

15. Carters in 1823

Carriers according to *Pigot's Directory* of 1823

One of the benefits of the Hampshire Genealogical Society is that they publish a good deal of material that is useful to local historians as well as to family historians. One such is a CD of Pigot's trade directory for Hampshire of 1823.

Amongst the trades listed are the carriers. According to the Directory you could have goods conveyed from Romsey to London, Andover, Gosport, Salisbury, Southampton, Stockbridge or Winchester but you would need to take your parcels to the right place for despatch. For example if you wanted items taken to Andover, Bulpit would take them from the Phoenix (now the Tavern in the Hundred) every Friday. On a Tuesday, you would need to go to the Star in the Horsefair when Cully would convey them, and on to Newbury if need be. Further up Cherville Street at the Lord Nelson, Butler would set off on Mondays to Andover and Appleshaw.

Seventeen or eighteen carriers are listed, depending on whether Burnett and Barnett are one or two people. Some were obviously passing through and were based elsewhere. For example, Sharp's wagon only visited the town on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month, but where in Romsey is not stated. On the other hand both King and Newman travelled to Southampton daily each 'from his own house'.

Another local carrier was Webb who set out from his warehouse. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays he went to both Salisbury and Southampton – two vehicles perhaps, and on Tuesdays he went to Gosport and Portsmouth. His Thursdays and Saturdays are not accounted for.

It is interesting that the grandest hotels in town are not involved in the carriers' trades. Thus nothing sets out from the White Horse, the Swan, the Abbey Hotel – then called The Falcon, or the Bell. However some ten pubs are listed. The first is the Phoenix which has already been mentioned. Nearby the Queen's Head also in the Hundred where M & Co now trade saw Burnett leave for Winchester and London on 3 days a week with a van and on a fourth with a waggon. Aslett departed twice a week from the Dolphin en route to London, Winchester and Southampton.

The Angel in Bell Street (now La Parisienne) was the departure point for Sawyer to Salisbury or Winchester. It is always possible that he traded between the two cities and picked up catch-trade in Romsey. In Middlebridge Street, the Three Tuns say Taylor depart to Salisbury on Mondays and Gosport on Tuesdays which again suggests that he was passing through.

Meanwhile three pubs in the Cherville Street area had links with carriers. At the Star Cull went to Andover, Newbury and Southampton once a week and Marsh went to Southampton and Broughton. Both those trips imply carriers passing through. The Vine took in parcels for Wood who travelled between Wallop and Southampton twice a week, and also for Ford who called once a week on his journey between Southampton and Stockbridge. The Vine is now a private house but conspicuous by its bow fronted window. Lastly the Lord Nelson, now called Nelson Cottage, was the contact point for Butler, who went to Andover and Appleshaw on Tuesdays and Southampton on Mondays.

In this day and age of Parcel Post or other parcel businesses taking anything anywhere it is difficult to envisage a world in which you had to go to the right pub on the right day to get your parcel taken to its intended destination. Older readers will remember country buses acting as parcels agents in the mid-twentieth century.

It is not apparent from this source how parcels were sent to destinations other than those listed. The value of this list is that it shows another role for the town's public houses and demonstrates that they served the community in more ways than solely the provision of spirituous liquors.

Phoebe Merrick, January 2013