

# A manuscript history of the Franklin family by Sophia Cracroft (1853)

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Received June 2013; first published online 21 November 2013

**ABSTRACT.** Sir John Franklin's widow, Jane Franklin, planned a biography of her husband in the years following the disappearance of his expedition. In this project she was directly assisted by her niece and amanuensis Sophia Cracroft. This biography never came to fruition, but it did result in an unpublished manuscript history of the Franklin family, dated 1853, which Cracroft shared with Franklin's early biographers. The manuscript provides an interesting account of the Franklin family, including the detailed circumstances of the failure of the Boston and Spilsby Bank in 1804, which caused great financial and emotional stress. The final section of the manuscript provides an account of John Franklin's early naval career and Arctic expeditions.

## Introduction

Jane Franklin (1791–1875) planned a biography of her husband Sir John Franklin (1786–1847) in the years following the disappearance of his Arctic expedition in search of a northwest passage. Before he left in 1845, it seems that he dictated an outline of his career to his wife (Franklin, Jane no date) and it was reported by a Franklin biographer that Lady Franklin 'spent the remainder of her life in the diligent collection of those materials for a memoir of her husband' (Traill 1896: 424). In this project she was directly assisted by her niece and amanuensis Sophia Cracroft (1816–1892). This biography never came to fruition, but it did result in a manuscript history of the Franklin family, dated 1853. The manuscript comprises 86 small pages of text in Cracroft's legible handwriting. Given the insults and potentially libellous barbs directed at several people in the manuscript, it is unlikely that it was intended for publication in this form.

A copy was deposited in the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland as a part of the Lefroy Papers some years ago, alongside three short newspaper obituaries of Cracroft dated 1892 (*The Times* (London) nd 1892; *Kensington News* (London) 2 July 1892). It is clear that during her lifetime Cracroft shared this manuscript and associated documents with three of Franklin's biographers, A.H. Beesly (1881: 5), A.H. Markham (1891: viii), and H.D. Traill (1896: 6). Traill wrote:

It was the long-cherished desire of Miss Sophia Cracroft, niece of Sir John Franklin, and constant and attached companion of Lady Franklin, to perform this labour of love herself, and it supplied the animating motive of her unwearied industry in collecting the mass of documents hitherto unpublished which have been employed in the preparation of this work. Failing health and almost total loss of sight, however, prevented the accomplishment of her purpose, and eventually her executors, Mr. and Mrs. G.B. Austen Lefroy, have entrusted the work to the present writer.

The manuscript provides an interesting and sympathetic account of the Franklin family, including the detailed circumstances of the failure of the Boston and Spilsby Bank in 1804, which caused great financial and emotional stress. The final section of the manuscript provides a valuable account of Franklin's early naval career along with an overview of his Arctic voyages, portions of which were told by Franklin to John Booth (1779–1854), his childhood friend and later brother-in-law.

The manuscript begins with the decline of the Franklin family from being members of the Lincolnshire squirearchy to shopkeepers in the eighteenth century, apparently due to the free-living of John Franklin's grandfather and great-grandfather. John Franklin's father, Willingham Franklin (1739–1824), who managed to restore a level of prosperity through his grocery and drapery businesses, was a figure of 'strict integrity' and branched out into local banking for farmers and graziers. With his wife Hannah (née Weeks), Willingham Franklin raised a large family, several of whom went on to have highly successful careers. Today, at the west end of the church at Spilsby, three monuments still stand to three of their children. These are Willingham Franklin junior (1779–1824), who was educated at Westminster College and Oriel College, Oxford, went on to be knighted and became a Supreme Court Judge at Madras in 1822, before he died with his family during a cholera epidemic, James Franklin (1783–1834) who had a passion for science and became an FRS and major in the 1st Bengal Cavalry where he saw action during the Pindari War and finally, John Franklin himself, the youngest son, is commemorated on a tablet as commander of the expedition that first discovered the northwest passage through the Arctic. The biographical details contained here remind us that these three Franklin brothers from Spilsby achieved status as imperial actors, extending British judicial, military, and naval strength far beyond Europe.

