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ALDAM, PEASE, BIRCHALL AND CO

This firm of woollen merchants was established in Leeds in the early eighteenth century, probably by Gervas Benson of Armley, an inventory of whose goods, dated April 1758 appears in item 4 below. In 1735 he had married Barbara, sister of John Aldam of Leeds (1718-1776) and it appears that by the 1760s John Aldam was in partnership with Gervas's son William (1736-1804). The partnership was enlarged in about 1767 by the admission of Thomas Benson.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the firm was trading under the name of William and Gervas Benson and Co with the partnership comprising William Benson, Gervas Benson, John Heaton and John Pease. This partnership was dissolved in December 1803 and from the beginning of the following year the business was carried on by John Pease, John Heaton (died c1812) William Pease (known as Aldam from 1810) and Thomas Benson Pease under the name of Pease, Heaton and Pease.

By 1816 it appears that the business was known as Aldam, Pease and Co with its partners being William Aldam, T B Pease and T. Birchall, the latter having become a partner about 1812. The partnership was dissolved in 1839 when its members were William Aldam, TB Pease, E. Birchall and John Heaton.

The surviving records comprise a series of nineteen sales ledgers, 1738-1839, which begin when Gervas Benson was already well-established in business. There is a cash book 1760-1782; three purchase and disbursement ledgers, 1809-1825; two stock books, 1811-1818 and 1832-1839; a bank book, 1833-1839, and a single day book for the months September to December 1838.

These records do not appear in the catalogue compiled by Patricia Hudson, The West Riding Wool Textile Industry (Edington, Wiltshire, 1975).

ACCOUNTS

Sales and General Ledgers

In addition to customer accounts, these ledgers contain some accounts relating to the partners.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|-----------|
| 1 | Ledger, indexed | 1738-1751 |
| 2 | Ledger, indexed | 1741-1758 |

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3. Ledger, indexed 1739-1759
Contains a summary of certain customers' accounts in the previous two ledgers, perhaps compiled to summarize the state of the accounts on the death of Gervas Benson
4. Ledger, no index 1758-1782
Includes an inventory of the goods and chattels of Gervas Benson late of Armley in the parish of Leeds, 12 Apr 1758, f7
Stock on hand belonging to his executor, f7v
Cash owing by tradesmen to his executor, 30 Mar 1758, f8-8v
Balance sheet of the executor's account f9-10v
5. Ledger, no index, all pages marked 'B' 1758-1772
6. Ledger, enclosed index 1771-1778
Includes a list of debts due to the partnership of John Aldam and William Benson 'before Thos Benson was taken in and due to them only' 1767, f186v
Balanced account of the estate and effects of John Aldam, f105-106
7. Ledger, enclosed index 1781-1793
8. Ledger, enclosed index 1792-1801
9. Ledger, enclosed index 1799-1820
The index uses separate columns for provincial customers and those in London, Ireland and overseas (mostly Canada and the USA)
10. Ledger, enclosed index 1802-1804
English sales only
11. Ledger, enclosed index 1803-1810
British sales only
Enclosed memorandum book lists debts outstanding in the 'old ledger'
12. Ledger, enclosed index 1810-1819
British sales only
13. Ledger, enclosed index 1816-1837
London, Irish and foreign sales

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|----|--|-----------|
| 14 | Ledger, enclosed index
British sales only | 1817-1825 |
| 15 | Ledger, enclosed index
British sales only | 1824-1830 |
| 16 | Ledger, enclosed index
British sales, excluding Leeds | 1830-1834 |
| 17 | Ledger, indexed
Labelled 'Leeds Ledger' but contains
accounts of sales in other parts of the
county also
Includes partners' accounts
Weekly totals of goods dyed at the
firm's own dyehouse, 1831-1838, at back | 1831-1834 |
| 18 | 'North Ledger', enclosed index
Contains accounts of sales in Leeds
and places north, including Scotland, but
not Lancashire | 1832-1840 |
| 19 | Ledger, enclosed index
Contains accounts of sales in Lancashire
and places south of Leeds | 1834-1839 |
| 20 | <u>Cash Book</u>
Volume titled 'Cash Book November 3
1760'
Includes, at the front, an account for
cash and bills of exchange with Kellam and
Palmer of London, 1764-1780; and with
Wickham, Field, Cleaver and Eamonson of
'the New Bank in Leeds', 1779-1782
At the back, the account of Aldam and
Benson with Kellam and Palmer, 1760-1763
Partnership accounts of John Aldam and
William Benson, 1760-1785 | 1760-1785 |

Purchase and Disbursement Ledgers

In addition to payments for goods and services supplied, these volumes include partners' accounts with balances posted to the stock books (see below).

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|----|------------------------|-----------|
| 21 | Ledger, indexed | 1809-1816 |
| 22 | Ledger, enclosed index | 1816-1820 |
| 23 | Ledger, indexed | 1821-1825 |

Stock Book

- 24 Stock Book 1811-1818
The accounts for each year fall into four sections, namely a detailed stock taking of cloth, dyestuffs and other raw materials held in the warehouse; a detailed list of debts due to the partnership; a list of debts due from the partnership and a settlement account for each partner, the last of which is followed by the partners' signatures.
- 25 Stock Book, titled 'Trade Accts 1838-9' 1832-1839
The accounts fall into four sections as specified above, but stock and debts are not individually itemised
- 26 Documents formerly enclosed in the above 5 items early 19 cent
Includes a memorandum of the capital share of partners each year from 1799 to 1839

Bank Book

- 27 Bank book of Aldam Pease and Co in account with Beckett, Blayds and Co [Leeds] 1833-1839

Day Book

- 28 Day book Sep-Dec 1838