828 p4 c2

615 "Bideford" Western Times 26 April 1828 p4 c2

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

### **1830, Barque *Mary Jane*, 249 tons**

Source is a display at Appledore Maritime Museum

### **1831, sloop-of-war *Pilot*, 29 tons**

Rogers' lists the 29 ton sloop-of-war *Pilot* as built in 1831 at "Crosspark Rock, East-the-Water" but without giving the builder<sup>616</sup>.

## **Vessels refitted or altered**

### **1817, Ship *HMS Tees*, 452 tons**

Appledore Maritime Museum displays a copy of a painting of *HMS Tees sailing from Table Bay, South Africa*, by modern artist Mark Myers RSMA. Their display notes that this was Taylor's largest vessel, 452 tons BM, and 115' long on the gun deck, she was the last of the ten Conway Class 6 raters built for the Admiralty. Although laid down in 1812, her completion was delayed, and she remained on the stocks, thanks to the cessation of the Napoleonic wars, until late 1816. The Navy commissioned her into service on 17th May 1817. Lent as a church ship on 10th August 1826, she subsequently moored in St Georges Dock, Liverpool, for 45 years, before sinking at her moorings, where-after she was broken up.

The *Tees* cannot be attributed in her entirety to Taylor, for the initial phase of the work on her was clearly carried out in Portsmouth. A London newspaper, in reporting the launch of H.M.S. *Tees*, 26, at Bideford, noted that, though launched at Bideford, she had been the last ship of war worked on at Merchants'-yard, Portsmouth<sup>617</sup>

One of the sources for Herman Melville's *Moby Dick*, written in 1851, was a book by William Scoresby Jr. a whaler and Arctic explorer. Having given up the sea, Scoresby took up the chaplaincy of *HMS Tees* and was there until 1832. The chapel was subsequently visited, in 1839, by Melville, who describes it in *Redburn*<sup>618</sup>:

*This was the hull of an old sloop-of-war, which had been converted into a mariner's church. A house had been built upon it, and a steeple took the place of a mast. There was a little balcony near the base of the steeple, some twenty feet from the water; where, on week-days, I used to see an old pensioner of a tar, sitting on a camp-stool, reading his Bible. On Sundays he hoisted the Bethel flag, and like the muezzin or cryer of prayers on the top of a Turkish mosque, would call the strolling sailors to their devotions ...*

## **Henry Tucker's yard, East-the-Water, bef. 1791 till 1846**

### **Location of the yard**

Caution needs to be exercised when considering these records, as they is scope for confusion with a shipbuilder named Tucker who was active in Appledore.

According to Nix, Henry Tucker's yard was located at the East-the-Water end of the Long Bridge<sup>619</sup>.

616 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 27

617 "Ship News" *London Courier and Evening Gazette* 2 July 1817 p4 c4

618 "Moby Dick on the Mersey" <https://mobydickonthemersey.org/melville-and-liverpool> Accessed 21 Aug 2016

619 Nix, 1991, 393

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The yard near Brunswick wharf seems to be accounted for at this period by other ship-builders, but there were two yards further north. As he is both a maltster and a shipbuilder then that may help narrow down his location (maltster's facilities being limited to certain areas of the wharfs).

From the details of the 1836 sale of Clarence Wharf, it would appear that he was the tenant there.

Henry Tucker also leaves an interest in Clarence Wharf in his Will.

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

Henry Tucker's birth was registered, as entry 31, "Henry Son of Joseph Tucker & Margaret his wife of Bideford Ship-wright baptized Oct 27<sup>th</sup> 1756"<sup>620</sup>

For a builder who lived to ninety, records of the ships he built seem rather scarce.

On 12<sup>th</sup> May 1781 a Henry Tucker of Bideford married Elizabeth Mayne/Maine [both spellings appear on the record] of Bideford. Her father William Maine was one of the witnesses [South West Heritage Trust, Bideford Marriages]. Nix states that this is the marriage of Henry Tucker, of East-the-Water, Shipbuilder, who married the eldest daughter of William Maine of High Street, Bideford<sup>621</sup>. It is worth noting that Mr Crocker, shipbuilder, of Bideford, may also have been connected to the Maine family, as on 2 May 1838 his daughter, one Miss Sally Maine Crocker, married Mr. J. Dark, of Leamington Spa<sup>622</sup>

Henry Tucker appears on a list of vessel shareholders, from 31 December 1787 as "Shipbuilder"<sup>623</sup>

In 1791 The Universal British Directory of Trade listed "Tucker Henry, *ship-builder*" in its entry for Bideford. Locations were not given in that publication. He is one of three ship-builder's listed, the other's being William Heard and John Hore.

In 1796 "Henry, Son of Henry Tucker & Elizabeth his Wife of Bideford, Shipwright, baptized Jul 3<sup>rd</sup> 1796 dead"<sup>624</sup>

Henry Tucker appears on a list of vessel shareholders, from 31 December 1803 as "Shipbuilder"<sup>625</sup>

In 1804 his yard had no shipwrights and 12 apprentices. Henry Tucker may have been related to the John Tucker who had a shipyard in Appledore, which, in 1804, also had no shipwrights but only apprentices (in that case 10)<sup>626</sup>.

Henry Tucker is listed in Pigot's Trade Directory of 1822-23 under both Maltsters and Ship-builders, with his address given as East the Water.