Willingham's eldest son, Thomas Adams Franklin, followed his father into business before establishing the

Boston and Spilsby Bank around 1799 with a local squire, John Bourne of Dalby. Willingham Franklin senior attached his name to this banking concern, which seemingly prospered in the context of an explosion in agricultural prices during the Napoleonic Wars. This was a period that witnessed a boom in the rural banking sector as prosperous farmers sought to store funds in local savings banks. These banks had mixed fortunes and most collapsed during the economic crisis associated with the end of the wars and sudden deflation in 1814. T.A. Franklin was also an officer in the local volunteer infantry which, much like yeomanry units, had the dual purpose of providing military defence in the event of a French invasion and smothering local dissent and revolt. Further local economic context can be gleaned from the details of a fenland riot that T.A. Franklin helped suppress; such crackdowns on unruly labour were common during a period of high food prices and scarcity of labour.

Throughout the manuscript there is a reliance on the concept of providence to explain disaster, misfortune, and success, no more so than when the fortunes of the Boston and Spilsby Bank are discussed. It appears that T.A. Franklin was manoeuvred out of control of the bank by the stratagems of Bourne and the Franklin family attorney William Walker, causing it to fail in 1804. The reconstruction of this episode, it must be noted, is extremely biased in favour of the Franklin family for, though emphasising the machinations of Bourne and Walker, judgement is not passed on the risky speculations that T.A. Franklin engaged in with his father's capital (Owen 1978: 22). Certainly Walker remained a part of the Franklin family's concerns after this period, as a mortgage bond signed by John Franklin in 1825 suggests (Franklin 1825). At the centre of this crisis was an estate at Holton cum Beckering which T.A. Franklin and his father purchased in 1803 (the manuscript says this cost £30,000, but another source claims it was £20,000 (Chancery 1827: 354)). After paying down some of the purchase fee, the Franklin's sold one portion of the estate to a Thomas Willoughby. However, Willoughby did not pay them in full which meant that the Franklin's were unable to complete their contract. The contract for the estate was cancelled and bankruptcy proceedings taken against T.A. Franklin caused the Franklin's' case for a performance of agreement to collapse in 1808 (Chancery 1827: 355). The financial losses which ensued greatly reduced the wealth of the Franklin family, causing great stress to Willingham Franklin senior and leading to T.A. Franklin's death by suicide in 1807. This was another thing not mentioned by Cracroft. The shadow of this tragic period loomed large over the family for many years and apparently hastened Hannah Franklin's death in 1810. Interestingly, this crisis became woven into the myth of John Franklin as the years passed with one of his nephews claiming that the speculation that brought down T.A. Franklin, his purchase of the Holton cum Beckering estate, was to give John Franklin a living as a prospective clergyman (Traill 1896: 433). This ignores the fact that

Franklin had been at sea and to war years before this purchase.

This, then, was the background in which John Franklin agitated for a career at sea despite the fact that his father wanted him to become a clergyman (Markham 1891: 9) and the financial embarrassments back home meant that he had to stand on his own feet with no support from his parents. The value of Cracroft's notes on Franklin during this period lies in the little betrayals of personality that biographers traditionally cherish. So we learn that the young John Franklin's 'outer man was none of the smartest' and that he was the only member of his family to have been whipped by his father, chiefly for staring outside whenever carriages pulled up to the house opposite his own. 'Perhaps', wonders Cracroft, 'in this daring curiosity the germ of that spirit of enquiry might peep out which stimulated him under the blessing of God in his onward course through difficulties, dangers & hardships which have been rarely surpassed'. Certainly, in later life, Franklin remembered how he would bolt into a room 'with fixed eyes, and open mouth, ready to catch the least syllable the company may drop; and occasionally put in a word, or two, by way of letting a light on a subject; contrary to the wishes and thanks of my mother and sisters' (cited in Beardsley 2002: 2). Another source remarked on how Franklin 'used to make it his practice to attend all the weddings and funerals that occurred in Spilsby Church, and hence it may be, as well as from the religious tone of his character, that it was thought that he would be favourably disposed to taking Holy Orders' (Traill 1896: 433).

