

THE TWENTY-SECOND
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

WAKEFIELD

Chamber of Commerce,

PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERS

AT THE

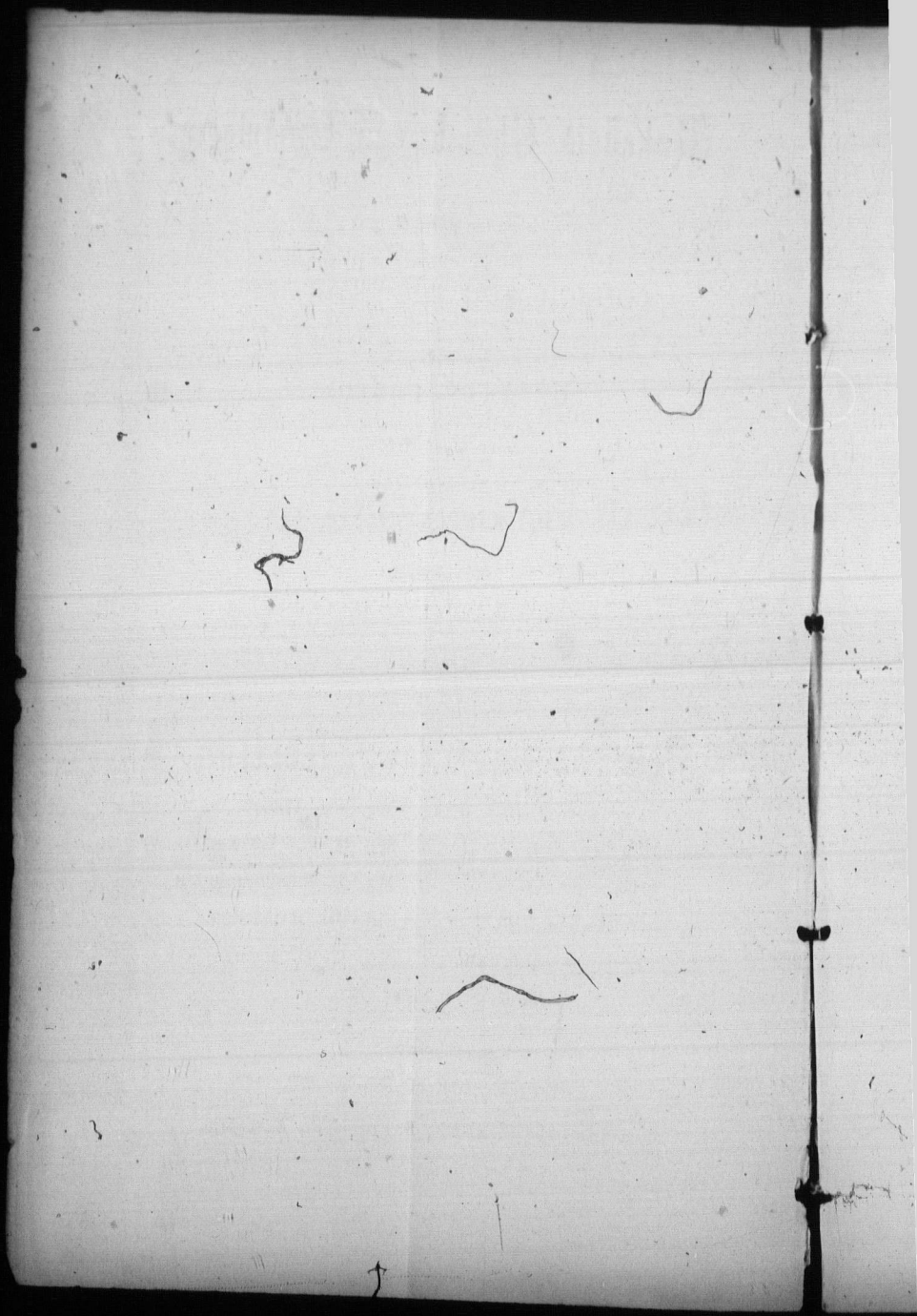
General Annual Meeting,

HELD ON THE

20TH DAY OF JANUARY, 1886.

WAKEFIELD :

J. ROBINSON AND SON, PRINTERS, "EXPRESS" OFFICE.
1886.



Wakefield Chamber of Commerce.

COUNCIL FOR THE YEAR 1886.

President :

CAPTAIN BOLTON.

Vice-Presidents :

MR. J. S. BOOTH.

MR. BARRON KILNER.