He is listed in Pigot's 1830 Directory for Devonshire, under Merchants, as "Tucker Henry, East the Water"

On 21 Jan 1836 the North Devon Journal<sup>627</sup> carried the news of the death "at Bidford, Mrs. Tucker,

620 Bideford, Great Meeting (Independent): Baptisms. National Archives TNA/RG/4/515

621 Nix, 1991, pg 319

622 North Devon Journal 31 May 1838 p4 c4

623 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491. Citing Devon Records Office 3318/S1

624 Bideford, Great Meeting (Independent): Baptisms. National Archives TNA/RG/4/515

625 Michael Nix, A Maritime History of the Ports of Bideford and Barnstaple 1786-1941. Thesis, University of Leicester. 1991, pg 491. Citing Devon Records Office 3319 S/1

626 Nix, 1991, page 394, citing 'An Account showing the Number of Shipwrights, and also Apprentices Employed in the Merchant Yards of Great Britain: According to the Returns of the Admiralty, in House of Commons Sessional Accounts: Papers and Accounts. VIII, 1805, (193), pp. 467 sqq'.

627 North Devon Journal 21 Jan 1836 p4 c4



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wife of Mr. Henry Tucker, for many years a shipbuilder of that town, aged 79." The parish records have an Elizabeth Tucker, aged 79, buried at Bideford on 21<sup>st</sup> Jan, 1836<sup>628</sup>.

In 1836 Clarence Wharf was put up for auction, at which time it was said to have "two strongly built malt houses" and an occupant by the name of "Mr. Henry Tucker." It seems that Henry Tucker bought it, as, following his death, his executors offer the freehold for sale.

Listed in Robson's 1839 Directory for Devonshire, as "Tucker Henry, *Maltster & ship owner*, East the Water"

The 1841 Census lists him at East-the-Water and of independent means. With him are his wife Elizabeth and his daughter Elizabeth.

Listed in Pigot's 1844 Trade Directory under Maltsters and Merchants, when address given as East the Water.

The North Devon Journal of 5 November 1846<sup>629</sup> reports the death, "at Bideford, on Monday last, of Mr. Henry Tucker, formerly shipbuilder, aged 90." The Anglican burial record for this individual gives his date of burial as Nov 7, his age as 90, and his "abode" as East the Water. The ceremony was performed in Bideford by W. Braithwaite<sup>630</sup>.

In 1847 probate was granted for the will of Henry Tucker, of Bideford, Gentleman<sup>631</sup>

Death duties were registered in 1847 for Tucker Henry Bideford Devon, Executor: Elizabeth Tucker daughter; Court:Devon RC Register:4 Folio:393<sup>632</sup>.

In 1848 the freehold property of the late Mr. Henry Tucker of Clarence Wharf is offered for sale, at which time Mrs. Tucker is living in a house on the Wharf, and so is Mr. Thomas Waters (a person of that name, soon after this, begins ship-building in this vicinity)<sup>633</sup>.

## Incidents relating to the yard

In 1801 Henry Tucker, of Bideford, Shipwright, received a bond of indemnity from George Follet of Exeter, "for œ1510, relating to the purchase of timber from Monkleigh Woods."<sup>634</sup>

In 1802 he had trouble with his apprentices running away:

"Ran Away from Henry Tucker, Ship Builder, Bideford, Two of his Apprentices, Robert Summer, aged 17, short straight Hair, and slight Stature and William Hoyle, of the same Age, short and thick; they were dressed in blue Jackets and pink Linen Trousers."

Whoever harbours or employs them will be prosecuted according to law.  
Bideford, 31st August, 1802."<sup>635</sup>

"Ran Away from their Master, Mr H. Tucker, Ship-Builder, Bideford, two of his Apprentices, one named William Scrigings, aged 21 years, near six Feet high, of a fair Complexion, with short Hair; a well-grown Man. The other named William Cann, aged 21 Years, of a fair Complexion, about 5

628 South West Heritage Trust, Devon Burials, Anglican, Bideford

629 North Devon Journal 5 November 1846 p3 c3

630 South West Heritage Trust, Devon Burials, 799A/PR/1/45

631 Prerogative Court of Canterbury PROB11/2055

632 National Archives, IR27/283

633 North Devon Journal 5 October 1848 p1 c2

634 "Lesley Aitchison's - Catalogue 63" Online: <http://www.localhistory.co.uk/la/cats/fortescue.htm> Accessed 3 Nov 2017. Item 74.

635 "Apprentices that ran away from their Masters" Postby Nevis. MyZone, Genealogy forum. Thu Nov 13, 2014.  
Online: <http://www.mzawf.org/viewtopic.php?f=33&t=877> Accessed 13 Jul 2016

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feet 7 inches high, long straight Hair, of an awkward Appearance. Whoever harbours or employs either of the said apprentices, after this public Notice, shall be prosecuted according to Law. 19th April 1802.”<sup>636</sup>

## **Ships launched**

### **1794, brig/brigantine *Diana*, 75/79 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>637</sup>.

### **1800, smack/sloop *Fanny*, 34/27/30 tons**

Attributed as possibly “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>638</sup>.

### **Aug 1806, sloop *Mutine***

“On Friday last [15 August] a sloop of war, built by Mr. Henry Tucker, at Bideford, was launched about six o'clock in the evening ; when the bridge, quay, and places adjacent were filled with spectators from the town and its vicinity, which added to the pleasure of the scene, there being a great display of beauty and fashion among the fair sex, who, with the other beholders, did not fail to hope that she may be successful in sharing the glory of Britain against our lawless ambitious enemy.--She was named *Mutine*, and so christened by the lord of the manor of Bideford, John Cleveland, esq. whose barge, amongst the other boats on the river, was not a little conspicuous for its elegance. She is considered a handsome tight-built vessel, and reflects the highest credit on the builder, and Mr. Cowe, under whose inspection she has been constructed.”<sup>639</sup>

From the position of the spectators, on the quay and bridge, this launch appears to have been from an East-the-Water yard.

Farr attributes her to Richard Chapman and gives her as 397 tons<sup>640</sup>. Several vessels officially attributed to Chapman seem, on the basis of contemporary evidence, to have been built by other builders.

HMS *Mutine* was a Royal Navy 18-gun "Cruizer" class brig-sloop<sup>641</sup>.