Cracroft also mentions Franklin's comments to Booth about several horrific, probably traumatic, scenes he encountered while serving at sea. These included seeing (at the age of 14) huge numbers of the dead beneath the clear waters of Copenhagen harbour in 1801. Booth also gave a dramatic account of how Franklin was pinned on the quarterdeck by a French sniper during the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. By contrast, the pleasant and straightforward side of Franklin comes across in the account of a tiresome visit to the Smolny Institute for Noble Girls at St. Petersburg in later years. Concerning Franklin's Arctic career, Cracroft gives an account of the tragic end of the land expedition (1819–1822) that is similar to the several versions published by the survivors (Franklin 1824). She does, however, include the touching detail that during the sufferings of the voyageur Jean Baptiste Adam at Fort Enterprise Franklin 'tried to keep up a little spirit & life in the poor man by telling him all the little tales he could recollect of what happened to him in his childhood'.

In later years the name of Sir John Franklin and his lost Arctic expedition became inextricably linked to his home town of Spilsby (for example *Stamford Mercury* 26 November 1847). After Dr. John Rae collected Inuit testimony relating to the demise of the Franklin expedition in 1854, Lady Franklin seemed to accept that her husband was dead. In 1855 she sent a tablet to be

erected on Beechey Island as ‘a monument to [Franklin’s] memory’ (Cracroft 1856). By 1856 Lady Franklin was also eager to have a statue of Franklin created, with her preferred location the city of Lincoln (*Stamford Mercury* 5 December 1856). In the end a bronze statue of Franklin, designed by Charles Bacon, was erected in front of the Old Town Hall at Spilsby in 1861 after some £750 was raised by subscription (Cotton Smith 1892: 134). Although Lady Franklin originally scoffed at the idea of a museum in the name of Franklin (Cracroft 1856), in 1873 she bought the Franklin family home on High Street, Spilsby, apparently with the object of turning it into a museum to display some of Franklin’s collections (Markham 1891: 4). Her death two years later led to the house being sold on: the premises is now a bakery.

This manuscript history of the Franklin family, therefore, was part of a broader effort on the part of Lady Franklin to celebrate the life of John Franklin and enshrine his memory at a time when it was almost certain that he was dead. The manuscript is sympathetic to the Franklin family and glosses over issues that would have embarrassed living members. In contrast to the account given in the manuscript, an alternative source suggests that T.A. Franklin had nothing to do with the yeomanry and that his time in the volunteer infantry was marked by dissent (Walker 1897). There are also some inaccuracies in the text, such as the date on which Franklin’s first wife, Eleanor Anne Porden (1795–1825), died, and the number of men on Franklin’s final Arctic expedition (128 not 138).

Lady Franklin and Cracroft kept watchful eyes on Franklin’s posthumous image, contributing, for instance, to Sir John Richardson’s entry on Franklin in the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (Richardson 1856). The manuscript was therefore an early attempt to collect information and anecdotes about Franklin’s early life and background with a view to managing his legacy. This was a valuable project as by the 1870s even family members were finding it difficult to obtain documents and personal reminiscences of Franklin (Anon 1874: 1). Certainly, by the 1890s, one can sense the frustration among Franklin biographers about the paucity of material available (Markham 1891: vii–viii; Traill 1896: 428). Access to the Cracroft manuscript thereby grew in importance. Indeed, it may be the case that Lady Franklin and Cracroft jealously guarded this source from Franklin’s family by his first wife.