Treasurer :

MR. WILLIAM LEE SELLERS.

Auditor :

MR. ALFRED ASH.

AND

MR. WILLIAM WATSON.

WM. HARTLEY LEE, Esq., J.P.

MR. J. A. FAWCETT.

MR. WM. BRIGGS.

COLONEL MACKIE, J.P.

ALD. REYNOLDS (MAYOR).

MR. GEO. PAYNE.

MR. WM. HURST.

MR. H. M. CARTER.

MR. M. P. STONEHOUSE

MR. HY. ROLLINSON.

MR. W. H. MILNES.

T. K. SANDERSON, Esq.

Secretary :

MR. GEORGE MANDER, J.P.

SIR EDWARD GREEN, BART., M.P., *Ex-Officio*.

The Twenty-Second Annual Report
OF THE
WAKEFIELD CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,

Presented to the Members at the General Annual

Meeting,

held on the 20th day of January, 1886.

In presenting their Report to the Members of the Chamber for the year ending 1885, the Council regret that they cannot report on any real improvement in the Trade and Commerce of the Borough. The Retail Trade in the Town has been, and still continues to be, greatly depressed. The depression prevailing in the Manufacturing and Mining Trades has been reflected with even increased intensity, for whilst Manufacturers have at any rate been enabled (in most cases) to keep their mills running and their hands fairly well employed, the diminution (we might almost say the disappearance) of their profits has resulted in almost complete stagnation in the numerous trades which depend upon the spending of those profits for their employment. Thus the Building Trade, with its many branches, has found little employment for either capital or labour. Neither can we report that any useful Commercial Legislation has taken place during the past year, the whole of the time of Parliament having been chiefly occupied with the passing of the Representation of the People's Bill, the Redistribution of Seats' Bill, and the Registration of Voters' Bills consequent thereon.

During the year the Chamber was deprived by death of a sincere friend and warm supporter in the person of the late lamented Mr. R. B. Mackie, the Member for the Borough, and this Chamber and the Town generally, by his comparatively early death, were deprived of the services of a wise counsellor and a useful representative. Mr. Mackie was on all occasions, in his capacity of a private citizen, as well as in that of his representative capacity, ever ready and earnest in promoting the interests of the Chamber; but he has left behind him an example worthy of all emulation, and an incentive to those who survive to more self-denying labour for the benefit of the Town in which we all have so great an interest. Your Council met and passed a Resolution of sympathy and condolence with Miss Edith Grace Mackie and the Members of the Family, and recorded the same in their Minute Book.

The 25th Annual Meeting of the Associated Chambers of Commerce of the United Kingdom was held at the Westminster Palace Hotel on the 24th, 25th, and 26th of February last, under the presidency of C. M. Norwood, Esq., M.P., and was numerously attended, and when, out of 63 Chambers now forming the Association, 53 were represented.

Questions of more or less interest and importance to the Commercial community of the Country were under discussion, and resolutions affecting the same were passed, and most of which have since been acted upon by the Executive Council. The late Mr. Mackie, Mr. W. H. Lee, and Mr. William Briggs attended the Meeting as Representatives of this Chamber.

No Autumnal Meeting of the Association was held, in consequence of the preparatory work required for the then pending Elections to the new Parliament.

RAILWAY RATES BILLS.

Numerous Railway Companies having given Notice of their intention to apply to Parliament for Bills to enable them to increase somewhat largely their Scale of Carriage Rates and

Terminal and other charges—together about nine Companies, viz., the Great Northern, the North-Eastern, the London and North-Western, the Midland, the Great Western, and the Great Eastern, more or less affecting Yorkshire and the West Riding Trade; the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire and the Lancashire and Yorkshire being the only two Companies of importance who did not give any Notice of their intention to apply for such powers—your Council, along with most of the Chambers of Commerce and other public bodies, took the matter up, and it may safely be said that the whole Trading community felt so strongly against the attempt that they unanimously decided to oppose the several Bills to the uttermost; and your Council presented Petitions against the Bills promoted by the Companies directly connected with the West Riding. The Executive Council of the Associated Chambers of Commerce also took strong action in the matter, and public feeling became so strong and so determined that the threatened opposition had its desired effect, and the Board of Trade took note of it, and the combined opposition of the Board and the universality and intensity of the threatened opposition of the Public led the several Companies to abandon their schemes, and the obnoxious Bills were withdrawn.

