

Correction of an Ownership Misconception

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In Harrington E. Manville's *Tokens of the Industrial Revolution – Foreign silver coins countermarked for use in Great Britain c. 1787-1828*¹, (Manville) on page 56 under Deanston, he records 'The Deanston Mill property was purchased by Benjamin Flounders, a Yorkshire Quaker, in partnership with Joseph, Samuel and William Twigg.' This information appears to be sourced, in part, from an article in volume 28 of the *British Numismatic Journal* for the period 1955-7 by S.A.H. Whetmore entitled 'Notes on some Issuers of Countermarked Spanish Dollars' on page 642. This detail has been repeated over the years, most notably in the Walter Allen sale of 1984 under lot 77².

Recent research indicates that during this period of countermarking there were in fact three businesses called 'Adelphi Cotton Works'. (Fig. 1)³

- 1) (15 in Fig. 1) **Deanston** / Doune set up by the Buchanans from 1785 as Adelphi then sold to Benjamin Flounders in about 1794. (Sale notice in Manville page 55 which refers to Kilmadock, and county of Perth. Fig. 2).

NAMES of MILLS, or PROPRIETORS' FIRMS.		Total of Persons of all Ages, employed in the Manufactory.	
No.		Males.	Females.
1.	John Bartholomew and Co. Barrowfield, near Glasgow	27	68
2.	Robert Humphreys and Co. Hutcheson Town, Glasgow	166	305
3.	Mile End Spinning Company, near Glasgow	61	121
4.	William King and Sons, at Johnstone	86	128
5.	William King and Sons, at Johnstone (per John Sharp)	58	82
6.	Buchanan, Stuart, and Lock, West Arthurie, near Neilston	85	132
7.	Culcreugh Spinning Company, Fintry, Stirlingshire	120	169
8.	Ballindaloch Cotton Works, Baltrou, Stirlingshire	60	229
9.	Aberdeen Cotton Mill, Forbes, Law, and Co.	32	240
10.	Gordon, Barron, and Co. Woodside, near Aberdeen	118	344
11.	Henry Houldsworth, Anderson and Woodside, near Glasgow	220	415
12.	Thornlybank Cotton Mill, Alexander and James Crum	40	79
13.	Benktop Cotton Works, Johnstone, Walter Brock and Co.	53	138
14.	George Grant and Co. Graham's Square, Glasgow	66	42
15.	Deanston Cotton Works, near Doune, in Perthshire	43	299
16.	Springfield Cotton Mill, Todd and Stevenson	43	67
17.	Croftlee Cotton Mill, Todd and Stevenson	63	124
18.	John and Robert Monteith, Pollockshaws	123	306
19.	Blairstyre Cotton Works, Lanarkshire, H. Monteith, Bogle and Co.	245	305
20.	W. Houldsworth and Hufley, Bridgeton	88	167
21.	Wellington Mills, Hutcheson Town, Cameron, Thomson, and Co.	74	289
22.	Watts, Logan, and Co. Johnstone	85	123
23.	Catrine Cotton Works, James Finlay and Co.	227	648
24.	Calderhaugh Cotton Mill, Lochwinnoch, Fulton, Buchanan, and Co.	83	103
25.	Blackburn Spinning Company, County of Linlithgow	36	84
26.	Joseph Twigg, jun. Paisley	48	138
27.	Port Dundas Mill, M. Robertson and Co.	36	94
28.	George Street Mill, Paisley, W. Robertson	20	48
29.	James Dunlop and Co. Barrowfield	102	184
30.	William Dunn, Calton	25	64
31.	William Dunn, Paisley	43	58
32.	William Dunn, Duntocher	61	97
33.	Hag Mill, Johnstone, George Houston and Co.	53	55
34.	Adelphi Cotton Works, R. Thomson and Co.	59	112
35.	Matthew Dunn and Co. Bridgeton	91	204
36.	Crombie and Carnegie, Calton	19	67
37.	Crombie and Carnegie, Ruglen	23	54
38.	George Yuille and Co. Glasgow	49	116
39.	Crombie and Carnegie, Anderson	33	90
40.	Rothray Cotton Mill, Glasgow, William Kelly	76	188
41.	Johnstone Mill, George Houston and Co.	45	79
		3,146	6,854

Fig. 1. Abstract of the Returns made by the Proprietors or Managers of Cotton Mills in Scotland, 1816.