Although there is some confusion over its authorship, *A brave man and his belongings* (1874) was a fragmentary memoir of Franklin put together by one of the Kay family, relations of Eleanor Franklin. Based on internal evidence, the book seems to have been composed by Eliza Margaret Jupp (née Kay), a niece of Eleanor Franklin’s. Jupp mentioned that one of her sources was a sketch of Franklin’s life up to 1822, which she believed was dictated by Eleanor Franklin to another niece of hers before her death (Anon 1874: 2–3). Eleanor Franklin’s manuscript thus mirrors Cracroft’s in an uncanny way. Eleanor

Franklin spent some time with John Franklin’s family in Lincolnshire in 1823, and she records how Willingham Franklin senior, now totally blind and nearly deaf, related anecdotes when reminded of the ‘early pranks’ of his sons (Gell 1930: 239). These occasions, as well as meetings with Booth may have provided her with some material, although her husband was notoriously shy about airing his achievements in public. Jupp’s 1874 book was notably deficient in detail about Franklin’s early life and she obviously did not have access to Lady Franklin/Cracroft’s collection, nor the reminiscences of Booth. ‘I should like, too,’ Jupp wrote, ‘to see those [letters] in which he related the trials of his shipwreck, and his eight weeks’ imprisonment on that coral reef - if, indeed he did relate them’ (Anon 1874: 6). It is clear from the manuscript reproduced here that Franklin did relate these experiences, while Lady Franklin was aware of Jupp’s project, presenting C.A. Rawnsley with an inscribed copy of it in January 1874 (Anon 1874). Going back two decades, an entry in Lady Franklin’s journal for 1855 records that ‘E. [Eleanor Gell, Franklin’s only daughter with Eleanor Franklin] wished for MSS. She wished to write her father’s life’ (Franklin 1855). As relations between Lady Franklin and the Gell’s were still fractious due to disputes over the estate of John Franklin (Woodward 1951: 281, 289) one might speculate that Lady Franklin held back on this manuscript with the intention of completing a biography of her own, or of waiting for an appropriate biographer (James Clark Ross was mentioned as an ideal candidate (Franklin 1855)). Certainly, after Lady Franklin’s death, Cracroft shared the materials with other biographers. When Cracroft died in 1892 her executors gave the materials to Traill (*Aberdeen Journal* 17 March 1896) who presumably returned them to the Lefroy family.

In the aftermath of John Franklin’s disappearance, Jane Franklin and Cracroft kept up an enormous correspondence with allies, naval officers, politicians, and members of the public. Both women were prolific writers, keeping diaries, travel journals, and abstracts of letters sent and received. Attention has been drawn recently to the themes of narration and authorship in the lives of Porden and Jane Franklin (Cavell 2013; Russell 2005). Writing served distinctive needs for them in their roles as wives and in this regard it is interesting that both women planned biographies of their husband. As an amanuensis, Cracroft was nominally the mouthpiece of Jane Franklin, taking on her voice and writing many of her letters: ‘we are two persons & not one’ Cracroft once wrote to Leopold McClintock (cited in Lentz 2003: 180). But it is clear that Cracroft could also take editorial decisions that may have involved destroying sensitive correspondence relating to their reputations (Lloyd-Jones 2001). After her death, Cracroft had planned a memoir of Jane Franklin (Cracroft no date) but declining eyesight ‘rendered the task an impossible one’ (Richards 1892: 554). She was therefore more than an amanuensis and was attacked as such late in life (Skewes 1890). The most distinctive aspect of Cracroft’s style in the manuscript

is its clarity and, unlike her aunt, her handwriting is extremely legible. It is difficult to know how much personal research Cracroft conducted for this project but it is possible that she received some information from her mother Isabella Cracroft (née Franklin) whose husband, Thomas Cracroft, is mentioned in the narrative.

It should be noted that the manuscript ends as the era of the large publicly-funded Franklin search expeditions was drawing to a close: the *Isabel* expedition, mentioned by Cracroft, under the command of William Kennedy, had been mostly funded by a £1700 subscription raised by the people of Van Diemen's Land. This expedition ignominiously fell apart after a crew mutiny in Chile, and by 1854 the Crimean War and Rae's evidence persuaded many that the case for further search expeditions was a weak one. Jane Franklin and her supporters went to considerable efforts to fund the Fox expedition under Francis Leopold McClintock which, in 1859, returned with documentary evidence that John Franklin had died on 11 June 1847. For this author at least, the John Franklin that emerges from this early attempt at a biography is a figure who came from remarkable Lincolnshire family with a colourful history, a background which must inform our readings of his equally remarkable Arctic career.

