

**Merchant Networks and Knowledge Transfer in the British Textile Trade 1820–1840:
The Case of Langworthy Brothers & Co.**

By Alexander Appleton

100312893/1

**A Thesis Submitted to the School of Arts and Humanities
University of East Anglia**

**In fulfilment of the Requirements of Doctor of Philosophy
March 2025**

**This copy of the thesis has been supplied on condition that anyone who consults it is
understood to recognise that its copyright rests with the author and that use of any
information derived there-from must be in accordance with current UK Copyright Law.
In addition, any quotation or extract must include full attribution.**

Abstract

This thesis looks at the importance of merchanting roles in the export of British textiles to overseas markets between 1820 and 1840 through a study of the surviving archival records of Langworthy Brothers & Co. Langworthy was a highly successful textile manufacturer and merchant firm which originated in Manchester during the early nineteenth century. During the 1820s and 1830s, Langworthy concentrated on adapting different textile product lines for overseas markets as well as importing slave-grown produce, including cotton. The Langworthy archive includes extensive items of correspondence, shipping records, cash books and receipts that provide a rich qualitative picture of the British textile trade. This work is the first in-depth study of a Manchester textile merchant firm since 1965 and bestows a fresh perspective on the merchanting aspect of the industry. It provides evidence for the significance of merchant roles, including merchant banks, Liverpool shipping firms, cotton brokers and commission agents. The thesis argues that it was a combination of strong and weak ties with these various merchant roles that allowed Manchester firms to globalise British textiles. It also reveals how information and expertise passed through these networks and produced comparative learning that gave British firms a competitive advantage in overseas markets, especially in Latin America. It was this information, combined with Manchester's specialist suppliers, that allowed manufacturers to fine-tune products that could be successfully adapted for complex consumer demands in competitive markets. This included printing optimal patterns on products that were likely to succeed in overseas markets, or dyeing cottons in the most sought-after colours. Overall, this thesis contributes to our broader understanding of the nature of the British textile trade's commercial success during the period between 1820 and 1840 with a specific focus on both Manchester and Latin America.

Access Condition and Agreement

Each deposit in UEA Digital Repository is protected by copyright and other intellectual property rights, and duplication or sale of all or part of any of the Data Collections is not permitted, except that material may be duplicated by you for your research use or for educational purposes in electronic or print form. You must obtain permission from the copyright holder, usually the author, for any other use. Exceptions only apply where a deposit may be explicitly provided under a stated licence, such as a Creative Commons licence or Open Government licence.

Electronic or print copies may not be offered, whether for sale or otherwise to anyone, unless explicitly stated under a Creative Commons or Open Government license. Unauthorised reproduction, editing or reformatting for resale purposes is explicitly prohibited (except where approved by the copyright holder themselves) and UEA reserves the right to take immediate 'take down' action on behalf of the copyright and/or rights holder if this Access condition of the UEA Digital Repository is breached. Any material in this database has been supplied on the understanding that it is copyright material and that no quotation from the material may be published without proper acknowledgement.

Acknowledgements

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the help and support I have received from others. I would first like to thank my PhD supervisors, both past and present.

I would like to thank Katie Belshaw, Curator at the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester. Katie has been with me on the project from the very start and has been a constant source of support and encouragement. Her expertise and advice have been invaluable in helping me to make sense of the source materials and in linking them to broader discussions in the field. Her specialist knowledge of Manchester and its industry helped me to contextualise my findings and navigate the sometimes alien world of the Lancashire textile industry. Not least she helped to keep me motivated and organised during the difficult time of the Covid-19 lockdown.

I am also grateful for the support of Dr Tim Boon of the Science Museum. Tim's advice regarding writing structure has been essential in allowing me to express my ideas clearly. His initial encouragement of my ideas was a real motivational boost during the early stages of the project.

I must also thank both Professor Geoffrey Plank and Professor Anthony Howe. Both Geoffrey and Anthony left the project early, however, the legacy of their input into the project lives on in the thesis. Geoffrey was a key voice in convincing me to focus on the Langworthy archive. Anthony, especially, has continued to talk with me and his exceptional knowledge of Manchester and its Cotton Industry means he has been a treasure trove of useful information for this work, I cannot thank him enough.

Professor Geoff Hicks has been a great help in the final phase of this journey. As a replacement supervisor he managed to get up to speed with the project very quickly. His keen eye for presentation and writing style has been a huge asset in polishing up the thesis and in helping me get to the stage of submission.

I would also like to thank all the other scholars I have talked with at various academic conferences throughout the UK, especially those of the Economic History Society. Dr Aashish Velkar deserves a special mention. I am similarly grateful to Anthony Sykas who has corresponded with me on multiple occasions during this project. His incredible in-depth knowledge of textile history has been of considerable utility to me in understanding the types of textiles Langworthy dealt in. Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to both Jane Middleton Smith and Stanley Chapman. Jane, who works at the John Smedley Archive, was instrumental in organising a meeting which gave me the opportunity to meet Stanley. The chance to discuss my ideas with such an esteemed scholar as Stanley was a great honour.

I would also like to thank the staff of the various archives and libraries that have been used in the creation of this thesis. This includes those who work at the Manchester Central Library, John Rylands Library and Science and Industry Museum Archive. The staff of the SIM archive, especially Emma Burgham, have shown great diligence and support in helping me to navigate both the materials of Langworthy Brothers & Co. and the other archives stored at SIM.

Finally, I must thank my parents, they have always been there to reassure me and support me in any way possible, not least in allowing me to use the house extension as an office.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|------|
| Glossary..... | viii |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Historiographical Context | 1 |
| Approach and Core Archive | 12 |
| Brief History of Langworthy Brothers & Co. | 16 |
| Structure of Thesis | 21 |
| Chapter 1: The Industrial Districts of Manchester and the Fine-tuning of Cotton Textiles..... | 25 |
| The Firm's Operations in Manchester | 30 |
| Langworthy and the Warehouse City | 39 |
| Warehouse on Cannon Street..... | 39 |
| Manchester's Specialists and the Finishing of Textiles..... | 48 |
| Bleachers..... | 48 |
| Dyers | 50 |
| Printers..... | 54 |
| Manufacturing Districts and Packaging Services | 59 |
| Spinners and Weavers | 59 |
| Packers, Wrappers and Calenderers..... | 65 |
| Conclusion..... | 68 |
| Chapter 2: Communications of Useful Knowledge and Foreign Markets, 1828 to 1839: Mastering Imitations and Product Selection..... | 70 |
| Latin American Markets and Slavery | 75 |
| Wider Market Conditions and Prevalent Product Types | 79 |
| Langworthy's Commission Agents in Brazil and the Market Chain | 85 |
| Changing Partnerships 1834–1839 | 87 |
| Navigating Market Forces and Wider Events 1828–1839..... | 88 |
| Abdication of Dom Pedro I..... | 89 |
| The Financial Panic of 1837..... | 90 |
| Chronology of Langworthy's Export Operations to Brazil | 90 |
| Common Themes in Communications..... | 95 |
| Presentation, Colours, Patterns and Shades..... | 95 |
| Packaging | 102 |
| Competition | 104 |
| Conclusion..... | 108 |

| | |
|--|-----|
| Chapter 3: Manchester Textile Merchants and Transport | 111 |
| Canals | 114 |
| The Fly Coach | 118 |
| Railways | 125 |
| Shipping | 133 |
| Marine Insurance | 136 |
| Conclusion | 138 |
| Chapter 4: Manchester Merchants and the First Merchant Banks: The Case of Langworthy Brothers & Co. and Frederick Huth & Co., 1831 to 1839 | 140 |
| Historiographical Context of Merchant Banking | 142 |
| Background and Mechanisms of Merchant Banking | 144 |
| The Initiation of the Relationship | 145 |
| The Business Connection | 148 |
| The Consequences of the Langworthy–Huth Business Connection for the Langworthy Business .. | 150 |
| Trading on Huth's Account: Peru, Mexico, Chile, Cuba and the West Coast of South America, 1831–1839 | 153 |
| Underwriters | 156 |
| Langworthy's Consignments for Drusina and Martinez, Mexico, 1831–1835 | 158 |
| Later Consignments in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific, 1835–1839 | 162 |
| The Globalisation of Manchester's Textile Exporters | 164 |
| Associated Networks and Contacts | 165 |
| Cross-Pennine Connection | 166 |
| A Liverpool Connection | 168 |
| Conclusion | 170 |
| Chapter 5: Langworthy and the Port of Liverpool, Brokers, Shippers and Commission Merchants .. | 172 |
| Liverpool's Development and the Literature | 174 |
| Forwarding Agents and General Merchants | 176 |
| Turner Brade & Co. | 176 |
| Tennants Moor & Co. | 180 |
| Alexander Johnston & Co. | 181 |
| Shipping Firms | 182 |
| Charles Ironside & Co. | 184 |
| Charles Taylor & Co. | 186 |
| Weaker Shipping Ties | 187 |
| The Importance of Brazilian Cotton to Liverpool Merchant Roles | 189 |
| Cotton Brokers | 191 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Molyneux Taylor & Co..... | 192 |
| Firms with Diversified Roles..... | 194 |
| Conclusion..... | 195 |
| Chapter Six: Manchester's Distribution Networks in Britain and Overseas | 197 |
| Historiographical Context of Business Networks..... | 198 |
| Commission Agents, Distributors and the Growth of Manchester's Textile Trade | 200 |
| The Importance of Commission Agents in Navigating Geopolitical Uncertainty..... | 202 |
| Commission Agents and Familiarity with Markets | 204 |
| Importance of London Agencies | 205 |
| Langworthy's Overseas Commission Agents | 206 |
| Ottoman Empire and Constantinople..... | 207 |
| Oporto, Isaac Newton | 212 |
| Mexico Agents..... | 213 |
| Loose Networks of Overseas Contacts..... | 214 |
| Langworthy's Agents in Britain | 215 |
| London | 215 |
| Castelli Brothers | 217 |
| James Deacon and Sons | 219 |
| Langworthy's Agents in Other Parts of Britain | 220 |
| Conclusion..... | 221 |
| Conclusion..... | 223 |
| Bibliography | 230 |
| Primary Material | 230 |
| Printed Primary Material | 232 |
| Secondary Material..... | 233 |
| Books..... | 233 |
| Journal Articles and Book Chapters | 236 |
| Websites | 239 |
| Theses | 240 |
| Appendices..... | 241 |
| Appendix A, Names of Local Suppliers, Their Role and Location, within the vicinity of Manchester along with Number of Receipts Found in Archive. | 241 |
| Appendix B, Transactions with Local Firms in Manchester by Area | 243 |
| Appendix C, Most Common Trade Locations with Dates, Number of Transactions and the Number of Agents and Distributors, Types of Goods Exported, YA2013.25,3,2,1 Accounts Ledger..... | 244 |

| | |
|---|-----|
| Appendix D, YA2013.25/2/2/1 Number of shipwrecks and consignments damaged referred to in the correspondence with agents in Brazil. | 249 |
| Appendix E, YA2013.25/3/2/1 Number of dealings between Langworthy Brothers & Co. and other firms, 1825–1836. | 250 |

Glossary

| Term | Definition |
|------------------|--|
| Bafts | A plain woven white cotton or muslin |
| Bahia | A northern region of Brazil, an important export location for Langworthy Brothers & Co. |
| Beaverteneens | Fabric made of twilled cotton. |
| Bengal Stripes | Striped fabric that originated from Bengal in India |
| Bleaching | Process used to clean and remove impurities from fabric with bleaching powder |
| Blue Indias | Generic term for blue coloured textiles that originated from India, generally dyed with Indigo |
| Blue Nankeen | Cotton fabric that originated from China and is dyed with Indigo |
| Broker | Someone whose business is to buy and sell goods on behalf of other firms |
| Calenderer | Firm involved in the finishing of process of textile who passes fabric between rollers to create a thinner and smoother material |
| Calendering | Process whereby fabric is passed between rollers to compress material and make it smooth. |
| Calico | A plain cotton textile which is unbleached |
| Cambrics | Cotton or linen cloth that is closely woven, the name originates from France |
| Cantons | Silks that originated from Canton in China, similar quality to Bengals |
| Carding | The process whereby raw cotton is prepared for spinning by passing the material between moving surfaces |
| Carrier | Firms involved in the temporary storage and conveyance of goods to another location on behalf of another business |
| Checks | A cotton fabric with a horizontal checked pattern, often with two colours |
| Cochineal | A type of insect used to make dyes |
| Commission Agent | Merchant who is paid on commission by another firm, in the British textile industry |
| Cords | Cotton fabric using a diagonal weave |
| Cotton | Fibre from cotton plant used to make textiles |
| Cross hatching | This is where, in order to fit as much information on the paper as possible, a writer continues to write on top of what has already been written on the page |
| Drape | The way a fabric hangs under its own weight |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Drill | Cotton fabric with a twill weave |
| Drysalters | Dealer in chemical products such as Indigo |
| Finishing | Adding a finishing agent to fabric |
| Florentines | Textile design that originated from Florence |
| Fly Coach | Refers to the early commercial coaching services for transporting people and goods. |
| French Ginghams | A Striped or checked fabric |
| Fustians | A type of heavy cotton fabric that originated from Egypt |
| Grey Cloth | Unfinished cloth which has not been bleached or printed upon |
| Handle | The feel of the textile when touched |
| Indigo | Colour extracted from organic material and dye used to make blue cottons |
| Jacquard | A loom that uses punched cards to create patterned cloth |
| Linen | Textile made from flax |
| Manchester Chamber of Commerce | A chamber which evolved from the Manchester Commercial Society in 1822 for the protection of the commercial interests of the merchants and manufacturers of Manchester. |
| Merchant and Manufacturer | Manufacturer of a specific category of textile as well as general merchanting and finishing of goods produced by other firms. |
| Merchant Banks | A banking firm that funds merchant ventures |
| Merchant Convertor | A firm which bought unfinished cloth from other suppliers and convert it into finished, often printed items |
| Merchant-Manufacturer | A firm that both manufactured textiles and then merchanted them directly to consumers |
| Moleskins | Type of thick and strong cotton cloth |
| Mordant Dyes | Substances with two purposes, uniting the fibre and the colouring matter, usually including fast dyes |
| Mule | Machines used to spin cotton into yarn, machines became increasingly mechanised and could control the speed at which the spindles turned |
| Muslin | A plain cotton fabric, an open and loose weave |
| Nankeen | Yellowish form of cotton cloth, which was often used to make trousers, originated from China. Langworthy's Nankeens were cheap imitations of the original cloth. They came in many varieties including Striped Nankeens. |
| Oil Cloth | Cloth which has been treated with linseed oil to make it waterproof, often used in packaging of textiles for shipment |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| Packer | Name of a firm responsible for packing goods produced by other business or providing packing materials |
| Pattern Book | Used to identify stocks suitability |
| Pattern Card | A card with holes in it, used to create a pattern when weaving textiles. Can also refer to card with samples and swatches of fabric attached to denote designs. |
| Pernambuco | A northern area of Brazil. The region was heavily dominated by slave plantations. Raw cotton was imported from the area to feed the Lancashire textile industry |
| Piece | This was a standard length of fabric, typically twenty-eight yards for calicoes |
| Piece Goods | Textile goods sold in long length |
| Prints | Printed textiles |
| Remittances | A form of payment in exchange for products or services, for examples, cash or produce were sent back to exporters as a form of payment |
| Salempore | Cotton cloth which originated from India, was a popular export to South American markets and Africa. |
| Samples | Small pieces of fabric used to judge marketability of textiles or imitate in the manufacturing process |
| Satin | Cotton textile that uses a weave to produce a smooth finish, in this case the warp covers the weft, the intersections are widely distributed |
| Shipper | Firm involved in the shipment and transportation of goods to overseas ports |
| Spindle | Rods that turn in order to twist fibre into yarn |
| Spinning | Turning cotton fibres into yarns |
| Striped Nankeens | An imitation of the yellow cottons that originated in China with striped patterns |
| Stuff | Plain woollen fabric |
| Thread Count | Number of standard lengths in a yarn. |
| Trade Circulars | Pamphlets that provide information and data on trading habits, trends, changes and rules |
| Twills | A strong cotton fabric made with a diagonal weave |
| Twine | Thread used for tying and binding |
| Velveteens | Fabric made to imitate velvet, often made with a combination of silk and velvet |

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Vertical Integration | A firm which combines two or more stages of production which are usually conducted by separate firms. |
| Warp | Yarns which are fixed to a loom and which weft is passed through to weave a fabric |
| Weaving | Yarns are interwoven to create fabric |
| Weft | Yarn woven lengthways underneath the warp |
| Yarn | Length of fibre used for weaving |

Introduction

In the period between 1780 and 1840 the British economy underwent a radical transformation which led to an increase in productive output and to new ways of living and working. This is the period that is most classically understood as the period of the Industrial Revolution, a term which was first conceived by the scholar Arnold Toynbee and which, in the case of Britain, is often associated with Lancashire.¹ Historians such as Eric Hobsbawm have recognised the English cotton industry and the city of Manchester as the pacemaker of this revolution on account of the application of mechanisation and rationalisation to the production process in cotton textiles which was the catalyst for the transition from the domestic system of output to the modern factory system that still dominates industrial nations.² The use of technical advances and power driven machinery in the pursuit of manufacturing during this period have captured the imagination of both historians and the public alike.³ British cottons soon found their way into overseas markets, originally in Europe and the USA and by the early nineteenth century the newer markets of Latin America, Africa, India and China. However, the focus on production has led to the neglect of the importance of communication networks in the supply chain and of the tertiary sector in allowing the British economy to dominate the international trade in textiles. Even in the export of mass-produced goods, the merchanting system was fundamental to the comprehensive development of products and their distribution, yet this part of the story has been significantly overlooked. Put simply, this thesis provides a fresh insight into the importance of merchanting to the success of the British textile industry between 1820 and 1840, by studying the records of Langworthy Brothers & Co. held at the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester. This was the period when Manchester specialised in the mass-produced printed cottons that came to dominate British textile exports.

Historiographical Context

The importance of Manchester's role in the export market for cotton textiles during the first half of the nineteenth century has long been recognised in the literature. However, much of this has taken the form of economic history dedicated towards the mechanisation of factories and the productive aspects of the textile trade, while the merchanting aspects of the industry have been largely ignored. This thesis aims to address this absence of research on these merchanting aspects by evidencing the economic pathways of the period using an archival case study approach focused on a prominent textile business named Langworthy Brothers & Co. (hereafter often referred to as Langworthy), with

¹ D.C. Coleman, *Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution* (London: Hambledon Press, London, 1992), 3.

² Eric Hobsbawm, *Industry and Empire* (London: Penguin, 1968), 12.

³ Coleman, "Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution", 30.

additional archival evidence used from other prominent textile companies for comparative purposes. By focusing on individual firms, it is possible to shed new light on the details of the interplay between the business owners, their counterparts across the globe and the unsung conduits of knowledge and skills channelled by merchant banks, brokers, shipping companies and commission agents.

The foremost historian on merchant enterprise in Britain is Stanley Chapman. His work broadly traces the history of merchanting from the end of the Napoleonic Wars up until the First World War, with special attention to the role of merchant banks. Much of Chapman's work came in the form of overarching studies of Britain as a whole and covered a prolonged period and multiple industries.⁴ Chapman argued that there had been a significant neglect of the tertiary sector in favour of the story of production within historiographical debate on the Industrial Revolution. Though Chapman did draw upon some examples from Manchester and the Lancashire textile industry, much of the detail is lost in the scope of the wider narrative as his main interest was the broader contribution of British merchanting to the economy as a whole. Consequently, Chapman's research paves the way for more detailed monographs on specific aspects of merchant enterprise within certain industries and geographical areas. This thesis will help to fill this gap within the literature.

This investigation builds upon Chapman's work while also challenging some of his assertions. For example, Chapman shows how most of the big merchants in Manchester during the early to mid-nineteenth century were merchant-manufacturers who became dominant after the end of the Napoleonic Wars. These include names such as Fielden Brothers, John Rylands, Butterworth and Brooks, H. Bannermen and Sons, Owen Owens and Son, and Robert Gardner. Many of these firms' earliest founders had started out as merchants before moving into manufacturing by buying cotton mills and then paradoxically diversifying as merchant-manufacturers in order to have greater control of the selling of their own products. Chapman argues that in the period after 1830 as markets began to become more complex and increasingly far-reaching, the composition of firms diversified once again as manufacturers, daunted by the complexities of trade, began to hand responsibility back to merchants who had for a while confined themselves to the rank of commission agents.⁵ In line with Peter Maw's thesis on the Anglo-American textile trade between 1750 and 1825, this research into Langworthy calls into question some of Chapman's abstractions on merchant-manufacturer roles and asserts that merchant firms often performed more complex tasks in the textile industry than was first thought, both before and after 1830.⁶ It supports Maw's notion that "the majority of Manchester

⁴ Stanley Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

⁵ Ibid., 69.

⁶ Peter Maw, "Anglo-American Trade during the Industrial Revolution: A Study of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Textile Industries 1750-1825" (PhD thesis, Manchester University, 2005).

exporters combined the production of a specific denomination of cottons with general dealing in Manchester goods, while several leading exporters of printed calicoes combined spinning, weaving and printing".⁷ This work on Langworthy Brothers & Co. therefore attempts to provide a more nuanced understanding of the significance of merchants in stimulating the export of textiles to distant markets. While Maw's work focused on the role of merchants in the trade with North America, this project will focus predominantly on the penetration of Latin American markets.

The work of scholars such as Chapman and Manuel Llorca-Jana on merchant banking has also served to inspire the third chapter of this thesis which investigates the relationship between Langworthy Brothers & Co. and the merchant bank Frederick Huth & Co. These narratives are useful in detailing the rise of merchant banking in London and its historical roots in Amsterdam. By looking at London-based firms such as Rothchild and Baring Brothers, Chapman was able to show how the use of credit and bills of exchange, which were underpinned by the wealth of these large firms, played a fundamental role in fostering British trade around the globe.⁸ This narrative was mainly London-centred and did not delve into many specific empirical examples of how merchant banks aided the operations of British northern manufacturers in the textile industry. Llorca-Jana's work on Frederick Huth & Co. did go some way in helping to fill this gap in the literature by using a case study approach on Huth's records and serves as an inspiration to this research into Langworthy.⁹ Llorca-Jana revealed the way in which Huth used its wealth to extend credit to textile exporters in Lancashire. This research differs to Llorca-Jana's and Chapman's in that it looks at this phenomenon from the perspective of a firm in Manchester instead of the merchant bank. As opposed to the story of how the Huth merchant bank exploited the textile industry, this work examines the relationship from the other side by showing how northern firms formed connections with London merchant banks and derived benefits from them.

Douglass Farnie devoted specific narratives to the Lancashire cotton trade and highlighted the importance of merchants as the "prime movers" of the industry. In his work Farnie argued that the role of merchants in economic history had been largely sidelined within the literature. Merchants had been relegated to the role of "middlemen" who acted purely on the will of capitalists and deterministic

⁷ Ibid., 264.

⁸ Stanley Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking* (London: Routledge, 1984), 9.

⁹ Manuel Llorca-Jana, *The Globalization of Merchant Banking before 1850, The Case of Huth & Co.* (London: Routledge, 2016).

market forces.¹⁰ He attempted to counter this perception by arguing that it was merchants who guided the direction of trade by responding to market information which was “the one indispensable weapon in the armoury of the merchant.”¹¹ This involved using samples to select the best designs for consumers. He further highlighted how as “merchant-manufacturers” merchants were also responsible for supervising production.¹² However, just as with Chapman, concrete and detailed examples based on the archival case study approach were not his main focus. This research, based on the Langworthy archive, provides an opportunity to empirically test the wider observations on merchant structures delivered by Chapman and Farnie and provides a concrete example of the importance of merchants as the “prime movers” of the textile industry.

A key factor that makes this study of Langworthy different from much of the existing literature is the degree to which it looks at the business records of private firms, and not those of the commercial institutions representing merchants. Much of the historical narrative on the textile merchants of Manchester has been based on the records of organisations such as the Manchester Chamber of Commerce, which was established by the merchant community to lobby Parliament and fight for the commercial interests of its members.¹³ While these were important studies they have not shed much light on the large proportion of merchants’ interests that lay outside of the formal institutions. Most merchant networking and transactions were conducted among different stakeholders and without the aid of such formal institutions. While governmental fiscal policy, international trade agreements and tariffs were no doubt important, it was the daily challenges of making contacts, securing capital and sourcing materials that were the main concerns of merchant firms. The way a firm navigated these challenges is best reflected in studying its private records. The best example of this is in B.W. Clapp’s study of the Manchester merchant John Owens which serves as inspiration for this study into Langworthy.¹⁴ Clapp used a business history approach and traced the chronological history of the Owens firm throughout the nineteenth century. Special attention was paid to the individual markets that the business was engaged in, from North America to South America, as well as the life of the founder John Owens. Much of Clapp’s account, however, is a business biography which looks at the story of John Owens in a lineal fashion and for its own sake. This investigation into Langworthy takes a different approach to Clapp’s study with a more thematic approach to the source material. It draws

¹⁰ Douglas Farnie, “The Role of Merchants as Prime Movers”, in D.A. Farnie and David J. Jeremy, eds., *The Fibre that Changed the World, The Cotton Industry in International Perspective 1600–1990s* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 27.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 37.

¹² *Ibid.*, 30.

¹³ Arthur Redford, *Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, Vol. 1 1794–1858* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934).

¹⁴ B.W. Clapp, *John Owens, Manchester Merchant* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965).

out bigger issues from the role of merchant banking to local supply systems, which helps to shed light on the much bigger questions regarding the catalysts for the commercial success of British cotton textiles. The micro interactions hold significant information which help to illuminate the wider macro picture.

It is also necessary to distinguish why a business history methodology is important to this topic as this is the method by which this research will be tackled. Hobsbawm famously labelled cotton as the “pacemaker” of the Industrial Revolution and consequently much of the historiography on the British textile industry during the Industrial Revolution has come in the form of either economic or social histories. Scholars of industrialisation such as T.S. Ashton and Hobsbawm tended to focus on quantitative questions of industrial output alongside social questions surrounding standards of living.¹⁵ Scholars of the textile trade and its world markets, such as Farnie and D.C.M. Platt, have looked at the big picture of the changing size and shift of textile exports to different areas of the globe and the various fiscal, political and economic factors that influenced it.¹⁶ However, there is a need for more detailed work to be done with regards to the business archives and specific actors involved in the trade. The perspective of the businesses involved in these larger questions has been somewhat lacking.

Other studies have demonstrated the wider geopolitical factors that influenced the course and direction of Manchester’s industry. Eric Williams brought attention to the relationship between capitalism and slavery.¹⁷ His findings have a great bearing on this project because of his observations on the shifting nature of the cotton triangle following the abolition of slave labour in the West Indies. Despite abolition, the Lancashire textile trade continued to be dependent on slave labour both in North America and Latin America. This work on Langworthy has evidenced some of Williams’ findings, including the continued reliance on the raw cotton produced by enslaved people from Brazil and the demand for cotton clothing amongst the slave populations there. Firms like Langworthy continued to benefit from this system of exploitation. More recently historians have approached the history of cotton from a global perspective, usually with the view of unpicking the inequalities of capitalism and interplay between imperialist policy and the interchange of ideas between industries in different parts of the globe such as India and Britain. Typical examples include the works of Sven Beckert, Jonathan Eacott, Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi.¹⁸ Beckert argued for the importance of “War

¹⁵ T.S. Ashton, *The Industrial Revolution 1760-1830* (London: Oxford University Press, 1948).

¹⁶ D.C.M. Platt, *Latin America and British Trade* (London: A and C Black Publishers Ltd, 1972).

¹⁷ Eric Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944).

¹⁸ Prasannan Parthasarathi, “*The European Response to Indian Cottons*”, in Prasannan Parthasarathi, *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) 2; Jonathan Eacott, *Selling Empire, India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016);

Capitalism" as an explanatory theory for the European success in the trade of cottons goods. It was the powerful institutions and states in Europe that were able to control trade networks through both military force and coercion.¹⁹ This force, combined with the exploitation of enslaved labour, meant that countries like Britain could challenge the dominance of the textile industries found in Asia. This is a view further corroborated by William Ashworth who developed the idea of state power as the main determinant of the Industrial Revolution.²⁰ He especially stressed the importance of protectionism as a bolster of Britain's economic superiority. While the work of this thesis focuses on the actions of individual merchants, it also situates them within this wider imperialist reality. British traders operated within the confines of the nation state and benefited from the imperialist policies of "War Capitalist" Britain.

The global perspective on the British textile trade that has come to dominate much of the recent literature has an important bearing on this analysis of the textile merchants of Manchester.²¹ Scholars such as Llorca-Jana and Vera Blinn Reber have looked at the international merchanting of British goods to certain locations around the globe such as Brazil and Argentina.²² Furthermore, Carlos Gabriel Guimaraes has written extensively on British efforts to trade with Brazil with special attention to the activities of the firm Samuel Phillips & Co.²³ However, scholars have increasingly recognised the interconnectedness and transnational nature of trade and consumption. At the heart of this new line of inquiry are the reasons for European divergence in leading the textile industry after Asia had originally dominated the trade in colourful cottons up until 1750.²⁴ The work of Joseph E. Inikori, especially, is key in revealing the importance of Africa and the African people in the Atlantic world in stimulating both demand for British cottons and in providing the raw materials for its manufacture.²⁵ He equally provides key evidence for the role the Indian textile trade played in standardising British cottons.²⁶ British merchants and manufacturers competed with the Indian-produced textiles distributed by the East India Company, and much of this competition was for markets in West Africa

Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).

¹⁹ Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* (London: Penguin, 2015).

²⁰ William Ashworth, *The Industrial Revolution, The State, Knowledge and Global Trade* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017).

²¹ Virginia Postrel, *The Fabric of Civilisation* (New York: Basic Books, 2020).

²² Vera Blinn Reber, *British Mercantile Houses in Buenos Aires, 1810–1880* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).

²³ Carlos Gabriel Guimaraes, *A Presença Inglesa Nas Finanças E No Comércio No Brasil Imperial* (Sao Paulo: Joana Monteleone, 2012).

²⁴ Giorgio Riello, *Cotton, The Fabric That Made the Modern World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

²⁵ Joseph E. Inikori, *Africans and the Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

²⁶ Joseph E. Inikori, "English Versus Indian Cotton Textiles" in Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, eds., *How India Clothed the World, Global Economic History Series, Volume 4* (Boston: Brill, 2009).

which lay at the heart of the Triangular Trade. This stimulated the imitation and competitiveness of British cottons. Riello has further pointed to how imperialist policy helped to realign consumer culture and preferences in favour of British cottons, many of which were inspired by Indian textile design. This was especially the case for the cheap prints in which Langworthy specialised. Many were imitations of textiles that originated from India. Import substitution lay at the heart of this and helped shift the centre of cotton textile production to Europe and away from India.²⁷ Beverly Lemire has detailed how this process took place in Britain where Indian cottons were marketed to the home market by the East India Company. This started the craze for printed calicoes amongst British consumers.²⁸ However, there has been less attention into how this process also took place in the overseas markets where British-produced cottons would eventually be sold. Marta Vicente is one scholar who has shed some light on this. She has written on how Colonial Spain popularised the wearing of Indian styles of cottons in Latin America during the eighteenth century and how this led to its inhabitants imitating European dress.²⁹ British merchants would then go on to fuel this consumer taste with the advent of the markets opening up following the independence of Latin American countries. Llorca-Jana has asserted that because of the complex demand for printed cottons in Latin America, British merchants were required to work hard to win over buyers, even in the cheap prints trade.³⁰ This all serves as an important historical backdrop to the operations of British textile merchants in the 1820 and 1830s along with their efforts to penetrate the poorer markets of Latin America and Asia.

However, with the exception of Geoffrey Jones' work there has been somewhat of a decline in the business history approach to this subject since the 1990s and works like those of business historians Chapman and Mary B. Rose have declined in fashion.³¹ It can be argued that this has been a loss to the literature as many of the clues to understanding the wider global shifts in cotton textile production and consumption are to be found in the records of the firms that produced and sold the cotton goods.³² Furthermore, the inequalities and exploitations associated with global capitalism are also to be found within the records of business firms. Consequently, a revival of business history also plays its part in continuing to highlight these themes and increasing our understanding of them. The role of

²⁷ Giorgio Riello, "The Globalization of Cotton Textiles, Indian Cottons, Europe and the Atlantic World", in Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 274.

²⁸ Beverly Lemire, *Fashions Favourite, The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 1.

²⁹ Marta V. Vicente, "Cotton Textiles in Colonial Spanish America" in Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 249.

³⁰ Manuel Llorca-Jana, *The British Textile Trade in South America in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

³¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*.

³² Geoffrey Jones, *Merchants to Multinationals* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

slavery in stimulating British exports to Latin America is a significant story thread that comes out of the Langworthy records. Textiles exported by the firm were involved in the clothing of enslaved people from Africa.

Consequently, this work on Langworthy also engages with more recent narratives on Britain's role in the exploitation of enslaved people which has been analysed in the works of Louise Guenther and Beckert.³³ Furthermore, the thesis considers the global interlinkages between British textile developments and that of cloth bought and sold in other locations such as India, Africa and China. Matters such as collaborative learning and cross-cultural communication that have recently been highlighted by scholars such as Inikori and Alka Raman are explicitly evidenced in the Langworthy materials.³⁴ Finally, the conclusions from this work contribute to the more contemporary debates surrounding the reasons for the mass appeal of British cottons. The work and insights of John Styles, Philip Sykas, Riello, and Parthasarathi into the importance of the visual style, patterns and aesthetic value of British cottons, and the significance this played in economic success, is equally uncovered.³⁵ This further helps to move the literature away from oversimplified production and economic narratives that focus on technology and price. It also paves the way for much needed attention into both the role of design and tertiary sector knowledge in the development of the cheap cottons for which Manchester became famous. This further helps build on the work of David Greysmith who has pointed out the general neglect of mass-produced goods in the literature amongst scholars of business and design, which has tended to focus far more on the fancy trade.³⁶ The manner in which cheap prints were designed and marketed to consumers has often been overlooked within the literature. Hence, this analysis of Langworthy's operations very much brings business history into the twenty-first century and continues to build on the progress made by more contemporary lines of inquiry into the nature of Britain's commercial influence in textiles in the early nineteenth century.

Business history remains a key lens for analysing and uncovering product development, preparation and varieties, the significance of business units and networks, and the workings of internal organisations and marketing, all of which remain little understood but were undoubtedly fundamental to the British textile trade. This is a view that has been highlighted by the economic historian D.C.

³³ Louise H. Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil* (Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2004).

³⁴ Inikori, "English Versus Indian Cotton Textiles"; Alka Raman, "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization, Evidence of Comparative Learning in the British Cotton Industry in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *Economic History Review* 75, no.2 (2022).

³⁵ John Styles, "What Were Cottons For in the Early Industrial Revolution", in Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200–1850* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 307.

³⁶ David Greysmith, "The Printed Textile Industry in England 1830–1870" (master's thesis, Middlesex Polytechnic, 1985).

Coleman. He asserted that “the creation of employment, the building of wealth, the use of resources: all have depended and still depend upon the decisions of businessmen, whether they are private capitalists, salaried directors, or the bosses of nationalized industry”. Coleman felt that historians should be looking at the work of businessmen in the same way as other actors such as politicians; he believed failing to do so would “be missing a good part of the play”.³⁷ Hence business history is an essential tool for tackling questions about causation in the past and incorporating the perspective of the businessman within the historiography.

N.S.B. Gras has pointed out that while economic and political history usually assumes business as a given and mainly focuses on public and general developments, business history does the opposite by assuming the public sphere as the context and concentrating on the private domain of business.³⁸ Surprisingly little historiography of individual firms in the British textile industry exists with the exception of Clapp’s work on the merchant John Owens and Brian Law’s work on the Fielden business.³⁹ However, the value of business history goes far beyond merely incorporating the viewpoints of the firms that were involved in trade; it also provides material to understand and connect both the history of industrial capitalism and the history of markets. The foremost business history journal, the *Business History Review*, has argued that much of the literature on industrial capitalism tends to be undertaken by British and American professors in history departments, who looked at events from an American or British perspective, whereas much of the emerging market literature, including Llorca-Jana’s work on South American markets, tends to be done by scholars from those regions, and who are specifically focused on these geographical areas. It points out that “there is strikingly little interaction between these different methodologies.”⁴⁰ Yet by constructing narratives from the business records it is possible to conjoin these two perspectives and provide a more transnational view of economic history. This is a fact best summed up by Sheryllynne Haggerty in her work on British merchants in the Atlantic. She states that: “Because merchants did not always adhere to geopolitical constructs, whatever the wishes of their government, a history of the merchant community also helps to alleviate the potential of any perceived boundaries of Atlantic Worlds or accusations of academic myopia.”⁴¹ For example, in the Langworthy firm case study both the industrial output in Manchester and the variables affecting demand in markets such as Brazil are entwined with

³⁷ Coleman, *Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution*, 178.

³⁸ N.S.B. Gras, “Business History”, reprinted in Walter A. Friedman and Geoffrey Jones, eds., *Business History* (Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013), 398.

³⁹ Brian R. Law, *Fieldens of Todmorden* (Littleborough: George Kelsall, 1995).

⁴⁰ “Debating Methodology in Business History”, *Business History Review* 91, no.3: A Special Issue on Methodologies (Autumn 2017).

⁴¹ Sheryllynne Haggerty, *Merely for Money? Business Culture in the British Atlantic, 1750–1815* (Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 2012), 4

the firm's outlook, and this is evidenced in the sources. It is difficult to think of another approach which can deliver this insight.

By approaching this subject from the perspective of a firm engaged in the textile trade, a more transnational view of the British textile industry and the factors involved in its development can be illuminated. This applies to both the international perspective and the situation in Manchester. A business history that utilises the archives of deceased merchant firms also allows for engagement with literature that traces the business composition of the city and the exact relationship between merchanting and manufacturing such as that dealt with by Roger Lloyd-Jones and Maw.⁴² Arguments surrounding the nature of warehousing, local supply networks as well as local transport are a key part of this narrative.⁴³

No business history enquiry can be conducted without conceptual frameworks by which to explore source material and add meaning to the findings. Rose, in her comparative study of the British and American textile industries, highlighted the potential of business history to showcase explanations such as network theory, evolutionary theory and business culture in promoting commercial success in the textile trade.⁴⁴ Consequently, similar conceptual themes are explored in this project. Other scholars of the trade have typically used either quantitative methods to measure change in the textile industry or have resorted to the analysis of published material such as trading gazettes. However, these methods all fail to capture the cultural and social environment in which firms involved in the industry were required to operate. This means that the reasons for changing trade patterns remain highly speculative and are often attributed to changes in fiscal policy or definitive technological changes. In line with Rose's arguments, this research rests on the premise that only by studying the unpublished records of the businesses involved in the industry can one ascertain the mechanisms and environment by which the historical actors made decisions.

This thesis draws upon social network theories by scholars such as Mark Granovetter, particularly his sociological theory on the "strength of weak ties" as an explanatory method of how resources and information pass through business networks.⁴⁵ In this theory Granovetter shows how distant ties with other stakeholders can provide new information and knowledge which can then create new opportunities for the stakeholders involved. Furthermore, this theory helps to demonstrate the way in which larger merchant networks were constructed and the factors that made them possible. One

⁴² Roger Lloyd-Jones and M.J. Lewis, *Manchester in the Age of the Factory, The Business Structure of Cottonopolis in the Industrial Revolution* (London: Croom Helm, 1988).

⁴³ Peter Maw, *Transport and The Industrial City, Manchester and the Canal Age* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013).

⁴⁴ Mary B. Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 9.

⁴⁵ Mark S. Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties", *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no.6 (1973).

mutual weak tie might lead to the formation of a new trading relationship. This is evidenced in Langworthy's various connections with merchants and manufacturers. This project looks at a combination of weaker ties and stronger and more fundamental ties to Langworthy's success. This includes ties such as the relationship with the merchant bank Frederick Huth & Co. which is explored in more depth. Haggerty has used similar themes including the importance of trust and reliability in merchant networks for navigating technical and moral hazards in the transatlantic trade.⁴⁶ Merchants navigated the risks associated with war and economic downturn by forming links with reliable partners. The stability and commercial success of a firm very much rested on its ability to form ties with strong partners in areas such as shipping, finance and procuring raw materials. Reliability and familiarity with these types of business partners and functions was fundamental to gaining opportunities in overseas markets. The Langworthy archive presents a perfect opportunity to analyse these types of networks.

This thesis builds further on other conceptual themes that have been developed in other historiographical works. This includes themes such as the significance of interfirm networks in the direction of trade and business, the interaction between useful knowledge embedded in networks and explicit knowledge, and the significance of decentralised local production systems. This type of approach has been displayed in Johann Murmann's work which unpicked how a combination of strong and weak ties was fundamental to the competitive advantage of businesses involved in the manufacture of synthetic dyes. This was especially evident in the knowledge that was passed through networks which allowed firms to evolve and adapt different dyes. He stated that:

One of the critical resources that firms in the synthetic dye industry needed to obtain was access to organic chemical knowledge and dye innovations. Firms needed to develop ties with universities and professors. Examining the dependence of a dye firm through Burt's more formal network version of resource dependence theory makes apparent that firms were competing for access to the leading organic chemists in the world. Those firms that were able to obtain ties to the best chemical talent of the day outperformed rivals that were not as well connected.⁴⁷

In this instance Murmann was looking at manufacturers involved in the synthetic dye industry during the second half of the nineteenth century. To date, this project on Langworthy will be the first time such a method has been applied to a textile merchant and manufacturer operating in Manchester in the first half of the nineteenth century. Rather than just a story of a firm this is an investigation into the contribution of business practices and organisation to the growth of the British textile industry. This is made especially evident in the interaction between local supply systems in Manchester and the

⁴⁶ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 3.

⁴⁷ Johann Peter Murmann, *Knowledge and Competitive Advantage, The Coevolution of Firms, Technology, and National Institutions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 5.

information arriving from abroad via Langworthy's networks. The interplay between information arriving from overseas markets and the division of production tasks in Manchester was coordinated by firms like Langworthy. Langworthy, therefore, was important in synchronising economic activity both in Manchester and abroad to create new product lines. Jonathan Zeitlin argues that industrial districts were a significant characteristic of the Industrial Revolution, especially in the way that decentralised frameworks of supply gave industrial clusters the flexibility to adapt products. However, he also points out that one of the major drawbacks to this view in the literature "concerns the relationship between the districts and the wider world". He states that "arguably the self-contained character of the industrial districts has been overstated even for earlier periods".⁴⁸ This is why the example of Langworthy is particularly helpful. Because the firm partook in both merchanting and manufacturing, the relationship between world markets and local supply chains is neatly reflected in the archive materials. This provides a new perspective on the Industrial Revolution that has been lacking in the literature to date.

Approach and Core Archive

In 1934 Gras, the original founder of business history as a discipline, argued that the only satisfactory business histories are those which have arisen from the internal records that have survived from businesses. He stated that "without inside records we cannot proceed far in business history".⁴⁹ The Langworthy records, which have until now remained unresearched, are rich regarding the volume of material that has survived along with their potential in shedding light on multiple facets of the British textile trade during the latter part of the Industrial Revolution. Through the archival analysis of the case studies of Langworthy and related firms it is possible to analyse the evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, and interpret the perceptions and thinking of the businessmen of the time, thus providing a robust interpretation of the key themes that have been revealed. Tables are used to make sense of the data found in the firm's cash and accounts books along with visual guides such as Geographic Information Systems Mapping or (GIS). The ledgers are used to contextualise the scale of Langworthy's operations and help place the qualitative evidence found in correspondence. The written letters are transcribed and then put into chronological order with a view to ascertaining important themes relating to merchant successes and build a narrative that can show how the firm's operations changed over time. This project takes a transnational business history approach to the subject by utilising a case study of the Langworthy records and the archives belonging to other textile

⁴⁸ Jonathan Zeitlin, "Industrial Districts and Regional Clusters. The Rediscovery of Industrial Districts: A Disciplinary Paradox", in Geoffrey Jones and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Business History*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 234.

⁴⁹ Gras, "Business History," 385–98.

businesses, including Owen Owens and Sons and Fielden Brothers, which serve as comparative examples to help contextualise the Langworthy materials and the key themes uncovered such as the importance of interfirm networks, market knowledge and merchant banks. Furthermore, by contrasting the Langworthy materials with that of other textile merchant firms it becomes possible to distinguish which practices were unique to Langworthy, and which were more typical of the Lancashire textile industry. As well as using archives, published sources can also be relied on to add further context to the findings that emerge from the research. Typical examples include local business directories by James Pigot and newspapers such as *The Manchester Guardian*.

The Langworthy archive is sizeable and contains documentation relating to multiple facets of the textile trade, including legal, administration and financial matters. Overall, the archive consists of twenty-eight sub-series of materials. This includes communications with Latin American markets, overseas agents and shipping firms in Liverpool and other ports, combined with numerous bills of lading. The bills of lading show the names of the ships being used for operations as well as the destination of the port and the shipping firm responsible. The communications number in the hundreds and mostly date from the late 1820s and early 1830s. There are also fourteen files of general correspondence relating to all matters of the business as well as hundreds of receipts relating to local supply networks in Manchester which Langworthy used to produce products. These include receipts from dyers, printers, packers and spinners. Internal communications between the firm's warehouse (in Manchester) and works (in Eccles) are also preserved in the archive as well as evidence of material culture including textile samples which were used as a form of market research. Each set of general business correspondence holds around 300 letters; however, the size of each file is variable. One file which contains correspondence with the port of Rio de Janeiro numbers around 700 letters and so the archive can be estimated to accommodate thousands of letters.⁵⁰ As well as correspondence with local businesses and foreign ports the Langworthy records also show communications with London-based firms. The archive contains financial records relating to the firm, including a cash book dating from 1831 and several accounts ledgers dating from 1825 to 1836. It also has a bad debt ledger and a shipping costs ledger. Most of the records are from the years 1822 to 1840; however, with the exception of the ledgers, the majority of the written material dates from the 1830s. The years 1833 to 1835 are especially well evidenced in the written letters to overseas agents and Liverpool merchants. The archive is impressive in scale.

The utility of this archive for this subject cannot be overstated. There are few records that shed light on as many aspects of the merchanting of printed cottons during this period as those of the

⁵⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Correspondence regarding cotton sales to Rio de Janeiro and fabric samples.

Langworthy materials. Because of the large volume of correspondence between the Manchester firm and its overseas business connections an intricate picture can be obtained on the conditions of international markets and how British textiles fared in them. At the same time the interfirm connections back in Manchester and the Lancashire region as a whole are also comprehensively evidenced. In fact, one of the most unique features of the archive is its ability to help us understand interfirm operations in the textile trade during this period. The receipts and notes passed between the Langworthy firm and local manufacturers; transport providers and suppliers illuminate how the manufacturing side was responding to overseas demand. How these two sides of the trade interacted is rarely evidenced so finely as in this archive, and this is mainly because the details of the supply side of textile operations are seldom discussed in formal correspondence. Moreover, the short notes that were passed between the firm's warehouse (in Manchester) and works (in Eccles) provide a special glimpse into how merchant firms went about upgrading textiles and preparing orders. The exact mechanics of how textile orders were finished with designs and made ready for export in Manchester is hardly ever evidenced in the general correspondence found in most merchant archives. Instead, most written records tend to focus on matters of finance and orders arriving from overseas ports. Consequently, these records provide a truly unique opportunity to explore an overlooked aspect of the cotton industry during its most formative years, that is, the way British cottons were produced, marketed and distributed by merchants in the decades following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. In addition to receipts from local suppliers, the archive also contains a notable number of receipts from local transport providers, including those which operated on canals, roads and railways. These offer an excellent frame of reference by which to understand the complex relationship between Manchester's textile operations and innovations in local transport during this period. Furthermore, the interactions between the large merchant houses based in the City of London and the northern manufacturing areas are also illuminated. Again there are few archives that provide the perspective of a northern textile firm in the operations of merchant banks and consequently most case studies on merchant banking have been London centred.

The correspondence and ledgers in the archive shed light on how these relationships were formed and maintained but also provide a picture of the role of these relationships in underpinning the merchanting of British textiles. The same is true for the merchant networks in the port of Liverpool which are also shown in the records. Few scholars have had the opportunity to chart these relationships from the perspective of a Manchester merchant firm because of the limited records and so most of the literature on these networks has been based on evidence from either Liverpool or London. This archive makes it possible to tackle questions surrounding the importance of Liverpool merchants and London merchant banks from a new Manchester-based angle. Furthermore, the

correspondence in the archive sent between Langworthy and overseas agents stationed abroad expands our understanding of the inner workings of the markets with which Manchester's textile merchants were engaged. Brazil, in particular, is well documented, but the archives also provide insights into Cuba, Mexico, Chile and Turkey. The types of products that were being sent, specifications, colours and quality are all evidenced. The trials and tribulations involved in overseas commerce are also brought to the surface as is the complex relationship between agents stationed abroad and merchants back in Manchester. Through the analysis of this archive, the thesis aims to build understanding which can contribute to the debates that have occupied scholars about the overseas trade of British textiles in the nineteenth century.

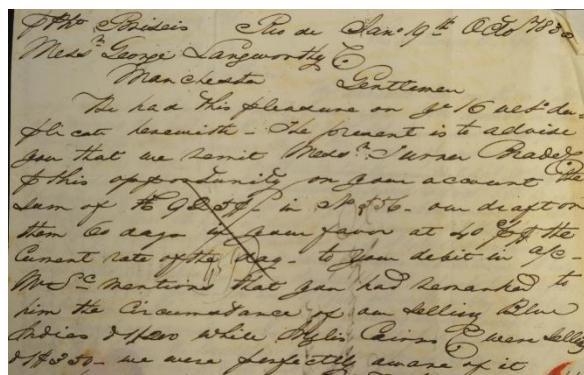


Figure 1: YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade & Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy & Co., Manchester, 19th January 1830.

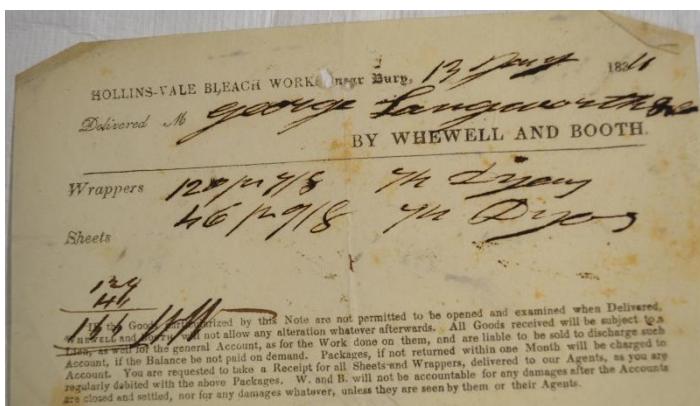


Figure 2: YA2013.25.2.16 Receipt from Whewell and Booth, Hollins Vale Bleach Works, Bury, 13th August 1834.

The above two images (Figures 1 and 2) are key examples from the Langworthy archive. The first is a letter sent to Langworthy from the commission agent Schwind Brade & Co. which resided in Rio de Janeiro. Schwind Brade worked for Langworthy on a commission basis to accept its consignments of textiles from Manchester. It details the types of textiles the agent wishes Langworthy to send to Brazil as well as the general state of the market. This type of source is excellent for showcasing the way useful knowledge was transmitted through interfirm networks and the manner in which this dictated merchants' business strategies, a key theme of this thesis. The second image is that of a receipt from

the firm Whewell and Booth which owned a bleach works in Bury. Langworthy used a range of bleachers and dyers within the vicinity of Manchester to prepare its textiles for export. This receipt is just one of many in the archive that provides a comprehensive picture of how textile exporters interacted with and utilised the local supply systems in Manchester. In the spirit of Gras's business history approach, the documentation relating to Langworthy provides the opportunity for a fresh perspective and a more nuanced understanding of the role of merchant firms in the British textile trade, and the reasons why British cottons were able to be competitive in the global trade during this period.

Brief History of Langworthy Brothers & Co.

The next place we visited which is specially connected with the Langworthy's was Salford, Manchester. Through Mr D. Spong, with whom I had become acquainted through correspondence, we had a wonderfully interesting experience. The next morning after our arrival he conducted us to the cotton mills of Langworthy Brothers & Co., Ltd, called the Greengate Mills, and located in Salford. A gentlemen conducted us through a portion of these where we saw the entire process of making the finished cloth from raw cotton as shipped from our Southern States. Later I met the present manager who told me no Langworthys were now connected with the firm, but that George, Edward Ryley and Lewis Langworthy established the business over 100 years ago.

William Franklin Langworthy, "Researches in England – 1927", from *The Langworthy Family* (New York: William F. and Othello S. Langworthy, 1940), 307.

George Langworthy was born in Surrey in 1801 and was the son of Edward and Sarah Ryley Langworthy, a merchant family that had originated from Somerset. His elder brother Edward had been born four years earlier in 1797 and he had another brother Lewis who was born in 1808. Alongside his brothers Edward and Lewis, George went on to take an active part in the wave of industrialisation and commerce that swept Britain in the early nineteenth century. Like many aspiring entrepreneurs, at that time, he eventually settled in Manchester which was then the shock town of the growing Lancashire cotton industry.⁵¹ Manchester would become known as Cottonopolis on account of its key role as the main trading entrepôt for Lancashire's booming textile industry.⁵² This type of move was common during the early part of the century as merchants began to move from London to be closer to the manufacturing activity that was rising in the north.⁵³ In Manchester, George eventually established the firm George Langworthy & Co. which is first listed in Pigot's directory in 1829 under "Nankeen Manufacturers" and described as based in Church Street.⁵⁴ However, the firm had been

⁵¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 54.

⁵² Alan Kidd and Terry Wyke, *Manchester, Making the Modern City* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016), 73.

⁵³ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 54.

⁵⁴ General Directory of Manchester and Salford, List of Merchants, Manufacturers and Traders, J. Pigot and Son, Fountain Street, (1829).

trading in Manchester since 1822. Nankeens were a popular yellowish cloth that were to become one of the most popular materials for making trousers typically worn by the archetypal middle-class businessmen of the period. In Langworthy's case these products were imitations and not the original textile that had developed in China. Many exhibited different colours and patterns, for example, striped nankeens or blue nankeens.

The firm rose to prominence at the same time as the overseas markets for English cottons were changing. During Napoleon's continental blockade of European ports and the 1812 war with America, British merchants involved in textiles had been looking towards Latin America as an alternative market to sell their goods.⁵⁵ Towards the end of these two conflicts and in the post-war years much of Latin America began to become independent from the Spanish and Portuguese Empires and this opened it up to foreign traders. Latin American countries therefore served as ideal neutral markets for Britain's textile industry that would help compensate for the loss of demand that had occurred in what was then Lancashire's traditional export locations, namely Europe and the USA.⁵⁶ Argentina had become independent from Spain by 1810 and Brazil began the process of freeing itself from Portuguese rule by 1822. The firm's cash book shows that from the 1820s onwards George Langworthy & Co. began to export its products to these new markets, especially Brazil. The period Langworthy was trading with Brazil coincided with growing unilateral free trade movements between Britain and South American countries. Brazil eventually became the largest single market for British cotton goods which were mainly traded in exchange for agrarian produce and raw cotton.⁵⁷

As well as manufacturing and selling nankeens the business also dealt in other items such as cotton drills, checks and salampores. In 1834, Pigot's list still has the firm as "Nankeen Manufacturers" but also as "Manufacturers of Bed-Ticks." Edward, on the other hand, had served an apprenticeship in the firm Charles Taylor and Son & Co. as a young man. Taylor and Sons would eventually go on to trade with George Langworthy & Co. by 1833, and so we can gather that Edward had played a part in introducing the firm to his brother's business.⁵⁸ Edward spent over a decade working as an agent in Latin American countries.⁵⁹ During this time he developed a formidable knowledge of the markets there as well as acquiring various contacts and networks. During this period, he spent time in Brazil,

⁵⁵ Stanley Chapman, "The Commercial Sector", in Mary B. Rose, ed., *The Lancashire Cotton Industry* (Preston: Lancashire Country Books, 1996), 74.

⁵⁶ Douglas Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry and the World Market, 1815–1896* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979), 93.

⁵⁷ Anthony Howe, "Latin America and the Nineteenth-Century Free Trade Project", in Alexandre Mendes Cunha and Carlos Eduardo Suprinyak, eds., *The Political Economy of Latin American Independence* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016), 47.

⁵⁸ Letter from Charles Taylor and Sons, Liverpool, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 24th March 1833.

⁵⁹ William Franklin Langworthy, "Researchers in England 1927", in *The Langworthy Family* (New York: William F. and Othello S. Langworthy, 1940), 308.

Argentina, Mexico and Chile, all of which were markets for which George would go on to manufacture goods. It was no coincidence that Edward was operating in South America at the same time as his brother George's firm, George Langworthy & Co., was beginning to make inroads into those markets. The correspondence and cash books of George Langworthy & Co. show that Edward was conducting transactions with his brother George's business throughout the late 1820s and early 1830s.⁶⁰ When Edward later formally joined his brother's business it seems that Edward continued to specialise in buying and selling abroad while George specialised more in manufacturing. The youngest brother Lewis was also said to have been conducting merchant activities in North America at the time George was establishing his business in Manchester.⁶¹ However, just like Edward, Lewis would later also join George in Manchester.

Throughout the 1820s and 1830s George Langworthy & Co. was acting as a merchant and manufacturer as well as a finisher of cloth. It was purchasing yarn from spinners in Manchester and was specialising in manufacturing for the Latin American markets. At the same time, the firm was buying and selling goods manufactured by other manufacturers in Manchester and beyond, sourcing materials from as far as Leeds, Glasgow and even Dundee. Langworthy took it upon itself to merchant its own goods overseas directly. The span of the firm's markets was vast. From the mid-1820s Langworthy was sending goods to agents in Brazil, in the ports of Rio de Janeiro and El Salvador. From at least 1831 it joined forces with merchant banks including Frederick Huth & Co. and Baring Brothers. It began to consign goods to accepting houses in places such as Chile and Mexico as well as forming trading relations with agents in Havana, Cuba. The firm had made inroads into almost all of the Latin American markets including Argentina. However, its span included markets beyond these countries such as in North America, with New Orleans acting as one of the principal export destinations. The firm was also active in Europe and was trading in ports ranging from Lisbon to Constantinople. It had even managed to penetrate Asian markets such as India, making exports for Calcutta and Bombay, though this trade was not as strong.

By 1832, on account of George being joined by his brothers Lewis and Edward, the firm changed its name to Langworthy Brothers & Co. By this stage Edward had returned home and in the Pigot's 1829 list of Manchester traders, Edward is listed above his brother George as a manufacturer who lived in the Piccadilly area of the city.⁶² The change of George's firm's name from George Langworthy & Co. to Langworthy Brothers & Co. in 1832 certainly marks the period when the brothers all joined forces and

⁶⁰ YA2013.25.3.2.3 Cash ledger.

⁶¹ Mike Shapton, *The Englishmen of Peseta* (London: Aspect Design, 2020), 9.

⁶² Pigot and Son's General Directory of Manchester and Salford, List of Merchants, Manufacturers, and Traders, J Pigot and Son, Fountain Street, (1829), 181.

worked under the same firm. However, they had been collaborating for some years before the name change. The firm's headquarters were in Cannon Street situated in the heart of the central business district of Manchester, an area that was inundated with other merchants.⁶³ From this point on, the range of Langworthy's markets continued to increase as did the diversity of cotton products the firm was manufacturing and dealing in.

By the end of the 1830s the firm had set its sights on expanding its manufacturing capabilities. By the end of 1838 the firm advertised the sale of a 45-horsepower condenser steam engine which it was anxious to sell in order to make room for a much larger one. It was also attempting to sell ten old steam cylinders. By around 1840 the Langworthy dynasty had resettled to a huge manufacturing complex in Salford on the banks of the River Irwell after purchasing a mill there. What became known as the Greengate Mills became one of the largest mills in Salford and such a venture was testimony to Langworthy's successful accumulation of capital. The mill was an impressive spectacle and stretched 200 metres along the river.⁶⁴ Historic Ordnance Survey maps show that in the following decades it extended significantly (see Figure 3). It was one of Salford's biggest employers, with about 1,000 operatives working there.



Figure 3: 1890 Ordnance Survey map of the famous Greengate Mills beside the River Irwell in Salford.

Despite its great economic significance, the Greengate area of Salford was said to be a terrible place to live. The River Irwell was quite literally a sewer on account of all the pollution produced by the mills and the torrents of waste that were regularly poured into it.⁶⁵ Mortalities at the mill were high, and the conditions were so poor that the Greengate area received a mention in Friedrich Engels' *The*

⁶³ John Mortimer, *Mercantile Manchester* (London: Palmer Howe, and Co., 1986), 47.

⁶⁴ Shapton, *Englishmen of the Peseta*, 11.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 13.

Condition of the Working Class in England and was described as terrible.⁶⁶ Langworthy had played its part in creating the age of dark satanic mills and the premises at Greengate were said to be particularly dangerous and were reputed to have had a high death toll.⁶⁷

By 1852, directories listed George as a manufacturer whereas Edward was listed as a merchant. Edward had returned to the profession he had previously specialised in as a young man, that is, the buying and selling of textiles and other commodities. In the Manchester city directories of 1855, Langworthy Brothers & Co. is listed as "Cotton Spinners and Calico Printers and Dyers and Manufacturers of Fustians, Bed Ticks, Drills, Cantons and Trouser Cloths". Both George and Lewis were still working for the firm, but Edward now had his own business named E.R. Langworthy & Co. Edward's lengthy career in the business was to go on and in 1861 he is still listed as a "Cotton Merchant". Langworthy Brothers & Co., on the other hand, continued to exist as a manufacturer. In 1867 Langworthy showcased its goods in the Paris exhibition, displaying a combination of cotton items from velveteen, cord and drill.⁶⁸ The brothers continued to live in the local vicinity of Manchester for the whole period.

Langworthy Brothers & Co. continued to manufacture finished textiles at its mill in Greengate and chose to take advantage of its growing capital and large premises to undertake vertical integration, whereby every process involved in the manufacture of textiles was taking place under one single roof. By 1891 the business is listed as "Dyers, Bleachers and Printers and also Spinners and Manufacturers".⁶⁹ In an 1873 list of credit ratings among Manchester's textile firms, Langworthy Brothers & Co. is shown to have A1 credit worthiness, the highest credit rating a firm was able to receive.⁷⁰ This rare and exceptional credit rating put it on a par with the other giants of cotton such as Horrocks Miller & Co., A and S Henry, Ralli Brothers and Rylands and Sons. This is an indication of how Langworthy was a well-established and stable firm with substantial capital and assets. Even more famous textile businesses such as Owen Owens and Son and Greg Brothers & Co., the descendants of Samuel Greg, failed to score as high a credit rating as Langworthy.

By this stage in their lives George and Edward's success was remarkable and perhaps nothing serves to reflect the significance of their wealth more than the money they left behind. George's son Edward Martin Langworthy received £100,000 from his father after his death and he later received the same amount from his uncle Edward, thus £200,000 in total. This suggests that the wealth created by the

⁶⁶ Friedrich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844* (London: Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., 1892), 62.

⁶⁷ Shapton, *Englishmen of the Peseta*, 13.

⁶⁸ Report of Langworthy showcasing goods at Paris, *Manchester Observer*, 8th June 1867.

⁶⁹ Worrall's Directory of Cotton Mills in Manchester 1891.

⁷⁰ The Manchester Commercial List by Estell & Co., London, 1873.

Langworthy firm was as great as that of other major firms of the period; for example, the firm Rylands and Sons was worth £100,000 in 1850.⁷¹ Edward Langworthy, the younger, went on to use the money to purchase a large sugar plantation in Argentina. The firm Langworthy Brothers & Co. survived well into the twentieth century long after anyone with the name Langworthy was involved with the firm. Edward (Figure 4) also left behind £25,000 to his younger brother Lewis after his death in 1874 at the age of 77.

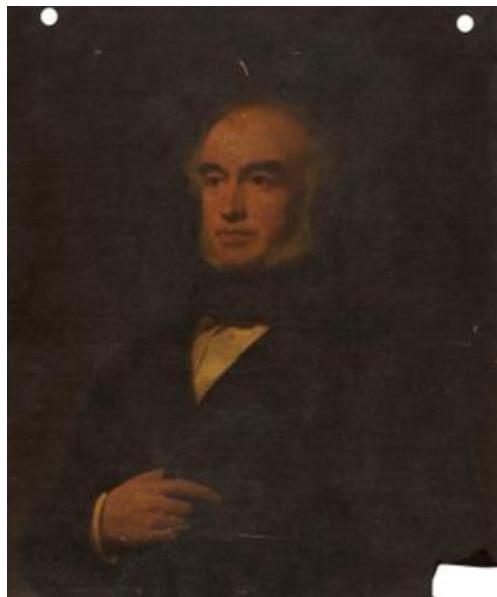


Figure 4: Portrait of Edward Langworthy, 1857. Courtesy of Salford Museum and Art Gallery.

Structure of Thesis

Key themes emerged from the study including the importance of product control processing and techniques, the nature of transport, the significance of merchant roles and networks, diversification of production methods and the cotton trade's connections to slavery. By examining and ascertaining the merchant's role in the trade, this thesis explores the business networks in the textile supply chain that allowed cotton exports from Manchester to penetrate and compete in international markets. It helps to shed light on the importance of export markets, business leadership, product diversification, the continuation of slavery and Manchester's transport infrastructure and local supply systems for the economic success of the British textile trade. The ways in which expertise and information passed

⁷¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*.

through merchant networks and local supply chains, helping the competitive advantage of British textile firms, is an overarching theme of this thesis.

In Chapter 1, this project starts by examining Langworthy's place within Cottonopolis. As a major firm on Cannon Street with a works located in Eccles, it was closely connected to the other numerous businesses in the city. The significance of its geographical location within the merchant city and the manner in which this aided the firm's business operations is uncovered. Langworthy was able to control the quality of the textiles that it sent abroad through its varied business associates within local supply systems in the districts of Manchester. Cooperation with local Manchester suppliers of dye, weft and patterns gave its textile exporters a healthy local economy to use as a base. As a firm that conducted both merchanting and manufacturing, Langworthy grew accustomed to dealing with almost every role associated with the textile industry during this time. The division of labour in Manchester combined with specialisation in bleaching, dyeing, printing, and packing meant forming connections with local suppliers was a key variable in merchant success. Langworthy was constantly looking for new contacts that could provide specialist services in order to improve the quality of its consignments. By constantly adapting, the firm was able to evolve and successfully meet the ever-changing demands of overseas markets.

After telling the story of Manchester, Chapter 2 deals directly with the overseas markets in which Langworthy traded and how the conditions of these overseas markets dictated the types of business strategies Langworthy used to achieve success. The role of communications and information coming from abroad for understanding consumer preferences in these markets was fundamental to market penetration. Much of this knowledge was learned by agents who visited the local buying rooms in foreign ports, taking note of the types of designs which were proving popular with local consumers. Brazil, especially, features heavily in this section because of the letters sent to Langworthy from its overseas commission agents in Rio de Janeiro. The findings of this chapter indicate that overseas markets were highly competitive and possessed assertive buyers. Rather than a passive consumer base where the cheapness and volume of British textiles arriving were the most significant variables in success, this work emphasises the significance of merchants in making sure cottons were both visually and textually conditioned enough to compete for sales during tight periods of opportunity. This chapter is a significant part of this thesis and reveals a comprehensive picture of the merchanting system's role in penetrating markets with British cottons.

The role played by progress in transport and communications in allowing all these business operations to take place is explored in Chapter 3. The narrative reveals how the great advances in canals, roads and railways were viewed from the perspective of a firm which was using them at the time. The

Langworthy records show that the firm exploited developments such as the Liverpool and Manchester Railway to send consignments of textiles and mail to Liverpool. Despite the evident impact the railway was having on Manchester's connection with the port, Langworthy was still relying heavily on a combination of canals and road networks, which are also explored in this chapter. Langworthy benefited from operating out of one of the best-connected merchant cities in the world during this period and the pioneering improvements in transport and communications of the Industrial Revolution.

The thesis then goes on to trace the various networks and connections that allowed this Manchester firm to penetrate global markets for cotton textiles (Chapter 4). A key story is Langworthy's partnership with the merchant bank Frederick Huth & Co. The Huth bank was introduced to Langworthy via a Leeds merchant dynasty, and it seems Huth was impressed with Langworthy's competence in providing textiles for Latin American markets. Huth played a fundamental role in opening Langworthy's export opportunities up to new markets and contributed greatly to the firm's vibrancy. As the most influential global merchanting service in the world at that time, the story of Langworthy's relationship with Huth reflects the impact of merchant banks on broadening the prospects of Manchester's textile trade after the Napoleonic War period.

In Chapter 5 the role of Liverpool and its merchants in connecting Manchester to global markets is explored. Langworthy's correspondence with many shippers, merchants, brokers and commission agents in that port offers a detailed insight into how Manchester textile traders relied on the various actors in Liverpool to connect them to the agents and buyers overseas. Liverpool was Langworthy's gateway to the international market. This theme is neatly reflected in the story of Langworthy's networks and connections, for example, the Liverpool merchant firm Turner Brade & Co. which acted as an intermediary between Langworthy and its Brazilian agents, or equally Langworthy's reliance on shipping firms such as Charles Ironside & Co. to transport its goods abroad.

The other link in the distribution chain that is analysed, in Chapter 6, is the overseas commission agents. These were the merchants that operated on the opposite end of the distribution chain before goods were transferred to local merchant circles. They were the key intermediary that transferred information, money, and goods back to merchants in Manchester. This part of the narrative focuses on how Langworthy used overseas agents to engage with various export markets around the globe, and overseas agents' influence on perceptions of how best to master foreign markets.

The thesis reveals how merchants commanded the direction of the industry by controlling both the quality and specifications of the cheap textile products that were being exported from Manchester. The thesis reveals a range of processes in detail, from how merchants responded to market

information to how they dictated the production process. They did this successfully because of effective information administered through interfirm networking with a diversity of commercial roles, which evolved both in Manchester and abroad. Within merchant networks the interplay between the knowledge economy and the industrial economy was enabled and this directed product development and aided competitive advantage. These decentralised networks of traders were fundamental to the flow of information, products and capital. During the 1820s and 1830s, Manchester acquired an increasingly refined merchanting structure that helped to make its products global. Firms like Langworthy were the executive regulators that stood at the centre of the trade and coordinated the economic activity of both the local districts and the situation in foreign ports. They were able to master the wider picture by exploiting almost every conceivable role involved in the industry. The specialisation within local production systems around Manchester supported this by allowing greater flexibility in product manufacturing, enabling firms to adapt to the conditions and consumer needs of multiple markets. A combination of sparse and dense networks within merchant circles were important in transferring information regarding textile design. By forming strong bonds with an assortment of different merchant roles, Langworthy was able to implement an effective strategy for penetrating overseas markets.

Chapter 1: The Industrial Districts of Manchester and the Fine-tuning of Cotton Textiles

I am sorry to say we sent Castelli Brother's order off before we received your note. As for the orders we have promised Rallies', I don't know when we will be able to execute them in consequence of a turn out which took place amongst our dyers last night. I suppose Mr. Langworthy would tell you the particulars, however, I hope in long we shall be able to do without them enormously and be able to substitute others in their places which may be depended on. Receive the day and lengths books, please let me have them again soon as you can also receive Castelli's, Fredrick Huth's and Durham Price's invoices with pattern cards.

YA2013.25.2.2.4 Short note sent to George Langworthy & Co.'s Warehouse by employee John Lowcock, Manchester, 24th September 1834.

Merchant firms, like Langworthy, were able to use the various local supply systems which had developed in Manchester to accurately control the quality of textile designs and fine-tune them for the tastes in overseas markets. This gave Langworthy the ability to effectively influence the colour and visual style of its textiles, which is increasingly recognised in the literature as being a notable catalyst to the popularisation of British cottons in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Manchester and its surrounding areas possessed a unique industrial configuration during the period from 1820 to 1840 which meant that its textile industry was able to adapt and imitate goods much faster than its competitors. Manchester, during these decades, has long been recognised for its mass production and new ways of working which embodied the new industrial order. However, the evidence from the warehouse firms involved in this growth shows that Manchester was also a place where control of design was enacted in the service of detailed specifications required for overseas consumers. This was especially important in developing the most aesthetically pleasing textile colours and patterns. Even for cheap and low-quality goods, appearance and texture were significant factors in making textiles marketable overseas. Merchants and manufacturers were able to exploit Manchester's specialist industrial advantages to adapt these aesthetic aspects of products and this allowed them to compete with traders from all over the globe. The way in which Langworthy was able to do this partially explains the reasons for the success of British textile exports in the decades following the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

As a merchant and manufacturer which also exported directly abroad, Langworthy built up its reputation by exploiting the evolving industrial composition of Manchester which enabled it to adjust its textiles to the custom requirements of its merchant partners operating in diverse markets. From specialist firms like Seville and Wright, to Whewell and Booth, to Dale Atkin & Co., William Simpson, and George Peacock, Langworthy used and coordinated the efforts of a whole list of spinners,

bleachers, dyers, printers and packers to create, adapt and pack textile products for global markets. Firms such as Langworthy were the executive control centres whereby the quality and specifications of textiles could be managed. This involved coordinating the economic activity of local industrial districts to meet the specific needs of overseas markets. The story of Langworthy between 1820 and 1840 is also the story of Manchester, the unique location during these decades where Langworthy was able to undertake its operations with a degree of ease.