### **1807 brigantine/brig *Phoenix*, 107/104**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>642</sup>.

### **1809 cutter/sloop/schooner *Ceres*, 47/36 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>643</sup>.

636 “Apprentices that ran away from their Masters” Postby Nevis. MyZone, Genealogy forum. Thu Nov 13, 2014.

Online: <http://www.mzawf.org/viewtopic.php?f=33&t=877> Accessed 13 Jul 2016

637 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 25

638 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 26

639 “Exeter” Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 21 August 1806 p4 c3

640 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 27

641 Uniopedia: The Concept Map, Online:[http://en.unionpedia.org/HMS\\_Mutine\\_%281806%29](http://en.unionpedia.org/HMS_Mutine_%281806%29), accessed 1/6/2016

642 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 27

643 Farr, *Ship Building in North Devon*, 1976, 29

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### **Aug 1813, Gun-brig *Pelter*, 183 <sup>51</sup>/<sub>94</sub> tons**

Launched on 27 August 1813, she was a 12 gun ship, credited to Henry Tucker of Bideford. 183 <sup>51</sup>/<sub>94</sub> tons B.M. She took about six months to build<sup>644</sup>. The initial cost to the build was £ 3,411<sup>645</sup>

### **1813, brigantine/brig/snow *Devonshire*, 130 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>646</sup>.

### **1816, brig/schooner-brig/schooner *Bideford*, 53/40/55 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>647</sup>.

### **1817, brigantine/brig *William and Henry*, 124/109 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>648</sup>.

### **1818, sloop *Aurora*, 31/24 tons**

Attributed to “Hy. Tucker” by Farr<sup>649</sup>.

### **Aug 1824, brig *New Alfred*, 120 tons**

“On Wednesday last [25 August], was launched from Mr. Tucker's Yard Bideford, a beautiful new Brig, of 120 tons burthen, call the New Alfred ; built for Capt. John Maine ; she went off the stocks in very fine style, in the presence of a vast concourse of spectators.”<sup>650</sup>

### **Sep 1825, brig *Lady Clinton*, 130 tons**

“A fine brig, of 130 tons, named *Lady Clinton*. was last week launched from the yard of Mr. Henry Tucker, ship-builder, Bideford. She went off in fine style,"in the presence of a great number of spectators. As she moved off, a man, called Anthony, fell into the hold on his head; he was taken up in a lifeless state, and remains very ill. The *Lady Clinton* is designed for the coasting trade, and built for Captain Day.”<sup>651</sup>

## **Waters' yard, Cross Park, ?-1848 till 1873**

### **Location of the yard**

In the reminiscences from T. Murphy, recorded in 1904, when Murphy was 89<sup>652</sup>, he states that Waters' yard was opposite the Terminus Inn, which was, in Roger's day, where the East of the Water restaurant now is. A plan from c. 1832 shows it opposite the Currier's Arms, whilst another, from 1842, shows it had extended northward, opposite the building north of the Curriers (now 1 & 1a Barnstaple Street)

644 “Henry Tucker” [http://threedecks.org/index.php?display\\_type=show\\_crewman&id=24227](http://threedecks.org/index.php?display_type=show_crewman&id=24227) Accessed 17 Sept 2016

645 Rif Winfield. British Warships in the Age of Sail 1793 – 1817. Seaforth, 2014. No page numbers

646 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 30

647 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 30

648 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 31

649 Farr, Ship Building in North Devon, 1976, 31

650 North Devon Journal 27 August 1824 p4 c1

651 Trewman's Exeter Flying Post 22 September 1825 p4 c3

652 Notebook of Vernon Boyle (1858-1926), cited in Wm. Henry Rogers typed manuscript Vol 3, Pg 35

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Graham Farr states that Thomas Waters took over the yard of William Brook in 1844, after Brook fell ill. Farr considers that this Thomas Waters is probably to be identified with a Clovelly builder of the same name who operated between 1827 and 1840<sup>653</sup>

## Biographical background on the shipbuilder/s

The 1851 Census records Water's as born about 1796, in Clovelly

Later "Mr. Waters, Shipbuilder of Bideford" had married a Miss Colley of Clovelly<sup>654</sup>

The stated birthplaces of his children on the 1851 Census suggest that Waters remained in Clovelly until at least 1840.

On the evening of the First Saturday of May 1840 a schooner, *Providence*, was launched "from the yard of Mr. Waters, of Clovelly, built for Mr. James Lee, of that place."<sup>655</sup>

In 1848 the freehold property of the late Mr. Henry Tucker of Clarence Wharf was offered for sale, at which time a Mr. Thomas Waters was resident in a house there<sup>656</sup>.

Thomas Waters is listed in White's 1850 Trade Directory under Shipbuilders, when his address is given as East the Water.

From the 1851 Census records it is clear that one Thomas Waters, identifies himself as a "Ship Builder, employing 17 men." He is living in Barnstaple Street with his wife Harriet and several children, amongst whom are his sons William, born c 1832 and an apprentice shipwright, and Thomas, born about 1839.