An action, however, was instituted in the High Court of Justice by a Mr. Hall, carrying on business near London, against the London, Brighton, and South Coast Railway, which was decided by the Court in favour of the Railway Company. Notice of Appeal, however, was given by the Plaintiff, and that appeal is now pending. Your Council felt it their duty to subscribe to a Guarantee Fund which was being raised towards defraying the costs of the appeal, but as yet no decision has been given by the Appellate Court so far as your Council has as yet any knowledge.

THE BANKRUPTCY ACT OF 1883.

The working of the Bankruptcy Act, and especially with reference to the practice of Solicitors favouring the mode of

winding up large Insolvent affairs by private Deeds of arrangement, and not in Bankruptcy, on account of the very meagre and restricted Scale of Costs allowed, which, in the opinion of the members of the profession, were so unreasonable and inadequate as not to be worth the while of the larger practitioners to take Bankruptcy business, and the question has been under consideration, and information on the working of the Act in the Wakefield District has been obtained at the request of the Executive Council of the Associated Chambers, and forwarded to the Executive Council, who were collecting information on the general working of the Act and on the question of private Deeds of arrangement, with a view of laying the result of the enquiries before the Board of Trade and the Lord Chancellor, in order to have the Act amended if found desirable. Mr. Joseph McKenna introduced a Bill into the House of Commons, and your Council decided to support it, which provided for the Registration of all Deeds of arrangement with Debtors who compound and settle for their Debts without process in Bankruptcy, in the same way as Bills of Sale are registered, so that the Trading community might have the means of knowing to what extent and when Debtors liquidated their affairs by Deed, as well as in Bankruptcy, and they petitioned the House of Commons in favour of the Bill. Your Council may here observe that in support of the opinion that private Deeds are resorted to the number of registered failures in 1883 under the Bankruptcy Act was 10,662, and in 1884 only 3,242; and, considering the depression which existed in Trade, your Council were of opinion that this great difference was due to the system of private arrangements being carried on, without the checks required by the old Bankruptcy Act.

TELEPHONIC CHARGES.

This question has engaged the attention of the Council, and certain information thereon obtained, in conjunction with the Leeds Chamber of Commerce, with a view of measures being adopted so as to have those charges placed on a more satisfactory basis.

RATING OF MACHINERY.

The consideration of this vexed question (which is of great moment to mill owners) has continued, and the Bill dealing with the subject introduced before Parliament, prepared and brought into the House of Commons by the Parliamentary Members of the Associated Chambers, received the favourable support of your Council, and the late Borough Member promised to vote in favour of it, but, for want of time, the Bill did not reach a second reading.

WEST INDIA MAILS.

The despatch of these mails from Plymouth, instead of Southampton and London as at present, would greatly accelerate the earlier delivery of letters in Wakefield, Leeds, Dewsbury, Huddersfield, and the other Towns of the West Riding, as well as other Northern Towns, has also been considered, and the Council, being of opinion that the time which would be saved by altering the Port of Departure to Plymouth would prove of great service and advantage to Wakefield men doing business with the West Indies and the public generally, decided to support the movement, in conjunction with the Plymouth and other Chambers in the West Riding, and the late Borough Member was appointed one of a deputation to wait on the late Postmaster General on the subject, to urge the desired alteration.

HARBOURS OF REFUGE.

This important question has again been under consideration, and your Council being as strongly impressed as ever with the great necessity which exists for some early steps being taken to establish Harbours, and especially on the East Coast of Yorkshire, where the loss of life and property largely occurs every year, your Council again prepared and presented a Memorial on the subject to the Board of Trade and the heads of other Departments. They regret, however, to say that the Board of Trade, although admitting the importance of the subject, decided that the Government could not provide them, but would aid public enterprise as far as they could, but they could not provide such Harbours at the public cost.

TREATIES OF COMMERCE.

This subject has not been overlooked by the Council, and it is to be regretted that the negotiations with Spain to come to terms with that country to secure a more liberal Tariff between the two countries fell through on the part of the Spanish Government, but negotiations have again been recently opened with the Government of Spain and our own, and it is to be hoped that greater success will attend the present efforts than the past.

A Treaty with Morocco is under consideration by the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office and the Government of Morocco, and we trust the effort will succeed. We may add that both the late and the present Governments have done all they could, and lost no opportunity of arranging for Treaties wherever practicable.