**KILMADOCK parish containing Doune town and Deanston Perthshire.
The Gazetteer of Scotland, 1882. Wilson, Rev. John.**



Fig. 2.

Deanston.

This Adelphi Cotton Works is the one that is believed to have issued the countermarks. It suffered a fire in 1796 reported in Manville on page 275. The descriptions of Deanston/Adelphi mill in the Old and New Statistical Accounts for Scotland make no mention of the Twiggs and suggest an unbroken line from the Buchanans to Flounders to the Finlays. (Fig. 3)

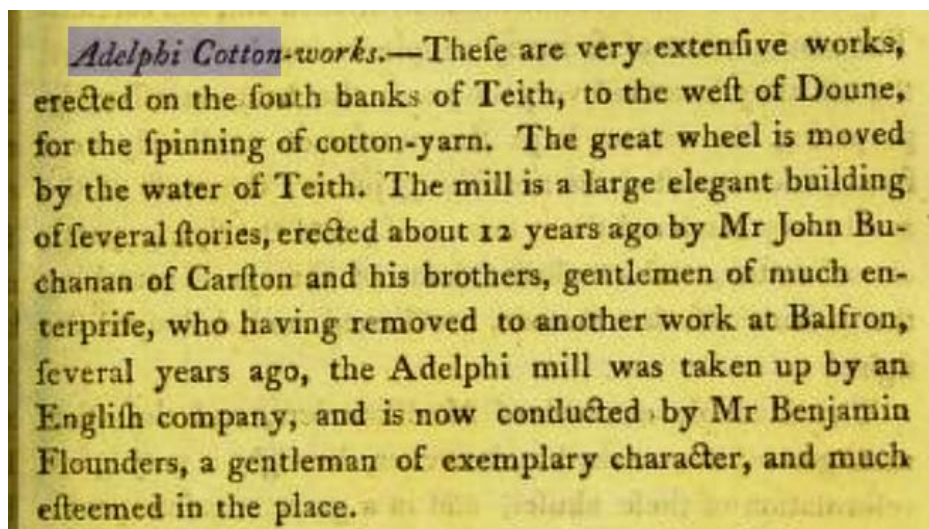


Fig. 3. The Statistical Account of Scotland, Volume Twentieth, 1798, p 87.

- 2) (26 in Fig. 1) Sneddon Street, **Paisley** owned by Joseph, Samuel and William Twigg, remaining in the Twigg family until at least the 1860's. (Fig. 4).

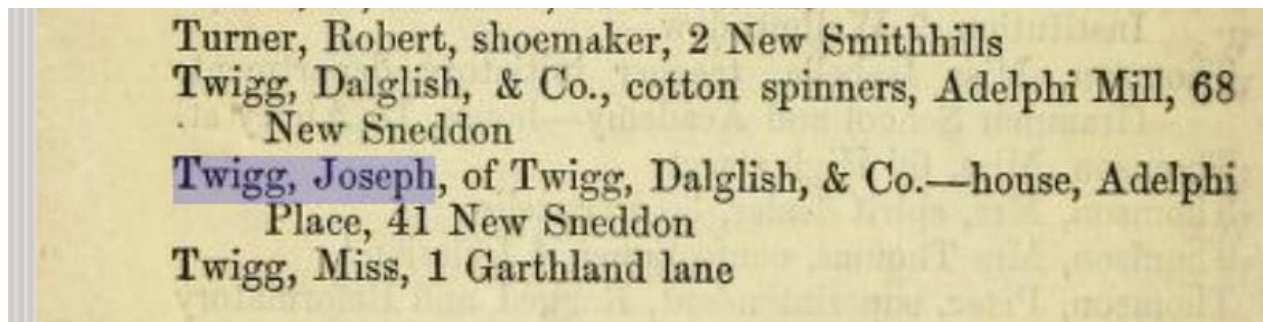


Fig. 4. Watson's Directory for Paisley 1865-66, p 96.

Paisley.

This Adelphi Cotton Works was owned by the Twigg family. It also suffered a fire, but in 1794. (Fig. 5) This, too, is reported in Manville, page 275. This report clearly states that the mill was in 'Sneddon of Paisley'. The fire was fought by the 'officers of the Strathspey fencibles, and a party of the privates, along with the Paisley volunteers'. The Strathspey Fencibles were raised in 1793 and immediately sent south to defend against any possible French invasion and were for a time headquartered in Paisley.