The vast collection of receipts, memoranda and correspondence in the Langworthy archive provides a detailed picture of how a major firm that exported cotton goods abroad took advantage of Manchester and its surrounding areas' industrial capabilities. The sources tell the story of a firm utilising the specialist expertise and significant resources of Manchester's industry to change and adapt pieces of cotton with accuracy and precision in order to meet tight and competitive sales margins in overseas markets. Langworthy's story reflects not only the distinctive role of Manchester in the Lancashire cotton industry but also how the British textile trade managed to compete in the international market and in many cases outperform the industries of other nations. Arguably, Langworthy Brothers & Co. was successful in the export of textiles during this period because of its ability to accurately control the quality of the designs of its products. Manchester in the period after 1820 was especially suited to providing an industrial and commercial bedrock upon which a merchant and manufacturing firm could outsource materials and equipment in the pursuit of better products. Manuel Llorca-Jana has shown how, in order to be successful in the export trade, textile firms usually either supplied a single merchant with the same reliable items or otherwise they had to be "open to adjusting production to new requirements" if goods did not initially sell well.¹ As Langworthy was supplying multiple merchants in many different markets it had to be constantly prepared to adjust its operations frequently and without much warning.

The epigram at the start of the chapter quoting John Lowcock, an employee of Langworthy Brothers, is typical of the hundreds that have survived in the archive. It shows how the Manchester firm was manufacturing as well as dyeing cloth and preparing goods in its warehouse in response to the orders it was receiving from its main business partners, in this instance the firms of Castelli Brothers, Fredrick Huth & Co. and Durham Price & Co. Langworthy was using pattern cards and samples to specify the textiles with the required colours and shades, and also to print the correct patterns onto the goods in order to satisfy buyers (see Figure 5). In addition, it also used the expertise of other firms and contracted designers to create the special patterns that would make its products visually appealing. From 1825 to 1839, Langworthy was chiefly committed to the business of manufacturing finished

¹ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 106.

cottons in Manchester and also converting cloth into printed items which it then merchanted directly abroad. It had to be astute in both its commercial and industrial capabilities.

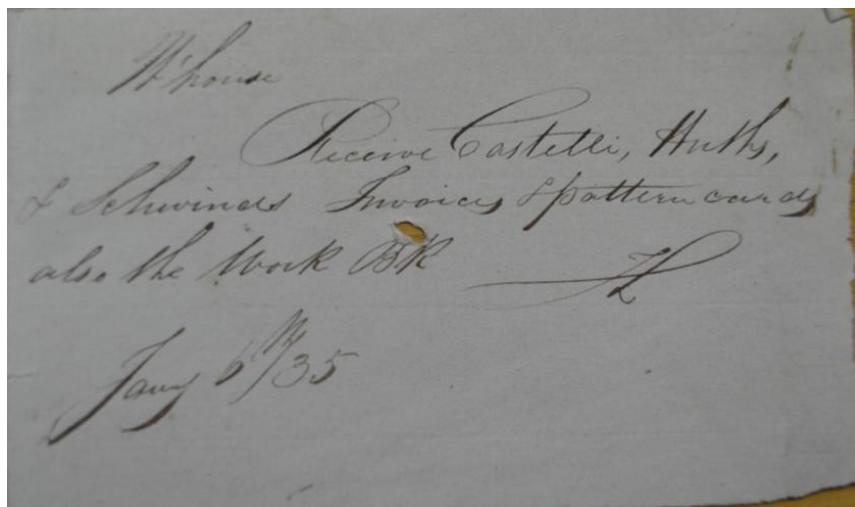


Figure 5: YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent to the warehouse referring to pattern cards for invoices received from Castelli's, Huth's and Schwind, 6th January 1835.

During Langworthy's business activities between 1822 and 1840, Manchester was the most advanced industrial centre in the world due to the application of modern machinery and mechanisation in the production of cotton textiles.² By 1835, 90% of Britain's cotton industry was concentrated in Manchester and its surrounding areas.³ By this period manufacturing was slowly moving away from the centre and to the outskirts of Manchester and its surrounding satellite towns.⁴ However, the industry was still highly concentrated around Lancashire, which contained 58.5% of Britain's cotton operatives in 1838.⁵ Manchester itself was chiefly developing as a commercial hub for the warehousing and sale of textiles. However, what also made it unique, during this period, was the growing specialisations and division of tasks within the area, especially in the finishing and preparation of textiles for export. The separate functions of the industry from spinning, bleaching and weaving often simultaneously led to the division of different districts of Manchester and its surrounding towns for particular types of work.⁶ At this stage the British textile industry was the most differentiated and specialised industry of its type in the world.⁷ It was this reality that provided the essential bedrock upon which Langworthy could rely to keep abreast with the competition in foreign markets, mainly because of the ease with which it could control the cost variables that went into product design from pattern, colour, size and texture. As well as utilising the evolving knowledge and expertise in design,

² Stephen Mosley, *The Chimney of the World* (Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2001), 2.

³ Ibid., 2.

⁴ Kidd and Wyke, *Manchester, Making the Modern City*, 90.

⁵ Sydney J. Chapman, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1904), 150.

⁶ Ibid., 155.

⁷ Ibid., 156.

which were increasingly becoming associated with Manchester (though London and Paris remained important in this regard), Langworthy was also operating in a time of increasing mechanisation which made the development of patterns on cheap cloth much easier. The Jacquard loom which was imported into Britain from France during the early nineteenth century as well as the rotating cylinder printing machine allowed for more complex patterns in woven cloth and on a much larger scale than previously imagined.⁸

The competition that had developed amongst local production systems in Manchester for various intermediary parts like weft and dyes allowed firms like Langworthy to be flexible in their approach when creating and exporting different styles of products. This was why Manchester cottons were able to compete successfully with textiles from other countries. Manchester was unique in the world as it was the first industrial city operating in the confines of the world's only true industrial nation. What many contemporaries recognised about the nature of industrialisation was the way in which the division of labour and the separation of tasks produced more effective work and on a much larger scale (Adam Smith's observations on the pin makers being an obvious example). However, apart from Manchester's ability to outproduce other industries around the world through new ways of working, the city also had the ability to control textile design and quality through the division of tasks and the ability to specify and easily obtain consistent quality materials and work between weaving, spinning, bleaching, printing and packing. Because of specialisation, accurate measurements of materials were easier to obtain than before and in larger quantities. While division of labour and mechanisation were taking place, traditional craft industries such as block printing also continued to play an important role. This meant Manchester's textile firms had the best of both worlds when it came to drawing upon local expertise and technology. This was a major factor in handing firms like Langworthy an advantage when producing goods that could be moulded to diverse consumer tastes.

The story of the various specialisms that had developed in the supply chain in the British textile industry support the observations of Clive Behagg regarding the impact of the division of labour in the production process for Britain's commercial and industrial growth in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He shows that what was equally important to the division of labour is how different firms took on different tasks which provided an effective supply chain that could respond to complex market demand. This defined many regional industries such as Birmingham's jewellery industry. When describing this industry, he argues:

As jewellery increasingly became a commodity for mass consumption, the firms in the Birmingham district used a combination of speciality and mass production to satisfy and create

⁸ Philip Sykes, ed., *Pathways in the Nineteenth-Century British Textile History*, vol. II. (London: Routledge, 2022), 28.

*demand. Such a strategy could not have been pursued without the district's distinctive networks of production and knowledge. These networks were the result of the connections developed over time among institutions and firms of different sizes and specialisms.*⁹

Behagg has shown how different firms developed to supply the larger industrial sector. Behagg defined the jewellery making part of Birmingham as "a geographically localised productive system based on an extended division of labour between small- and medium- sized firms specialised in distinct phases of a common industrial sector".¹⁰ These smaller specialists often provided the bigger manufacturers and wholesaler firms with the materials and components that went into the finished article. He states, "different specialisations found in the quarter provided the industry with the flexibility to combine specialisation and mass production in response to endlessly changing demand".¹¹ The textile entrepreneurs of Manchester were one of the first groups of traders to do this and this explains why Langworthy was able to adapt its products and remain flexible enough to compete in unpredictable markets with fluctuating consumer demand. The way Manchester's industrial districts had become divided into the specialist functions of spinners, dye suppliers, cloth dealers, printers and packing, helped to make the British textile industry a competitive player during the early nineteenth century. The interaction between the warehousing centre and the local supply chains served as a backdrop upon which Langworthy based its success.

Overall, Langworthy Brothers & Co. was able to adapt its products effectively because of two chief reasons: the essential information and knowledge sent to it from agents abroad about which types of products were popular; and its close connections with and utilisation of various specialist networks of suppliers located around Manchester and beyond, coordinated by the firm's warehouse buyers and managers. This chapter focuses on the latter and argues that it was the division of specialist roles in Manchester and its surrounding regions that meant that firms like Langworthy could meet the complex consumer demand in overseas markets and succeed in the export of cheap British textiles. Scholars such as H.B. Rodgers have shown how the general division of tasks in Manchester had taken shape by 1840 and would not change for much of the nineteenth century.¹² Consequently, the activities of Langworthy provide a key window into understanding the competitive advantage Manchester's industrial and commercial composition afforded the British textile trade during the 1820s and 1830s.

⁹ Clive Behagg, "Golden Opportunities, Jewellery Making between Mass Production and Speciality", *Enterprise and Society* 4, no.2 (June 2003): 274.

¹⁰ Ibid., 274.

¹¹ Ibid., 296.

¹² H.B. Rodgers, "The Lancashire Cotton Industry in 1840", in S.D. Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 2 (London: Tauris and Co., 1997), 229.

The Firm's Operations in Manchester

Langworthy Brothers & Co. took on multiple roles during the 1820s and 1830s, making it difficult to apply any one particular label to the firm. Pigot's directory of 1829 lists George Langworthy & Co. as "Manufacturers and Dealers in Cotton Goods".¹³ Pigot's later directory of 1837, however, lists Langworthy as cotton spinners but also as cotton dealers and "Manchester Warehouseman". By this date the firm had moved its operations to the Salford Greengate Mills and began spinning; however, it still retained a warehouse in Manchester for converting and dealing in finished cloth.¹⁴ In another listing from 1837 the firm came under the heading of "Calico Printer and Print Warehouse" situated in New Brown Street but also as "Spinners" in that same location.¹⁵ The firm was officially listed under other roles during different years such as nankeen manufacturers, merchants, dyers and finishers. The firm would eventually acquire a huge factory complex in Salford which allowed it to conduct all the various operations involved in the manufacture and finishing of textiles under one roof. The firm eventually became spinners, calico printers, dyers, weavers, and even bleachers.

During the 1820s and 1830s, Langworthy manufactured textiles and exported finished cotton textiles to be sent throughout Britain and abroad. The firm was especially concerned with the export of goods to Latin American markets. It was often listed as a manufacturer of nankeens, a yellowish form of cloth typically worn as trousers. The firm's archive, however, makes it abundantly clear that it was making many other types of textiles as well, most of which were coloured and printed styles of textiles that had originated from India and were popularised around the globe by the European East Indian Companies and various colonial powers that brought these textiles into the Western hemisphere. As well as manufacturing its own textiles it also converted cloth made by other firms into finished printed items. Many of these textiles were imitations that were not the same as the original form of textile. Langworthy's nankeens, for example, came in many forms such as blue and striped and would have had quite a different look and feel to the true nankeen cloth.

By 1841, towards the end of our period of study, Langworthy became more vertical in its operations and was listed in Pigot's directory as "Cotton Spinners, Calico Printers and Manufacturers" residing in Sandywell, Salford.¹⁶ By this stage the business was performing most tasks in-house at its factory, including spinning and weaving. Sandywell is a street in the Greengate area of Salford near the stretch of the River Irwell where Langworthy's large mill once stood. As the century wore on, it increasingly conducted all its operations in this one location in Greengate (see Figure 6). John Jewkes has shown

¹³ Pigot and Sons General Directory of Manchester and Salford, 1829.

¹⁴ Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory, 1837.

¹⁵ Ibid, 1837, 93.

¹⁶ Pigot and Slater's Directory of Manchester and Salford, 1841, 157.

how during times of boom there is a natural tendency towards vertical integration among businesses that wish to expand and take on more tasks involved in the operation. However, this does not necessarily make the business more efficient and can lead to a situation where a firm has to micromanage a multitude of operations in both supply and distribution that could be more efficiently and conveniently taken care of by other firms. He states “a period of prosperity and expanding profits will tend to stimulate integration. Boom conditions will often weaken caution and lead to uneconomic expansion both in degree and direction.”¹⁷ The point is that during the 1820s and 1830s, it was not necessary for textile exporters to become vertically integrated in order to produce competitive textiles for overseas markets. This was because of the diversity of specialists and division of tasks in the industrial districts of Manchester to which firms could devolve responsibility. This made Manchester unique in the global setting. Langworthy’s tendency towards integration along with its move to a much larger premises meant it was riding a wave of economic success which was driven by its expansion into the export trade. It was Langworthy’s ability in adapting textiles which gave it the capital to increase in size and conduct more of its operations in-house. Though this is a pattern seen in many successful textile businesses, it is questionable whether this trend actually made British textiles more competitive as the century wore on. This is a subject beyond the scope of this work and a task for another study. During the period that this research focuses on Langworthy was less vertical and its business ethos involved a great deal of outsourcing.

¹⁷ John Jewkes, “Factors in Industrial Integration”, *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (August 1930).

ADVERTISEMENT.

1921.

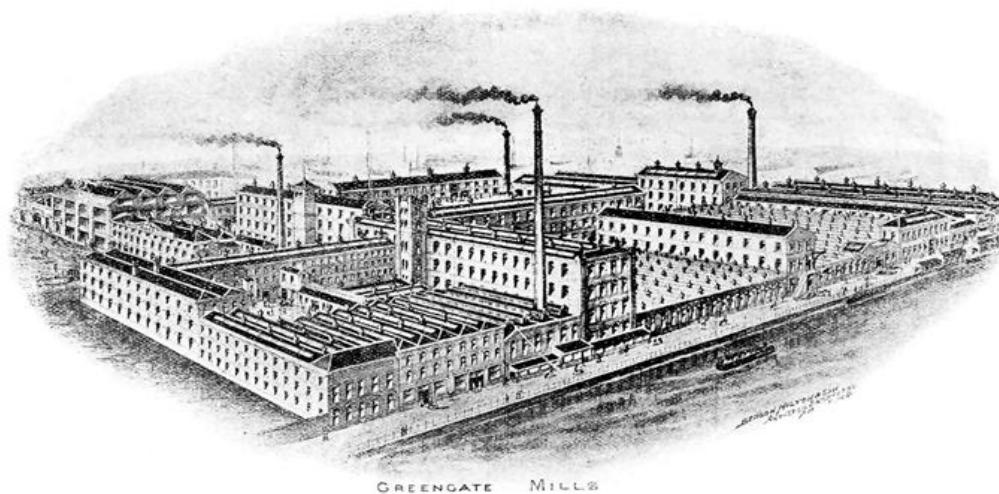
TELEPHONE NOS. { GREENGATE MILLS, 5756 CITY.
{ 12, CHARLOTTE ST. 1850 CITY. TELEGRAPHIC ADDRESS, "LANGWORTHY, MANCHESTER."

LANGWORTHY BROS. & CO.,

LIMITED,

COTTON SPINNERS AND MANUFACTURERS,
DYERS, BLEACHERS AND PRINTERS.

Works—Greengate Mills, Salford, Manchester. Warehouse—12, Charlotte Street, Manchester.



Bleached, Dyed and Printed Drills (Union and Cotton), Twills, Ducks, Serges, Moleskins, Trouserings, for South America, India, Straits Settlements and China.

KHAKI DRILLS (Army Dye), and for all Markets.

High-Class FLANNELETTES, Woven, Printed and Dyed.

Cords, Moles, Lambskins, Pocketings, Cantoons. Raincoatings, Linings and Silesias.

Indigo Dyers of Bluette for the Home Trade

Indigo Dyed Drills, Cambrics, Bafts and Shirtings, for China, India, the Dutch Indies, South America and the Levant.

Every Description of Indigo and other Printed Goods for the East and West Coasts of Africa and the Eastern Markets.

Yarn (Counts 8th to 24th), on Beams, in Chains Warps or Bundles.

SUITABLE FOR ALL MARKETS OF THE WORLD.

Figure 6: Picture of the Greengate Mills, 1921; by this time the Langworthy family had ceased to be involved in the business, however, the firm was now one of the biggest employers in Salford.

The short notes that were passed between the firm's employees during the early to mid-1830s were separated between those coming from the "Warehouse" located in Manchester and the "Works" which was in Eccles, a two-hour walk from the city centre. Eccles during this period was known for its expertise in the weaving of nankeens, Langworthy's main export, and so it is not surprising that the manufacturing side of the business was located there. Most of the textiles Langworthy exported during this time were cheap low-quality to middling sorts of goods. The fancy trade was not its speciality. However, the evidence from archives such as that of Langworthy's reveals how even with

cheaper textiles the cost of the product was not enough to win over consumers. The trade in cheap cottons was still highly competitive and firms had to create textiles that adhered to the latest fashions and tastes. Greysmith has shown how most scholars of design have dismissed the cheap mass-produced prints of the 1830s, believing there was a decline in craftsmanship brought on by machinery. This perspective also stems from an overfocus on fancy goods and the fact that registered designs did not take place until 1842. However, this thesis argues that the quality of machinery-produced goods was also very important to achieve trading success. Even in the trade of cheap prints, craftsmanship and standards continued to improve, and it was these types of goods that Manchester primarily focused on developing.¹⁸ The firm's operations reflect how for Manchester's textile businesses, which combined both manufacturing and warehousing, it was the ability to adapt appearance and therefore marketability of products that was a major concern in market success. For Latin American markets, such as Brazil, timing was of the essence as textiles of the right style had to arrive on time for the correct season. For grey goods appearance was not as vital; however, for all textiles, the handle (feel) and drape were important indicators of quality alongside weight and yarn count. All these aspects of quality had to be continually adjusted and fine-tuned in order to achieve successful sales abroad. Langworthy made notable progress in achieving this aim during the 1820s and 1830s. It was not uncommon during this period for firms to combine both merchanting and manufacturing. However, more often than not, this involved branches in the countryside as well as the town. A notable example was Fielden Brothers & Co., which manufactured from its Waterside Mill in Todmorden and conducted its warehousing and merchanting activities in Manchester under a separate branch.¹⁹ The Langworthy firm, on the other hand, conducted almost all of its different operations in and around Manchester and Salford and consequently its story is also the story of Manchester during these decades.

In Stanley Chapman's noteworthy work on British merchant enterprise, he alluded to how firms performed different roles in that some were merchant-manufacturers which merchanted their own manufactured goods and others were pure merchants that specialised in the buying and selling of goods manufactured by other firms. However, the situation was rather more complex than this and the types of tasks firms performed were often more diverse and could change rapidly from year to year. Ultimately this is a problem of definition on the historian's part, and it is difficult for a simple label to completely encapsulate everything a firm did. Maw has perhaps more accurately defined the different groupings of firms involved in Manchester's textile industry. His understanding includes categories such as "merchant finishers", that is firms that finished textiles manufactured by other firms before selling them on to the market. Other terms include "merchant shippers", pure merchants

¹⁸ Greysmith, "The Printed Textile Industry in England 1830–1870", 127.

¹⁹ Brian R. Law, *Fieldens of Todmorden*, 40.

who purchased textiles and shipped them at their own risk. Similarly to Chapman, Maw also defines some firms as “manufacturer merchants” to describe businesses that merchanted their own goods. However, it is the phrase “Merchants and Manufacturers” that most neatly describes Langworthy’s operations during the 1820s and 1830s. Maw defines these types as:

*Merchants and manufacturers manufactured and finished a specific category of textiles, and in addition, acted as general merchants, purchasing and finishing different goods from within the same industry.*²⁰

Textiles come in the form of intermediate goods before the finished product can be created in that there are many stages involved in the process of making a textile, from making yarn out of fibre, turning yarn into cloth, and then finishing cloth through dyeing, printing and calendering before packing and shipping. Some firms specialised in just one of these stages, although it was common for firms to be involved in many. During this period Langworthy manufactured textiles but was also buying unfinished cloth which it converted and finished into printed items. It also sold these goods directly to overseas markets by dealing with shipping firms and commission agents, usually through Liverpool. This also makes the firm merchants as well. Langworthy’s experience was not wholly unheard of, and the range of its operations suggests the firm was held in esteem alongside other successful firms operating in Manchester during this period. There were also many more firms that confined themselves to just one role such as weaving, printing or general merchanting. At the same time, combining more than one type of operation was standard practice for a number of businesses. This was a period of experimentation and flexibility in Manchester and many businesses did not just confine themselves to one role. This was despite the fact that financial risk was higher for firms that finished their own cloth. What all firms had in common, however, was the economic incentive to make and sell cotton textiles that were already becoming famously associated with Manchester. Maw states:

*Most Lancashire firms specialised in Manchester Goods, a diverse assortment of textiles and smallwares made from cotton, linen and silk. Manchester was by far the most important commercial centre for Lancashire’s export trade, although it was a commonplace for Manchester firms to have manufacturing and commercial interests that stretched into Lancashire, Cheshire, Derbyshire and beyond.*²¹

Langworthy was chiefly concerned with the manufacture and export of dyed and printed cotton textiles, much of which had been popularised by the Indian textile industry. It was often the case that a firm would specialise in a particular area of the trade, in this case colourful and patterned calicoes to overseas markets, while at the same time dealing in other goods and performing other functions.

²⁰ Maw, “Anglo-American Trade during the Industrial Revolution”, 30.

²¹ Ibid., 258.

Maw, for example, asserts that most Manchester-based textile firms that exported textiles specialised in the manufacture of a particular type of cotton product, while also dealing in more general types of Manchester goods. Furthermore, a proportion of the larger firms that exported printed calicoes undertook spinning, weaving and printing simultaneously.²²

Because Langworthy was chiefly concerned with the fine-tuning of textiles to meet consumer tastes in overseas markets the firm carried a higher risk than more specialist suppliers lower in the supply chain. Unlike a spinner, which could continue to make the same items over and over and supply a particular group of neighbouring firms, Langworthy had the far more complex task of constantly adapting textiles to suit the ever-changing tastes of consumers in distant markets. This is neatly reflected in Chapman's observation:

*Even in the case of the best known and simplest cloths, marketing must be more difficult than in the spinning industry, for the cotton market is capable of higher development than in the yarn market, and the latter than the cloth market, since the greater the number of variable elements in a product the less developed can the market for that commodity become.*²³

Finished goods had to be continually updated, redesigned, or given new colours and textures to suit fashions and compete with the flurry of textiles arriving into ports in Latin America. In Rio de Janeiro, textiles were arriving from India but also the USA, Germany and Portugal. Styles has argued that the chief reason for the success of British cottons in comparison to linen and flax during the Industrial Revolution owed more to their appearance than their cheapness or durability. It was the "visual, decorative style and fashionable qualities" that allowed them to penetrate overseas markets and determined the success of printed textiles.²⁴ Consequently, in order for Britain to succeed in dominating the textile trade, Lancashire firms had to be able to control the visual quality of products with precision. Langworthy's operations are important in revealing this less well-known story. As opposed to a story of mechanisation and mass production, the focus here is the importance of the information and quality control which Langworthy orchestrated. The firm could specify the design, texture and colour of textile products with a degree of accuracy (see Figures 7 and 8). It was this rather neglected aspect of the trade that contributed to the domination of Manchester in the market for non-elite goods in the early nineteenth century.

²² Ibid., 264.

²³ Chapman, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*, 162.

²⁴ Styles, "What Were Cottons For", 326.



Figure 7: YA2013.25.3.1.4 Receipt for dyeing from Chapman and Martin, Blue, Black and Fancy Dyes, Located in Pendleton, Salford, October 1834.



Figure 8: YA2013.25.1.6 Sample, which demonstrates the precision of the printed patterns that Langworthy was finishing; this sample was attached to a letter alongside striped drills.

Sykas has shown how during this period merchant converters built up a strong reputation as experts in creating the most visually appealing textiles. While Langworthy operated before the conventional era of the merchant converter, the same description can be applied because of the work the firm performed. As already shown, firms which were exporting directly abroad were involved in a higher risk business than others on account of the greater number of variables that were susceptible to rejection. For example, buyers might find that the style or colour of the textiles was not to their liking. Langworthy was merchanting goods directly abroad which required the skills to meet the demands of a constantly changing market. With consumer tastes mainly centred around a product's appearance, Langworthy's very survival was dependent on achieving this goal. Liverpool shipping companies preferred to use the services of a merchant converter to acquire cottons rather than go to the mills directly. The reason for this was because "converters provided their specialist knowledge of design and production, as well as holding large stocks of unfinished cloth ready to be printed to a customer's

requirements".²⁵ This is reflected in Langworthy's trade with the Liverpool shipping firm Charles Ironside & Co. which was shipping the firm's goods to Lisbon. Langworthy essentially built its reputation on its ability to accurately adapt textiles to the visual style outlined in the orders sent from other firms. These types of businesses were the mediums by which useful knowledge regarding consumer tastes in markets could then be combined with local expertise amongst specialists in Manchester. They provided the bridge between the new informal tacit knowledge coming from overseas ports and the more standardised knowledge in Lancashire. This led to comparative learning in the international textile trade and allowed Britain to master the trade in printed cottons. Though Langworthy's operations cannot be completely encompassed under the umbrella term of merchant converter, the warehouse notes reveal that this was a large part of its function. It was the expertise of these types of firms which helped to put British textiles on a par with those from other countries.²⁶

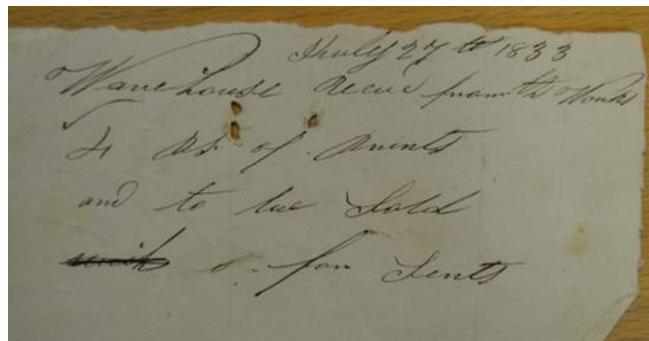


Figure 9: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Short note passed to the warehouse from the works, 4 pieces of prints, 27th July 1833.

The firm was not only manufacturing and exporting goods to overseas markets but was also supplying other merchants in Manchester with textiles. Equally, it was buying and selling finished goods from neighbouring Manchester firms (see Figure 10). Consequently, Langworthy's warehouse operatives were responsible for a complex set of operations, which was an organisational challenge.

²⁵ Philip Anthony Sykas, *The Secret Life of Textiles, Six Pattern Books in North West England* (Bolton: Bolton Museum, 2005), 27.

²⁶ Raman, "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization".

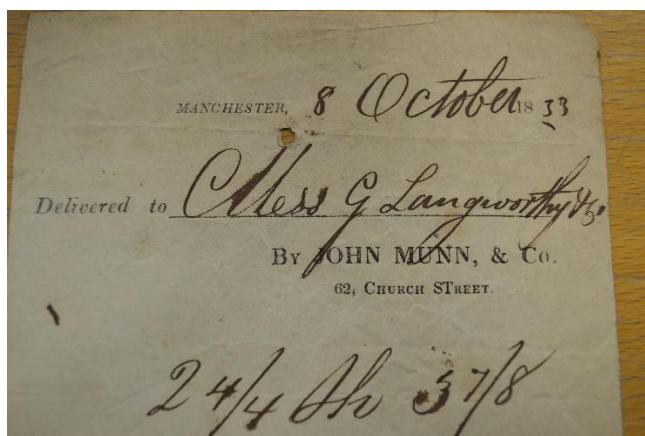


Figure 10: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Receipt for medium grey shirtings, from John Munn & Co., 8th October 1833.

John Munn & Co. (from whom in 1833 Langworthy was sourcing materials) provide an interesting comparison with Langworthy. The differences between the operations of the two firms helps to demonstrate the complex role Langworthy played during this period. Unlike Langworthy, Munn was a dealer in unfinished grey cloth. By the late 1830s it was also manufacturing unprinted items such as grey shirtings. Pigot's 1828 directory lists them as calico dealers and manufacturers located in Prestwich in Bury.²⁷ In the mid-1830s Munn acted as a middleman between manufacturers and merchants, supplying other Manchester firms with cloth that could then be printed upon and moulded to that firm's particular style of design. The firm had a warehouse in Church Street and sent cloth to other prominent businesses such as Henry Bannerman and Sons and T. and R. Potter. Unlike Langworthy, Munn did not produce or deal in the numerous coloured and patterned items during this period nor is there any evidence that it exported its goods directly overseas. In this sense its function was akin to a commission dealer, focused purely on undertaking simpler operations between firms in Manchester and producing plainer products. Almost all the sales in Munn's cash book are listed as "Grey Calicoes" and there is the odd reference to cotton twill. The firm's sales book does show, however, that it was making notable sales. For example, in September 1822 they sold 1,856 pieces of cloth.²⁸ Though dealing in grey goods still carried its risks, such as fluctuations in the price of cotton and the need to buy at the right time, there were fewer variables to go wrong in marketability than was the case for firms which dealt in a wider variety of printed and patterned items.

²⁷ Pigot & Co., National Commercial Directory, 1828, 452.

²⁸ M386 John Munn & Co., Sales Book, 1819–1822.

Langworthy and the Warehouse City

The Business visitor to Manchester could not have failed to be overawed by the giant factories of the Murray Brothers or McConnel and Kennedy, both employing over 1,000 workers each in 1815. Ancoats, the main location of the factory system, seemed to be the centre, indeed the very heart of the bustling business system of Cottonopolis, but away from the smokestacks, in Cannon Street, High Street, Market Street and the numerous courts and alleys running off these main arteries it was business of quite a different mode.²⁹

The story of why Langworthy was able to accurately produce textiles for international markets partly mirrors the story of why Manchester traders as a whole were able to master the export trade in cotton textiles in comparison to other locations. During its early operations, in the 1820s and 1830s, much of Langworthy's ventures were aided by the smaller firms in the local supply systems around Manchester. This gave the firm the flexibility it needed to undertake dynamic operations without having to resort to vertical integration straight away. This was made especially easy for firms like Langworthy because of its location in Cannon Street, the warehousing centre during this time, and near the array of printing, dyeing and packing services that had developed in Manchester. Pigot's directory from 1828 also lists George Langworthy & Co. as having premises on Church Street which also sat right in the middle of the commercial and warehouse section of the city, less than a five-minute walk away from Cannon Street.³⁰ Indeed, scholars such as Lloyd-Jones and Lewis have highlighted how the perception of Manchester as specifically a factory city is somewhat unjustified and inconsistent with the evidence. The example of Langworthy, during the 1820s and 1830s, supports this as the firm used its warehouse to convert cloth into decorative printed cottons that would appeal to its overseas consumers. It was the responsibility of the firm's warehouse managers to ensure that the cloth contained the correct visual appeal for the standards of the day. During the first decade of the nineteenth century warehouses grew in scale and by the mid-century often possessed multiple floors. Because variety was important in attracting more buyers, warehouses became cradles of experimentation with more colours and styles of textile.³¹ It was in these types of premises that the fine-tuning took place which gave firms, like Langworthy, a competitive advantage.

Warehouse on Cannon Street

Cannon Street was the location of the firm's warehouse where it conducted most of its operations during the late 1820s and early 1830s. The street had at this time developed as the centre of the

²⁹ Lloyd-Jones and Lewis, *Manchester and the Age of the Factory*, 6.

³⁰ Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory, Merchants, Bankers and Professional Gentlemen, London, 1828–1829, 385.

³¹ Sykas, *Secret Life of Textiles*, 120.

warehouse city alongside Market Street. It was noted by contemporary observers for its central position and its myriad traders. A poem, from 1833, neatly reflects this.

*Hail, Cannon-Street, the tradesman's greatest pride,
Known to all country buyers far and wide
Emporium of traffic and of gain
Thy fame extends across the western main
Where Yankees much esteem thy style of work
In Philadelphia, Boston and New York
And praises are to thee most justly due
From Pernambuco, Rio and Bahia too
Indeed, in every part of the Brazils
Long have been sold the tried and valued twills.
Forget not Frankfurt too and Leipsic fairs
Where oft are sent thy cheap and varied wares³²*

Note that Brazil, and more specifically Rio de Janeiro and the Bahia region of the country, are specifically mentioned in the poem in relation to Cannon Street. These were some of the biggest export destinations for Langworthy's goods. The poem reflects how much of the work that Langworthy was carrying out during this period was typical for traders that resided in that part of Manchester. Langworthy's operations were largely the result of the firm's geographical location in the centre of the business district of the world's first industrial city. Indeed, the trade directories that have survived from the 1820s and 1830s show that many traders that occupied Cannon Street were involved in similar business operations as Langworthy. Pigot's directory from 1822, for example, lists traders in Cannon Street such as Lloyd Price & Co., described as "Nankeen Manufacturers and Calico Printers," Jackson Edward, a calico printer, and Hoyle Chatburn & Co., also listed as a calico printer.³³ What this means is that most of the firms that were resident in Cannon Street during this period were engaged in the manufacture, merchanting and printing of coloured cotton textiles. Consequently, Cannon Street was particularly suited as a base of operation for these types of firms as reflected in its pulling effect in drawing them to reside there (see Figures 11 and 12). Langworthy's is a fitting testimony to

³² John Stanley Gregson, Poem (1833), quoted in Sykas, ed., *Pathways in the Nineteenth-Century British Textile Industry*, vol. II., 30.

³³ Pigot and Dean's New Directory of Manchester and Salford, 1821–1822.

how a firm used and relied on the business structure of the city, and its example epitomises what was special about Manchester in the later part of the Industrial Revolution period.

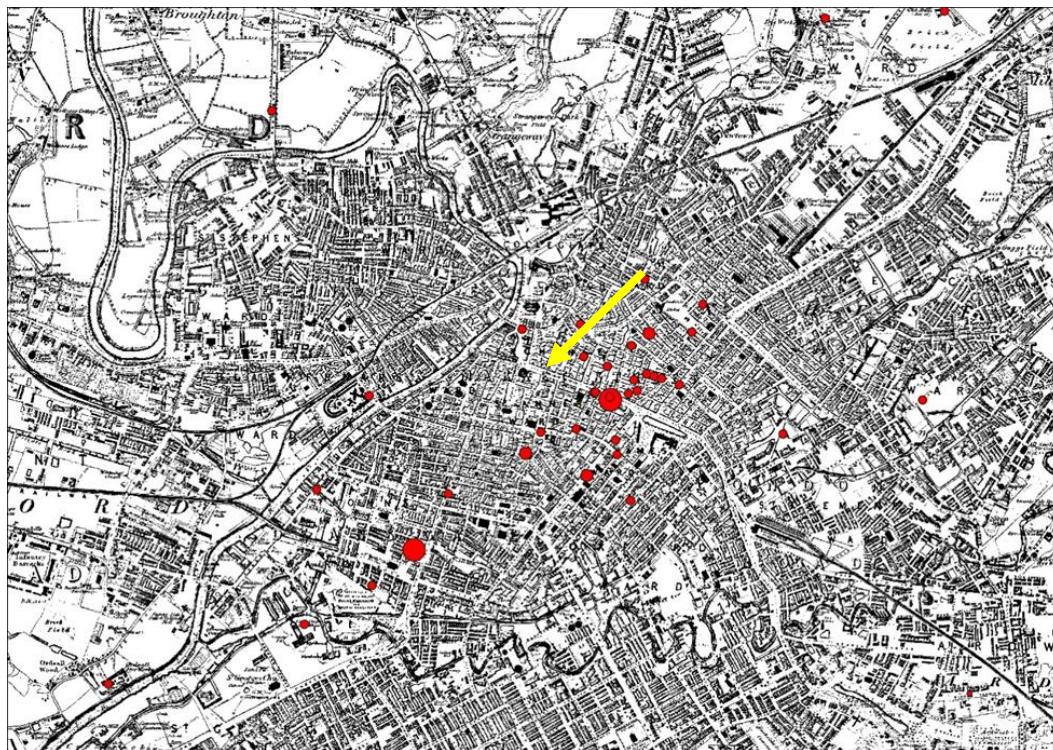


Figure 11: Map showing proximity of Langworthy's main business partners with whom they conducted transactions. The arrow points to the location of Langworthy's headquarters on Cannon Street. Each red circle represents a firm they corresponded with; the size of the circle indicates the number of times Langworthy corresponded with them.

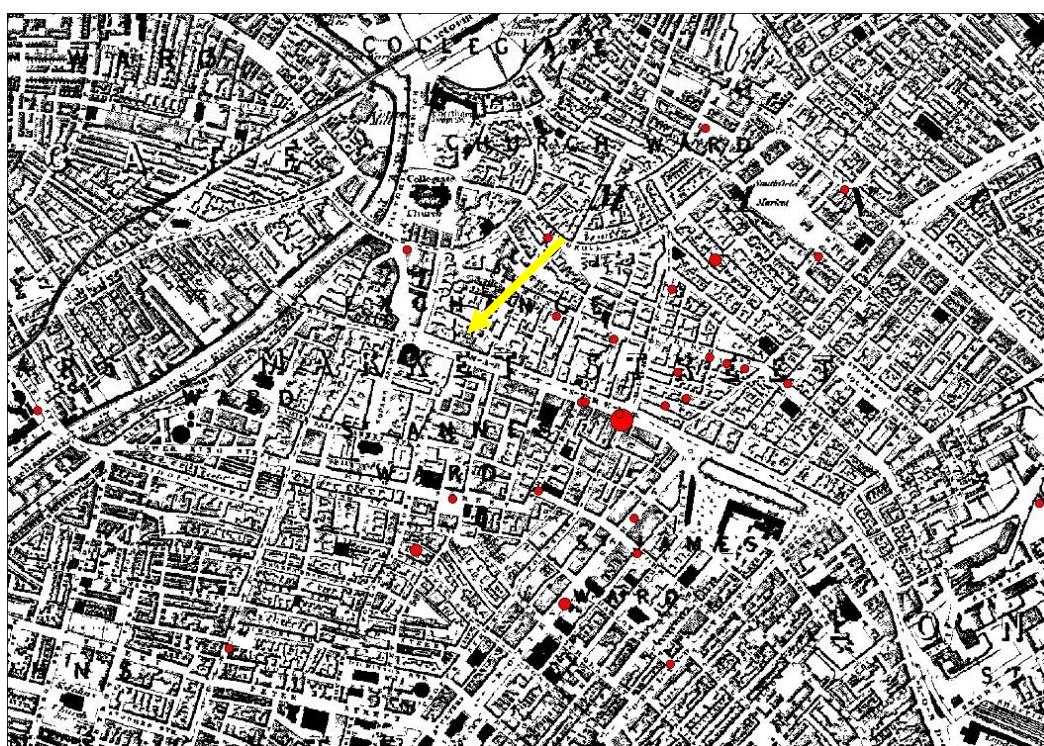


Figure 12: A closer view of the proximity of the businesses with whom Langworthy worked, which occupied locations close to Cannon Street. The yellow arrow denotes the location of the Langworthy firm headquarters in Cannon Street. The red circles signify the locations of the local suppliers and servicers the firm dealt with.

The volume and diversity of cotton goods, especially of different colours, is later reflected in the following poem.

Say the next morning or afternoon

Now, grey goods mentioned, let us turn to white

Their various names and qualities indite

Plain cambric's, lappets and fine hair-cord checks

Fitting, indeed, to tie round emperors' necks

Stripes, jaconet's, and shawls, a numerous train,

White quilting's, dimities and Indian jean.

Now to the printers - fancy-minded men

When shall we see such wondrous work again?

They grasp with eagerness the rainbows hues

Green, pink, and orange, and forsooth, two blues!

With brown and yellows and the charming sights

Of blue and scarlets and of black and whites!

Dark fancies too, and neutral style appears

The existing wonders of the last ten years.

Should some great house be bringing patterns out,

Of new invention, to kick up a rout³⁴

The 1833 poem provides a canny depiction of the variety of textiles and multiple colours that were noticeable to contemporaries. Manchester had a major advantage in the production of these types of mass-produced printed textiles during this period.

In the first half of the 1830s, the Manchester-based firm was chiefly managed by Mr George Langworthy. However, he employed two key individuals to run the day-to-day operations of the business by the names of John Lowcock and Mr Powell, who were responsible for running the warehouse. Lowcock and Powell worked in close proximity to each other. The Langworthy archive is full of notes that were sent between them, most of which are not dated. Short notes such as these were delivered by an errand boy and are testimony to the importance written instructions played in the running of merchant warehouses. Very often Langworthy would expect an almost instant reply

³⁴ John Stanley Gregson, Poem (1833), quoted in Sykas, ed., *Pathways in the Nineteenth-Century British Textile Industry*, vol. II., 30.

which would be handed to the deliverer to be taken back in response to the inquiry of the initial sender. The majority of the notes refer to the outsourcing of textiles and materials from other firms in Manchester, the assessment of the quality of the goods that were being produced, and preparation for transport to Liverpool for export. Large numbers of invoices containing orders would arrive at Langworthy's warehouse from its main customers and agents. One of the main functions of Langworthy's warehouse was as a location where quality control could be implemented to assess the standard of goods that were coming in and out. It was common during this period for manufacturers and merchants to employ an "experienced workman" who had a keen eye for the grade of cloth and its overall standard and who could inspect goods before they were sent out.³⁵

Powell and Lowcock performed this quality oversight. It seems that Lowcock was primarily responsible for the final preparation of goods before they were sent to the Liverpool supply chain. It was time-constrained work as all the processes for the preparation of bales of textiles, notably measuring, folding, checking and packing, had to be completed in time for sailing ships that were departing for Brazil's seasonal trade where demand was concentrated during short periods. This is reflected in a note sent to Powell from Lowcock in 1834. He wrote:

*We are at present preparing Friday's order for James Durham and Co. which is the next in turn when you shall have the invoice as soon as we have the goods ready, say Saturday. We can't very well set aside our order to begin another – but we will get all off [sic] we hopefully can – We are well aware it is not desirable to delay too long as we have orders in hand which are wanted.*³⁶

Orders were constantly arriving and usually there was a backlog of consignments to prepare. Both Powell and Lowcock were sending pattern cards and samples to each other in order to source the best quality items from the surrounding area. Pattern cards were sent from Langworthy's warehouse to local dyers and printers to fetch the best designs for the firm's products.

*We are sending the remainder of the order in today and we will send patterns with them which will be as exact to the pattern as we can. Need we send another card with them as the patterns only. We keep the card to compare with those we are sending off. We will send it back with goods.*³⁷

Pattern cards were usually pieces of paper with small samples of textile attached to them.³⁸ They were often sent with orders to denote the types of design that were wanted for individual customers. The quality checks and specific pinpointing of desirable designs was essential work for pleasing overseas

³⁵ Lloyd-Jones and Lewis, *Manchester and the Age of the Factory*, 48.

³⁶ YA2013.25.2.1.5, Note sent from John Lowcock to Mr Powell, Manchester, 29th February 1834.

³⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Warehouse note, undated.

³⁸ Sykas, *Secret Life of Textiles*, 124.

buyers and to maintain Langworthy's reputation as a reliable judge of the right textiles to send to specific markets.

Langworthy's warehouse was the command centre of its operations. There are notes sent by Langworthy employees which are addressed from the "Works" located in Eccles. This was a building which was committed to the weaving of goods as opposed to storage; however, during this period it might have been a relatively small operation, even just a floor of a building. At this time Eccles was known for its specialist handweavers that were still an important economic component of the Lancashire textile trade despite the slow introduction of power looms. Indeed, during the 1820s and 1830s there were over 4,000 families employed in the production of cotton goods but there were only two mills using power looms.³⁹ However, despite handlooms still being the main preoccupation, the trade had moved on from the old domestic system and the number of workers was now beginning to increase in larger premises owned by capitalists such as Langworthy. A short note sent between the works and Langworthy's warehouse denotes how the firm was sending money to pay the weavers, which was administered by a "Mr Rogerson", the man responsible for employing them. The note writes: "Mr Rogerson wants for Eccles Weavers this week."⁴⁰

Langworthy's operations were highly experimental in nature in that it was not only weaving textiles but also sending them out for printing and calendering, before eventually receiving the goods back for packing. It also bought unfinished cloth or grey cloth from other firms in the city which could also be converted. This means that many of the processes involved in making many of its products were performed by other firms. Textiles were constantly coming in and out of the firm's warehouse because Langworthy was utilising the unique industrial composition of Manchester and the wider Lancashire region to adapt its textiles to the specifications sent to it from its overseas contacts. The diversification of roles combined with the latest technology and practices allowed Manchester's firms to quickly produce large quantities of textiles and imitate designs that were popular amongst overseas consumers.

We see another example of interfirm transactions centred on the Langworthy warehouse in one note sent from Powell to Lowcock in 1834. Powell informed Lowcock that pattern cards and orders were arriving from Castelli's at the same time as the warehouse was preparing some drills to be sent to the Liverpool firm C. Taylor and Sons, which was Langworthy's main gateway into the Argentina market. Pattern cards were often sent between Powell and Lowcock to keep track of and identify which cases of goods were being sent to each firm, such as when patterns of velveteens were sent in reference to

³⁹ F.R. Johnston, *Eccles, The Growth of a Lancashire Town* (Eccles: Eccles and District History Society, 1967), 86.

⁴⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent from Mr Lowcock to Mr Powell, 5th December 1834.

cases destined for Isaac Newton who was responsible for Langworthy's sales in Portugal: "I send you the pattern card and patterns for referencing of Newtons one case of Velveteen's." However, in the case of the drills destined for Charles Taylor and Sons, Powell informed Lowcock that there would be a delay in the drills being made, up to 10 o'clock at the latest, on account of the men having been drinking heavily the night before.⁴¹ Instances such as this would be costly for the firm when one considers the tight schedule involved in supplying seasonal markets with tight windows of opportunity.

Deadlines were tight because of the concentrated demand in overseas markets during certain parts of the year and consequently the work was busy. Warehouse buyers and managers had to allow time for measuring, folding, mixing, labelling and checking as well as pressing. The notes were helpful in speeding up communication and were even used to send a message from one floor of the warehouse to another. In one instance in 1834 Powell sent a note to another employee named Mr Wordsworth asking for a skip of weft destined for the works in Eccles to be sent down from the top floor immediately on account of the cart arriving to take it.⁴² Weft such as this was used to manufacture Langworthy's nankeens and materials used in the creation of textiles were often sent to the works in Eccles where Langworthy's textiles were ultimately weaved. Langworthy's manufacturing base in Eccles was also being supplied with yarns that had been purchased from Seville and Wright, Langworthy's main supplier of yarn. For instance, in a note from Lowcock to Powell he says:

We have not yet received any weft for Eccles. We expected Seville Wright and Co. would have sent some, but they have not yet and they are entirely without.⁴³

As the weaving of Langworthy's goods was taking place in Eccles during this period it was important to keep it supplied with both warp and weft yarn. However, during this period Langworthy was purchasing looms which it was constantly upgrading. Langworthy eventually moved towards spinning on a large scale in the 1840s, however, during the 1830s it was buying warp and weft from other manufacturers to create the textiles at the works (see Figure 13) and then receiving the woven articles back for finishing. There are many short notes showing deliveries of warp and weft to the works.⁴⁴

⁴¹ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Short note sent from Mr Powell to J. Lowcock, Manchester, 1833.

⁴² YA2013.25.2.1.5 Short note sent from Mr Powell to Mr Wordsworth, Manchester, 25th January 1834.

⁴³ YA2013.25.2.2.4 Short note from Lowcock to Powell 16th August 1834.

⁴⁴ YA2013.25.2.1.6 Short note detailing delivery of weft to works complex, received by an Alex Thompson, 9th January 1834.

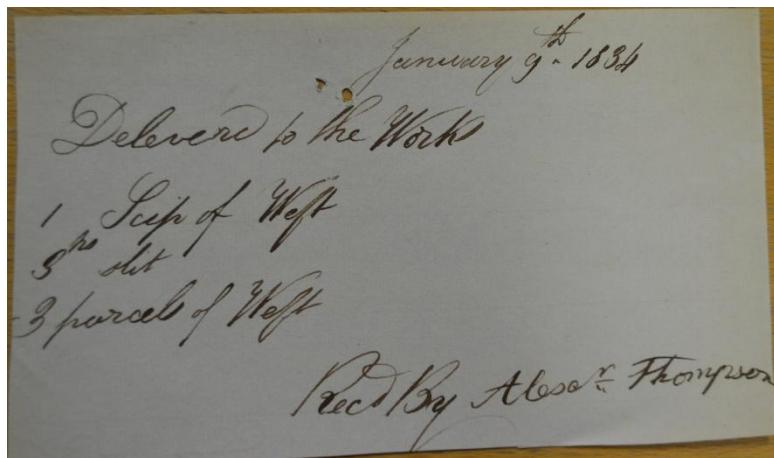


Figure 13: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Short note detailing delivery of weft to works complex, received by an Alex Thompson, 9th January 1834.

Langworthy owned a number of buildings around the city, including on New Brown Street which is listed in Pigot's *National Commercial Directory* of 1837. This building was acquired to conduct printing operations and came under the heading "Calico Printer and Print Warehouses".⁴⁵ The firm's operations were devolved around Manchester as a whole. Cannon Street was becoming rather overcrowded and the warehouses located there were limited in space and size. It was common practice during this period for very successful firms to move out of Cannon Street to other parts of Manchester such as Mosley Street, and so Langworthy's branching out to other locations during the late 1830s once again acts as an indicator of the firm's success. It is clear the firm required more space to conduct its growing operations.

The different styles and specifications of products were often referred to by a number which was used as a reference to that particular product. For example, in one outgoing note Powell asked Lowcock for three samples of Number 1 and 2 white drills to be sent to him (see Figure 14). As Powell was the more forward facing of the two employees, he was sending these samples to potential buyers who may have been interested in purchasing Langworthy's drills. Lowcock responded by sending one of each of the drills.

⁴⁵ Pigot & Co.'s *National Commercial Directory of the Whole of Scotland and the Isle of Man*, London, 1837, 105.

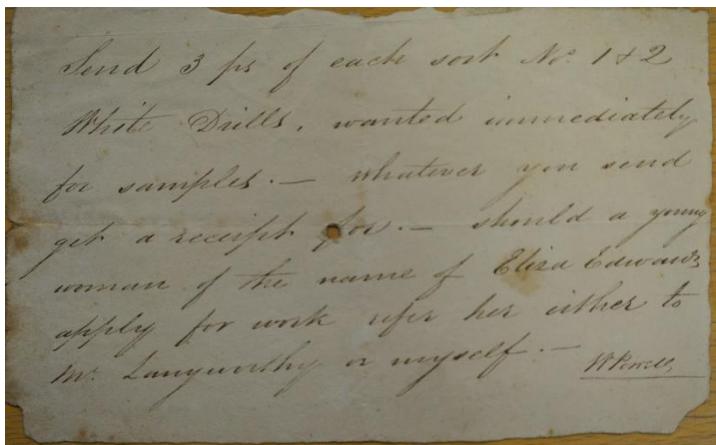


Figure 14: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Short note sent from Mr Powell requesting white drills immediately.

Powell and Lowcock were left to undertake much of the internal operations in Manchester themselves, however, every so often they would write to George Langworthy asking for his reassurance on their actions. The below note shows Powell asking Langworthy for advice regarding closing an invoice. This was about velveteens and cords that were soon expected to arrive from Lowcock and destined to be sent to the shipping firm Charles Ironside & Co. in Liverpool.

There is no letter from Ironside up to this moment. I have sent to the works for the particulars of the velveteens and cords which they should send tonight and these will form Lowcock's answer. There is a doubt as to their getting them off tonight; Shall I put them in the invoice or close in without them, or will it best for me to advise Ironsides of the forwarding and leave the invoice for the two-o clock train tomorrow? I will await your answer to this and follow it. Your most obedient servant, Mr Powell, ½ past 7.⁴⁶

Powell was left to coordinate efforts between the warehouse and Lowcock's operations at the works while at the same time dealing directly with the invoices and shipping orders from Liverpool. While he no doubt demonstrated his proficiency at this task, he still felt the need to consult George Langworthy when it was required. It was the warehouse overseers that ultimately set the tone of the operations, being the ones responsible for communicating the orders to the works. This is reflected in a note sent to Powell from Lowcock when Lowcock was asking for confirmation of what types of goods were required to be sent to the warehouse. He states:

We received 5 packages of blue India's for Mr L Josh. He says you have got 4 pieces up at the Warehouse full as good as any he can find here. Also received two pieces of drills, it is not stated on the note what kind is wanted, however, we have sent one of each and if more is wanted, please do say. John Lowcock⁴⁷

⁴⁶ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent from Mr Powell to John Lowcock

⁴⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent from John Lowcock to Mr Powell at the warehouse.

Powell was the main link in the chain that communicated orders directly with Liverpool merchants and shipping companies, whereas Lowcock was working more with the local dyeing and printing firms to meet the specifications sent by Powell, mainly in the form of pattern cards and samples. In one note he states that "I have advised Ironside of what goods we are sending already."⁴⁸

Manchester's Specialists and the Finishing of Textiles

No matter how proficient Langworthy's warehouse operations and its employees were, it would have been impossible for the firm to achieve success in the adaptation of unbleached cloth into colourful printed items without the proximity of specialist enterprises that were located around the different districts of Manchester, most notably the various printers and dyers the firm used to implement its designs. This was essential as the appearance of cottons was a major factor in their desirability in global markets. The firm's ability to specialise in printed coloured textiles that had originally been popularised elsewhere made it successful in supplying Latin American markets with cottons. This rested on the firm's ability to source bleachers for the textiles it used, apply the varieties of dyes required for overseas consumers, and utilise the services of printers to implement the correct patterns. Finding the best dyes was especially important for firms committed to markets where the colour and style of the products were important characteristics by which cloth was judged. Langworthy was, after all, listed as manufacturers of nankeen, a type of cloth which has been shown by John Styles to owe much of its success to its colour.

The success of the all-cotton fabrics probably turned in part on qualitative superiority in terms of weight and colour, as in this case of all-cotton prints, but fashion also played a crucial role. It certainly contributed to the astonishing success of nankeen during the last three decades of the eighteenth century. Among the groups of all cotton fabrics, nankeen was by far the most frequently mentioned in the Old Bailey cases. Its popularity was especially marked as a material for breeches, where its light-yellow colour enabled it to mimic the look of ultra-fashionable tight breeches.⁴⁹

As a successful manufacturer of imitation nankeens, Langworthy learned how to use dyes and colours for the best effect for a whole range of products. The original cloth that became known as nankeen was made of naturally yellow Chinese cotton, however, Langworthy was dyeing cotton to imitate nankeens of many colours such as blue.

Bleachers

Much of the cloth Langworthy was dealing in was initially unbleached. Before the firm could convert the cloth into fancy dyed and printed items, it first had to ensure that the cloth was bleached. In the

⁴⁸ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent by Mr Powell, February 1835.

⁴⁹ Styles, "What Were Cottons For", 324.

archives there are lots of receipts that show Langworthy was also using the services of local bleachers to prepare the cloth. This included the Hollins Vale Bleach Works in Bury owned by a firm called Whewell and Booth (see Figures 15 and 17). As usual the bleaching and dyeing were coordinated from the Langworthy premises at both the works and the warehouse by the firm's managers (see Figure 16). This is reflected in the short notes on small pieces of paper sent between the two locations. One such communication asks for Whewell and Booth to be informed about cloth stored at the works that needed to be bleached. As with dyeing and printing, Langworthy was outsourcing the bleaching work:

Please send to Messrs Whewell and Booth and say that we have got a quantity of pieces at the works for bleaching.⁵⁰



Figure 15: EPW017301 Aerial photo of Hollins Vale Bleach Works in Bury, 1926, from www.britainfromabove.org.uk.

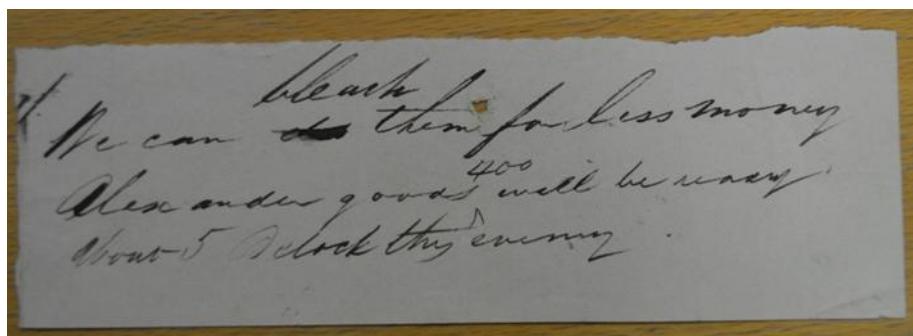


Figure 16: YA2013.25/2/1/5 Short note showing that Langworthy was bleaching products before they could be printed.

⁵⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Short note sent from Mr Lowcock from the works to the warehouse, 6th November 1834.

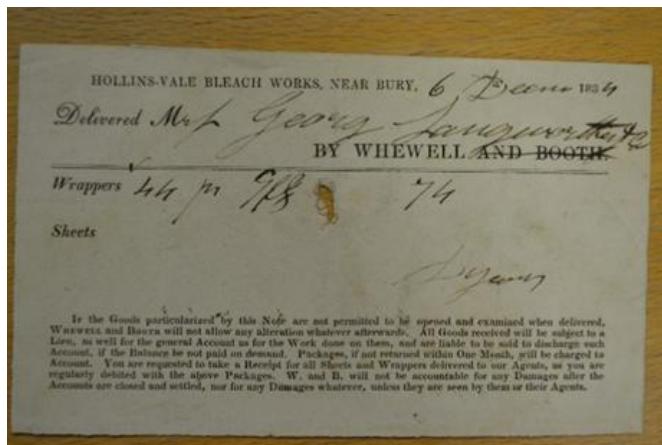


Figure 17: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Receipt from Hollins Vale Bleach Works, near Bury, for 44 wrappers, by Whewell and Booth, 6th December 1834.

Dyers

The large collection of receipts in the Langworthy archive show that in the 1820s and 1830s the firm was relying on a large number of firms to fine-tune and finish its products, including the dyeing firm, Dale Atkin & Co. (see Figure 18), which was a drysalter and chemist manufacturer based in Salford and Manchester. The firm was eventually dissolved in 1836.⁵¹

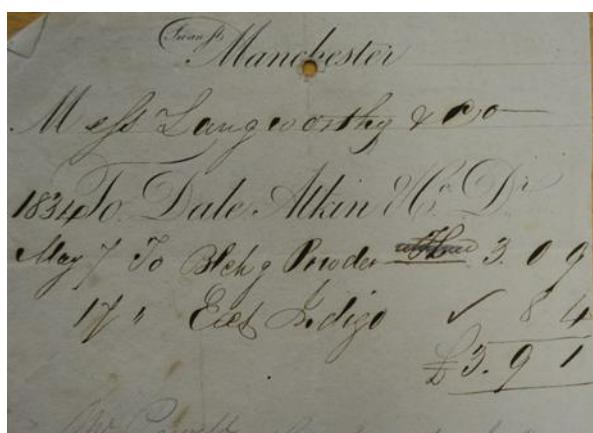


Figure 18: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Invoice from manufacturing chemist, Dale Atkin & Co., for indigo dye.

Atkin was supplying Langworthy with extracts of indigo dyes. The use of indigo in the British textile industry was heavily influenced by demand from Africa, especially in West Africa and Ghana. Scholars such as Stuart Robinson have shown that consumers in Africa were not easily won over with dull

⁵¹ London Gazette for the Year 1836, vol. 2, (London, Robert Clarke, Parliament Street), 1681.

colours but instead preferred bright and colourful garments.⁵² Indigo was the main dye used to create blue pigment colours for textile designs before the introduction of synthetic dyes in the 1850s.⁵³ It was one of the most important dyes used in the textile industry during the nineteenth century. The process of dyeing textiles indigo involved saturating the cloth in indigo liquor and then exposing it to the air.⁵⁴ The indigo then oxidises in the air to create the indigo blue colour. Most of the dyeing that Langworthy undertook was with acidic dyes which were more suitable for producing bright fancy colours such as blue, green, red and yellow, whereas mordant dyes were usually used for darker colours, usually on wool.⁵⁵ Cotton, however, lent itself well to bright colours and fast colours which were especially sought after in the markets Langworthy was engaged in such as in Latin America. Langworthy's sourcing of indigo dye from Dale Atkin & Co. in 1834 is not surprising at all when one considers the number of consignments of blue nankeens, blue Indias and blue salampores it was sending to countries like Brazil. Later newspaper reports show that Langworthy stored vast amounts of indigo dye at its premises at Greengate when the firm moved to Salford in the late 1830s. In one instance large amounts of the dye were stolen during a robbery. The process of dyeing required a great deal of water for washing the colours and so this is likely to have played a part in Langworthy's reasons for moving to a premises near the River Irwell where water could be easily accessed. The site at Greengate was already home to many different dye works including the Adelphi Dye Works.⁵⁶ Langworthy also imported dyes in return for its textile exports. This was the case for its exports to Honduras through a Glasgow firm of the name Alexander Johnston & Co. Johnston was advancing cochineal and indigo from Honduras as remittance for Langworthy's shipments there.⁵⁷ As well as raw cotton, Manchester's industry was hungry for dyeing substances for colouring the cloth and printing patterns. Robinson has shown how it was the quality of Manchester's printing that was the paramount reason for the success of British imitations of Indian textiles:

It was not until 1750 that the Manchester goods reached a quality of printing high enough to compete successfully with Indian goods. These imitation Indian calicoes were known as baftaes, cushtaes, negannepaults, and bejutapaults. Despite fastness problems, particularly with reds, the exports of Manchester goods rose steadily, helped by the decline of the East Indian traders.⁵⁸

⁵² Stuart Robinson, *A History of Dyed Textiles* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970), 77.

⁵³ Norman Redhead, "Greengate, The Archaeology of Salford's Historic Core", *Greater Manchester's Past Revealed* 13 (2015): 34.

⁵⁴ A.F. Barker, *Textiles, The Mercerized and Artificial Fibres and the Dyeing of Textile Materials* (London: Constable and Company, 1910), 67.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 78.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 34.

⁵⁷ Letter from Alex Johnston and Co., Glasgow, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 31st September 1833.

⁵⁸ Robinson, *History of Dyed Textiles*, 76.

However, printing was also dependent upon having the correct dyes to apply to the fabrics in order to create the intricate patterns. Even the printing depended largely upon the chemicals provided by suppliers like Dale Atkin.

During this period, dyes and those specialists who supplied them were becoming ever more important to Manchester's industry as the numbers of colours and types of dyes expanded dramatically. As Chapman states:

*The other craft connected with calico printing that developed rapidly in the first half of the nineteenth century was that of colour making. It would be easy to dignify this development with the name chemistry but the surviving recopied books of colour men suggests something more akin to the culinary arts than modern colour chemistry.*⁵⁹

This evolution in colour making formed an important backdrop to Langworthy's success in textile exporting during the 1820s and 1830s. The fundamental nature of colours and the types of dyes that were used to create them, and their importance to Langworthy's operations, is also reflected in the effects of not having the exact dyes for people's orders. One note sent from Mr Powell shows that one order was being held up on account of not having the right dyes for certain ends which made up the weave of the product. In this case Powell asked if pea green dye could be used as a substitute for grape green so that the order could be sent off more quickly.

*We are getting on fast as we can- with both orders but you are aware how we have been situated. Mr Rogerson is coming up and will give you an answer respecting orders, I see by your note he only wants 100 ends at present. If he will allow us to place a few ends pea green in place of the grape greens perhaps we may send 100 ends off today.*⁶⁰

Langworthy's fine-tuning of textiles in this area would not have been possible without the evolution in dye making which had taken place during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Lancashire especially became a hotbed of dye suppliers, which all experimented in the different types of colours that could be produced to imitate textiles from other countries, especially India. Pigot's list of 1837 shows that there were fifty-four drysalters located in Manchester and eighty-four dyers.⁶¹ During this period the number of dyes becoming available to Manchester's textile entrepreneurs was increasing in volume with greater availability of imported dyes including madder and weld but also dyewoods. This was all taking place even before the establishment of synthetic dyes. Scholars who have studied the evolution of colouring textiles such as Agusti Nieto-Galan have highlighted how

The western obsession with the imitation of printed patterns from the East placed natural dyestuffs in a revolutionary new context, in which multiple mechanic, aesthetic and chemical

⁵⁹ S.D. Chapman, "Quantity vs Quality in the British Industrial Revolution", in S.D. Chapman, *The Textile Industries*, vol. 3 (London: Tauris Publishers, 1997), 335.

⁶⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.4, Note from Mr Powell, undated.

⁶¹ Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory, 1837, 98.

skills coexisted in very different ways and were assigned to individuals who had acquired years of experience at the new sites of production, but had little or no standard technical education. Drawing together the old savoir-faire of the workshops and manufacturers, the everyday practice of dyers and emerging experts changed markedly, as did their overall understanding of the metier.⁶²

Dye suppliers such as Atkin no doubt fitted this description. The division of labour and competition that had evolved around supplying dyes to the textile industry was highly geared towards serving the needs of firms like Langworthy, which was intent on manufacturing the cottons with the particular shades and colours that were most likely to fetch a successful sale in markets like Brazil where colour was a major factor in a product's suitability.

In the example mentioned above, between Powell and Lowcock, Powell tries to persuade Lowcock to dye some textiles with alternative colours on account of an order coming in which had been confirmed by Mr Robinson, who also worked for the firm.⁶³ This illustrates how the firm was constantly experimenting with new colours and this formed a major function of the managers at both the warehouse and the works. The firm used diagrams and notes to denote the types of colours it was using. They show Langworthy used a range of greens alongside browns, including pea green and bottle green (see Figure 19).⁶⁴

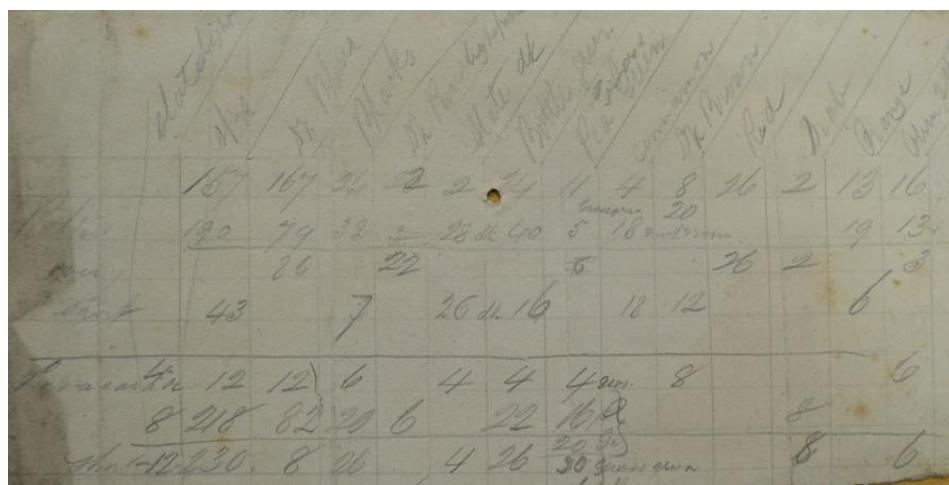


Figure 19: YA2013.25.2.1.5, Scrap note with graph denoting the types of colours being applied to Langworthy's textiles, including pea green, bottle green, and dark brown.

⁶² Agusti Nieto-Galan, *Colouring Textiles, A History of Natural Dyestuffs in Industrial Europe* (London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001), 54.

⁶³ YA2013.25.2.2.4 Note sent by Mr Powell, undated.

⁶⁴ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Scrap note with graph denoting the types of colours being applied to Langworthy's textiles, including pea green, bottle green, and dark brown.

Printers

As well as developing the colours and shades of textiles, firms like Langworthy also had to carefully oversee the administration of patterns and images for the design of its products. This was made possible by the combination of block and more mechanised printing methods that had flourished in Manchester.



Figure 20: YA2013.2.1.6 Hand painted designs probably for cheap handkerchiefs. They were sent to local printers which used them to print designs suited to export markets.

Langworthy was using both pattern cards and hand-painted designs (see Figure 20) to dictate the types of decorative patterns that would be printed onto the goods. During this period designers were usually working freelance and sold their services to different companies; however, they were sometimes employed directly by a firm. In Langworthy's case it is difficult to say which, but it certainly took advantage of local designers to hand paint designs such as different flower patterns which could then be used by printers to replicate onto Langworthy's unfinished cloth. The warehouse work was crucial to this. Most designs were usually either imitations of designs already in existence, usually deriving from France or India, and sometimes they could be modifications of previous designs already in use.⁶⁵ The period also saw the rise in agents who made their living from collecting the most unique and sought-after designs and selling them to firms for imitation. They were known as pattern collectors. As Langworthy was in the business of specialising in printed cottons it would have been constantly

⁶⁵ T. Kusamitsu, "British Industrialisation and Design Before the Great Exhibition", in S.D. Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, Volume 3 (London: Tauris Publishers, 1997), 322.

seeking new designs that could give their products an edge. Every step in their process from weaving, dying and printing was geared towards achieving this goal, as writers such as T. Kusamitsu have suggested. He states that:

*the theory of division of labour was still one of the prime motivations in the development of the industry. It was insisted upon by manufacturers. Their main concern was how to reorganise the division of labour so as to produce effectively more efficient and competitive designs.*⁶⁶

The rotating cylinder printing machine was one of the nineteenth-century technical innovations that allowed for more complex patterns in woven cloth and on a much larger scale than previously imagined. Printing became more accurate and easier to implement than before when block printing was the predominant method of applying designs to textiles. Though mechanisation flourished, block printing also continued to be competitive, and Manchester's merchants and manufacturers were uniquely placed to take advantage of both methods, allowing them to compete effectively with textile producers all over the globe. When it came to single colours, cylinder printing held an advantage. However, for multiple colours block printing continued to be superior and was improved during the 1820s and 1830s. Due to these technical developments, more and more firms were desperate to create their own unique patterns. Between 1839 and 1847 there were 15,697 copyright designs registered in Manchester, more than in both London and Glasgow.⁶⁷

As the receipts below make clear (Figures 21–23), Langworthy was using many specialist engravers and printers to create various printed designs to market its cloth. Many of these were also being used to print labels for Langworthy's products. By 1830 most of the textile printing taking place in the country was concentrated in a 30-mile radius around Manchester and so there was a close relationship between the warehouses and printers and engravers.⁶⁸ Engravers were responsible for making the rollers that were used to print designs onto cotton cloth. There was great variability in the different patterns these rollers could print. One order from Thomas Cave and Son in March 1834 was for 1,000 printed stars. Another from W. and H. Cave in December 1834, was for 250 George and the Dragon Patterned tickets, used as labels for Langworthy's goods. Many of the textiles that Langworthy was dealing in are described in the various notes as either coloured or printed calicoes.⁶⁹ The firm would eventually go on to be defined as a calico printer, however, during this period a part of its operations was also highly centred around the dyeing and printing of calicoes.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 317.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 321.

⁶⁸ Greysmith, "The Printing Textile Industry in England 1830–1870", 6.

⁶⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.4 Note for the warehouse, received from the works, five pieces of blue calicoes, 29th September 1834.



Figure 21: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt for 250 George and the Dragon Patterns from W&H. Cave, Engravers and Printers, Manchester, 12th December 1834.



Figure 22: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt for 1,000 small, printed stars from engravers and copper plate printers Thomas and Cave and Son, Manchester, 15th March 1834.

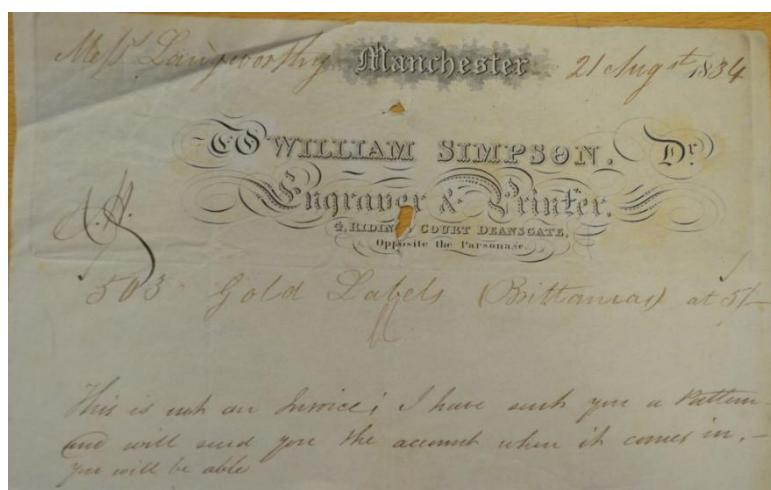


Figure 23: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt from William Simpson, Engraver and Printer, Deansgate, 21st August 1834.

As with advancements in the dyeing process, Langworthy was also operating at a time when printing was developing fast, especially in Manchester and the wider Lancashire region. Roller printing was highly developed there and was beginning to speed up the process of applying patterns to textiles. However, what made Manchester unique during this period was the combination of both block printing and roller printing which meant that firms could produce almost any quality of printed textile for almost any market in the world. Greysmith has revealed how roller printing allowed for cheaper mass-produced prints, but in Manchester this was combined with block printing to ensure the competitive advantage of its cottons.⁷⁰ Roller printing was limited to start with in that it could only really produce three colours until the 1840s. Moreover, the copper plates were expensive. However, as in Langworthy's case and the firm's use of the services of Thomas Cave and Son, it is clear that copper plate printing was being utilised. The combination of the two and the division of printing tasks in Manchester meant that Langworthy could compete with textile producers in other towns and countries, especially in non-elite goods.