In July 1851, several members of Water's family, who were returning from a pleasure trip to Clovelly, were involved in a coach crash, in which Mrs. Waters sustained injuries, from which she tragically died. The inquest into her death heard details of the incident and mentions other members of the party included Capt. Lakey, Mr. Jesse Martin, and Capt. Jones, "brother -in-law of deceased"<sup>657</sup>

In 1852, Waters' son-in-law, J. Martin, was also active at the yard. In 1849 a son had been born to the wife of a "Mr. Jesse Martin of East-the-Water"<sup>658</sup>

On 21 August 1856 the North Devon Journal carried a notice that an indenture dated 9 Aug 1856 "and made between Thomas Waters, of Bideford, in the county of Devon, Shipbuilder, of the first part ; Robert Easton Yelland, Banker, George Heard, Merchant, and William How, Merchant, all of the same place (Creditors of the said Thomas Waters, and Trustees named and appointed on behalf of themselves and Trustees named and appointed on behalf of themselves and others, the Creditors of the said Thomas Waters for the purposes therein expressed), of the second part.; and the several other persons, Creditors of the said Thomas Waters whose names and seals are thereunder subscribed and set, of the third part." Waters personal estate and effects were entrusted to the trustees for the benefit of his creditors.<sup>659</sup>

653 "Ship Building in North Devon" by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

654 Hartland and West Country Chronicle 7 May 1931 p7 c3

655 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 May 1840 p3 c3

656 North Devon Journal 5 October 1848 p1 c2

657 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 7 August 1851 p5 c1

658 "Births" North Devon Journal 19 April 1849 p8 c4

659 North Devon Journal 21 August 1856

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

In 1857 Thomas seems to have started taking his son William, then aged about 25, into the business, as several makers certificates are signed by William, whilst the local papers credit Thomas as the builder. This certificate signing was perhaps intended to give William the credentials to set up on his own, for Grahame Farr suggests that he did just that in 1860, operating from the Rolle Company's Sea Locks yard, at Weare Gifford<sup>660</sup>.

In 1858, *The London Gazette* carried the following: "Notice is hereby given, that William Waters of Bideford, in the county of Devon, Shipbuilder, hath by indenture bearing date the 5<sup>th</sup> day of August, 1858, assigned all his estate and effects unto Robert Easton Yelland, Banker, and George Heard, Merchant, both of Bideford aforesaid, upon trust for themselves and the rest of the creditors of the said William Waters" it goes on to say that the deed had been formally executed<sup>661</sup>.

On the 1861 Census Thomas Waters is listed in Barnstaple Street, immediately after the Three Crowns, and gives his occupation as Master Ship Builder, employing 2 men.

William Waters is listed on the 1861 Census as follows: "Torrige Street, William Waters, Head, Mar, 29, Ship Builder, Master, employing 7 men" [Torrige Street later became Torrige Place]. So, although he was now building ships in Weare Gifford, he continued to live in East-the-Water.

On the 1871 Census Thomas Waters is at 43 Barnstaple Street and still gives his occupation as Ship Builder.

In December 1873 "Mr. Waters, Shipbuilder, and Mr. Philip Colwill, lime and coal merchant" each received 10 days notice to give up their yards (in accord with the terms under which they held them)<sup>662</sup>.

Thomas Waters appears to have died in 1875, when the death was registered in Bideford district for a Thomas Waters, aged 79<sup>663</sup>.

## Incidents related to the yard

In 1850 "Samuel Richards, aged 9. was found drowned at the side of Mr. Water's shipbuilding yard, East-the-Water, Bideford<sup>664</sup>.

In 1856 the yard celebrated the launch of two vessels for local ship-owners, "LAUNCHING TREAT.--The workmen belonging to Mr. Water's ship-building yard, and friends, were regaled by a feast on Friday night last, in commemoration of the launch of the *Heroine* and the *Gleanings*, belonging to Captains Hammett and Tucker, who generously provided the feast, which was served up by Mr. Balch, of the Terminus Inn, in good style, at Mr. Hammett's sail loft. The evening passed off pleasantly, and the arrangements gave general satisfaction."<sup>665</sup>

In August 1861 a sawyer, named William Moore, of Northam, employed by Mr. Waters was working at "Slewman's yard, East-the-Water," . . . "was in the act of descending into the sawpit," when the ladder gave way and he fractured his collar bone<sup>666</sup>.

660 "Ship Building in North Devon" by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

661 The London Gazette. August 24, 1858. Pg. 3922

662 "The Proposed New Railway Wharf at East the Water" 4 Dec 1873 North Devon Journal p8 c1

663 Apr-Jun, 5b/367

664 "August 1850" North Devon Journal 16 August 1900 p3 c1

665 Bideford Weekly Gazette 26 August 1856 p1 c1

666 "Serious Accident" Bideford Weekly Gazette 27 August 1861 p4 c1

Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

The following advertisement appeared in 1867 and referred to the yard :“WANTED two or three stout Lads as apprentices to the sea. Apply to Capt. Jones, at Mr. Waters' Yard, Bideford.” [Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 February 1867 p4 c7]

In 1872 a letter from “Mr. Waters, shipbuilder, of East-the-Water” was read, at the meeting of the Local Board, in which he requested compensation for damage cause in carrying out civil drainage works<sup>667</sup>.

## Ship launches

### Prior to 1845, active in Clovelly?

Prior to 1845 it seems likely that Mr. Waters was launching vessels from a yard in Clovelly.

### 1845, sloop *Ebernezer*, 22 tons

Grahame Farr identifies the 22 ton sloop *Ebernezer* as Thomas Waters' first vessel from Cross Park<sup>668</sup>

Inkerman Rogers identifies the Ebenezer as an 18 ton sloop-of-war, also stating that Thomas Waters built her at Crosspark<sup>669</sup>

Newspaper accounts suggest that Brooks was still launching ships from his yard until 1846 and that the yard was not put up for sale by his widow until October 1846. Waters may therefore have moved into the yard as a tenant (the yard could handle two vessels), and built this smaller vessel whilst Brooks was allowed to complete his final one.

### Jul 1851, copper-bottomed schooner *Vivid*, 150 tons (register)

On 3 July 1851 the local press reported the launch, on Tuesday morning last (1 July), of the *Vivid*, a fine copper-bottomed schooner of 150 ton register, from the yard of Mr. Waters<sup>670</sup>.