TELEGRAPH ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Your Council considered this Bill, and were of opinion that the minimum charge for Telegrams in the United Kingdom of 6d. would be a great advantage to the commercial community, but that the mode proposed by this Bill—to limit the words to 12, including addresses—would seriously diminish the worth of the proposal, with the additional charge of 1d. for every additional extra two words beyond the first 12, and your Council passed a Resolution, and sent a copy to the late Mr. Mackie for presentation to the Postmaster General, and with instructions to put himself in communication with other Members of Parliament who had charge of similar Resolutions, namely:—That the message should be 12 words, counting addresses, for 6d., and 1d. for each additional three words, and they considered that this would be a fair settlement of the question.

ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE DEPRESSION OF TRADE.

Your Council having received from the Secretary of the Royal Commission a string of questions, and asking the Council

to kindly answer the same shortly, so far as concerned the depression of trade within the jurisdiction of the Chamber, and considering its importance, they decided to refer the matter to a Special Committee, composed of Members of the Council and Subscribers to the Chamber, representing the various branches of Trade and Industry in the district, to consider and report to the Chamber thereon. The Committee consisted of the following gentlemen:—The President, J. S. Booth, John Craven, William Briggs, H. M. Carter, J. O. Greaves, W. H. Lee, Geo. Payne, T. K. Sanderson, Barron Kilner, Reuben Reynolds, and Colonel Mackie. The Committee held several meetings, Captain Bolton (the President) being Chairman and, after mature consideration, they answered most of the questions to the best of their ability and as far as they were able (some of them being of very wide range they could not answer), and at a General Meeting of the Council the Committee presented their report, confining it to the answers given, and a Resolution was passed confirming and approving of the same, and a copy was forwarded to the Commissioners by the Secretary of the Chamber.

The total number of Chambers who gave answers to the questions submitted was 48, and other Commercial Associations sent answers, and several officials connected with the Bankruptcy Department of the Board of Trade, the Commercial Department of the Foreign Office, the Board of Customs, and other public officials connected with Government Departments, gave evidence before the Commission at its first sitting. The Commissioners have presented a first Report of their proceedings, but it is composed entirely of the answers given by the several Chambers of Commerce and oral evidence taken merely, but no Report proper commenting on the answers and the evidence received, or suggesting the causes of the present depression, or suggesting any remedy. The question is a grave and serious one, and we must wait with patience for the final Report of the Commission before any distinct and definite opinion can be formed on the result.

OUR INDIAN EMPIRE AND THE OPENING OF TRADE THERE.

This subject has occupied the attention of the Council at the instance of the London Chamber of Commerce, and letters on the subject have been received from Mr. R. H. Colquhoun, London, a gentleman who has taken considerable interest in the question of consolidating and extending British Interests in Indo-China and the East generally, by way of opening out new markets for British Industry, and especially with the Shan States of British Burmah, and a Line of Railway is projected to form a connection with the Indian and Burmese Lines, to be called "The Burma-Siam-China Railway," commencing on the Shores of the Gulph of Siam, and running through the Shan States of Siam and British Burmah, and so connect the South-West portion of China, or Indo-China, with British Burmah. A scheme, it will be remembered, having somewhat similar objects in view as the one proposed was set forth and supported with such patient perseverance and industry by the late Captain Sprye, but without success.

It is well known that the Shans are most anxious to trade with Burmah and the adjoining country of China, which is rich in raw material and natural products. So much of the proposed undertaking as may be described as immediately in question is a small portion, or branch, running from Raheng to our Seaport at Maulmain in the Gulph of Martaban, and your Council considered the scheme worthy of support.

GENERAL.

Several other subjects and Bills before Parliament, including Carriage Tax, Judgment on Railway Rates, Co-operative Societies Paying Income Tax, Bankruptcy Proxies, Official Inspection of Steam Boilers, Rents and Taxes as Preference Claims in Bankruptcy and Insolvencies, and other questions of more or less importance to the Commercial community, have engaged the attention of the Council during the year.

Several Acts of Parliament were prepared at the instance of the Executive Council of the Associated Chambers, and

introduced into the House by the Parliamentary Members of the Executive, amongst which were

Bills of Exchange Registration Bill,
The Companies Act Consolidation Bill,
Partnership Act Consolidation Bill, and
The Registration of Firms Bill,

but in consequence of the block in Commercial Legislation by the several Bills relating to the representation of the people, these Bills had to be withdrawn, and, among other Commercial Bills which shared the same fate, was the Supreme Court of Judicature (District Courts) Bill.

Our late Borough Member was always ready with his advice and active assistance on all occasions when required by the Council, and our present Member, Sir Edward Green, Bart., informs your Council that it will be his pleasure and endeavour to render the like assistance in all respects as the late Member did as far as may lay in his power.