During the 1830s firms like Cave and Simpson were part of a group of thirty-seven "Engravers and Copper Plate Printers" located in Manchester along with thirty-two other firms which were listed as "Engravers and Calico Printers."⁷¹ Printing in Switzerland and France still continued to be supreme in fancy goods but not in the volumes that Lancashire could produce. Furthermore, the mechanisation of spinning and weaving meant that more cloth could be produced and printed upon at a cheaper rate. In this sense Manchester merchants could compete on the grounds of both quality and quantity. Scholars such as Platt have often acknowledged the latter but the degree to which quality control was also a key variable in the success of the British textile trade has rarely been appreciated, even if it was the middle market that most Manchester firms were focusing on. Though these goods were limited by a price point, fine adjustments still had to be made to ensure they met consumer standards. Textiles of all forms of quality were still required to be competitive. The relationship between commercial success at the end of the French wars and the revolution in printing is acknowledged by Chapman:

In the long period Lancashire benefited from the reversal of the post-war years and quality printers in the region benefited most. By the eighteen twenties when trade began to revive, there was very little competition left from London. The introduction of power loom weaving further strengthened Lancashire's unassailable position in the supply of fabrics for printing.⁷²

The evidence demonstrates that Langworthy utilised the services of numerous smaller firms to perfect its products, most of whom were involved in the finishing trades (see Appendix A). Indeed, it has been shown that in 1834 there were at least 100 firms in the Manchester and Salford districts alone who

⁷⁰ Greysmith, "The Printed Textile Industry in England 1830–1870", 3.

⁷¹ Pigot & Co.'s National Commercial Directory, 1837, 99.

⁷² S.D. Chapman, "Quantity vs Quality", 337.

were involved in the dying business as well as thirty-two bleachers.⁷³ While spinning and weaving moved out of the city into the surrounding downs, printing, dyeing and bleaching were still heavily focused around Manchester. Consequently, for a firm like Langworthy, its location in the heart of Manchester made its work all the easier (see Figure 24). The scholar Geoffrey Timmins sums up the result of these firms' specialisations during the 1830s and the resulting product diversification:

A bewildering range of fabrics soon emerged, which varied according to the type of cotton used, the degree of fineness in the weave, the extent and range of colour and pattern and the method of weave employed. Never before had the customer enjoyed such a wide choice of British made textile products.⁷⁴

This development was chiefly the result of firms like Langworthy which were able to utilise the specialisms of Manchester in accordance with the information sent to them from overseas markets. Information and pattern cards were integral to this process.

You shall have the pattern cards of all of Newton's goods today with particulars of what we shall send off for him⁷⁵

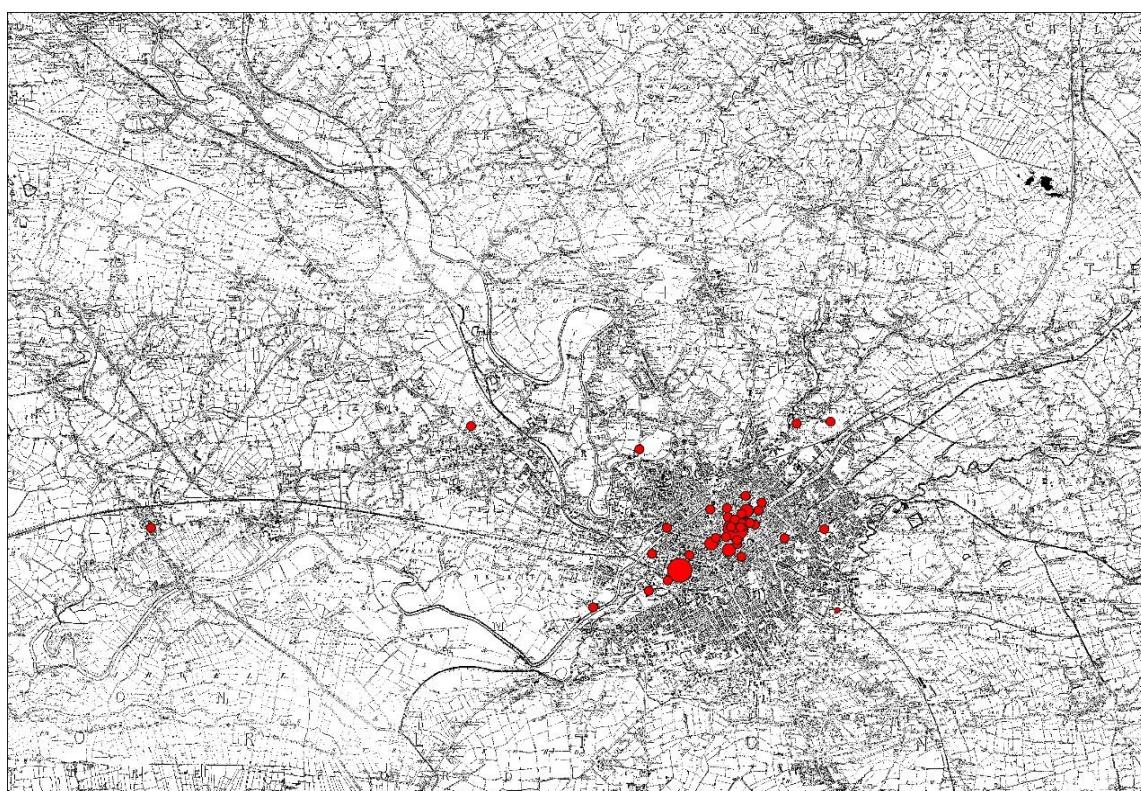


Figure 24: A wider view of Langworthy's business associates and local suppliers in Manchester and its surrounding towns. Notice the concentration in Manchester.

⁷³ Geoffrey Timmins, *Made in Lancashire, A History of Regional Industrialisation* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), 97.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 163.

⁷⁵ YA2013.25/2/2/4, Warehouse Note.

Manufacturing Districts and Packaging Services

Spinners and Weavers

Thus far we have focused on how Langworthy was using local firms to help it convert unfinished cloth into products that could compete in markets where colour and style of pattern were features by which textiles were increasingly judged. All textiles, including base items, were judged on handle and drape. However, because Langworthy was converting cloth for Brazilian markets, colour and style were highly scrutinised. Langworthy's operations, however, had an added complexity as the receipts in the archive reveal that the firm was also purchasing materials to weave its own textiles. During the 1820s and 1830s Langworthy was purchasing warp, weft and twist from local spinning firms, most commonly from the Medlock Mill owned by Seville and Wright which operated out of Oldham (see Figures 25–27). Wright was not the largest spinner in the area and was dwarfed by much larger firms such as McConnel and Kennedy located in Ancoats, which employed over a thousand operatives. However, it was sizeable. In 1833 it employed 172 workers at the firm's mill in Lower Moor, Oldham.⁷⁶ Perhaps what is more important is that it was a state-of-the-art spinner and at the time was probably using Robert's self-acting mule which was widely distributed amongst firms in the Oldham area after 1825. Langworthy formed a strong trading relationship with Wright. As expected, most of its communications with Wright were concerning the colour of the materials it was receiving and ensuring this was absolutely right. This is reflected in an example from August 1834 when in a letter Langworthy told Wright:

Yours of today is to hand, the colour of your twist is not so white as we wish it. Perhaps you can mend this. The twist will do. Red tie is preferred for shipping. If you can get it to, if not yellow, it must do. We hope the 12 wefts will now be good. What you have sent, will be a great loss, are laying by all the cops the weavers cannot use.⁷⁷

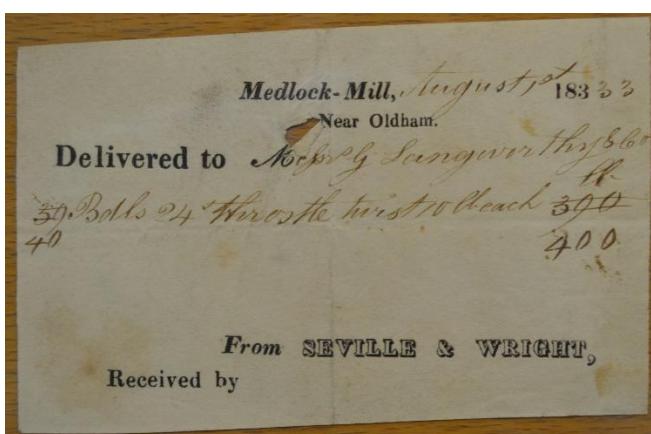


Figure 25: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Receipt from Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill, for cotton twist, August 1833.

⁷⁶ Edwin Butterworth, *Historical Sketches of Oldham* (Oldham: 1856), 181.

⁷⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Letter from George Langworthy and Co. to Seville and Wright, Manchester, 7th August 1834.

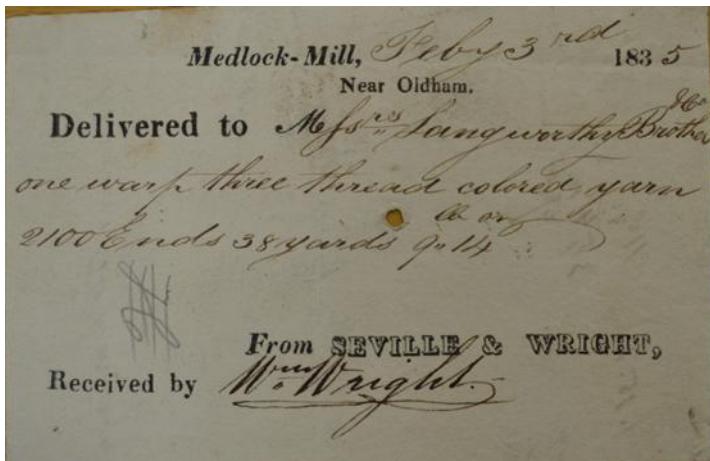


Figure 26: YA2013.25.2.1.5 Receipt from Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill, for order of "one warp three thread colored yarn", 3rd February 1835.

Once again it was the colour with which Langworthy was mainly concerned. In this instance the firm was anxious to obtain the correct shade of twist which it wanted to be much whiter than was being supplied. The firm also seemed to be keen to obtain red tie, used for the skein wrapper for packaging the textiles in the shipping process, as opposed to yellow. A later receipt from 1835 shows that Langworthy bought one warp three thread coloured yarn from Wright.⁷⁸ This yarn was then used for weaving the cloth which the firm exported. When producing dyed textiles, it is possible to go about this in two ways. One involves obtaining grey cloth or unfinished cloth and then sending it to be dyed and printed. However, it is also possible to obtain dyed yarn and twist which can be used to create a coloured textile. Yarn was often dyed by hand, where they are moved in a liquor.⁷⁹ In this instance it was Langworthy obtaining red twist from the spinning firm Seville and Wright, which it presumably used to weave textiles that contained red in them. What is more important about this example, however, is the way in which it demonstrates how Langworthy was able to affect the quality and visual style of its goods even at the level of integrant items. During the 1830s, Seville and Wright became the main spinner Langworthy used for acquiring twist, warp and weft to manufacture textiles. There are also delivery notes showing that Langworthy would then deliver this coloured yarn to the works in Eccles from its warehouse in Cannon Street. Within these delivery notes the different coloured yarns along with their quantity and specific type of textile intended were denoted. For example, 100 ends used to weave velveteens.⁸⁰

⁷⁸ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Receipt from Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill, for order of three hundred coloured yarn, 3rd February 1835.

⁷⁹ A.F. Barker, *Textiles*, 77.

⁸⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.5, Receipt showing delivery of coloured yarn to the works from George Langworthy and Co., 30th December 1834.

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>Mr. George Langworthy, Medlock Mill, Decr. 8th 1834</i> | |
| <i>Bought of Seville & Wright.</i> | |
| <i>Mule & Throstle Spinners.</i> | |
| <i>To 24 Hanks 3600 6 ends 235 Yards</i> | |
| <i>4.07.38.9 1447.34.12 117.38.12</i> | |
| <i>4.3.3.10 8.86.6 19.38.12</i> | |
| <i>9.0.37.13 0.31.8 19.38.12</i> | |
| <i>10.37.13 16.31.10 20.38.12</i> | |
| <i>1.38.0 16.31.10 155.0</i> | |
| <i>2.38.9 16.31.11 374.0</i> | |
| <i>3.38.9 12.31.3 380.12</i> | |
| <i>4.38.9 14.31.3 913.11. Nett 26. Yards</i> | |
| <i>5.38.0 15.37.12</i> | |
| <i>6.37.14 16.37.12</i> | |
| <i><u>380.19.0 377.0</u></i> | |
| <i>For 100 skips 298.0 - 30.8 - 824 - 218.8</i> | |
| <i>9. " 290.0 - 38.8 - 825 - 221.8</i> | |
| <i>33. " 294.0 - 33.8 - 826 - 224.8</i> | |
| <i>105. " 244.0 - 31.8 - 827 - 214.0</i> | |
| <i><u>876.0 129.0</u></i> | |
| <i><u>107.06. Total 18. Pen. lowe & Co</u></i> | |

Figure 27: YA2013.25.2.2.7 Receipt from Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill, prepared warps ready for weaving and cotton yarn in skip quantities, 8th December 1834.

These component materials would first arrive at Langworthy's warehouse before being moved to the works by cart. There are warehouse notes sent between Langworthy's employees stating that regular deliveries of weft from Seville and Wright would arrive at the warehouse on Cannon Street.⁸¹ In a later note, from that same month in December 1834, Langworthy's managers at the works changed the delivery system in order to improve efficiency by asking for the yarn to be delivered directly to the works in Eccles (see also Figure 28) and bypass the warehouse.

In the future take no more skips in at the warehouse – as a general rule we wish to have them delivered at the works.⁸²

This is also further evidence of how the weaving operations in Eccles were essential to Langworthy's business aims.

⁸¹ YA2013.25.2.1.5, Warehouse note detailing delivery of skips of weft from Seville and Wright, 9th December 1834.

⁸² YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note sent to the warehouse from Lowcock asking for direct delivery to the works, 31st December 1834.

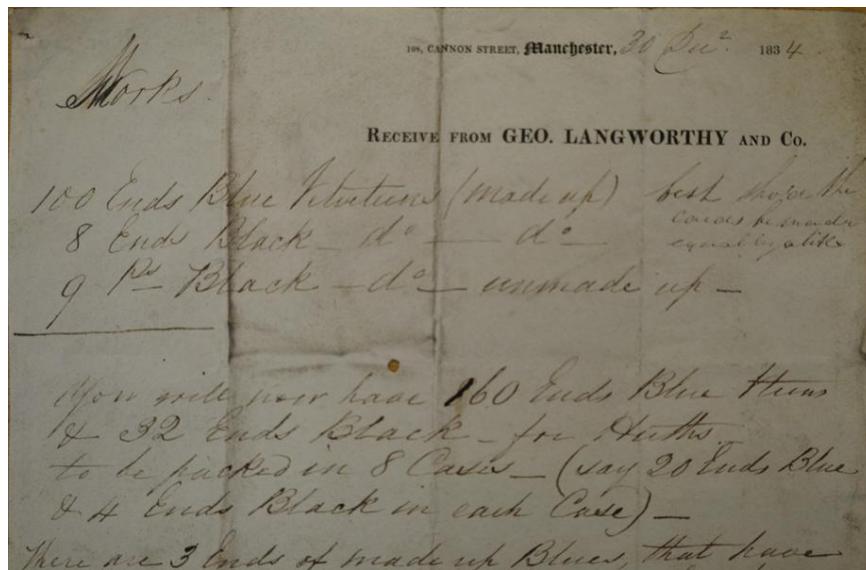


Figure 28: YA2013.25.2.1.5 Receipt showing delivery of coloured yarn to the works from George Langworthy & Co., 30th December 1834.

As well as buying component materials from local spinning firms and utilising the services of printers to convert grey cloth into printed textiles, Langworthy was also undertaking a traditional merchant role. It was buying finished goods from other manufacturers and selling it on in a similar vein to a firm like Owen Owens and Son. For example, during the 1830s, it was buying finished articles from the check manufacturer, Thomas Fray, who was based in Wigan. The smaller specialist firms in the supply chain around Manchester allowed Langworthy to purchase a variety of different textiles to suit overseas consumer demand (see Figure 29).

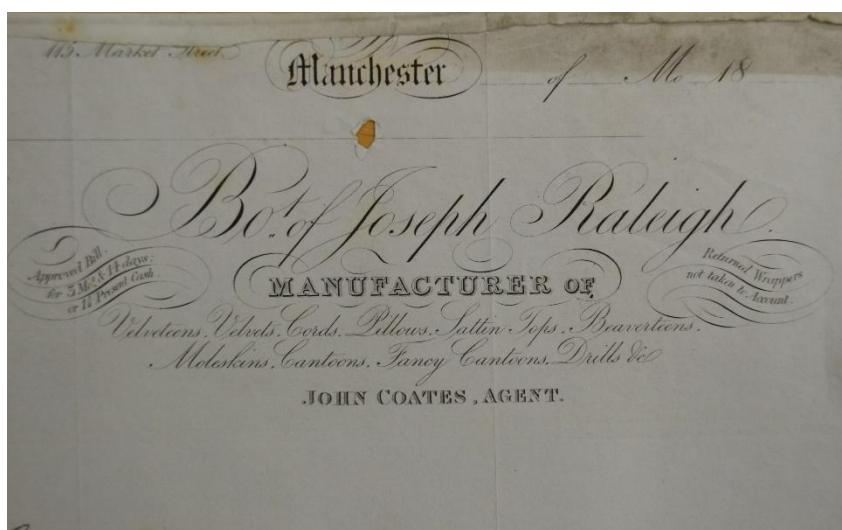


Figure 29: YA2013.25.2.2.2 Receipt from Joseph Raleigh, Manufacturer of Velveteens, Velvets, Cords, Pillows, Sattin Tops, Beaverteens, Moleskins, Cantoons, Fancy Cantoons and Drills &c, 115 Market Street, Manchester

It would often send out employees to different manufacturing districts to scour the warehouses of other manufacturers looking for the sorts of goods that could satisfy the specifications in the firms'

orders. Warehouse employees regularly travelled to the works in Eccles, the location where much of the textiles for Langworthy were manufactured, to pick up some moleskins which Langworthy did not convert itself.⁸³ This was the location often referred to as “the Works” within the notes between Powell and Lowcock. Eccles was a highly industrialised area and was known for its handweavers which were masters in the creation of nankeens and checks, two items which were popular exports for Langworthy.⁸⁴ These handweavers were adequately supplied with yarn on account of the spinning mills that sprung up in the Eccles area during the early nineteenth century and which by 1835 contained 1,124 operatives working in them.⁸⁵ Eccles grew very fast after the building of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway, which opened in 1830.

Mr George Langworthy was still highly involved in the daily operations of the firm and had the final decision on terms, payments and orders. At the end of one note, which was likely sent by Powell, though we cannot be sure, it says “we are sending Castelli’s four cases of nankeens off today, please ask Mr Langworthy if the terms are as before. He does not say on the order”.⁸⁶ This is further evidenced in another instance when Lowcock in a note to Langworthy says he is sending an errand boy up to the top floor with samples of muslins. He asks Langworthy “please you can either give him instructions for the packing of them or send a note here with particulars.”⁸⁷ Langworthy was a key authority in providing the crucial end market particulars such as packaging instructions which was an essential task in preventing products from being damaged on the overseas crossing.

As well as manufacturing nankeens and drills, Langworthy was also exporting products such as satins, beaverteens, moleskins, velveteens and cords. Satins were a form of textile, sometimes made from silk but which could also be made from cotton that exhibited a shiny finish because of the manner in which the warp and weft had been put together. Beaverteens were heavier cloth with diagonal weaves. Moleskins are heavy dense cotton fabrics, whereas velveteens were soft fabrics made from cotton that were designed to imitate the feeling of silk velvet textiles. Even Langworthy could not hope to specialise in developing all these diverse products as well as concentrating on salampores, nankeens, blue Indias and drills. As a result, the firm also bought finished goods from other manufacturers in Manchester such as Joseph Raleigh & Co. which had a warehouse in Market Street. Many of the manufacturers Langworthy Brothers bought goods from were similar to those that Owen Owens and Son were using. For example, both Owens and Langworthy were purchasing from Samuel Greg, the well-known Manchester entrepreneur who would eventually build the famous Quarry Bank

⁸³ YA2013.25.2.2.7 Note from the warehouse, undated.

⁸⁴ Johnston, *Eccles*, 86.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁸⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.7 Warehouse Note, No Name or Date

⁸⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note from John Lowcock to George Langworthy, 24th January 1834.

Mill in Cheshire. Likewise, both firms purchased unfinished cloth from Munn. The main difference, however, is that unlike Owens, Langworthy was working this cloth to design its own unique textiles rather than just buying and selling. Within the Owens' cash books there are transactions recorded that show it buying dyed products from Langworthy. For example, it bought £168 worth of goods from Langworthy in March 1838.⁸⁸ However, there is no evidence that Langworthy ever bought goods from Owens. Some of the notes sent by Powell and Lowcock imply that sometimes other manufacturers would send textiles straight to Liverpool after Langworthy had paid for them. Sometimes these never even came to Langworthy's own warehouse to be prepared. This is indicated in one note sent from Powell to George Langworthy in August 1834 when Powell asked his employer if 500 fancy prints produced by the firm Wright and Lee were to come to the warehouse or go straight to Liverpool.⁸⁹ A Mr Hicks had made room in the warehouse for them. However, based on the tone of this note, it seems clear that it was common practice for goods made by other firms on Langworthy's account to bypass the warehouse process.

*Joshua Preston is come back and said that you can't have the blue baft samples until tomorrow morning. The printed piece we sent for calendering will be ready at 5 o clock this evening when it shall be sent to warehouse.*⁹⁰

Mr George Langworthy was actively inspecting the samples himself. Indeed, his schedule was busy with making sure suppliers were paid and that the bales of goods leaving the warehouse were of sufficient quality asked for by his commission agents. He was also responsible for securing new orders. One note sent to Langworthy from Powell neatly reflects his busy work life.

*The enclosed is the only letter (4 o clock post)- Mr Haigh called- Mr Stafford wanted to see you about shawls. Mr Rogerson has seen heap and says Mr Hoth's Warping Mill is ready but wants to know if he will take it. You promised Mr Seville £150, he called about ½ past Six, but it will do on Saturday. Behrens want to know when you had sales for No 105, 114, 127. 132, 134 = Five Bales Nankeens- they say the a/c we furnished is incorrect but to what extent I don't know. I have finished parting but want to look over Newton's A/C, shall be ready on Thursday morning.*⁹¹

In this instance Mr Seville from Seville and Wright was coming to the Langworthy warehouse to pick up his money for materials he had sent Langworthy.

*I send you all the invoices I can spare at present, as to the invoice of Seville and Wright you speak of, I think I sent it. I can't say at present how many cases we shall have for Newton. You can send us the mark and number and we can mark upwards and will give the particulars as early as possible.*⁹²

⁸⁸ OWN1.1.1.3 Ledger book, 17.

⁸⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.7 Note from Mr Powell to George Langworthy, 13th August 1834.

⁹⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Note from John Lowcock to George Langworthy, 4 o'clock, undated.

⁹¹ YA2013.25.2.2.7 Note from Mr Powell to George Langworthy, no date.

⁹² YA2013.25.2.2.7 Warehouse note, 30th September 1834.

Overall, Manchester had become a productive base for a firm to acquire component items for manufacturing textiles and in acquiring finished goods for general merchanting. It was the job of merchanting and manufacturing firms to coordinate these activities and exploit Manchester's industrial advantage.

Packers, Wrappers and Calenderers

Manchester was also a good location for the packing process on account of the various specialist providers that had evolved to support the work of the city's merchants and wholesalers. For example, Pigot's directory of Manchester businesses in 1837 lists thirty-seven "Packer and Maker Up" firms in Manchester. It also lists nine oil cloth manufacturers and thirty rope and twine manufacturers.⁹³ Whether Langworthy was producing the textiles or sending out unfinished cloth bought from other dealers to be printed upon, the final stage of both these journeys was to ensure that the products were scrupulously packaged and protected for their overseas journey before the goods could be sent by either cart or train to the shipping firms in Liverpool. Textiles were packed in its warehouse in Cannon Street, with packing materials sourced from local suppliers in Manchester (see Figures 30 and 31, and Figure 33). This included masses of twine, ropes, oil cloths and wrappers. Llorca-Jana has highlighted the significance that packaging played in the marketability of products in South America. Labelling was also important, for example, one warehouse note shows that Spanish labels were being used for consignments destined for the firm's customers Frederick Huth & Co. Most of the markets where Huth had branches located were Spanish speaking.⁹⁴ The British textile trade had made notable progress in the packaging and labelling field during the early decades of the nineteenth century. Llorca-Jana argues this was especially important in the South American markets, which Langworthy focused on, due to the distance the goods had to travel overseas. He states:

It may be the case that packing has been so overlooked in studies of the Anglo-South America trade because it was not an issue for exports to continental Europe or to North America where the lion's share of British exports went before the Napoleonic Wars. However, in the trades to South America, the main perils lay ahead.⁹⁵

⁹³ Pigot & Co.'s Directory of the Merchants, Manufacturers and Wholesale Traders of Manchester, 1837.

⁹⁴ YA2013.25.2.1.5, Warehouse note, referring to Spanish labels, 31st December 1833.

⁹⁵ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 200.



Figure 30: YA2013.25/2/1/6, Receipt for packing in oil cloth from Geo Pickup, Calenderer, Maker Up and Packer, 16th October 1834.

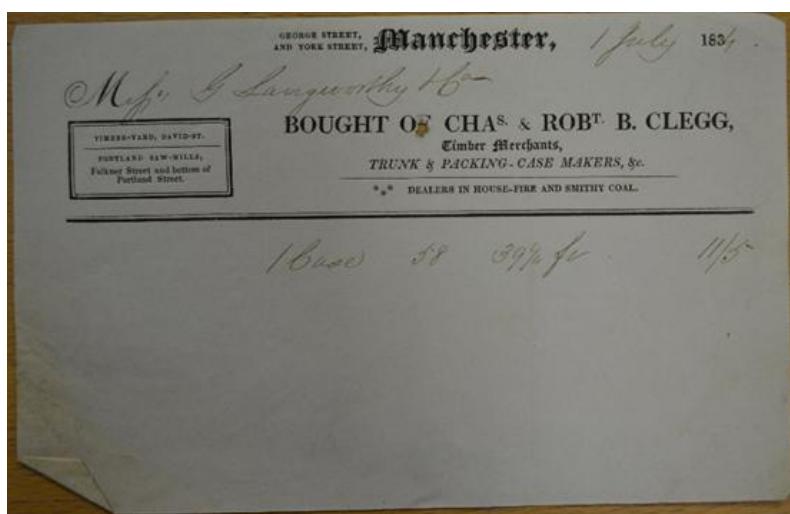


Figure 31: YA201325.2.1.6 Receipt from Charles and Robert B. Clegg, for 1 packing case, 1st July 1834.

The above receipts represent just a few in the archive that show how Langworthy was purchasing packing materials from different suppliers such as George Peacock and Charles and Robert Clegg. Packing was important for protecting against damage from sea water, mildew and moisture. It was also important for the presentation of products. The quality of packing and its respectability also had a major impact on insurance premiums.⁹⁶ Insufficient or low-quality packing was well known in the trade to have the potential to produce large losses on shipments. Ropes were also an important item that was integral to the packing aspect of the business. Langworthy sourced these from a firm called Charles Dunderdale which was based in Manchester.⁹⁷ The types of materials Langworthy was purchasing from local packing firms are also reflected in the Owen Owens and Son archive.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 205.

⁹⁷ YA2013.25.3.2.1 Langworthy accounts ledger.

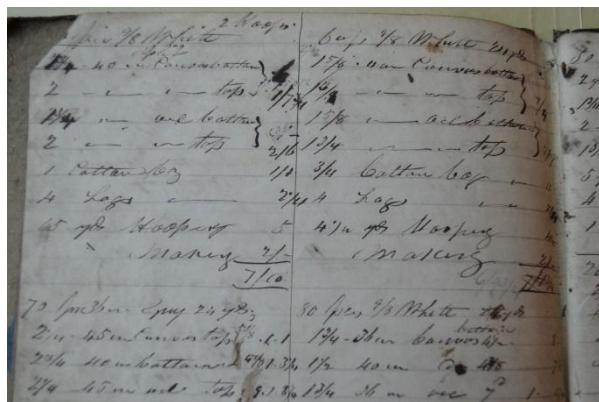


Figure 32: OWN2.1.2 Owens packing book, 1837–1838

The Owens archive contains packing books (see Figure 32) which show the materials the firm was purchasing for the packing process such as twine, rope, tape, paper, cotton bags and oil cloth on a large scale.⁹⁸ Owens was also using tin boxes to make sure its textiles were watertight on the overseas crossing. Just like Langworthy it used specialist packing firms to source these particulars such as E. Hacking which were selling oil cloths, while also buying hoops from Richard Dawes & Co. and lasts from Thomas Ashworth.⁹⁹ The fact that firms kept separate records for the buying of packing materials is a testament to how important a component this was to the merchant process. Langworthy used a combination of its own packing combined with utilising the services of other firms. There are letters that show that it certainly carried out some of its own packing in its warehouse premises. One letter from Seville and Wright to Langworthy refers to the firms packing warehouse, which most likely involved its premises on Cannon Street.

Your kind order came to hand on the 31st instant and shall be attended to and got to the packers warehouse as early as possible tomorrow morning by our cart.¹⁰⁰

However, there are also examples that show that sometimes Langworthy would send goods out to be packaged by outside providers. One note sent between Langworthy's warehouse employees refers to a recommendation of packing instructions to be sent along with a set of goods to George Pickup, a calenderer, maker up and packing firm.

I think you had better see pickup respecting the packing of these goods and give him directions how you would have packed, and you may tell him we shall have a load ready for them by six o'clock.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ OWN2.1.2 Owens packing book, 1837–1838.

⁹⁹ OWN2.1.2 Twenty-one loose pieces; receipt for 36 oil cloths from E. Hacking, Manchester, 22nd March 1843; receipt for 14 bales of lasts from Thomas Ashworth, Manchester, 30th November 1840.

¹⁰⁰ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 31st October 1831.

¹⁰¹ YA2013.25.2.1.5. Note from Warehouse to Mr Newton, 1834.

Just as with Langworthy, Owens was both contracting out work as well as performing tasks in-house and was doing both its own packing as well as sending goods to be packaged by other firms. Both firms were supported in their operations by the large body of suppliers in Manchester that could aid firms in the creation and preparation of textile exports.



Figure 33: YA2013.25.2.1.6 Receipt for oil cloth from Thomas Watson, Bag Manufacturer, Market Street, Manchester, 16th August 1834.

Appendix B shows the number of transactions in one of Langworthy's cash books that took place between Langworthy and local firms, depending on geographical location in the Lancashire region, during the 1820s and 1830s. Despite the increasing relocation of firms to the towns around Manchester that took place during this time, it is clear that Manchester was still by far the biggest business community with which Langworthy was involved and depended upon. It was this concentration of suppliers in Manchester that gave its firms the capacity to respond to market demand and to adapt textiles for export.

Conclusion

Merchant and manufacturing firms, such as Langworthy, were important in synchronising the commercial activity that was happening both abroad and in the industrial clusters of Manchester. It was the specialisation amongst Manchester's local production and distribution systems that allowed the exporters of British textiles to penetrate overseas markets successfully during the early nineteenth century. Large textile exporting firms coordinated the efforts of these decentralised production complexes to assure consumer products were marketable. They were the executive administrators of quality control and made certain that products were fine-tuned for the specific needs of overseas markets. These businesses combined information sourced from overseas merchant channels with local expertise to develop competitive consumer goods. Over time they became processing centres

whereby this useful information was converted into more explicit knowledge that would be used to standardise these commodities. This ensured that the textiles were in constant demand amongst foreign consumers and they were kept abreast with the latest fashions. The industrial districts of Manchester provided a unique bedrock for firms to adapt products for foreign markets because of the intermarriage between traditional craft forms of production and the new technological advances that characterised the industrial age. This is reflected in the combination of block printing and roller printing that Langworthy Brothers & Co. could take advantage of. The local proximity of businesses in the supply chain allowed for increased flexibility which allowed firms to manufacture, finish and package textiles with ease. This included the sourcing of component items such as warp and weft but also specific dyes, patterns and packaging materials. Langworthy was an experimental multi-product firm that employed a range of techniques to produce textiles including outsourcing tasks to other firms and employing specific human capital and equipment. The firm's employees used a combination of written instructions, pattern cards and samples to prepare orders of consignments of goods. All of this was aided by the proximity of other specialists in the supply chain. By focusing on developing the low-to middling-quality textiles, the firm achieved a balance between low input costs and acquiring standards of quality control to maximise profits in competitive overseas markets. Langworthy's example of the fine-tuning of textiles is not only a reflection of the competitive advantage of the firm but also wider trade in British coloured printed cottons during the period between 1820 and 1840.

Chapter 2: Communications of Useful Knowledge and Foreign Markets, 1828 to 1839: Mastering Imitations and Product Selection

Could you only imitate them exactly we should then sell quantities. Cannot you procure papers from the India house – as soon as we possibly can do so with some degree of certainty, we shall send you samples of what goods of your manufacture are likely to pay.

Schwind Brade & Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy & Co., Manchester, 12th July 1831.

We shall be glad to see the new Trouser stuffs, we have no doubt they will do well, the time of year is approaching when they are most in demand. New showy goods of this sort are always sure to sell.

Schwind Brade & Co. to George Langworthy & Co., 17th September 1833.

We lowered the price of the drills because our neighbours were doing so too. We shall want a supply of both these articles. We hope long before the receipt of this can be acknowledged. In recommending any new article of stuff we know we can rely upon your good taste – combined with the knowledge you possess of this market. We like very much some very fine salampores much finer than those you sent – with a dark blue dye indigo – with a little glazing. We are sure they will do well.

Schwind Weetman & Co. to George Langworthy & Co., 10th May 1834.

This chapter concentrates on the nature of communications arriving in Manchester from overseas and into the hands of Langworthy Brothers & Co. The focus is on the importance of the useful information and knowledge the communications contained in relation to the quality and aesthetics of textiles that were desired amongst consumers. It looks at the role of these communications in allowing Manchester's merchants to adapt and export cotton goods to Latin American markets successfully. While the previous chapter focused on how a merchant and manufacturer used the unique supply chain in Manchester to administer quality control, this chapter focuses on the importance of the overseas market chain. Special attention is given to the exports sent to the slave economy of Brazil between 1828 and 1839, but other markets such as Cuba, Argentina and Mexico are also referred to.

Useful information and instructions regarding desired textile styles, and the ability of merchants to adapt products accurately to this information, has been underestimated in relation to the success of British exports in cheap printed textiles. Much of the literature has tended to focus on the low price of British cottons, mass production and market flooding. However, the colour and vibrancy of cottons was highly important in pleasing buyers. The story of Langworthy's export operations to Brazil reveals how Manchester firms penetrated overseas markets and selected the right types of goods to be sent there, including those destined to partake in the Brazilian slave trade. For Manchester's textile

merchants, buying and sending the most sought-after textiles was one of the most crucial issues in mastering the trade to overseas destinations. In order to meet this challenge, merchants were required to receive and adhere to sound market knowledge provided by overseas agents. The above extracts, from the archive, reflect the most common subject matter to feature in the letters between Langworthy in Manchester and the agents it used in distant markets; that is, the types of goods that should be manufactured or bought and then delivered. How the textiles should look, and feel, was at the centre of these communications.

It has already been shown that Manchester's merchants and manufacturers had an ability to control the quality of cotton goods which allowed them to penetrate markets with cheap imitations of existing products. However, it was the useful knowledge embedded in merchant networks which allowed textile printers and manufacturers to adapt to markets. While mass production and the cheapness of British textiles was a determining factor in the success of the British textile trade, the merchanting process and the expertise of agents stationed abroad and in Liverpool were just as important. The communications that were sent to Langworthy from overseas make it clear that Manchester's command of global markets was never secure and was fraught with obstacles. This chapter focuses on Langworthy's communications with its commission agents Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. and Durham Price & Co., which were stationed in Brazil. It also utilises the records of the firms Owen Owens and Sons, and Fielden Brothers, both of which traded in similar markets as Langworthy during the same period, as well as the correspondence sent from other competing agents operating out of Brazil, including Bradshaw Wanklyn and Sons, established in 1837. Hibbert Wanklyn and Bradshaw, which later became Bradshaw Wanklyn and Sons from 1837, was a branch of the large Wanklyn enterprise which was established in Rio de Janeiro by William Wanklyn in 1808 following the Portuguese Royal Family's departure from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro in the wake of Napoleon's invasion.¹ This chapter looks at how Manchester firms successfully imitated goods that had originated in Asia, and which, by the 1830s, were being sold by British traders in the form of cheap mass-produced cottons of a sufficient quality to penetrate Latin American markets, following these countries' independence. It examines the types and nature of these goods, and the strategies merchants used to supply and sell them. It stresses the importance of colours, patterns and aesthetic look in the successful sale of consignments abroad.

This chapter further looks at the conditions of overseas markets and how they determined the strategies of merchants. Factors such as slavery, competition, consumer tastes and political instability

¹ *Remains, Historical and Literary, Connected with the Palatine Counties of Lancaster and Chester*, vol. 69, (Chetham Society, 1866), 199.

all had an impact on the actions of Manchester's textile merchants. To make profits they had to master the process of selecting the products that were most likely to sell overseas as well as develop the ability to imitate the textiles that were already popular amongst consumers, including popular designs that had originated from Asia. For a nineteenth-century firm like Langworthy this was a monumental task. Because of the time it took to send packages by ship in the days of sail, demand for products could already have changed by the time the goods arrived. Langworthy had the added challenge of trading in Latin American markets which were particularly noted for their high standards when it came to product selection and where the consumer taste for visual style was an important variable in making a successful sale. Here the exact intricacies of both the types of goods and their quality would make the difference between success and failure. Competition was intense and there were numerous merchant houses, not only from Britain, but America, Portugal and Germany, all competing for narrow sales margins. Many of these textiles also played a part in the Brazilian slave trade which put Manchester's merchants in conflict with the anti-slavery policies of Britain.

Langworthy's example, furthermore, needs to be seen within the wider context of historical shifts in the British cotton industry and the broader scholarly debates on the reasons for this. Eacott and Inikori have shown how the key to the success of the British textile industry in the first half of the nineteenth century was its ability to standardise cotton textiles and broaden consumer demand. They did this initially through the imitation of Indian textiles which included a range of recognised textile types that had evolved over hundreds of years and which, before the second half of the eighteenth century, possessed a high reputation and were noted for both superior wear and washing in comparison to European cotton textiles.² Although Britain had a significant advantage in its scale of production, handmade items from India and other Asian countries were still superior in quality and were more highly respected. However, Manchester increasingly used its modern productive capacity to achieve an increasing standardisation and quality of its own. By the beginning of the nineteenth century British textile producers had been inspired by Indian methods of crafting textiles from the accounts of European traders who had returned from India, and from the textiles that had been imported into Britain via the East India Company. This inspiration from Indian textiles was combined with the new innovative industrial techniques developed in Manchester.³ Consequently, by the end of the eighteenth century, British merchants and manufacturers were able to export textiles in the likeness of existing products from Asia, and this formed an important backdrop to Langworthy's operations.

² J.F., *The Merchant's Warehouse Laid Open: or, The plain dealing linnen-draper, showing how to buy all sorts of linnen and Indian goods* (London, 1696).

³ Vibe Maria Martens, "The Colourful Qualities of Desire, Fashion, Colours and Industrial Espionage", in Marie Louise Nosch, Zhao Feng and Lotika Varadarajan, eds. *Global Textile Encounters, Ancient Textile Series*, vol. 20 (Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014), 163.

The use of Indian dyes to achieve a similar vibrancy of colour was especially important to this process, especially the use of madder to create red and indigo to dye cloth blue.⁴ Vibe Maria Martens has argued that:

The Indian cotton textiles are perhaps the earliest case of a fashion craze, which caused a product to become truly global, something of a certain quality and colour, which was desirable to Europeans, evidently the colourful qualities of desire.⁵

Langworthy's ability to closely imitate these popular Asian goods meant the firm was part of this globalising process of spreading colourful cotton textiles. This allowed Manchester's firms to successfully dominate the trade in the first half of the nineteenth century. Eacott argues that "British factories imitating Indian goods accelerated production, lowered costs and tightened standardisation thereby further broadening consumption patterns."⁶ This was a chief catalyst for British textile exports to West Africa where Lancashire's manufactured goods competed with textiles exported from the East India Company.⁷ Competition with Indian-produced textiles between around 1740 and 1820 steadily improved the quality of British goods. This process has most recently been outlined by Raman who argues that British manufacturers learned from the design of Indian textiles which were seen as the benchmark in quality.⁸

The case of Langworthy represents an example of a Manchester trader applying the same strategy in Latin American markets. Not only did Langworthy imitate textile types that had originated in India and China but also imitated competing British goods that were already circulating in Latin America. Samples and information sent from overseas enabled Manchester merchants to adapt their product lines. While Raman has highlighted the importance of technology and production methods in increasing the quality of British textiles, the Langworthy evidence shows how the communications arriving from merchants stationed abroad were of equal importance. Textiles which had originated from Asia were regularly mentioned as setting the standard in Langworthy's communications and consequently technological change in Britain must be set against the comparative learning from the Indian textile industry. Raman has highlighted how, far from merely competing against Indian goods, British traders also "learnt to refine their own cotton products through this competition against samples and the finest cotton goods purchased anywhere in the world."⁹ The communications arriving from Langworthy's overseas merchant networks fit this pattern as Langworthy learned to follow the

⁴ Ibid., 163.

⁵ Ibid., 164.

⁶ Jonathan Eacott, *Selling Empire*, 438.

⁷ Inikori, "English Versus Indian Cotton Textiles", 105.

⁸ Raman, "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization", 451.

⁹ Ibid., 468.

detailed advice and samples from its overseas agents regarding product selection (see Figures 34 and 35).

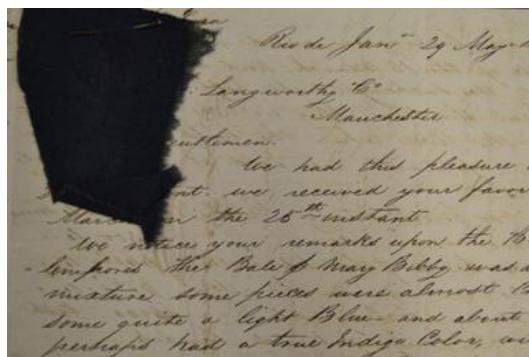


Figure 34: YA2013.25.2.2.1 Example of sample attached to letter from Rio de Janeiro, 29th May 1832.



Figure 35: YA2013.25.2.2.1 Striped samples sent from Rio de Janeiro; most of the stripes produced in Lancashire were in fact a mixture of cotton and linen; the striped cotton linen represents the customary patterns in Lancashire dating from the mid-eighteenth century.

The Langworthy archive also sheds light on the nature of overseas markets and supports many of the arguments presented by Llorca-Jana who has shown that Latin American markets were competitive, with consumers who were difficult to please. Llorca-Jana noted how “Latin American textile consumers behaved very much as consumers do today”, and challenges notions by scholars such as Platt that the consumer needs there were primitive and easy to master. Llorca-Jana states that “portraying the local population as passive consumers is not only a misrepresentation made by European academics but also by Latin American scholars”.¹⁰ The evidence analysed in this thesis corroborates this view, showing how Langworthy used its networks and information to overcome

¹⁰ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 92.

market challenges and meet demand. At the same time, while samples and information were highly important, Langworthy was also expected to exercise its own judgement regarding the best goods to send. In a later letter from 1836 sent to Langworthy from the agents Durham Price & Co., Price hints at the fact that the samples are only to be taken as a general guide and that ultimately the responsibility for sending the right products also rested with the home firm sending them.

*We confirm our recommendation of blue salampores which continue very scarce. Any new article must originate with you – it will generally be too late to ship an article of which we may send you patterns which should merely be considered as a guide to show what will suit the market.*¹¹

There was a degree of flexibility, therefore, regarding the use of samples and some merchant advice in the letters was more liberal in tone regarding how closely Langworthy should copy the patterns. However, earlier letters sent by Brade are far stricter, on some occasions asking for as close an imitation as possible. What can be said with certainty is that detailed information and guidance was highly necessary for the British textile trade to flourish in overseas markets no matter how cheap the textiles were. Langworthy's example supports Llorca-Jana's observations on the crucial nature of information and communications in deciding which products to produce and export.¹²

Latin American Markets and Slavery

We must first tackle the important question of slavery, which was a significant factor intertwined with Langworthy's export operations to Brazil in the early nineteenth century. Although the slave trade had been abolished in Britain in 1807 and slavery, as a practice, in its colonies in 1833, British traders, like Langworthy, continued to benefit from and prop up the practice of slavery long after this period. Indeed, Brazil would not abolish slavery until as late as 1888. From 1828 to 1840, Langworthy was trading to markets around the globe, especially Latin America. These included the Pacific markets and ports in Chile as well as Atlantic destinations such as Cuba, Mexico and North American ports. The evidence shows that the firm was most heavily invested in markets that were dominated by slavery. This is likely to have been a conscious decision on Langworthy's part. The firm did not trade to ports situated in the northern states of the USA, many of which had abolished slavery by the time Langworthy was trading, but with places like New Orleans, which was highly integrated into the global cotton trade and underpinned by slave labour. Langworthy's biggest export market during this time was Brazil and its northern region of Bahia, which was also heavily underpinned by slave labour. Between 1821 and 1825 a total of 23,700 slaves arrived in Bahia; however, between 1826 and 1830

¹¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 21st May 1836.

¹² Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 57.

this had risen to 47,900 slaves.¹³ Even amongst enslaved people there was a demand for European produced clothing, and it is likely that many of the textiles Langworthy was exporting would eventually clothe enslaved people. However, the firm's products would have been worn by a range of classes. Some of Langworthy's textiles were also used by Brazilian merchants to be exported to West Africa in exchange for enslaved people. One textile, in particular, which Langworthy was exporting, and which was involved in the Brazilian slave trade, was a type of cloth known as salampore. This cloth is said to have originated from India, from the city of Nellore.¹⁴ The trade in this cloth and its links to the slave trade are alluded to in the archival letters, such as one from 1837 when the firm Durham Price & Co. advised Langworthy to send more salampores to the market and stated that:

We continue our recommendations for blue salampores, provided no treaty has been concluded between England and Portugal affecting this trade under the flag of the latter. Any precautionary penalties which a treaty may establish will be easily evaded and personal punishment short of death on those taken in the transport of slaves will have little or no effect on those engaged in that traffic.¹⁵

During this period British policy was to endeavour to abolish slavery globally by using the power of the Royal Navy. Britain was a big trading partner to Brazil and consequently Britain held a lot of influence over that country.¹⁶ However, Portugal also continued to be a major trader with its former colonial territory and its merchants were still shipping thousands of slaves to Brazil. Britain was determined to stay on good terms with both Brazil and Portugal, however, its government still enacted various treaties to bring the slave trade to an end.¹⁷ The above letter between Price and Langworthy, at the start of February 1837, implies that both firms were aware that their business in salampores was potentially in breach of these efforts to end the cruel trade. However, Price felt confident that it could easily evade any potential penalty on account of the regulations being poorly enforced. A later letter at the end of that month expressed greater concerns about any interference from government to obstruct the slave trade.

We continue our recommendation of blue salampores. We have a report of a decree by the Portuguese government affecting the African trade, which we supposed to be founded on a convention with England. As far as we can learn the penalties enacted by this decree, are not likely to obstruct the trade. It states to be that vessels under the Portuguese flag are not to be

¹³ "Table, Slaves Imported into Brazil, 1791–1855", in Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, 39.

¹⁴ Nigel Tattersfield, *The Forgotten Trade, Comprising the Log of the Daniel and Henry of 1700 and Accounts of the Slave Trade from the Minor Ports of England, 1698–1725* (London: Pimlico, 1998), Appendix Eight.

¹⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.1, Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 1st February 1837.

¹⁶ Leslie Bethell, "Britain and Brazil 1809–1914," in *Brazil: Essays on History and Politics* (London: University of London Press, 2018), 64.

¹⁷ Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, 34.

*subject to capture except by Portuguese ships of war. If this be the case that part of the decree be rather an encouragement than otherwise to the traffic.*¹⁸

In fact, even though Portugal had officially banned the slave trade by this period, Portuguese ships continued to traffic enslaved Africans, as this letter makes clear. Despite Britain's official outward policy to end slavery, its merchants like Langworthy continued to benefit from it, not least by exporting textiles that were to be used in exchange for slaves. British-produced textiles were sent to Brazil and were then re-exported by Brazilian merchants to West Africa on Portuguese ships. There are numerous pattern books across the globe that show that this was a common practice.¹⁹ Langworthy's salampores were destined to be sent to West Africa after arriving in Rio de Janeiro and a large share of the British cloth sent to Brazil was then re-exported in the holds of slave ships and exchanged for enslaved human beings.²⁰ In both these letters between Price and Langworthy it seems both firms were anxious for the trade to continue on account of the demand for the blue salampores. These practices are in line with the observations of Beckert and Williams, who have highlighted the continued importance that slavery played in Britain's trade in cottons during the time that British official policy was hostile to the trade.²¹ An earlier letter from Schwind Weetman & Co. implies that it was highly likely that many of the textiles Langworthy sent were also being used for clothing enslaved people who worked in the gold mines of Brazil. It stated that "there is greater dullness than had been known for a long time, owing to the people from the mines not being able to come to the city – having suffered from a scarcity of provisions".²² During this time thousands of slaves worked in the gold mines, many of which were located in the Rio de Contas area of Bahia.²³ Most of Langworthy's textile exports to Brazil were destined for Bahia which helps to clarify the characteristics of the consumer base it was supplying. It has also been suggested that the motivations for sending textiles to prop up the slave trade were more financially lucrative to merchants than selling to the "general Brazilian consumer market".²⁴ However, as well as selling textiles to both clothe enslaved people and to be used in exchange for enslaved people, merchants were also interested in the raw commodities that slave labour produced, and which could be imported into Britain to supply its growing industry.

¹⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 27th February 1837.

¹⁹ Letter book with textile samples, England, 1827–41, Joseph Downs Collection, Winterthur Library.

²⁰ Sarah B. Parks, "By Your Exertions with Ours, British Printed Cottons in Brazil, 1827–1841", *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*, 725 (2012), 8.

²¹ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*; Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 76.

²² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Weetman and Co. to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th February 1834.

²³ A.J. Russell-Wood, "Technology and Society, The Impact of Gold Mining on the Institution of Slavery in Portuguese America", *Journal of Economic History* 37, no.1 (1977): 1.

²⁴ Parks, "By Your Exertions with Ours", 8.

Lancashire's textile industry was founded upon the Atlantic Cotton Triangle which was underpinned by the West Indian slave trade. However, Williams has shown how even after the West Indies became negligible to British capitalism, Manchester's merchants turned to the slave populations of the United States and South America as an outlet for their products. He argued that "If Manchester still thrived on shirts for black men, the British West Indies had no monopoly of blacks, and the larger slave populations of the United States and Brazil offered more attractive markets."²⁵ Furthermore, Manchester's merchants regularly imported raw cotton grown on slave plantations in Brazil in exchange for manufactured textiles. This is reflected in the actions of Langworthy and other Manchester traders such as Owen Owens and Sons. As Guenther has argued in regard to the Bahia economy, "British merchants ultimately depended upon the health of the local slave-based economy to ensure the viability of their own commercial interests."²⁶ The Bahia region of Brazil, to which Langworthy's exported goods, possessed numerous cotton plantations. In the years between 1826 and 1835, which coincides with the period when Langworthy was trading in textiles to Brazil, around 64,600 enslaved people were imported into Bahia.²⁷ The systems of credit, whereby British merchants were importing slave-produced commodities, continued to support the slave trade. Slave-grown produce was essential for the trade and many of the buyers of British textiles in the Brazilian interior were connected to the slave trade.²⁸ During the period Langworthy was trading, the Triangular Trade had shifted from the West Indies to markets in Latin America; however, it still functioned in a similar fashion as it had before. As Williams has put it, after the end of the colonial system,

*British exports to the world were in manufactured goods which could be paid for only in raw materials – the cotton of the United States, the cotton, coffee and sugar of Brazil, the sugar of Cuba, the sugar and cotton of India. The expansion of British exports depended upon the capacity of Britain to absorb the raw materials as payment.*²⁹

Almost all these markets were the ones on which Langworthy, Fieldens, and Owens focused. The period after 1820, when Langworthy began to come on to the trading scene, saw a huge expansion of slavery not only in the Southern United States but also in Cuba and Brazil.³⁰ By 1822 there were between 1 and 1.5 million enslaved people in Brazil and between 300,000 and 400,000 enslaved people in Cuba.³¹ In the case of Langworthy the business was regularly importing slave-grown Brazilian cotton to be used by manufacturers back in Manchester. It did this via the Liverpool cotton brokers

²⁵ Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 133.

²⁶ Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, 35.

²⁷ "Table, Slaves imported into Brazil, 1791–1855 in Thousands", in *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 48.

²⁹ Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*, 154.

³⁰ Anthony E. Kaye, "The Second Slavery: Modernity in the Nineteenth-Century South and the Atlantic World," *The Journal of Southern History* 75, no.3 (2009): 632.

³¹ Bethell, *Brazil*, 113.

Molyneux Taylor & Co. which was receiving the cotton from Langworthy's agents Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. For example, in one instance Taylor pays Schwind £500 on Langworthy's account for bags of cotton.³² Furthermore, merchants like Langworthy, Fieldens and Owens were achieving a trade balance by being regularly remitted other forms of South American produce in return for their textile exports, including grain, coffee and hides. Sometimes merchants would also be paid for their exports in specie cash or silver. However, in a continent where currency was not always widely available raw materials and commodities were a good substitute. It was often the intention of the large and successful merchants to attempt to make a second profit on the imports it took in exchange for its goods.

Wider Market Conditions and Prevalent Product Types

While acknowledging the importance of the economics of slave labour in Langworthy's market decisions, we must also take note of other factors such as wider consumer demand and the need for raw materials. Changes in the quality of cotton partly explains the redirection of trade away from the West Indies to Brazil. Brazilian cotton, chiefly from Pernambuco, was superior with its "longer and more resistant fibre".³³ The USA did not provide any of the cotton for Manchester before 1790 and it was only later with the introduction of the saw gin that US cotton began to make headway in British markets. Furthermore, the majority of Langworthy's consignments were still exchanged for cash, much in the form of long credit that passed through various middlemen. While merchants took advantage of produce such as coffee and cotton, this was not always a reliable form of payment as commodities like this only arrived in bulk during certain seasons.

Overall, the principal factor that motivated Langworthy to export goods to Latin America was the rise in consumer demand and the hope for profitable sales. Britain had already been supplying the Spanish and Portuguese colonial populations with woollen textiles from the late 1700s and after the independence movement in the 1820s there was a potential for greater legal trade.³⁴ Latin America was, at this time, growing in importance as an export destination for Britain's textile industry and was beginning to grow in prominence in contrast to the more traditional export destinations of Europe and America.³⁵ After 1820 European and North American markets became increasingly more

³² YA2013.25.2.1.3, Letter from Molyneux Taylor and Co. to Langworthy Brothers, sent from Liverpool, 28th November 1835.

³³ Thales Pereira, "The Rise of Cotton Trade in Brazil During the Industrial Revolution", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 50, no.4 (2017), 5.

³⁴ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 3.

³⁵ "Table 3, Export of Cotton Goods, 1784–1856 by regions", in Ralph Davis, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade* (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979), 19.

competitive which was accompanied by a steep rise in productive output in Lancashire.³⁶ To deal with these changes, new markets were sought to provide an easier outlet for British cottons. Latin American and Asian markets played a large role in this. Between 1824 and 1830 English exports of cotton goods to Latin America amounted to £2,825,000 but between 1830 and 1836 this had risen to £3,206,000.³⁷ Langworthy's main gateway into the Brazilian market was through the merchants stationed in the port of Rio de Janeiro, the business capital of Brazil. The merchants in the city held great influence over the whole region and grew rich on the exports of raw cotton, coffee, and cow hides, which were traded in exchange for finished goods sent from Britain. Following independence from Portugal in 1822, Brazil was considered by Manchester exporters as a neutral market that was now free for them to exploit. Many British merchants went to the ports of Salvador and Rio de Janeiro intent on infiltrating Brazil with British textiles. Almost all the population groups in Brazil valued cotton cloth above other materials like linen, and while some of Langworthy's textiles clothed enslaved people, a large percentage were also worn by all classes of people there. This is also why textiles remained Britain's biggest export to Brazil throughout the whole of the nineteenth century.³⁸ For Langworthy it was Bahia, in the north of Brazil, that was of key interest. The region was controlled by Brazil's merchant elite who relied heavily on the export-import economy with European traders.³⁹

Latin American markets proved more difficult to master than merchants had originally expected and were not the easy prize they had envisaged. The perspective of Latin America as primitive and undemanding is one that has continued to endure even amongst historians. Platt believed that it was the arrival of British merchants who created the demand and integrated Latin America into the global economy. He argued that local buyers, desperate for European goods, were unlikely to refuse British traders and so the market was quite easy to master owing to Britain's huge industrial lead.⁴⁰ However, when one looks closer at the situation on the ground a more complex picture can be seen. The Langworthy records reveal that it was a sophisticated market with high levels of competition. Platt's view that British merchant success was the result of cheap mass-produced goods sent to passive buyers, while partially valid, is in danger of overlooking the mechanisms that traders used to remain competitive, a fact also observed by Llorca-Jana. The conditions of the market meant that Manchester's merchants and manufacturers had to adapt their strategies to suit the market demands.

³⁶ Ralph Davis, "The English Export Trade, Textiles from 1784–1856", in S.D. Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 2 (London: Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1997), 238.

³⁷ "Table 6, Exports of Cotton Goods to America and Australia, 1784–1856", in Davis, *The Industrial Revolution*.

³⁸ Thales Augusto Zamberlan Pereira, "Tariffs and the Textile Trade Between Britain and Brazil, 1808–1860", *Estudos Economicos* 51, no.2 (2021): 326.

³⁹ Eugene W. Ridings, "The Merchant Elite and the Development of Brazil, The Case of Bahia during the Empire", *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 15, no.3 (1973): 337.

⁴⁰ Platt, *Latin America and British Trade*, 47.

It was abundantly clear to British traders that Lancashire's textiles were not merely going to sell themselves but were going to require careful adaptation, planning and marketing. This is partially explained by the longer trajectory of British textile exports to both Portugal and Spain since the early 1700s, which at that time were some of the biggest consumers of British goods.⁴¹ Many of these textiles were then re-exported by Spain and Portugal to the colonies in South America and so there had been a growing taste for British goods for a much longer period preceding independence. A large percentage of British textile exports to Portugal and Spain in the 1700s were wool; however, the styles and colours used in these early textiles also set the trend for consumer preferences in Latin America for the subsequent cottons.⁴² A wool pattern book belonging to a Norwich merchant from 1763 demonstrates the vibrancy of colours and patterns in worsted textiles that were being exported to Spain and Portugal.⁴³ While the diversity of colour in cottons during the industrial era was partially inspired by designs from Asia, this was also the result of the legacy of the wool trade.

In every Latin American market it was important to meet consumer tastes. Burgeoning consumer tastes were developing throughout Cuba during the early decades of the nineteenth century and textile imports increased dramatically during this time. Havana served as the main port for the whole country. Havana's middle classes had the greatest purchasing power. However, luxury clothing with "delicate dyes" was in demand among all the social classes of Cuba, including the nation's large population of enslaved people. Scholars such as Nadia Fernández-de-Pinedo stated that when it came to textiles in Cuba, "there was an appetite for textiles and fashionable goods no matter what gender, race, or social rank in the colonial system", and argued that "slaves and natives were rarely passive recipients of dress".⁴⁴ It is therefore likely that the textiles Langworthy was sending were destined to be worn by multiple classes and groups in Cuba including the large population of enslaved people. In a letter sent to Langworthy from the Liverpool firm Tennants Moor & Co., it states:

We return your patterns pieces by this day's train, having marked one of the prints for the finish and another as being a very excellent pattern, indeed all the prints are good patterns if you take care to select lively combinations of colouring. The muslins are very plain for the Havana market, the two pieces with so much green in them would be thought very inferior to the other with blue.⁴⁵

⁴¹ H.E.S. Fisher, "Anglo-Portuguese Trade, 1700–1770", *The Economic History Review* 16, no.2, (1963): 219.

⁴² Nadia Fernández-De-Pinedo Echevarría and Emiliano Fernández-De-Pinedo Fernández, "Distribution of British Textiles in the Spanish Market at The Beginning of the Eighteenth Century", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 31, no.2 (2013): 257.

⁴³ 67-1885, John Kelly, Worsted Pattern Book Containing Samples for Spain and Portugal, 1763, Victoria and Albert Museum.

⁴⁴ Nadia Fernandez-de-Pinedo, "Compelled to Import: Cuban Consumption at the Dawn of the Nineteenth Century", *Atlantic Studies* 19, no.3 (2021): 7.

⁴⁵ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, 21st September 1835.

What united all these markets from Brazil to Cuba was that the textiles had to be vibrant, diverse and full of colour to be suitably marketable (see Figure 36). The eight most common types of textiles that were consumed in South America during the first half of the nineteenth century included florentines, cambrics, printed fabrics, nankeens, sateens, gingham, shirtings and drills.⁴⁶ With the exception of cambrics, these were all textiles that Langworthy at one time specialised in sending, and so the firm's records reflect a more general picture of how Manchester textile merchants were able to succeed in the trade.



Figure 36: Illustration of types of clothing worn in Latin America during the early nineteenth century; note the women's dress and its colourful constitution. Depiction entitled *Gente del pueblo, plaza mayor y catedral de Mexico* by Lehnert, Pierrre Fredrick, 1850.

The distinctive conditions of different world markets influenced the varying strategies that merchant firms chose to follow. To further understand the unique conditions of the Brazil market, it is helpful to contrast it with India. The most obvious difference between Brazil and India is the degree to which India already possessed a long history of cotton textile design and production before the arrival of European traders. This difference is reflected in the types of cotton goods that Britain commonly exported there, which differ from those exported by Langworthy. The cotton merchants known as George Robinson & Co. provide an interesting contrast. The firm's export book shows that many of the goods that it was sending to Calcutta and Bombay in 1839 were yarns, twists and plain cottons such as grey and white shirtings.⁴⁷ Indeed, other firms that exported textiles to India such as Fielden

⁴⁶ "Table 4.1 List of Main Textiles to South America", in Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 95.

⁴⁷ GB127.MS f 382.2 R1 George Robinson & Co. export book, 1839–1870.

Brothers display a similar picture.⁴⁸ However, this was certainly not the case for Langworthy and Fielden's exports to Latin America. This was partly because Brazil and Argentina did not have a domestic textile industry of their own and were more in need of fully dyed and printed cottons. In India, by contrast, cheap machine-spun yarn and plain cottons from Britain could be further processed by Indian artisans who possessed the skills to convert cloth for local consumers.⁴⁹ Though dyed textiles were sent from Britain to India, India's own domestic industry meant that it was not as dependent on Britain for finished textiles as Latin American countries. This meant that for merchants engaged in penetrating the South American markets, unlike India, the cheapness of the product was not the sole catalyst in market demand. Cheap mass-produced textiles had to be carefully marketed, and design and style were important.⁵⁰

Table 1 below provides some indication of the types of products that were discussed in Langworthy's correspondence. One can observe the variety of products that were being sent, with salampores, nankeens and drills standing out. The products Langworthy sent less often, such as velveteens, are the ones it bought from other firms, while the ones sent frequently, like nankeens, were its own manufactures. The correspondence shows that Langworthy's goods were mainly blue nankeens and salampores that were competing with Indian manufactured goods. The Indian manufactured goods were longer in length and generally better received. However, Langworthy was trying to make up for this deficit by not only imitating them as closely as possible but also selling other items such as drills.⁵¹

⁴⁸ FDN.1.1.5 Letter from Calcutta to Fielden Brothers, Manchester, 17th October 1840.

⁴⁹ Davis, "The English Export Trade", 239.

⁵⁰ Greysmith, "The Printed Textile Industry in England 1830-1870", 127.

⁵¹ YA2013.25/2/2/1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, 24th November 1834.

Table 1: Textile types referred to in forty-eight letters, YA2013.25.2.2.1, 1828–1839.

| Types of Products Referred to 1828–1839 | Number of Letters Referring to Them |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| Nankeens | 39 |
| Blue Nankeens | 13 |
| Yellow Nankeens | 1 |
| Striped Nankeens | 2 |
| French Nankeens | 1 |
| Cotton Drills | 31 |
| Fancy Drills | 2 |
| Printed Drills | 1 |
| Satin Faced Drills | 1 |
| Linen Drills | 1 |
| White Drills | 1 |
| Salampores | 17 |
| Blue Salampores | 6 |
| Indigo Salampores | 1 |
| Blue Indias | 17 |
| Gingham | 4 |
| French Gingham | 1 |
| Velveteens | 2 |
| Florentines | 4 |
| Twills | 3 |
| White Cottons | 2 |
| Beaverteens | 1 |
| Cords | 2 |
| Moleskins | 5 |
| Bengal Stripes | 2 |
| Printed Fustians | 3 |
| Bafts | 2 |
| Mangalo | 1 |

Product development was just as important as technological innovation for Britain's success in the textile market during this period.⁵² While scholars of industry have tended to focus on production methods, output and economic growth, there has been somewhat of a lack of appreciation of the extent to which product selection also played a part in the economic success of the British textile trade.⁵³ Improvements in mechanisation would have been useless without the information and knowledge about which products would be most marketable to consumers. The development of British product lines depended on this knowledge that was circulating in the global economy.⁵⁴ In order to form a strategy for producing and supplying adequate textiles for Latin America, merchants

⁵² Maxine Berg, "The British Product Revolution of the Eighteenth Century", in Jeff Horn, Leonard N. Rosenband and Merrit Roe Smith, eds., *Reconceptualising the Industrial Revolution* (London: The MIT Press, 2010), 49.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 49.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 48.

required information. Douglas Farnie declared that “all markets are markets of information”.⁵⁵ To access this information a Manchester firm required the services of trusted and competent overseas agents based in Brazil, which were familiar with local demand.

Langworthy's Commission Agents in Brazil and the Market Chain

Overseas commission agents were key links in the market chain and essential to the inbound and outbound distribution of goods, information and profits. During the 1820s and 1830s Langworthy itself was exporting textiles to Brazil and was using commission agents stationed in several ports on the east coast. These included Porto Alegre in the south and Salvador in the north. However, it was the agents in Rio de Janeiro that stand out as by far the biggest receivers of Langworthy's goods. While George Langworthy established his business in Manchester around 1822, his brother Edward Langworthy was residing in South America. It is likely that Edward, who would later join his brothers George and Lewis to form Langworthy Brothers & Co. in 1835, played a significant part in steering George in the direction of South America as he would have acquired a strong knowledge of the market there during the 1820s.

Langworthy exported cottons to Brazil through Liverpool and Rio de Janeiro merchant companies during the 1820s and 1830s, many of which changed names multiple times due to the dissolution of partnerships and newcomers joining the businesses. From 1828 Langworthy was sending its goods to the firm Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. Schwind continued to sign off with this name in its letters sent to Langworthy until 1834. The Schwind and Brade partnerships that Langworthy sent goods to during this period was usually listed as a commission merchant.⁵⁶ Schwind Brade would remit Langworthy its profits via the Liverpool commission merchant Turner Brade & Co., which acted as the middleman between the two firms. With Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. in Rio and Turner Brade & Co. in Liverpool, Langworthy had a viable supply and communications network with which to export cottons to Brazil. Remittances were passed between the Brazilian house and the Liverpool house and then on to Langworthy. In one letter Brade declared that “we remit to Mr C Schwind who will understand with Turner Brade & Co. in reference to advances”, going on to state that the firm “will do everything in their power to render satisfactory business they may be forwarded with from you”.⁵⁷ Hence payments and goods passed through these two houses, one situated in Rio de Janeiro and the other in Liverpool. The Liverpool middleman firm was the most dominant as it was the one coordinating business between Langworthy and the commission agents in Rio (see Figure 37).

⁵⁵ Farnie, “Prime Movers”, 37.

⁵⁶ Dissolution of Partnerships, *London Gazette*, 28th October 1834.

⁵⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 18th December 1833.



Figure 37: diagrammatic representation of trade and communication flows

The key individual merchant who connected the firms of Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. and Turner Brade & Co. was a man called Daniel Brade, one of the founders of the Liverpool firm. A man called Charles Brade was also working in Liverpool to coordinate the efforts of the two firms. In Liverpool Thomas Turner and Daniel Brade worked closely with each other. The family connection between Turner Brade & Co. and Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. along with the mutual confiding they had with each other was optimal for sending on the latest news, remittances and orders to Langworthy in Manchester. Originally the Brazil side of these partnerships was called Schwind Schmell & Co., as Adalbert Joseph Schmell was one of the major players in the business.⁵⁸ However by the beginning of the 1820s it seems that Schmell had little to do with these merchant connections and his name no longer features in the partnership names. Brade was also working alongside a Carter J. Weetman who was working in Rio to service Langworthy's consignments. In September 1834 Schwind Brade & Co. was reconfigured to Schwind Weetman & Co., as Carter J. Weetman had become more integrated into the firm. Schwind Turner & Co. was established in Liverpool in 1835 but went bankrupt in 1836.⁵⁹ Langworthy had found an important connection in the Schwind family as it was one of the biggest and most successful merchant firms stationed in Brazil and was an expert on the trade to the Bahia region of the country. This is reflected in the fact that between 1819 and 1821, Schwind Schmell & Co. are reported to have handled around 0.2% of British exports to Bahia.⁶⁰ This means it was still dwarfed by other firms such as Boothby Johnson & Co. and Mellors and Russell, which both took around 14% respectively. However, this still puts them in the top eleven firms at the time. Consequently, Langworthy secured a strong tie with a firm that already possessed a high reputation and competence in the Brazilian trade.

As well as Turner, Brade and Schwind, Langworthy also consigned its goods to the commission merchant firm in Rio de Janeiro, Durham Price & Co. Langworthy became associated with this firm from 1833, but it was not relying heavily on it until around 1835. The arrangements were similar to that of Brade in that there were two branches of the firm, one in Rio and the other in Britain to act as the middleman. As opposed to Liverpool, the home branch of Durham Price & Co. was located in

⁵⁸ Dissolution of Partnership, *London Gazette*, 2nd December 1819.

⁵⁹ Bankruptcy, *London Gazette*, 16th December 1836.

⁶⁰ "Table 3: Proportional Share of Firms in British Commerce, Bahia, 1819-1821", in Guenther, *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, 15.

Manchester and was known as James Durham & Co., a commission merchant.⁶¹ One letter sent from James Durham & Co. indicates that this new relationship was initiated through the Manchester side of the business which had started with informal face-to-face conversations in the town.

With reference to our several verbal communications we now beg to state the terms on which it is mutually agreed we are to transact your business at Rio De Janeiro. Our James Durham will advance you the favours of the value of all the shipments of staple goods and one half on fancy and printed goods. Our commissions for sale and guarantee to maturity of remittances hire and warehouse rent. It being understood that our guarantee extends to the payment of all sales within five months from their maturity should any remain so long awaiting. Assuring you that nothing shall be wanting on our part to render our correspondence beneficial to you, we remain James Durham and Co.⁶²

Just as with Turner Brade & Co. in Liverpool, the advances from Rio were to pass through a middleman, in this case James Durham.

Changing Partnerships 1834–1839

By 1835 there had been a transition in partnerships in Rio and Schwind Brade Johnston no longer existed. Charles Schwind and his relatives working in Brazil and Carter T. Weetman had now formed a new firm of the name Schwind Weetman & Co. As well as this new partnership, Langworthy was also now sending goods to Durham Price & Co. which was heavily involved in ferrying goods to West Africa as part of the Brazilian slave trade. Weetman was still dealing in Langworthy's consignments and Turner Brade was still acting as the key middleman that stood between the Brazilian agents and Langworthy.⁶³ Charles Schwind was operating in Liverpool as well and was helping to coordinate efforts by travelling between the port and Manchester. He was essential in advising Langworthy what it should be sending to Mr Weetman in Rio and what was coming into fashion in Bahia.⁶⁴

From 1835 there were two sets of correspondence between Langworthy and Rio de Janeiro, one coming from Schwind Weetman and the other coming from Durham Price & Co. After 1836 far more of Langworthy's consignments to Rio de Janeiro were now going through the hands of Price as opposed to Weetman. This was in part due to the dissolution of the firm that took place in that year. In November 1836 James Weetman, the son of Carter Thomas Weetman, wrote to Langworthy from Liverpool with news of the dissolution of the Schwind partnership but also to offer reassurance that

⁶¹ Dissolution of Partnership, *The London Gazette*, 25th June 1847, 2331.

⁶² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from James Durham and Co., Manchester, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 24th August 1833.

⁶³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Weetman and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th February 1835.

