

LOUTH NAVIGATION - LISTS OF COMMISSIONERS (Page 2)

Please note that this is not the definitive list of all commissioners - more will be added as research continues.

List of Louth Canal Commissioners - 1-12 Early Intake; 13 -48 1866 Majority Intake; 49 - 61 1871 New Appointments					
? - indicates unsubstantiated, or unclear fact, or ongoing research.					
(xx) - indicates still alive & present on UK Census 18xx					
No.	Name	App'd	Residence	Occupation	Research Notes
1	Samuel Trought	1828			see 1828 entry
2	George Allenby	1831	Hallington House, Hallington	Farmer	
3	John Allenby	1831	Lee Street, Louth	Gentleman	
4	Nathaniel Cartwright	1831	Louth		
5	John Booth Sharpley	1831	Louth	Corn Merchant, Riverhead	
6	Thomas Overton	1834	Louth	Wine Merchant, Eastgate	
7	Richard Chatterton	1834	Tathwell	Farming Family	
8	Charles Bowmar	1848	Holy Trinity Terrace, Louth	Draper, Eve & Ranshaw	
9	Robert Norfolk	1848	Eastfield road, Louth	Miller, Corn & Coal Merchant, Riverhead	
10	William East	1848	Louth	Brewer & Malster, Maiden Row	
11	William Potter	1848	Louth	Grocer & Chandler, Mercer Row	(81)
12	William Chatterton	1848	Tathwell	Farming Family	
13	Croft Sharpley	1866	Authorpe		
14	Coates Sharpley	1866	The Hall, Kelstern	Farmer 530 acres son of Croft	(81)
15	William Seaton	1866	Yarborough	Brick & Tile Manufacturer, & Corn Merchant, Grainthorpe	
16	Jonathan Birkett	1866	Louth	Brewer, Wine & Spirit Merchant	(81)
17	George M. Merrikin	1866	Louth		
18	George R. Willoughby	1866	The Villa, Eastgate, Louth	Corporation Surveyor	
19	David Hay	1866	The Grange, Yarborough	Farmer	
20	Thomas Young	1866	Louth	Farmer by, 1881 369 acres Covenham St. Bartholomew	
21	Thomas Young	1866	Manor House, Covenham	Farmer	
22	Abraham Samuel	1866	Louth	Silversmith, Jeweller, Mercer Row	(81)
23	George Bett	1866	Alvingham	Farmer by 1881 69 acres	(81)
24	John Hodgson	1866	N. Cockerington	Farmer by 1881 320 acres	(81)
25	William Shepherd	1866	Louth 71 Upgate	Bookseller, Printer, Stationer, Market Place	(81)
26	Michael Colbridge	1866	Louth	Grocer, 14 Mercer Row	

27	Salah Cartwright	1866	Louth	Ironmonger, 26 Mercer Row by 1881 JP & Alderman	(81)
28	John Phillipson	1866	Louth	Hardware Dealer, 98 Eastgate	(81)
29	Richard Chapman	1866	b. Kelstern rtd. Louth 1881	Farmer	?Poss related to Mrs Mary Chapman, Trinity Terrace
30	Richard Nell ?RJ	1866	Louth	Manager Oilcake Mills, Charles Street	
31	John Robinson	1866	Louth	Farmer & Grazier, Chequergate	(81)
32	John James Clark	1866	Welton		
33	John S. Foster	1866	Ludborough	Farmer by 1881 1600 acres Ludborough House	
34	John Bell	1866	The Elms, Crowtree Lane, Louth	Surgeon, by 1881 J.P	(81)
35	John Hyde Bell	1866	Louth	Solicitor & Secretary to Corn Exchange Company	
36	George Houlden	1866	Scupholme	Farming Family	
37	Frederick Tate	1866	13 Chequergate, Louth	Surgeon and JP, Alderman by 1881	(81)
38	Jonathan Simpson Calvert	1866	Tothill	Farmer	
39	James Robson	1866	The Hall, Brackenborough	Farmer 650 acres	(81)
40	William Smith	1866	Keddington	Farmer 12 acres	(81)
41	Jonathan W. Parker	1866	Manor House, Ludborough	Farmer 600 acres	(81)
42	Robert Johnson	1866	Louth		
43	William Robert Emeris	1866	57 Westgate, Louth	Esq. J.P. Land, houses, dividends	(81)
44	Charles Edward Lucas	1866	Louth	Wine, Spirit & Porter Merchant, Corn Exchange	
45	John Bourne	1866	141 Eastgate, Louth	Farmer	(81)
46	John Nelson	1866	Wyham House, Wyham	Farmer	
47	William Newman	1866	Louth	Corn & Coal Merchant, Thames Street & Corn Market	(81)
48	John Norfolk	1866	20 Eastfield Road, Louth	Seed Crusher	(81)
49	Thomas Elkington Smith	1871	Trinity Terrace, Louth	Merchant, Nell & Smith, in 1881 census referred to as Manure Manufacturer & Coal Merchant	(81)
50	Samuel Topliss	1871	Louth	Draper & Silk Mercer, Mercer Row	(81)
51	John East	1871	Louth	Merchant in Wine, Spirit, Corn & Coal, Riverhead	
52	Isaac Strawson	1871	Louth	Farmer, by 1881 farming 200 acres at Tetney	(81)
53	David Grant Briggs	1871	Louth	By 1881 Estate Agent & Auctioneer at Wrawby	(81)
54	James Nell	1871	Trinity Terrace, Louth	Merchant	(81)
55	Robert Gray Chatterton	1871	Tathwell	Farmer	(81)
56	William Hay	1871	The Hall, South Reston	Farmer & Brickmaker	
57	William Ludlam	1871	High Holme Road,	Mason & Son, Auctioneer	(81)