### Acknowledgments

I wish to acknowledge the Deputy Keeper of the Records, Public Record Office of Northern Ireland for permission to access the copy of this manuscript. For their assistance I would like to thank Naomi Boneham, Archivist at the Scott Polar Research Institute, and Dr. Janice Cavell, Historical Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Canada. I am also indebted to Mrs. Mary Carleton Reynolds, County Librarian, Co. Longford, Ireland, for her help in tracing the provenance of the manuscript. The anonymous reader of this article provided some excellent suggestions and I am grateful for this advice.

### Text

Willingham Franklin Sen.r was born on the 2nd Dec.ber (old Style) 1739 at Sibsey near Boston, Lincolnshire, in a pretty, good old house, standing close to the Turnpike Road, leading from that village to Boston, built upon his Father's Estate which had been many generations in the Family. This house was pulled down by one of the Mr. Sauls, about the year 1830, and a more modern residence erected a little farther back from the Turnpike.

Both Mr. Franklin's father and his Grandfather lived upon this property, the Estate belonging to the latter was considerable both in Sibsey & the adjoining village of Stickney, as the Title Deeds in which the name of Willingham is found in the latter Parish amply testifies - Unfortunately both these Ancestors of Mr. Franklin's were exceedingly free livers, & each in their generation greatly diminished their substance until, when Mr. Franklin's father died, there was very little more left than a moderate subsistence for his Widow, & to place his eldest son out an apprentice to a respectable Grocer & Draper at Lincoln. His father's name was John who married a Miss

Hall, whose mother's name was Willingham, a Lady of considerable property. She had another sister married to a Mr. Longstaff a gentleman of very expensive habits who by his extravagance & thoughtlessness very soon dissipated her fortune & his own too.

The widow of Mr. John Franklin was a woman of masculine capacity & great resolution. No sooner was her son out of his apprenticeship, than she came with him, and opened a little shop at Spilsby; not content with being housekeeper for her son, she superintended the business in every Department which could be seen after by a female, with the utmost economy and activity.

A person of the name of Thomas Spikin (who eventually became affluent in this business) was then first Apprentice. He told the writer (J. Booth) that nothing could exceed her industry & capacity.

Some years after, Mr. Franklin fixed him in a shop on the green at Revesby, where he realised an ample property & retired upon it to Stickford. Mr. Franklin's Mother lived to see her son exceedingly prosperous in his business. She died in a good old age, & was buried close by under one of the oldest oak trees in England, the remains of which are still standing much shattered & very hollow, in Partney Church Yard.

In 1773, in the 34th year of his age, Mr. Franklin married Miss Hannah Weeks of Donington Wykes, the daughter of a considerable Farmer & grazier. When quite young she had the misfortune to lose both her Parents. An Aunt Yerburch residing at Boston took her & brought her up. She was educated there. The kindness of her amiable disposition, exceedingly affable manners, & great activity were of the utmost advantage to her Husband, & greatly helped to draw most of the business in the neighbourhood to his shop. When once brought there, it was secured by the strict integrity of Mr. Franklin, through whose whole life, the same undeviating rectitude formed the most prominent feature of his character. His favourite Author was Wogan, a layman who published in 1754 in four volumes 'An Essay on the proper Lessons appointed by the Liturgy of the Church of England, to be read on Sundays & Chief Festivals, as they are directed by her Table of Proper lessons throughout the Year'. These volumes are now in the possession of J. Booth. They were the delight of Mr. Franklin's heart; he might be seen seated in an Armchair with spectacles on, reading these continually.

There is perhaps no little Market Town in Eng.d so closely surrounded by numbers of nice villages as Spilsby, the Inhabitants of which found shelter under Mr. Franklin's most hospitable roof whenever they were overtaken by care [,] anxiety, or suffering from whatever cause.