BOOKS AND PAPERS RECEIVED.

Monthly Trade Reports of the United Kingdom.

Reports of Secretaries of Legation and Consuls on Manufacturer and Commerce.

Annual Statement of Trade and Navigation of the United Kingdom for 1884.

Monthly Numbers of the British Mail and the London Chamber of Commerce Journal have been received and regularly laid on the tables of the News Rooms of the Church and Mechanics' Institutions for the information of the members and others.

The Directors who retire by rotation are Messrs. T. K. Sanderson, William Briggs, M. P. Stonehouse, Henry Rollinson, Isaac Longbottom, and Barron Kilner, all of whom are eligible for re-election.

The following is the Cash Account for the year ending 31st December, 1885:—

Treasurer's Account of Receipts and Disbursements

From 1st January, 1885, to 31st December, 1885.

Dr. 1885.		Receipts.		Cr. 1885.		Payments.	
		£ s. d.				£ s. d.	
Jan. 1st.—To Balance in hand	..	22	18 7	Postages and Carriage of Parcels	..	1	17 1
Subscriptions for the year ending 31st Dec., 1885	..	56	14 0	Secretary for 1884..	..	25	0 0
Dec. 31st.—To Interest allowed by the Bank to this date..	..	0	9 4	Subscription to the Associated Chambers	..	5	5 0
				<i>London Chamber of Commerce Journal</i>	..	0	16 3
				Railway Rates Committee—Paid part of Subscription of £5 5s. towards Guarantee Fund for Costs of Appeal against decision as to Railway Charges	..	1	6 3
				Sundry Payments	..	1	4 6
				Printing and Advertising, Note Paper, &c.	..	5	8 4
				Use of Room at Town Hall for parts of 1884 and 1885	..	4	15 0
				Dec. 31st.—Balance in hand	..	34	9 6
						£80	1 11

Audited and found correct,

ALFRED ASH, Auditor.

WILLIAM LEE SELLERS, Treasurer.

1st January, 1886.

LIST OF MEMBERS.

	£	s.	d.
Ash Brothers, Messrs.	1	1	0
Barker, R. H., & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Beaumont, Mr. Herbert	1	1	0
Belle Isle Dyeworks Co.	1	1	0
Beverley Brothers, Messrs.	1	1	0
Bolton, George, & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Booth, Mr. J. S.	1	1	0
Bradley & Craven, Messrs.	1	1	0
Briggs, I., & Sons, Messrs.	2	2	0
Carter & Sons, Messrs.	1	1	0
Cradock, G., & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Dyson, Sons, & Brotherton, Messrs.	1	1	0
Fawcett, Mr. Joseph A.	1	1	0
Fernandes, N. L., & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Greaves, Mr. J. O.	1	1	0
Green, Sir Edward, Bart., M.P.	2	2	0
Hodgson & Simpson, Messrs.	1	1	0
Holdsworth & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Hurst, Mr. William	1	1	0
Kilner, Messrs.	1	1	0
Leatham, Tew, & Co., Messrs.	2	2	0
Leatham, W. H., Esq.	1	1	0
Lee, Geo., & Sons, Limited, Messrs.	2	2	0
Longbottom, Isaac, & Son, Messrs.	1	1	0
Mackie, R., & Sons, Messrs.	2	2	0

Martin, Mr. John J.	1	1	0
Mason, Mr. Henry	1	1	0
McInnes, Mr. James	1	1	0
Milnes, Mr. Wm. Henry	1	1	0
Milthorp, G. & F., Messrs.	1	1	0
Nicholson, W., & Sons, Messrs.	1	1	0
Ottley, Mr. J. B.	1	1	0
Reynolds & Haslegrave, Messrs.	2	2	0
Rhodes, G. & W., Messrs.	1	1	0
Robinson, Jno., & Son, Messrs.	1	1	0
Rollinson, Mr. Henry	1	1	0
Sanderson, T. K., Esq.	1	1	0
Sellers, Mr. Wm. Lee	1	1	0
Shaw, Mr. Joseph	1	1	0
Smith, Mr. Thomas	1	1	0
Stonehouse, Mr. M. P.	1	1	0
Teall, Simpson, & Co., Limited	1	1	0
Wades, Playfair, & Co., Messrs.	1	1	0
Wakefield and Barnsley Union Banking Co., Limited	2	2	0
Wakefield and West Riding Herald—Carr, Mr. E., Proprietor	1	1	0
Watson, Mr. William	1	1	0