⁶⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Charles Schwind, Liverpool, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 23rd March 1835.

Carter Weetman was still resident in Rio and was happy to continue offering his services to the Manchester firm. He wrote:

As holder of power of account formally son of C T Weetman of Rio De Janeiro I beg respectfully to advise you that he has given notice of dissolution of the firm, Schwind Weetman and Co. commission merchant of that city. The dissolution to take place comes after the 31st of august last. He will close the account and take charge of such property as may have been privately considered to them, or in the interval of the notice and the dissolution. And for this purpose, he is desirous of the written approbation of this consigning friends with express order to Messrs Schwind Weetman and Co. to deliver said property to his case.⁶⁵

The exact details of the new arrangements were at this time unclear. For example, James Weetman informed Langworthy that clarification as to whether he would be now trading on his own personal account was still undecided. However, James seemed adamant to reassure what he referred to as his “consigning friends” and stated that:

In either case he will remain resident in Rio and equal case will be taken of all goods continuing under his charge, or of further consignment to his address.⁶⁶

Despite the reassurances Langworthy increasingly put more of its trust in Price during this period. After a shipment in 1835 Price expressed its gratitude that Langworthy had chosen its services,

this vessel is now discharging, but none of your packages are yet in our possession – on being loaded they shall have our best attention. We note your instruction of confining your shipment of drills to ourselves. We have little doubt you will find such a plan very conducive to your interest. We beg to assure you that every exertion shall be used to merit your confidence.⁶⁷

In a similar fashion to Schwind Weetman, Price was using its initiative and expertise to guarantee sales. With Price at its side, Langworthy was able to continue to adapt to consumer demand in the market and navigate the financial problems during the period from 1834 to 1839. Equally, Price was instrumental in allowing Langworthy’s exports to be involved in the Brazilian slave trade without rebuttal from the British authorities.

Navigating Market Forces and Wider Events 1828–1839

During Langworthy’s operations with both Brade and Price, the firm navigated the various challenges of these years, including political instability. These years were also to be marked by increasing competition from other merchant houses from Britain and abroad which made the quality and accuracy of Langworthy’s imitations more important than ever. This was also a time when Langworthy

⁶⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from James Weetman, Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th November 1836.

⁶⁶ Ibid.

⁶⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 11th November 1835.

discovered new ways to pay for its exports, including taking advantage of various raw commodities produced in Brazil.

Abdication of Dom Pedro I

Political instability was a common issue and Brade's report of March 1831 informed Langworthy of some disturbances that were occurring.

*There have been some slight disturbances here between the liberals and old Portuguese, the affair has ended in nothing as the saying goes and confidence is again restored.*⁶⁸

Disturbances became much worse following the abdication of Dom Pedro I, the first Emperor of Brazil. This began to affect trade further. In Brade's next correspondence the following month, in April 1831, it told Langworthy of the monumental events that were taking place.

*We have barely time to inform you owing to the packet being suddenly poised to sail tomorrow morning and this vessel going likewise that from 2nd Instant disturbance and assemblies of people arrived in various parts of the town, led to the event of the Emperor Don Pedro 1st abdicating the throne in favour of his son who was proclaimed on the same day the 7th, a provisional regency appointed.*⁶⁹

The agents had been forced to cease trading goods on account of the riots and unrest that were taking place in the streets and harbours of Rio de Janeiro following Pedro's abdication. This impeded Langworthy's trade for some months. Because of the shutdown of the market, Brade was attempting to sell Langworthy's textiles directly to buyers in the Bahia region because there was no hope of making any sale in Rio. Brade's network also included agents stationed in Salvador much closer to the consumers of Bahia and so it was able to bypass the disturbances in Rio. Brade was also keen to reassure Langworthy of its hopes for an improved state of the market on account of more political stability resulting from the popularity of the new government. By the end of April, it wrote:

*when sales do commence here again they will be made for cash and discountable Bills – if the present government is well thought of throughout Brazil, we anticipate an improved state of its commerce, as the measures of the government in reference to the coming will have a beneficial influence upon it. We know your sentiments perfectly and depend upon the best possible being done for your interest.*⁷⁰

Brade had complete control of Langworthy's consignments once they had arrived in Brazil. By this stage in the process there was very little input from Langworthy, and it was up to the commission agent to make the best of a bad situation. The consensus was that a good agent firm would employ

⁶⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 31st March 1831.

⁶⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 9th April 1831.

⁷⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th April 1831.

its initiative to ensure the best possible sale, and in this case, it seems Brade was adapting its strategy during political and economic turmoil in order to give Langworthy's consignments their best chance. In June 1831 there was still a strong degree of political unrest between the new government and the local populace. Brade remained optimistic that the government would bring the situation under control and normal commerce would resume.⁷¹

The Financial Panic of 1837

The latter part of this period was also highly affected by a financial crisis and recession beginning with the Panic of 1837, when the price of cotton was fluctuating. Price continually complained of the effects of the poor financial conditions caused by the Panic of 1837 that took place in North America which significantly lowered the price of cotton. On the other hand, the effects on Langworthy's trade seem to have been mixed with some positive outcomes for the firm. As American textile producers were the hardest hit by the crisis, Price reported that competition from American exporters had eased greatly.⁷² It asked Langworthy to continue to risk sending textiles because of its opinion that "while cotton remains low, we think it will be a long time before the Americans can compete with us to any extent."⁷³ This was because American planters were holding raw cotton back, on account of its low price, for as long as possible. The American cotton price fall was continuing to affect the trade the following year in 1838. Both Price and Langworthy worked closely to manage output and the costs of products accordingly in order to take account of the cheapness of American products.⁷⁴ It was important for Price to sell Langworthy's shipments at the optimal time.⁷⁵ For example, Price sometimes made the decision to hold an auction to quickly sell Langworthy's stock before American products arrived and overstocked the market. Langworthy's association with Price meant it was able to navigate its way through this difficult period.⁷⁶

Chronology of Langworthy's Export Operations to Brazil

We must now turn our attention to how Langworthy's export operations to Brazil unfolded over time, between the end of the 1820s and up until the late 1830s. Langworthy continued trading after this time, however, these are the date parameters that the surviving source material from the Langworthy

⁷¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 16th June 1831.

⁷² YA2013.23.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 12th August 1837.

⁷³ Ibid.

⁷⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 11th June 1838.

⁷⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 10th July 1838.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

archive covers. This is also our period of interest, when Manchester-produced cottons were beginning to make headway in the Brazilian market and when the British textile industry was the most industrialised in the world. By looking at how the firm's operations unfolded chronologically we can get a better sense of the ways Langworthy engaged with the market over time and the strategies it used to penetrate it.

During the 1820s Langworthy was starting to learn about supplying the market and sometimes displayed signs of difficulty with its sales. During these years Langworthy was especially concerned with the selling of florentines; these are mentioned less often during the 1830s. In 1828, Schwind Brade Johnston was reporting mixed results in its ability to sell Langworthy cottons in Brazil. It informed Langworthy that it had been unable to sell a number of packs of products that had been sent and that because of this it had not written back to Manchester in some time. However, it seems it was having success in selling florentines and cotton drills on Langworthy's account, which were proving popular with consumers and were keeping up with the market standards.⁷⁷ Apparently, however, the state of Langworthy's sales was still relatively poor which Brade accounted to shipments coming from rival traders. To put Langworthy at ease it assured the Manchester firm that the rivalry would be short-lived. By late December 1828, Brade had succeeded in selling striped nankeens, drills and florentines.⁷⁸ Langworthy was also sending other varieties of goods and in total forty cases of goods had been sold on the firm's account at the beginning of 1829. Despite this, both Brade and Langworthy were disappointed with the performance and were struggling to achieve their aspired sales levels.

By mid-1829 the situation remained in a similar state. Brade informed Langworthy that "we can scarcely quote any improvements in florentines and drills".⁷⁹ A large amount of goods had been supplied to the market which had resulted in oversupply and significantly lowered prices. The agents did, however, send remittances for some successful sales, on one occasion sending £1,560 to Langworthy's credit, although Schwind Brade Johnston was demanding a 26% commission.⁸⁰ This evidence therefore indicates that, from the very start, this was not an easy trade to master on account of market flooding and competition. This meant it was highly important for products to be perceived as good quality in the eyes of consumers.

⁷⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade Johnston and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 13th December 1828.

⁷⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Account Sales of 40 cases of Merchandise received from Liverpool and Fortescue and sold on account and risk of Messer's George Langworthy and Co., Rio de Janeiro, 22nd January 1829.

⁷⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade Johnston and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 4th May 1829.

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Langworthy's experience in 1828 and 1829, both in terms of low sales and damage to goods, would have been enough to deter many merchants from trading there, and it does seem that Langworthy began to lose interest for a short time. However, by 1830 the situation was beginning to change, and in that year, Schwind Brade Johnston wrote with good news regarding the market's vibrancy:

it is now some time since we had this pleasure – our market now offering some encouragement for one or two articles of your manufacture. We beg to wait upon you with the full reservations for your consideration.⁸¹

Langworthy received news that common striped nankeens were beginning to sell very well as were florentines and drills. Brade also made it clear what measurements and thread counts were proving popular in the market along with specific designs such as Bengal Stripes. Langworthy had been making successful sales in white drills to the port of Pernambuco and consequently Brade also asked if a few cases of them could be sent as well. Brade finished one letter in a positive fashion and hoped that Langworthy would be encouraged by the good news.

hoping that you may again be induced to make a trial of our market and ensuring you of our best exertions for your interest.⁸²

By 1831 Langworthy was back in the market and was generally doing better than it had been in 1828.⁸³ Successful sales were being made in blue nankeens. However, they did not fetch the price that either Brade or Langworthy was after. As 1831 drew on, Langworthy was making good sales in cotton drills which according to Brade was the only article with which it had made any real progress.⁸⁴ Despite increasing competition from other houses, especially those from the USA, in August Langworthy was making sales worth over £5,000 in Brazil on numerous products, including French Nankeens.⁸⁵ Brade reported that other merchant houses of the names Messrs Moor Holland and Bradshaw Wanklyn & Co. had arrived on the scene with the same articles of goods as Langworthy. This was putting extra pressure on Langworthy's goods to be competitive. To make matters more frustrating for Langworthy, Brade told the Manchester firm that Portuguese ships had arrived from India carrying 20,000 pieces of similar goods which had overstocked the market.

⁸¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade Johnston and Co. and Carter J Weetman, Rio De Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th March 1830.

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 31st March 1831.

⁸⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 12th July 1831.

⁸⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 18th August 1831.

At the end of 1831 Brade was remitting some impressive sales back to Langworthy, sending back £5,000 on Langworthy's account on one occasion.⁸⁶ Brade was especially impressed with the blue salampores Langworthy was sending.⁸⁷ It was also waiting anxiously for a shipment of fancy cotton trouserings and striped nankeens which it hoped to be good imitations of the samples and patterns being sent.

From 1832 Brade was at times starting to send Langworthy Brazilian coffee which would have been grown on plantations.⁸⁸ Manchester firms were regularly importing Brazilian coffee for the European coffee market. Most of this was the product of the labour of enslaved people.⁸⁹ However, the coffee only arrived in bulk during certain times and so this was not always a reliable form of payment. In the early months of the year the market was rather overstocked and consequently Langworthy's textiles were being sold for lower prices.⁹⁰ Blue nankeens, especially, were being exported in large amounts during this year. Other textiles were also sold such as printed twills, white cottons, salampores and blue Indias. One consignment made the sum of £1,350 in cash.⁹¹

During 1833, Brade was making more sales for Langworthy, though there were a number of items that were not doing so well.⁹² During the early part of the summer it was struggling to sell Langworthy's blue Indias and white cottons, though its striped drills were doing better.⁹³ However, Brade was now more confident than in its earlier correspondence at the beginning of the decade and encouraged Langworthy to continue exporting in anticipation of rising demand. By October Langworthy's consignments were indeed selling much better, particularly the firm's nankeens and salampores.⁹⁴ What we can say with a degree of confidence is that from 1828 to 1833 Langworthy had improved in its ability to manufacture and export goods to the market. Though Brade was not always completely pleased with all the consignments that were being sent, enough of Langworthy's products were

⁸⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 4th November 1831.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 29th May 1832.

⁸⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio De Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 4th July 1834.

⁹⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 28th April 1832.

⁹¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 29th May 1832.

⁹² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 3rd September 1833.

⁹³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 16th September 1833.

⁹⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th October 1833.

deemed acceptable to continue allowing Brade to sell in the market for the rest of 1833 and 1834. From 1834 to 1835 Langworthy began to increasingly rely on the expertise of Price as opposed to Brade and was starting to export white and striped moleskins as well as printed fustians.

Throughout the year 1836, much of Langworthy's exports to Brazil continued to be paid for in sugar, coffee and hides. The hides were generally sourced from the Rio Grande do Sul. However, Langworthy was still also receiving dollars, silver and copper.⁹⁵ Rosewood from Bahia was also sometimes being used for remittances. This once again reflects Williams' assertions regarding the lucrative nature of raw produce in Latin America and the shifting nature of the cotton triangle. However, it is important to note that it was the need for an outlet for Manchester cottons that was the main driver and hence methods of payment varied and were interchangeable. In a number of Price's correspondence sent to Langworthy, the firm makes clear that produce was being used as remittance mainly on account of its abundance as opposed to money which was scarce.⁹⁶ Throughout the rest of 1836, blue salampores, blue Indias, blue nankeens and drills continued to be the most commonly requested orders for Price.⁹⁷ All of these products were described by Price as "imitations" of textiles that were already landing in the market. However, despite the consistency in product types there was variability in the desired presentation and quantity of these products. Price summarised the problem in September 1836. It told Langworthy that "the taste of the people is fickle and what is saleable one month is perfectly rejected another".⁹⁸ This evidence again takes issue with Platt's arguments regarding the yielding compliance of buyers in Latin America and instead reiterates the significant challenges of meeting complex consumer demand. In 1837 Price was continuing to entreat Langworthy to send blue salampores which were destined to be sent to West Africa.⁹⁹ Brazilian merchants were re-exporting Langworthy's cloth to the African mainland in exchange for enslaved people. This was also the time when the firm was required to navigate the fluctuating price of cotton caused by the 1837 financial panic. Price was able to steer Langworthy through these problems and support its export operations during the late 1830s.

⁹⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 16th April 1836.

⁹⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 24th May 1837

⁹⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th June 1836.

⁹⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th September 1836

⁹⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 1st February 1837.

Common Themes in Communications

Apart from responding to the political and economic stumbling blocks of markets, the communications between merchants in Brazil and Langworthy make it clear that the commission agents were mainly preoccupied with describing to the best of their abilities the desired features of textile consignments. Figure 38 below provides an insight into the most common subjects discussed in the communications sent back to Manchester by the agents in Brazil between 1828 and 1839. While price and accounts are understandably the most frequently mentioned variables, it is evident that many qualitative factors are also discussed, from packaging, the size and appearance of products, and the timing of deliveries. In fact, all these subjects combined make them just as noteworthy as price as a point of discussion amongst merchants and demonstrate that British success in penetrating foreign textile markets was the product of many complex factors that went beyond the cheapness of the goods. Other factors, including the qualities of the products, were just as crucial and British traders were under constant pressure to make certain textiles of sufficient standard. More broadly this reflects the significance of useful knowledge embedded in merchant communication channels to enable the effective supply of printed cottons.

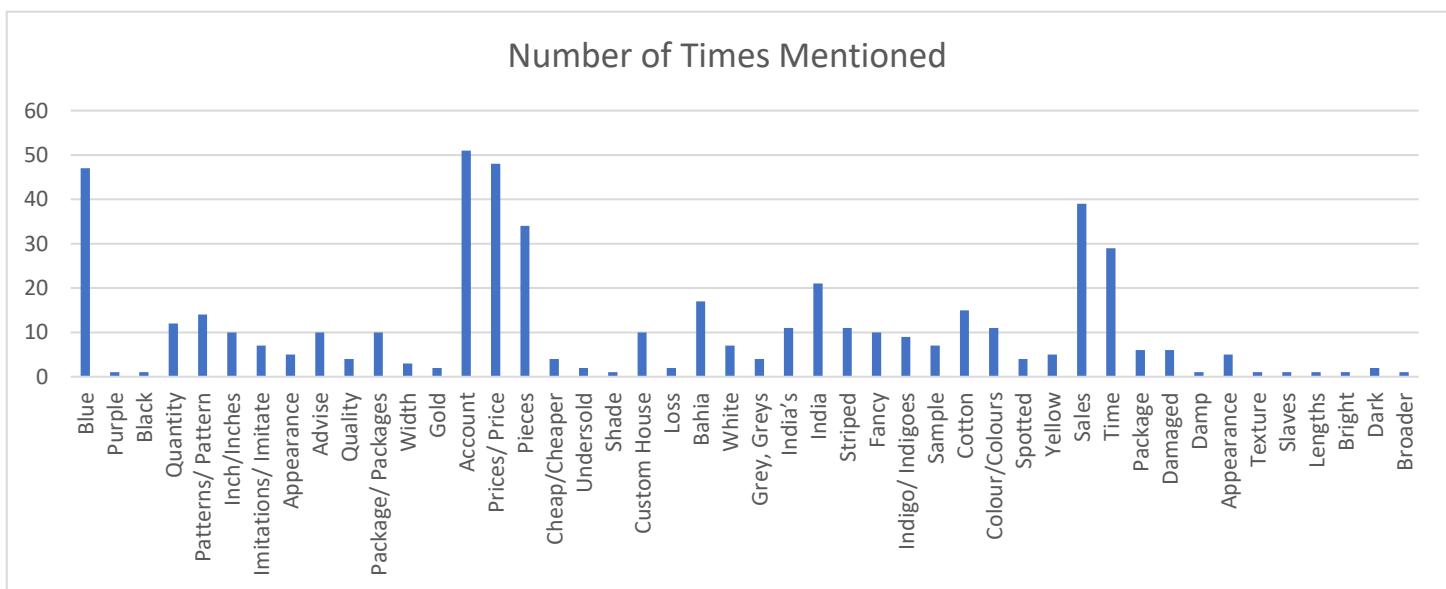


Figure 38: Text analysis of common terms referred to in advice sent to Langworthy in forty-eight letters from Brazil, 1828–1839, YA2013.25.2.2.1.

Presentation, Colours, Patterns and Shades

Though hang and drape were important, getting the right colour and shade of products was one of the key variables that would make the difference between a successful sale or failure, and colours that

required washing were to be kept to a minimum.¹⁰⁰ In total thirty-one of the letters sent to Langworthy from its agents in Rio de Janeiro during this period stipulated that it was the colour of products that was inhibiting sales. By far the most common colour requested for all the different products (salampores, nankeens and Indias) was blue, which is mentioned forty-seven times in the correspondence. Width and length were also important. In one instance in 1831 Brade was convinced that it had been unable to get the best value for five cases of blue nankeens on account of the colour of the nankeens being too dark a blue. The disappointment amongst the agents is obvious. In this instance the agents state that the nankeens "were too dark a blue" and that competing houses such as Messrs Moor Holland were doing better because its nankeens were "of better colour".¹⁰¹

There is a noticeable decline in the complaints regarding the colour and shade of Langworthy's goods by the latter half of the 1830s. It seems Langworthy had become more attuned to the types of pigmentation that were required for the market and was perfecting its craft. Brade was always trying to increase the standards of consignment and in one instance expressed hopes that the next batch of Langworthy's blue Indias and salampores would be better than what had been previously sent on the ship called *Mary Bibby*. In reference to this previous consignment, it informed Langworthy that:

*The bale of Mary Bibby was a curious mixture, some pieces were almost black some quite a light blue and about a dozen perhaps had a true Indigo colour with the violet or copperas shade – You will perceive we have, however, got a good price for it.*¹⁰²

However, despite being able to sell the *Mary Bibby* goods at a decent price, Brade aspired to once again receive goods of better suitability on the next delivery, stating

*We hope the colour may turn out to be better than that of Mary Bibby. The quality of the cloth would have done very well stouter as per pattern and would have been better liked, they have no objection to fine ones if the threads are round and close. As to future aspirations in blue Indias, we scarcely know how to advise you, we think we shall be more correct if we leave it to your own judgment for you are better aware what are coming than we are. You're supplying other people at the same time as you're sending to us.*¹⁰³

Brade was not the only agent Langworthy was sending goods to. Langworthy was highly integrated into multiple overseas markets and would have been using all the information coming back from its overseas stakeholders to make sure the products it selected and manufactured were right for export. Langworthy was learning, and the more time it spent adapting to markets the better its consignments

¹⁰⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Durham Price and Co., Rio de Janeiro, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 16th April 1836.

¹⁰¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 31st March 1831.

¹⁰² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 29th May 1832.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

sold. This included the firm's trade to Cuba, most of which passed through the Liverpool house, Tennants Moor & Co., alongside the trade to Argentina which passed through Charles Taylor & Co., as well as to Constantinople that passed through Charles Ede. Samples were important for most Latin American markets, and in ports like Havana, Moor procured the most suitable patterns and sent them to Langworthy. Many of the products were similar such as drills and nankeens.¹⁰⁴ For Ottoman markets there was also a demand for cheap printed imitations of Asian cottons in a similar fashion to that of Brazil. This included salampores, nankeens and stripes.¹⁰⁵ Consequently, similar communications and processes were used to penetrate the Levant.

On another occasion in Brazil, Brade was impressed with Langworthy's salampores and reported that the quality of the cloth was very good and going down well with the shopkeepers of Rio. Three of the pieces in this bale were coloured with indigo dye, and the rest were coloured in log wood dye.¹⁰⁶ For every one bale of log wood-dyed products it sold, Brade could sell twenty bales of indigo-dyed goods. The Rio-based firm once again conveyed its discontent to Langworthy for not following its instructions close enough.

We cannot help expressing our regret that you did not lend a large quantity of indigo salampores – as the opportunity for realising a handsome profit was too good. We hope it has not gone by and that the next vessel will bring us a large quantity.¹⁰⁷

Brade recommended that in the next shipment Langworthy should send goods dyed in fancy colours with the newest patterns. Some more samples were also attached to the corner of the letter: one from a competitor and another from Langworthy's own manufacture. Langworthy's sample had an advantage because of its rounder threads. This helped put Langworthy in a strong position to gain an intimate knowledge of the markets and obtain useful information to constantly adapt its products for the buyers there.

¹⁰⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 23rd January 1833.

¹⁰⁵ Halil Inalcik, "When and how British cotton goods invaded the Levant markets", in Huri Islamoglu-Inan, ed., *The Ottoman Empire and The World Economy*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1987), 376.

¹⁰⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 6th June 1832.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

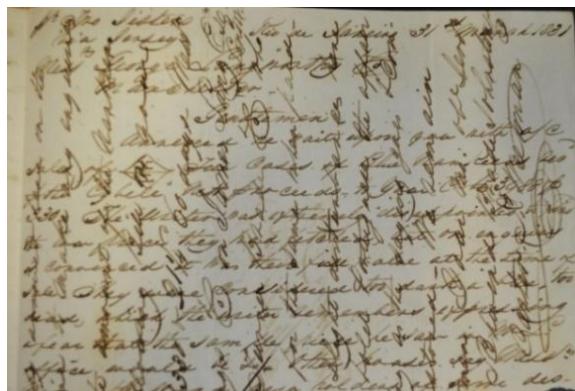


Figure 39: YA2013.25.2.2.1 Example of crossed writing in Brade's Letters from Rio de Janeiro, 31st March 1831. This saved money on postage by using less paper.

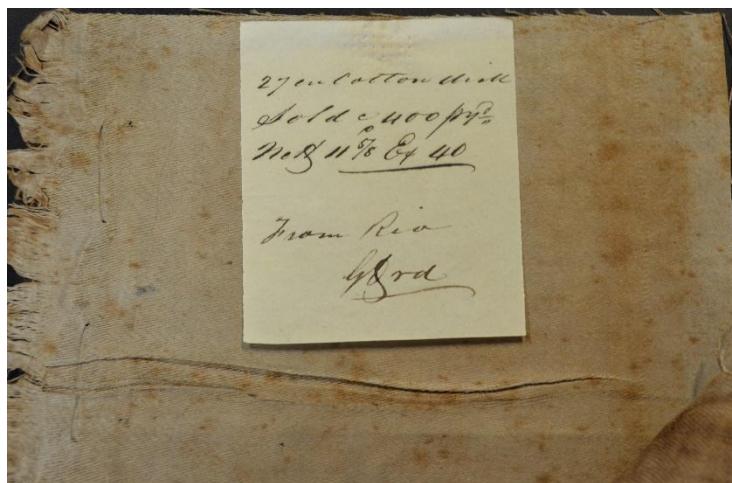
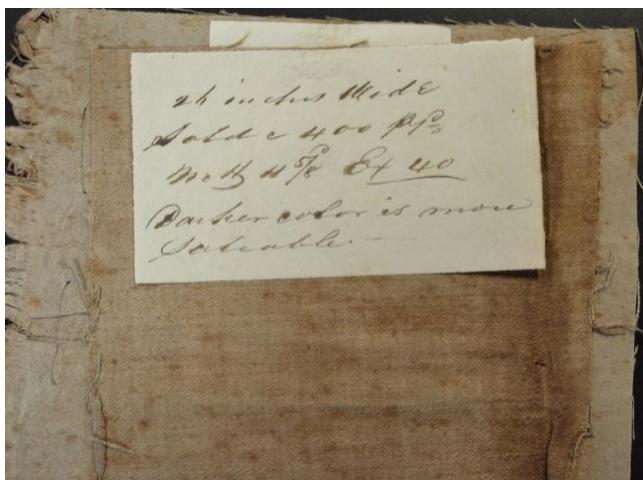


Figure 40: Samples of cotton drills sent from Rio de Janeiro with attached note indicating the darker colour drill to be more saleable, 1836.

Another recurrent criticism from the agents in Brazil was that the goods had failed to meet the standards of the Indian textiles. To correct this, samples were sent back to Manchester so that Langworthy could use its manufacturing process to imitate them more accurately. In one instance Brade stated that

*They would, we have not the least doubt, have been sold at a good rate had they been closer imitations of India. The colour is very much too dark – be of a light yellow and softer – we send an India piece via Bahia which they will forward you.*¹⁰⁸

Brade scoured the local buying rooms to see what was popular and then forwarded this information back to Manchester (see Figures 39 and 40 above). The Rio firm stated: “we shall procure patterns of what is likely to suit your manufacture and hope to meet in future.”¹⁰⁹ During much of 1831 Brade was unable to sell Langworthy’s yellow India nankeens as the real Indian-produced products were selling at lower prices. Furthermore, yellow nankeens were not as popular as blue nankeens. The correspondence reveals that real India blue nankeens had been arriving in Rio de Janeiro from the Cape of Good Hope in the summer months of 1831. These Indian-produced goods were being shipped from India to the Cape of Africa and then on to Brazil. These textiles were still seen as the benchmark for quality and Brade made it clear to Langworthy that if it could imitate these types of goods exactly then it would be able to sell large quantities of them. Raman has highlighted how it was Indian-produced goods coming out of Africa at this time that were propelling British companies to improve quality.¹¹⁰ However, Langworthy was only able to do this because of the information and samples sent by its agents. It was not just technology that allowed Manchester to imitate Indian textiles but also the samples of goods sent by commission agents.¹¹¹ Brade’s advice was often mixed. In one example it admired the finish on Langworthy’s nankeens but was less pleased with the patterns which it described as “infinitely worse than the last without comparison”. In response to this Brade beseeched Langworthy to “imitate as closely as possible the patterns sent you”.¹¹²

Brade would not hold back in its criticism if the firm had failed to send the correct product types. In March 1832, Brade ordered Langworthy to send blue Indias with a strong indigo dye and close imitations of the samples. Indigo is mentioned a total of nine times in these communications to Langworthy from Brazil. Brade conveyed its disappointment that no fancy drills had been sent on the last shipment despite sending Langworthy some patterns for them. Brade made similar complaints in relation to an absence of blue salampores which it had asked for in one shipment and displayed its disappointment as Langworthy had not followed its advice.

¹⁰⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 16th June 1831.

¹⁰⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 21st June 1831.

¹¹⁰ Raman, “Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization”, 449.

¹¹¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 12th July 1831.

¹¹² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 4th November 1831.

*We were disappointed by the packages of the 19th of January not to hear of some blue salampores coming. It is not doing our early information justice.*¹¹³

Agents like Schwind Brade & Co. also had an image to uphold and a poor supply from Manchester reflected badly on their reputation. It was servicing a number of merchants apart from Langworthy and was not without bargaining power in its relationship with the Manchester firm. Brade would, however, express praise for Langworthy when the correct products had arrived. For example, in the beginning of 1832, Brade described one shipment as excellent.¹¹⁴

Just as Langworthy was imitating nankeen cloth of Chinese origin, it was also imitating nankeen styles that had originated in France, “French nankeens”. Before Britain began to master the imitation of Indian and Chinese textiles, it was France which had been a major player in the successful design of cotton clothing according to oriental designs.¹¹⁵ Consequently, British merchants and manufacturers saw no reason why they should not imitate French fashions as well. Industrial espionage between France and Britain had a long history and is perhaps best exemplified in the case of John Holker. Holker was a Manchester industrialist who spied on Britain’s industrial capabilities in order to pass on trade secrets to France during the eighteenth century. In the album of textiles he collected, he mentions the nankeen cloth which Langworthy would later manufacture.

*This fabric is called nankeen. The warp and weft are the best quality West Indian cotton. It is used for coats and breeches, which are very durable. The length of a piece is 30 yards or 22 French ells and a half. It is made in a width of a quarter yard plus half a quarter an inch which comes 5/15th a French ell.*¹¹⁶

By the 1830s, British traders, like Langworthy, were now copying French designs using the latest manufacturing techniques. It is likely that the “French nankeens” which Langworthy were imitating were themselves originally inspired by older British designs which were equally inspired by Chinese fashions. There was a constant back and forth circulation of ideas between different nationalities of producers which is consistent with the nature of industrial development.

Brade sometimes displayed some disdain for the local buyers for not valuing the French nankeens highly enough.¹¹⁷ In August 1831 Brade stated that the nankeens were three inches broader than the original product they had been imitated from; however, this had failed to win over the buyers. Despite

¹¹³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 3rd March 1832.

¹¹⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 11th January 1832.

¹¹⁵ John Styles, *The Holker Album, Textile Samples and Industrial Espionage in the 18th Century* (Paris: Musee Des Arts Decoratifs, 2023).

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 267.

¹¹⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 18th August 1831.

the setback with the French nankeens Langworthy's agents were able to send £5,599 to the firm's credit and so it is evident that it was succeeding in making worthy sales in other products. It was not just Langworthy which was receiving samples from Brazil, as Brade was also relying on Manchester samples coming the other way. Brade stated that its partners in Liverpool, Turner Brade & Co., had managed to procure some samples from Langworthy and that they were arriving in Brazil.

*Turner Brade and Co. sent a few days ago, a sample of common drill nankeens- which they got from you when in Manchester and which would as far as we can ascertain from showing the patterns prove a ready sale.*¹¹⁸

It was important to test Langworthy's products in the buying rooms and compare them with other textiles in the market before placing orders.

The letters of other agents operating out of Rio de Janeiro paint a similar picture; Langworthy's experience of Brazil was far from unique. Bradshaw Wanklyn & Co. expressed analogous concerns regarding the colour and pattern of the textiles being the main feature by which products were judged. In 1842 the firm asked its suppliers to keep sending consignments to Rio with as many varieties of colour as possible but to refrain from sending any orange textiles.

*You ought to keep us regularly supplied with this style, taking care to change the assortment entirely, as often as you can, you ought not to send many patterns worked with Orange and none that show a great deal as the colour is not generally liked.*¹¹⁹

Later in the same letter Wanklyn implores its suppliers to send the most vibrantly colourful prints possible stating "the next assortment should be new patterns showing a good body of colour". It asked for stripes and checks. Interestingly, it also warned not to send any more fine prints as the lower qualities were selling easier. It had made late sales at auction and was still to sell an assortment of what it referred to as "large stripes" warning that it "hoped to dispose of them next month as some customers are expected from one of the provinces for which they are suitable".¹²⁰ Almost all the products Wanklyn was dealing in were cheap prints which became synonymous with Manchester, and just as with Langworthy, colour and patterns were the main variables by which consignments were judged in Brazil.

¹¹⁸ Ibid.

¹¹⁹ YMS 0227, Letter from Bradshaw Wanklyn and Co., Rio de Janeiro, 31st January 1842.

¹²⁰ Ibid.



Figure 41: YA2013.25.2.2.1 Cotton drill samples sent from Durham Price & Co., August 1833.

Packaging

Apart from the contentions surrounding the colours and patterns of products, the letters from Langworthy's agents also show that packaging was a frequent topic of discussion. In June 1831 Brade had been trying to sell packages of blue nankeens sent by Langworthy and informed its Manchester partners that it would have been able to get a much better price if the nankeens had been packaged more suitably. Presentation of goods was essential in this market and Brade stipulated that the way they had been packed in bales meant that they had lost their bulk in the custom house.

We were sorry to find that these being packed in Bales which has been of serious detriment to them. So the first place it has pressed them into half the bulk they would otherwise have had in sealing them in the custom house, each piece being loose, the papers have been disfigured and torn, indeed we have had to pack them all over again.¹²¹

Brade requested that Langworthy in future pack its textiles in cases with five pieces tied together. It was deemed better for the goods to be made of fine cloth but also to appear as bulky as possible. It accused Langworthy of calendering the textiles which was to their disfavour as this generally makes textiles appear a lot more lightweight. This was proving unfashionable in Brazil during the period and bulkier looking goods were preferred.

Apart from the presentation of products, using the correct packaging was also important in getting products to market in a suitable condition. It was not uncommon for Langworthy to receive news from Rio de Janeiro that the textile packages it had sent had been rendered unsellable because of deterioration on the overseas crossing. This happened in January 1829 when Langworthy was informed of how 260 of its striped drills had been damaged on the overseas crossing.¹²² This

¹²¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 16th June 1831.

¹²² YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from the Undersigned British Merchants Established in the City of Rio de Janeiro, 14th January 1829.

deterioration of products on overseas journeys was a common problem and this risk was always lurking in the background of any export operation. In 1838 Langworthy received similar news from Rio de Janeiro that thirty-seven pieces of Langworthy's goods had been damaged by sea water and consequently the goods then had to be sold by public auction before they deteriorated any further.¹²³ Had the goods arrived in a good condition they would have generated more profit. Other merchant houses that were operating in Rio de Janeiro reported similar occurrences of damage and mildew with consignments on the crossing. In 1842 Wanklyn & Co. reported to its Manchester suppliers that

*We have to observe that in the assortments, all the purple gowns are mildewed which is a very serious drawback to the disposal of them, we wish you could prevent this.*¹²⁴

Damage from sea water, mildew and other forms of deterioration on sea vessels was an impediment that all textile merchants operating in the distant Latin American markets had to contend with. Both Owen Owens and Sons and Fielden Brothers experienced the same problems when trying to penetrate these markets.¹²⁵

There were actions that merchants could take to reduce the risks, including using better packaging. In his study of textile exports to the Southern Cone, Llorca-Jana revealed that in the first meeting of British merchants in Buenos Aires one of the first points discussed related to the effects of sea water damage to textiles during their crossing on sailing vessels.¹²⁶ Such was the importance of keeping products dry, most of the packing materials that were used were usually more expensive than the textiles they were protecting. Oil cloth was an important deterrent to the threat of products becoming damp as it provided a degree of waterproofing and became a standard part of the packing process. It has already been shown that Manchester was an effective base from which to source packaging materials, and these materials were often bought because of the advice and information coming from abroad. Langworthy would regularly purchase protective packaging, especially oil cloth, from the large number of specialist suppliers in Manchester.¹²⁷ Though instances of damage to goods were common they did not induce Langworthy to abandon the market and large quantities of its consignments arrived in good condition.

¹²³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from the Undesignated British Merchants established in the City of Rio de Janeiro, 30th April 1838.

¹²⁴ YMS 0227 Pattern book; letter from Bradshaw Wanklyn and Sons, of Rio de Janeiro, 22nd February 1842.

¹²⁵ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 84.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 201.

¹²⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.7 Receipt from Messrs G. Langworthy and Co. from George Peacock, Calenderer Maker-Up and Packer, Dealer Wrappers, Matts, Twine, Ropes and Oil Cloths, 20 Bow Lane and 28 Cross Street, Manchester, 18th October 1834.

Competition

Britain possessed no monopoly on trade to South America and following independence from Portugal and Spain numerous traders from different nations began to send exports there, particularly the USA, which was successfully penetrating the continent. Various other European traders were also competing with Britain, mainly from Belgium, Germany and France.¹²⁸ Alexander Speirs, who operated out of Buenos Aires, reported in 1835 that cotton hosiery, printed calicoes, garments, shawls and muslins were all being imported into Buenos Aires in competition with British goods. He also reported that cotton goods from France, Germany and Switzerland were also making their way on to the scene.¹²⁹ In reference to the printed calicoes, he states “they are frequently in styles which appear to be new and sometimes showing a degree of beauty and taste superior to those generally exhibited in the style of British printed calicos.” Stewart Ker, a merchant in Rio de Janeiro, made similar complaints about competition from the United States particularly in cotton goods which he says were being sold at prices that would only produce a loss for British manufacturers. Langworthy’s agents often expressed their concerns about shipments of Indian-based textiles arriving in Brazil from other countries, such as the United States, that could compete with Langworthy’s imitations.¹³⁰ Competition also meant the market had narrow sales margins which proved challenging.

It was not uncommon for ships to arrive at the same time as other vessels which contained similar goods and hence there would be immediate competition in the buying rooms. This is also why it was important for Langworthy’s consignments to arrive at just the right moment when there would be more chance of a quick sale. Latin American markets were challenging for British traders as they were saturated with lots of merchants all competing for a limited consumer base. Manchester’s manufacturers did not struggle to produce enough textiles during this period, rather the main problem was finding enough people to buy them. Brade frequently complained consignments would not arrive on time to make an impact on account of other houses stocking identical goods.

*So if there are any in the Lady Cornwall there are poor prospects further. She is making a long passage, the Dyson which sailed with her from Liverpool is all out. Nankeens such as we sent you a sample of were in pretty good demand but Williams and Wanklyns both have them and we fear we shall not get them in time to do much good.*¹³¹

¹²⁸ Ibid., 71.

¹²⁹ GB127 2023 Report of Alexander Speirs of the firm Alexander Speirs and Co., 1835, Merchants in Buenos Ayres on Foreign Competition, Cited from Affidavits, Class 1, Competition of Continental with British Manufacturers in Continental Markets, GB127, p.8.

¹³⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 22nd December 1831.

¹³¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 17th February 1832.

This indicates how if the packets took too long on the passage or were not dispatched promptly then the goods would arrive too late to make a sale at the optimum time due to competition. This was made more difficult by the fact that the speed by which commission merchants in Brazil could send information on local demand and competition was limited by the speed of sailing ships. For South American markets the fastest ship to Liverpool was a journey of three to four months as opposed to four to six weeks for North America.¹³² This meant there was always a major time lag between the immediate needs of the market and what Langworthy was preparing. In order to counteract this obstacle, overseas agents like Brade were expected to hold for better prices if the market was flooded and sell quickly if it was expected that more competitors would arrive.¹³³ On one occasion a consignment of blue Indias was left to “lie a while” on account of Wanklyn having 4,000 superior quality goods in Rio making sales untenable.¹³⁴ Brade went as far as to ask Langworthy to suspend shipments altogether until the market situation had improved.

The speed by which Langworthy could get its products to market was further slowed by bureaucratic custom houses. In an 1831 letter, Brade wrote to Langworthy informing them of how their “goods had only just landed, and there are so many obstacles at this moment in the custom house that we cannot get them through”.¹³⁵ In some instances, the custom house would be unmanned and closed due to holidays which would result in consignments being trapped there until it opened again. This is revealed in correspondence sent to Langworthy from its agents in Porto Alegre in 1835.

*since when your goods reached us safely, owing to the Easter Holidays intervening we could not get them out of our Custom House until the 24th April.*¹³⁶

Furthermore, the account sheets that were sent back to Langworthy were littered with custom house charges, interest duties, dispatching house charges, insurance against fire, warehouse rent and the commission that was to be paid to the agents involved. All these various fees would be taken out of Langworthy’s profits.¹³⁷ The costs were not trivial and until 1831 there was a duty on all printed cottons and so all firms who produced printed goods had to contend with this.

¹³² Law, *Fieldens of Todmorden*, 44.

¹³³ Ibid., 44.

¹³⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 23rd February 1832.

¹³⁵ YA2013.2.2.21, Letter from Schwind Brade and Co., Rio De Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 3rd March 1832.

¹³⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter sent to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, from Agents in Porto Alegre, 1st May 1835.

¹³⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Accounts and Charges sent back to George Langworthy and Co. from Messer’s Cairns, 25th May 1835.

Brade would often write to Langworthy informing the firm about how it was attempting to gain control over the price of products in relation to the demand. This was to extract maximum profits in the unpredictable market. Brade wrote:

*We considered that if we are to preserve our custom for you as the manufacturer we ought not to be undersold, indeed that you may also suffer a temporary loss, by driving those who purchase out of the market, you will eventually (if you chose to avail yourselves of it) be the gainers that we ought to undersell. Once the late heavy shipments fall off, which we feel convinced they must do after such prices as these, we may then hope to raise our prices again. We shall take every means in our power to ascertain what is received by other houses and you must let us know if you can what is going from Manchester.*¹³⁸

This illustrates a merchant responding to the product demand overseas. Merchants would lower prices when the market was overstocked, but also raise prices when there was a scarcity of goods. Firms like Holland and Wanklyn were importing nankeens that were almost identical to Langworthy's.¹³⁹ Competition, market saturation, as well as changing seasonal demand meant that timing was of the essence. Overseas operations often held the promise for big financial returns; however, it was essential to sell Langworthy's textiles when there were few alternative options for local buyers and therefore acquire the highest price. Communication was key to this, with both firms reporting to each other how the situation was changing at their respective ends. Through a trusted network, merchants in Manchester could not only use the information sent to them to control the quality of the product but also to control the prices. As Farnie has highlighted, merchants really were the generals of the trade.¹⁴⁰

While competition proved a constant challenge, Manchester's merchants were well placed to handle it. By producing textiles with precision and adapting quickly to samples, Langworthy was able to make viable exports. In August 1831, George Langworthy wrote back to Brade in Rio in answer to its agent's concerns about the competition. The tone of the letter shows Langworthy to be highly confident about his firm's ability to meet the demand and see off any competition. Langworthy reassured Brade that once samples arrived in Manchester then it would be able to closely imitate them. Langworthy also asked for Brade's advice on its current exports and the sorts of prices they would likely sell at.

As soon as we receive the piece you have sent us from Bahia, we will make the necessary attention in the colour of them – you will find in the present lot two kind of goods, the first 2000 pieces say consignments No 77 to 84 are 12 ½ inches wide which is the width of the real Indias we have with us, and the other 200 pieces are 14 to 14 ½ inches we made them this extra width

¹³⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th May 1832.

¹³⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 21st June 1831.

¹⁴⁰ Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry*, 61.

*for another market at the recommendation of some friends of ours, please to examine them and give us the opinion of your dealers if any price is available in consequence.*¹⁴¹

What is perhaps more interesting is that Langworthy was not worried about its competitors in the market as it was able to produce many varieties of goods cheaply and in quantities that not all firms were able to do. It stated that:

*The lot you mention of Messrs Moor and Co. is of the finer width, you are not to be afraid of being undersold in their goods, we can afford as cheap or cheaper than anybody who may send them to your market, therefore take current rates and do not miss sales, the manufacture of them here has almost entirely ceased except by ourselves and we will supply you regularly and endeavour to send you a suitable article – We are anxious to have you export upon the other goods.*¹⁴²

Langworthy had planned its manufacturing process to take advantage of particular types of product demand that other merchants were unable to supply or not as cheaply. This instance also shows that Langworthy was anxious that Brade made sales rather than hang on to wait for the best price to avoid being undersold.

While the sampling system was important for penetrating competitive markets, so too was paying attention to competitors. The arrival of consignments from competitors, such as Moor and Holland, could drastically change the market's buoyancy and change the value of Langworthy's shipments. Brade was wary of this:

*We see Moors house dispatching cases of 120 blue nankeens, but we have not heard what they are getting for them. – Mr Holland sold his for considerably less than ours, but we cannot say at what price, 2000 pieces of India ones came for us the other day therefore it will be well to be cautious*¹⁴³

Merchants were secretive and spied on each other. This is reflected in the correspondence sent by James Hodgson, who was one of the most successful of the British consignment agents who dealt in the distribution and sale of Manchester goods at this time and served many of the largest Manchester merchants who specialised in the South American market, including Fielden Brothers & Co. and Owen Owens and Sons. During the opening of the relationship between Hodgson and Owens, Hodgson gave advice that:

it is prudent, at all times, to keep perfectly secret the destination of your purchases in first instances from the manufacturers of whom you buy it is desirable that you do employ secret and faithful packers to shipping agents at Liverpool – Indeed it is particularly desirable that you

¹⁴¹ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, to Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, 27th August 1831.

¹⁴² Ibid.

¹⁴³ YA2013.25.2.2.1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 18th August 1831.

*should avoid employing any one to ship your goods that may be anyways intimate or connected with such Liverpool houses.*¹⁴⁴

The merchant community was mired in secrecy and highly anxious about the actions of other traders. Being the first in getting a new product line of goods to the market gave a merchant a distinct advantage in making a successful sale. There was a constant battle to be the fastest at getting the appropriate goods to the consumers. Competition took place at every level of the supply chain from competing manufacturers in Manchester to shippers in Liverpool and then agents abroad. Liverpool, especially, was embroiled in secrecy. This was the easiest place to find out which manufacturers were sending which particular items to specific markets as most of this trade was held together by intermediary shippers, brokers and merchants like Turner Brade & Co. Llorca-Jana highlighted how “merchants kept their suppliers in the strictest secrecy so that no other merchant could contact them”, and that most of this secrecy was regarding information that was passing through Liverpool.¹⁴⁵ However, overseas ports were equally melting pots of surveillance. Langworthy’s case in Brazil reflects Llorca-Jana’s observations that the two most fundamental issues that agents faced when ordering British textiles for the Latin American markets were “entrusting manufacturers with making incredibly specific pieces of cloth and ensuring the opportune arrival of these products”.¹⁴⁶ Langworthy’s trade certainly fits this description.

Conclusion

It was the useful knowledge transmitted through overseas merchant networks that allowed firms in Manchester to read the market with effectiveness and modify textiles accordingly. Product selection and development was fundamental to the success of British textiles and depended on the interaction of merchants with the knowledge economy. The key to success in Latin American markets for merchants was to adhere to the advice and information sent back to Manchester from overseas commission agents who understood the realities of consumer demand. The use of communications containing samples and information sent back and forth between Manchester and overseas ports was essential to both product selection and the imitation of popular textiles. Langworthy was a processor of this useful information and coordinated its local efforts in Manchester to respond to the knowledge of its agents. It was important for Langworthy to imitate the samples as closely as possible. Though the pricing of textiles was important, the communications reveal that qualitative factors such as shade, colour and pattern were equally important and that the communications coming from agents were

¹⁴⁴ GB127 MIS C.89.1 Letter to Owens from James Hodgson, 1829.

¹⁴⁵ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 53.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 100.

essential in selecting and fine-tuning products to these types of criteria. This calls into question wider assumptions that the success of British textile exports rested simply on their cheapness and quantity.

Manchester traders, like Langworthy, were successful because of their ability to imitate cottons sent from other countries but also cottons from other British exporters. The firm's archive strongly demonstrates the importance of Asian-based textiles as a benchmark of quality and how British manufacturers slowly mastered imitations through comparative learning. This resulted in the success of the cheap prints in which Langworthy specialised. The merchant side of the industry allowed manufacturers to control the quality and specifications of goods with precision. This allowed Langworthy to gain a foothold in markets and create its own niche. Information and sampling also meant firms could imitate textiles that were being sent by competing merchants as well as all manner of other textiles that were in circulation in Latin America. This meant that constant adaptation and improvement could take place to meet consumer preferences and ensure textiles were able to find buyers in the oversupplied market.

Throughout the period from 1828 to 1839 Langworthy adapted to the Latin American markets and grew in confidence. The firm's trade was facilitated by agents which were an essential part of the market chain and allowed Langworthy to navigate through various challenges which affected business, including political instability, market gluts and financial crisis. There was little Langworthy could do once its goods had arrived in the market and hence the role of agents in overseas ports was a highly responsible one.

Brazil was highly competitive for British traders to make headway in. The Langworthy evidence calls into question notions regarding the limited nature of Latin American markets in the early nineteenth century and instead supports more recent interpretations that markets in South America were sophisticated in their consumer demand and a challenge to master. The types of goods that were being sent there were diverse and worn by a range of classes. Vibrant looking textiles of lively colours were highly sought after, especially ones made with various pigmentations of blue.

It was difficult for merchants to ever get comfortable with the product lines they were sending because of the market's variability. The needs of buyers were constantly in flux. Consumers were picky and there were more traders than was required for the size of the consumer base. The market was always fluctuating, and this made sales margins tight which was exacerbated by competition from other merchants from Britain, Europe and North America. Though pricing was important, textiles were judged on visual style, length, width, pattern and colour.

The other key factor in market success was timing. Sometimes the narrow time frame when vessels arrived into port would drastically change the value of goods from one week to the next. This often resulted in Langworthy being undersold or lowered the value of its own goods. The role of agents was important in manipulating market conditions and playing for a better deal. This included selling early or late and selling at lower or higher prices depending on the state of the competition. Effective packaging of goods was also important.

Finally, many of the textiles Langworthy sent were involved in the slave trade between Brazil and West Africa. Manchester-produced cottons were still being exchanged for enslaved people from West Africa. Langworthy, like many other traders, took advantage of produce grown on the slave plantations as a form of payment for its consignments. Langworthy cottons were also likely to be used to clothe enslaved people in Brazil. This reflects wider arguments regarding how the British textile industry relied on a shift in the Triangular Trade away from the West Indies and to the newly opened Latin American markets which had far bigger populations of enslaved people.

Chapter 3: Manchester Textile Merchants and Transport



Figure 42: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt from the Langworthy archive, from the Severn Warehouse, 1st September 1834. Langworthy used this warehouse to store its products before they were transported by canal carriers such as Worthington Gilbert & Co. The warehouse was located on Deansgate near to the Castlefield canal basin, right beside the Rochdale Canal.

To succeed in the production and export of cotton textiles, textile firms had to rely on a complex web of transport links to transfer materials and carry goods to market. Transport was also intimately tied up with business communications and the transfer of information. It has long been recognised within the general narratives of the Industrial Revolution that the growth of industries such as coal, iron and textiles were interlinked with the development of more effective transport methods.¹ Britain held natural advantages in navigation, including accessible rivers and a coastline for sea transportation. However, it is the developments in canals, roads and eventually steam railways that have received the most attention from historians as explanations for industrial growth.² Manchester, often regarded as the world's first industrial city, was at the forefront of this transport revolution which was a fundamental part of the specialised local economy and its ability to supply diverse export markets.³ This made Manchester first and foremost an effective distribution centre for textiles.⁴ Because of Langworthy's central location in the city, unlike a more rural-based firm such as Gregs at Quarry Bank, Langworthy was perfectly located to take advantage of the latest transport innovations in the city.⁵

¹ Roger Osborne, *Iron, Steam and Money, The Making of the Industrial Revolution* (London: Pimlico, 2014), 257.

² *Ibid.*, p. 267.

³ Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 23.

⁴ Michael M. Edwards, *The Growth of the British Cotton Trade, 1780–1815* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 181.

⁵ Mary B. Rose, *The Greggs of Quarry Bank Mill* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

This chapter looks at the development of these types of transport infrastructure in Manchester and their role in the textile trade between 1820 and 1840, from the perspective of a merchant firm that used this infrastructure.

During the period 1820 to 1840, transport in Manchester and its surrounding areas was both evolving and expanding fast. This made Manchester one of the most connected locations in the world. This is most notably reflected in infrastructure such as the Bridgewater Canal, opened in 1761 to transport coal from the Duke of Bridgewater's estate, and later the Liverpool and Manchester Railway completed in 1830, the world's first intercity railway. Manchester is situated at the heart of three rivers, the Irwell, Medlock and Irk. The canal age further strengthened its water transport. This natural water transport and later the canal network placed Manchester at the centre of a major transport hub that made it a perfect distribution centre of manufactured goods. These waterways eventually connected the city to the rest of Britain.

Much of the literature on the evolution of transport during this period has been inclined to rely on commercial directories, parliamentary testimony and second-hand reports. However, the texture of the Langworthy archive provides a unique opportunity to look at the nature and benefits of transport development in Manchester through the eyes of a business in the city that was engaged in the export of finished goods. The archive materials show a firm's close-knit interaction with local transport services in Manchester during the formative decades of the transport revolution. Much of the historical discussion on transport during this period has tended to focus on the movement of heavy materials like coal, or raw produce like cotton. There have been few studies, however, on the interaction between firms engaged in the production and sale of finished cotton textiles in Manchester and local transport providers. Indeed, scholars of transport history, such as Rick Szostak, have highlighted how the impact of improvements in transport on the latter stages of production of finished goods has been largely ignored, with Maw's work being an exception.⁶

The Langworthy archive helps to shed light on this deficit by using a small-scale case study to answer bigger historical questions, in what some scholars term a micro-historical perspective. Micro historians have often pointed out how "reducing the scale of observation" makes it possible to discover new connections that were not previously obvious, and to develop greater understanding of the motivations of historical actors.⁷ By examining transport from the perspective of the firms that were driving Britain's industrial and commercial growth one can provide insights into the exact intricacies

⁶ Szostak, *The Role of Transportation*, 164; Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*.

⁷ Carlo Ginzburg, "Micro History: Two or Three Things I Know About It", trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi, *Critical Inquiry* 20, no.1 (1993): 23.

of the relationship between transport and commerce during the period. Business historians have shown how decision making and strategy in business is usually the result of “compromise, conflicts and reflection”.⁸ While there have been many narratives that have traced the history of transport during these decades from a macro or lineal perspective, there have been few that have focused on the specific relevance of transport for firms and the options they faced and decisions they made in relation to local conveyance methods.

The archive provides evidence that helps to indicate the degree to which new innovations in transport shaped the potential of businesses by providing new opportunities and incentives. Documenting this aspect of the Langworthy story, using evidence sourced in numerous receipts and notes sent to Langworthy from the various transport businesses in Manchester and its surrounding areas, it is possible to reveal the role transport played in the daily business of the firm. As opposed to focusing purely on technological determinism, namely great inventions, this chapter looks at the innovations in the types of services that were provided by carrying firms. As well as overland transport providers, this also means looking at how shipping services improved at sea, especially in relation to insurance, packing and the storage of goods. This is also discussed in relation to Langworthy’s operations.

The fine detail of the archive reinforces many of the observations made by Maw in his valuable work on the history of Manchester transport infrastructure.⁹ This chapter argues that for textile exporters like Langworthy, more traditional forms of land transport like roads and canals continued to develop and play an important role in textile business operations despite the coming of the railways that characterised the 1830s. However, even during its early days, the Liverpool and Manchester Railway did play an important role in conveying finished goods to Liverpool that were destined for the export market. This chapter argues that the innovations in railway development were immediately taken advantage of by textile merchants. From the first moment railway services became available to the business community of Manchester they were taken up with great eagerness by the local textile firms. Though the railway proved highly successful, for Langworthy, it was not a complete substitute for roads and canals. The railway was especially important in speeding up Langworthy’s communication with Liverpool, however, roads still provided more flexibility when it came to running errands over short distances or delivering goods and post to multiple locations. Canals also still retained an important role for bulk transport. This use of new and different forms of land transport was accompanied by a greater variability in services at sea combined with the role of insurance which meant goods could be transported faster to more locations with less risk. These forms of transport

⁸ Patrick Fridenson, “Business History and History”, in Geoffrey Jones and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Business History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 12.

⁹ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*.

were open to free market competition and Langworthy had to form connections with specialist carrying firms that owned the means to convey goods and information. Just as important as technological transformations were the innovations in the variety, reliability and flexibility of services offered by different transport providers both at sea and on land.¹⁰

Table 2 below provides a quantitative reflection of the degree to which Langworthy relied on different forms of transport during the 1830s by counting the number of receipts for each method found in the archive.

Table 2: Number of times different forms of transport were used by Langworthy during the 1830s, reflected in the archive receipts.

| Transport Method | Road / Fly Coach | Canal | Railway |
|--|------------------|-------|---------|
| Number of receipts in Langworthy archive | 24 | 12 | 5 |

It is important to remember that this table only contains the receipts that have survived from the 1830s and present only a tiny fraction of the number of transactions Langworthy made with transport firms. However, we can use these to make educated speculations on the degree to which Langworthy relied on different types of conveyance. What the receipts show is that Manchester-based merchant and manufacturing firms were able to use three different methods of transport to convey finished goods and postal information over land. All three of these methods of transport continued to flourish and play an important role in the textile trade during this time, and each offered its own advantages. It is difficult to think of another town or city other than Manchester where this would have been possible during this time. Nevertheless, these receipts also indicate that not all transport methods were relied on equally. Railways had the lowest number of receipts as they were still in their infancy. It also points to the fact that roads, especially, played an integral part in the Industrial Revolution and the business operations of firms. However, alongside roads and the various fly coach services (a light wagon pulled by horses), Langworthy also took advantage of the canal network.

Canals

Though canals were not as flexible as roads and railways they were still reliable and affordable in the transport of bulk traffic.¹¹ They were much cheaper than roads and were highly important in opening up economies of scale within regions to larger markets and this was especially true of Manchester and

¹⁰ Dan Bogart, Michael Lefors and A.E.M. Satchell, "Canal Carriers and Creative Destruction in English Transport", *Explorations in Economic History* 71 (2019), 21.

¹¹ Gerard Turnbull, "Canals, Growth and Regional Demand", *Economic History Review* 40 no.4 (1987): 537.

its textile industry.¹² Maw has pointed out that most of the literature regarding canals has tended to focus on “inter-regional movements of coal” because canals were much more effective than roads at moving heavy loads. However, this has been to the detriment of historical interest into the role of canals in moving lighter commodities that formed the basis of “regional specialisation”, textiles being the most obvious example for Lancashire.¹³ In point of fact, 15,000 tonnes of textiles were carried from Manchester to Liverpool in 1825 by canal, a greater weight than by roads.¹⁴ The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries saw great improvements in the canal network, not just in Lancashire but throughout Britain as a whole. The Grand Junction Canal, opened in 1805, shortened the distance between London and Manchester by sixty miles.¹⁵ During this period of the firm’s history, the Castlefield area of Manchester was the centre of the basins for a lot of the major canals, including the Bridgewater and Bolton and Bury Canals.¹⁶ The Bridgewater Canal was especially important as it was linked to the Leeds and Liverpool Canal by 1821 and, as a result, provided a direct link from Liverpool to Manchester. The Rochdale Canal provided effective services to Hull, the gateway to the European market. Canals were especially important for the conveying of raw cotton from Liverpool to Manchester and had largely replaced roads in this task by the 1820s.¹⁷ Canals were also generally cheaper than railways and so continued to be used even up until the ‘railway mania’ of the 1840s.

The other big advantage canals had over other forms of conveyance was that canal carriers often owned much of the warehousing in the city where merchants’ goods could be kept dry and safe before transportation.¹⁸ Wherever canals developed, warehouses usually also developed, especially along the basins. Here many carrier firms set up their headquarters.¹⁹ Many of the firms that operated canal services also owned warehouses close to the canal basin. Despite the advent of railways in Manchester, canals still moved more traffic, especially in raw cotton, as late as the 1840s and so any notion that railways ended the dominance of canals immediately is an oversight.²⁰ By 1841 the amount of cotton brought to Manchester by rail amounted only to a quarter, with the remaining three quarters coming by water, mainly via the Bridgewater Canal and the Rivers Mersey and Irwell.²¹

Langworthy regularly took advantage of canal carriers that owned warehousing. One of the most common types of receipt relating to transport services in the Langworthy archive is from the Severn

¹² Ibid., 545.

¹³ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 62.

¹⁴ Ibid., 58.

¹⁵ Bogart, Lefors and Satchell, “Canal Carriers”.

¹⁶ Ibid., 9.

¹⁷ Ibid., 55.

¹⁸ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 90.

¹⁹ Lemire, *Fashions Favourite*, 125.

²⁰ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 46.

²¹ Ibid., 46.

Warehouse located on Deansgate near to the Castlefield canal basin, right beside the Rochdale Canal, also the site of Thomas Bache's warehouse.²² Because of its central location near the Castlefield site, the Severn Warehouse was perfectly located to store goods before being shipped off via the canal system. This service was operated by a firm called Worthington Gilbert & Co., a public carrier firm.²³ There are twelve receipts in the Langworthy archive showing that the firm was using the services of the Severn Warehouse (see for example Figure 43). Most of the packages were relatively cheap, ranging in the shillings and pence mark. We can assume that the service was regularly used by Langworthy.

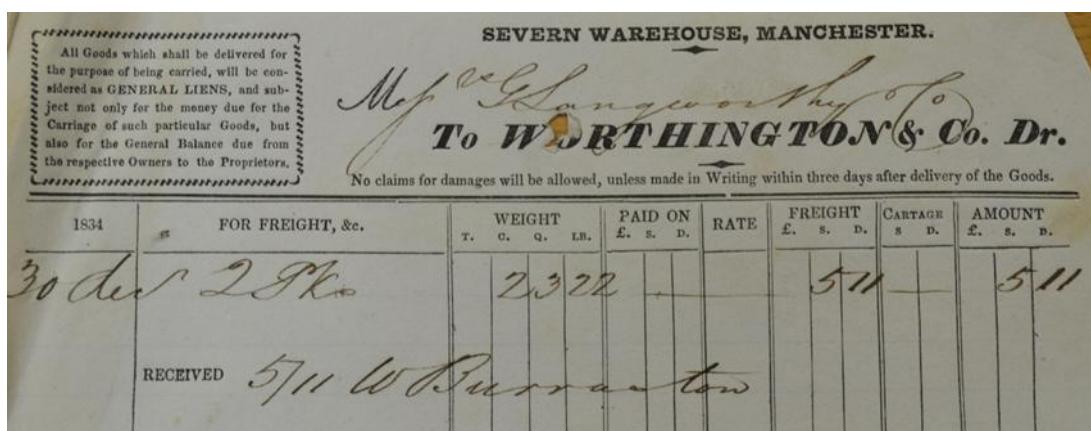


Figure 43: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Severn Warehouse, 30th December 1834

Worthington also owned another warehouse on Deansgate. In fact, there were nine different warehouses in total located in the Castlefield basin near the Rochdale Canal.²⁴ Both of Worthington's warehouses were built in 1808. Maw states that Worthington's was one of the first independent carrier firms to operate errands on the canal independently of the main canal owners like the Rochdale Canal Company. He describes the Severn Warehouse as a "rectangular building that adjoined Deansgate on the western elevation, served by an extension of the branch canal".²⁵

The warehouses located in the Castlefield area were an important part of the industrial infrastructure of Manchester. They were used by Manchester textile firms as a transhipment location and to store goods close to the canal basins and then load them onto canal barges. A directory from the period shows that Worthington Gilbert & Co.'s boats were being used on the Duke of Bridgewater's canal not only to ferry goods to Liverpool but also to Birmingham, Bristol and South Wales. During this period, other carriers used by Langworthy, such as Pickford's and Bache, were also using the Bridgewater Canal and operating fly boats. These receipts in the archive serve as evidence that Langworthy was

²² Ibid., 173.

²³ YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Severn Warehouse, 25th August 1834.

²⁴ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 155.

²⁵ Ibid., 173.

using the services of canal carriers to store and move goods. Goods from Langworthy's premises would arrive at the warehouse via carts and then could be distributed. Because textile goods were fragile and, unlike coal, required protection, warehouses such as this one were major assets to the firms engaged in the selling of cotton textiles.²⁶ The coming of the railways, however, meant that many carrier firms also took an interest in using this new form of conveyance in the service of textile businesses. Hence, railway warehouses also became focal points of distribution for Manchester's finished textiles.

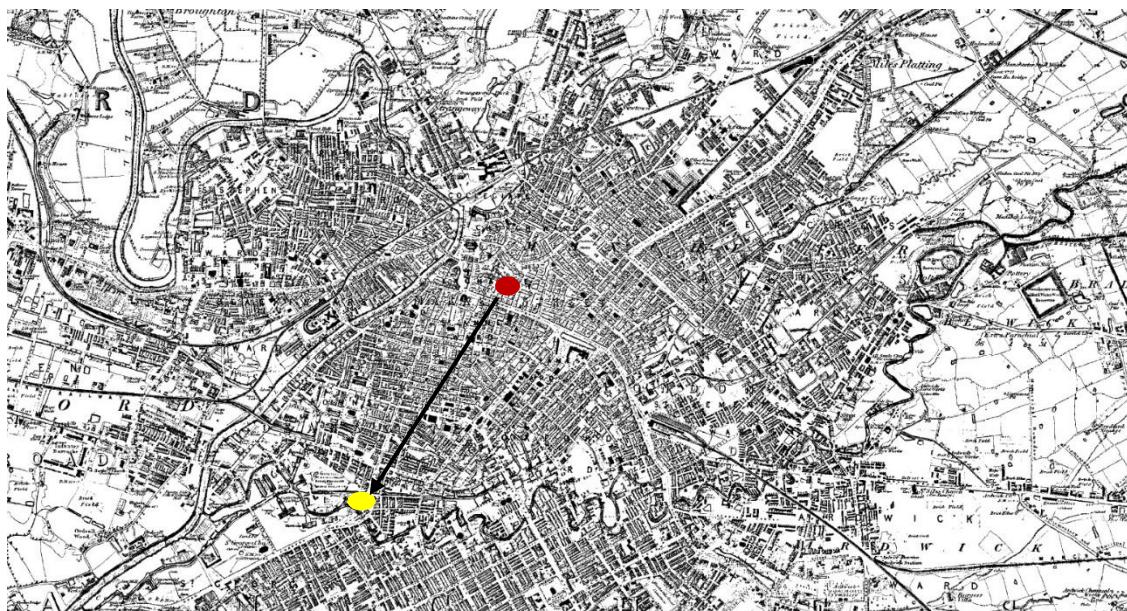


Figure 44: Location of the Severn Warehouse, a mile from Langworthy's headquarters on Cannon Street, on an 1840 map of Manchester. The yellow circle represents the Severn Warehouse, the red circle represents Cannon Street.

Overall, Maw has shown that canal basins were major catalysts and stimulators of industry, and it is no coincidence that factories and commerce developed in and around Ancoats, Oxford Street and Piccadilly, the canal side areas.²⁷ However, he also acknowledges that the commercial area around the Exchange, near to where Langworthy's headquarters was located, remained relatively distant from the canal districts (see Figure 44 above).²⁸ Indeed, the walk between the Castlefield basin and Langworthy's headquarters was around thirty minutes. This meant that for merchant and manufacturing firms like Langworthy, other forms of transport, namely road, were also required to undertake the shorter journeys around Manchester. Road delivery and industrialisation have received little attention in the literature in comparison to the more dramatic occurrences of canals and railways. Rather than a simple succession of different transport modes that replaced each other the

²⁶ Ibid., 150.

²⁷ Ibid., 11.

²⁸ Ibid., 11.

Industrial Revolution was in fact characterised more by revolutions in many different groups of transport that developed alongside each other simultaneously.²⁹ Road carriers continued to grow even as canals became more common.³⁰ This is a fact that is often overshadowed by narratives that have covered grand events in canal and railway development, resulting in roads being somewhat overlooked in Manchester's history.

The Fly Coach

The evidence from Langworthy also cements the important legacy of roads to the success of the textile industry in Manchester between 1820 and 1840. Roads continued to be essential to Langworthy's operations and as a case study it points to a much wider observation on the continued use of horses and carriages as a means of transport in urban settings. The Industrial Revolution period is often associated with the development of canals and then railways, with roads being somewhat overlooked in Manchester's history. Indeed, it is often wrongly assumed that canals and railways led to horses becoming increasingly obsolete. In fact, horses continued to play a major role in industrialisation and their use increased rather than decreased. Indeed, roads and horses were never completely eclipsed. Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr have observed how the nineteenth century saw improvements in road vehicles that made horses more viable. Infrastructure continued to develop to suit the horse. Over some distances they could be more profitable than steam and required less maintenance.³¹ They state that "The nineteenth-century city represented the climax of human exploitation of horsepower. Humans could not have built nor lived in the giant, wealth-generating metropoles that emerged in that century without horses."³² This was true for Manchester, the world's first industrial city, which was still dependent upon this animal. Roads remained the most used form of transport in Manchester itself and in the inter-regional movement of piece goods.³³ For textile merchants like Langworthy, the road carrier was still an important service provider in its operations. When it came to running errands within the city, sending and receiving post from different stakeholders, and transactions in materials over short distances, the use of horses remained the most flexible and adaptable.

During the time that Langworthy was trading, Manchester lay at the heart of a complex road network on which the firm continued to rely. Canals often provided unreliable and slow services and though their legacy has been firmly embedded in the literature, many scholars have failed to recognise that

²⁹ Bogart, Lefors and Satchell, "Canal Carriers", 21.

³⁰ Ibid., 21.

³¹ Clay McShane and Joel A. Tarr, *The Horse in the City, Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007), 4.

³² Ibid., 1.

³³ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 83.

their development coincided with further extensions of roads.³⁴ This was partly the legacy of the rise in turnpike trusts, whereby local bodies were created and given the power to collect revenue in the form of tolls to improve and expand the local road network. This was a pattern that was witnessed around the whole of Britain but especially in Manchester and was responsible for the construction and improvement of roads going into the main urban centre of the town. Despite advances in canal development in the post-Napoleonic war years, the Manchester area was still home to just under 200 land carrying firms which were able to transport goods overland to other parts of the country.³⁵ In 1820, it is reputed that there were seventy-seven road carrier firms in Manchester itself.³⁶ The rapid economic progress following the post-war depression and the need to transport goods to domestic and foreign markets meant that road haulage was in fact in its heyday despite the progress of canals and eventually railways.³⁷

Despite being the most expensive form of transport, roads held notable advantages in comparison to canals. This included not only the speed by which fly coaches and vans could travel in comparison to a canal barge but also the greater geographical coverage and flexibility they provided. Unlike canals, roads were also not restricted point to point distribution. They were faster and consequently much more appropriate for lightweight goods that travelled over land.³⁸ Furthermore, before 1850 there were 22,000 miles of roads in Britain in comparison to just 4,000 miles of canals and 6,000 miles of railways.³⁹ This meant that during the time Langworthy was operating it used roads as a major form of transport.⁴⁰ Canals continued to hold an advantage for heavier and bulkier items such as raw cotton. However, for manufactured items, dyestuffs and piece goods, roads were often superior, especially in and around the locality of Manchester. Langworthy relied on sourcing materials from local dyers, spinners and packing firms and so it was required to utilise roads and the advantages they held for intra- and inter-urban distribution.⁴¹ Sometimes this involved using its own carts and local coach services to transport Langworthy's materials and messages between the works side of the business in Eccles and the warehouse in the centre of Manchester. During this period new turnpike trusts had been established to ensure better roads between Manchester and Eccles and consequently

³⁴ Ibid., 1.

³⁵ Gerard L. Turnbull, "Pickford's 1750–1920, A Study in the Development of Transportation" (PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1972), 175.

³⁶ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 74.

³⁷ Ibid., 175.

³⁸ Bogart, Lefors and Satchell, "Canal Carriers", 21.

³⁹ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 69.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 69.

⁴¹ Ibid., 82

Langworthy was operating at a time when more effective links were possible between its two premises.⁴²

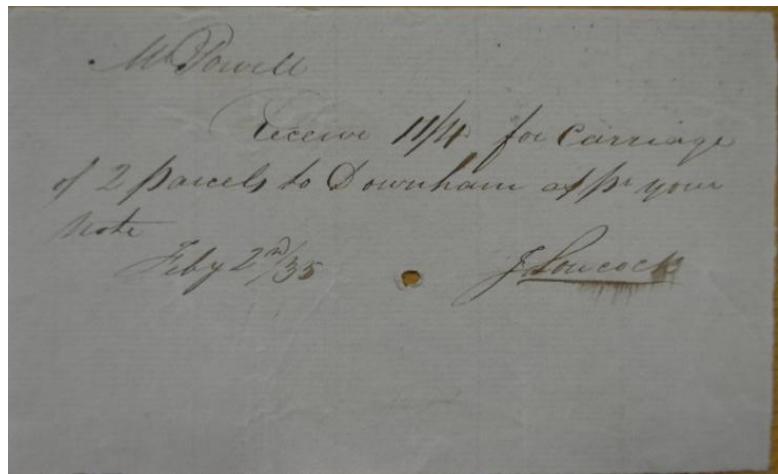


Figure 45: YA2013.25/2/1/5 Short note from Lowcock to Powell, the two chief overseers of Langworthy's operations. It refers to the daily use of carriages to deliver parcels.