	Mason		Louth		
58	William Nell	1871	Louth	Ship Owner, Seed Crusher, Merchant, Riverhead	(81)
59	John Hewson	1871	Louth	Chemist, Druggist, Insurance Agent	
60	Charles M. Nesbitt	1871	19 & 21 Cornmarket Louth	Manager Lincoln & Lindsey Bank, Borough Treasurer, JP	(81)
61	Thomas Falkner Allison	1871	Louth	Solicitor, Town Clerk, Clerk of Gas Company, Wine Merchant, & by 1881 also a farmer	(81)

An Enterprise becoming less Attractive

A study of the register of the canal commissioners 1866 to 1882 reveals a decline in their number. This would suggest that the entrepreneurs, professional and business people of Louth as well as the farmers and landowners of the surrounding countryside who made up the canal commission were of the opinion that the canal was no longer a suitable place for their financial and commercial involvement. William Emeris was unusual in his socio-economic background for a commissioner in that he appears to be financially independent. In the 1881 census he is referred to as maintaining himself through land, houses and dividends. In this respect he fits much more the profile of the shareholders who were of independent means.

In 1866 the number of commissioners on the register was 48. Of these the earliest had been appointed in 1828 and 1831. Five were appointed in 1848, and July 1866 saw a sudden infusion of new blood with the appointment of another 36 commissioners. Over half (58%), of the total on the register came from Louth. The same is true of the newly appointed commissioners, over half (53%), came from Louth. By 1876 the 99 year lease which the GNR took over in 1847 would run out. At this point it would be possible for the commissioners to resume management of the tolls and the leasehold land at the Riverhead. It might be possible that the great influx of commissioners from Louth's commercial and professional classes, and the wealthy farmers in the surrounding countryside in 1866, was because they saw a good financial opportunity in the next 10 years. When the lease ran out it would be possible for them to gain more control over their trading costs via control of the level of tolls. This group may well have felt side lined by the control the GNR had over tolls 1847-1876. It was noted in Stuart Sizer's history of the Louth Navigation that the GNR general manager Henry Oakley expressed concern in 1876 just before the lease ended that the canal could still be an economic competitor to the railway freight when the GNR lost control. This reveals a possible interesting local condition. The railway network was at its greatest extent at this time. Inland waterways nationally were regarded as inefficient compared with rail transport. The Louth canal probably gave more convenient access to South Yorkshire than the railways. The railway route to South Yorkshire was less direct than by water. Land transport had to go all the way around the Humber estuary.

The numbers held up quite well until 1876, when there were 40 on the register. There was quite a healthy influx of new members in 1871 when another 13 were appointed, the great majority of these again from Louth. There were 4 new appointments in 1876, all of them also from Louth. By 1877, however, numbers had dropped to 29 with just one new member, John Hay of Louth. By 1882, when the register record ends numbers had dropped further to 22. When commissioners died their absence was recorded in the register as 'dead'. It is clear that as they passed on the overall number of commissioners declined and fewer others wished to be involved in the management of tolls and rental connected with the canal.

The sources used to identify occupations were the following:

White's Directory 1872;

UK Census 1881;

Other sources: Louth Navigation a History; Stuart M. Sizer; 1999; Louth Navigation Trust parish records using the Family Search International Genealogical Index for families.