### 1852, schooner *Queen of the Seas*, 240 tons burthen

In August of 1852, the *Queen of the Seas*, a schooner of 240 tons burthen, was launched “from the yard of Mr. Waters, at Bideford.”<sup>671</sup>

### Sep 1852, smack *Quiver*, 65 tons

In September of 1852 the *Quiver*, a smack of 65 tons burthen, was launched “from the yard of Mr. Waters, of Bideford.” Her owner being “Mr. Henry Stevens, of Bideford.”<sup>672</sup>

### Sep 1852, screw steamer *Alpha* (built by James Martin at Water's yard)

Following the description of the launch of the *Quiver* from Waters' yard, the Exeter and Plymouth

667 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 31 October 1872 p6 c2

668 “Ship Building in North Devon”. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/>  
Accessed 28 Sep 2016

669 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 27

670 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 3 July 1851 p8 c5

671 “August 1852” North Devon Journal 4 September 1902 p2 c3

672 “September 1852” North Devon Journal 25 September 1902 p2 c7

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

Gazette<sup>673</sup> goes on to state “and on Wednesday [1 September], something more novel occurred at the same place, the launching of a small screw steamer, built by Mr. J. Martin, Mr. Waters' son-in-law, in a large mould loft adjoining the yard. A level platform was erected outside, on which she was brought out, and at the proper season, the end nearer the river was lowered gradually till it formed a launch, off which she dashed gaily, in the presence of a large concourse of people. She is appropriately named the *Alpha*, and is considered a beautiful model. She is 50 feet long, draws about two feet water, and is intended to ply between Bideford and Barnstaple, and for excursion trips, as she can leave Bideford at half-flood, and return at half-ebb.”

### **Sep 1854, barque *Chieftain/Ellen Sophia*, in excess of 200 tons**

In Sep 1854, 'A barque called “Chieftain” belonging to Mr. T. Evans was launched from Waters' shipbuilding yard'<sup>674</sup>

Grahame Farr suggests that this ship was built on speculation, was over 200 tons, and was bought soon after her launch by one Thomas Evans, who changed her temporary name of *Chieftain* to *Ellen Sophia*. Farr further suggests that this Thomas Evans was probably the former ship-builder at Cleave Houses, and that he sold the vessel the next day to Edward Fernandez, of Instow<sup>675</sup>.

Rogers attributes her to Thomas Waters, but gives no tonnage<sup>676</sup>.

### **1855, brig *Wildwave*, 191 tons**

'The brig “Wildwave,” was launched from Mr. Water's yard at Bideford.'<sup>677</sup>

Rogers comments that she was “a fine brig,” attributes her to Thomas Waters, and gives her as 191 tons<sup>678</sup>

### **Mar 1856, unidentified schooner.**

“Another beautiful schooner, was launched on Saturday morning last [8 March], from the yard of Mr. Waters east-the-water, she is the property our late esteemed townsman T. Evans Esq., and does credit to the builder.”<sup>679</sup> The parallel account in the North Devon Journal<sup>680</sup> indicates that Mr Evans is “of Bristol.”

### **Aug 1856, schooner *Heroine*, 126 tons**

“On Saturday morning last [2 August], a schooner, which received the name of *Heroine*, was launched from Mr. Thomas Water's yard, East-the-Water. She is 126 tons burthen, and is as beautifully modelled a craft as has been turned out at this port. Her launch proved a little troublesome, and gave her builder no little anxiety. The “dog shores,” &c., were knocked down about seven o'clock, and the vessel began to move, but instead of going clean off, when about three-quarter passage she stuck fast, with the stern in the water and her “fore-foot” on the quay. It was

673 Exeter and Plymouth Gazette 4 September 1852 p8 c2-3

674 Reminiscences from T. Murphy, recorded in 1904, when Murphy was 89, recorded in the Notebook of Vernon Boyle (1858-1926), cited in Wm. Henry Rogers typed manuscript Vol 3, Pg 36

675 “Ship Building in North Devon.” Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

676 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 29

677 “February 1855” North Devon Journal 30 March 1905 p7 c7

678 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 29

679 “Ship Launch” Bideford Weekly Gazette 11 March 1856 p1 c1

680 North Devon Journal 13 March 1856 p5 c4

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

attempted to move her by screw-power, but the ground sunk under the pressure; warps and kedge anchors failed to start it. To the credit of the other ship-builders, Messrs. Cox and Johnson, when the fix that their neighbour's vessel was in was perceived, they immediately sent a detachment of hands from each yard, who, with others, got on board and gave it such a perilous rocking that everybody expected her to go clean over. It was, however, the means, after about three-quarters of an hours' effort, of moving her from her dangerous predicament and completing the launch. The vessel is said to built for Mr. Hammetts and is believed to be intended for the Mediterranean trade."<sup>681</sup> []

On 2 Oct 1856 the North Devon Journal [p5 c5] announced that, due to severe weather damage, "the schooner Heroine (the vessel that was launched with so much difficulty some time ago from Mr. Water's yard), took shelter here," in Bideford, where she was found to be over-loaded.

Rogers' attributes her to Thomas Waters [Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 28]

### **Aug 1856, schooner *Gleanings*, 90 tons.**

"On Saturday week last [16 August] a schooner of about 90 tons burthen was launched from the yard of Mr. Thomas Waters, ship-builder, East-the-water, and received the name of the *Gleanings*. She is the property of Mr Thomas Tucker, of this port."<sup>682</sup> The North Devon Journal also carried the news of this launch, adding that she was launched about 6 o'clock, and that Thomas Tucker, late master of the *Gleaner*, was intending to use her for the coasting trade<sup>683</sup>.

### **May 1857, schooner *Zouave*, 120 tons.**

"On Saturday morning, the 9th inst. [9 May], a pretty schooner was launched from the yard of Mr. Waters, East-the-water. Her length is 68 feet, breadth 18 feet, and depth 9 feet, and is expected to carry 120 tons. She is built for Captain James Finch jun., and Mr. Berryman, of Clovelly, and is to be employed in the copper and tin trade." The article goes on to mention a launch at Cleave Houses (Cox's yard) of the *Tamar*.<sup>684</sup>

The launch was also covered by the North Devon Journal, which additionally confirmed that the name of the ship was *Zouave* and that Berryman was a sailmaker<sup>685</sup>.