For longer journeys Langworthy also paid for the services of local carrying firms which specialised in moving goods for other businesses. The most frequent carrying firms used by Langworthy during this period included Carver & Co., Pickford's, Worthington Gilbert & Co., Ridsdale Pearson & Co., Ann Johnson & Co., John Curtis and Thomas Bache. Maw has shown how firms like Pickford's and Bache were among the biggest of the national carriers during the 1820s and so it is unsurprising that these firms feature as part of Langworthy's bundles of receipts.⁴³ Carrying companies that operated regular fly coach services were a mainstay of textile operations. The various receipts in the archive from road carrier businesses show the different locations these fly coach services allowed firms, like Langworthy, to access. For example, on a receipt from Ann Johnson (Figure 46) for a package from Birmingham Lane, a street in Meltham near Huddersfield, it displays all the locations that Ann Johnson served. It states:

*Daily conveyance by fly waggons to and from Manchester, Warrington, Chester, Liverpool, and all parts of North Wales, to Congleton, Newcastle, Stone, Stafford, Walsall, Birmingham, Worcester, Gloucester, Bristol, Bath and London, also to Sheffield, Rotherham, Doncaster, Gainsborough, Mansfield, Nottingham, Leicester, Lincoln, Louth, Boston, Newark, Grantham, Stamford, Cambridge, Huntingdon, Norwich and all parts of Norfolk and Suffolk, Cambridgeshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire.*⁴⁴

⁴² Ibid., 72.

⁴³ Ibid., 134.

⁴⁴ YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Ann Johnson, 29th July 1834.



Figure 46: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt from Ann Johnson, Fly Coach Service.

By utilising the services of carriers like Ann Johnson, Langworthy was able to stay connected to almost any area in England where significant trading was conducted. With fly coach services as flexible as this Langworthy could send and receive packages from specific locations dotted around Lancashire and beyond. This reflects Szostak's observations on how improvements in transport during this period led to much wider markets becoming available to northern textile firms, not just overseas but also nationally.⁴⁵ It was because of transport improvements within Britain that commercial hubs, like London, could react to the price changes of Manchester goods within relatively short time periods.⁴⁶ However, the firm relied on a number of other carrying firms which operated fly coaches (or wagons). These included firms such as Carver & Co., a major carrying firm that had originally started out as a textile business. One of the firm's warehouses built in 1806 on the Piccadilly Basin remains in Manchester and is the oldest surviving warehouse in the city. The leader of the firm was a John Carver who was born in 1793. The firm's main headquarters was in Piccadilly, Manchester, while it also had offices in Hulme and Chester Road and so it was another obvious service Langworthy could use. The receipts from Carver show that it operated fly wagons to convey goods, but also postal services run by postal vans. Its wagons travelled between Manchester to places such as Hull, Newcastle, Edinburgh and Leeds. In one instance, for example, Langworthy sent some twills to Leeds by carriage through Carver on 11th August 1834 (Figure 47).⁴⁷ Carver was one of the major road carrier firms alongside Pickford's that made the transition to both canals and then railways. The railway would charge carrier firms for the use of its carriages and locomotives.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Szostak, *The Role of Transportation*, 169.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 169.

⁴⁷ YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Carver and Co., 11th August 1834.

⁴⁸ Maw, *Transport and The Industrial City*, 271.

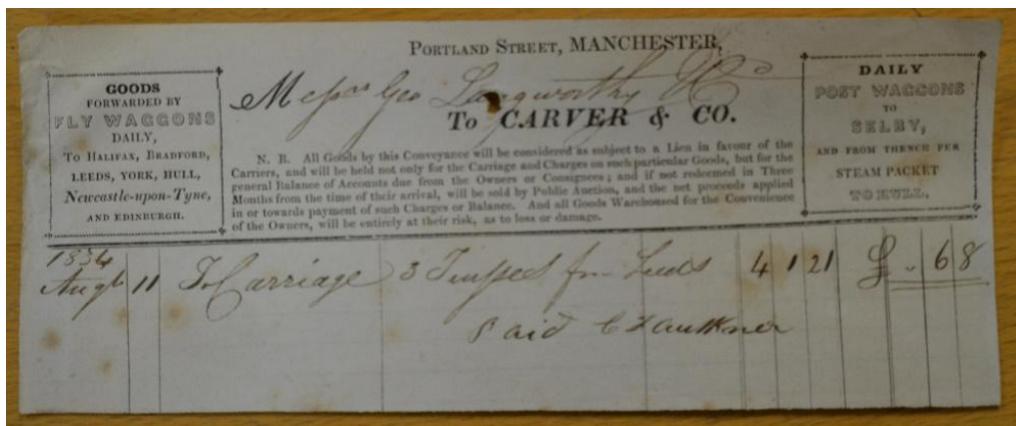


Figure 47: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Carver & Co., 11th August 1834.

The other fly coach provider that Langworthy was using was Pickford's, the oldest and most famous transport provider to develop during this time. The rise of Pickford's had a strong correspondence with the rise of Manchester as both the manufacturing and distribution centre of the British textile industry. Lemire has demonstrated how the transport of textiles from Lancashire to London was especially important to the success of Pickford's, as London remained the largest market for Manchester goods during the eighteenth century.⁴⁹ Indeed, Clapp has demonstrated that Pickford's was the main carrier used by Owen Owens and Sons to transport its textiles to London customers.⁵⁰ The business was originally founded by Thomas Pickford in the seventeenth century. However, it was not until the eighteenth century that the firm began to prosper on a larger scale, mainly by operating fast fly coaches between Manchester and London. Consequently, Pickford's took root in Manchester to gain a foothold in the movement of textiles to the capital. This trade continued to strengthen throughout the eighteenth century so that by the time Langworthy was operating in the early nineteenth century, Pickford's was highly reliant on the momentum of the textile trade. Many other carrying firms followed Pickford's example and were competing for the traffic.⁵¹

Pickford's benefited from the economic resurgence following 1820 and the end of the post-war depression. Thereafter it increased its services dramatically. In 1819 Pickford introduced a van service between Manchester and Liverpool and a more direct service to London.⁵² The firm increased its reach to Sheffield, Chesterfield, Mansfield and Nottingham. All of these journeys had been turned into daily services by Pickford's by 1825.⁵³ By the 1830s the journey between Manchester and London had been shortened to just thirty-four hours.⁵⁴ There are notes used by the warehouse operatives, within the

⁴⁹ Lemire, *Fashions Favourite*, 124.

⁵⁰ Clapp, *John Owens*, 156.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 124.

⁵² Turnbull, "Pickford's 1750–1920", 176.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 176.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 177.

archive, showing that Pickford's was being used to transport cases of Langworthy's goods to London in order to meet the orders of firms like Ralli Brothers.⁵⁵ Langworthy was also using Pickford's to deliver and receive patterns and samples to and from its London customers and distributors (see Figure 48).

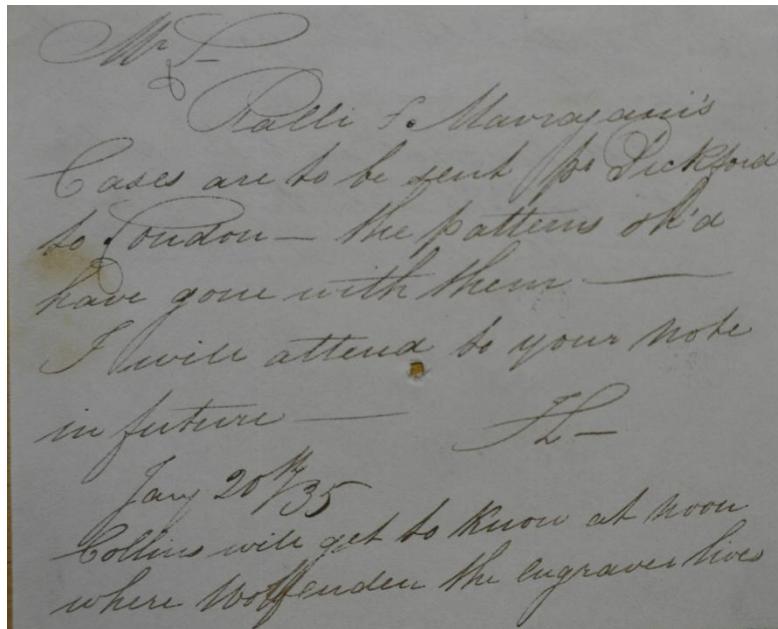


Figure 48: YA2013.25/2/1/5 Short note sent to George Langworthy from warehouse managers regarding cases of goods to be sent to London via Pickford's coach service, 20th January 1835.

Pickford's coach and van services developed timely schedules that could be relied upon by textile merchant firms. Pigot and Dean's directory of Manchester and Salford from 1822 shows that Pickford's caravans were offering daily services to London from its warehouse in St Peters Square, promising to make the run in thirty-six hours.⁵⁶ St Peters Square was less than a mile away from Langworthy's headquarters on Cannon Street and so the firm had one of the most convenient transport connections with London on its doorstep. This is similarly demonstrated in the case of Thomas Bache which Langworthy also used to send and receive goods from London.⁵⁷ Bache's warehouse was located in Castlefield, only a short cart journey from Langworthy's premises in Cannon Street. It is important to mention that carrier firms like Bache and Pickford's also operated canal boat services and so

⁵⁵ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Short note sent to George Langworthy from warehouse managers regarding cases of goods to be sent to London via Pickford's coach service, 20th January 1835.

⁵⁶ Pigot and Dean's Directory of Manchester and Salford, 1821–1822, 197.

⁵⁷ YA2013/3/1/4 Receipt from Thomas Bache for delivery of one case of goods from London for George Langworthy and Co., 31st December 1834.

Langworthy's goods with these firms may well have also found their way onto canals. Thomas Bache, for example, provided regular fly boats from the Castle Quay in Manchester to Liverpool and London.

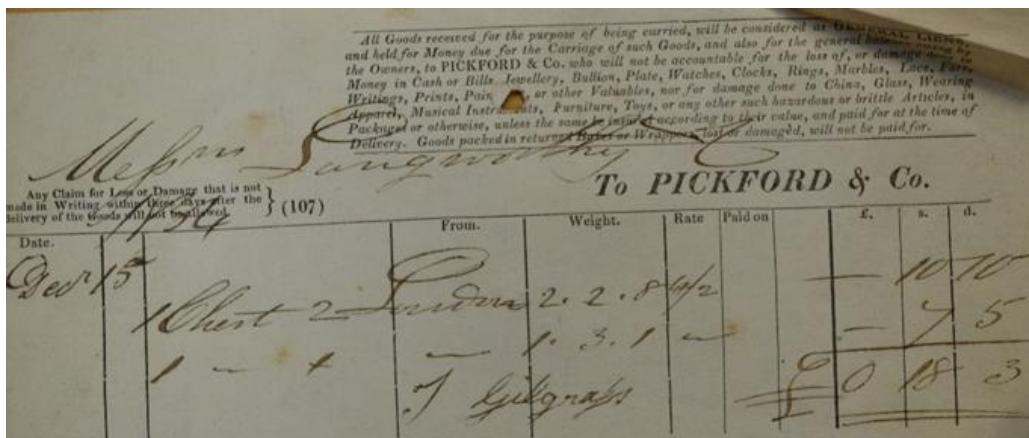


Figure 49: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Pickford & Co., 15th December 1834.

As well as sending goods, the Langworthy materials also show the significant role that coach services played in business communications. One note from 1834 shows that Langworthy was using coach services to forward parcels and messages to James Hartley Downham, one of its main business associates.

I am James Hartley Downham – who will call for it at the Brownlow Arms Coach Office. Of the premium of carriage as at foot we guarantee the safe delivery of the above parcel and its content to James Hartley.⁵⁸

Various coach terminals like the one at Brownlow, Liverpool, were key centre points of the fly coach network. Brownlow is close to the mouth of the River Mersey and less than a twenty-minute walk from the Liverpool docks. Consequently, in view of Langworthy's trade to Liverpool it is no surprise that this featured as a key location and a point of interest for Langworthy. By the time Langworthy was operating, the carrier service had developed alongside a sophisticated infrastructure network which required loading points and administrative centres. It was not uncommon for inns to undertake this role, especially when the network was in its infancy.⁵⁹ The road network's geographical flexibility in comparison to other forms of transport, and its coverage of more routes, were key advantages that were reflected in Langworthy's use of the coach service to deliver parcels to James Hartley on a regular basis. The note from February 1834 reveals how Langworthy uses the Brownlow Coach Office to make payments to Hartley.

⁵⁸ YA2013.25/1/6 Note detailing delivery by coach to James Hartley Downham, February 1834.

⁵⁹ Lemire, *Fashions Favourite*, 124.

In consideration of the premium and carriage as at foot, we guarantee that safe delivery of the above parcel and the contents of one hundred pounds to James Hartley personally or to his written order.⁶⁰

Langworthy also sent ninety pounds to Hartley via coach in October 1834.⁶¹ Seventy pounds was also sent via Brownlow in June 1834.⁶² The archival evidence therefore shows how road transport was important to textile exporters, not just for transportation of materials and goods, but also for communications and payments. Roads also had an advantage when it came to shorter journeys and the need to send parcels and mail across the city. Indeed, many of the short notes between Powell and Lowcock refer to coaches as the way the two were conveying information and materials to each other.⁶³ Maw has demonstrated how road transport's greater geographical flexibility and coverage were the reasons firms continued to use road carriers, despite road charges being generally higher than charges for both canal and railway.⁶⁴

Railways

Despite the continued importance of canals and road transport Langworthy was still receptive to the coming of the railway age. The opening of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway (L&MR) in 1830 was to have a significant impact on commerce and communications between Liverpool and Manchester and other towns in the north-west which were soon linked up to the railway following a series of extensions. Both canals and roads were the dominant movers of cotton during the 1830s. However, railways were catching up fast and would eventually take over by the 1850s.⁶⁵ Railways had already proven their effectiveness in carrying mineral traffic in the north-east of England during the eighteenth century and steam locomotives had been applied to pulling railway haulage during the early nineteenth century, for example on the Hetton Railway, which opened in 1822. It was most notably the Stockton and Darlington Railway, opened in 1825 to transport coal from west Durham to Stockton, which began to draw the attention of businessmen in the north-west to the advantages of such a scheme. However, most of the railways in the north-east of England were smaller wagonways, often horse-drawn, with the intention to move coal from inland collieries to sea ports. The scale of the L&MR far surpassed these earlier examples. It was the first railway to connect two cities and the first to regularly use steam locomotives for the whole length of the track. Furthermore, what made the L&MR different in its conception was the intention to move people and finished goods, as well as raw

⁶⁰ YA2013.25/3/1/4 Note regarding delivery of one hundred pounds to James Hartley Downham, 13th November 1834.

⁶¹ YA2013.25/3/1/4 Note regarding delivery of ninety pounds to Hartley Downham, 10th October 1834.

⁶² YA2013.25/3/1/4 Note regarding delivery of seventy pounds to Hartley Downham, 6th June 1834.

⁶³ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Note from Powell to Lowcock, 3rd February 1835.

⁶⁴ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 58.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 65.

materials, between the two towns. The railway was highly supported within business circles in Lancashire. John Moss, especially, one of Liverpool's most prominent bankers, was supportive of the scheme. However, the plan was originally conceived by William James, a leading land agent and coal owner.⁶⁶

In his work on the history of transport in Manchester, Maw has made the point that much of the literature on the use of the early railways tends to focus on their movement of coal and raw materials and he highlights how very few studies have discussed their importance in the movement of finished goods.⁶⁷ However, the receipts from the Langworthy archive shed some light on how merchant firms were using the railway to send cases and packages to the shipping firms in Liverpool. The L&MR started operating a general carrying business in December 1830.⁶⁸ Langworthy took advantage of its close proximity to the railway station on Liverpool Road in the Castlefield area of Manchester (see Figure 54). The railway was by far the fastest form of transport of its day and was cheaper than road haulage.⁶⁹ A canal boat would often take around seventeen hours to make the journey between Manchester and Liverpool; the railway, however, could make the journey in around two hours.⁷⁰ The evidence shows that the railway was being used to transport Langworthy's finished goods to Liverpool (Figure 50).

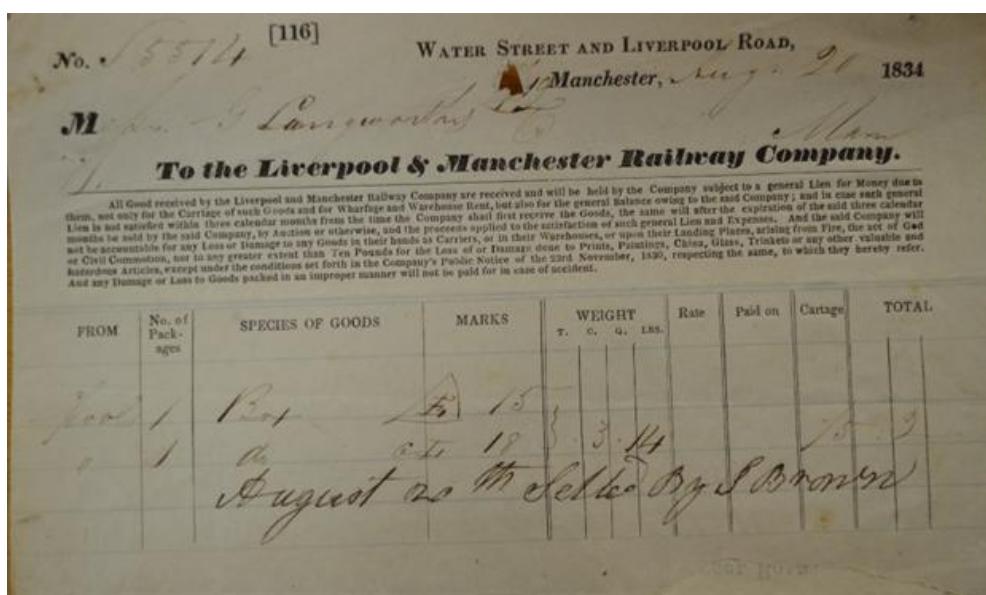


Figure 50: YA2013.25/3/1/4 Receipt, Liverpool and Manchester Railway, 20th August 1834.

⁶⁶ Thomas J. Donaghy, *Liverpool and Manchester Railway Operations 1831 to 1845* (Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1972), 12.

⁶⁷ Maw, *Transport and the Industrial City*, 2.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 104.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 84.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 84.

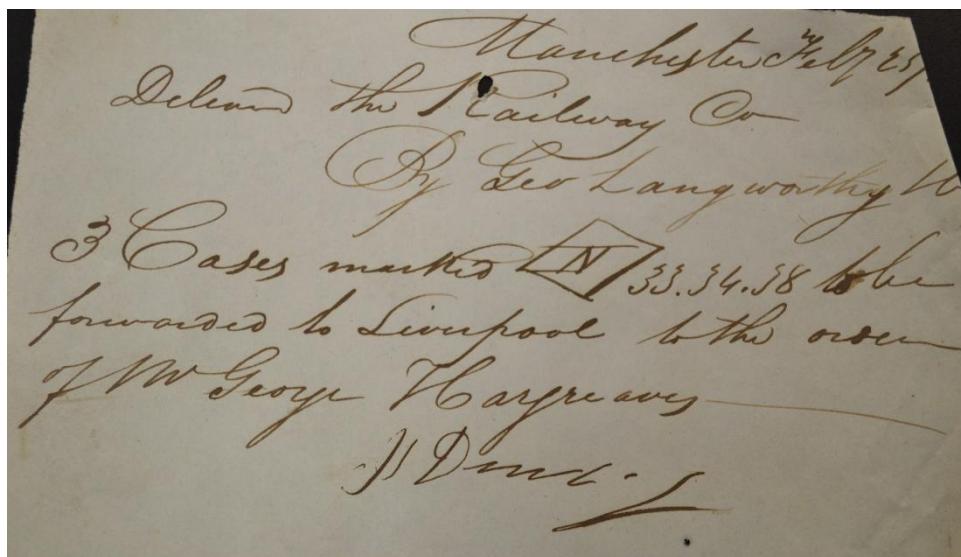


Figure 51: YA2013.25/2/2/5 Short note regarding delivery of three cases of Langworthy's goods by railway to the order of Mr George Hargreaves in Liverpool, Manchester, 25th February 1834.

The above receipt (Figure 51) shows that Langworthy sent three cases of goods to Liverpool via the railway in 1834.⁷¹ The goods were sent on the order of George Hargreaves, a Liverpool merchant and shipper who was a business associate and trader with Turner Brade & Co. Hargreaves regularly shipped printed cotton goods to Oporto and Bahia.⁷² The goods referred to in this railway receipt would probably have been passed onto either the Schwind business, Langworthy's main merchant partner in Brazil, or to Issac Newton, Langworthy's main connection with the market in Portugal (see Figure 52 below).

This evidence shows that the railway was being used for the export of Langworthy's printed cottons overseas and once again, just as with the carriage notes and receipts, we can speculate that Langworthy used the railway often for this purpose. Just the day before this receipt (Figure 51) was sent there was a near identical note on the 24th February 1834 showing that Langworthy had sent eight cases of goods by train.⁷³ There were also two cases sent on the 22nd of that month.⁷⁴ By the end of 1834, there are more warehouse notes that show that Langworthy was continuing to send goods to Liverpool on the railway, one being for goods destined for the Liverpool firm, Charles Taylor & Co., which was sending Langworthy's goods to Mexico and Argentina.⁷⁵

⁷¹ YA2013.25/2/2/5 Short note regarding delivery by railway, Manchester, 25th February 1834.

⁷² Hargreaves and Schwind Legal Case, *The Manchester Guardian*, 30th August 1837.

⁷³ YA2013.25/2/2/5 Short note regarding delivery by railway, Manchester, 24th February 1835.

⁷⁴ YA2013.25/2/2/5 Short note regarding delivery by railway, Manchester, 22nd February 1834.

⁷⁵ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Note sent to Langworthy's warehouse regarding £40 worth of drills to be sent to Liverpool via the Railway for the firm Charles Taylor and Co., 23rd December 1834.

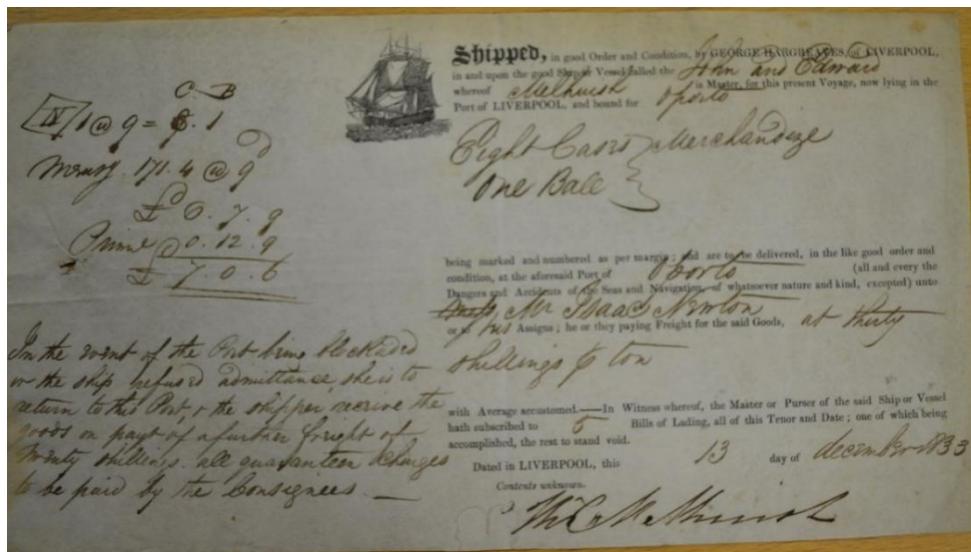


Figure 52: YA2013.25/2/2/6 Bill of lading for bale of goods shipped from Liverpool by George Hargreaves and destined for Issac Newton in Oporto, 13th December 1833.

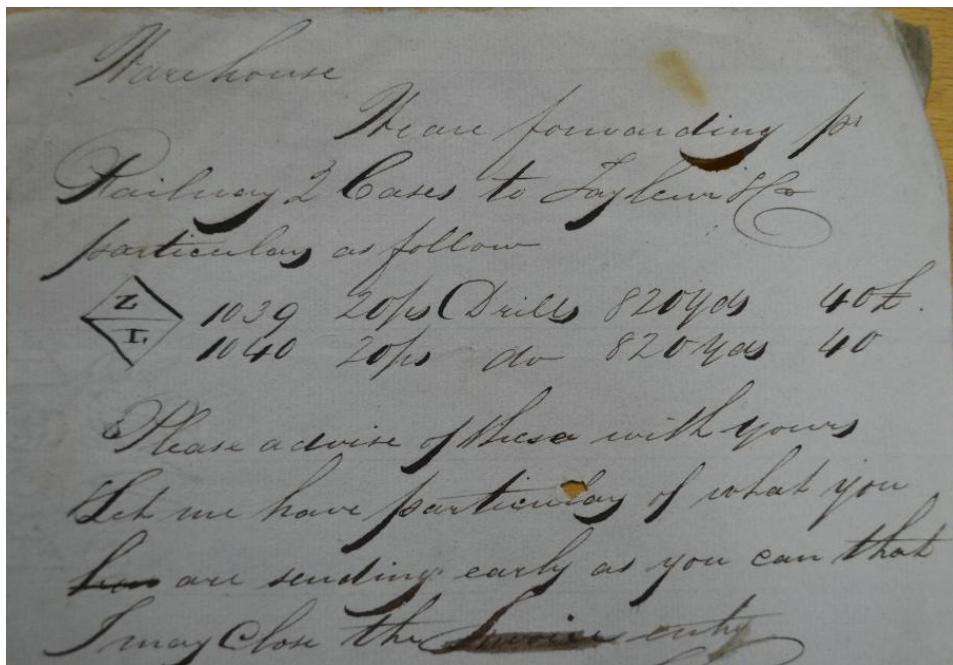


Figure 53: YA2013.25/2/1/5 Note sent to Langworthy's warehouse regarding £40 worth of cotton drills to be sent to Liverpool via the railway for the firm Charles Taylor & Co., 23rd December 1834.

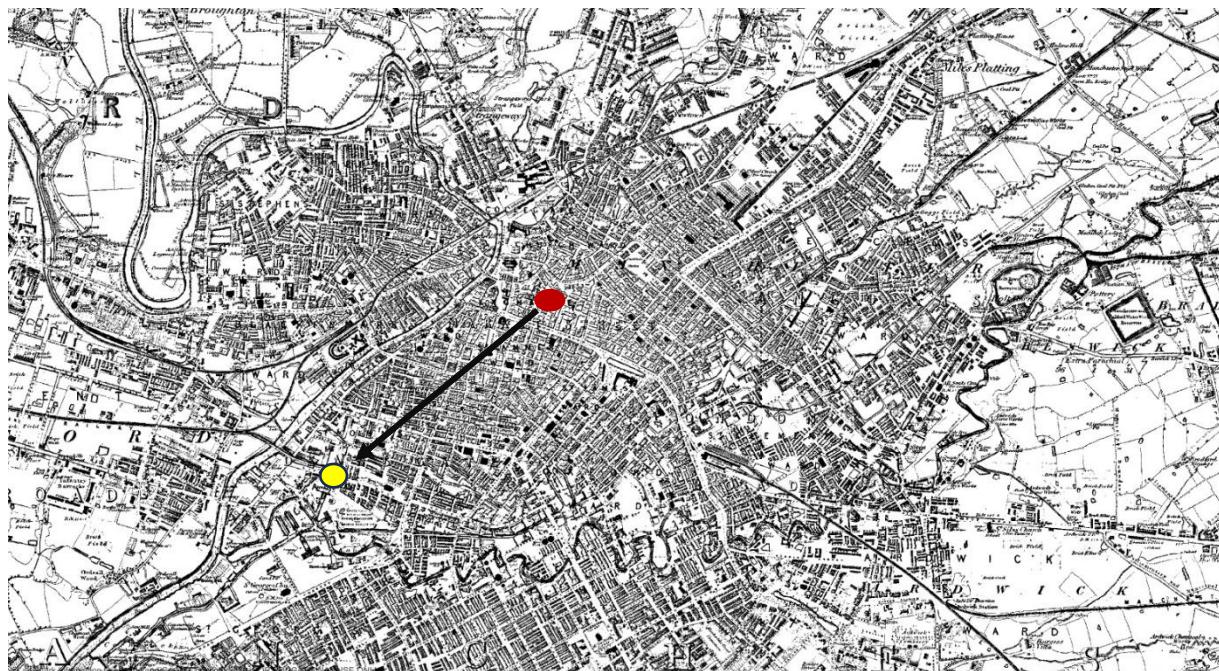


Figure 54: Location of Liverpool Road Station in relation to Langworthy's headquarters on Cannon Street on an 1840 map of Manchester - around a twenty-minute walk between each location. The yellow circle represents Liverpool Road, the red circle represents Cannon Street.

The movement of freight by railway during the 1830s had advantages but also some disadvantages. Sending goods by train was still relatively expensive by comparison to other transport methods, but from the start the L&MR made efforts to compete with other firms involved in the carrying business.⁷⁶ However, these efforts were limited as the railway was unique in comparison to its predecessors in that its main business priority was passenger traffic. Because of the superior profitability of passenger traffic, freight trains were to give right of way to passenger trains. Furthermore, there were no set times or standard services for freight traffic which was just one of many of the disadvantages of using the railway in comparison to other carriers.⁷⁷ During this period sending goods by train also carried its risks. The railway had problems with fires caused by sparks and embers from the engine's chimney setting light to the goods on its coaches. Thomas J. Donaghy reveals the case in 1833 when some wagons of cotton caught fire.

*In 1833, three wagons of cotton caught fire on Chat Moss, and considerable damage was done to the cotton and the wagons. It was found that in this case that ashes dropped along the way by the locomotive were propelled upward by the wheels of the various wagons and thus caused the fire.*⁷⁸

⁷⁶ Donaghy, *Liverpool and Manchester Railway Operations*, 104.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 105.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 106.

He also reveals that the majority of the compensatory fire damages that were paid by the railway were sent to merchants whose goods had been damaged on the journey.⁷⁹ Railways held other disadvantages, for example railway companies owned a smaller share of the warehousing premises in Manchester in comparison to the canal companies.⁸⁰ This meant it was difficult to store goods and partially explains why Langworthy was still using canals, as reflected in its use of the Severn Warehouse. Canals were still slightly cheaper for the journey between Manchester and Liverpool and canal boats could also distribute packages of finished goods directly onto sea vessels on the coast.⁸¹ This saved on storage costs. This further explains why railways did not completely take over before 1850, even for the trade with Liverpool. The early 1830s was a period of trial and error for the L&MR and the railway was constantly trying to improve its services in order to compete with the other carrier firms in Manchester.⁸²

Despite these various disadvantages, Langworthy still found it fruitful to use the railway for some of its operations. Later evidence after the 1830s shows that as railways grew, they became more and more important to Langworthy's business operations. On one occasion Langworthy received a letter from the Southampton Railway Office. Southampton also served as an important port for Langworthy for the import of raw materials on its account, as well as exporting. Langworthy, like many merchant firms, also went on to own shares in railways.⁸³ Later evidence from newspaper reports shows that Langworthy signed petitions for new railways to be built that could help connect its trade. For example, both James Deacon & Co., one of Langworthy's main London trading partners, and Langworthy Brothers & Co., signed a petition during the 1840s at the height of the 'railway mania' for a direct railway line between London and Manchester. As Deacon was a London-based firm and Langworthy was located in Manchester, both close trading partners, the fact that both firms signed the same petition was not coincidental and clearly the railway was seen as a way of strengthening their trade. Other businesses with links to Langworthy also signed the petition, including John Munn & Co.⁸⁴ The newspaper report on the reasons for the meeting of the merchants to discuss the possibility of the line reads as follows:

At a meeting held this day of some of the most influential parties who had signed the preceding document, it was resolved to form a provincial committee of gentlemen resident in London and Manchester, and on the intended line and that the requisite steps should be taken for that purpose and that in the meantime the preceding document should be advertised. Experience has

⁷⁹ Ibid., 108.

⁸⁰ Maw, *Transport and The Industrial City*, 90.

⁸¹ Ibid., 90.

⁸² Donaghy, *Liverpool and Manchester Railway Operations*, 104.

⁸³ YA2013.25/2/1/4 Letter from H. Martin to Langworthy, Southampton Railway Office, Saturday 5th, month and year unknown.

⁸⁴ Petition for direct line between London and Manchester, *The Manchester Guardian*, 18th June 1845.

*shown, as to railways that the interest of the public and the interest of the proprietors are the same. That the lowest fares for passengers, and charges for goods, and the quickest journeys are advantageous for both.*⁸⁵

The relevance of railways to Langworthy's national commercial interests is further reflected in the shares that the firm's members owned in other railway building projects around the country. In 1837 a parliamentary report indicates that George Langworthy owned £500 worth of shares in the Portsmouth Junction Railway Project, and that Edward Langworthy also owned £1,000 worth of shares in the same railway.⁸⁶ Firms like Owens followed a similar business strategy and John Owens invested most of his free capital in railways.⁸⁷ Hence railways continued to benefit Langworthy's activities even after the initial opening of the L&MR in 1830, and the firm actively partook in the 'railway mania'.

The various branch lines and extensions from the L&MR during the 1830s also played a part in Langworthy's own tertiary business operations. Sending post and the speeding up of these communications was a key part of this. There are letters in the archive that were sent to Langworthy via local railways during the 1830s. One letter was sent to the firm from Wigan in 1833, the same year that an extension line was built to join the town to the main L&MR line. The contents of the letter regard a building project and the railway is specifically mentioned in the letter.⁸⁸ The Wigan branch line began its operations in 1832 and by 1834 it was running a lot of traffic in both freight and parcels.⁸⁹ The L&MR company supplied the locomotives and wagons for freight traffic between Manchester and Wigan.⁹⁰ Wigan was an important industrial town with key contacts located there for Langworthy. This included businessmen such as Thomas Fray who manufactured checks for Langworthy. The branch line to Wigan had been built mainly to connect the coalfields around Wigan to the main line from Liverpool to Manchester; however, for Langworthy it was Fray that was an especially important contact. The Fray business would eventually go bankrupt in November 1851.⁹¹ During the 1830s the line came under the ownership of the North Union Railway, an amalgamation of the Wigan Branch Railway and the Preston and Wigan Railway.

For Langworthy, the usefulness of the branch line to Wigan is reflected in the letters sent to the company from Fray himself. In one piece of correspondence in 1833 Fray makes direct references to the railway as it was being used to transport both goods and money between the two businesses. He

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Railway Subscription Contracts, Deposited in Private Bill Office, House of Commons Papers, 7th March 1837, 46.

⁸⁷ Clapp, *John Owens*, 156.

⁸⁸ YA2013.25/2/1/7 Letter sent to Langworthy from Alex Martin, Wigan, 16th September 1833.

⁸⁹ Donaghy, *Liverpool and Manchester Railway Operations*, 151.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 151.

⁹¹ Report of Bankruptcy of Thomas Fray, Check Manufacturer and Dealers, *The London Gazette*, 4th March 1852, 790.

even goes as far as to send Langworthy some information about the best prices for trains along with a timetable. He stated that, "I have sent you six pieces of stripes and a list of railway prices of carriage." George was also using the railway to travel from Manchester to Wigan to visit Fray and meet him in person. In anticipation for one encounter, Fray informed George that there would be an extra first-class train departing from Manchester at 10 am that would arrive in Wigan at 11.30am.⁹² There are other letters that show that other business associates from Wigan were using the new line to travel into Manchester and meet representatives of Langworthy in person. This included an A.W. Martin who was working on a pump that could be used in Langworthy's manufacturing operations, who referred to his intended journey into Manchester on a Saturday by train.⁹³

The use of the Wigan line in Langworthy's business interests is a further reflection of how as soon as railways developed, textile firms in Manchester immediately began to use them. While these branches became increasingly important for Langworthy as the 1830s progressed, Liverpool remained the main place for which the firm utilised railway transport. Numerous letters sent between Langworthy and Liverpool shipping firms show that communications between them were speedy. There are instances where a shipper informs Langworthy of a vessel that is disembarking from the port the following day and implores Langworthy to send goods to Liverpool as soon as possible to make the voyage. Langworthy was able to respond to these calls relatively quickly, for example answering messages that very same day. It is difficult to conceive of how this would have been possible without the speed of the railway. Indeed, the locomotives at the time often travelled at speeds of 18 to 25 miles per hour and could complete the journey in just over two hours.⁹⁴ This allowed Manchester firms to respond to markets effectively and create a quick turnaround when sending new consignments abroad. The firm Owen Owens and Sons also used the railway to keep pace with the tight deadlines of shipping. Clapp has revealed how, for Owens, the railway was seen as an emergency back-up option, "if goods were in danger of being shut out of a vessel".⁹⁵ In overseas markets where timing was essential for supplying variable demand and avoiding competition, the railway's speed was a major asset to Manchester's textile exporters.

⁹² YA2013.25/2/1/4 Letter from Thomas Fray, Wigan, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 28th October 1833.

⁹³ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from A. W. Martin, Wigan, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 22nd April 1835.

⁹⁴ John Duncan, "Early Steam Railways in Great Britain", *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society* 12, (1926): 22.

⁹⁵ Clapp, *John Owens*, 155.

Shipping

While the British textile trade during the 1830s was characterised by an expansion and improvement in land transport, a similar transformation was taking place at sea.⁹⁶ There was an increase in the number of ships available for textile exporters and a greater frequency of ship voyages with more regular and standardised departures.⁹⁷ Ronald Hope sees this as partially stemming from less regulation from government.⁹⁸ The period also witnessed improvements in ship design as well as an increase in the number of private ship owners. There were also improvements in the speed of sailing ships and then towards the end of this period early ocean steamers. By about 1830 there had already been steamboat services established between Glasgow, Whitehaven and Liverpool.⁹⁹ Langworthy, with its close merchant connections with Glasgow, also benefited from the fast boats from Greenock, which are often referred to in the letters with Alexander Johnston & Co.¹⁰⁰ Langworthy regularly undertook joint ventures and shipped its goods alongside Glasgow firms such as Johnston & Co., which partially stemmed from the expertise in shipping in Glasgow.¹⁰¹ Ships departing from Greenock would often sail to Liverpool and pick up Langworthy's batches of textiles before departing overseas. Glasgow-based shippers would provide the Manchester firm with plenty of notice of when vessels were departing from Scotland, which gave Langworthy time to send consignments to Liverpool.¹⁰² Langworthy also relied on specific shipping firms in Liverpool and therefore the same ships were repeatedly used in the textile trade to Rio de Janeiro. Ships such as the *Maria*, *Mary Bibby*, *Lady Cornwallis* and *Helvellyn* were regularly mentioned. Ships like the *Mary Bibby* were part of the Bibby line of shipowners, which was founded in 1807 by John Bibby in Liverpool. The *Mary Bibby* was well known for operating journeys to South America from the early 1820s and through to the 1830s and this is why the ship's name appears regularly in Langworthy's correspondence.¹⁰³

⁹⁶ Ronald Hope, *A New History of British Shipping* (London: John Murray, 1990), 255.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 284.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 280.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 276.

¹⁰⁰ Greenock was home to the *Comet*, one of the earliest paddle steamers to be built. Its engines are now displayed at the Science Museum in London. There are references by Liverpool shipping firms to a ship called the *Comet*. This was being used to ship Langworthy's textiles to New Orleans. This undoubtedly refers to a later ship as the famous vessel, built in 1812, had ended its days at sea by 1820.

¹⁰¹ YA2013.25/2/1/7 Letter from W.B. Carter, Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 21st May 1835.

¹⁰² YA2013.25/2/1/7 Letter from Alexander Johnston and Co., Glasgow, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 28th September 1833.

¹⁰³ B/BIBBY, 1812–1890, Merseyside Maritime Museum Archival Guide.

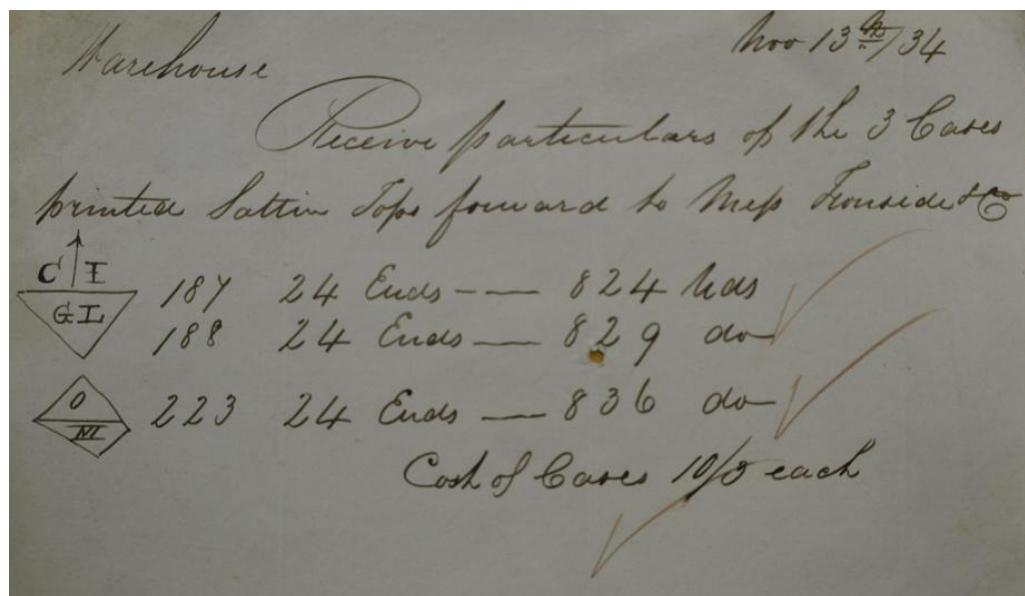


Figure 55: YA2013.25/2/1/5 Warehouse note with shipping marks ensuring Langworthy's goods were sent to Charles Ironside & Co., 13th November 1834.

In addition to technological improvements, shipping services also improved. Llorca-Jana has shown how merchants that did not invest in their own fleet during this period could "use the first ready to sail ship which gave them greater frequency than those restricted to their own vessels".¹⁰⁴ Shipments could be made regularly to a much greater variety of markets than before because of the growing number of specialist shipping providers. This also gave firms greater flexibility in relation to changing market conditions.¹⁰⁵ Markings were used within the notes sent between Langworthy's warehouse and works signifying which goods were to be sent to which specific shipping firms. The above note (Figure 55) provides an example of printed satins which were to be sent to Charles Ironside & Co. Langworthy used triangular markings to control the direction of consignments to different shipping firms and to alternative markets.

One of the risks associated with shipping that had not been eradicated despite the improvements in technology and services was the risk of sinking and other disasters, which was a constant danger (see Appendix D). There were occasions when Langworthy lost money because of such events, for example when the *Oceano* sunk, a ship which had sailed out of Liverpool to transport textiles to New Orleans. The sinking lost the firm five bales of goods. On a separate occasion a ship called *William the Fourth* was wrecked when taking a consignment of Langworthy's goods to Valparaiso in the Pacific market.¹⁰⁶ Other Manchester merchants experienced similar issues. A letter sent to the Fielden Brothers in 1830,

¹⁰⁴ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 77.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 77.

¹⁰⁶ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Baring Brothers to Langworthy, Liverpool, 17th July 1835.

sent by its overseas agent James Hodgson based in Buenos Aires, reflects the always present dangers that those in the merchanting business faced. The letter informs Fieldens of a very near disastrous collision that took place when the vessel Hodgson was sailing on crashed into the banks of the River Plate. Hodgson informs Fieldens:

*We arrived here last Monday and with a sincerely grateful heart, I say, thank God, for it! As on entering the river we struck the English Bank and were in imminent danger of perishing, by the greatest of exertions of sounding in all directions and throwing overboard our freshwater provisions and ammunition we got off again without the vessel being apparently, in the least injured. I made up my mind for the worst.*¹⁰⁷

This incident reflects the extreme risks and dangers for those involved in the shipping industry, as well as the possibility of losing goods because of disasters at sea.

It was also the case that when a ship was wrecked quite often some of the surviving goods would be salvaged and then sold at auction. An advertisement found in the Langworthy archive shows an example of goods that had been rescued from the shipwreck of the *Fair Helen*, which had been wrecked on its way to Brazil. The advert states that the goods would be sold to the highest bidder from the back of a shed in Jacksons Lane and that those interested in attending should apply to W.M. Hudson, a Liverpool broker. The goods that had been saved included 100 jaconets, salampores, 100 12-yard cambrics, 45 drab linen drills, 50 neutral prints and 35 shirtings.¹⁰⁸ Auctions such as these attracted large parties of buyers and reflect the high value of textiles. Great lengths were made to ensure that no product went to waste. Markets like Brazil took mainly finished goods and these textiles would have been the product of much work in Manchester.

One strategy that merchants like Langworthy used to mitigate these risks was to ensure it placed its exports in the hands of the best ships and most competent crews. This involved following the advice of the overseas agents and their intermediate partners in Liverpool. In the correspondence between James Hodgson and Owens, Hodgson gives stern advice and implores Owens of the necessity of selecting the best vessels to transport the goods as fast as possible, manned by captains experienced in the Buenos Aires trade. As well as sinkings and shipwrecks, goods could often be damaged on the crossing by mildew and seawater. This was a problem that was to plague Langworthy's consignments to Brazil throughout its commitment to sending goods to Schwind Brade and later Durham Price & Co. Many of the transactions between Schwind Brade and George Langworthy reveal how Brade had been forced to sell Langworthy's cottons at auction for a much lower price than it otherwise would have done because of damage to the goods on the overseas crossing from Liverpool. To combat the

¹⁰⁷ FDN.1/1/5 Letter from James Hodgson in Buenos Aires to Fielden Brothers Manchester, 5th November 1830.

¹⁰⁸ YA2013.25/2/2/5 Auction advertisement for goods saved from the *Fair Helen*, to be sold to the highest bidder, in a shed in Jacksons Lane, Union Street, Manchester, 17th February 1834.

problems of mildew and other forms of deterioration, merchants often ensured goods were wrapped in oil cloth and stored in safe and dry parts of the vessels. In one instance Langworthy's agents in Brazil, Schwind Brade & Co., complained that its goods had been placed too near the bottom of the ship where it was damp. Brade insisted that had the goods been stored higher up near the hatch then these would have sold well.¹⁰⁹

Marine Insurance

The other safety measure was insurance which was the main way merchants could cover their losses. Marine insurers like Baring Brothers were significant in encouraging merchants to trade abroad despite the risks, and this gave Langworthy the confidence to export to distant destinations. The expansion of British trade during the early nineteenth century led to a greater number of firms entering the marine insurance business and an end to the old monopoly held by Lloyds.¹¹⁰ Until these developments, Lloyds had been by far the most significant marine insurer and by 1810 possessed at least 1,400 subscribers and underwriters.¹¹¹ Hope has argued that without the development of marine insurance British shipping would not have been able to increase in tonnage as it did during the early 1800s.¹¹² The insurance of shipments was a key factor making shipping risks acceptable to merchants. This was often provided by the larger merchant banks located in London. The merchant bank Frederick Huth was highly involved in the marine insurance business before it took to merchant banking, and this was a function it still performed during the 1830s (see Chapter 4). Towards the end of 1835 Huth was insuring Langworthy's shipments of goods to the United States and the port of New Orleans. America at this time was still the biggest market for British textiles. After 1825 it is reputed that merchant banks were providing around 80% of the finance for Britain's exports to the United States.¹¹³ Chapman shows that this period was marked by large North American houses buying from warehouses in Manchester that were financed by merchant banks in London.¹¹⁴ With the exception of Llorca-Jana's work on South America, the focus on these North American houses has somewhat overshadowed the companies that funded operations to South America such as Huth.

Huth did, on the other hand, insure some ventures to North America, particularly to New Orleans. New Orleans had by this time become part of the cotton triangle after the purchase of Louisiana from

¹⁰⁹ YA2013.25/2/2/1 Letter from Schwind Brade and Co. and Carter J. Weetman, Rio de Janeiro, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 11th January 1832.

¹¹⁰ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 78.

¹¹¹ Hope, *New History of British Shipping*, 255.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, 256.

¹¹³ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 69.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 69.

France in 1803.¹¹⁵ Raw cotton cultivated by enslaved people on the plantations was exported from the port and taken to Liverpool. Huth was mainly interested in trading manufactured goods for raw produce, and it is likely that Langworthy's goods would have been traded for cotton grown in Louisiana. Because of the port's importance, New Orleans, like Manchester, became a major merchant entrepôt which eventually developed its own commercial community and formal rules. Its merchants were anxious that only American ships should be used in the export trade. Shipwrecks and sinkings were a common problem. In one instance in October 1835 Huth revealed to Langworthy that it had been unable to insure a shipment to New Orleans on account of the vessel not being found in any of the registers and that because the New Orleans companies stated that during quieter times the vessel must be American and not British-built.¹¹⁶ Huth then informed Langworthy that it would consequently suspend the insurance until Langworthy secured an appropriate vessel.

We have deemed it best to suspend any further attempt to make the insurance until we are prepared to address or deny the supposition but have been formed regaining the vessel and we address you principally to request that you will obtain all the information from Liverpool. We shall consequently expect this to be forwarded with your reply on Monday morning when we shall be guided by its contents in closing this matter to the best of your interests.¹¹⁷

Along with the contention surrounding the appropriateness of the vessel, Huth was anxious that there had been no warranty against the vessel loading salt which was common for ships going to New Orleans.

Eventually, Huth managed to persuade the insurers and underwriters to insure the ship known as the *Oleanna*. Because the vessel was unregistered and unfamiliar to most of the connected parties, Huth was not able to cover the risk under the same conditions as before and was forced to pay a great deal more for the insurance. Huth's disappointment was obvious by its requesting Langworthy to only use ships provided by Liverpool agents or else to send an envoy that could satisfy the underwriters about the suitability of the vessel.¹¹⁸ Liverpool had evolved over time to meet the requirements of the export trade in textiles and it was essential for firms involved in the export trade to form close links with the specialist shipping agents there.

Frederick Huth & Co. was not the only merchant bank that was protecting Langworthy' shipments. Langworthy was able to harness the benefits of the first era of globalisation in trade because of the support it received from global firms like Huth and Barings, which were able to provide insurance. For

¹¹⁵ Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry*, 58.

¹¹⁶ YA2013.25/2/2 Letter from Fredrick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 1st October 1835.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

¹¹⁸ YA2013.25/2/1/3 Letter from Fredrick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 5th October 1835.

example, the firm employed the services of Baring Brothers, probably the oldest British merchant bank.¹¹⁹ On the 17th July 1835, Barings informed Langworthy that the ship, the *William the Fourth*, which contained fifteen cases of Langworthy's goods destined for Messrs Alsop & Co. in Valparaiso, had been wrecked. Later that year Barings informed Langworthy that £170 worth of goods from the fifteen packages had been salvaged from the ship.¹²⁰ Merchant banks like Huth and Barings were hugely influential in the insurance business, and it was these powerful firms with their large capital assets that were instrumental in providing secure trading conditions for northern traders.

Often Huth would enact the insurance themselves. However, the correspondence shows that it sometimes used the London Assurance Company (LAC) to insure Langworthy's sea journeys.

*We are in receipt of your esteemed letters of the 5th and 12th instant and now beg to inform you that we have effected insurance at the London Assurance Company on your goods for Lady Cornwall.*¹²¹

The LAC was founded in 1720. Llorca-Jana has shown how both the LAC and Lloyds held a largely unchallenged monopoly on marine insurance up until 1824 when Nathan Rothschild managed to repeal the monopoly and reintroduce competition into the insurance business.¹²² After this period more companies entered the insurance trade and Huth was one of the few firms which was able to effect insurance to Latin American markets.¹²³

Conclusion

The ability of Manchester's textile merchants to export finished textiles during the 1830s is partly explained by the sophisticated development of competitive transport suppliers in Manchester and Liverpool during the early nineteenth century, which provided reliable services both on land and at sea. All three modes of land transport – canals, roads and rail – were utilised by Manchester's textile merchants to transport goods and for communications. Langworthy's rise to prominence took place within this transformative transportation context, which was important in widening the markets available for Manchester goods. This included faster and more efficient connections with Liverpool but also the other commercial hubs in Britain such as London. Just as significant as the developments in transport technology were the types of carrying firms that operated these services, and textile exporters were able to take advantage of these specialist carrying firms which were located close by

¹¹⁹ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Baring Brothers, Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester 17th July 1835.

¹²⁰ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Baring Brothers, Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th December 1835.

¹²¹ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, 18th December 1835.

¹²² Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 79.

¹²³ Ibid., 79.

in Manchester. The carrier firms of this period competed with each other to provide regular and reliable services, and textile firms like Langworthy were well placed to take advantage of this in the pursuit of textile exports.

Langworthy's choices regarding which modes of land transport operators to use supports Maw's hypothesis that more traditional forms of transport like roads and canals continued to play a dominant role in the 1830s, despite the railway developments that characterised the decade. The speed of the Liverpool and Manchester Railway did play an important role in conveying finished goods to Liverpool, for the export market, and was especially valued by textile exporters because it accelerated communications with Liverpool shipping firms. However, roads still provided more flexibility when it came to running errands over short distances or delivering goods and post to multiple locations around Britain. Though the railway proved to be effective for Langworthy, it was not a substitute for roads and canals, which continued to be important in merchant operations. Langworthy also took advantage of the storage facilities of the carrier firms that could store goods in their own warehouses before they were ultimately moved on. Canal warehouses operated by local carriers were highly crucial in the storage and onward moving of finished textiles produced by Manchester textile firms. This was accompanied by improvements in shipping and more regular shipping services from Liverpool. This allowed Langworthy to gain access to a greater variety of markets and maintain regular consignments. This also included improved storage and packaging procedures, ensuring goods were protected on the crossing. Combined with the role of insurance, this meant goods could be transported to more locations faster and with less risk.

Chapter 4: Manchester Merchants and the First Merchant Banks: The Case of Langworthy Brothers & Co. and Frederick Huth & Co., 1831 to 1839

With a view to encourage Mr Langworthy's shipments as much as possible we have been very liberal in our advances to him, having authorised him to draw for £1200 on account of goods amounting to £1550 cost price, which on an article like prints is more than we can well justify in general principles. We should therefore not wish the advance to be known to other friends as it must on no account serve as a precedent.

From a letter send by Frederick Huth & Co. to H.H. Stansfield, 20th January 1834, Huth/A-UCL, Volume 13.

This chapter reveals how the merchant bank, Frederick Huth & Co., played a key role in opening up overseas markets for Langworthy Brothers & Co., increasing its export potential and reducing risk by offering it more secure trading. The above extract from a letter Huth sent to its main textile agent in the north of England, Hatton Hammer Stansfield, demonstrates the high esteem in which Frederick Huth & Co. held Langworthy, and its trust in the manufacturer-trader. Huth offered Langworthy preferential treatment when allowing the Manchester firm to trade on its account and increase its exports. Huth granted Langworthy certain privileges when it came to their trading relationship, especially in relation to the amount of capital it advanced. Langworthy and Huth's trading relationship reveals a distinct story of how a London merchant bank propelled a northern textile manufacturer-trader into the international trading scene. Huth's vast network of overseas contacts, high volumes of capital and market knowledge allowed Langworthy to undertake larger consignments, increase its exports and access more markets. Furthermore, it offered the firm more secure and reliable trading. Their relationship helps us to understand the importance of business networks and specific merchant roles to the globalisation of Manchester's textiles during this period. These types of business networks were integral to providing the stability and confidence for businesses in the emerging British economy. It especially displays the importance of merchant banks in opening up markets to Manchester's textile exporters.

More generally, this link between London merchant banks, like Huth, and northern traders, like Langworthy, provides a different picture to that provided by scholars in explaining how the British textile industry succeeded in the early decades of the nineteenth century. It shows that it was the business relationships between different firms that existed outside formal trade associations which made the difference for expanding the quantity of goods exchanged and diversifying directions of trade to multiple locations. These networks often transcended the confines of different states and empires and were regularly built on mutual contacts, trust and reputation. These business

relationships are frequently overlooked within the literature, as is the role of the informal networks of traders that often operated in markets where Britain held no monopoly. Instead, scholars have tended to focus on the formal trade associations or other commercial business confederations that helped to bolster the British textile trade. Arthur Redford has highlighted the importance of these formal associational institutions in removing protective duties that were an obstacle to Manchester's business community and in promoting the cause of free trade.¹ More recently Ashworth has stressed the power of the British state as a major determinant, in that state-sponsored policies protected British traders and "framed the evolution of British industry".² However, these factors were only part of the story. Many trading relationships were forged outside these formal institutions and often transcended the confines of the state. This is perhaps most evident in the power and influence of the merchant banks that propelled British textile traders into the global trading scene during the early nineteenth century. By exploring the specific business relationships between merchant banks and northern textile merchants and manufacturers, we can shed light on the contribution of these business relationships and the more informal networks of merchants to the success of the British textile trade. Langworthy Brothers & Co.'s link with the merchant bank Frederick Huth & Co. is a strong example of this.

This chapter begins by noting the significance of merchant banking in the commercial history of Britain and placing it in historiographical context. It then explores the circumstances that led to the business relationship between Langworthy and Frederick Huth & Co. The central part of the analysis considers the subsequent association between Huth and Langworthy and how it increased the success of Langworthy's export operations. It traces the history of Langworthy and Huth's joint operations in the Pacific and the Gulf of Mexico as well as the dynamic of the working relationship. This case study enables us to reflect more broadly on the contribution of merchant banking to the Lancashire textile trade, and how merchant banking helped to globalise British textiles. As with previous chapters, this analysis of Huth and Langworthy's relationship continues to note the impact of slavery in line with our greater understanding, from recent literature, on the slave trade's important role in the textile trade. Finally, the chapter considers the more general significance of these types of business networks, via a network analysis. In this case it examines how the Langworthy–Huth dynamic generated other relationships or associates which it brought into Langworthy's circle, associates that Langworthy would previously have been unlikely to connect with. Business relationships such as this, existing outside the formal trade associations, institutions or exchanges, played a significant role in building

¹ Arthur Redford, *Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, Vol. 2 1850–1939*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956), 5.

² Ashworth, *The Industrial Revolution*, 1.

the commercial networks that drove the expansion of the British textile trade and the success of the firms that spearheaded it. In other words, this is the “strength of weak ties”: one tie can inadvertently lead to other ties, and some might develop to be significant and stronger connections.³ While the relationship with Huth developed into a “strong tie”, its example demonstrates how the networking process took place within wider merchant circles.

Historiographical Context of Merchant Banking

To determine where this analysis of Huth and Langworthy’s relationship fits in the literature we must first look at studies about merchant banking in relation to the British textile trade. Chapman’s significant 1992 study of British merchant enterprise during the nineteenth century remains the foremost work on British merchanting and places great emphasis on the significant role merchant banks played in promoting British exports.⁴ Manchester, which had originally been devoid of a sophisticated merchanting structure at the beginning of the century, was by the 1830s exporting to many more markets throughout the world in a more efficient manner. Manchester and Liverpool had already been fostering strong merchant links with the United States and the West Indies during the later part of the eighteenth century. However, merchant ties with Latin American markets on the west coast were limited. The large merchant banks like Huth helped to address this problem. The other big players to come to the aid of the northern manufacturing scene at this time included Rothschild and Brown Shipley & Co.⁵

Much of Chapman’s work, however, is centred on Anglo-American merchant banks and the trade to North America. Furthermore, scholars who have looked at the specific impact of merchant banks on Manchester’s textile merchants have also been mainly interested in exports to North America.⁶ Because of this, more attention has been paid to the American houses that undertook this trade, such as Shipley & Co., and, with the exception of Llorca-Jana’s work, less towards the merchant banks and textile merchants that exported to Latin America.⁷ Llorca-Jana’s study of Frederick Huth & Co., while important in revealing the history of the merchant bank, did not provide much clarity on specific examples of Huth having worked with northern firms in the Lancashire textile industry. As a result, this example, based on the Langworthy archive, of a textile merchant using the services of a merchant bank to penetrate Latin American markets, helps to fill this gap within the literature.

³ Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”.

⁴ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 69.

⁵ Chapman, “The Commercial Sector”, 75.

⁶ Maw, “Anglo-American Trade during the Industrial Revolution”.

⁷ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*.

The Huth–Langworthy relationship as a case study illustrates and enriches, in detail, the broader observations of Chapman on the rise of merchant banks in the City of London during the post-Napoleonic War period and provides more insights into the significance of such relationships for opening up more markets to British northern textile merchants and manufacturers.⁸ Merchant banks aided the textile trade by financing merchant ventures through their overseas accepting houses. Chapman highlighted these merchants as a major force in commerce during this time on account of their “large capital linked with intimate knowledge of foreign markets.”⁹ The relationship between Langworthy and Huth also demonstrates how important familiar business networks were to merchant success and the role “weak ties” between firms played in globalising the textile industry during the industrial age. This process reflects what has been termed the “strength of weak ties”.¹⁰ Network theorists such as Granovetter have assessed the strength of a network of weak ties according to “the amount of time, emotional intensity, the mutual confiding, and the reciprocal services which characterise it”.¹¹ Greater strength leads to larger networks and has a big effect on trading patterns. These effects and trading patterns can be examined in the specific relationships that different firms had with one another. Langworthy’s relationship with Huth provides an example of how one business tie can lead to sizeable changes in business opportunity.

The story of the merchant banks further helps us to understand the nature of British textile firms and their relationship with overseas markets in the years following the end of the Napoleonic Wars. Farnie, in his assessment of the importance of merchant-manufacturers to the textile export trade, tended to emphasise the narrative that merchant-manufacturers retreated from overseas markets in the early nineteenth century. He argued that they mainly used overarching formal trade and commercial associations such as the Manchester Exchange and the Chamber of Commerce to access the export trade.¹² Outside these formal institutions he argued that firms were mainly focused on home trade while foreign merchants controlled the overseas markets.¹³ The Chamber of Commerce, preceded by the Manchester Commercial Society, was established in 1820 to protect and forward the commercial interests of Manchester’s textile merchants and manufacturers to the British Government. The Chamber’s aims included fighting for the commercial interests of Manchester, attending the “proceedings in Parliament affecting the commercial interests of Manchester and its neighbourhood”, and “the removal of existing regulations injurious to the freedom of trade”.¹⁴ Equally, the Exchange

⁸ Chapman, “The Commercial Sector”, 75.

⁹ Ibid., p. 75.

¹⁰ Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”.

¹¹ Ibid., 1362.

¹² Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry*, 61.

¹³ Ibid., 61.

¹⁴ Redford, *Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, Vol. 1 1794–1858*, 70.

was established as a meeting place for merchants to carry out transactions and deals and to buy and sell cotton products. The Langworthy evidence, however, shows another story, that of a merchant and manufacturer confidently pursuing overseas interests through its business and sometimes more informal ties with other large firms. Langworthy was of course a member of the Exchange. However, it was its informal business networks that were more important, especially the firm's ties with Frederick Huth & Co. which gave Langworthy increasing export opportunities. There is growing recognition within the literature that it was the power of entrepreneurial firms that was shaping globalisation at this time and not just the power of governments and deterministic market forces.¹⁵ The case of Langworthy and its association with Huth illustrates the merits of this argument.

Background and Mechanisms of Merchant Banking

The basic premise of merchant banking is where a richer and more financially stable merchant begins to offer financial assistance to smaller firms. This is mostly done through bills of exchange (see Figure 56) to start with and then the process of underwriting whereby a merchant takes on the financial risk of a business operation for another firm. A bill of exchange was a promissory note or bill that was endorsed by a larger creditor, which consequently meant it would be trusted by most businesses. Merchant banks were the force behind much of the export finance that was to take place in the early nineteenth century. They soon took on many more financial roles and techniques, from insurance to acceptance credit, which eventually generated the acceptance houses that facilitated international trade.¹⁶

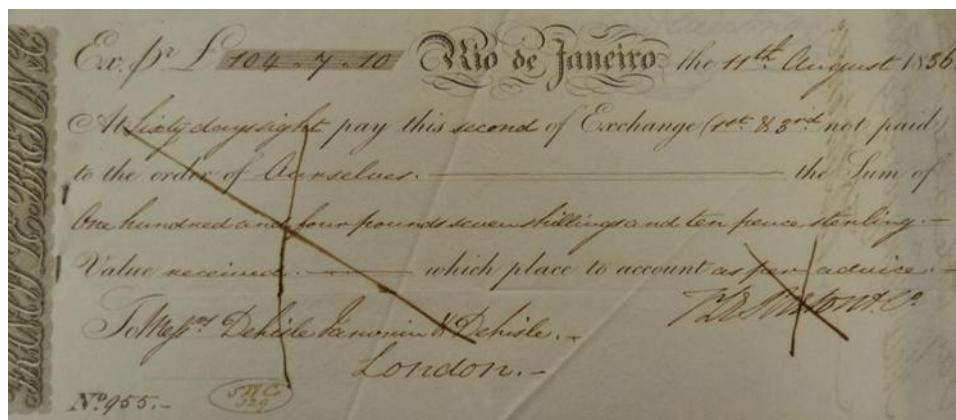


Figure 56: Example of a bill of exchange for £104,7,10, 11th August 1836.

Merchant banking largely developed in Amsterdam which was home to a community of Sephardic Jews during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was there that wealthy merchants began to

¹⁵ Manuel Llorca-Jana, "Shaping Globalisation, London's Merchant Bankers in the Early Nineteenth Century", *The Business History Review* 88, no.3 (2014), 469.

¹⁶ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 69.

issue acceptance credit, allowing smaller commission businesses to draw upon their account and therefore give their bills of exchange added security. Eventually merchant banking found its way into Britain and especially London. This was because Britain was the biggest trading partner of the Netherlands and so many Dutch traders began to move to London from Amsterdam.¹⁷ Chapman sees this as a fundamental development in the growth of international commerce. He states:

*This self-liquidating instrument for financing trade can readily be renewed on a revolving basis but meanwhile offers the accepting house the opportunity of maintaining its liquidity and operating on a moderate capital. It is impossible to say when the practice became widespread, but several London merchants were acting as agents for Dutch financiers in the 1600s, quite likely on the basis of this kind of credit.*¹⁸

During Langworthy's business operations in the 1830s, London had become a new centre of merchant banking which financed different trades. The two most prominent firms were Barings Bank and N.M. Rothschild and Sons, but Brown Shipley & Co., Lazard's, and Frederick Huth & Co. were not far behind. With the exception of Brown Shipley & Co., a US firm, most of these growing houses were German in origin, as was Huth, a firm that had originated in Hamburg. During the latter part of the eighteenth century, Hamburg was a thriving merchant entrepôt. It was here, like many merchants who eventually became merchant bankers, that the young Frederick learned the art of operating in the linen trade, which resulted in him eventually moving to Corunna (Coruña). Before Frederick Huth & Co. located to London it had been based in Spain and focused its operations there for many years until 1809 when Napoleon invaded. Huth was just one of many merchant firms that fled the continent during the Napoleonic Wars at a time when trading in Europe was made exceptionally difficult by the continental blockade.¹⁹ After the beginning of the Peninsular War, Frederick Huth fled to Britain and quickly established his business interests there. This was around the same time that the British Army, under John Moore, had retreated to Corunna in the wake of Napoleon's invasion and so Huth would probably have sailed for Britain during the ensuing panic. Frederick Huth was originally a commission merchant when he first arrived in London in 1809, though his firm quickly diversified and undertook more operations. It took some time before the firm could integrate itself into the wider British economy and acquire more British contacts.

The Initiation of the Relationship

Understanding the circumstances that led to the two firms' collaboration enables us to better understand the way in which these types of business ties developed. From 1831 Langworthy began

¹⁷ Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking*, 3.

¹⁸ Ibid., 2.

¹⁹ Ibid., 4.

to manufacture textiles for the merchant bank Frederick Huth & Co. The manner of the forging of this relationship is typical of the time, reflecting the importance of weak ties through informal networks in dictating the direction of business strategy in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Langworthy came to the attention of Huth because of its reputation as a competent firm with strong knowledge and experience in supplying overseas markets. The meeting of the two businesses took place because of their mutual associations within the same networks. George Langworthy was introduced to Frederick Huth by a mutual friend whose name unfortunately is not documented. This is an example of a weaker tie cementing a new network. Their formal trading relationship, however, was initiated by a Leeds agent Hatton Hammer Stansfield (1793–1877). Stansfield was one of the most influential agents located in the textile districts during this period and had exceptional knowledge of the consumer habits in different parts of South America. He was aware of what types of textiles were in demand on that continent and which manufacturers in the north of England were best placed to supply them.²⁰ Consequently, for a merchant bank like Huth, Stansfield proved a worthy contact. From the 1820s until 1841, Stansfield was appointed by Huth as its main agent representing the company in the northern textile districts, working for no other business than Huth. Llorca-Jana states:

*Stansfield was the main middleman used by Huth & Co. in Lancashire and Yorkshire to procure consignments for its correspondents in many quarters, but in particular for the establishments in the west coast of South America. In time Stansfield became one of the most knowledgeable experts in Britain on the textiles consumed in Latin America.*²¹

It is no surprise then that Huth used Stansfield to contact Langworthy and encourage the firm to make shipments to its houses. Many other Manchester-based merchants partook in Huth's operations via Stansfield. In a similar fashion Messrs W. Grant Brothers exported textiles to Huth's Lima House in 1831, the same year that Langworthy began to consign goods for the firm. Grant Brothers were calico printers established in 1800 and were also based in Cannon Street, as Langworthy was.²² In 1831 Huth wrote to Stansfield stating:

*George Langworthy and Co., Manufacturers of Nankeens, Florentines, Drills of Manchester have been introduced to us by a very intimate friend and we request that when you next go to Manchester, you will give them a call, and endeavour to introduce them to make shipments to the Pacific.*²³

²⁰ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 82.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 82.

²² Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 7, Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Messrs W. Grant Brothers, Manchester, 26th March 1831.

²³ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 7, Jan–Jun 1831, Letter from Fred Huth and Co. to H.H. Stansfield (Leeds), London 24th March 1831.

A later letter reveals two factors contributing to Langworthy's high reputation and the firm coming to the notice of Huth: the firm's ability to manufacture and merchant textiles that were specifically adapted for Latin American markets and the ability to understand and even speak Spanish.

For the Mexican market, hitherto we have always been in the habit of transmitting any orders we get from the latter country, Mexico, to Mr. Langworthy, as this gentleman is so thoroughly acquainted with the sort of goods likely to suit the Mexican Markets and having a knowledge of the Spanish language can more easily understand the orders than most of the other houses in Manchester.²⁴

The Mr Langworthy referred to in this letter is probably Edward Langworthy, who was spearheading the firm in 1839 and who had already worked as an agent in Spanish-speaking countries such as Mexico. Edward had been working for other firms such as Charles Taylor & Co. on that continent for some time and would have probably got accustomed to the language. Langworthy's accounts ledger also reveals that Edward had been accepting George's textile consignments in Mexico as early as 1826.²⁵ Along with Langworthy's strong knowledge of printed textiles for Latin American markets, the firm's familiarity with the Spanish language also impressed Huth and featured as a key reason for their association with each other. One short note shows Langworthy had been sent some books written in Spanish, one a history of Spain. In the note the person lending the books remarks that "Like most other Spanish books, I know little of their contents, but you will be the best judge."²⁶ It was in Spain that Frederick Huth managed to gain most of his contacts and make his business more competitive. Hence, despite being a German firm from Hamburg, Frederick Huth had evolved in Spain through trade with the Spanish-speaking world. Frederick Huth himself had been an apprentice to a Spanish firm when he was a resident in Hamburg which went by the name of Brentano Aubrieta & Co.²⁷ Even after he had moved to London most of his contacts continued to be Spanish.²⁸

It was not only the ability to work with Spanish that built the strong tie with Huth, but also the firm's proficiency and experience at adapting its manufacturing strategies to meet the demand in Latin America. Consequently, Huth found its association with Langworthy to its advantage. For this reason, Huth's advances to the firm were generous. Langworthy capitalised on its ability to export the same types of products that it was already sending on its own account to agents in Rio.²⁹ Huth wasted no time in taking advantage of Langworthy's competitive edge, and through its agent Stansfield, who was

²⁴ Letter 20 Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 23, Apr–Jun 1839, Letter from Huth and Co. to Huth and Co. (Liverpool). London, 8th April 1839.

²⁵ YA2013.25/3/2/1 Langworthy account ledger, 1826–1836.

²⁶ YA2013.25/2/1/3 Short note sent to Langworthy regarding Spanish books, addressed from a B and N, Unknown date.

²⁷ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 11.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 17.

²⁹ YA2013.25/3/2/1 Langworthy account ledger, 1826–1836.

an expert in the unique tastes of Latin American markets, worked with Langworthy to penetrate the market. Hence, Stansfield acted as the key go-between. This is demonstrated in a letter from February 1835. Huth wrote to Langworthy stating that:

Our agent Mr Stansfield or his assistant will hand you a letter from our Lima friends containing some patterns to which we beg your kind attention and shall be very happy to learn that they have been serviceable to you.³⁰

Before Langworthy's association with Frederick Huth, Langworthy had already made inroads into Central American markets like Mexico in the mid- to late 1820s. Furthermore, as well as its association with what had previously been Spanish colonial markets, Langworthy had also become familiar with the former territory of the Portuguese Empire, Brazil, as well as sending textiles to Portugal itself. In 1831 Lisbon features as a common export location in the ledgers.³¹ Altogether, what this shows is that Langworthy was already very familiar with the products and language of the markets in which Huth was interested in doing business and this contributed to Huth's interest in working with Langworthy.

The Business Connection

The Huth–Langworthy bond demonstrates the possibility of how larger informal trading networks were formed between firms. It was unpretentious casual relationships that often played a big role in placing merchants in contact with each other. Reputations, competence and who one knew were the major reasons why some firms attracted the attention of other merchanting actors and some did not. Once a merchant like Langworthy's had managed to attract the attention of one influential firm, the chances of acquiring more contacts increased. After Langworthy had secured a connection with Frederick Huth, the firm began to operate within new networks of overseas traders which resulted in larger trading networks for Langworthy.