Every member of their families in communicating their grief to Mrs. Franklin (to whose kind heart it was ever a pleasure to be useful) always found consideration if not relief. Whilst her husband in numberless instances assisted the heads of families both in Spilsby or around the whole neighbourhood, when under little pecuniary embarrassment, by cashing their Bills & doing a good deal of the business of a Banker for them. His knowledge of business enabled him to do this with advantage to the Individuals & for the most part without any serious loss to himself, but he was never known in any instance to turn the presence of these hard circumstances to his own advantage. The thorough rectitude of his mind made him detest such measures & was effectual Security against such gain - hence it was, when he became identified with

a Bank set up sometime afterwards in Spilsby, it had the entire confidence & good will of the whole neighbourhood. In these spirited benevolent acts, his Eldest son Thomas took a prominent part as he grew up.

The result of much well managed business until the year 1802, was the realising £10,000. A part of this was invested in the house & shop in Spilsby with another house on each side of it, with several cottages at the bottom of the garden; these, abutted upon the back Street. Though this property he now divided amongst several Proprietors, the spot would easily be ascertained, for the whole Town, or nearly so, belongs to Lord Willoughby de Eresby. Mr. Franklin was the 2nd Proprietor in the place, including a Paddock on the Partney Road which was sold to old Ned Smith (of whom more will be said hereafter) for 300 guineas. All this property lay in the centre of the Town. With another portion of this £10,000, namely £4000, a judicious purchase was made of the nice little Estate in Mavis Enderby between 3 and 4 miles from Spilsby on which Mr. Franklin built a good house & retired to it when he gave up business in 1802. Mr. & Mrs. Franklin had a fair prospect of spending the remainder of their days in this comfortable retreat, but it pleased Providence to ordain it otherwise.

Mr. & Mrs. Franklin had 12 children born at Spilsby.  
Thomas Adams, born Nov. 4, 1773, died Oct. 7 1807.  
- aged 34.

Mary, born May 25. 1775. Died July 1799 aged 24.  
Elizabeth, born April 23, 1777. died Jan.ry 10, 1850  
aged 72.

Hannah, born Aug. 6, 1778.

Willingham, born Nov. 11, 1779, died May 31, 1824  
aged 45.

Ann, born Oct. 11, 1781. Buried at St. Bride's London,  
1808.

James, born May 5, 1783, died Aug 31, 1834. aged  
50. buried at St. John's Wood.

Henry, born in May 1785, died in June following.

John, born April 16, 1786.

Sarah, born Sep. 15, 1788, died Sept. 25. 1816.  
buried in the church at Horncastle.

Isabella, born April 10, 1791

Henrietta Weeks, born Sep. 25, 1794

The Eldest son was 21 when the youngest daughter was born. In this way, Henrietta became the chief Pet of her brother Thomas.

Mrs. Franklin died at Mavis Enderby after only 3 days illness, on the 19th of Novber 1810, aged 59.

Mr. Franklin died on the 3rd April 1824, at Horncastle. Both were interred in the family vault at Spilsby where are also the remains of their sons Thomas & Henry, & their daughters Mary & Elizabeth. The vault may be found situated about the centre of the South side of the Church Yard. For 2 Tablets set up in Spilsby church under the superintendence of J. Booth, at a cost of about £200 (£100 each) one to Sir Willingham & the other to Major James Franklin, see the next page.x Mr. Holloway's Fee for the Coffin was £8. X The descriptions are here alluded to, not copied here, because possessed separately.

It has hardly ever been the lot of any Family to be blessed with more judicious kind Parents, than Mr.& Mrs. Franklin. The latter ranks amongst the most affte of Mothers, which was an affection always tempered with discretion. The moment she saw any thing going on wrong, she felt outrage & instantly corrected it. The Father was perhaps the least indulgent, but it was only in small

things, for in all important matters he was ever ready to make every sacrifice for the welfare of his family.