### **Sep 1857, schooner *Fairy*, 140 tons.**

"On Saturday evening last [19 September], a very pretty schooner about 140 tons burthen, was launched from the yard of Mr. Thomas Waters, East-the-Water. As she glided from the stocks into her future element, she received the name of *Fairy* from Miss Ann Jones, daughter of the owner, Cap. Jones, of Port Talbort."<sup>686</sup>

Grahame Farr states that the builder's certificate for the *Fairy* was signed by William Waters.<sup>687</sup>

681 North Devon Journal 7 August 1856 p8 c2

682 "Ship Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 26 August 1856 p1 c1

683 "Bideford" North Devon Journal 21 August 1856 p8 c1

684 "Ships Launched" Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 May 1857 p1 c1

685 "Ships launched" North Devon Journal 14 May 1857 p5 c4

686 "Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 September 1857 p1 c1

687 "Ship Building in North Devon" by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016



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### **Mar 1858, schooner *Leader*, 140 tons**

“The beautiful schooner *Leader*, Capt. Bate, was launched at Mr. Waters' yard. Bideford, on Tuesday morning [2 March], built for the captain and others in Port Talbort. Burthen 140 tons. She went off in gallant style, witnessed by a large concourse of spectators on both sides of the river, who were delighted at her fine appearance when she settled the bosom of the Torridge. She will be fitted out with every dispatch, being already chartered for the Mediterranean.”<sup>688</sup>

Grahame Farr states that the builder's certificate for the *Leader* was signed by William Waters<sup>689</sup>.

### **Sep 1858, smack *Pride of Torridge***

"On Thursday evening [23 September] a smack was launched from the yard of Mr. Waters, called the *Pride of the Torridge*. She was built for Mr. Hammett, shipowner, of this port.”<sup>690</sup>

In 1857 Waters' six-oared gig, *Pride of the Torridge* had taken the prize in its class at the Bideford Regatta<sup>691</sup>, perhaps inspiring the name of this smack.

### **1859, schooner *St. Germans*, 100 tons**

Grahame Farr suggests that this was the third of the ships launched between 1857 and 1859 for which William Waters' signed the builder's certificate<sup>692</sup>.

Rogers lists her as a 100 ton schooner<sup>693</sup>

### **1860, ketch *Rainbow*, 57 tons**

Rogers lists the 1860 built, 57 ton, ketch *Rainbow*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>694</sup>.

John Johnson offered a smack for sale in 1861, of 75 tons dead weight and with the same name [see entry under ships launched by Johnson's yard].

### **1861, smack *Trio*, 58 tons**

Rogers lists the 1861 built, 58 ton, smack *Trio*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>695</sup>.

### **1862, unidentified vessel**

“On the same evening another and smaller craft was launched from the yard of Mr. Waters. Returning from the *launch* at Messrs. Cox's, the public were just in time see this gallant craft bound off the stocks and enter the harbour with a dash that must have shaken the nerves of those on board her.” This followed an account of the launch of the *Scout* from Cox's yard<sup>696</sup>.

688 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 4 March 1858 p5 c1

689 “Ship Building in North Devon” by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

690 "Ship Launch" Gazette 28 September 1858 p1 c1

691 "Bideford Regatta" Western Times 11 July 1857 p5 c5

692 [“Ship Building in North Devon” by Grahame Farr. Maritime monographs and reports No. 22. 1976., cited in Bideford Buzz, Jul, 2016. Online: <http://bidefordbuzz.org.uk/2016/07/two-bideford-built-schooners-of-the-nineteenth-century/> Accessed 28 Sep 2016

693 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 30

694 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 30

695 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 30

696 “Launches” Bideford Weekly Gazette 5 August 1862 p4 c1

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The visibility of this launch, to the returning crowd, confirms that it was from the East-the-Water yard and not from William Water's yard further up the Torridge.

### **1865, ketch *Two Sisters*, 79 tons**

Rogers lists the 1865 built, 79 ton, ketch *Two Sisters*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>697</sup>.

Registered in Bideford, she was owned initially by P.K. Harris of Appledore and subsequently by J. Chugg of Braunton. Although originally built as a Polacca schooner, she was re-rigged in 1880 as a ketch, thereafter serving in the Bristol Channel, carrying coal and bricks. Although she sank in 1922, she was raised, repaired, and had an engine fitted. She had the distinction of bearing the final cargo of iron ore to leave Spreacombe mines near Braunton bound for South Wales. In 1939, she was bought for an intended voyage to Australia, but became instead a sea scout training ship, based at Littlehampton. She was finally broken up in 1950<sup>698</sup>.

John Chugg wrote, in April 1934, of the "Two Sisters (built for the writer's grandfather at Water's Yard, East-the-Water, in 1865, and still staunch and strong), but now ketch-rigged, and equipped with a powerful motor."<sup>699</sup>

### **Feb 1867, schooner *M.H.A.*, c. 120 tons**

"A fine new schooner was launched on Tuesday evening last [22 February] from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. E. Waters, at East-the-Water. It is of excellent build, and well modelled. We understand that it is intended for general trade, and that a Mr. Jones, of Swansea, is the owner."<sup>700</sup>

"On Tuesday evening, a nicely modelled schooner was launched from Mr. Waters' yard. She was named M. H. A. She is about 150 tons burthen. The owner is Mr. J. Jones, Swansea, she went off the stocks beautifully."<sup>701</sup>

### **1867, schooner *J.M.J.*, 80 tons**

Rogers lists the 1867 built, 80 ton, schooner *J.M.J.*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>702</sup>.