It is also worth noting that neither Huth nor Langworthy are necessarily typical of many merchant firm–merchant bank connections of the time. Huth was unusually global in its approach in comparison with other merchant banks such as Rothschild and Ralli Brothers, which tended to limit their coverage to Europe.³² Moreover, Langworthy was an unusual Manchester firm for its ability to take on so many different functions and export to such diverse world markets at the same time. Both firms were very successful because of these strategies, and this is the reason they came to the attention of each other and worked well together.

³⁰ YA2013.25/2/2/3 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd February 1835.

³¹ YA2013.25/3/2/1 Langworthy account ledger, 1826–1836.

³² Llorca-Jana, "Shaping Globalisation", 475.

As the textile industry grew, Huth secured more contacts in the north of England. As textiles was one of the fastest growing industries at this time, it should be no surprise that this was one of the chief sectors Huth took advantage of. The firm opened a branch in Liverpool in 1830, just a year before it began its association with Langworthy. Other big London firms established Liverpool branches during this period such as Brown Shipley & Co. Huth placed its Liverpool branch in the hands of a partner who had been responsible for managing its houses in South American markets.³³ These were the markets that Langworthy was a specialist in supplying, and so it is very likely that Huth's desire to exploit the textile trade with Latin America was a key factor in its decision to open a branch in Liverpool. Some scholars have argued that Huth opened its Liverpool branch to engage more with the Anglo-American trade, but Llorca-Jana disagrees and instead argues that the branch was opened in Liverpool more to strengthen its business ties with South American markets.³⁴ The case of Langworthy's connection to Huth supports this latter theory. Huth had a total of twenty-one different business partners in Manchester during the late 1830s, the second highest after London, of which Langworthy was one of the most important.³⁵ As a result, Huth's business became ever more dependent on these Manchester merchants and manufacturers and needed to be in constant communication with them.

Langworthy featured as an important part of this story of the role of merchant banking in the textile trade. Huth acted as an intermediary between British and Spanish buyers while also beginning to specialise in marine insurance. Initially the business did not specialise in British manufactured products but rather colonial produce from Latin America, especially wool and the sugar trade based in Havana. Huth himself regularly travelled to the Latin American markets and in the 1820s established houses in Peru, Chile, Cuba, Argentina and Mexico.³⁶ Huth soon realised that he could trade British manufactured goods, namely textiles, for the produce located in these markets. Huth's success led to the firm taking on the activities of a merchant banker. As Langworthy was a growing successful firm which had already been trading textiles to the newly independent markets of Latin America from the early 1820s, Huth and Langworthy's business interests naturally crossed paths and complemented each other. Indeed, Llorca-Jana, in his investigation of Huth, has highlighted Langworthy as the vanguard of the textile manufacturers supplying Huth's operations alongside several other firms from Manchester. He states:

From 1812–1850 Huth and Co. was supplied by literally hundreds of different textile manufacturers and textile merchants. Amongst the most important ones were John Anderton of Bradford, Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, Edward Rawson, Halifax, Webster and Sons in Leeds, Du Fay and Co., Manchester, Burton and Son, Manchester, Marek and Co., Manchester,

³³ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 147.

³⁴ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 89.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 35.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 29.

*Birley Hornby Kirk, Manchester, Stewart and Wilson, Glasgow, Guthie and Co., Glasgow, Dugdale and Brother, Manchester.*³⁷

Manchester's banking system was still in its infancy at this time and so many textile firms turned to the London merchant bankers for assistance. Some of the other firms mentioned here were similar to Langworthy in that they were highly successful businesses with lots of capital that allowed them to export directly abroad. Du Fay & Co., for example, were a Frankfurt house that had been established in Manchester since 1800. Like Langworthy the firm moved its focus away from Europe and started to focus on the growing markets of the Americas.³⁸ Du Fay began exporting to Mexico and Argentina.³⁹ However, like Langworthy it was the finance and connections provided by Huth that really helped this process along. In Du Fay's case it not only traded on the credit provided by Huth but also by Rothschild which was increasingly involved in assisting the exports of Manchester firms.⁴⁰ Both Du Fay and Rothschild were firms of German origin and had emerged in Frankfurt which meant that their connection was strong. Rothschild mainly helped Manchester traders like Du Fay trade to the European continent. For Huth, the Latin American world had been the major focus since Frederick Huth had moved to London in 1809, partially because of the continental blockade which made trade with Europe difficult.⁴¹

The Consequences of the Langworthy–Huth Business Connection for the Langworthy Business

To understand the consequences of Langworthy's alliance with Huth we must review its impact on both the growth and geographical direction of Langworthy's trade. Huth and Langworthy's combined export activities were part of a much wider shift in the direction of British textile exports which were increasingly moving away from North America to Latin American. This geographical shift during the 1830s saw Manchester firms specialise in the production and sale of lower- to middling- quality textiles to the Latin American and Levant spheres of the globe, as opposed to fancy goods for Europe and North America.⁴² Because of Huth's influence Langworthy began to export goods to Huth's houses in places such as Valparaiso, Havana and New Orleans. The correspondence sent from Huth to Langworthy makes it clear that it was the markets of the west coast of South America and the Gulf of Mexico that were the most frequent destinations for Langworthy's consignments on Huth's account. Chile and Mexico, usually referred to as Pacific markets, stand out. Of the twenty letters sent directly from Huth to Langworthy collected for this study, nine or 45% refer directly to consignments sent to

³⁷ Ibid., 81.

³⁸ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 147.

³⁹ Ibid., 147.

⁴⁰ Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking*, 19.

⁴¹ Ibid., 10.

⁴² Chapman, "Quantity vs Quality", 335.

Chile and Mexico. Two refer to Cuban consignments and the others refer more broadly to Pacific markets. This is not including other letters sent from other stakeholders involved in Huth's operations with Langworthy, such as Stansfield and various shipping firms, that also mainly refer to these same markets.

Four letters, however, refer to shipments to New Orleans, and so Langworthy's textiles were also making their way to North America under Huth's guidance, though not to the extent of South America. New Orleans functioned as a distributive port to other major destinations around the Gulf of Mexico. Hence, not all Langworthy's cargoes to New Orleans were destined to be consumed in North America but were mainly arriving in New Orleans for transhipment to other vessels that were leaving for Mexico. This is illustrated by evidence from August 1835, when Huth insured Langworthy's goods on a vessel known as the *Byron*, which was destined for New Orleans. However, the final destination of the consignments was in fact Veracruz and Tampico on the east coast of Mexico. The transhipment process could be confusing, and goods could become lost or misplaced. Huth instructed Langworthy that the bill of lading was very important to making sure that the textiles were transhipped effectively and that they arrived at the correct place for the right premium. Huth insisted that:

The only document required as proof of the transhipment would be the bill of lading which should be sent from New Orleans to England by the first opportunity after the goods are shipped. If the goods are as we suppose chiefly intended for Veracruz and Tampico it would be better to name these two places than to say port or ports, which latter condition would we fear increase the premium.⁴³

This letter reinforces the sense that it was mainly Latin American markets in which Huth was interested and not those in North America.

Because Huth was a global firm, Langworthy also expanded its global reach and began to trade to far more markets. Langworthy had already made inroads into Brazil on its own, but it is doubtful it could have traded to the variety of markets it did in the 1830s without Huth. Though the surviving letters sent to Langworthy from Huth only give us a small snippet of the overall picture, they do give us a speculative indication of what proportion of Langworthy's consignments for Huth went to each market. Huth had connections in over thirty-seven countries around the world from around 1822 and consequently Langworthy had secured a very powerful contact.⁴⁴ Llorca-Jana has revealed how Huth was probably the first merchant bank to go global in the first half of the nineteenth century and was instrumental in bringing markets like Chile and Mexico into the international trading sphere. Despite having less capital than the other big merchant banks of the period such as Barings and Rothschild, by

⁴³ YA2013.25/2/1/2 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th August 1835.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

1850 Huth would come to possess “6,000 correspondents in more than 70 countries, in over 600 cities and five continents”.⁴⁵ Because of this Llorca-Jana states that Huth & Co. “defied the conventional wisdom of their era and decided to go global well before any other competitor dared to, and well before the transport and communication revolutions of the second half of the nineteenth century.”⁴⁶ Because of the merchant bank’s high levels of capital, Huth was able to fund Langworthy’s consignments with no difficulty and so the firm served to bring Manchester’s textile traders into the international trading order.⁴⁷

Langworthy was not the only Manchester textile exporter that was using the services of Huth to help penetrate markets. As expected, when one looks at the records of other Manchester textile merchants which exported to Latin America during this period, Huth’s name often appears. This is true for the firm Owen Owens and Sons which traded on Frederick Huth & Co.’s account to Valparaiso in Chile. In 1838, for example, Owens exported goods to Huth’s subsidiary house there known as Frederick Huth Grunning.⁴⁸ The case of Langworthy therefore reflects a much wider shift that was taking place in relation to merchant banking and the textile trade. Huth continued to work with several significant Manchester traders up until the 1850s and beyond, including the firm A. and S. Henry, a firm of American origin and one of the largest textile merchant firms of its day, established in Manchester by Alexander Henry in 1805.⁴⁹ The important role that Manchester’s cotton goods played in cementing Huth’s trajectory must not be understated and was instrumental in increasing the wealth and power of merchant banks. Huth would end the nineteenth century as one of the elite banking dynasties in London with shares in multiple investment trusts and strong coalitions with British banking institutions, including the Bank of England and London Joint Stock Bank.⁵⁰

Huth had a disproportionate impact on the direction of Langworthy’s export operations during the 1830s compared to other firms. Langworthy’s account book shows that between 1833 and 1836 it conducted forty-nine separate transactions with Huth (see Appendix E). This did not make Huth its most regular trading partner and its number of consignments did not make up a large percentage of Langworthy’s overall transactions, but it did place it higher up the list than most individual firms, even higher than Turner Brade & Co., Langworthy’s main gateway into Brazil, and much higher than James

⁴⁵ Manuel Llorca-Jana, “The Economic Activities of a Global Merchant-Banker in Chile, Huth and Co. of London, 1820s–1850s”, *Historia* 45, no.2 (2012): 401–2.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 401.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 81.

⁴⁸ OWN1/1/4 Ledger D, 1st December 1838.

⁴⁹ CLC/B/087/MS10700/001 Letter from A. and S. Henry, Manchester, to Frederick Huth and Co., London, 23rd October 1869; Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 152.

⁵⁰ Michael Lisle-Williams, “Merchant Banking Dynasties in the English Class Structure: Ownership, Solidarity and Kinship in the City of London, 1850–1960”, *British Journal of Sociology* 35, no.3 (1984), 341.

Deacon and Sons, the firm's main London customers.⁵¹ Moreover, Langworthy's consignments with Huth were concentrated over a shorter period of time compared with some other partners, like Deacon. However, what is chiefly striking about the Huth–Langworthy relationship is the sheer diversity of locations Huth opened up to Langworthy and the size of the transactions made on its account.

Trading on Huth's Account: Peru, Mexico, Chile, Cuba and the West Coast of South America, 1831–1839

To understand the impact of merchant banks on the textile exporters' operations we need an explication of Langworthy and Huth's joint trading ventures in the Pacific and in the Gulf of Mexico. From 1831 Langworthy was increasingly consigning goods to Chile, Bolivia, Peru, Cuba and Mexico. Almost all these ventures were undertaken on Huth's account and under its guidance. Apart from the firm Anthony Gibbs and Sons, Huth was the only other large merchant bank that was able to penetrate these geographical areas, with even Rothschild and Barings failing to do so. In a sense Huth became the doyen of the British Latin American trade in a similar way to how a firm like Jardine Matheson & Co. dominated British trade to China.⁵² Huth's financial advances to textile manufacturers exporting to these markets were very liberal during this period and the firm possessed numerous branches in the Pacific arena.⁵³ This was a reasoned strategy on the part of Huth as it took place at a time when the market for high-quality British cottons for North America and Europe was beginning to decline because of competition from these regions' home industries, and the demand for lower-grade but highly-decorated textiles in Latin America was starting to take a bigger share of British exports. At the same time there was an increasing demand in Britain for the various commodities produced in the Latin American markets such as cochineal, indigo, coffee, sugar and silver, all of which Huth imported heavily. The firm was also well-versed in the shipping of quicksilver (mercury) from Valparaiso and Lima.⁵⁴ The export of textiles and import of commodities was central to Huth's strategy.

Almost all the shipments Langworthy made for Huth travelled from Liverpool to their intended ports. In May 1831, Langworthy shipped twelve cases of goods to houses in the Pacific on board the ship the *Mary Ann*. There were a number of ships around this period that went by this name, a few of which were launched in Liverpool. The *Mary Ann* was a British brigantine (two-masted sailing ship) that was used by Huth in many operations around the Pacific and this is the one likely referred to in the

⁵¹ YA2013.25/3/2/1 Langworthy's account ledger.

⁵² Daniel R. Headrick, *Power over Peoples* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010), 198.

⁵³ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 109.

⁵⁴ XI/38/149A London Banking House, Letter Received from Huth, Frederick and Grunning and Co., Lima and Valparaiso 1838.

Langworthy correspondence.⁵⁵ Stansfield was continuing to act as the key intermediary between the two firms.

We are happy to hear from Mr Stansfield that you shipped 12 cases to our friends in the Pacific onboard Mary Ann, of which said friend has sent us copy of invoice amounting to £438.11, without, however, giving us order for insurance. We shall therefore feel obliged by your acquainting us with your wishes in this latter respect and at the same time we beg to say that we shall deem it a favour if you will this time allow us to pay cash for the proportion of advances agreed upon instead of your drawing for the same as usual.⁵⁶

Throughout 1833 Huth was sending money to Langworthy's bank account for the consignments it had made. On the 19th June 1833, Huth paid the advances to Langworthy's account with Jones Lloyd & Co., Langworthy's main Manchester banking partner. Only £400 was sent, £38.11 short of that stated on the invoice.⁵⁷ This was due to the various charges Huth applied to Langworthy for using its services. While Huth was generally pleased with the services of Langworthy, the letters reveal that it was Mr Stansfield who was the glue that kept the trading relationship together. He would sometimes write to Langworthy in an attempt to get the best out of the firm and ensure Langworthy's priorities aligned with Huth's interests. In November 1833, Stansfield complained to Langworthy that the firm was failing to send enough prints on time for carefully selected shipments to Huth's targeted markets, in this instance supplying goods for the ship known as the *James Prowse*. As seasonal markets required the textiles to be sent in very short time windows this would have been detrimental to Huth's export success. Stansfield wrote:

I am much disappointed indeed at your letter which I have only this moment received. Mr Huth will be very much annoyed as he had set his heart on having some prints for James Prowse and if you do not manage some we shall not have one piece on board, cannot you get a few hundred of either muslins or prints to be shipped on Saturday morning, if you cannot, you have my authority to write to Mr Hamer and desire he will stop the James Prowse until that day. I should be as unwilling as yourself to ship unsuitable styles, but I cannot help thinking that by using a little of the same energy that you are exerting on the Twele you may get some ready.⁵⁸

Langworthy was hesitant to send inferior quality products, probably because it was considering its own reputation above that of Huth's. As Huth's main textile agent in the north, Stansfield was expected to ensure that northern textile manufacturers continued to meet Huth's tight deadlines. He regularly visited Manchester to help put businesses in order. He finished his letter which urgently

⁵⁵ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 206.

⁵⁶ YA2013.25/2/1/6 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 6th May 1833.

⁵⁷ YA2013.25.2/ 1/1 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 19th June 1833.

⁵⁸ YA2013.25/2/1/1 Letter from H.H. Stansfield, Leeds, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 11th November 1833.

requested muslins and prints with the somewhat stern warning that “I shall be in Manchester early on Friday morning and I hope to hear you have managed some.”⁵⁹

It was essential for Langworthy to meet Huth’s deadlines for consignments because ships left Liverpool at specific times to meet the demand that arose during certain periods of the year. Generally, there was very little flexibility around when a ship would leave and so if goods failed to arrive on time for shipment, then Huth’s chances of successful sales would be drastically affected. Such was the importance of Huth’s export operations that even Liverpool shipping firms would occasionally write to Langworthy to warn them to deliver consignments on time. In December 1833 the Liverpool shipper, H.Y. Hammer, sent a letter to Langworthy imploring them not to miss out on sending prints onboard a particularly fast sailing vessel to Chile.

*you are preparing prints for Huth and Co., you should know that our vessel for Valparaiso is full and will sail first fair wind and that another is filling too fast that I am fearful that no goods will be received onboard of her after Friday next, it is a very fast desirable sailing vessel.*⁶⁰

Shipping firms such as Hammer may have had ulterior motives and so letters such as this should not always be taken at face value. For example, it may have been the case that they were under-filled and were expressing urgency to Langworthy in order to ensure the ship was filled on time. As it was Huth’s account on which the goods were shipped, Huth took a great interest in which vessels and crews were being used. As probably the biggest single supplier of printed textiles to Latin America during this period Huth would have wanted the best crews and fastest vessels to ensure goods arrived both safely and in a timely fashion to the intended destination. Not only was it critical that Langworthy kept up with the supply of textiles for these ships’ timings, but it was also important to send samples to Huth’s overseas branches in time for feedback whereby Langworthy could quickly adapt its manufacturing to suit the latest seasonal demand. At the end of the letter sent from H.Y. Hammer, there is a postscript:

*Please send the patterns of any goods you might ship as soon as possible. If the vessels are without them nothing can be done at Valparaiso with the goods.*⁶¹

As demonstrated earlier with respect to Langworthy’s export operations on its own account to Brazil, the sending and receiving of samples of patterns was fundamental to market penetration. This was also true for Langworthy’s shipments on Huth’s account.⁶²

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ YA2013.25/2/1/1 Letter from H.Y. Hammer, Liverpool, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th December 1833.

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 13, Jan–Jun 1834. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co. to Stansfield (Manchester). London, 20th February 1834.

As Huth was a merchant bank which relied on the balance of trade between exports and imports, it was always anxious that enough British manufactured goods were being sent abroad. These manufactured items would then be traded for produce imported back to Britain. This dynamic is illustrated in 1834 when Huth was struggling to consign enough cotton goods of the correct specifications for the west coast markets in South America. The firm turned to the services of Langworthy to help fix this problem. In one letter Huth expressed to Stansfield its concerns at the undersupply and asserted that significant advances would be given to Langworthy in order to create sufficient shipments of printed cottons to the west coast of South America. It allowed Langworthy to draw £1,200 on its account to meet the demand.⁶³ In the letter Huth acknowledged that its advances to Langworthy had been particularly liberal in comparison to the amount that would usually have been allowed to other northern manufacturers. However, as already shown in a previous chapter, Langworthy was particularly good at adapting its exports to suit market demands and Huth's liberal advances is further evidence of Langworthy's talents.

Langworthy's privileged position to be able to draw upon the large financial potential of a big player like Huth gave the business extra incentives. It reduced both the risk and liability of its export operations. All Langworthy had to do was ensure it pleased Huth and the overseas stakeholders the merchant bank worked with. This was a goal Langworthy succeeded in accomplishing. Throughout 1834 Huth was impressed by Langworthy's ability to supply prints to the Pacific markets and encouraged them to make shipments from Liverpool as regularly as possible, requesting that it send at least 500 pieces of prints per voyage.⁶⁴ Huth then remitted Langworthy the profits for the successful shipments. Payments were sent back by different means, for example, in 1834 Huth was sending Langworthy bullion and specie on ships of war coming from Mexico to Britain. These payments were usually large; in one instance Huth was making promises to honour Langworthy with a payment of £1,200 for a shipment on a vessel called the *Georgiana* which was sent to Valparaiso.⁶⁵

Underwriters

While Langworthy benefited from Huth taking on the risk associated with these ventures, it would be wrong to suggest Huth carried the whole burden. Various underwriters worked with Huth to share in the rewards. In one letter from April 1835, it is revealed that five underwriters were working with Huth, including Samuel Boddington, P. Cruickshank, R. Ramsey, M. Wigan and H.L. Wigan. Samuel

⁶³ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 13, Jan–Jun 1834. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co. to Stansfield (Leeds). London, 20th January 1834.

⁶⁴ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 13. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 6th March 1834.

⁶⁵ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 13. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 27th January 1834.

Boddington was a slave compensation recipient in 1831 and owned large estates in the West Indies.⁶⁶ He worked for Boddington & Co. stationed in London and was chiefly a West Indies merchant.⁶⁷ In other words, Langworthy's tie with Huth was leading to its integration with further networks of traders that had financial assets from other sources, including slavery. It was not uncommon for capital inherited from the slave trade to be tied up in Langworthy's ventures. Llorca-Jana has revealed that from 1810 Huth utilised its connections with several Lloyds underwriters, such as John Dubois, to make headway in the South American market.⁶⁸ Underwriters were a key part of spreading the risk for merchant ventures, in this case insuring Huth's consignments to distant markets. Lloyds played an important role in the insurance of ventures to Valparaiso in Chile and other ports on the west coast of South America. It made a large portion of its early capital by insuring slave trading ventures. Nicholas Draper has revealed how the business offered much of the marine insurance for slave voyages taking enslaved people from Africa to the Americas.⁶⁹

There are other examples that show how Huth and Langworthy's joint ventures rested on the security afforded by the finance of other firms. In October 1835, Huth insured thirty-one bales of Langworthy's cotton goods which were worth £1,000 and destined for New Orleans. For this it deducted £27.10 from Langworthy's account for commission and other charges such as a policy stamp which denoted an insurance contribution.⁷⁰

Be it Known that Frederick Huth and Co. make shipment from Liverpool to New Orleans on manufactured goods worth £1,000. They take all responsibility. 26 Bales of manufactured goods at £25 each, worth £650. 31 bales in total worth £1,000.

The bill of lading makes it clear that these were goods that had been manufactured by Langworthy but also provides evidence of how the financing of the venture was the product of many individuals and firms who were underwriters. Much of the capital and risk was dependent upon them. Many of the underwriters involved in this consignment were the same names such as Samuel Boddington, W.M. Taylor, George Pierce, Samuel Anderson, Alex Rougemont, A.H. Douglass and P. Cruikshank. The money that was put into these ventures was not only coming from Huth themselves but also the underwriters, most of whom put in £100 with the exception of Alex Rougemont and John Barclay who

⁶⁶ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, "Boddington, Samuel (1766–1843), West India merchant, slave owner, and collector", by Nicholas Draper, 6th October 2016, <https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/107427>.

⁶⁷ YA2013.25/2/1/4 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 2nd April 1835.

⁶⁸ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 35.

⁶⁹ Nicholas Draper, "Lloyd's, Marine Insurance and Slavery", Lloyds, accessed 8th August 2022, <https://www.lloyds.com/about-lloyds/history/the-trans-atlantic-slave-trade/lloyds-marine-insurance-and-slavery>

⁷⁰ YA2013.25/2/1/3 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th October 1835.

both put in £150 each.⁷¹ It was the underwriters associated with Huth that ultimately gave Langworthy a secure financial backing.

Langworthy's Consignments for Drusina and Martinez, Mexico, 1831–1835

The case of Langworthy very much reflects the work of scholars who have sought to understand the importance of loose networks and weak ties in providing the confidence for manufacturing firms to undertake risky ventures.⁷² A strong tie with one contact would usually indirectly lead to many other weaker ties that were to have powerful consequences for the direction of a firm's trade during this time. Rose has argued that loose networks of merchants allowed them to become acquainted with each other informally and that this must not be understated as a determining force in expanding the trading capacity of British textile manufacturers.⁷³ They allowed merchants to reduce transaction costs and trade with the financial backing of more stakeholders. Apart from the underwriters that were working to propel Langworthy into the export trade to the South American west coast, the Huth connection allowed Langworthy to connect with various overseas houses that the Manchester firm would otherwise have been hard-pressed to form ties with. This is evidenced in Langworthy's exports to Mexico. As Huth began to finance Langworthy's trading ventures, the Mexican house Drusina and Martinez became a major accepter of Langworthy's exports.

Drusina and Martinez was one of the most successful companies in Mexico during the late 1820s. The firm was founded in Mexico City. Of the two partners involved in the firm, Guillermo Drusina undertook most of its operations in Mexico. He had been working as a clerk for the firm Ruperti, Hartley and Green from 1824.⁷⁴ Both Justo Ruperti and Drusina were, like Huth, originally from Hamburg before they set up their businesses in Mexico. It was Ruperti who brought Drusina and Martinez together to form the business. Ruperti eventually moved back to Europe and was responsible for acting as an agent for the firm and to ascertain consignments for the Mexican house. His agreement for his services to the firm stipulated that they could only undertake consignments and commission sales in order to reduce the risk and avoid bankruptcy.⁷⁵ This was also with the view to make the firm more appealing to European manufacturers that were looking to make consignments to Mexico and avoid risky ventures. As a result, they became a strong associate with Huth, and because of that, with Langworthy as well.

⁷¹ YA2013.25/2/1/3 Bill of lading, from Frederick Huth, London, 20th October 1835.

⁷² Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties", 1362.

⁷³ Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 70.

⁷⁴ David W. Walker, "Commerce in Mexico: Drusina and Martinez, 1828–1837", in *Kinship, Business and Politics* (Texas, University of Texas Press, 1986).

⁷⁵ Ibid.

As one of the largest and most successful accepting houses stationed in Mexico during this period, Huth's association with Drusina was a significant advantage for Langworthy. The majority of Langworthy's shipments to Mexico were coming out of Liverpool. However, the bills of lading that Huth sent to Langworthy show that they also shipped from Southampton. Shipments of Huth's packages to Drusina and Martinez were mainly passing through Stansfield's office in Liverpool.⁷⁶ Huth was shipping all manner of goods to Mexico from many parts of the country, including Perth in Scotland. During this time, Mexico was growing in importance as a market for British printed cottons of varying colours. A pattern book that charts the changing consumer tastes for textiles in Mexico contains a testimony from 1823 on the sorts of British goods that were popular. Printed drills, ginghams and dresses were especially sought after. White goods or plain cottons were in low demand and the general advice was not to send them.

*Prints of all classes and great quantities are consumed. The prevailing taste at present is dark goods, coffee colour, chocolate, blue of different shades, green of different shades, mulberry Red. They ought to be striped or running patterns of narrow breadth and flowers between them. dark blue and green with the figures of a lighter shade of the same colour are esteemed. A standard rule for all sorts of printed goods is to have the colours very bright, if the style is at all suitable and the colours lively, the quality of the cloth is not so much attended to.*⁷⁷

As already demonstrated in an earlier chapter, analysis of Langworthy's consignments to Brazil shows it was a specialist in meeting the seasonal demands for cheap colourful prints, and this is why Huth required its services to tap into the burgeoning Mexican market.

The significant role that Huth played in opening the Mexican market to Langworthy cannot be overstated. During the time Langworthy was exporting to Mexico between 1831 and 1839, the country was a particularly risky and unstable market in which to be involved. Scholars have recognised that this made the market especially difficult for a single merchant trader to make inroads on its own. The years between 1836 and 1842 were a time of economic depression which made life difficult for British traders. This was further heightened by the instability caused by the war between Mexico and Texas.⁷⁸ This meant that independent operations were very uncommon and most British ventures in Mexico were consignments funded by large groups of underwriters in Britain. This made the risk associated with the volatile Mexican trade during these years more acceptable. Hilarie J. Heath has argued that for Mexico, in particular, the large merchant banks were the only way to encourage British merchants to trade there. She states that "The British houses arriving on the Mexican scene represented large

⁷⁶ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 7, Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London to H.H. Stansfield Esquire, Liverpool, 25th March 1831.

⁷⁷ YMS 0227 Textile Pattern Book, General Scheme of Goods Answerable for the Market of Mexico with remarks on Colours and Styles at present in Demand, October 1823.

⁷⁸ Hilarie J. Heath, "British Merchant Houses in Mexico, 1821 to 1860", *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73, no.2, (1993), 265.

European houses or banks with ample experience in overseas trade and the necessary access to credit and contacts to enable them easily to dominate Mexico's external and wholesale trade."⁷⁹ This certainly corresponds with the Langworthy evidence, and it is difficult to see how George and Edward would have been able to penetrate Mexico without Huth's backing.

Huth's correspondence to Langworthy shows that its consignments were directed to Veracruz, one of the most important ports on the east coast of Mexico. In February 1835 Huth wrote to Langworthy detailing its advances to Langworthy for making shipments to Drusina and Martinez, including £550 made in November 1833, but acknowledged that it still owed Langworthy £1,000 which it would be ready to honour once Langworthy had sent its drafts to cash in on the money Huth owed.⁸⁰ In March 1835 Huth informed Langworthy that it had insured fifteen packages of Langworthy's cotton drills and handkerchiefs worth £500 from Liverpool to Veracruz.⁸¹ In the same letter Huth noted how it was very interested in the success of Langworthy's sales in Pacific markets and that it would be looking to make many more future ventures in this region with Langworthy. In a subsequent letter sent in April 1835, Huth remitted Langworthy bills of lading for a shipment of thirty-six cases of cotton drills and handkerchiefs sent to Messrs Drusina and Martinez. In the letter Huth conveyed to Langworthy its apologies for the long delay in transmitting the profits from the Mexican consignments owing to the unpredictable fluctuations in the market. It stated that "we have remained deprived of our funds for 6 to 8 months, a year or sometimes much longer, according to the state of the Mexican market". Keen to put Langworthy at ease Huth insisted that it was working towards improving the speed at which advances were brought forward.

We hope that hence forward our Mexican friends will have to contend with less disturbances and other difficulties and will thus be able [sic] to reline consignments and remit the proceeds with less delay than written the last three of four years.⁸²

While it was important for Langworthy to please Huth, the relationship went both ways. Trust and mutual respect were key elements in successful trading relationships. Huth was keen to keep Langworthy satisfied. As one of its biggest and most competent suppliers it needed to ensure Langworthy received its fair share of rewards to continue to induce the firm to make shipments to its houses.

⁷⁹ Ibid., 269.

⁸⁰ YA2013.25/2/2/3 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd February 1835.

⁸¹ YA2013.25/2/2/3 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, March 1835.

⁸² YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd April 1835.

Because Langworthy specialised in printed cottons, a trade that Huth was becoming highly reliant on, Langworthy became indispensable to Huth's trade during the 1830s. Langworthy's authority in its relationship with Huth stands out in the letters sent between the two firms, especially in relation to the Mexican trade. In one letter it was George Langworthy himself who was ordering Huth to insure his shipments to Mexico. Huth wrote to the Manchester firm detailing how:

Since our respects of the 5th May we find ourselves without your esteemed favour, but we have in the meantime had the pleasure of a personal interview with your Mr G Langworthy by whose order we have effected insurance on your shipment of cotton goods for which shipment we beg to offer you our best acknowledgments.⁸³

Furthermore, Drusina and Martinez were referring directly to Langworthy in their communications with Huth, asking them to give Langworthy permission to draw on its account in order to further Langworthy's consignments to Mexico.

Messer's W M Drusina and G L Martinez advise us of having given you authority to draw upon us for their account to the extent of four thousand pounds which credit you would most likely await yourselves of at different periods. We suppose that you will consider the former credit offered with us in your favour by said friends as cancelled by this new one.⁸⁴

Langworthy's reputation was growing internationally, all because of the overseas houses to which it had been connected through its business association with one of the most influential merchant banks of the period. Equally it was then Langworthy's reputation for supplying Latin American markets with printed cottons that was increasing consignments on Huth's account. The benefits went both ways. Trust and mutual respect have been cited by network theorists as strong explanations for firms being able to coordinate economic efforts across international boundaries during the nineteenth century.⁸⁵ The trust and respect Langworthy and Huth had for each other's talents is reflective of this.

By August 1835, Huth did indeed agree to insure Langworthy's consignment of goods to Drusina and Martinez in accordance with what was said during their personal interview with George. The sums of money involved are impressive. Huth insured a consignment of Langworthy's goods worth £2,000 destined for the Mexican house.⁸⁶ The merchant bank also allowed Langworthy to draw on its account for £4,000 as advised by Drusina and Martinez. In addition to this £4,000, Huth advanced £6,000 to the Mexican house's agents. In total £10,000 was advanced for the consignments passed between the two firms. To put the size and worth of Langworthy's consignments into perspective, the large

⁸³ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 1st July 1835.

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Mark Casson and Howard Fox, "International Business Networks: Theory and Practice", *Business and Economic History* 22, no. 1 (1993).

⁸⁶ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 6th August 1835.

Manchester firm Owen Owens and Son's entire stock in Philadelphia was said to be worth no more than £3,000 in 1820, which usually represented four months' worth of sales.⁸⁷ Between 1812 and 1816 Owens exported a total of £10,500 worth of cotton goods to Rio de Janeiro, which was a large amount for the firm.⁸⁸ Average single consignments were often around the £300 mark. Equally for Langworthy's own trade to Rio, consignments were usually more modest than what was sent on Huth's account. These were large consignments of goods by the standards of the time and Huth was forwarding exceptional amounts of capital to finance these ventures. In this correspondence, Huth went on to outline the time frames by which it wished the money to be sent back and the commission it wished to charge Langworthy.

And it is agreed that we shall charge you a commission of ½% for effecting the insurance on the whole shipment and a commission of 2% on the £6,000 which we advance to you under your own responsibility. You will have the goodness to instruct Messer's Drusina and Martinez to remit to us the returns for the said £6,000 on which returns we shall not charge any further commission. We annex (sic) accountable of \$282.5 received for you from our Valparaiso house for producing £52.13.11 which we pass to your credit due 13th July.⁸⁹

At the end of 1835, Langworthy made another consignment with Huth which was once again destined for Mexico and the house of Drusina and Martinez. It also made another shipment to New Orleans.⁹⁰ This time the consignment was taken on a Liverpool ship the *P. Margaret*. A sum of £1,400 was paid to Langworthy's account for the venture. In this correspondence Huth also informed Langworthy that it would be sending them credit worth £287.12 in January of the following year, for a number of other shipments that had been made with them which were equivalent to five packages.

Later Consignments in the Gulf of Mexico and the Pacific, 1835–1839

From 1835 Huth's house in Chile was continuing to accept Langworthy's batches, though not all of these goods were necessarily destined to be sold there. Huth's house in Valparaiso acted as a springboard from which to penetrate the Bolivian market. Just as with Langworthy's consignments to Rio de Janeiro, its cotton products made journeys to distant buyers deep in the interior of countries and far from the port where the products were unloaded. For Rio it was the northern Brazilian market of Bahia, for Valparaiso it was Bolivia, located thousands of kilometres north. The goods would probably have been taken down the coastline as Bolivia at that time possessed a coastal border with the Pacific before it eventually lost this to Chile in a dispute towards the end of the nineteenth century.

⁸⁷ Clapp, *John Owens*, 37.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 23.

⁸⁹ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 6th August 1835.

⁹⁰ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 4th December 1835.

During the early months of 1835 Huth informed Langworthy that it had not had any new advances to send from the Pacific markets but that it was in high expectation that fresh advances would soon be arriving from the Valparaiso house. In May 1835, Langworthy did indeed receive its advances from Huth's Valparaiso house. The Manchester firm were given a sum of £40.3.6, only a small advance, which was sent to its account for sales of cottons that had been sold in the Bolivian market.⁹¹ By mid-October 1835, Huth had sent Langworthy remittances worth \$4,606 from merchant houses located in Valparaiso.⁹² However, it had been unable to send any further remittances from the other west coast markets since the start of the winter. Another consignment was sent on the ship the *Lady Cornwall* and was destined for Valparaiso. For this, Huth forwarded Langworthy £1,000.⁹³

In 1838 goods were taken to Bordeaux in France before they made the journey to ports located on the South American west coast, mainly to the same usual markets such as Chile and Mexico but also to Peru. This was because iron was added to Huth's shipments before they made the crossing over the Atlantic to be sold alongside textiles.⁹⁴ Huth was involved in the trade of many goods and commodities other than cottons and was exporting iron to Latin America as well. In February 1838, Langworthy also made shipments of goods to Havana on Huth's account for the house of Tomas de Veyga.⁹⁵ Just as with Frederick Huth, Tomas de Veyga fled Spain and the city of Corunna during the early nineteenth century. However, unlike Huth, he resettled in Cuba where he became highly involved in business and politics. By 1839, Langworthy was still conducting shipments with Huth.⁹⁶ Langworthy's relationship with the merchant bank had now spanned a decade.

⁹¹ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Fredrick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 5th May 1835.

⁹² YA2013.25/2/1/3 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 14th October 1835.

⁹³ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 18th December 1835.

⁹⁴ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 19, Jan–Apr 1838. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co. to Castellain, Sons and Co. (Liverpool). London, 6th January 1838.

⁹⁵ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 19, Jan–Apr 1838. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co. to W. H. Rawson (Halifax). London, 17th February 1838.

⁹⁶ Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 23, Apr–Jun 1839. Letter from Frederick Huth and Co. to Huth and Co. (Liverpool). London, 8th April 1839.

The Globalisation of Manchester's Textile Exporters

The wider role that merchant banking played in fostering growth and expansion in the Lancashire textile trade is illustrated by Langworthy's operations on Huth's account. They show how, though Langworthy were one of the elite firms in Manchester that could conduct both merchanting and manufacturing, it would not have been able to conduct the whole business without the aid of others. Huth's strong financial record resulted in easier and more fruitful connections between overseas houses and manufacturers and merchants back in Manchester. Merchant banks offered more secure trading on account of their large amounts of capital. Huth themselves possessed capital worth £312,000 by 1845 at a time when £100,000 was considered a standard point of reference for what would constitute a large merchant firm.⁹⁷ Chapman has shown it was not just large amounts of capital that guaranteed what was termed the A1 credit rating, the highest level of credit rating that could be awarded by business reports, but it was also a firm's reliability and financial record. Huth was largely considered a solid firm that could be relied upon. This is with the exception of a £10,000 loss in 1836, mainly as a result of the financial crisis of that year when the price of cotton fell.⁹⁸ Its good record overall afforded Manchester textile merchants' far greater opportunities.

Because of Langworthy's association with global companies like Huth, it escaped the tendency to retreat into the home market as many merchant-manufacturers did after the Napoleonic Wars. A valuable comparison is Fielden Brothers. Fieldens found the Manchester Exchange to be oversupplied with too many sellers which depressed prices and made making notable sales difficult. Because of the business's high levels of capital, it used the same strategy as Langworthy and sold directly abroad. Though this was riskier, Fieldens found the superior rewards worth it.⁹⁹

The case of Langworthy and Huth provides an example of Rose's observations on the importance that networking and partnerships played in giving firms the confidence to trade overseas. She argues that "partnerships were even more important in international commerce than they were within the domestic economy. In general, the risks and uncertainties of overseas trade deterred the majority of manufacturing firms from becoming involved in foreign marketing".¹⁰⁰ Institutions such as the Exchange, while helpful for local transactions, held little clout in the distant markets of Latin America. For firms like Langworthy connections with other firms gave it the confidence to trade overseas.¹⁰¹ It was its informal business ties which could sometimes lead to much stronger ties that eventually

⁹⁷ Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking*, 55.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 73.

⁹⁹ Law, *Fieldens of Todmorden*, 42.

¹⁰⁰ Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 75

¹⁰¹ W. Mark Fruin, "Business Groups and Interfirm Networks", in Geoffrey Jones and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Business History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 254.

secured a network of reciprocal stakeholders which could aid each other in international commerce. Huth epitomises what Chapman sees as the rise of “a handful of wealthy merchants who had graduated to pure finance and provided the credits for manufacturers to send their goods to agents abroad”.¹⁰² Manchester’s manufacturers benefited especially because it meant they “were less exposed to the risk of selling in overseas markets”.¹⁰³ Consequently, far from fitting the trend of a manufacturer retreating from overseas and relying on institutions like the Exchange, as described by Farnie, Langworthy was instead growing in confidence in new expanding markets.

Associated Networks and Contacts

It was not just Huth’s capital that benefited Langworthy, it was also its contacts, many of which were interested in trading with Langworthy directly. As a consequence, this business relationship offers an interesting case study in social network analysis. Granovetter pointed out how just as weak ties can lead to the formation of larger networks, the same can be said for strong ties.¹⁰⁴ Huth and Langworthy represented a strong tie which eventually resulted in the formation of new ties. We now need to look at how the Huth connection led to the creation of new contacts for Langworthy and expanded the firm’s networks by examining three different examples. The story of Langworthy’s association with Huth goes much further in importance than just the consignments that were traded on its account between 1831 and 1839 and the insurance if offered. Huth’s connections and contacts were of critical importance in integrating Langworthy into further collaborative trade networks that expanded the potential of the business. This is best exemplified with Langworthy’s blossoming relationship with the merchants Tennants Moor & Co., stationed in Liverpool, and the cross-Pennine connection with the manufacturing firm Stansfield Brothers (see below), as well as its contact with Cuban agents. These types of networks, mostly a consequence of Huth’s association with Langworthy, provide good examples that demonstrate the importance of “micro-level interactions” as an explanation for both sociological and economic change. Granovetter highlighted how sociologists and economists have often failed to recognise “how interactions in small groups aggregate to form large scale patterns”. In other words, interpersonal and economic ties between individuals lead to wider social and economic trends by creating greater amounts of networks. He uses the example of how stronger ties inevitably lead to “larger time commitments” with other players. For example, if “A-B and A-C ties exist then the amount of time C spends with B depends in part on the amount of time A spends with B and C respectively”.¹⁰⁵ In this example Huth was usually the A tie that was connecting other merchants

¹⁰² Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 69.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 69.

¹⁰⁴ Granovetter, “The Strength of Weak Ties”, 1362.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 1362.

together. Langworthy's business relationships with Huth, Moor and Stansfield help us to understand the importance of informal merchant networks to Manchester's trade links during the early nineteenth century. It helps to build on Granovetter's observations on the significance of "micro-level interactions to macro-level patterns" within wider business and sociological shifts, something that has been less well studied in the literature.¹⁰⁶

The way the business connection was leading to more contacts is demonstrated by the fact that Huth was actively sending envoys from places like Cuba to have personal meetings with Langworthy in Manchester. In May 1835, Huth introduced Langworthy to a Havana agent called Dr Manuel Falcon. It informed Langworthy that it was sending Dr Falcon to Manchester to stay with Langworthy as a guest.¹⁰⁷ Falcon was an acquaintance of Huth's and a representative of Messrs Vazquez Falcon Echarte & Co., the Havana trading house. This Cuban house had been shipping consignments of sugar from Havana to London and Huth had insured its cargoes.¹⁰⁸ Huth and Vazquez Falcon Echarte & Co. were already in a close business relationship over this sugar trade before Dr Falcon visited Manchester. Falcon wanted to strengthen his mercantile relations with British traders, and it was Huth's wish for Langworthy to advise him of how its services would be able to benefit this Cuban house. It expected Langworthy to make every effort to ensure his comfort in Manchester and help cement a new trading connection. In the case of Dr Falcon, this Cuban agent was anxious to meet the Langworthy brothers himself. This example is reflective of how Langworthy's reputation overseas was having an equal benefit for Huth by attracting them further trade. This mutual interest generated another fruitful network for Langworthy in the case of Dr Falcon.

Cross-Pennine Connection

The Huth connection with Langworthy also integrated the Manchester firm into other networks in Britain, both in Leeds and Liverpool. Though Langworthy's relationship with Huth was cemented through the Leeds agent Hatton Hammer Stansfield, Langworthy was also using the services of the Leeds manufacturer Stansfield Brothers & Co. during the period. The cross-Pennine link with Stansfield placed them closer to other business communities including the London merchant banking scene. This then led to the firm's integration into other networks of merchants. Both the Leeds agent and the owners of the manufacturing firm there were related to each other by family and were part of the same business dynasty. Stansfield Brothers & Co. were listed in 1829 as stuff manufacturers, a type of

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 1360.

¹⁰⁷ YA2013.25/2/2 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 29th May 1835.

¹⁰⁸ Manuel Llorca-Jana, "Connections and Networks in Spain of a London Merchant Banker, 1800–1850", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 31, no.3, (2013).

woollen cloth. Langworthy was using its services during the 1830s. The firm's correspondence reveals how it was the agent H.H. Stansfield who placed Langworthy in contact with the Leeds manufacturer, the same agent who put Langworthy in contact with Huth.

Another factor that made this connection more likely was that H.H. Stansfield was listed officially as a wool agent who resided in the Leeds commercial buildings according to White's directory of Leeds professions from 1837.¹⁰⁹ Such was the importance of cotton exports to Huth's business that in 1841 Huth eventually dismissed H.H. Stansfield as its agent in the north on account of his refusal to reside in Manchester as it had wished. Though Stansfield did possess a Liverpool office, he was a Leeds-based agent first and foremost and wanted to remain in Leeds for most of the year, travelling to Manchester only intermittently, despite Huth's constant complaints that he should reside in either Manchester or Liverpool permanently.¹¹⁰ This was because Leeds was the main entrepôt of the Yorkshire wool trade but not the trade in printed cottons which represented a far higher percentage of Huth's exports overseas. Hence, despite being considered a specialist in the trade of printed cottons to South America, Stansfield had clearly developed his trade in the wool districts and was still more strongly associated with wool in Leeds business circles.

In Langworthy's case the strong family link between H.H. Stanfield and Stanfield Brothers played a key part in Langworthy coming into contact with the Leeds firm. In 1833 Stansfield Brothers wrote to Langworthy, stating:

*We are indebted to Mr H. H. Stansfield for the acquaintance with your respectable house which we shall feel happy to cultivate and now beg to enclose a pattern of satins for your inspection and shall be well pleased to be favoured with your kind orders in this article which will have our best attention.*¹¹¹

Langworthy's cross-Pennine link contributed to its close connection with Huth and vice versa. As H.H. Stansfield was Huth's main scouting agent in the north of England, he put Langworthy in contact with Stansfield Brothers for the specific purpose of supplying Huth's merchant ventures. The two firms were sending textile samples to each other in 1835. In February 1835 Stansfield Brothers sent cotton samples of satins in different shades of black to deduce which were most acceptable to its customer Langworthy.¹¹² Langworthy was also sending samples to Stansfield to source the textiles it required from the Leeds manufacturer. In one instance Stansfield had been able to procure 144 pieces of cloth

¹⁰⁹ White's Leeds Directory of Trades and Professions 1837.

¹¹⁰ Llorca-Jana, *Globalization of Merchant Banking*, 88.

¹¹¹ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Stansfield Brothers and Co., Leeds, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 13th July 1833.

¹¹² YA2013.25/2/1/2 Letter from Stansfield Brothers and Co., Leeds, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd February 1835.

that matched Langworthy's demands.¹¹³ The firm's willingness to serve Langworthy features heavily in the correspondence, and the interconnectedness of the goings on in Leeds and Manchester is evident. It was not just London networks that could change the course of a Manchester merchant's trade but other parts of the country as well.

Stansfield Brothers had built a trusted relationship with Langworthy during this period. The mutual respect between the firms is reflected in their openness to ask advice from each other. In one instance Stansfield asked Langworthy's personal opinion on a London-based trader that it was contemplating doing business with. Stansfield Brothers requested:

*In our yesterday's letter it was our intention to ask your opinion of the solidity of Messrs Ponides and Co., London, and we now take this liberty assuring you that we shall make the most courteous use of any information you will be pleased to give us for which we shall feel very much obliged.*¹¹⁴

Reciprocal confiding of this nature demonstrates the significance of trusted merchant networks in obtaining information and developing the confidence to trade. The more Langworthy became integrated into various networks of merchants and manufacturers the more information and advice could be transferred between them. In this instance the cross-Pennine connection with Stansfield was a key part of building the relationship with Huth and other merchants. In the correspondence with Langworthy, Huth frequently referred to Stansfield, who continued to act as a key communicator between the firms long after the relationship had initially been established.¹¹⁵

A Liverpool Connection

As well as cross-Pennine connections, Huth's association with Langworthy put the firm on track to forming networks with various Liverpool merchant firms. While many of these were not directly linked to Huth itself, Huth's influence in pushing Langworthy into particular markets meant that it naturally came into contact with Liverpool firms that specialised in forwarding goods to the markets Huth required. Tennants Moor & Co. represents just one of the many Liverpool merchant firms that participated in Langworthy's business because of Huth's guidance in thrusting the Manchester firm into a greater number of markets, in this case Cuba. Moor were listed as general merchants in Pigot's directory and operated out of Liverpool. By the time Langworthy was operating, Liverpool merchants were beginning to replace the London merchants as the main gateway to the export trade, though

¹¹³ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Stansfield Brothers and Co., Leeds, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 13th July 1835.

¹¹⁴ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Stansfield Brothers and Co., Leeds, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 14th July 1835.

¹¹⁵ YA2013/25/2/1/6 Letter from Frederick Huth and Co., London, to George Langworthy and Co., London, 6th May 1833.

London still remained important.¹¹⁶ Moor acted as an intermediary between Langworthy and the Cuban markets. The correspondence sent between Moor and Langworthy shows consignments of printed goods and cotton drills to be the chief products that were passed between them. Moor had an acute knowledge of the seasonal demands of Cuban buyers and how to select the best ships to take Langworthy's goods there. As well as acting as an intermediary between Langworthy and Cuba it was also offering the Manchester firm advice on what types of textiles to send, based on their suitability.¹¹⁷ In one example it wrote:

*We have looked at the sample and consider it very suitable to the Havana market but we would not recommend much at present as we fear a good deal is now on the way, (not however, for us) unless you could meet with it upon cheap terms.*¹¹⁸

Moor also advised on the time frames of the market. In December 1835 it told Langworthy to send its goods as quickly as possible on account of a Spanish ship weighing forty tonnes arriving in Liverpool, known as the *Antonia Bonifacio*, which was destined to sail for Havana with goods that would compete with Langworthy's.

*The Antonia Bonifacio is still here but is expected to be loaded this week, we shall be sorry if your prints are not in time for her. We will thank you to advise us when you can have them drawn for shipment and the quantity, that we may secure room for them if possible and the sooner they can be here the better.*¹¹⁹

Moor took on the responsibility of shipping, insuring and advising Langworthy on the best possible product selection for Cuban markets. The firm represents a good exemplar of the various middlemen and specialists that connected Lancashire manufacturers with overseas buyers in the post-Napoleonic War period.¹²⁰ However, it was still the global merchant banks that were the glue that held it all together. Without Huth's influence in pushing Langworthy into the Cuban market it is improbable that Langworthy and Moor would have worked with each other at all. Their example is once again testament to how one stronger business tie quickly led to a larger number of ties between many businesses which had dramatic implications for individual firms and the broader direction of the British textile trade during this period.

¹¹⁶ Giorgio Riello, "Cotton Textiles and the Industrial Revolution in a Global Context", *Past and Present* 255: (2022), 130.

¹¹⁷ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 30th April 1835.

¹¹⁸ YA2013.25/2/1/5 Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd April 1835.

¹¹⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.2 Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 9th December 1835.

¹²⁰ Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 71.

Conclusion

Langworthy's introduction to Huth in 1831 had a major impact on the firm's upward and global trajectory. It was this connection that increased the capacity of the Manchester firm and allowed it to expand the trade in textiles with much greater magnitude.¹²¹ Langworthy's bond with Huth gave it far greater geographical coverage in the export of its textiles. Huth was especially instrumental in opening up markets in the Pacific and in the Gulf of Mexico. Furthermore, Huth's large financial assets and contacts with underwriters gave Langworthy added security in its operations by reducing risk. The story of Huth and Langworthy provides a northern perspective on Chapman's observations regarding the significant role merchant banks played in opening up Britain's merchant trade potential during the first half of the nineteenth century. It sheds further light on the role merchant banks played in opening the Latin American markets to northern textile traders, a part of the story that has lacked attention in comparison to British exports to North America.

The connection between Langworthy and Huth was not random. Langworthy's reputation and ties with other traders played a large part in the formation of this business relationship. When Huth arrived in Britain towards the latter part of the Napoleonic Wars it took some time for the firm to integrate itself into the British economy and take advantage of the liberation of Latin American trade. A major catalyst that allowed them to do this was the ability of northern manufacturers to imitate and produce the right quality textiles that could penetrate Latin American markets, as previously discussed. These textiles could then be sold in exchange for North and South American produce which was imported back into Britain on Huth's account. Langworthy's strong knowledge of Latin American markets combined with its proficiency in the Spanish language made it a worthy ally to Huth. It was the expertise of a major merchant and manufacturer in Manchester and its strong competence in meeting market demands that greatly increased Huth's own success overseas. Equally, Huth's global reach and capital made it a formidable partner for Langworthy. This case neatly captures the significant role that merchant banks and accepting houses played in opening up the international trading scene to British textiles.

Finally, this example demonstrates the wider significance of interfirm networks and informal merchant ties in the British textile trade during this period. Joint ventures and cooperation between different firms provided an important catalyst in spreading Manchester's textiles around the globe. This has been largely overlooked in comparison to factors like production methods, formal trade associations and policies of the state. The weak ties that Huth and Langworthy shared eventually led to them coming together to form a much stronger tie which was highly beneficial to both firms. This

¹²¹ Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties", 1361.

strong tie then led to many other connections for Langworthy. While scholars have recognised the important role formal institutions played in helping Manchester's merchants to gain influence in foreign markets, this case study shows, in line with Rose's observations, the significance that business ties played in increasing export opportunities to overseas markets.¹²² Social networks of this kind played a large part in shaping the commercial history of the British textile trade and need to be explored further. This analysis of Huth and Langworthy's relationship points the way to further inquiry into similar case studies of interlinkages between firms as a way of better understanding and explaining larger global trading patterns.

¹²² Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 75.

Chapter 5: Langworthy and the Port of Liverpool, Brokers, Shippers and Commission Merchants

Liverpool 27th June 1833

We are shipping your 8 cases per venues Andrew to sail Saturday next. If you can have the Indies and Drills down on Saturday, they will be in time for this opportunity and which it is desirable to take advantage of your two Rio Packages and shipping for 1st June. We have yet scarcely a package on hand.

YA2013/25.2.1.7, Letter from Charles Ironside & Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy & Co., Manchester, 27th June 1833.

Liverpool 15th April 1835

The first-class ship Captain Watts is the next for Bahia to sail first wind after the 20th and by his ship your 11 packages SB/BB for your foot in nankeen insurance what ought to be down low as the conveyance is a first rate, our writer would with full amount be obliged if you could give the order to his favour friends Messer's Melhuish Gray and Co. London who we hold of the highest respectability as merchants and as brokers.

YA2013.25.2.2.2, Letter from Turner Brade & Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers & Co., Manchester, 15th April 1835.

Manchester's merchanting abilities were highly tied up with the success of Liverpool as a commercial port. Liverpool stood as the gateway to the overseas networks that Manchester merchants utilised to penetrate markets with cotton textiles. The utilisation of the merchant services that were established in Liverpool is a partial explanation of how Langworthy was able to master the export trade in cotton goods to the Atlantic world. Over the course of the eighteenth century, Liverpool built a highly developed merchant structure, much of which evolved from transatlantic slavery, which could be exploited by Manchester's textile merchants. Without the diversification and specialisation of merchant roles in Liverpool it would have been impractical for Langworthy to penetrate the scale and diversity of markets it did during the 1820s and 1830s. Moreover, without the stability they offered Langworthy would not have developed the confidence to partake in the global textile trade. Liverpool firms were integral to the viability of Langworthy focusing on certain markets and, just as with the Huth connection, played a crucial role in the direction of Langworthy's trade. The capacity of these merchants also allowed for openness to different payment methods and acted as a springboard to further contacts overseas.

However, few scholars have been able to show how the merchanting arrangements in Liverpool and Manchester interacted with each other in the pursuit of exporting finished textiles. The evidence from the Langworthy archive helps to fill this gap by offering a unique insight into the nature and pattern

of these types of business dynamics between the two locations. Unlike the previous chapter, which focused on Langworthy's exports on the account of a large merchant bank, this chapter reveals a different picture by looking at exports on Langworthy's own account and the independent connections it forged to make those operations possible. This chapter will demonstrate how forming trusted networks and strong reciprocal business relationships with Liverpool firms was essential in penetrating overseas markets and in acquiring incoming money, commodities and raw produce as payment. It reveals how raw commodities from Latin America and Brazil, especially, have been somewhat underestimated as a point of interest for Liverpool's businesses. The chapter shows how the specific resources and capabilities of these Liverpool firms were of central importance to the pattern of Langworthy's trade and its decisions to focus on certain markets. Furthermore, the distinct qualities of these Liverpool firms were a major asset in navigating the hazards and tribulations associated with exporting textiles overseas. As well as reliability, they were also important in giving Langworthy the self-assurance to take risks and explore novel markets. This is evidenced in Langworthy's relationship with various Liverpool merchant firms which it used to penetrate Latin America markets.

The letters quoted above were sent to Langworthy from two different types of merchant, a shipping firm and a forwarding agent, both based in Liverpool. The first is one of many correspondences that Langworthy received from the Liverpool shipping firm Charles Ironside & Co. which was responsible for the shipment of much of Langworthy's textiles to Brazil and Portugal. The letter details Ironside's intention to ship Langworthy's textiles on board the *Andrew*, which was destined for the port of Rio de Janeiro. The firm utilised several other shippers and agents in Liverpool to forward its goods to overseas markets. The other letter was sent to Langworthy in reference to a shipment of their textiles to Bahia in Brazil from the merchant firm, Turner Brade & Co., the key intermediary firm in Liverpool that Langworthy used to forward its goods to agents in Brazil. In the letter Brade requests Langworthy to implement insurance on the packages via the firm Melhuish Gray & Co. which was a London-based merchant and banker according to Pigot's directory of 1825.¹ However, Langworthy relied on a whole list of other Liverpool merchants to stay connected with various commission agents stationed around the world. Networks like these have been underestimated as a determining factor in the global spread of Manchester goods during this period.

These Liverpool networks might best be categorised as strong ties or what business theorists call dense networks because of the long lasting and reciprocal nature of the relationships.² At the same time more passive transactions were conducted with more sparse networks usually in the pursuit of

¹ Pigot's Directory, 1825–1826; London Street Directory 1843.

² Ishtaq P. Mahmood, Hongbin Zhu and Edward J. Zajac, "Where can capabilities come from? Network Ties and Capability Acquisition in Business Groups", *Strategic Management Journal* 32, no.8 (2011).

less familiar markets. This work focuses more on Langworthy's more established networks. Furthermore, Liverpool during this time had become a place of major business interest to merchants stationed throughout the whole country, many of whom had established branches in the port. Consequently, this chapter also looks at how the need for Manchester textile firms to form connections with Liverpool merchant firms led to Langworthy's association with businesses in other cities, such as London and Glasgow.

This chapter continues to uncover a much wider theme of this investigation, that being the manner in which the reliability of informal business networks contributed to the direction and growth of the global trade in Manchester textiles. As scholars of business networks in the Industrial Revolution have increasingly pointed out, few businessmen during the Industrial Revolution could rely on "institutions or general morality" to safeguard their trade but rather they depended on dealing with other individuals of "known repute" and allowed the reputation of other stakeholders to guide decision making.³ While most Liverpool merchant networks were built purely on trade rather than religion, family ties or ethnicity, scholars such as John Haggerty and Sheryllynne Haggerty have shown that this was not necessarily a disadvantage. Mutual respect for knowledge and skills could also lead to reliable expansion and this period was characterised by remarkable trust and a "lack of abuse" within networks.⁴ Consequently, in order to understand the growth of the British textile trade during this period, we need to establish the nature and trajectory of some of these connections and the significance they had in enhancing the confidence of Manchester textile exporters in their operations.

Liverpool's Development and the Literature

Before assessing these different networks, it seems prudent to first place them within the wider context of Liverpool's development. In the early nineteenth century, Liverpool became the main port for the importation of raw cotton from the West Indies, USA and Brazil,⁵ eventually superseding London as the main location for dealers in raw cotton. In addition, with the growing importance of overseas demand for British goods the port also became the main gateway to exporting abroad for textile traders operating out of Manchester. Rose has shown how the emergence of Liverpool as the main gateway to overseas trade helped to speed up communication in the Lancashire textiles industry. Manchester merchants and manufacturers began to rely on a port with its own sophisticated mercantile structure that was only around thirty miles away. It was the importance of raw cotton that

³ Robin Pearson and David Richardson, "Business Networking in the Industrial Revolution", *The Economic History Review* 54, no.4 (2001): 657.

⁴ John Haggerty and Sheryllynne Haggerty, "Visual Analytics of an Eighteenth-Century Business Network", *Enterprise and Society* 11, no.1 (2010): 4.

⁵ Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*, 26.

was at the heart of this movement. This was owing to the transfer of the raw cotton trade from London to Liverpool on account of the United States becoming Britain's biggest supplier. This led to the formation of a "class of merchants in Liverpool that acted as middlemen between American planters, shipping firms and cotton textile manufacturers, mainly spinners, in Lancashire."⁶

The evidence from firms such as Langworthy and Owens reveals that these merchant roles were also integral to firms that manufactured and merchanted finished textiles and not just the region's spinners. This was on account of the practice of procuring raw cotton as payment for exported goods. In his observations on Manchester's larger merchant-manufacturers, Chapman acknowledged that their success "was facilitated by the increase in size, wealth and expertise of the merchants of Liverpool."⁷ This was exemplified both in the tonnage of shipping and the number of shipping firms. However, this was also reflected in the growth of general merchants that were able to act in a similar fashion to their "London antecedents" as they were able to buy and sell on their own account.⁸ Clapp has shown how the expertise of these Liverpool firms also helped to direct Manchester merchants towards certain markets. He reveals how it was "Liverpool men" that pushed Owens to export to South America and placed the firm in contact with agents in Brazil, in this case the forwarding agent Daniel Buchanan. Clapp summarised the task of these Liverpool roles, "to forward merchants goods from Liverpool to the markets of the world, to supply clients with the latest news of Liverpool markets and to sell on commission the raw cotton and other produce in which merchants of Manchester were so often paid for their exports."⁹ Consequently, the raw cotton trade, Liverpool and the manufacturing of finished goods in Manchester cannot be separated but were all interconnected.

Both Rose and Chapman have acknowledged the significance of the physical port of Liverpool as a gateway to Manchester's textile trade. However, they did not manage to uncover in any detail the exact mechanisms and dynamics of merchant connections between Manchester and Liverpool. While scholars have acknowledged that Liverpool networks were crucial, few, with the exception of Clapp, have been able to unpick the qualitative subtext of these relationships and why specific actors were important. This was pointed out by Haggerty and Haggerty in relation to eighteenth-century Liverpool networks. They showed that without defining the features of business relationships it is difficult to truly understand the importance of business networks.¹⁰ This work has already looked at Langworthy's connections with merchant banks, however, this section looks at the key set of business networks with various agents, merchants, shippers and brokers located in the port for the importing of the raw

⁶ Ibid., 71.

⁷ Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking*, 8.

⁸ Ibid., 8.

⁹ Clapp, *John Owens*, 74.

¹⁰ Haggerty and Haggerty, "Visual Analytics", 5.

cotton and for the export and shipment of finished products to overseas markets. Liverpool houses were extremely influential in controlling the trade between specific markets and Lancashire. Such was the influence of Liverpool houses; it was often them setting the terms and strategy of businesses wishing to export or import.¹¹ The only exception to this would be firms which held their own branch in Liverpool such as Fielden Brothers. The firm had a factory in Todmorden, a warehouse in Manchester, but also a member of their own stationed in Liverpool to handle the shipments.¹² Langworthy, on the other hand, did not have their own branch in Liverpool as Fieldens did and so it was only natural that forming reliable connections in the port would be even more vital for the firm. By looking at several of Langworthy's partnerships with Liverpool shipping firms, brokers and forwarding agents we can uncover the substance of these connections.

Forwarding Agents and General Merchants

In order to form strong ties with overseas agents and accepting houses abroad, firms, like Langworthy, were required to cement links with intermediary firms and traders in Liverpool that could form the basis for these overseas contacts. These were known as forwarding agents or general merchants and were, in essence, the glue that kept the supply chain together. To get a sense of the influence of this type of Liverpool role in the performance of Manchester's textile firms we need to unpick the specific examples of when Langworthy used these types of businesses. The firms Turner Brade & Co., Tennants Moor & Co. and Alexander Johnston & Co. provide good case studies.

Turner Brade & Co.

Turner Brade & Co. provides a clear example of this type of firm. As well as acting as a forwarding merchant to the firm Schwind Brade & Co., in Brazil, the correspondence with Langworthy shows that the Liverpool merchant also conveyed Langworthy's goods to Argentina and the port of Buenos Aires.¹³ Without Turner Brade's work in commanding the Liverpool side of the supply chain it would have been virtually impossible for Langworthy to supply the Bahia market with any degree of efficiency and the firm would have been unable to be adaptive in their response to the market advice that was being sent to them from the overseas agents. Scholars such as Llorca-Jana have shown how because Liverpool firms had developed independently from those in Manchester, it was essential for most Manchester firms to have either a branch in the port or a connection with an agent there, such as Brade. He states

¹¹ Reber, *British Mercantile Houses in Buenos Aires*, 71.

¹² FDN 1/1/5, Letter from Thomas Fielden, Manchester, May 13th, 1812.

¹³ YA2013.25.2.2.3 Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool and Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 2nd March 1835

British merchants exporting to the Southern Cone needed either a forwarding agent in Liverpool or a branch there. After all the most outstanding feature of British mercantile enterprise in the first half of the nineteenth century was the rise of Liverpool.¹⁴

The example of Langworthy's fruitful connection with Turner Brade strongly reflects this.

At the head of this firm was Daniel Brade who had two brothers called Thomas and William, all who lived in Liverpool. Daniel's father and uncle, William and James Brade, had made much of their money in the trade in enslaved people hence, like many Liverpool firms, their lineage can be traced back to the days of transatlantic slavery. It is important to remember that many of the trade networks Langworthy utilised had already been well established before the firm came onto the scene. In Liverpool, many of these traders could trace their lineage to the slave trade which, though by this stage were no longer Liverpool's central business, were centrally linked to the mercantile structure Langworthy exploited.¹⁵ By this period Brade were both Liverpool merchants and brokers as the firm also sourced raw cotton from Brazil as remittance for sales made on Langworthy's account. Money, textile samples and information flowed through this network. On the 13th October 1831, Langworthy received a letter from Turner Brade with some samples of common striped nankeens enclosed (Figure 37). These were one of the most common product variants that Langworthy was exporting during this period. The firm mentioned that these samples had been received from Schwind Brade in Rio de Janeiro.

I have letters from friends in Rio, they do not say they have not written you, but they mention their intention of doing so with sales on the 21st same month of the January packet. We have received from them the enclosed samples with the following remarks.¹⁶

¹⁴ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 75.

¹⁵ S.G. Checkland, "Economic Attitudes in Liverpool, 1793–1807", *The Economic History Review* 5, no.1 (1952): 74.

¹⁶ YA2013.2.2.1, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 13th October 1831.



Figure 57, YA2013.25.2.2.1, Sample of Common Striped Nankeen attached to a letter sent by Turner Brade & Co., Liverpool, 13th October 1831

Both Schwind Brade and Turner Brade were intricately linked and connected by family. However, it is likely that it was Turner Brade which took the lead in this network. This was a common feature of Liverpool connections as Liverpool houses usually had overseas branches and extensions. In his study of Owen Owens and Sons, Clapp also found this to be the case. He showed how, by the 1830s and 1840s, forwarding agents in Liverpool with no overseas connections had been “squeezed out” of the market on account of the rise of Liverpool parent firms with their own overseas branches. These firms proved more efficient and could directly advise Owens on how best to ship textiles abroad. Clapp revealed how “One of the duties of the forwarding agent was to advise Owens on the relative merits of vessels advertised to sail for places he was interested in. For the most part Owens preferred to ship by the fastest and most seaworthy vessel available.”¹⁷ Consequently, just as in the case of Langworthy, these types of firms were more frequently used by Owens during the period.

A later correspondence sent to Langworthy in September 1833 is reflective of how Turner Brade also acted on Langworthy’s behalf in connection with London financiers and insurers. It was forwarding the cost of damages for a consignment to London for settlement.¹⁸ However, one of their communications from the following month of that year tells of one of their most important roles, which was keeping Langworthy informed of the state of sales on their account in Brazil and then forwarding them the credit. It passed £200 to Langworthy’s credit for sales in the Bahia region of

¹⁷ Clapp, *John Owens*, 26.

¹⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.1, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 9th September 1833.

Brazil.¹⁹ In a correspondence sent a few years later in April 1835 Turner Brade was keeping Langworthy informed of which ships were being loaded with Langworthy's goods and when they were due to set sail to their respective markets.²⁰

Turner Brade took it upon itself to oversee the insurance of Langworthy's consignments of goods on the crossing to Brazil, much of which was provided by London financiers. In many instances following this, Brade repeatedly organised and dictated the shipment operations of Langworthy's exports. Brade was an important mediator between Manchester firms like Langworthy and Liverpool shipping firms. Effective communication between Brade and Langworthy was an important part of ensuring these operations were carried out successfully. For example, in September 1835 Brade informed Langworthy that it was late in sending goods to Liverpool and was in danger of missing the slot on a voyage Brade had organised. It stated

*We beg to inform you, that the goods you have ready for Bahia if not entered before 3 o clock tomorrow will not be ready and have to lay over for the next vessel in April.*²¹

A later correspondence from October of that year reveals that Brade had the shipments logged well in advance so that if goods had missed a voyage, it was possible to know with a degree of certainty when the next available shipment could be made. Brade knew with accuracy the names of the vessels that were sailing to Brazil weeks and often months in advance.²² It would have been using Liverpool business circulars to keep abreast of what was happening and passing the information back to Langworthy. Strong reliable networks were fundamental in allowing businesses to operate in international markets because they increased the efficiency by which commercial news, information and resources could be accessed.²³

Turner Brade & Co. eventually went bankrupt in 1836 and so ended its trading relationship with Langworthy. Up until the moment of its bankruptcy it had been the most consistent Liverpool merchant firm to work with Langworthy during the early 1830s. It was, nevertheless, not the only Liverpool merchant Langworthy worked with, and the Manchester firm utilised other forwarding agents to penetrate overseas markets.

¹⁹ YA2013.25.2.1.7, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 15th October 1833.

²⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.2, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to Messer's Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th April 1835.

²¹ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to Messer's Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 29th September 1835.

²² YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to Messer's Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 7th October 1835.

²³ Pearson and Richardson, "Business Networking", 658.

Tennants Moor & Co.

It was essential for Langworthy to build close ties with firms like Brade which could specialise in the conveyance of goods to overseas ports while also feeding back information and profits. During this period merchant firms in Liverpool had become highly specialised in that certain firms focused on distinct markets. For Brade, this was Brazil. However, in order to forward goods to the Cuban market, Langworthy utilised the services of the Liverpool firm Tennants Moor & Co.

Tennants Moor & Co. were listed as merchants residing at the Chatham buildings in South Street, Liverpool, according to Gore's directory in 1834.²⁴ In the same vein as the Turner Brade network, Moor had a separate branch overseas that was subordinate to the parent firm which operated out of Liverpool. In this instance it was an agent stationed in Havana as opposed to Rio de Janeiro. However, as with Brade, Liverpool was the main base where operations were coordinated. The overseas component of the business went by the name of S.C. Tenant & Co. The correspondence sent from Moor to Langworthy reveal that Moor was responsible for organising the shipments to Cuba from 1831. The letters in the archive show that Moor was receiving cases of Langworthy's drills on board a ship called the *Charles Ferdinand* to Havana. On another occasion printed cords were arriving at Moor's hands to be exported on the *Antonia Bonafacio*.²⁵ Just like Turner Brade, Moor also organised the insurance for the cases of goods on the voyage.²⁶ The below bill of lading provides an interesting insight into how the shipping process took place and Moor's role within it.

Shipped in good order and well-conditioned by Tennants Moor and Co. of Liverpool in and upon the good ship or vessel called the Jane where of J Rathay is master for the present voyage now lying in the port of Liverpool and bound for Havana.

Nine Cases of Merchandise

Being marked and numbered as in the margin which are to be delivered in the like good order and well-conditioned at the present port of Havana all and every the dangers and accidents of the seas, rivers and navigation of whatever value and kind sooner expected into Messer's S.C. Tenant and Co. or to their assigns, he on they paying freight for the said merchandise at the rate of forty shillings per in measurement.

With ten percent therefore for the prime and average accustomed in witness whereof the mast of the aid ship hath subsided to Bills of lading all of this tenor and date, one of which being accomplished the rest to stand void based in Liverpool this day of September 1831.²⁷

²⁴ Gore's Directory of Liverpool and Its Environs for the Year, Jan 1834, 343.

²⁵ YA2013.25.2.1.3, Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, 5th November 1835.

²⁶ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Tennants Moor and Co., Liverpool, to Langworthy Brothers, Manchester, 30th April 1835.

²⁷ YA2013.25.2.2.6, Bill of Loading for Shipment of Nine Cases of Merchandise to Havana, September 1831.

This bill of lading makes it clear that it was Moor which took on responsibility for the shipment along with their subsidiary agent in Havana, S.C. Tennant & Co. Moor was clearly a specialist in merchanting goods to the port of Havana. Scholars such as Chapman have highlighted how it was the increasingly sophisticated division of tasks in Liverpool that allowed the major manufacturing and merchanting firms in Manchester to export with precision during the early nineteenth century. He states that

The emergence of this new breed of merchant-manufacturers in the provincial industrial regions was facilitated by the increase in the size, wealth, and expertise of the merchants of Liverpool. Already in the 1790s there was a specialisation by export destination and by commodities in a similar way to that defined by Mortimer for London.²⁸

In other words, these types of firms were the crucial ties that bonded Manchester-based firms to a given market. In the case of Langworthy and Cuba, it may be said that its tie with Moor was just as fundamental to its proclivity to concentrate its exports there as other reasons such as consumer demand, slavery or state policies. It was the expertise and contacts of the Moor business that partially acted as a catalyst for Langworthy concentrating on Cuba as opposed to alternative markets. The reliability and repetitive character of this business relationship further cemented this link with Cuba.