Dec. 4 About ten o'clock, the beautiful and extensive **Adelphi cotton** mills, in Sneddon of Paisley, the property of Messrs. Joseph, Samuel, and Wm. Twigg, were discovered to be on fire in the upper floor, occasioned, as is believed, by some sparks having issued from a stove lately erected for the convenience of the works.

Fig. 5. The European Magazine, volume 26, July-December 1794, p 453.

3) (34 in Fig. 1) **Hutchesontown**, Glasgow owned by Robert Thomson.

Hutchesontown.

This Adelphi Cotton Works was owned by Robert Thomson from at least 1809⁴ and was still in his ownership in 1838 when there was a trial for 'Illegal Conspiracy and Murder' at the High Court of Justiciary, Edinburgh⁵. (Fig. 6) In fact Thomson, who was a flax spinner, is apparently credited with being the first in Scotland to consider spinning cotton in his mill after a chance purchase of a batch of East India Company cotton. (Fig. 7)

AND MORE PARTICULARLY, the said secret select or secret committee, and the said Thomas Hunter, Peter Hacket, Richard McNeil, James Gibb, and William McLean, all and each, or one or more of them, members of the said unlawful association, and parties to the said illegal conspiracy, and to the appointment of the said secret select, or secret committee, did, (6.) upon the

15th day of June 1837,

or on one or other of the days of that month, or of May immediately preceding, or of July immediately following, and within an apartment or apartments occupied by them, situated as aforesaid, wickedly and feloniously hire, engage, instigate, or direct, certain members of the said unlawful association, or other persons to the prosecutor unknown, to attack and assault one or more of the operative cotton-spinners, then in the employment of Robert Thomson and Sons, Adelphi Cotton Works, Hutchisontown, in or near Glasgow, being one of the cotton-mills in which the members of the said unlawful association had struck work as aforesaid, and that with the illegal and felonious intent and purpose of deterring and intimidating the operatives then in the employment of the said Robert Thomson and Sons, from working at a lower rate of wages, or on terms different from those demanded prescribed by the members of the said unlawful association ;

Fig. 6. Report of the Trial at Edinburgh High Court of Judiciary, 3 January 1838, p 19.

While Mr Thomson's work in Helensburgh was important, he was also a major figure in the Glasgow business world, where he was greatly respected and much loved.

He was the first person who attempted the manufacture of cotton goods in Scotland, and he was the founder of the well known firm of Robert Thomson & Son, of the Adelphi Cotton Works in Hutesontown.

Mr. Thomson was originally in the linen trade, which he carried on extensively until about 1778. He was in business with his brother-in-law, James Monteith, whose son was frequently in London on business.

He happened accidentally to attend a public sale at the East India Warehouse. Among other goods offered were a few bales of East India cotton yarn, which he bought for a trifling sum as it was thought to be useless.

He sent the material to Glasgow for experiment. The texture was beautiful, but the difficulty was to find means of preparing it for the weaver.

A machine was designed for this, and Mr Thomson put it to good use. He was able to produce muslin which was soon in demand, as Indian muslin was fashionable and very expensive.

Fig. 7. Extract from Helensburgh Heritage Trust – 'search' Robert Thomson, 2nd on list 'Was he the Town's first Provost?'

It would, therefore, seem that Adelphi was a popular name for a business. As Manville points out on page 55, 'adelphi is brothers in Greek' and though it is not clear if 'brothers' were involved in the Hutchesontown concern, they certainly were in Deanston and at Paisley.



¹ British Numismatic Society Special Publication No. 3, Spink London, 2001.

² Spink Coin Auctions No. 34, 14-15 March 1984.

³ House of Lords, The Sessional Papers 1801-1833, Vol. 92 (1818). Report of the Minutes of Evidence taken before The Select Committee on the State of the Children employed in the Manufactories of the United Kingdom, 25 April – 18 June 1816. Page 240, Abstract of the Returns made by the Proprietors or Managers of Cotton Mills in Scotland, relative to their Work-People.

⁴ The Glasgow Directory containing a list of the Merchants, Manufacturers, Traders, etc. in the City and Suburbs, Glasgow, 1809, page 122.

⁵ Report of The Trial or Thomas Hunter, Peter Hacket, Richard McNeil, James Gibb, and William McLean, operative cotton-spinners in Glasgow, before The High Court of Justiciary, at Edinburgh, on Wednesday, January 3, 1838, and seven following days, for the crimes of Illegal Conspiracy and Murder, page 19.