In Sept 1879 a schooner *J.M.J.* (of Swansea), Capt. Bennet, arrived at Leith carrying wine and salt<sup>703</sup>. Her home port of Swansea, and the use of an abbreviation for her name, suggests that she was for the same owner as the *M.H.A.*

### **Apr 1868, Schooner *Ismene*, 103 tons**

"On Saturday morning [25 April], a splendid schooner was launched from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Walters. She is purchased by Captain Merefield, of Bideford, and is intended for the general trade. The vessel is named the *Ismene*, and about 180 tons burden. She went off the stocks in gallant style, and was generally admired as a perfect model."<sup>704</sup>

697 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

698 "Sailing Ship Photo Par Ketch Two Sisters Bideford Topsail Schooner SF Pearce" Description of a photo for sale on Ebay. Online : [http://www.ebay.com/itm/Sailing-Ship-Photo-Par-Ketch-Two-Sisters-Bideford-Topsail-Schooner-SF-Pearce-/391240621199?\\_ul=BO&nma=true&si=gUfAJ00clT4Je7D1RNglvEnuMe4%253D&orig\\_cvip=true&rt=nc&\\_trksid=p2047675.l2557](http://www.ebay.com/itm/Sailing-Ship-Photo-Par-Ketch-Two-Sisters-Bideford-Topsail-Schooner-SF-Pearce-/391240621199?_ul=BO&nma=true&si=gUfAJ00clT4Je7D1RNglvEnuMe4%253D&orig_cvip=true&rt=nc&_trksid=p2047675.l2557) Accessed 20 May 2017

699 "The Old Lime Burning Industry of North Devon" *North Devon Journal* 26 April 1934 p5 c4

700 "Launch of a New Schooner" *Bideford Weekly Gazette* 26 February 1867 p4 c5

701 "Bideford" *Western Times* 26 February 1867 p3 c5

702 Rogers, *Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford*, 1947, 32

703 "Shipping Intelligence" *Glasgow Herald* 4 September 1879 p6 c7

704 "Bideford" *North Devon Journal* 30 April 1868 p8 c1

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'A schooner named the "Ismene," and intended for the general trade, was recently *launched* from the shipbuilding yard of Mr. Waters. She is 180 tons burden, and has been purchased by Captain Merefield.<sup>705</sup>

Rogers lists a 103 ton barquetine, *Ismene*, Capt. Merefield, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>706</sup>.

Merry describes her as a two masted topsail schooner<sup>707</sup>.

### **1870, ketch *Pride of the Tow*, 50 tons**

Rogers lists a 1870 built, 50 ton, ketch *Pride of the Tow*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>708</sup>.

References to the *Pride of the Tow* have been traced as early as March 21, 1870, when she arrived at Appledore from Newport<sup>709</sup>.

### **Mar 1870, clipper schooner *Forward Ho!***

"During the high tides of the past week three splendid vessels have been launched into the river." . . . "On Saturday morning [19 March] a handsome-looking clipper schooner, about 150 tons, was launched from Water's yard, East the-Water. This vessel is the property of Mr. Haines, of Appledore, and was christened by him Miss Haines at the time of the launch. Her name Forward Ho! and she is intended for general trading."<sup>710</sup>

Rogers lists is a 103 ton barquetine, *Ismene*, Capt. Merefield, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>711</sup>.

### **1871, smack *Lucy*, 25 tons**

Rogers lists a 1871 built, 25 ton, smack, *Lucy*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>712</sup>.

### **1873, smack *Success*, 34 tons**

Rogers lists a 1873 built, 34 ton, smack, *Success*, attributing her to Thos. Waters<sup>713</sup>.

## **Ships refitted or altered**

In anecdotal evidence from "Mr. W. Leonard" subsequently recorded by Vernon Boyle<sup>714</sup>, he states "The Alice was cut in two and lengthened at Waters' shipyard East-the-Water, on the beach alongside the yard."

The Alice was originally built by William Waters at Weare Gifford, as may be seen from the following account, published in the Bideford Weekly Gazette<sup>715</sup> 'On Tuesday last [12 February], a fine schooner, built at the yard of the Rolle Canal Company, at Weare Gifford, was floated down the river, and passed safely through the bridge. She is a very beautiful little vessel, about 90 tons custom-house measurement; was built by Mr. Wm. Waters of this town ; is called the "Alice," and is

705 "Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 5 May 1868 p4 c2

706 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 32

707 Ian D Merry, The Westcotts and their times, National Maritime Museum, 1980 (Google snippet view)

708 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

709 "Appledore" Shipping and Mercantile Gazette 22 March 1870 p3 c1

710 "Ship Launches" Bideford Weekly Gazette 22 March 1870 p4 c2

711 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

712 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

713 Rogers, Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in Bideford, 1947, 33

714 Notebook of Vernon Boyle (1858-1926), cited in Wm. Henry Rogers typed manuscript Vol 3, Pg 34

715 "Ship Launch" Bideford Weekly Gazette 19 February 1861 p4 c2

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intended, we are told, for the foreign trade.'

## **Doubt's Nuttaberry road shipyard**

A plan drawn in 1776 by S. Jewell, shows the foreshore, upstream of the bridge and south of Torrington Lane<sup>716</sup>. The road to Nuttaberry seems to run across the strand, with, to the landward of it, first a property, then land belonging to Jn. Rolle Esq., and then, to the south of that, land marked as "The late Mr. Doubt's Yard for his Ship Building."

## **Unidentified shipyard "near the Gasworks"**

In March 1862 the following appeared in the Bideford Weekly Gazette - "BIDEFORD, DEVON. TO BE SOLD by private contract, for the residue of a term of 20 years, which commenced on 25<sup>th</sup> day of March, 1861, all that newly erected WHARF, (intended for a ship-building yard), near the Gas Works, on the east side of the river Torridge, in Bideford, together with the Beach adjoining thereto. The premises are about 237 feet long and extend to low water mark Apply to Mr. J. Lee, 3, Victoria Terrace, Bideford."<sup>717</sup>

It is possible that this was on the site later occupied by Bartlett's saw-mill.