Alexander Johnston & Co.

The utilisation of forwarding agents and specialist merchants extended beyond purely the port of Liverpool. Manchester's economy was bound up with the rest of the British economy, especially other textile producing regions. Because of this Manchester's merchant networks also stretched to other ports that were concerned with the export of textiles, such as Hull and especially Glasgow.

This is reflected in Langworthy's association with the Glasgow-based firm Alex Johnston & Co. which it began working with from at least 1833. Johnston was a Glasgow merchant firm, however, it often sent shipments down the west coast of the country to Liverpool to pick up further shipments. Johnston had agents stationed in Liverpool as well. The firm was likely related to the firm Edward Johnston & Co. which made notable inroads into the importation of coffee from the Brazilian market during the 1830s and 1840s. The firm's founder Edward Johnston married the daughter of a man named Charles Alexander Moke in 1827 who was a coffee farmer in Rio de Janeiro, and this is likely to have given rise to the name of the branch in Glasgow.²⁹ Johnston was a type of general merchant and broker firm which also imported products into Liverpool. Most joint operations between Liverpool firms and Manchester textile merchants were based equally on the import of raw materials and the export of

²⁸ Stanley Chapman, "British Marketing Enterprise, The Changing Roles of Merchants, Manufacturers and Financiers, 1700–1860," *Business History Review* 53, no.2 (1979): 215.

²⁹ Carlos Gabriel Guimaraes, "English Presence in the Brazilian Empire, Edward Johnston & Co. and the Exports Trade, 1842–1852" *Rivesto Tempo* 21, no. 37 (2015): 207.

cloth. While this mostly centred on raw cotton, the example of Langworthy and Johnston rested on the import of dye substances such as indigo and cochineal.

The correspondence between Johnston and Langworthy reveals how, as with Brade and Moor, Johnston would keep Langworthy updated on when ships were to set to sail, and which voyages were best to take advantage off. One correspondence from September 1833 discloses how Johnston was sending shipments to Honduras from the Greenock docks near Glasgow in order to merchant Langworthy's textiles to that country in exchange for indigo and cochineal which were used as a form of remittance.

We last night Sunday received letters from Honduras to 1st August, 2 cases are noted as sold of our mark which we hope may prove satisfactory. We advised you in the 29th instant of the Catherine's day of sailing which we now confirm say 5th proximo. If you think of shipping be parted in having your goods in time at Greenock-not later than the 4th there is a possibility of their being in time on the 5th but you had better not trust it. From the advance of cochineal and Indigo in this country we anticipate a good business in Honduras and of this during next year and we think this is a very favourable time to make a shipment as there may not be another vessel sailing for some time.³⁰

On a later occasion in October 1835 Johnston informed Langworthy that it would be sending a shipment from the Clyde which would eventually arrive in Liverpool before departing to Honduras. Johnston implored Langworthy to liaise with their Liverpool contacts and get the goods to Liverpool on time. Johnston even went as far as to organise the transport of the goods from Manchester to Liverpool.

The ship has arrived from Honduras at Liverpool. This is advertised to sail from the Clyde at about the 10th of next month for Honduras. She will be at Liverpool Thursday next if you get your goods forwarded to Liverpool so as to be there before that day- get them put onboard of her, I will save carriage from Liverpool to herewith. Our agents at Liverpool are key, we mention this in case they may be of service to you.³¹

As with both Brade and Moor, Johnston was a merchant firm which Langworthy could rely on to specialise in the export of their textiles to a specific market, in this case Honduras. Unlike Moor and Brade, Johnston reflects the strong Scottish connection in Langworthy's trade network during this period.

Shipping Firms

Any analysis of Manchester's textile exporters during this period has to be looked at in conjunction with the rise of the shipping industry in Liverpool and the firms that were involved in this. Shipping

³⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.7, Letter from Alex Johnston and Co., Glasgow to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 30th September 1833.

³¹ YA2013.2.1.3, Letter from Alex Johnston and Co., Glasgow to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd October 1835.

firms were an essential link in the chain. Clapp has revealed how at the end of the Napoleonic Wars Manchester merchants are reputed to have had access to better shipping services than before the war owing to the fast steamers that had been introduced and the regular shipping services that had become customary. Voyages from Liverpool to Argentina took around ten weeks on average and about eight weeks for Brazil. The Liverpool shipping services were some of the most advanced in the world. However, despite the improvements, shipments and communications with South America were much slower than with North America. Clapp estimates that it could take as long as four to six months to receive replies to letters sent to South America.³² This improved with the packet lines that were introduced from 1835 and meant there were more regular services. It was the stable channels of shipping traffic that made Langworthy's commitment to overseas markets not only possible but also desirable. Merchants were now able to send and receive goods as well as correspondence with overseas agents on a more consistent basis than ever before.

During this period Langworthy succeeded in establishing reliable relationships with Liverpool shipping firms and this ensured it had a stable artery that connected it to its overseas buyers. This meant that the firm had a handful of trusted couriers who could repeatedly take its orders over time. One of the most interesting sources in the Langworthy collection is the bills of lading. These records of shipments show how Langworthy's consignments were being sent to ports all over the world. However, what is equally clear from the records is that Langworthy was also repeatedly using the same shipping firms to transport goods to overseas markets on its own account. One letter sent to the Manchester firm from the agent H.H. Stansfield, the main intermediary between Langworthy and the merchant bank Fredrick Huth & Co., shows a snapshot of different ships that were being loaded with Langworthy's goods for Valparaiso including names of captains and ship names.

To Messrs Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester

Progress of Vessels Loading in Liverpool for Valparaiso

Ship-Mary Scott, Captain-Scott, February 20 preparing for sea, Ship-Dyson, Captain-Stewart, February 13th cleared that day, Ship-Mary Ridgeway, Captain-Porleuy, February 23rd Sailed 18th Instant, Ship-Mary Walkin, Captain-Pollock, February 20th one now loaded, Ship-W Rushton, Captain-Stachan, February 20th beginning to load, Ship-Southampton, Captain-Brigg, February 20th, Ship-Phillips, Captain-Hull, 23rd Growing Dock, Ship-Maypo, Captain-Gragg, February 23rd nothing in.

*Agents Huth Gurnung and Co. from Valparaiso and Lima and Huth and Co., London.*³³

³² Clapp, *John Owens*, 28.

³³ YA2013.25.2.2.3, Letter sent from H.H. Stansfield, Market Street, Manchester, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, Undated.

Considering this is a description of vessels departing solely for Valparaiso, it gives us a picture of the scale of shipments that was taking place and the quantity of ships, loaded with Langworthy's goods, departing at any one time.

Charles Ironside & Co.

One of the most common firms mentioned is the Liverpool shipping firm Charles Ironside & Co. which was mainly responsible for taking Langworthy's goods to Latin American and Portuguese ports. However, it was also shipping Langworthy's goods to other ports in other countries, including New Orleans. Langworthy began using the services of this shipping firm from 1831.³⁴ The catalyst for Charles Ironside & Co. and Langworthy forming a close relationship was the trade to Rio de Janeiro and Lisbon. Ironside had developed its reputation in the trade during the 1820s and 1830s by becoming well known for specialising in the shipment of British goods to Portugal and Brazil.³⁵ As Rio de Janeiro and Brazil was the most common export destination for Langworthy's textiles this made their partnership likely as it was to each other's mutual interest.

The fact that Rio de Janeiro features as the most frequent destination for Ironside's vessels which contained Langworthy's goods shows how the firm was trusted by Manchester's exporters in the shipment of goods to that port. This helped to build Ironside's reputation and meant it became a highly successful shipping firm which is reflected in its longevity. It was shipping Manchester textiles throughout the 1830s and was still operating in Liverpool as late as the 1850s. A directory shows that in 1854 it owned a ship called the *Caractacus*.³⁶ Moreover, the firm's directors were still members of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce in 1851.³⁷ Charles Ironside eventually became a close business partner of the trader James Napier who was stationed in Bahia in Brazil. The two eventually formed the firm Ironside, Napier & Co. in 1845 which specialised in the coffee trade from Brazil. Ironside would also go on to specialise in the supply of steamships for trade with Santa Cruz by the 1850s. By 1854 the firms still had sailing vessels registered with the port of Liverpool.³⁸

³⁴ YA2013.25.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

³⁵ Guimaraes, "English Presence in the Brazilian Empire", 200.

³⁶ Marwood's Shipping Register of Sailing Vessels Registered at The Port of Liverpool, 1854.

³⁷ Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, First Annual Report of the Council, List of Members 1851. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, First Annual Report of the Council Presented to the Chamber at the General Meeting, 3rd February 1851, 32.

³⁸ Marwood's North of England, Maritime Directory and Shipping Register, Sunderland, March 1854 Sailing Vessels Registered at the Port of Liverpool.

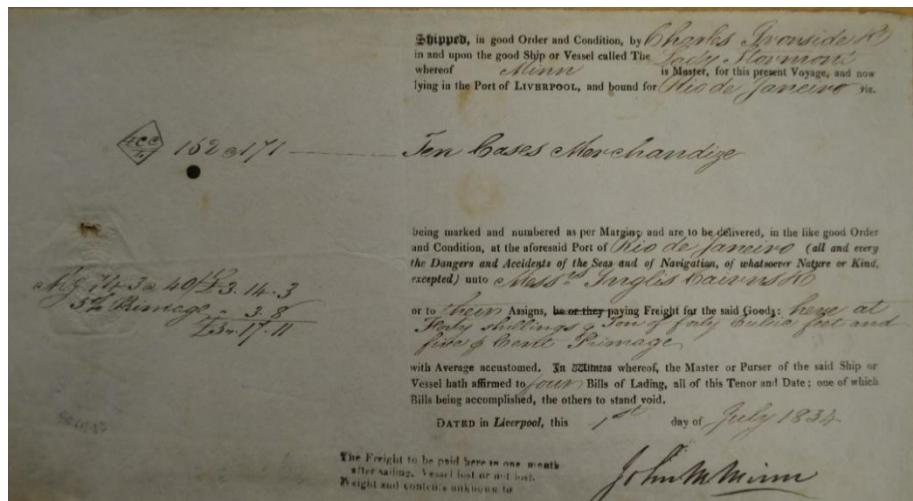


Figure 58, YA2013.2.2.6, Bill of Lading for Ten Cases of Merchandise destined for Rio de Janeiro, to be shipped by Charles Ironside & Co. on the Lady Stormont from Liverpool, 1st July 1834

The correspondence between Ironside and Langworthy reveal the closeness of the two firms and the degree to which Ironside played a pivotal role in the responsibility of Langworthy's shipments. For example, in June 1833 Ironside were shipping Indias and drills manufactured by Langworthy to Rio via a ship called the *Andrew*.³⁹ Ironside did occasionally ship goods to other locations for Langworthy other than just Lisbon and Rio. In May 1835, Ironside were shipping ten cases of Langworthy's blue Indias to Kingston, Jamaica. The vessel, the *Jamaica*, was captained by a Mr Simpson.⁴⁰ Scholars such as Chapman have revealed that there was a wide spectrum of shippers in Liverpool. He states that

*There are two lines of division between shippers. Shippers may be classified according to the markets with which they deal or according to the commodities in which they deal. At one extreme lie shippers who export almost anything to a particular place, while at another extreme may be found those who export a particular sort of thing anywhere.*⁴¹

In Ironside's case it shipped to multiple markets. However, this should not detract from the fact that it was Brazil and Portugal that was its biggest interests. In total Langworthy made eighty-one transactions with Ironside between 1831 and 1835, making it by far the most frequent and consistent firm Langworthy dealt with throughout the 1830s. For example, this number of transactions outnumbers even Tennants Moor & Co. with whom it made fifty-one separate transactions between 1830 and 1836 according to the accounts ledger.⁴² Ironside would eventually diversify its operations and become a major commercial player in the port. Edward Johnston and Alfred Booth would later

³⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.2, Letter from Charles Ironside and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 27th June 1833.

⁴⁰ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Charles Ironside and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 9th May 1835.

⁴¹ Chapman, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*, 114.

⁴² YA2013.25.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

join the firm after 1844 following their success in the coffee business in Rio de Janeiro and would eventually establish Booths which was one of the largest Liverpool shipping and banking firms during the nineteenth century.⁴³ It was from this firm that Charles Booth, the famous poverty investigator, originated and who would eventually take over the firm. Once again, it was the port of Rio and the Brazilian market which was the mutual point of interest that brought about the connection between Ironside, Johnston and Booth, just as it was for Ironside and Langworthy. Market forces were driving these networks and likewise the networks facilitated the market. Mutual specialisation and trading interests cemented them. Charles Ironside & Co. was the shipping firm most heavily used by Langworthy because Brazil was its most important overseas market. This resulted in a strong tie which gave Langworthy the ability to sustain a long-term commitment to the market.

Charles Taylor & Co.

Charles Taylor & Co. was another Liverpool firm closely tied with Langworthy and it regularly carried Langworthy's consignments to the South American ports, though unlike Charles Ironside & Co. the bills of lading show their vessels were mainly destined for ports like Buenos Aires and Montevideo as opposed to Rio de Janeiro. Charles Taylor and Sons was a significant trading partner for Langworthy during the whole period from 1824 to 1836. It is an example of a stronger tie in the same fashion as Ironside. During these years Langworthy made sixty-nine transactions with Taylor according to the accounts ledger.⁴⁴ Taylor was based in Liverpool but also controlled Langworthy's consignments to Tampico in Mexico and Buenos Aires through subsidiary houses of the names Taylor Bates & Co. in Mexico and C. Taylor and Sons in Buenos Aires. Langworthy entrusted large loads of consignments with Taylor. For example, on January 12th 1830, Langworthy sent 211 items to Charles Taylor & Co. in Mexico, which included 10 ¾ end stripes and some white drills. The cost came to £614,4,8.⁴⁵ The remittances from these locations would pass through Taylor in Liverpool in a similar fashion as remittances from Brazil passed through Turner Brade and through Tennants Moor from Havana. Some of the remittances from Mexico were in the form of specie. Once the Liverpool shipping firms had committed to undertake the business of ferrying Manchester's textile exports abroad, they would usually send back the charges in the form of a bill of lading to their Manchester customers at the time it was about to set sail. As well as bills of lading the correspondence between Langworthy and their

⁴³ Sherylllynne Haggerty, Anthony Webster and Nicolas J. White, eds., *The Empire in One City? Liverpool's Inconvenient Imperial Past* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2008).

⁴⁴ YA2013.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

⁴⁵ YA2013.25.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

shipping partners also makes it clear that merchants would have to pay to keep their goods in warehouses belonging to the Liverpool firms in the time before and after the voyage.⁴⁶

It was not always the case that a specific shipping firm specialised in the shipment of goods to one port. There are many examples of how Langworthy repeatedly used the same shipping company to take its goods to completely different destinations depending upon its orders. One example of this was the firm W.B. Prescott who were used by Langworthy to ship five bales of merchandise on board its ship the *Laura Ann* to Constantinople in February 1832.⁴⁷ However, in April of the same year it would use the same firm again to take six cases of goods to Gibraltar on board a different ship entirely. Individual shipping firms often owned numerous ships that were undertaking multiple journeys to different ports overseas. Langworthy could not hope to undertake such operations on its own as the firm did not own its own ships. Hence it was completely necessary to form these Liverpool connections. In his study of the British textile trade to South America, Llorca-Jana has shown that most British exporters of textiles to Latin America were using the services of Liverpool shipping firms on account of the general separation of the business of trading and ship owning. He points out how it was exceptionally rare for merchant houses to own their own fleets of ships during the early nineteenth century.⁴⁸ Without its own ships, Langworthy relied on shipping specialists.

Overall, Taylor and Ironside were the two most important shipping contacts for Langworthy. The fact they were prevalent in the shipment of goods to Latin American markets partly explains this. Liverpool was after all the most important port alongside Glasgow and London for the shipment of cotton goods to Latin America.

Weaker Shipping Ties

Langworthy was exporting goods to numerous markets other than just Brazil and Argentina. Consequently, Langworthy also utilised the services of a great number of other shippers in Liverpool with which it had much weaker ties in comparison to Ironside. While business success is often based on trust it is equally dependent on risk. In order to take risks Langworthy were required to reach out to less familiar contacts on a shorter-term basis. For example, the firm's correspondence shows it used a number of firms to ferry Manchester goods to New Orleans. It relied on the services of Messer's Cairns and Brown and Sons to take its goods to this market. The correspondence shows that Cairns

⁴⁶ YA2013/25/2.2.2 Bill for Warehouse storage in Tampico from Charles Taylor and Sons and Co., Liverpool, 11th May 1835.

⁴⁷ YA2013.25/2/2/6, Bill of Loading, W.B. Prescott, Shipment to Constantinople, 23rd February 1832.

⁴⁸ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 75.

took on the responsibility of shipping fifty-four packages of Langworthy's goods to the port in October 1835. The firm wrote to Langworthy

Dear Sirs, I duly received your favour of the 4th and have shipped the fifty four packages for New Orleans by the British Merchant to sail tomorrow. I would be obliged by you letting me have your invoice and return of post to enable me to get a certificate from the consul.⁴⁹

Once the ship had set sail the shipping firm would then send the charges to their customer. Consequently, the following day Langworthy did indeed receive correspondence from Cairns outlining the charges for the voyage to New Orleans.

Above are shipping charges on your fifty four packages for British Merchant for New Orleans's, to sail first fair wind and enclosed is stamp bill of lading for same. I have written to Mr and Mrs Calmant Brothers and Co. ordering insurance.⁵⁰

Just as with Ironside, Cairns helped organise the insurance of the consignments. This had become customary amongst Liverpool shippers; their role was far more sophisticated than purely conveying goods to markets. It was their specialist expertise that made them major contributors to the Lancashire export trade in textiles.

A less frequent shipping firm that Langworthy was associated with was of the name Walken Wilken which it used far less often than Charles Ironside & Co. This was partly due to the fact that it was mainly responsible for shipping Langworthy's goods to markets in the Levant, a part of the world that was less important for Langworthy's exports in comparison with Latin America. Nevertheless, it was important for textile exporters to form weaker ties and more sparse networks in Liverpool in order to branch out to other parts of the globe. The correspondence between Wilken and Langworthy show that this firm was shipping Langworthy's goods to locations such as Syria, Malta and Constantinople.⁵¹ The firm also shipped nankeens belonging to Langworthy to an overseas branch of the firm Castelli Brothers, located in the Cape of Good Hope, called Messrs Castelli Gustinarne & Co.⁵² The correspondence between Wilken and Langworthy is interesting in that it suggests that shippers had some influence on the decisions of merchants regarding the choice of market to send goods to. Wilken would inform Langworthy which vessels were about to sail to certain locations and would make suggestions about which consignments should be sent per ship.

⁴⁹ YA2013.2.1.3, Letter from Nathan Cairns and Brown and Sons, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 27th October 1835.

⁵⁰ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter from Nathan Cairns and Brown and Sons, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 28th October 1835.

⁵¹ YA2013.25, 2.1.2 Letter from Walken Wilken, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 19th December 1835.

⁵² YA2013.25, 2.1.2 Letter from Walken Wilken, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 28th December 1835.

While Ironside might be considered a strong tie or a form of dense network, because of the amount of time and intensity the firms spent together, other connections with shippers might be more fleeting and casual. An example of a much weaker tie included the shipping firm L.P. Mofield which was responsible for transporting Langworthy's textiles to Calcutta and Bombay.⁵³ These goods were going to the overseas house of Messrs Lyall Matheson & Co., a related firm to the much bigger and more famous house of Jardine Matheson & Co. Once again Langworthy made less shipments to India than to other markets and consequently it used the services of Mofield less often than other shippers.

A continual question one must ask when looking at the direction of trading operations is the degree to which merchants like Langworthy chose to form stronger ties with some firms because they specialised in the markets that they were already interested in conducting business with or whether it was the case that firms chose to trade in some particular markets because of the quality of their existing relationships with firms that operated in them. The answer was surely a mixture of both. For example, Langworthy's stronger tie with Ironside contributed to the firm continuing to focus on Brazil on account of the familiarity it had with those networks. This was why it was important for firms like Langworthy to have a more varied number of perhaps weaker ties as well as its more trusted relationships. This allowed the firm to experiment and try its luck elsewhere.

This is an occurrence that has been observed by Sherylllynne Haggerty. She has pointed out how "not all ties are equally valuable or comparable, and ties may well be used for different purposes, through a number of different interlinking networks."⁵⁴ She makes the argument that it was sometimes the case that denser networks could become stale and result in "dubious benefits" whereas "building up weak ties was especially important if the weak tie acted as a bridge to other networks."⁵⁵ This is what network theorists such as Granovetter have recognised as being the "strength of weak ties".⁵⁶ This was why Langworthy's less consistent ties and contacts are also important to consider alongside the stronger links as determining forces in the path that merchant firms in Manchester took, especially in relation to Liverpool firms, which were the key liaisons with overseas ports.

The Importance of Brazilian Cotton to Liverpool Merchant Roles

Scholars have frequently recognised how Liverpool's mercantile community was bound up with the importance of North American cotton which fed the Lancashire textile industry. However, there has been less recognition of the significance of Brazilian cotton, and other forms of Brazilian produce,

⁵³ YA2013.25, 2.1.4 Letter from L P Mofield, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th March 1835.

⁵⁴ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 166.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties".

which have both been underestimated in their importance to the development of Liverpool's business community. The degree to which Liverpool shipping networks were tied to the prevalence of the Brazilian trade is reflected in the Brazilian Association of Liverpool which was established by the merchants and shipowners of Liverpool to help protect the interests of traders who were engaged in the export and import of products with Brazil. The importance of the Brazilian trade is reflected in a petition to Parliament from the Liverpool merchants in 1833, the same time that Langworthy was using Liverpool services to ship textiles there. The petition was asking for the removal of what the Liverpool traders saw as excessive duties on the importation of Brazilian products such as coffee. They made the point in the petition that

The Trade with Brazil has now become one of the most important branches of our foreign commerce and deserves the special protection and encouragement of the state. Our exports of British manufactures and produce to that Empire, amounting annually to the value of upwards of Three Million Sterling which manufacturers and produce are admitted freely and on the most favoured terms for consumption in that country and with which its people are almost exclusively clothed.⁵⁷

However, while the petition recognises the fundamental importance of the export trade, it was the import of produce from Brazil such as sugar, coffee and rum which were used as remittance and payment for British exports that was their chief concern. It stated that Brazil

affords ample means of payment for this merchandise in her many and rich productions and of freighting back to this kingdom an immense tonnage of British shipping but that none of these articles are admissible on practical terms for use or consumption in this country, except the before mentioned articles of cotton, tobacco and hides which form but a very small portion of the value of the whole.⁵⁸

The British textile trade was a business that depended on a balance between exports and imports as much of the trade went to overseas markets. Even in the case of Manchester manufacturers and merchants the import of silver and produce was important to their export operations. However, in order to source these items, these businesses had to rely on Liverpool merchants which specialised in the importation and sale of Brazilian produce in Liverpool. While state policies and trade associations were important it was the function provided by merchants in Liverpool which ultimately facilitated this aspect of the textile trade. This brings us to the next type of merchant role Langworthy heavily utilised, that being the Liverpool broker.

⁵⁷ Some Remarks and Explanatory Observations on a Petition to Parliament from the Merchants and Shipowners of Liverpool Praying for the Admission to Consumption on the Products of Brazil Addressed to the Right Honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer by a Member of the Brazilian Association of Liverpool, G and J Robinson, Castle Street, Liverpool, 1833.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

Cotton Brokers

The Langworthy archive demonstrates the significance of the expertise of Liverpool traders in the buying and selling of produce and its influence in the merchanting of Manchester's textiles to Latin American markets. Merchants invested in overseas markets benefited from their ability to reap rewards from cotton imports as well as textile exports. The first importation of cotton into Liverpool was in 1758 and, from the last quarter of the eighteenth century, Liverpool became the biggest cotton market for the whole country.⁵⁹ Specialist buying brokers, with the intention of sourcing and importing commodities like cotton, became synonymous with the port. They became experts on the best choice of cotton available and understood the strengths and weaknesses of different varieties. To import raw cotton as remittance for the goods exported overseas, Langworthy had to rely on the expertise of these specialist broker firms. In 1807 there was a total of twenty brokers and dealers stationed in Liverpool and this number continued to increase thereafter.⁶⁰ It was not uncommon for manufacturing firms to source raw cotton from Liverpool brokers to use in their own production of textiles. For example, the records of Rylands and Son, which focused on making textiles for the home market, show that it was using the services of Daniel Buchanan, a well-known cotton broker.⁶¹ However, as Langworthy was mainly occupied with the latter stages of production and finishing, the firm was not using this cotton in its own manufacturing process. Rather it used brokers to secure goods as payment for consignments sent to foreign markets as opposed to silver or cash.

The rise of sophisticated cotton brokers in Liverpool partly mirrors the continued importance that slavery played in the British textile trade. Consequently, before assessing the different Liverpool brokers that contributed to Langworthy's business operations, through the importation of raw cotton and other types of produce, it is first essential to highlight the way in which slave labour underpinned many of these ventures. Manchester's merchants regularly imported raw cotton grown on slave plantations in places like Brazil and the USA in exchange for manufactured textiles. This is reflected in the actions of Langworthy and other Manchester traders such as Owen Owens and Sons. The cotton brokers of Liverpool were an integral part of this process. Research conducted by Katie Haynes into the records of the Manchester merchant John Owens has shed further light into how this process worked. She has shown how planters who owned the cotton plantations would sell cotton to brokers

⁵⁹ Stanley Dumbell, "Early Liverpool Cotton Imports and the Organisation of the Liverpool Cotton Market in the Eighteenth Century", *The Economic Journal* 33, no.131 (1923): 369.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 369.

⁶¹ R/1/2/4, Rylands and Sons Account Book, Transactions with Daniel Buchanan, November 1829–October 1831.

who would then trade it to merchants.⁶² For Owens, most of this cotton came from South Carolina and Louisiana. Haynes has managed to pinpoint a specific plantation in South Carolina which was run by a William Harrison Ellison.⁶³ This can be deduced from the identification marks on the cotton bales. The expansion of slavery was chiefly the result of the expansion of the cotton trade and in the case of Langworthy the business was regularly importing slave-grown Brazilian cotton to be used, by manufacturers, back in Manchester. It did this via several Liverpool cotton brokers.

Molyneux Taylor & Co.

One of the most important examples was the broker, Molyneux Taylor & Co. Langworthy found a worthy partner in Molyneux Taylor due to its expertise which Langworthy could trust and rely on to make the best arrangements in the buying and selling of cotton on its account. This was as remittance for the consignments of textiles it had sent to Latin America. This firm started as a partnership formed in 1831 between Mr Edmund Molyneux and Mr David Taylor. Molyneux Taylor was one of the most formidable experts in sourcing raw cotton and a major player in the Liverpool Cotton Exchange. The firm was first established in 1796. As well as being buyers and sellers in raw cotton the firm also traded in other forms of general produce such as sugar. This broker firm had its origins in earlier partnerships that had been formed around 1816 between Joseph Greaves and Anthony Molyneux.⁶⁴ By 1839 the firm had become Molyneux Witherby & Co. and was responsible at that time for 5.23% of all the raw cotton imported into Liverpool.⁶⁵ The firm would continue to be successful throughout the first half of the nineteenth century until it was eventually dissolved in 1858.⁶⁶

During this period Langworthy was receiving the cotton from Langworthy's Brazilian agents Schwind Brade Johnston & Co. account as payment for the consignments of textiles it had sent there. This was done via the services of Molyneux Taylor. These imports were often large, for example, in one instance Taylor pays Schwind £500 on Langworthy's account for bags of cotton.⁶⁷ Langworthy had formed a fairly strong tie with one of the most successful of all the cotton brokers to develop in Liverpool and this was to play a major part in the success of the firm's business ventures. This example of Langworthy using Taylor to import commodities mirrors the similar practice which was undertaken by Owen Owens and Sons which also imported raw produce from Latin American markets as payment for the

⁶² Katie Haynes, "John Owens", *Rylands Blog, Rylands Collections*, 18th September 2023, <https://rylandscollections.com/2023/09/18/john-owens/>.

⁶³ Ibid.

⁶⁴ Thomas Ellison, *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain* (London: Frank Cass and Co., 1886).

⁶⁵ Nigel Hall, "Liverpool's Cotton Merchants and Importers 1700–1914", *Northern History* 54, no.1 (2017).

⁶⁶ *London Gazette*, 4th January 1859.

⁶⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.3, Letter from Molyneux Taylor & Co. to Langworthy Brothers, sent from Liverpool, 28th November 1835.

shipments of goods it sent there. This was not always raw cotton but could include other produce such as hides. For example, in 1841 Owens was importing salted hides from Argentina through an agent called John Jackson.⁶⁸ Firms like Langworthy and Owens would then sell this raw produce on to other buyers. Molyneux Taylor also represented other firms' interests in Liverpool such as the Glasgow cotton brokers Kelly & Co. which Langworthy also traded with. The Glasgow relationship is particularly interesting. As per the logic of strong ties and dense business networks, Langworthy's association with Molyneux Taylor then gave the firm access to weaker ties of brokers in other ports around Britain.

A letter sent to Langworthy from Taylor in October 1835 reveals that Taylor was sourcing the raw cotton from the Bahia and Pernambuco regions of Brazil.⁶⁹ However, it was also sourcing and selling North American cotton on Langworthy's account. All of this cotton would have been grown on the slave plantations that dominated the Brazilian and USA economies during this period. In October 1835 the firm sold 3,500 bags of cotton on Langworthy's account. The following month Taylor managed to sell another fifty bales of Bahia cotton for Langworthy despite the reportedly dull state of the market during that time.⁷⁰ Taylor was also working closely with Langworthy's other networks of traders in Brazil to acquire the raw cotton, especially the Schwind Brade contacts, Langworthy's most notable agents in Brazil. For example, at the end of November 1835 Taylor wrote to Langworthy stating that

We are in receipt of your favour of the 23rd instant and note contents; we have paid in your account to Messer's Schwind £500 on a further advance on your cotton under our care, which we wish you to acknowledge. We see no prospect of any improvement in the market, and we think we shall best consult your interests by closing what we hold of yours the best price our market will afford. Today 1500 bags, about 500 of which are Brazil the market very dull. Referring you to the annexed circular.⁷¹

In this instance the Schwind and Molyneux Taylor partnerships had managed to ferry £500 worth of cotton from Brazil for Langworthy. The correspondence also reveals that Taylor, in a similar vein to the other Liverpool partnerships, was keeping Langworthy informed of the state of the market and what actions it was carrying out to serve Langworthy's best interests. In this instance it advised Langworthy to settle on the best price that could be afforded in the market at that time. Likewise in December of that year Taylor did not make any sales on Langworthy's account as it deduced that the

⁶⁸ OWN 3/2/4/2/1, Letter from John Jackson, Monte Video, to Owen Owens and Son's, Manchester, 5th February 1841.

⁶⁹ YA2013.25. 2.1.3, Letter from Molyneux Taylor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 3rd October 1835.

⁷⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.2, Letter from Molyneux Taylor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 11th November 1835.

⁷¹ YA2013.2.1.3, Letter from Molyneux Taylor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 28th November 1835

prices were too low despite possessing another fifty bags of cotton.⁷² The firm was keen to put Langworthy's anxieties at ease by promising to dispose of some of Langworthy's stock the following week.

Langworthy and Taylor's association is reflective of the intermarriage of interests between Liverpool and Manchester and the important role specialist Liverpool firms played in the export trade of Lancashire textiles to Latin America during this period. The growth of Brazil's trade with Manchester provided a complementary opportunity for both Langworthy and Taylor and this made their trading relationship strong. In a sense the Liverpool brokers gained an advantage in partaking in business with Manchester's textile exporters. Hyde, Parkinson and Marriner, in their study of Liverpool brokers, have found similar evidence that supports this argument. They have revealed how Liverpool's cotton brokers purposely employed a strategy whereby importers of cotton became dependent upon their services, giving them the exclusive right to buy and sell cotton for the firm they served. In return the importer gained the assurance that its business concerns would be adequately met because of the expertise and reliability of the broker.⁷³

Langworthy was happy for Taylor to make the best arrangements on their behalf in Liverpool and Taylor were grateful for the trade Langworthy's textile exports to Brazil provided them. In his study of Lancashire textile exports to North America during the early nineteenth century, Maw also pointed out the integral role of Liverpool brokers to American merchants that were importing British goods. He showed that the most significant contribution provided by Liverpool's mercantile firms and those of American origin based in London was felt chiefly in the import trades. They helped to facilitate the selling of raw cotton into England on behalf of American firms and the sale of English goods into America.⁷⁴ Just as with Maw's observations of the significance of Liverpool merchants to the trade with North America, the Langworthy evidence is demonstrative of their equal importance to South American markets.

Firms with Diversified Roles

Not all the firms Langworthy used to acquire raw produce were purely brokers. As with the difficulties of defining different types of firms in Manchester, the same was true for Liverpool where there was an equal amount of diversification of roles. Many Liverpool firms undertook multiple roles

⁷² YA2013/25/2/1/3, Letter from Molyneux Taylor and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 5th December 1835

⁷³ Francis E. Hyde, Bradbury B. Parkinson and Sheila Marriner, "The Cotton Broker and the Rise of the Liverpool Cotton Market", *The Economic History Review* 8, no.1 (1955)

⁷⁴ Maw, "Anglo-American Trade during the Industrial Revolution", 306.

simultaneously. Chapman has highlighted how this can make it difficult for historians to make sense of merchant roles in Liverpool. He stated that

The textbook definitions of divisions between merchants, factors, brokers, and the variety of middleman are taken as read, not only because there is ample literature on the subject but also because in practice roles frequently overlapped.⁷⁵

Turner Brade & Co. were general brokers as well as merchants and consequently the firm also partook in the sourcing and sale of raw cotton on Langworthy's account in a similar manner as Taylor. This meant that just as with Molyneux Taylor, Langworthy could also use its expertise in sourcing produce from Brazil to acquire raw cotton as remittance for its consignments. Sometimes the quantity of these remittances could be sizeable. In April 1835 Brade sent Langworthy account sales of fifty bags of cotton which it would have sold in Liverpool on Langworthy's account.

When we handed you the account sales of the above 50 bags of cotton, there was omitted the above charge.⁷⁶

In a further instance in July of that year the firm was remitting Langworthy £700 for cotton sales.

How will it be agreeable to you to arrange for the £700 due on the 20th? We can get an advance of 7% per bag in your cotton, shall we do, and you will remit the difference in time or remit £700. Your Answer will oblige.⁷⁷

This shows how Langworthy's tie with Turner Brade & Co. was also facilitating more flexible methods of acquiring profits for their efforts in the export business. Ultimately, this openness to different payment options in commodities, provided by these Liverpool firms, was a decisive component in the viability of the export trade in Manchester cottons to the Americas during this stage in the development of the British textile industry.

Conclusion

Langworthy formed strong familiar connections with several Liverpool shippers, brokers, forwarding agents and merchants during the 1820s and 1830s. It used these networks to ship and forward goods to overseas ports as well as to import raw produce from the markets it was engaged in. Different firms were selected based on their expertise in bridging the gap with certain markets. These examples have shown the importance of Liverpool merchant roles as advisors, confidants and conveyors of important market information. The strong reliability of these networks allowed commercial news and resources to pass through markets efficiently and were more important to merchants than formal institutions.

⁷⁵ Chapman, "British Marketing Enterprise", 207.

⁷⁶ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter sent from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 21st April 1835.

⁷⁷ YA2013.2.2.2, Letter sent from Turner Brade and Co., Liverpool to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 11th July 1835.

These networks were imperative to carrying out the complexity of their mercantile ventures and in opening new opportunities for the firm. For many Liverpool firms, such as Molyneux Taylor & Co., this was part of the strategy to make Manchester businesses reliant on them. As Langworthy was a very well-established firm it makes sense that it was connected to some of the most successful of Liverpool's traders.

Furthermore, it was the specific nature and qualities of these Liverpool firms that significantly influenced Langworthy's business decisions, especially in relation to which markets it chose to export to. The choices and expertise of Liverpool businesses in relation to markets dictated much of the strategy back in Manchester. As with Langworthy's relationship with Fredrick Huth & Co., these Liverpool connections demonstrate the importance of the combination of loose and dense networks in both facilitating and dictating the direction of a firm's trade. Langworthy's success in penetrating markets like Brazil or Cuba very much depended on the firm's strong ties and trusted contacts such as Turner Brade & Co. and Tennants Moor & Co. Many of these contacts were based on mutual trading interests, however, some networks were reinforced by family connections and friendships too.

Other markets required looser networks or weaker ties to help take risks and spread the trade further. As well as the more established links, there was a degree of flexibility and ease by which new contacts could be initiated in Liverpool. This lack of rigidity which characterised Liverpool's merchant structure could lead to the generation of new networks which allowed Langworthy to experiment with less familiar markets on short notice. The roles of these firms were also malleable, and it was common for Liverpool businesses to perform many roles at the same time. This gave merchant operations added adaptability, including exposure to different methods of payment.

Chapter Six: Manchester's Distribution Networks in Britain and Overseas

Constantinople 25th June 1831

Messer's George Langworthy and Co.

By the Jackson from Liverpool received a consignment of 400 nankeens and 40 pieces of linen drills which my brother Francis informs me are for your account on the 10th instant. I advised him of the sale of the former at 56/40 per yard. Sales remitted him on the account £100 and requested that he would transmit the sale to you when accepted. The price will not leave a profit on your invoice but as I saw no immediate prospect of improvement and found my neighbours were realising at this rate, I felt I was acting for your interest in disposing of them. I hope you will be satisfied. Of the drills I have only placed 10 pieces which pays well, it is however an article of trifling contemplation, and I cannot recommend a further shipment this season, nankeens are saleable throughout the year and perhaps in the autumn a trifle more may be obtainable. Should you require information on manufacturers generally I shall be most happy to follow up a more detailed correspondence.

Charles Ede

YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy & Co., Manchester, 25th June 1831.

A key catalyst in the success of Manchester's textile manufacturers and merchants during the first half of the nineteenth century was in their ability to form links with competent agents and accepting firms stationed both in overseas ports and in Britain's main commercial centres such as London and Glasgow. Langworthy's propensity to supply many markets was built on its willingness to form effective connections with expert buyers, commissioners and recipients. This chapter unpicks how Manchester textile firms, like Langworthy, used other businesses to accept and distribute their goods, especially firms based in London. This often included firms that acted as commission agents or as agency houses. Agency houses were firms that conducted business for other houses, usually for a commission, and so many were also referred to as commission agents.¹ These types of organisations became more common with the decline of the monopolies of the major trading companies such as the East India Company which controlled most of the trade to the Far East until the end of the Napoleonic Wars in 1815.² Thereafter an increasing number of these types of houses developed in Eastern and Latin American markets in order to receive British goods. The importance of these types of business roles and relationships is reflected in an analysis of Langworthy Brothers & Co.'s merchant networks which demonstrate the degree to which trusted recipients of goods, both overseas and in Britain, allowed Manchester's firms to form stable connections with markets and gain familiarity with them.

¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 107.

² Ibid.

In the case of Langworthy, this means looking at its overseas networks with agents such as Charles Ede in Constantinople and other houses such as Eversmann and Hoffman in Mexico. These types of overseas firms became indispensable to Langworthy's ability to react to markets and facilitate consignments on its own account. This chapter looks at these firms through a geographical lens and discusses Langworthy's overseas agents in separate sections by region. In addition to its overseas contacts, London also featured as a major recipient of Manchester goods. Many London-based firms acted as distributors of northern goods to their networks of contacts in international markets. It was the financial resources of London that made the spread of overseas agents to Latin America and the Orient possible.³ For Langworthy this included Castelli Brothers and James Deacon and Sons. However, there were many more contacts in London that were used by Langworthy to expand the firm's merchant networks across overseas markets. As a result, London's commercial community features heavily in this part of Langworthy's story.

As well as the Langworthy archive, this chapter also looks at other comparative firms. The records of Owen Owens and Sons are especially good at highlighting the importance of commissions agents as this firm worked closely with some of the most well-known Latin American based commission agents of the period. This included the firm Hodgson and Robinson. Owens' connections to competent agents in Argentina acted as a catalyst in making South America the firm's biggest interest and as a result the correspondence sent to Owens from its agents abroad feature heavily in this study. The case of Fielden Brothers also offers another good example by which to demonstrate the importance of forming merchant networks with other traders to distribute and sell textiles. Fieldens were one of the most successful of all Lancashire's textile businesses during the nineteenth century and just as with Owens, Hodgson and Robinson were one of its biggest recipients of goods.⁴

Historiographical Context of Business Networks

Haggerty has asserted that merchant success was "reliant on knowing people with whom to take risks and whom to trust, gaining information on reputation and the social pressure to fulfil obligations – the merchants' networks."⁵ Langworthy's association with overseas houses are reflective of Haggerty's observations. This is especially the case when one considers that these agents were responsible for handling consignments on Langworthy's own account. This was a much riskier operation in comparison to trading on the account of larger traders, like Huth, as the risk resided with Langworthy. Hence trust with agents was even more critical.⁶ For Langworthy it might be said that it

³ Chapman, *The Rise of Merchant Banking*, 15.

⁴ Law, *Fieldens of Todmorden*, 46.

⁵ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 3.

⁶ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 134.

relied on a mixture of what social network theorists have termed as “sparse and dense networks” in that it relied on casual and irregular contacts to forward its textiles while also developing much stronger and more regular relationships with others.⁷ Haggerty, in her work on mercantile culture in the Atlantic world during the early nineteenth century, has highlighted the significance that sparse networks of traders played in fostering exchanges in business.

In the ever-growing and changing mercantile community of the Atlantic world, it was not always possible to know ‘of’, let alone personally ‘know’, all your correspondents. Most of these trading relationships were within non-negotiated exchanges; that is, not subject to formal contracts.⁸

The correspondence sent to Langworthy in Manchester from overseas agents and London distributors further demonstrates the importance of webs of traders to the flow of cash, information and products in relation to cotton textiles. These sparse networks, often formed outside of formal institutions, allowed firms to send and receive information across international boundaries. The advantages to these types of networks are clear to business theorists such as Mark Casson who has demonstrated that business networks tend to develop “quite naturally” and act as “co-ordinating mechanisms” that dictate the strategy of businesses and general patterns of trading.⁹ Cooperative networks such as these that are made up by multiple firms continue to play a highly significant role the growth of the international economy.¹⁰ The same principal can be applied to the spread of the British textile trade during the early nineteenth century; however, scholars have tended to neglect this aspect and have concentrated more on technology, product quality and fiscal explanations. With the exception of Chapman and Haggerty, many of the grand narratives of industrialisation tend to focus on a specific invention such as Arkwright’s water frame or Crompton’s spinning mule. More recent work such as that of Beckert and Ashworth have stressed the significance of imperialism and state policies. However, there has been less acknowledgement within the literature of the degree to which social networks and cooperation between the different business actors within them also played a part in the rise of industrial capitalism. This analysis of Langworthy’s networks of agents provides a more specific and detailed example that builds on the wider observations made by Haggerty and Chapman. Just as with previous chapters, this chapter shows that these types of networks were usually formed organically and outside of formal institutions, a fact that is often overlooked in the historiography.

The general oversight in the literature means that many narratives do not fully contend with the reality that a combination of scattered and dense networks of traders with different functions played an

⁷ Mahmood, Zhu and Zajac, “Where can capabilities come from?”, 827.

⁸ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 51.

⁹ Mark Casson, “Entrepreneurial Networks in International Business”, *Business and Economic History* 26, no.2 (1992): 811.

¹⁰ Ibid.

exponential role in fostering success in the export of Manchester cottons. The information and experiences communicated through these networks provided space for commercial improvement and cemented trading links that fostered trade. Sometimes these networks would begin with relatively casual and circumstantial encounters but would eventually become more cemented over time and played a major role in the economic environment. Weak ties would then often turn into much stronger ties as more regular and trusted reciprocity formed between firms.¹¹ This is demonstrated in Langworthy's relationship with the City of London and the commercial world it provided. Cementing connections with merchant roles in London was often the key to unlocking further ties with merchants stationed overseas. This interplay of sparse and dense networks allowed Manchester's textile merchants to penetrate overseas markets with goods.

Commission Agents, Distributors and the Growth of Manchester's Textile Trade

Interrogating this subject further uncovers one of the most important links in the commercial web, that being the overseas commission agent, or merchant, along with various other forms of recipient who could receive Langworthy's goods and distribute them to buyers. The rise of Manchester's textile industry coincided with a growingly sophisticated merchant structure and webs of agents that built their reputation on the selling of other firms' stock on a consignment basis. These firms would accept consignments of goods sent to them from producers back in Britain and then sell them on for a commission. Often, they would sell stocks of products on the account of the merchant firm back home as in the case of Langworthy's consignments of goods to Brazil. This meant that while the agent was handling the goods, they were still owned by the consigning firm back in Britain. These agents could take many forms. In some instances, a direct member or employee of a firm stationed themselves overseas. However, more often northern manufacturers and merchants were using the services of another business to accept their exports. Furthermore, commission agents eventually grew into larger and more sophisticated enterprises which gave way to the agency system, where larger firms, most of whom were stationed in London, could buy and sell the products of northern manufacturers. Chapman states that

The term agency house implies that, like most other British merchant enterprises of the period, they worked on commission, acting as agents for domestic manufacturers or merchants. This was indeed the way that most of them began, but by the middle 1830s increasing numbers were trading on their own account, sending buyers round the North of England and Scottish factories to buy textiles.¹²

¹¹ Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties".

¹² Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 109.

The case of Langworthy provides a strong example of how northern manufacturers increasingly took advantage of this system throughout the 1830s. There have been far too few examples within the literature that show how this process worked or the types of networking that made these business relationships possible. The way Langworthy used other businesses to distribute its textiles around the globe helps to fill in this gap within the historiography.

As markets were becoming ever more complex and distant during the early nineteenth century, it was imperative for exporters like Langworthy to form ties with networks of traders overseas. As Chapman has argued

A class of merchants, both in the home and foreign trade, whose dealings with the producers were on the basis of consignment appear to have carried on extensive businesses in the early nineteenth century. It was at this time when the output of Lancashire was expanding in consequence of the new inventions and new enterprise, and when neither foreign markets nor home markets were yet prepared to take large stocks.¹³

Without a trusted network of agents stationed abroad in various ports dotted around the globe Langworthy would have been unable to access the international trade in textiles. It was essential for northern textile firms to form connections with traders both in Britain and around the world who could accept their products.

This all worked within a context in which a variety of networks were in action at any one given time, and merchants were conscious of the importance of their friends and associates. Mostly therefore, merchants were extremely active in increasing and developing their contacts over time as they pursued their business. Moreover, most of them were able to adapt their networks to cope with changing market conditions.¹⁴

During the post-Napoleonic era the number of overseas markets available to Manchester's goods increased. At the same time sales margins became increasingly tight. In order to compensate for this manufacturers and merchants increasingly turned their eyes to new markets. Targeting overseas destinations was a strategy to help a business achieve a high turnover.¹⁵ This trend inevitably led to increased specialisation and the division of tasks in the commercial sector, the rise of the overseas commission agent being probably the most important.¹⁶

The most well-known example of a commission agent and most often cited in the literature is that of the firm Hodgson and Robinson who became highly respected in the industry. Unlike many of the agents that Langworthy used, which were usually an offshoot belonging to a parent firm in Britain, Hodgson was an example of an independent agent. The firm specialised in importing textiles into ports

¹³ Chapman, *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*, 135.

¹⁴ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 236.

¹⁵ Chapman, "The Commercial Sector", 76.

¹⁶ Ibid., 79.

like Buenos Aires and offered its services to important Manchester firms like Owens and Fieldens. In his study of the Owens business, Clapp remarked that “it was perhaps by accident that South America became Owens biggest interest in the 1830s” and that this freak occurrence gave Owens competent agents in Buenos Aires.¹⁷ However, this was no accident. It was those connections with competent agents that drove Owens to commit to the market and succeed in penetrating it with exports. Clapp himself acknowledged that Owens was close to abandoning the market when cotton prices went low and that had it not been for Hodgson’s promises of “small profits and quick returns”, Owens would not have been persuaded of the logic of committing to the market. Hodgson set Owens “on the right path” by directing him to purchase textiles from the firm of Ashworth Brothers in Todmorden which produced goods that were cheap and popular in Argentina.¹⁸ Thereafter demand for Owens’ exports on the River Plate increased.

Chapman identified Hodgson and Robinson as probably the most successful of all the commission agents to serve the textile industry during the first half of the nineteenth century.¹⁹ This example more than any other personified the importance of the overseas commission agent during this period and the various challenges they faced. He states that

The problems of commission agents selling in the more distant foreign markets are vividly illustrated in the letter books of Hodgson and Robinson, who started in Buenos Aires in 1817 importing Manchester goods and selling hides, tallow, bullion and other South American products to Britain. John Hodgson canvassed for commissions by assuring manufacturers that in general they could expect returns every year, but in practice trade proved to be much slower as the Spanish-American dealers were reluctant to meet their debts. Moreover, the market suffered from recurrent gluts and shortages because communications with Britain were irregular.²⁰

The records of Owens and the correspondence sent to them from foreign ports are a good reflection of the significance of overseas agents during this period more generally. As well as the correspondence from Hodgson and Robinson, there are also letters sent from the agent John Jackson who served Owens in Montevideo in Uruguay during the 1840s.

The Importance of Commission Agents in Navigating Geopolitical Uncertainty

Jackson helped Owens to navigate the Uruguay and Argentina market from his base in Montevideo. As with all commission agents stationed overseas, war, political upheaval and blockades were regular problems that they were forced to navigate. One notable example included the civil wars that took

¹⁷ Clapp, *John Owens*, 76.

¹⁸ Ibid., 88.

¹⁹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 72.

²⁰ Ibid., 72.

place in Argentina during the late 1830s and early 1840s. In 1841 Jackson wrote to Owens explaining how the poor state of business was largely due to events outside of his control.

The present dull state of Business here is in a great measure owing to our future tranquillity being previously menaced by an invasion, which, since the success of the Buenos Aires government forces over the interior provinces, will in all probability ensure, with the ostensible view re-establish our ex-president and his party. The Rivers Pana and Uruguay have already been declared in a state of interdiction for vessels under the flag of this place or any other except that of Buenos Aires and the appearances are very troubled times. Under these circumstances we are more desirous to collect our outstanding accounts than push sales.²¹

The above letter refers to the troubles associated with the conflicts in Argentina under the rule of Manuel de Rosas and the associated Uruguayan Civil War between 1839 and 1851. At one stage in the war the port of Montevideo was placed under siege. These events made it difficult for British merchants to trade to the provinces. What this letter shows, however, is that commission agents would often adapt their strategies to take account of the problems associated with conflict. In this instance Jackson thought it best practice to withhold sales and focus purely on collecting outstanding payments until more certainty resumed. This reflects the ability of commission agents to use their experience and initiative to navigate these situations on behalf of the exporter back in Manchester.

During the time that Langworthy and Owens were trading in Latin America, the South American continent was a hotbed of unrest and war. Individual nations were either engulfed in civil war or were at war with the other South American empires. The independence of Latin American countries such as Argentina brought about increased purchasing power in those markets because of the offload of the fiscal burden to the colonial empires.²² This was to the benefit of British merchants that wished to trade there. At the same time the independent nations were far from united and sank into internal conflict which was to their detriment as viable locations to conduct business. Political fragmentation and weak national administrations created unfavourable economic circumstances to British merchants.²³ With the exception of Brazil, which remained more united, this instability categorised much of the Latin American continent in the post-independence era when Langworthy were trading.²⁴ This was especially the case in Argentina which suffered a number of civil wars. Usually, these conflicts were subject to interference and manipulation from European powers such as Britain and France in a desperate attempt to keep ports open and the flow of trade moving. Famous examples of this include the French blockade of the Rio de la Plata in 1838 and a further Anglo-French blockade in 1845. The

²¹ OWN3/2/4/1, Letter from John Jackson and Co., Mote Video to Owen Owens and Sons, Manchester, 12th February 1841.

²² Leonardo Prados de la Escosura, "Lost Decades? Economic Performance in Post-Independence Latin America", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41, no.2 (2009): 282.

²³ *Ibid.*, 284.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 284.

naval resources of the European powers were the main asset in their armoury to exert force on the continent. Merchant enterprise took place within the confines of state power and colonial competition in which Britain, owing to its vast naval resources, held a notable advantage. British merchants and overseas agents were granted the privilege of operating under the influence of British military power that could intervene when markets became untenable due to wider social and political events. Nevertheless, merchants stationed abroad were largely left to their own devices and had to employ all their efforts and know how to achieve any headway in competitive markets.

Commission Agents and Familiarity with Markets

Just as with the correspondence sent to other Lancashire firms, like Fielden Brothers, Owens' agents used information gathered from buying rooms in order to dictate the buying and manufacturing practices of the firm back in Britain. They could then acquire the consignments that were sure to sell.

Large quantities of English printed India corals are disposed of here and thinking that they may be sent to advantage we send you seven half's to show the quality and styles most in request, but of course the assortments are comprised of a greater variety of patterns, the present price is \$10, leaving net about 25 per price of halves, calculating at the present high duties, in these goods, new showy patterns always command a preference over the old ones, 300 pieces would be a sufficient quantity for one shipment, the samples you may return when done with.²⁵

As well as exporters of textiles, Manchester firms such as Owens were usually importers as well and the overseas agent was also integral to making this possible. In Jackson's case, it seems that he was sending back salted hides as a return cargo on Owens account.²⁶ A report commissioned by *The Guardian* on the connections between slavery and the founding of the paper has revealed a number of interesting case studies of other prominent British merchants who traded on the South American continent during this time. As with Owens and Fieldens it was a firm's agents who maintained the steady stream of exports in exchange for imports which usually depended on produce that was the product of enslaved labour and Manchester's overseas business networks continued to be highly intertwined with slavery long after the abolition movement. The report reveals the case of Phillips Wood & Co. who acted as commission agents for the firm William Lupton & Co. in Rio de Janeiro. As with most commission agents it sent back remittances to Lupton and sometimes this included raw cotton that had been grown in Bahia and Pernambuco.²⁷ However, as with all agents, Wood was also

²⁵ OWN3/2/4/1, Letter from John Jackson and Co., Monte Video to Owen Owens and Sons, Manchester, 10th October 1840.

²⁶ OWN3/2/4/1, Letter from John Jackson and Co., Monte Video to Owen Owens and Sons, Manchester, 12th February 1841.

²⁷ *The Guardian*, The Scott Trust Legacies of Enslavement Report, (2020), Part 2, 31.

responsible for helping Lupton to penetrate the market with textiles. They used both written information and samples acquired from the buying rooms to do this.

British manufacturers tended to rely on detailed descriptions of the exact goods that were in high demand. However, detailed descriptions often led to misunderstandings by manufacturers and as such, “every opportunity was taken to send samples to Britain” with some firms such as Gibbs & Sons going so far as to “send a man home every nine months with samples.”²⁸

The correspondence sent to Langworthy reveals a similar picture. There had to be a merchant on the ground who could accept Langworthy's shipments, pass them on to be sold and then send back the profits. Equally, the information that agents sent back via packet ships regarding the state of the market and the wants of the buyers there was just as important. It has also been shown that more often than not overseas agents were subsidiaries of parent firms that were based in Liverpool or had some connection to a Liverpool merchant enterprise. Typical examples include the trading relationship with Rio de Janeiro agents Schwind Brade & Co. which were connected with the Liverpool merchant firm Turner Brade & Co. and also the Havana agents Steph Cattley Tennants & Co. who were subsidiary to Tennants Moor & Co. in Liverpool. In other instances, Langworthy sent its goods to stand alone agents such as Charles Ede in Constantinople. On a more intimate level, Langworthy was penetrating the Mexican market from 1825 to 1830 via one of the firm's own, Edward Langworthy, before he eventually returned to England to join his brother George in Manchester.²⁹ In an industry where trust and reliability were key, utilising family ties is hardly surprising. This is similarly demonstrated in the example of Samuel Greg & Co. of Quarry Bank. In this case the firm's owner, Samuel Greg, sent his sons abroad to represent the firm in order to investigate markets and cement reliable customers.³⁰

Importance of London Agencies

As well as supplying agents stationed abroad with textiles, like most Manchester firms, Langworthy also sent goods to other firms dotted around Britain. Many of these agency firms sold goods on to the home market but also acted as distributors to houses located overseas. London, in particular, was an important destination for Manchester goods. There Langworthy relied on firms such as James Deacon and Sons and Castelli Brothers to take its textiles and keep it updated on what was required by the market. Firms such as Deacon and Castelli, a merchant firm of Italian descent, are best described as agency houses. These were firms that specialised in doing business for others due to their contacts

²⁸ Ibid., 31.

²⁹ YA2013.25.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

³⁰ Mary B. Rose, *The Gregs of Quarry Bank Mill, The Rise and Decline of a Family Firm, 1750–1914* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 46.

and strong knowledge of markets, much like the Greek firm Ralli Brothers.³¹ Almost all were based in London.

Langworthy's Overseas Commission Agents

In order to understand the importance of overseas merchant roles to Manchester's textile industry, we must first throw light on the specific firms Langworthy used to penetrate different markets. As the overseas commission agent occupied the final stage of the merchant network and provided the boots on the ground in the market, firms, like Langworthy, had to be careful in its selection of who to form ties with. Sometimes the types of agents that Langworthy traded with in overseas ports was dictated by the Liverpool firm which acted as the middleman and on other occasions Langworthy formed ties with overseas traders directly. Manufacturers and merchants in Manchester trusted their agents to make the best decisions in their interest and, in an age before fast communications, they had little choice. Networking and trust in relation to risks all went hand in hand. Haggerty has pointed out how merchants were always extremely sophisticated in their management of risks; in many ways one of the main goals of textile merchants was risk management. Trust in the face of technical and moral hazards could not only be guaranteed through formal institutions. Rather, trust was a complicated issue that was intermingled with personal ties to other commercial players.³²

While it was important for the business to depend on reliable shipping companies to ferry goods abroad in a safe and timely manner, the commission agent essentially dictated the whole strategy of a firm via the information and orders they sent back. Moreover, the agent was responsible for the flow of capital returning home and often sourced much of the local produce that was imported for return cargoes and destined for the Liverpool brokers. The whole process of sending back samples and information, receiving goods and then sending back the proceeds either in credit or produce could take as long as a year.³³ This meant there was little room for major errors. The agent then had a remarkably difficult and challenging role. Furthermore, as agents were reliant on commission payments received from the goods sent by other firms, the financial rewards were often small and hard-pressed to justify. Platt argues that the low rewards and high risks of glutted markets like Brazil often meant that it was usually the preserve of younger men who were willing to try their hand in the hope of fortune. However, the difficulties often meant that agents regularly gave up and returned home when business had become too difficult. He states that

There was no incentive to remain in business once the real extent of the market was evident to all. Since the normal merchant was simply a consignee, surviving of commissions on goods

³¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 119

³² Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 64.

³³ Reber, *British Mercantile Houses in Buenos Aires*, 58.

*despatched by others, his capital stake, was small, if it existed at all, he could return home at any moment and did so once he found that profits were eluding him. In any case, he was compelled to withdraw when no consignments were received to distribute, and many British manufacturers and merchants in the United Kingdom, having suffered severely during the crisis of the mid 1820s turned inwards on themselves, putting their money into home markets.*³⁴

The fact that Langworthy was able to maintain its overseas business interests throughout the 1820s and 1830s is partially a testament to the competency of the agents it was connected with.

Ottoman Empire and Constantinople

One part of the globe where Langworthy succeeded in forming strong ties with agents was in the Ottoman markets and especially in Constantinople. Throughout the eighteenth century the Ottoman Empire had acquired much of its textiles from India; however, links with England had been fostered on account of the desire to import woollen products. As with many markets, by the time Langworthy were established in Manchester, Lancashire cottons were able to compete with those from India. Generally, the Empire exported more than it imported. The silk roads which ran through it were major suppliers of the Mediterranean with all manner of goods including indigo. On the other hand, Constantinople was the exception and imported three to four times more than it exported. The city was a major centre of consumption. Hence, this was the city where British merchants resided in order to penetrate the markets of the Levant.³⁵

The major expansion of British textile exports to the Ottoman Empire occurred between 1780 and 1840, the period associated with the Industrial Revolution. Furthermore, as with Latin America, most of these cottons were cheap printed imitations of Indian textiles. Halil Inalcik has revealed that some of the most popular included salampores, nankeens and printed dyed calicoes more generally.³⁶ These were the textiles that Langworthy specialised in and so the firm's story lies at the heart of the British effort to penetrate the Levant. Constantinople was also the major port that British textiles were exported to for distribution to more distant markets in the Ottoman Empire. During this period the Ottoman Empire was going through a rapid period of economic decline as it began to lose its ability to compete successfully in export markets. Ottoman territories such as Egypt had been big exporters of silk and other textiles to European markets. However, by the nineteenth century these were increasingly waning in comparison to British and Indian exports. At the same time the internal domestic markets of the Ottoman Empire were increasingly being flooded by imports from Europe

³⁴ Platt, *Latin America and British Trade*, 52.

³⁵ Daniel Panzac, "International and Domestic Maritime Trade in the Ottoman Empire during the Eighteenth Century", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no.2 (1992): 192.

³⁶ Inalcik, "When and How British Cotton Goods Invaded the Levant Markets", 376.

which now dominated the manufacturing scene.³⁷ Constantinople had always been the main merchant entrepôt to the imperial Ottoman world and was a focus point for merchants of different nationalities and religious/ethnic traditions. Greek merchants, especially, increasingly became a key link in the chain between Manchester businesses and Constantinople.³⁸

In Constantinople, Langworthy formed a strong tie with the agent Charles Ede who resided there during the 1830s. The correspondence between Charles Ede and Langworthy provides a wealth of information on the role of agents in foreign ports. Charles Ede was born in Liskeard, Cornwall, in 1793 and died in 1863. He resided in Constantinople during the time of Langworthy's trade to Turkey during the 1830s and had a son called Nathaniel Joseph Ede who was born in 1836. Nathaniel would go on to continue the business in Constantinople after his father. Ede was certainly capable of surviving in the commission trade and built a successful merchant dynasty out of this role that was to remain successful in Constantinople for a long period. He was a well-connected businessman within the international mercantile scene and even dined with Richard Cobden during Cobden's trip to Constantinople in 1837.³⁹

The correspondence between Ede and Langworthy starts in 1831. The main product Ede was selling on behalf of Langworthy was nankeens, Langworthy's primary product of manufacture. Most of these nankeens were described as coloured nankeens. For example, in June 1831 Ede received 400 nankeens via a ship from Liverpool called the *Jackson*; he also received forty linen drills. In this instance, Ede insisted that Langworthy should continue to send nankeens as he felt they were likely to make good sales throughout the season, but he confessed that he could not recommend any further shipments of drills.⁴⁰ In other letters he requested grey long cloths and shirtings, as well as fancy twills.⁴¹ In a similar fashion to Langworthy's agents in Brazil, Ede would send back samples and pattern cards in order to help Langworthy imitate popular products and this dictated the types of good being manufactured.⁴² Once again this reflects the fundamental importance of the commission agent to the export of Manchester goods.

³⁷ Sevket Pamuk and Jeffrey Williamson, "Ottoman De-Industrialisation 1800–1913, Assessing the Magnitude Impact and Response", *Economic History Review* 64, no.1 (2011): 159.

³⁸ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 160.

³⁹ John Drinkwater, *History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar*, (London, John Murray, 1844).

⁴⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th June 1831.

⁴¹ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th April 1832.

⁴² YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th December 1831.

Ede was also sending back money from the sales to Langworthy's account. It was his brother Francis who was responsible for doing this. Francis was also important in passing on pattern cards and samples to Langworthy. In one instance Ede informed Langworthy that £100 worth of sales was being remitted back to Francis. In the letter Ede informed Langworthy that this would not give them a profit on its account but circumstances dictated that disposing of the goods was the best decision to make. Once the goods had arrived in the agent's possession there was very little possibility for the Manchester firm to dictate the strategy and Langworthy had to trust Charles Ede to make the best decisions in response to the circumstances. In a correspondence sent from Constantinople in July 1831, Ede sent more remittances back. He also asked for more samples to be sent on the next Liverpool vessel of any other items Langworthy were able to manufacture which might make up for the poor sales in drills.

He stated that

I have not made any further progress in the sale of the drills, if you manufacture any other fancy article, I should recommend you sending out samples by first vessel from Liverpool, any thing fine either for trousers or waistcoats, I might probably be enabled to introduce them amongst the people of the country, your lowest prices should be stated and terms. The demand for Nankeens still continues but no intention in price. Ramsbottom's make is much esteemed here and command much higher rates.⁴³

The tone of the letter shows that Ede was keen to improve Langworthy's prospects in the market and felt that with his knowledge of the local populace's desires, he would be able to make more money for the Manchester firm. As always, agents were spying on the products being sold by other firms, in this instance products made by Ramsbottoms.

In the summer of 1831 disaster struck for Langworthy's trading interests in Constantinople when a fire broke out in the city destroying a good chunk of Ede's wealth and putting a halt to sales. This was accompanied by epidemic diseases such as cholera and plague which meant cash was scarce.⁴⁴

On the 14th instant I sold your 40 pieces of drills at 4 per yard on 61 days credit. On the second instant a destructive fire broke out in this city and carried away 5000 houses and 40,000 inhabitants were left without shelter. Besides this calamity the plague and cholera are raging amongst and have completely put a stop to business and the debtors will not fulfil their engagement until the subsides. By the fire I have lost effectually to the amount of £800, the total value of property destroyed exceeds 5 million sterling. I hope the health of the place will soon be restored and our commercial relations become interesting.⁴⁵

⁴³ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 12th July 1831.

⁴⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th August 1831.

⁴⁵ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th August 1831.

In the early months of 1832, the following year, Ede would report other much less dramatic events which had affected the ability to make sales and return payments, such as festivals.

The delays in payment of sales are caused by the festivals which are strictly observed by the natives, they have returned to business, and I hope next packet to make a good remittance for your account.⁴⁶

As with Langworthy's export operations in Brazil, wider social and political events were always impacting on trade. Ede also reported on cultural variables that influenced the market's buoyancy such as the thirty-day fast during Ramadan which reduced sales and made the market dull. It was Ede's job to keep Langworthy interested and informed that sales would go up again when the fast had come to an end.⁴⁷ In 1832 Ede continued to remit Langworthy's payments via his brother Francis. He reported to Langworthy strong sales in grey long cloths and twills and communicated his high expectations for sales in the spring season, especially for the next batches of nankeens that were being sent over.

The spring of 1832 stands out as a time when Ede was achieving striking sales on Langworthy's behalf with extensive rewards. In April Ede remitted an impressive £5,280 worth of sales on Langworthy's account.⁴⁸ In the following months of 1832 Ede continued to make successful sales on Langworthy's account in nankeens, bright coloured prints, grey long cloths and twills. Just as with Latin American markets, colour was important and Ede implored Langworthy to not use yellow in any of the cloth being sent.⁴⁹ In October 1832, the plague returned and put an end to sales once again. Ede wrote that

The dull state of the market for some time is the cause of my not writing you more frequently, and my chief object today is to particularise my late remittances to my brother for your account. The plague is raging very severely amongst us and therefore it would be imprudent to give, consequently sales are very limited and a few of our buyers have courage to attend at their shops, the payments for past sales are much delayed.⁵⁰

Pandemics meant that the buying rooms were devoid of merchants and buyers and so the trade came to a halt. Despite Ede's services, it seems that the Constantinople markets were difficult to maintain a foothold in. After 1832, Langworthy does not seem to have made as many consignments for Ede.⁵¹

⁴⁶ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th January 1832.

⁴⁷ YA2013.25. 2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 5th February 1832.

⁴⁸ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to Geroge Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th May 1832.

⁴⁹ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 10th October 1831.

⁵⁰ YA2013.25.2.2.5, Letter from Charles Ede, Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th October 1832.

⁵¹ YA2013.25/3/2/1/ Accounts Ledger 1830–1836.

The evidence suggests that this was far more down to the conditions of the market itself and unexpected circumstances such as pestilence and fire rather than the role of Ede. It may have simply been that other markets were performing better and hence Langworthy focused more of its attention elsewhere.

As has already been alluded to Langworthy relied on a combination of strong ties and weak ties. Sometimes the firm would exploit its more unfamiliar and sparser networks for the possibility of successful exports. Therefore, there is evidence of Langworthy having short exchanges with other agents. The lack of continuing entries in the ledgers and further correspondence suggests that these trading relationships were more fleeting than with stronger contacts such as Ede. One example includes an overseas firm of the name C. Cunningham & Co. which was also based in Constantinople. The firm was headed by a Mr Charles Cunningham, a merchant that resided in Constantinople and who would eventually go into partnership with a Joshua Bates in 1833. Langworthy was also using Cunningham in 1832 to receive its consignments of nankeens for the market in Turkey. However, just as with Ede, Cunningham reported similar issues in the market such as plague. The firm also reported the disrupting effects of the Egyptian Ottoman war which waged between the years 1831 and 1833 adding further complication to Langworthy's ability to penetrate the Orient. Cunningham reported that

The War with Egypt still continues, the army sent last spring against the Egyptians has been annihilated by disease famine and war, the Turkish fleet has returned to the Dardanelles without having thought to attack the Egyptians although much superior in force the government is making a great effort to send forward another army to oppose the advance of the Egyptians. This drowns the country of men employed in agriculture and consequently very much diminishes the demand for manufacturers and all imports. Ibrahim Pashaw continues to advance but we have no doubt that the European powers will interfere soon and settle matters between the sultan and Mehmet Ali when we may hope for some improvement.⁵²

It is clear that Langworthy's difficulties in this market were owing more to wider circumstances, beyond the merchant's control, than the reliability of its networks. Cunningham, keen to build trust with Langworthy, finished its correspondence by insisting that it would reach out to Langworthy once the situation had improved.⁵³ With many of the conflicts and struggles that took place in Latin America, the British government was not averse to using its military power to create a more favourable situation for those who traded in British goods. This was an underlying advantage that British merchants continued to enjoy throughout the nineteenth century. The war between Egypt and Turkey was partly fought with the intention by Mehmet Ali to make Egypt a more dominant state in the region and

⁵² YA2013.25.2.1.3, Letter from C Cunningham and Co., Constantinople to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, November 1832.

⁵³ Ibid.

reduce the power of the Ottomans. Russia came to the aid of the Ottomans and stopped the invasion. This kept Constantinople free to trade and reduced Egypt to a minor power.⁵⁴ The problems associated with the war as mentioned in Cunningham's letter act as a reminder that British trade in textiles to the Levant during this period took place in the context of British imperialism in the Middle East alongside the competing Ottoman Empire and that of Egypt.⁵⁵ In the period after this study, from 1840 onwards, British exports of cottons to the Levant markets continued to increase and Lancashire goods made their way further into the interiors of the countries in that part of the globe.⁵⁶

Oporto, Isaac Newton

If any of Langworthy's trading relationships with merchant houses based overseas could be considered as strong ties, that with Isaac Newton of Oporto would be one of the strongest candidates. Indeed, the firm's ledger suggests that Langworthy and Newton traded on a joint account.⁵⁷ There are few correspondences between Newton and Langworthy that have survived within the archive and so a qualitative picture of the network is difficult to shed light on. However, the quantity of orders that were sent to Newton in Portugal along with the length of time the two firms worked with each other suggests that Langworthy cemented a dense network with the Oporto-based merchant house, at least in the years between 1833 and 1834. Indeed, there is a ledger within the archive of Langworthy Brothers that solely records transactions of textiles sent to Newton between 1833 and 1836.⁵⁸ The textiles were once again similar to that sent to Brazil with striped nankeens, especially, being sought after. It seems that Langworthy's tie with Newton was cemented through a Henry Hoyle who was an important British merchant stationed in Lisbon and was known as a "Commission Agent". Hoyle eventually became partners with George Hardman, however, this was dissolved in February 1849.⁵⁹ Hoyle was the father of the famous Conservative politician Henry Hoyle Howorth and was considered one of the most well-reputed British merchants stationed in Portugal during this period. Langworthy's strong ties with the Hoyle–Newton network meant that the firm was well placed to penetrate the market in Portugal. Langworthy's association with Newton in Portugal is likely to have acted as a springboard to further ties with merchants in the Brazil trade and the firm's wider interest in the former Portuguese colony. It is also likely that many of Langworthy's textiles that were being shipped to Portugal were also being further shipped to Brazil.

⁵⁴ Maurus Reinkowski, "Uncommunicative Communication: Competing Egyptian, Ottoman and British Imperial Ventures, in 19th-Century Egypt," *Die Welt Des Islams* 54, no.3 (2014): 402.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Inalcik, "When and How British Cotton Goods Invaded the Levant Markets", 384.

⁵⁷ YA2013.25.3/2/1/ Accounts Ledger 1830–1836.

⁵⁸ YA2013.25.3.1.5, Isaac Newton Sales to Oporto Ledger.