The vicinity of this wharf may be linked to the area used by John Crocker, the boat-builder, whose house appears, in 1841, to have been somewhere near to Nuttaberry, but this has yet to be explored.

## **Mr William Whitefield, "last of the master shipbuilders"**

Whilst not an owner of a shipyard East-the-Water, Mr. William Whitefield was intimately involved with them. In a brief obituary in the Western Times of 14 March 1910<sup>718</sup> it was noted that "Mr. Wm. Whitfield [sic], of Higher Cleave Houses, near Bideford," had died suddenly, aged 74, and that "Mr. Whitfield became foreman of Cox's large shipbuilding yard, which stood at Cleave Houses, and was afterwards with the late Mr. Johnson and the late Mr. Restarick, of East-the-Water, subsequently being in business for himself. He is believed to have been the last of the master shipbuilders of the borough."

Wilson's Commercial Almanac lists two shipbuilders in its commercial section for Cleavehouses, John Westcott, and Wm. Whitefield<sup>719</sup>. From this it is clear that Whitfield returned to Cleavehouses after Restarick's yard closed.

## **The role of Richard Chapman, of Cleave Houses**

Inkerman Rogers, in an annex to his book, *A Record of Wooden Sailing Ships and Warships Built in the Port of Bideford from the Year 1568 to 1938: With a Brief Account of the Shipbuilding Industry in the Town*<sup>720</sup>, presents a table entitled "List of Warships Built in the Port of Bideford; Extracts from Lists of His Majesty's Royal Navy at the Admiralty, London" [fold out insert with no page

716 A map of a small messuage (house) and tenement east of the River Torridge drawn by S Jewell, 1776. Ref. NDRO 2379A/Z38/53g; Reproduced on page 8 in Emma Waldron. Mapping the County. Devon Heritage Services. 2013. Online: [www.devon.gov.uk/mappingthecounty2013.pdf](http://www.devon.gov.uk/mappingthecounty2013.pdf) Accessed 12 Dec 2017

717 Bideford Weekly Gazette 11 March 1862 p4 c6

718 "Last of the Master Shipbuilders of Bideford" Western Times 14 March 1910 p2 c5

719 Wilson's 1896 Almanack and Directory of Bideford, Northam & Westward Ho! Bideford: Wilson, 1896, 29

720 Bideford: Gazette Printing Service, 1947

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

number]. Underneath the title he adds “Richard Chapman, shipbuilder at Cleavehouses.” It is not clear from this table whether it is intended as a list of ships built by Richard Chapman, at Cleavehouses, a list of ships where Chapman was in some way responsible to the Navy, or a list drawn up for the Navy, by Richard Chapman, but for reasons unknown. Whilst Chapman's yard was on the west of the Torridge, more direct evidence indicates that several of the ships on Rogers' list were built in East-the-Water's yards. Thus rendering the first of the options above, i.e. that Chapman built all the ships on Rogers' list, impossible. Winfield also chooses to attribute several of the vessels to other yards, some in East-the-Water. For these reasons inclusion on Inkerman Rogers' list has not been taken as definitive proof of Chapman being the builder. Where primary sources have yet to be located, authorities such as Appledore Maritime Museum, or Winfield's British Warships in the Age of Sail have been treated as more authoritative.

For the ships which appear on Rogers' list, the following indicates where evidence points to a specific builder:

- 1807, *Volage*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Richard Chapman's yard
- 1807, *Garland*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Richard Chapman's yard.
- 1807, *Myrtle*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Richard Chapman's yard.
- 1807, *Comet*, where the Admiralty's contract was with William Taylor, and plans of her bear the name of “Mr. Taylor”
- 1807, *Carnation*, probably William Taylor, as attributed to him in displays at the Appledore Maritime Museum
- 1807, *Acorn*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to George Crocker's yard
- 1807 [sic, assumed to be the *Mutine* launched in 1806], *Mutine*, where a contemporary press article attributes her to Henry Tucker's yard
- 1807, *Mistrel*
- 1812, *Fairy*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to William Taylor
- 1813, *Ontario*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Richard Chapman (as the re-named Mohawk)
- 1813, *Pelter*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Henry Tucker
- 1800 [sic 1813], *Beelzebub*, Admiralty contract to William Taylor, who then appealed for reimbursement of extra costs incurred in her building
- 1814, *Tees*, Appledore Maritime Museum display attributes to William Taylor
- 1814, *Cyrene*, Winfield, British Warships in the Age of Sail, attributes to Richard Chapman
- 1814, *Mohawk*
- 1814, *Falmouth*, where the Admiralty's contract was with William Taylor
- *Devastation*
- *Volcano*

## Vessels built or refitted in East-the-Water

For more details concerning the East-the-Water built vessels, see the entries for each ship given elsewhere in this document.

That the Chapman family was actively involved with other yards is proven by the following press report: “On Wednesday Evening was launched from the Yard of W. Tardew, Esq. the Brig Louisa, and as she went of the stocks, a flag was hoisted with Lady Rolle, on it ; Loisa being the christian name of Lady Rolle. She is deemed a handsome Vessel, having been laid down by Mr. Chapman, whose modelling has been always esteemed.”<sup>721</sup>. The Loisa was the first vessel built near the mouth of the Rolle canal. This hints at the intriguing possibility that Chapman was involved in all these vessels, but as the mould-maker, though it might equally be that Chapman was responsible for the final fitting out and rigging. It is also possible that Chapman could have supervised the work of other yards for the Navy.

721 “Bideford” North Devon Journal 30 March 1827 p4 c2