⁵⁹ *The London Gazette*, 1849, 1332.

Mexico Agents

The other big market that Langworthy was invested in for a long time was Mexico. Tampico in Mexico was the first overseas market that Langworthy was heavily invested in, many years before Brazil. Langworthy's account book contains sixty-seven transactions to this area between 1826 and 1836.⁶⁰ Moreover, much of the communications and remittances that were coming out of that market during the 1830s were sent directly to Edward Langworthy. It was Edward who was the most important of the three Langworthy brothers in fostering links with trading partners in Mexico. This is because during the 1820s Edward had been acting as agent in that market and resided there for a time. Hence, he was perfectly placed for forming ties with agents there. Here, Langworthy's trade was conducted through a number of different agents such as Eversmann and Hoffman, French Anguel and Spitta Meyer & Co.⁶¹ All these Tampico agents were cooperating with Langworthy through a mutual friend by the name Mr Henderson.⁶² Henderson was the man in charge of ordering commission agents to ship back the remittances for consignments to Langworthy. Another Mexico agent that has already been discussed is Drusina and Martinez which was accepting Langworthy's consignments by order of Fred Huth & Co. This was common practice and usually it was the larger firms or more successful merchants that placed smaller agents in contact with other big firms in Britain. As Llorca-Jana has argued

The agents were, in general, men of little property who were paid small commissions to buy on behalf of the richer merchants such as Huth and Co. For this service, these agents were furnished with bills on London or Liverpool.⁶³

The majority of the payments that were being made from Mexico were in the form of hard Mexican dollars as opposed to raw produce, silver or credit as was the case in other markets such as Brazil.⁶⁴ For example, in December 1835 Eversmann and Hoffman sent back a bag containing 1,000 Mexican dollars.⁶⁵

⁶⁰ YA2013.25.3.2.1, Langworthy Accounts Ledger.

⁶¹ YA2013.25.2.1.4, Letter from French Anguel, Tampico to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 22nd August 1835.

⁶² YA2013.25.2.1.4, Letter from Eversmann and Hoffman, Tampico to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 12th November 1833.

⁶³ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 61.

⁶⁴ YA2013.25.2.2.2, Letter from Spitta Mayer and Co., Tampico, to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 25th May 1835.

⁶⁵ YA2013.25.2.1.4, Letter from Everman and Hoffman, Tampico to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th December 1835.

Loose Networks of Overseas Contacts

As well as strong and more trusted overseas contacts, Langworthy's varied business interests brought them into connection with looser networks involving less frequent encounters with some overseas houses. One example included Lyall Matheson & Co. located in India and headed by a man called Robert Lyall. Matheson became one of the major firms that accepted British goods into Calcutta.⁶⁶ The firm dealt in an all manner of goods other than just textiles, including beer. The firm was an offshoot of the famous Jardine Matheson & Co., one of the biggest accepters of British goods in Asian markets and especially China. The Lyall Matheson & Co. was originally established by Hugh Matheson, the brother of James Matheson. As with many of Langworthy's overseas agents, the two firms operated through a middle firm located in London of the name Messrs Lyall Wyllie & Co.⁶⁷ Weaker ties such as these allowed Langworthy to branch out of its usual market expertise and make shipments to India, a market the firm was less specialised in. Matheson's adaptability, success and willingness to accept a variety of products no doubt helped make this possible.

Sometimes Langworthy possessed weaker ties in more familiar markets to which the firm exported goods more regularly. These weaker ties usually stood alongside a more familiar contact that was usually responsible for cementing the link with that market. As a firm started to trade to a specific area more often, a greater number of contacts would usually follow. In the case of Chile, it was a branch of Huth which was the main springboard into that market (see Chapter 4). However, Langworthy also dealt with the agents known as Messrs Alsop & Co. which was based in Valparaiso.⁶⁸ Valparaiso was the main gateway to Chile and between 1810 and 1859 there were over 260 British merchant houses operating in the port.⁶⁹ Alsop accepted goods belonging to Langworthy and was a significantly large merchant house in Chile which was still in operation as late as the early twentieth century. The firm would become recognised among the most successful British merchant houses located in Valparaiso alongside Huth Grunning & Co., and Baring Brothers & Co.⁷⁰ The family was related to the famous John Alsop, the British artist.⁷¹ The firm was a commission agent house and had

⁶⁶ *Simonds Colonial Magazine* 13, no.50 (1848): 219

⁶⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.4 Letter from L.P. Mofield, Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th March 1835.

⁶⁸ YA2013.24.2.2.2 Letter from Baring Brothers and Co., Liverpool to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 17th July 1835.

⁶⁹ Manuel Llorca-Jana, "The Organisation of British Textile Exports to the River Plate and Chile, Merchant Houses operating 1810–1859", *Business History* 53, no.6 (2011): 825.

⁷⁰ J. Maurice Dempsey and William Hughes, *Our Ocean Highways, A Condensed Universal Hand Gazetteer and International Route Book* (London: Almanack, 1871), 450.

⁷¹ "John Alsop, 1828–1909", Selly Manor Museum, 2nd September 2021, <https://sellymanormuseum.org.uk/news/2021-09-02/john-alsop-1828-1909-biography-of-a-local-artist-who-specialised-in-illustrations-of-the-midlands>

notable trading partners including William Goddard and Sons, the nineteenth-century shipbuilder and merchant which traded with Alsop during the 1840s and 1850s. Just as with Langworthy, most of the goods Alsop accepted from Goddard were printed cotton textiles.⁷²

While weak ties provided a significant outlet by which firms could spread their ambitions, it was still the strong ties, such as those with Ede, Newton and Moor, by which firms gained a strong foothold in any particular export location. For Argentina the noteworthy contact was that of Charles Taylor & Co., Langworthy's main link to the Argentine market. The two firms traded with each other from 1826 to 1831 making them one of Langworthy's stronger ties. The consignments of textiles between the two firms were often sizeable: for example, in January 1835 Langworthy sent £2,000 worth of goods to Taylor.⁷³ Taylor had branches in both Buenos Aires and Liverpool as it was also a ship broker as well as a merchant firm (see Chapter 5). Like many of the most dominant British agents in South America the overseas house was a branch of the parent firm in Britain.⁷⁴ Whereas more irregular contacts could be used to provide flexibility in markets, such as with Cunningham and Alsop, a contact such as Taylor was the main branch upon which Langworthy formed a dedicated commitment. For Owens their main strong tie in Argentina was Hodgson and Green, for Fieldens it was Jackson & Co. and for Langworthy it was Taylor. Almost all its trade was facilitated by this house. Langworthy's greater familiarity with this firm was aided by two factors, one being that Taylor possessed an office in Manchester but also that Edward Langworthy had once worked for this firm (see Introduction). Taylor & Co. were amongst the largest British firms accepting cottons in Argentina and served several textile manufacturers back at home, many of which were merchant-manufacturers. This included the Halifax firm Dickson & Co. which produced ponchos.⁷⁵ Taylor also possessed branches in Mexico and New Orleans.⁷⁶

Langworthy's Agents in Britain

London

As has already been alluded to, Langworthy was not solely focused on selling textiles to agents and customers overseas but also firms located in other British towns and cities. These firms would also then distribute textiles to either the home market or to markets abroad. It was the firms of Glasgow and London that regularly served as the biggest receivers. Manchester's merchants were usually reluctant to entrust the sales of their goods to firms who showed little promise. Rather, the use of

⁷² Frances Brennan, "The Goddard Papers, The History of a Nineteenth-Century Shipbuilder and Merchant", *Coriolis* 4, no.2 (2013): 23.

⁷³ YA2013.25/3/2/1/ Accounts Ledger, January 1835.

⁷⁴ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*, 64.

⁷⁵ Llorca-Jana, "The Organisation of British Textile Exports", 841.

⁷⁶ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 91.

other businesses was usually down to the perceived promise that they were better connected and more "highly informed" of the wants of particularly markets.⁷⁷ Llorca-Jana has shown how this often coincided with selling to much bigger firms as they inevitably had more connections.⁷⁸ In fact, London is recorded as a location of transaction more than any other in the accounts ledger. However, London's importance was twofold as many of the overseas agencies were usually connected to a London parent firm.

The major names in London that Langworthy was working with during the 1830s included Castelli Brothers, James Deacon and Sons and Richard Felicoe. Though Liverpool was on the rise during this period and increasingly replacing London as a centre for the sale and distribution of Manchester goods, the capital still retained much of its former importance. Castelli Brothers was still distributing Langworthy's goods from its base in the capital. Much of the correspondence sent from Castelli shows that the firm were distributing and making sales in Constantinople and then forwarding Langworthy the profits.⁷⁹ This was because Castelli had a subsidiary house based there of the name Castelli Gustimana & Co. A similar arrangement was evident in Langworthy's relationship with the house of Ede in Constantinople which was also held together by London contacts, in this case Charles Ede's brothers Francis and Fred. As well as receiving correspondence from Ede in Constantinople, Langworthy was simultaneously receiving letters from the Ede house in London which held the network together. At the beginning of December 1833, for example, Fred Ede in London wrote to Langworthy in regard to orders of nankeens and stripes for Constantinople and informed the northern firm that he would be paying remittances to Langworthy's Lloyds account.⁸⁰ He finished the letter by insisting that he would be informing his brother of the arrangements. Evidently, using independent commission agents based in foreign ports was usually undertaken by first coming into contact with a London business that acted as a springboard to further contacts abroad. This involved forming strong links with London parent firms who possessed wide ranging distribution networks.

James Deacon and Sons were also selling Langworthy's textiles on Langworthy's account and then sending back the remittances to Manchester. Chapman has shown that London firms as well as those from Glasgow became centres of the agency system because of their high amounts of capital.

There are two further characteristics of the agency houses which though not unique in the mercantile world, were particularly strongly developed. One was that there were close connections with the City of London, or with the wealthiest families of Glasgow and Liverpool

⁷⁷ Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade to South America*, 63.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 63.

⁷⁹ YA2013.25.2.1.4, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th December 1835.

⁸⁰ YA2013.25.2.1.2 Letter from Fred Ede, London to George Langworthy and Co., Manchester, 4th December 1833.

*from the earliest years. Profits could only be assured by employing a large capital because of the risk associated with distance, war and commercial crisis.*⁸¹

In other words, many businesses that performed the role of commission agent depended on the capital provided by London firms.⁸²

Castelli Brothers

Castelli Brothers was a highly successful Italian firm based in London and was exporting Langworthy's textiles from Liverpool, although all of its correspondence with the Manchester firm came from London where the firm's headquarters was located. The firm often petitioned Langworthy to send consignments of goods to Liverpool for shipment.⁸³ As one of its biggest customers, Langworthy were always keen to prioritise shipments made for Castelli Brothers. In the short notes sent between Langworthy's managers, Castelli's name is often repeated when preparing different products for transport. The remittances that were regularly credited to Langworthy's account by Castelli were usually quite sizeable. For example, in March 1835, £258.16.6 was advanced to them. The firm also frequently reported to Langworthy on the success or failure of its overseas branches in selling Langworthy's goods. The goods that were being sent to Constantinople were arriving into the hands of a direct branch of the Castelli's business located there. Many of the correspondence from the London firm shows that it was remitting proceeds from nankeen sales to Langworthy from what Castelli referred to as "our house of Constantinople".⁸⁴ Just as with Langworthy's relationship with Brade and Durham in Brazil, Castelli sold the textiles while also sending back vital information as to which products to send to the market.

*We feel pleasure in informing you that the last account from Constantinople advise us that plain nankeens were rather in demand.*⁸⁵

However, unlike the Brade partnerships it seems that Castelli was buying these textiles and selling on its own account as opposed to selling on Langworthy's for a commission. This is an important distinction as it marks the difference between commission agents and the agency type firms which bought and sold under their own capital. Both types of organisations were utilised to export and distribute British textiles.

⁸¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*, 113.

⁸² Ibid., 73.

⁸³ YA2013.25. 2.1.4, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 23rd March 1835.

⁸⁴ YA2013.2.1.2, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 29th July 1835.

⁸⁵ YA2013.2.1.2, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th August 1835.

The news was not always positive. In October 1835, Castelli reported poor sales in relation to the Constantinople trade.

We regret to inform you that the last accounts from Constantinople are unusually bad, the market was very dull, prices reducing and no money could be collected from the buyers of your 10 cases of Nankeens to pay.⁸⁶

Castelli specialised in the sale of nankeens and so the firm was a worthy partner for Langworthy. Blue nankeens seem to be especially sought after.⁸⁷ Having contacts with firms that specialised in the sale of certain product lines to specific markets was an integral part of a merchant's network and a key determinant in giving firms like Langworthy the confidence to take risks and branch out to more markets. A factor that is impressive about Langworthy's operations is the degree to which it could export to multiple unfamiliar markets simultaneously. Its effective distribution network along with the expertise and reliability it afforded was a key part of allowing Langworthy to do this. Castelli represents a key component of this type of network and its relationship with Langworthy provides similar conclusions to that drawn by Haggerty on the significance of trust and reliability in merchant networks in allowing them to navigate technical and moral hazards.⁸⁸ She states that merchants "thought of certain market 'places' as riskier than others, and knowledge of the market (or lack thereof) might deter them from embarking on a venture."⁸⁹ However, contacts such as Castelli who had its own overseas branches in Turkey and experience in trading to the area helped Langworthy to see the possibilities of overcoming this risk. Other correspondence from Castelli expressed much more positive news for the Manchester firm. In December 1835, Castelli debited Langworthy for the successful sale of twenty-six cases of nankeens for Constantinople.⁹⁰ Langworthy were continuing to trade heavily with Castelli right up until the year of 1838 when in March of that year it made an order for 100 pieces of plain nankeens.⁹¹ Hence the trading relationship between the two firms continued to prove fruitful towards the end of our period.

⁸⁶ YA2013.25.2.1.7, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 19th October 1835.

⁸⁷ YA2013. 25.2.1.3, Letter from Castelli Brothers, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 29th August 1835.

⁸⁸ Haggerty, *Merely for Money?*, 57.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 57

⁹⁰ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Castelli Brothers, London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 20th December 1835.

⁹¹ YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letter from Castelli Brothers, London, to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 7th July 1838.

James Deacon and Sons

Langworthy traded with James Deacon and Sons from as early as 1827 and at least until 1835 based on its accounts ledger.⁹² However, it is almost certain that the relationship continued long after that and both firms worked closely to forward petitions for better infrastructure and transport in the 1840s. Between 1827 and 1836 there are thirty-three transactions with the firm recorded in the ledger. Furthermore, within the short notes sent between the firm's employees regarding the preparing of orders, Deacon was referenced regularly.⁹³ By around the mid-nineteenth century Deacon was referred to as a "Linen Factor", such as in the 1839 Post Office Directory. However, during this period it is clear the firm traded in cotton goods.⁹⁴ This firm represents an example of a commission agent Langworthy was using which was stationed in London as opposed to overseas. Deacon was particularly effective at selling white drills on Langworthy's account in London.⁹⁵ The correspondence between the two businesses is illuminating in that it reveals Deacon to have specialist knowledge of the unique requirements of the London market. For example, one correspondence reveals how required measurements for linen drills were different in London to elsewhere. Just as with Langworthy's contacts in overseas markets, Deacon often offered advice regarding the presentation of goods for the market and packing guidance. In one instance, in November 1833, Deacon sent some commentary to Langworthy regarding the quality of the preparation.

*Some of the goods come much better finished than others because you do not roll them well and firmly.*⁹⁶

Just as with Langworthy's contacts in Brazil, Deacon would send samples to Langworthy to ascertain if the Manchester firm could acquire or manufacture items that closely resembled the designs required for the market.⁹⁷ In an earlier letter from November 1833, Deacon informed Langworthy that almost all the cottons goods were in low demand with the exception of cotton drills. The firm referred to the market as "gloomy". Orders of particular styles and types of fabric were often referred to by number as was the common practice amongst textile merchants during this period. In this instance Deacon sent an order for "No 1 Drills".⁹⁸ Deacon was heavily involved in selling goods on to other

⁹² YA2013, Langworthy Accounts Ledger 1826–1836.

⁹³ YA2013.25.2.1.5 Receipt for Parcel Destined for James Deacon and Son, 10th July 1835.

⁹⁴ D. Morier Evans, *The History of the Commercial Crisis, 1857–1858 and the Stock Exchange Panic of 1859* (London: Groombridge and Sons, 1859).

⁹⁵ YA2013.25.2.1.7, Letter from James Deacon and Sons, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 25th November 1835.

⁹⁶ YA2013.25.2.1.1 Letter from James Deacon and Sons, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 5th November 1833.

⁹⁷ YA2013.25.2.1.3 Letter from James Deacon and Sons, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, Undated.

⁹⁸ YA2013.25.2.1.1 Letter from James Deacon and Sons, London to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 2nd November 1833.

wholesalers in London on Langworthy's own account. Drills were the main article; however, it also made sales in cords.⁹⁹ Just as with Brade in Brazil, Deacon provided this service for a commission. The rewards could be sizeable. In October 1833, the firm received £284 commission payment for the sale of bales of Langworthy's drills.¹⁰⁰

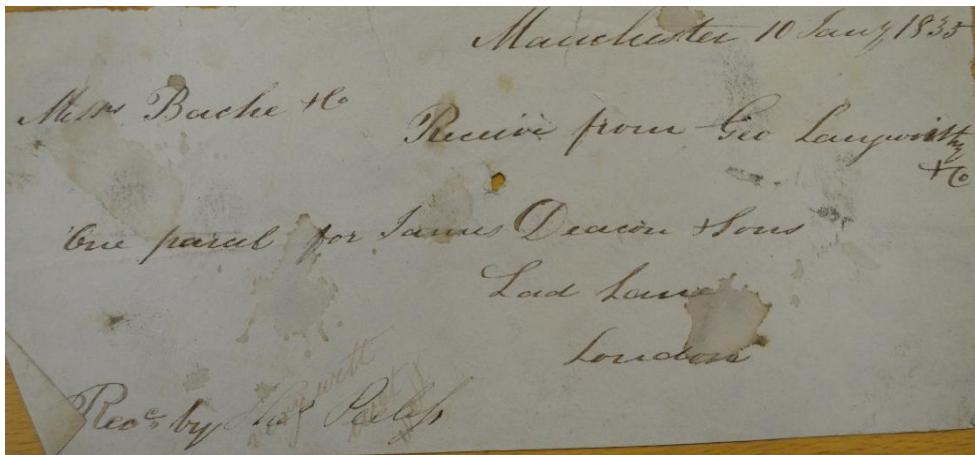


Figure 59, YA2013.25.2.1.5 Receipt for parcel destined for James Deacon and Son, 10th July 1835

Langworthy's Agents in Other Parts of Britain

As well as England's capital, Glasgow was also a prominent springboard upon which a Manchester firm could launch themselves into the overseas trade. Langworthy depended upon Alex Johnston & Co. to penetrate the Honduras market.¹⁰¹ The firm also had a joint account venture with the Glasgow-based firm Alexander Linyth & Co.¹⁰² On the other hand, the locations of some of Langworthy's buying agents could be much closer to home. In one instance it was using the services of a Mr John Henry Penting, who resided in the village of Heslington just outside of York. One letter sent from Penting to Langworthy shows how Penting was supplying markets in both Buenos Aires and Montevideo with Langworthy's textiles.

I will call upon you in Manchester on Friday next, the 20th instant, to settle the remainder of the prints for Buenos Aires and Montevideo, provided we meet with any that promise a margin upon which to expectation. I hope also that the goods already fixed upon as likely to answer are in

⁹⁹ YA2013.25.2.1.1, Receipt for sale on George Langworthy's Account by James Deacon and Sons, 31st October 1833.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ YA2013.25.2.1.3, Letter from Alex Johnston and Co., Glasgow to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 15th October 1835.

¹⁰² YA2013.25.2.2.1, Letter from Alex Linyth and Co., Glasgow to Langworthy Brothers and Co., Manchester, 5th September 1835.

*progress as our last accounts from Buenos Aires offer very good prospects of price in the political way.*¹⁰³

However, Langworthy's records suggest that these types of connections were more of an exception and as a general rule buyers were more likely to be located in the big commercial centres. The contrast between strong ties and weak ties is also reflected on a geographical level in that most of Langworthy's more consistent and cemented trading relationships tended to be with merchant firms located in the main financial and trading centres such as London. However, there was a wealth of weaker ties and sparser networks that could be called on from time to time in more modest locations such as York and Huddersfield.

Conclusion

Langworthy, and comparable firms like Owens and Fieldens, relied on a network of agents located in both Britain and foreign ports to navigate global markets, sell their goods and bring profits back into its account. This included commission agents stationed abroad, and agency houses located in Britain's commercial cities, such as London. The rise of northern manufacturers and merchants which dealt in Manchester goods was accompanied by a rise in businesses which could provide expert knowledge on the growingly diverse range of markets that became open to Lancashire textiles in the decades following the end of the French Wars. The two accompanied each other and as textiles were one of the most successful of British exports during the 1830s, merchant roles developed and specialised to take advantage of this. Many agents depended upon the finance and organisation of larger firms in London and Manchester firms needed London businesses to launch their textiles into markets abroad. Consequently, northern merchants and manufacturers, like Langworthy, formed strong links with these London firms to access the export market. London firms were better connected and were an important part of the distribution network. These contacts extended to overseas ports and many agents located abroad belonged to much more established parent firms in London and Glasgow. Langworthy's case also shows the diversity of buyers and commission businesses that sprung up during this period and an array of smaller independent traders also responded to the call of Manchester's exports. These networks were a fundamental part of the economic structure of the British textile trade in the early nineteenth century.

These business relationships are a testimony to the degree to which an interplay of sparse and dense networks was essential for giving merchants and manufacturers like Langworthy the confidence to take risks and expand its horizons to more markets and export different product lines. Sometimes

¹⁰³ YA2013.25 Letter from John Henry Penting, Heslington, York to George Langworthy Esquire, Manchester, 14th November 1835.

these sparse networks could cement into much more permanent and enduring relationships, making the transition from a weak tie to a strong tie. Many of these networks sprung up naturally through a mutual interest in trading ventures and occurred outside commercial institutions and pressure groups. Once networks such as these became reliable, they provided a strong foundation upon which to conduct the trade in textiles. Trust and dependability within these relationships was the key to taking acceptable risks in markets, especially when Manchester firms were trading on their own account.

Conclusion

This research has been carried out with the aim of understanding the wider role of the merchanting process to the success of the British textile industry during the latter decades of the world's first Industrial Revolution. The historical literature has tended to overfocus on the more visible developments in factories and production processes as catalysts for the commercial success of the British textile industry during the early nineteenth century. However, this thesis has focused on the less visible merchanting side of the business by uncovering the intimate world of a major textile merchant and manufacturing firm in Manchester and its operations between 1820 and 1840. This has been the first in-depth study of a Manchester-based textile merchant firm since Clapp's 1965 study of John Owens. The Langworthy Brothers & Co. archive provides a crucial insight into the reasons for the success of British textiles in overseas markets during the two decades when Lancashire's industry was virtually the only mechanised textile trade in the world.

This project has shown, conclusively, that the merchanting and production side of the trade were intermingled and complementary to each other. This was mirrored in the relationship between the knowledge economy and the industrial economy which were glued together through merchant mechanisms. The overfocus on production narratives has provided a skewed picture of the reasons for the success of the industry during the years between 1820 and 1840. In this period Langworthy achieved success in the manufacture of cheap printed textiles which it then exported to overseas markets. The firm's ability to adjust its manufacturing process and use the expertise of other traders ensured that it could fine-tune textiles according to colour, shade, pattern and feel. The effect of this was that Langworthy made sustained headway in the newly independent and highly discerning Latin American markets, specialising in the trade in cottons to Brazil, Argentina, Chile, Mexico and Cuba. In comparison the firm achieved more moderate success in other parts of the globe such as the Levant and Portugal. The firm's ability to master the export business in cheap prints ensured its transition into a much larger and more established business in Salford and consequently its long survival well into the twentieth century.

The findings show that it was the specialised networks of traders and their ability to transfer information which allowed Langworthy to implement effective quality control of products. These networks allowed for greater engagement with the growing knowledge economy which was the key to market penetration and the firm's success in Latin America. Greater insight has been obtained by tracking the processes and written communication channels available to piece together documentation and trace shipments. This has shed light on the processes firms used to engage with global markets and decipher the types of textiles to send, an important part of the story of the

Lancashire textile industry that has not been well explored. Langworthy's example has shown the ability of British manufacturers to produce quality and recognised product lines which were integral to the globalisation of the British textile trade during this era. While advances in manufacturing machinery and technology were important in the commercial success of British textiles, the information which passed through interfirm business networks was also essential and dictated the direction of manufacturing. Large firms which both manufactured and sold textiles directly to overseas markets, like Langworthy, were processing centres of this information and research.

The merchant function was integral to the development and design of textiles to meet the consumer tastes of overseas markets. As well as being essential to the sale and distribution of products, merchant networks and processes were also vital to the evolution of British textile designs because of the passing of information through networks which aided comparative learning with other parts of the globe and especially Asia. The information relayed back from overseas markets regarding the types of visual designs of textile, texture and quality, were all administered through trusted merchant networks. This knowledge from markets was organic and gathered from local sources around overseas ports. It was then embedded within written communications and transmitted back to textile firms in Britain.

Merchant and manufacturing firms, such as Langworthy, were the mediums where this useful knowledge was converted into more explicit knowledge which allowed Manchester's local supply systems and industrial capabilities to remain adaptive and fine-tune products to meet specific, and often complex, consumer tastes. Merchant firms synchronised the activities that were happening in the locality of Manchester with the information regarding market trends which was arriving from overseas. This activity played an important part in standardising British-produced cottons and ensured British textiles exhibited a competitive advantage in foreign markets. The firm was uniquely advantaged to do well owing to the division of labour and the specialisation of suppliers in Manchester and its surrounding areas. With its headquarters in Cannon Street, Langworthy was close to the local supply systems that had evolved to meet the needs of the trade. However, rather than just the division of tasks in a single factory, this work has demonstrated how the supply chain and the labour that made it possible was distributed throughout Manchester and its surrounding towns, as specialist firms evolved to undertake specific roles. From bleaching, spinning, weaving, printing and packing, the surrounding geography of Langworthy's headquarters was perfectly geared towards the creation of a diverse range of complex products for highly competitive markets. It was the information passed through informal merchant networks combined with the defined supply chain in Manchester that made the evolution and development of British textiles possible and guaranteed greater quality assurance of products.

Manchester's merchant firms were not only aided by the array of specialist textile suppliers and finishers in the city but also by the robustness of local transport providers. This allowed textile exporters to undertake smoother operations in a more timely, responsive and reliable fashion. Despite the advent of railways, for Langworthy road transport and the fly coach continued to be especially important. In the same way that firms had diversified in the production process of textiles so too had the role of transporting goods. Langworthy was able to take advantage of specialist carrying firms, such as Worthington Gilbert & Co., which owned warehouses in the city where goods could be stored and ultimately transported to market. Inland transport was indispensable in taking Langworthy's textiles from Manchester to Liverpool and other commercial centres throughout Britain. Despite the early use of the railway, canals and roads continued to play an important part in the movement of Manchester goods and in the passing of messages. Roads were especially important for Langworthy's ability to convey goods and materials within Manchester itself, chiefly for transporting items between its warehouse in Manchester and its works location in Eccles. Road carriers, like Pickford, were also significant in connecting Langworthy with the other commercial centres in Britain. The railway did, however, become an important asset in carrying out speedy operations and communications with Liverpool within short time periods, particularly last minute deliveries before ships departed. Furthermore, as the railway expanded, Langworthy took advantage of its various branch lines. Regarding shipping, more consistent and reliable voyages were developing from Liverpool, during this time. This was aided by improvements in both the storage of goods onboard ships and in the insurance business, underpinned by larger firms. Both these factors reduced risk and acted as further encouragement for textile firms in exporting to distant markets.

This research has not been merely the story of a single firm. The thesis has displayed the interplay between ties with other traders and the types of merchant roles that made the export of British cottons around the world possible. The division between merchant and manufacturer was not so clearly defined and firms took on multiple roles. The work has called into question the observations on the division of the industry between merchanting and manufacturing as being somewhat oversimplified. Furthermore, the term merchant-manufacturer, though applicable to some businesses does not provide a complete picture of what was going on in the city during this time.¹ Langworthy themselves were performing multiple roles during this period and, while not the norm for all firms, this setup was not unique. Furthermore, Langworthy's story has revealed enough about the other roles within the industry to show how they all played their part in the ultimate export of a British textile.

¹ Chapman, *Merchant Enterprise*.

The preceding chapters have demonstrated the types of business connections firms like Langworthy relied on to function in the global market. The firm grew and thrived at a time when the British textile industry was seeking new markets as traditional destinations such as the USA and Europe were becoming more difficult to penetrate because of competition from their own domestic manufacturers. In this way Langworthy's story was part of a wider movement of firms that sought to penetrate the poorer markets of India and the Far East, but especially the Latin American world. Moreover, with their strong ties with big merchant banks like Frederick Huth & Co., Langworthy had both the stability and capital to carry out large consignments and trade to multiple areas around the globe. These were the first firms to become truly global with their connections spanning multiple markets.

While the merchant banks provided the impetus and power behind this new era of global trading in British textiles, many other roles developed to create effective networks whereby the transportation, export and selling of products was made possible. The most important included an increasing number of shipping firms, brokers and commission agents, all of which were an integral part of Manchester's merchant network. The port of Liverpool had especially advanced as a core base for these types of firms, which were the gatekeepers to the export trade. Liverpool took a central role as the home of many overseas networks, the agents operating in foreign ports usually belonging to a parent firm or forwarding agent in Liverpool. They were the key intermediaries that linked Manchester to the wider world. During this period Langworthy succeeded in developing reliable ties with several Liverpool firms, including cotton brokers like Molyneux Taylor & Co. and forwarding agents like Turner Brade & Co. This secured its ability to not only master the logistics of exporting to distant markets but also source vital raw materials as payment, including raw cotton. Furthermore, the expertise that had evolved in Liverpool in both buying and selling were intrinsic to the survival of the producers of Manchester goods. The information that Liverpool firms mediated between overseas players and Manchester-based firms was important in market familiarisation. Because of this, Lancashire cottons evolved to meet the standards of overseas consumer tastes. This played a far greater role in stimulating the direction of British textile manufacturing than has been previously thought.

The focus on factory narratives and technology, while important, has detracted from questions surrounding how firms forged global links to achieve the desired result. Trust, cooperation and reliability between different merchant roles were essential in allowing northern textile exporters the confidence to take risks in selling goods to distant markets. As with all these merchant roles, they could only function as part of a wider distribution chain and were all interdependent. Trust was essential as was mutual cooperation. If one could find a reliable partner who was competent in one aspect of the supply chain, this could be the significant variable in fostering successful business practice. Langworthy placed great emphasis on these soft skills. This is evident in the firm's association

with firms such as Seville and Wright, its most reliable supplier of yarn, or Charles Ironside & Co., its most reliable shipper, and equally the capital and expertise of Fred Huth & Co., Langworthy's most consistent investor in its ventures. Most connections came about through informal ties, family relations or mutual acquaintances, much of which took place outside the formal institutions and trading halls. Although the observations of historians such as Farnie and Redford have stressed the significance of the Chamber of Commerce and the Manchester Exchange, the Langworthy archive far more reflects the observations of scholars such as Rose, Granovetter and Llorca-Jana.² All of these scholars have pointed to the importance of informal networking that often transcended state borders as being a key explanation in business structures. It was these sorts of connections which globalised the selling of textiles in many markets where Britain held no formal monopoly. In Langworthy's case this was further aided by the linguistic strengths of the firm in speaking Spanish alongside its deeper cultural understanding of the markets it was supplying.

The networking and soft skills developed by merchants were just as vital to trade as the power of states and the fiscal policies of governments that have been emphasised by historians like Ashworth and Beckert as determinants of British success.³ Rather, the Langworthy archive shows that it was the significant firms with high capital, many of which had come to Britain from abroad, that directed the industry to global dominance. Furthermore, the initial links between these firms often had little to do with formal or institutional associations but were instead coordinated and understood by Langworthy. Granovetter has coined the phrase "the strength of weak ties" whereby seemingly insignificant associations inevitably lead to much larger networks.⁴ The degree to which one firm has a reciprocal relationship with another very much determined how strong a connection both firms then had with each other's trading partners. The wealth of material in the Langworthy archive reflects this phenomenon. Langworthy's acquaintance with Huth through the northern agent Stansfield led to their association with many more agents and accepting houses in foreign ports and as a result it was now able to access markets which were unreachable to many. Huth's capital and expertise were also of great importance. Once a firm had achieved a reputation for competence, more networks easily followed. The link between London merchant banks and northern manufacturers is perhaps the best exemplar of this. As opposed to a government-charted trading company spearheading trade, as was the case in India, in Latin America many hundreds of traders had piggybacked on the capital provided by the major firms. This both reduced risk and provided more stability. Through these examples one begins to realise the spread of trade was fluid and uncoordinated. Indeed, looser and more casual

² Rose, *Firms, Networks and Business Values*; Llorca-Jana, *British Textile Trade in South America*; Farnie, *The English Cotton Industry*.

³ Ashworth, *The Industrial Revolution*.

⁴ Granovetter, "The Strength of Weak Ties".

networks could sometimes be the key to unlocking greater potential for Langworthy in spreading its trade to new areas.

This thesis has also been an exploration in material culture and of the textiles themselves, most notably in the form of samples and letters. It has demonstrated more recent arguments forwarded by scholars such as Llorca-Jana, Styles and Raman that it was the information and samples that allowed merchants to imitate the designs that had already been popularised by other countries such as India and China.⁵ Imitation of goods was key to the success of British textiles during these years. By closely adhering to the advice and information sent to them in the correspondence from their agents and by imitating samples of superior cottons from other parts of the world, Langworthy could navigate its way in to competitive and distant markets. It was not just the case that Lancashire set the fashion, rather the markets themselves were setting the convention. This has been most strongly demonstrated in relation to the Latin American world. In line with Llorca-Jana's findings, it has been shown that these markets were highly competitive with discerning consumers, therefore countering older interpretations by historians such as Platt that have portrayed Latin American markets as unsophisticated.

It was the visual style that above all determined fruitful or bad sales. This supports the work of Styles and Riello who point to visual style and colour as being the most important factors in the learning process of cotton goods production.⁶ The archive has revealed that the industrial configuration of Manchester was especially apt at controlling these variables and this contributed to the success of firms like Langworthy. Langworthy understood the importance of replicating the colour and cultural significance of certain textiles which gave it an advantage in market penetration. The firm could produce a diverse range of textiles from nankeens, blue Indias and many different coloured drills. Checks, salampores and florentines of a wide range of patterns and colours could be produced. These patterns could be easily changed or adapted depending on how consumer tastes were changing. The division of labour and specialisation meant big firms like Langworthy could enact quality control to the highest order. As well as merchanting textiles abroad, Langworthy was able to convert unfinished cloth into printed products. Equally, it could weave its own goods from scratch at the works in Eccles. What underpinned all of this was the array of specialist firms that occupied Manchester from spinning firms which could provide yarn such as Seville and Wright, to the providers of dye such as Dale Atkin & Co. It was the unique division of labour that had developed in Manchester and its surrounding areas that made Langworthy competitive in the global market. All of this was geared towards meeting the

⁵ Raman, "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization".

⁶ Styles, "What Were Cottons For".

information that was being sent through the merchant function. In this sense merchant firms really were the generals of the trade.

Slavery continued to underpin much of the trade links and remained integral to the funding, payment and consumption of Manchester goods in the old Portuguese and Spanish empires. The project has consistently pointed out the importance of colonial produce such as raw cotton and sugar as being a stimulant to merchant roles. Human slavery lay at the heart of this system, and Langworthy's business rested on the enslavement of people who provided not only the labour that made the industry possible but also provided the impetus for the export of its finished cottons. It has been shown that Langworthy's goods were often used by Brazilian traders to purchase slaves from West Africa. Furthermore, the cotton produced in Pernambuco and Bahia was frequently used as a return cargo to pay for consignments of goods. In an industry that depended upon a balance between imports and exports it is not surprising that the export trade cannot be looked at in isolation. On the contrary its successful shipment and sale was closely tied up with imports. As Williams has argued, rather than disappearing following abolition, the cotton triangle merely shifted to other areas in the globe where the terrible condition of human slavery was still rife.⁷ Langworthy, Owens and Fieldens and many other traders were reliant on the slave economies of Latin America and the USA to allow their trade to prosper. Ports such as New Orleans, Rio de Janeiro and Havana were all hotbeds of slave economies, surrounded by plantations, and Langworthy's trade flourished in these locations.

Overall, Langworthy's case demonstrates the importance of merchanting in relation to growth of the British textile trade during the 1820s and 1830s and the wider reasons for Manchester's commercial success. Rather than geographical determinism, state power or great men inventing great machines as an explanation for the ascendance of Lancashire's industry, this thesis points to the importance of sparse and dense interfirm networks of traders within the international scene along with quality control and diversification. The merchant systems and supply mechanisms in place continued to flourish on the back of the old colonial order that had been created during the mercantilist era. Above all, this firmly cements the legacy of merchanting and commerce in the production of Manchester goods while also shedding light on the importance of undocumented relational and communication skills that ultimately formed the essential ties with other firms. This in turn made the distribution of British textiles around the globe possible. Further research should be directed towards the archives of other firms that participated in the trade. The stories they have to tell may reveal another dynamic to the British textile trade waiting to be explored.

⁷ Williams, *Capitalism and Slavery*.

Bibliography

Primary Material

67-1885, John Kelly, Worsted Pattern Book Containing Samples for Spain and Portugal, 1763, Victoria and Albert Museum.

B/BIBBY, 1812–1890, Merseyside Maritime Museum Archival Guide.

CLC/B/087 Fredrick Huth & Company Records, London Archives.

CLC/B/087/MS10701 Ledger Recording Remittances from Subsidiaries in Valparaiso and Lima and Monthly Stock Accounts 1849 to 1902.

CLC/B/087/MS10702/002 Private Ledgers of Huth's Subsidiary in Valparaiso, Lima, Peru and Chile 1854–1933.

CLC/B/087/MS10700/001/A Correspondence, Accounts, Bills of Lading and Receipts 1820–1945.

CLC/B/087/MS10700/002/A Correspondence, Accounts, Bills of Lading and Receipts 1820–1945.

CLC/B/087/MS10700/003/ A Correspondence, Accounts, Bills of Lading and Receipts 1820–1945.

CLC/B/087/MS10700/004/ A Correspondence, Accounts, Bills of Lading and Receipts 1820–1945.

FDN, Archive of Fielden Brothers & Co., John Rylands Library.

FDN/1/1/2 Correspondence Between the Brothers.

FDN 1/1/5 Correspondence Relating to Commercial Activities.

GB 133 Archive of Hodgson and Robinson Company, 1811–1886, John Rylands Library.

GB 133 GHR/5/1 Letter Books and Correspondence, 1817–1867.

GB127, 2023, Report of Alexander Speirs of the firm Alexander Speirs & Co., 1835, Merchants in Buenos Ayres on Foreign Competition, Cited from Affidavits, Class 1, Competition of Continental with British Manufacturers in Continental Markets.

GB127. M386 Archive of John Munn & Co., Manchester Central Library.

M386, Cloth Sales Book 1819–1822.

M386, Copy Letter Book, Out Letters.

M386 Day Book, 1813–1819.

GB127. MS f 382.2 R 1, Archive of George Robinson & Co., Manchester Central Library.

MS6382.2R1 Volume 1 Export Book 1839–1870.

MS. F382.2 R1 Volume 3, Contract Book, 1847–1855.

MS. F382.2 R1 Volume 4, Cash Book 1847–1852.

MS F382.2 R1 Petty Cash Book A Volume 5, 1847–1860.

Letter book with textile samples, England, 1827–41, Joseph Downs Collection, Winterthur Library.

OWN, Archive of Owen Owens and Sons 1813–1857, John Rylands Library.

OWN1/1/1/4 Ledger.

OWN 2/1 Packing and Packing Account Books.

OWN 3/2/4 Correspondence Relating to South American Trade 1838–1846.

R/1/2/4/ Archive of Rylands and Sons, John Rylands Library.

R/1/2/4, Rylands and Sons Account Book.

UCL Frederick Huth & Company Archive, English Letters.

Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 7, Jan–Jun 1831.

Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 13, Jan–Jun 1834.

Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 19, Jan–Apr 1838.

Huth/A-UCL English Letters, Volume 23, Apr–Jun 1839.

XI/38/149A London Banking House Letters, Rothschild Archive.

YA2013.25 Archive of Langworthy Brothers & Co., 1826–1961, Science and Industry Museum.

YA2013.25/2/1/1 Business Letters and Notes- Regarding ordering of materials and textiles.

YA2013.25/2/1/2 Business Letters and Notes- Regarding ordering of materials and textiles.

YA2013.25/2/1/3 Business Letters, Notes and Textile Samples.

YA2013.25/2/1/4 Business Letters and Notes- Regarding ordering of materials and textiles.

YA2013.25/2/1/5 Business Letters, Notes and Logbook for 1834.

YA2013.25/2/1/6 Business Letters and Deliveries for 1834.

YA2013.25/2/1/7 Business Letters and Deliveries for 1834.

YA2013.25/2/2/1 Correspondence Regarding Cotton Sales to Rio de Janeiro and Fabric Samples.

YA2013.25/2/2/2 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/2/2/3 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/2/2/4 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/2/2/5 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/2/2/6 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/2/2/7 Letters and Notes About Business Operations.

YA2013.25/3/1/1 Notes Regarding Deliveries, Accounts and Goods.

YA2013.25/3/1/2 Notes Regarding Deliveries and Receipts.

YA2013.25/3/1/3 Receipts and Notes Regarding Deliveries.

YA2013.25/3/1/4 Cash and Receipts.

YA2013.25/3/1/5 Sales and Invoices.

YA2013.25/3/2/1 Accounts Ledger.

YA2013.25/3/2/2 Shipping Costs, Bills of Lading.

YA2013.25/3/2/3 Cash Ledger.

YA2013.25/3/2/4 Ledger.

YA2013.25/3/2/5 Bundle of Loose Papers, Referring Mainly to Contacts.

YA2013.25/3/2/6 Accounts/Cash Ledger.

YA2013.25/3/2/7 Bad Debt Ledger.

YA2013.25/3/2/8 Index of Companies Involved with Langworthy during 1830s.

YMS 0227, Pattern Book, Science and Industry Museum.

Printed Primary Material

Gore's Directory of Liverpool and Its Environs, Jan 1834.

J. Maurice Dempsey and William Hughes, *Our Ocean Highways, A Condensed Universal Hand Gazetteer and International Route Book*. London: Almanack, 1871.

J.F., *The Merchant's Warehouse Laid Open*. London, 1696.

Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, First Annual Report of the Council, List of Members 1851. Liverpool Chamber of Commerce, First Annual Report of the Council Presented to the Chamber at the General Meeting, 3rd February 1851.

London Gazette 1665–Present.

Manchester Observer 1791–2000.

Marwood's Shipping Register of Sailing Vessels Registered at The Port of Liverpool, 1854.

Marwood's North of England, Maritime Directory and Shipping Register, Sunderland, March 1854
Sailing Vessels Registered at the Port of Liverpool.

Pigot & Co., Pigot and Dean, Pigot and Slater, Commercial Directories 1828–1843.

Railway Subscription Contracts, Deposited in Private Bill Office, House of Commons Papers, 7th March 1837, 46.

Remains, Historical and Literary, Connected with the Palatine Counties of Lancaster and Chester, vol. 69. Chetham Society, 1866.

Simonds Colonial Magazine 13, no.50 (1848).

Some Remarks and Explanatory Observations on a Petition to Parliament from the Merchants and Shipowners of Liverpool Addressed to the Right Honourable Chancellor of the Exchequer by a Member of the Brazilian Association of Liverpool, G and J Robinson, Castle Street, Liverpool, 1833.

The Manchester Commercial List by Estell & Co. London, 1873.

The Manchester Guardian 1821–2000.

White's Leeds Directory of Trades and Professions 1837.

Worrall's Directory of Cotton Mills in Manchester 1891.

Secondary Material

Books

Ashworth, William. *The Industrial Revolution, The State, Knowledge and Global Trade*. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

Barker, A.F. *Textiles, The Mercerized and Artificial Fibres and the Dyeing of Textile Materials*. London: Constable and Company, 1910.

Beckert, Sven. *Empire of Cotton, A New History of Global Capitalism*. London: Penguin, 2014.

Bethell, Leslie. *Brazil, Essays on History and Politics*. London: University of London Press, 2018.

Butterworth, Edwin, *Historical Sketches of Oldham*. Oldham: 1856.

Chapman, Stanley. *Merchant Enterprise in Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992.

Chapman, Stanley. *The Rise of Merchant Banking*. London: Routledge, 1984.

Chapman, Sydney J., *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1904.

Clapp, B.W. *John Owens, Manchester Merchant*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1965.

Coleman, D.C. *Myth, History and the Industrial Revolution*. London: Hambledon Press, 1992.

Davis, Ralph, *The Industrial Revolution and British Overseas Trade*. Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1979.

Donaghy, Thomas J. *Liverpool and Manchester Railway Operations 1831 to 1845*. Newton Abbott: David and Charles, 1972.

Drinkwater, John. *History of the Late Siege of Gibraltar*. London: John Murray, 1844.

Edwards, Michael M. *The Growth of the British Cotton Trade, 1780–1815*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967.

Ellison, Thomas. *The Cotton Trade of Great Britain*. London: Frank Cass and Co., 1886.

Engels, Friedrich. *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*. London: Swan, Sonnenschein and Co., 1892.

Eacott, Jonathan. *Selling Empire, India in the Making of Britain and America, 1600–1830*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2016.

Evans, D. Morier, *The History of the Commercial Crisis, 1857–1858 and the Stock Exchange Panic of 1859*. London: Groombridge and Sons, 1859.

Farnie, D.A. and Jeremy, David J. *The Fibre that Changed the World, The Cotton Industry in International Perspective 1600–1990s*. Oxford; Oxford University Press, 2004.

Farnie, Douglas. *The English Cotton Industry and the World Market, 1815–1896*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.

Friedman, Walter A. and Geoffrey Jones, eds. *Business History*. Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2013.

Guenther, Louise H. *British Merchants in Nineteenth-Century Brazil, Business Culture and Identity in Bahia, 1808–1850*. Oxford: Centre for Brazilian Studies, 2004.

Guimaraes, Carlos Gabriel. *A Presença Inglesa Nas Finanças E No Comércio No Brasil Imperial*. São Paulo: Joana Monteleone, 2012.

Haggerty, Sherryllynne, Webster, Anthony, and White, Nicolas J. eds., *The Empire in One City? Liverpool's Inconvenient Imperial Past*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008.

Haggerty, Sherryllynne. *Merely for Money? Business Culture in the British Atlantic, 1750–1815*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012.

Headrick, Daniel R. *Power over Peoples*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010.

Hobsbawm, Eric. *Industry and Empire*. London: Penguin, 1968.

Hope, Ronald. *A New History of British Shipping*. London: John Murray, 1990.

Inikori, Joseph E. "English Versus Indian Cotton Textiles". In Giorgio Riello and Tirthankar Roy, eds. *How India Clothed the World, Global Economic History Series, Volume 4*. Boston: Brill, 2009.

Inikori, Joseph E. *Africans and the Industrial Revolution*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Islamoglu-Inan, Huri. *The Ottoman Empire and The World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Johnston, F.R. *Eccles, The Growth of a Lancashire Town*. Eccles: Eccles and District History Society, 1967.

Jones, Geoffrey and Jonathan Zeitlin. *The Oxford Handbook of Business History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Jones, Geoffrey. *Merchants to Multinationals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

Kidd, Alan and Terry Wyke. *Manchester, Making the Modern City*. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2016.

Law, Brian R. *Fieldens of Todmorden, A Nineteenth Century Business Dynasty*. Littleborough: George Kelsall, 1995.

Lemire, Beverley. *Fashions Favourite, The Cotton Trade and the Consumer in Britain, 1660–1800*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. *The British Textile Trade in South America in the Nineteenth Century*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. *The Globalization of Merchant Banking before 1850, The Case of Huth & Co.* London: Routledge, 2016.

Lloyd-Jones, Roger and M.J. Lewis. *Manchester and the Age of the Factory, The Business Structure of Cottonopolis in the Industrial Revolution.* London: Croome Helm, 1988.

Maw, Peter. *Transport and the Industrial City, Manchester and the Age of the Canal, 1750–1850.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013.

McShane, Clay and Joel A. Tarr. *The Horse in the City, Living Machines in the Nineteenth Century.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2007.

Mortimer, John. *Mercantile Manchester.* London: Palmer Howe, and Co., 1986.

Mosley, Stephen. *The Chimney of the World.* Cambridge: The White Horse Press, 2001.

Murmann, Johann Peter. *Knowledge and Competitive Advantage, The Coevolution of Firms, Technology, and National Institutions.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Osborne, Roger. *Iron, Steam and Money, The Making of the Industrial Revolution.* London: Pimlico, 2014.

Parthasarathi, Prasannan. *Why Europe Grew Rich and Asia Did Not.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.

Platt, D.C.M. *Latin America and British Trade.* London: A and C Black Publishers Ltd, 1972.

Postrel, Virginia. *The Fabric of Civilisation.* New York: Basic Books, 2020.

Reber, Vera Blinn. *British Mercantile Houses in Buenos Aires, 1810–1880.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979.

Redford, Arthur. *Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, Vol. 1 1794–1858.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1934.

Redford, Arthur. *Manchester Merchants and Foreign Trade, Vol. 2 1850–1939.* Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1956.

Redhead, Norman. *Greengate, The Archaeology of Salford's Historic Core.* Greater Manchester's Past Revealed, vol. 13 (Lancaster: Oxford Archaeology Ltd, 2015).

Riello, Giorgio. *Cotton, The Fabric That Made the Modern World.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Riello, Giorgio and Parthasarathi, Prasannan eds. *The Spinning World, A Global History of Textiles, 1200–1850.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Robinson, Stuart. *A History of Dyed Textiles.* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1970.

Rose, Mary B. *Firms, Networks and Business Values.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Rose, Mary B. *The Greggs of Quarry Bank Mill* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986.

Rose, Mary B. *The Lancashire Cotton Industry.* Lancashire: Lancashire County Books, 1996.

Shapton, Mike. *The Englishmen of the Peseta.* London: Aspect Design, 2020.

Styles, John *The Holker Album, Textile Samples and Industrial Espionage in the 18th Century*. Paris: Musee Des Arts Decoratifs, 2023.

Sykas, Phillip Anthony, ed. *Pathways in the Nineteenth-Century British Textile Industry*, vol. II. London: Routledge, 2022.

Sykas, Phillip Anthony. *The Secret Life of Textiles, Six Pattern Books in North West England*. Bolton: Bolton Museum, 2005.

Szostak, Rick. *The Role of Transportation in the Industrial Revolution, England and France*. London: McGill Queen University Press, 1991.

Tattersfield, Nigel. *The Forgotten Trade, Comprising the Log of the Daniel and Henry of 1700 and Accounts of the Slave Trade from the Minor Ports of England, 1698–1725*. London: Pimlico, 1998.

Timmins, Geoffrey, *Made in Lancashire, A History of Regional Industrialisation*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998.

Walker, David W. *Kinship, Business and Politics*. Texas: University of Texas Press, 1986.

Williams, Eric. *Capitalism and Slavery*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1944.

Journal Articles and Book Chapters

“Debating Methodology in Business History”, *Business History Review* 91, no.3: A Special Issue on Methodologies (Autumn 2017).

Behagg, Clive. “Golden Opportunities, Jewellery Making between Mass Production and Speciality”, *Enterprise and Society* 4, no.2 (June 2003).

Berg, Maxine. “The British Product Revolution of the Eighteenth Century”. In Jeff Horn, Leonard N Rosenband and Merrit Roe Smith, *Reconceptualising the Industrial Revolution*. London: The MIT Press, 2010.

Bogart, Dan, Michael Lefors and A.E.M. Satchell. “Canal Carriers and Creative Destruction in English Transport”, *Explorations in Economic History* 71 (2019).

Brennan, Frances, “The Goddard Papers, The History of a Nineteenth-Century Shipbuilder and Merchant”, *Coriolis* 4, no.2 (2013):

Casson, Mark and Howard Fox, “International Business Networks: Theory and Practice”, *Business and Economic History* 22, no.1 (1993).

Chapman, S.D. “Quantity vs Quality in the British Industrial Revolution”. In S.D Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 3. London: Tauris Publishers, 1997.

Chapman, Stanley. “British Marketing Enterprise, The Changing Roles of Merchants, Manufacturers and Financiers, 1700–1860,” *Business History Review* 53, no.2 (1979).

Chapman, Stanley. “The Commercial Sector”. In Mary B. Rose, ed., *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*. Preston: Lancashire Country Books, 1996.

Checkland, S.G. "Economic Attitudes in Liverpool, 1793–1807", *The Economic History Review* 5, no.1 (1952).

Davis, Ralph. "The English Export Trade, Textiles from 1784–1856". In S.D Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 2. London: Tauris and Co. Ltd, 1997.

Dumbell, Stanley. "Early Liverpool Cotton Imports and the Organisation of the Liverpool Cotton Market in the Eighteenth Century", *The Economic Journal* 33, no.131 (1923).

Duncan, John. "Early Steam Railways in Great Britain", *The Railway and Locomotive Historical Society* 12, (1926): 22.

Farnie, Douglas. "The Role of Merchants as Prime Movers". In D.A. Farnie and David J. Jeremy, eds., *The Fibre that Changed the World, The Cotton Industry in International Perspective 1600–1990s*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Fernández-De-Pinedo Echevarria, Nadia and Emilio Fernández-De-Pinedo Fernández, "Distribution of British Textiles in the Spanish Market at The Beginning of the Eighteenth Century", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 31, no.2 (2013).

Fernández-de-Pinedo, Nadia. "Compelled to Import: Cuban Consumption at the Dawn of the Nineteenth" Century, *Atlantic Studies* 19, no.3 (2021).

Fisher, H.E.S. "Anglo-Portuguese Trade, 1700–1770", *The Economic History Review* 16, no.2 (1963).

Fruin, W. Mark. "Business Groups and Interfirm Networks". In Geoffrey Jones and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *Oxford Handbook of Business History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Ginzburg, Carlo "Micro History: Two or Three Things I Know About It", trans. John and Anne C. Tedeschi, *Critical Inquiry* 20, no.1 (1993): 23.

Granovetter, Mark S. "The Strength of Weak Ties", *American Journal of Sociology* 78, no.6 (1973).

Gras, N.S.B. "Business History," *Economic History Review* 4, no.4 (1934).

Guimaraes, Carlos Gabriel. "English Presence in the Brazilian Empire, Edward Johnston & Co. and the Exports Trade, 1842–1852" *Rivesto Tempo* 21, no.37 (2015).

Haggerty, John and Sheryllynne Haggerty, "Visual Analytics of an Eighteenth-Century Business Network", *Enterprise and Society* 11, no.1 (2010).

Hall, Nigel, "Liverpool's Cotton Merchants and Importers 1700–1914", *Northern History* 54, no.1 (2017).

Heath, Hilarie J. "British Merchant Houses in Mexico, 1821 to 1860," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 73, no.2 (1993).

Howe, Anthony. "Latin America and the Nineteenth-Century Free Trade Project". In Alexandre Mendes Cunha and Carlos Eduardo Suprinyak, eds., *The Political Economy of Latin American Independence*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2016.

Hyde, Francis E., Bradbury B. Parkinson and Sheila Marriner, "The Cotton Broker and the Rise of the Liverpool Cotton Market", *The Economic History Review* 8, no.1 (1955).

Inalcik, Halil. "When and how British cotton goods invaded the Levant markets". In Huri Islamoglu-Inan, ed., *The Ottoman Empire and The World Economy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987.

Jewkes, John. "Factors in Industrial Integration", *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (August 1930).

Kaye, Anthony E. "The Second Slavery, Modernity in the Nineteenth-Century South and the Atlantic World," *The Journal of Southern History* 75, no.3 (2009).

Kusamitsu, T. "British Industrialisation and Design Before the Great Exhibition". In S.D Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 3 (London: Tauris Publishers, 1997).

Langworthy, William Franklin. "Researchers in England 1927". In *The Langworthy Family, Some Descendants of Andrew and Rachel Hubbard Langworthy who were married at Newport, Rhode Island, November 3rd, 1658*. New York: William F. and Othello S. Langworthy, 1940.

Lisle-Williams, Michael. "Merchant Banking Dynasties in the English Class Structure: Ownership, Solidarity and Kinship in the City of London, 1850–1960," *British Journal of Sociology* 35, no.3 (1984).

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. "Connections and Networks in Spain of a London Merchant Banker, 1800–1850", *Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 31, no.3 (2013).

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. "Shaping Globalisation, London's Merchant Bankers in the Early Nineteenth Century", *The Business History Review* 88, no.3 (2014).

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. "The Economic Activities of a Global Merchant-Banker in Chile, Huth and Co. of London, 1820s–1850s", *Historia* 45, no.2 (2012).

Llorca-Jana, Manuel. "The Organisation of British Textile Exports to the River Plate and Chile, Merchant Houses operating 1810–1859", *Business History* 53, no.6 (2011).

Mahmood, Ishtaq P., Hongbin Zhu and Edward J. Zajac. "Where can capabilities come from? Network Ties and Capability Acquisition in Business Groups", *Strategic Management Journal* 32, no.8 (2011).

Martens, Vibe Maria. "The Colourful Qualities of Desire, Fashion, Colours and Industrial Espionage". In Marie Louise Nosch, Zhao Feng and Lotika Varadarajan, eds., *Global Textile Encounters, Ancient Textile Series*, vol. 20. Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2014.

Nieto-Galan, Agusti. *Colouring Textiles, A History of Natural Dyestuffs in Industrial Europe*. London: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2001.

Pamuk, Sevket and Jeffrey Williamson. "Ottoman De-Industrialisation 1800–1913, Assessing the Magnitude Impact and Response", *Economic History Review* 64, no.1 (2011).

Panzac, Daniel. "International and Domestic Maritime Trade in the Ottoman Empire during the Eighteenth Century", *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 24, no.2 (1992).

Parks, Sarah B. "By Your Exertions with Ours, British Printed Cottons in Brazil, 1827–1841", *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*, 725 (2012).

Pearson, Robin and David Richardson. "Business Networking in the Industrial Revolution", *The Economic History Review* 54, no.4 (2001).

Pereira, Thales Augusto Zamberlan. "Tariffs and the Textile Trade Between Britain and Brazil, 1808–1860", *Estudos Economicos* 51, no.2 (2021).

Prados de la Escosura, Leonardo. "Lost Decades? Economic Performance in Post-Independence Latin America", *Journal of Latin American Studies* 41, no.2 (2009).

Raman, Alka. "Indian Cotton Textiles and British Industrialization, Evidence of Comparative learning in the British Cotton Industry in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries", *Economic History Review* 75, no.2 (2022).

Redhead, Norman and Miller, Ian, "Greengate, The Archaeology of Salford's Historic Core" *Greater Manchester's Past Revealed*, Volume 13, (2015).

Reinkowski, Maurus. "Uncommunicative Communication: Competing Egyptian, Ottoman and British Imperial Ventures, in 19th-Century Egypt", *Die Welt Des Islams* 54, no.3 (2014).

Ridings, Eugene W. "The Merchant Elite and the Development of Brazil, The Case of Bahia during the Empire", *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs* 15, no. 3 (1973).

Riello, Giorgio, "Cotton Textiles and the Industrial Revolution in a Global Context", *Past and Present* 255: (2022), 130.

Rodgers, H.B. "The Lancashire Cotton Industry in 1840". In S.D. Chapman, ed., *The Textile Industries*, vol. 2. London: Tauris and Co., 1997.

Styles, John. "What Were Cottons For in the Industrial Revolution". In Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Cotton Textiles, 1200–1850*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Turnbull, Gerard. "Canals, Growth and Regional Demand", *Economic History Review* 40, no.4 (1987).

Vicente, Marta V. "Cotton Textiles in Colonial Spanish America". In Giorgio Riello and Prasannan Parthasarathi, eds., *The Spinning World, A Global History of Textiles, 1200–1850*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Wood, A.J. Russell "Technology and Society, The Impact of Gold Mining on the Institution of Slavery in Portuguese America", *Journal of Economic History* 37, no.1 (1977): 1.

Zeitlin, Jonathan. "Industrial Districts and Regional Clusters, The Rediscovery of Industrial Districts, A Disciplinary Paradox". In Geoffrey Jones and Jonathan Zeitlin, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Business History*. Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2007.

Websites

"John Alsop, 1828–1909", Selly Manor Museum, 2nd September 2021, <https://sellymanormuseum.org.uk/news/2021-09-02/john-alsop-1828-1909-biography-of-a-local-artist-who-specialised-in-illustrations-of-the-midlands>.

Draper, Nicholas. "Lloyd's, Marine Insurance and Slavery", Lloyds, <https://www.lloyds.com/about-lloyds/history/the-trans-atlantic-slave-trade/lloyds-marine-insurance-and-slavery>.

Haynes, Katie. "John Owens", Rylands Blog, Rylands Collections, 18th September 2023, <https://rylandscollections.com/2023/09/18/john-owens/>.

Theses

Greysmith, David. "The Printed Textile Industry in England 1830–1870". Master's thesis, Middlesex Polytechnic, 1985.

Maw, Peter. "Anglo-American Trade during the Industrial Revolution: A Study of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Textile Industries 1750–1825". PhD thesis, Manchester University, 2005.

Turnbull, Gerard L. "Pickford's 1750–1920, A Study in the Development of Transportation". PhD thesis, University of Glasgow, 1972.

Appendices

Appendix A, Names of Local Suppliers, Their Role and Location, within the vicinity of Manchester along with Number of Receipts Found in Archive.

| Firm | Role | Location | Number of Receipts |
|--|---|--|--------------------|
| Langworthy Brothers & Co. | Textile Merchants and Manufacturers | Cannon Street, Manchester | NA |
| T and T Crompton | | No 3, Church Street, Manchester | 2 |
| Dale Atkin & Co. | Chemists | Swan Street, Manchester | 2 |
| T. Baches Warehouse | Warehouse and Carrying Firm | Castlefield's, Manchester | 2 |
| Ordsall Dye Works | Dyers | Salford | 1 |
| Seville and Wright, Medlock Mill | Spinners | Fowleach, Oldham | 7 |
| Thomas and David Ainsworth | Fustian Manufacturers and Warehouseman | 14, Bread Street, High Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Prichard and Brothers | Umbrella and Smallware Manufacturers | High Street, Manchester | 3 |
| Severn Warehouse | Carrying Firm | Deansgate, Manchester | 11 |
| Works, Main Weavers | Weaving | Eccles | 1 |
| Charles and Robert B Clegg | Trunk and Packing-Case Makers | George Street and York Street, Manchester | 2 |
| Chapman and Martin | Blue, Black and Fancy Dyers | Tanners Lane, Pendleton | 1 |
| Hilne Travis Milne | Mills | Shaw | 5 |
| William B Lens | Importer and Dealer in Timber | Worsley Street, New Bailey Bridge, Salford | 1 |
| Joseph Clark & Sons | Mill | 20, Mosley Street, Manchester | 4 |
| Beny Rawson & Co. | Vitriol Works | Bolton | 2 |
| Christopher Grimshaw | | No 7, Sussex Street | 2 |
| John Curtis | Currier | 21 Withy Grove, Manchester | 2 |
| Smith Hill & Co. | Shirtings, Cloths, Nankeens | 6 Old Mill Gate and 110 Cannon Street | 1 |
| Forths & Company | Dealers in Calicoes, Twist and Weft | Bridgwater Buildings, Manchester | 2 |
| Tomlinson and Leigh | Iron Mongers | Market Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Liverpool and Manchester Railway Company | Railway Company | Water Street and Liverpool Road | 4 |
| Thomas Watson | Trunk and Travelling Bag Manufacturer | Market Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Carver & Co. | Goods Forwarded by Fly Waggon Daily | Portland Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Thomas Marsland and Sons | Printers | 33 Mosley Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Nathan Phillips & Co. | Manufacturers, Smallwares, Sewing Cottons, Silks | Church Street, Manchester | 1 |
| E Goodall | Carpet and Blanket Warehouse | King Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Ann Johnson | Daily Conveyance by Fly Waggon | Oak Street, Manchester | 2 |
| James Grabtree | Manufacturer of Sateens, Quiltings, Jackonets | Angel Yard, Manchester | 1 |
| Robert Holt | Iron and Tin-Plate Workers and Packing Case Maker | 14, Old Mill Gate, Manchester | 1 |
| Owen and Hartley | Dresses, Dyes and Muslin Finishers | Smedley, Manchester | 1 |
| Thomas Airey | Dealer in Slate, Ridge Stones, Plastering Hair | Brewer Street, Port Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Ridsdale and Pearson | Waggons | Warehouse, Mayes Street, Manchester | 1 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|---|---|----|
| Mallalieu and Lees | Iron Merchants | 2 and 3 Cateaton Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Thomas Cave and Son | Copper Plate Printers | Spring Gardens, Manchester | 2 |
| Joseph Raleigh | Manufacturer of Cords, Velveteens and Beaverteens | Market Street, Manchester | 2 |
| George Peacock | Calenderer, Maker Up and Packer | Bow Lane and Cross Street, Manchester | 3 |
| John Haigh | Twist Supplier | Lees, Manchester | 1 |
| William Simpson | Engraver and Printer | Deansgate, Manchester | 2 |
| W.G. Seed | | 37 Spring Gardens | 1 |
| William Guest | | Manchester | 1 |
| Whewell and Booth | Hollins Vale Bleach Works | Bury | 4 |
| B Render | | Bridgewater Place, Manchester | 1 |
| Jas and Will Eckersley | | Birchen Lane, Manchester | 1 |
| Jones Loyd & Co. | Bank | Market Street, Manchester | 13 |
| Sarah Robertson | Pieces of Cotton Thread | 2nd Oldham Street, Manchester | 1 |
| William Thorpe | Dye Works | Collyhurst, Manchester | 2 |
| John Munn & Co. | Grey Cloth Dealer | 62 Church Street, Manchester | 1 |
| Yates and Williams | Calico Merchants | 1, Bread Street and Bridgewater Buildings, Manchester | 1 |
| Longsdon and Clegg | Dyers, Dye Works | Ardwick, Manchester | 1 |

Appendix B, Transactions with Local Firms in Manchester by Area

| Location and Dates | Number of Transactions |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Oldham 1826–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Bolton 1826–1836</i> | 6 |
| <i>Ashton 1826–1836</i> | 2 |
| <i>Chorlton on Medlock 1834–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Burnley 1831–1836</i> | 3 |
| <i>Wigan 1833–1836</i> | 3 |
| <i>Ancoats 1834–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Manchester 1826–1836</i> | 483 |
| <i>Staley Bridge 1826–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Eccles 1828–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Preston 1829–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Salford 1831–1836</i> | 12 |
| <i>Stockport 1831–1836</i> | 1 |
| <i>Pendleton 1831–1836</i> | 1 |

Appendix C, Most Common Trade Locations with Dates, Number of Transactions and the Number of Agents and Distributors, Types of Goods Exported, YA2013.25,3,2,1 Accounts Ledger

| Locations | Number of Transactions | Number of Agents and Buyers | Main Agents and Merchant Houses Depended on and Dates | Types of Goods Traded |
|--|------------------------|-----------------------------|--|---|
| Rio De Janeiro, Port Alegre, Pernambuco and Bahia, Brazil 1828–1836 | 161 | 7 | Anfield Brade & Co. 1824 Schwind Turner & Co., 1828 Schwind Brade & Co., 1830 Inglis Cains & Co. 1832–1836 Schwind Weetman & Co. 1835–1836 Robert Lowden & Co., 1830 Durham Price & Co., 1833–1840 | Nankeens, Drills, Velveteens, Checks, Blue Indias, Salempores, French Ginghams, Florentines |
| Valparaiso, Santiago Chile, 1828–1836 | 26 | 6 | Messrs Alsop & Co. 1834–1836 Huth Grunning & Co. 1834–1836 Taylor & Co. 1828 Taylor Cartwright & Co. 1829 | Velveteens, Blue Indias and Prints |

| | | | | |
|--|----|---|--|--|
| | | | Taylor Claude & Co. 1835– 1836 George De La Sena and Heaven 1826 | |
| Tampico, Mexico 1826–1836 | 67 | 5 | Edward Langworthy 1826–1830 Evermann and Hoffman, Spitta Meyer Drusina and Martinez Taylor Bates & Co. 1828 | Plain Nankeens, Stripes, Drills |
| Syria | | 2 | W.J. Dunderdale 1834–1835 Barker Wilkin & Co. 1835– 1836 | Nankeens, Grey Twills and Cambrics |
| Constantinople, Turkey 1830–1836 | 53 | 3 | Charles Ede, C Cunningham Barker & Co. 1832–1835 Galloway Son & Co. 1833 | Nankeens |
| New Orleans, USA, 1835–1836 | 5 | 1 | Fred Huth Branch 1831– 1836 Fred Frey & Co. 1835–1836 | Cheap Prints, Cotton Drills |
| Rio Grande | | 1 | David Price & Co. 1835–1836 | Diagonals |
| Oporto, Lisbon, Portugal, 1831–1836 | 67 | 1 | Issac Newton | Nankeens, Cameroons, Cotton Drills |

| | | | | |
|--|-----|---|--|--|
| | | | Edward Murphy & Co. 1832 | |
| Havana, Cuba 1830–1836 | 37 | 2 | Tennants Moor & Co. | Cheap Prints, Cotton Drills |
| Bombay/ Calcutta, India, 1831–1836 | 8 | 1 | Lyall Matheson & Co. Divion Carter & Co., 1834–1836 | Unknown |
| London, England, 1826–1828 “Often acted as a distribution centre to other markets around the globe” | 788 | 7 | Castelli Brothers James Deacon and Sons. Francis Ede 1830–1833 Oliver Watson & Co. 1831 R and N Nichols 1830 Bischoff Haffenden & Co. 1831 Cook Gladstone & Co. 1826 | Nankeens, Striped Nankeens, Checks, Union Checks, Blue Florentines, White Drills |
| Philadelphia, USA 1828–1836 | 5 | 1 | Jacob Rees and Son, 1829 | |
| Liverpool, England 1826–1836 | 199 | 1 | Turner Brade & Co. | Blue Nankeens, Drills, Salampores, Ginghams |
| Hamburg, Germany 1826–1836 | 1 | 1 | Albrecht 1826 | Plain Coloured Nankeens |
| Glasgow, Scotland 1830–1836 | 19 | 3 | Alex Galloway and Son, 1831 Davie and Son, 1831 | Cochineal |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|---|--|--|
| | | | Alex Johnston & Co., 1834–1836 | |
| Kingston, Jamaica 1834–1835 | 5 | 1 | Fred and Singleton & Co., 1834–1836 | Unknown |
| Dublin, Belfast, Ireland 1826–1833 | 14 | 1 | Hauge Beaumont and Dean Robert and George Grey Crawford and Granham | Unknown |
| Buenos Aires, Argentina 1830–1836 | 17 | 3 | Charles Taylor and Sons Taylor Cartwright & Co. 1828 Taylor & Co. 1830–1836 | Cheap Prints |
| Vera Cruz | | 1 | Robert Heaven 1827 | Green Nankeens |
| Leghorn, Italy, 1826–1836 | 24 | 2 | Routh and Garland Henry Petty 1834 | Nankeens |
| Lima, Peru, 1831–1836 | 18 | 1 | Taylor Read & Co. 1833–1834 Taylor Claude & Co. 1834–1836 Fred Huth Grunning & Co. 1834–1836 | Cheap Prints, Cotton Drills, Handkerchiefs |
| Malta, 1830–1836 | 9 | 2 | James Bell & Co. 1830 Rose Dunderdale & Co. 1834–1836 | Velveteens |

| | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|----|---|--|--|
| Canton | | 2 | Galloway Son & Co. 1833 Gastelle Grustio & Co. 1833 | Unknown |
| West Coast 1832–1836 | 12 | 2 | Taylor & Co. 1830-1836 Fred Huth Grunning & Co 1833-1836 | Cheap Prints, Cotton Drills, Handkerchiefs |
| Monte Video, Uruguay 1833–1836 | 15 | 1 | Scurr Hughes & Co., 1834–1836 | Cheap Prints |

Appendix D, YA2013.25/2/2/1 Number of shipwrecks and consignments damaged referred to in the correspondence with agents in Brazil.

| | |
|---|---|
| <i>Number of shipwrecks with Langworthy's consignments, 1828–1839</i> | 2 |
| <i>Consignments damaged on the crossing 1828–1839</i> | 8 |

Appendix E, YA2013.25/3/2/1 Number of dealings between Langworthy Brothers & Co. and other firms, 1825–1836.

| Name of Firm in Ledger and Years Active with Langworthy | Number of Transactions Recorded |
|---|---------------------------------|
| <i>Frederick Huth & Co. 1831–1836</i> | 49 |
| <i>James Deacon and Sons 1827–1836</i> | 33 |
| <i>Charles Ironside & Co. 1831–1835</i> | 81 |
| <i>Turner Brade & Co. 1828–1836, 0 transactions in 1830</i> | 47 |
| <i>Alex Johnston & Co. 1833–1836</i> | 5 |
| <i>James Durham and Durham Price & Co. 1835–1836</i> | 29 |
| <i>Charles Taylor and Sons & Co. 1826–1831</i> | 69 |