On the landing of their staircase in their house in Spilsby, a whip might be always seen hanging up, to which either Parent would look on proper occasions. But such was the dutiful obedience at all times paid by the children to their Parents, that notwithstanding J. Booth was constantly in their house for years together during his Youth, he never saw it once used except on John Franklin as will be hereafter related. All the young ones had buoyant spirits, & made most animated play fellows, yet they were equally obedient & tractable. Few families were better brought up, or gave in after life, more ample proof of what a good early training will effect.

Their eldest son Thomas Adams Franklin was educated at St. Ives where he very early discovered great Talent combined with no ordinary powers of application. His education & early habits fitted him for mercantile pursuits, to which, as he grew up, he vigorously applied himself.

Thomas Spikin, of whom we shall speak hereafter, told J. Booth the following anecdote of him when only about 3 years old.

The Clerk of the Peace for the Division of Lindsey was a Mr. Tho.s Brackenbury whose house in Spilsby almost adjoined Mr. Franklin's, their back yards well nigh opened into each other. Seventy or eighty years ago, when gentlemen did not treat their Hunters so delicately as in more modern times, it appears that Mr. Brackenbury's Son John (who was 1st cousin to J. Booth's mother) turned his Hunter loose at a time of much frost & snow, to caper about in a somewhat spacious Court Yard adjoining the Stable, for exercise.

All of a sudden, the horse disappeared & the whole neighbourhood was roused for many days together, searching for him. In Mr. Franklin's Yard there was a spare Stable which was seldom made use of, the door of which often stood open. After ten days of most active search, the child T.A. Franklin was heard to say 'I shut the door' - on being asked which door, he led them to that of the spare Stable, & there stood the poor famished animal! The poor creature had eaten much of the deal from the Standing & Manger. With proper treatment it recovered, but it was very near being entirely destroyed.

On leaving School T.A. Franklin remained with his Father, & managed, with signal success, the weightier concerns of the business. Though Spilsby was very unfavourably situated for mercantile transactions from its having no Canal yet he contrived to enter into dealings with Merchants both at home & abroad.

In the 1799 all the wheat in Great Britain was sprouted. This fearful scourge at the hand of Providence was never known to be so severe in the memory of man. No such thing as wholesome bread was to be had in the country. The loaves ran about & would not keep their shape, they were all hollow & had inside only a little moist matter at the bottom, heavier than the ordinary paste - and such throughout the Kingdom was the loaf of that calamitous year. [A cold winter in 1798-1799 combined with a cool, rainy growing season in 1799 led to crop failure in the British Isles. The wheat harvest deficiencies could not be made up by imports due to similarly poor weather conditions in northern Europe and political conflict (Neumann and Kington 1992)].

Thomas Franklin very early in the Season anticipated the consequences of so bad a harvest & wrote off to

America. Very soon, as much flour of 1st rate quality arrived from that country & reached Spilsby, & served his family & the Revd. Mr. Booth's until the next Harvest. This proved a blessing of the first order to those who had the advantage of it.

It was the constant practice of most of the Farmers around Spilsby, to come on the Market Day (Monday) to see Thos. A. Franklin (who had previously had little or nothing to do with corn) to enquire what they should ask the Millers for their wheat & all other grain. The promptness and correct manner in which he advised them on this anxious point according to the various qualities of their grain, was most assuring, & he soon became a prime favourite with the whole body of Farmers. Their good will proved of great Advantage to the Bank which was afterwards set up at Spilsby by Messrs. Franklin, Bourne, & Franklin.

Towards the end of the last century T.A. Franklin was mainly instrumental in raising a troop of cavalry at Spilsby of which the late Mr. Coltman of Hagnaby Priory, was Captain, Mr. Massingberd of Ormsby Lieut., Mr. Maddison of Louth Cornet, & T.A. Franklin (who acted the part of Adjutant) Quartermaster. He kept all the Accounts & was upon all necessary occasions in communication with the Government. Through his unwearied efforts the troop arrived at a degree of discipline which was very creditable.

It did good service to the neighbourhood when called out to suppress Riots amongst the Navvies or Bankers ['Navvies', excavators in the Fens, were also known as 'Bankers' during this period] who were at that time employed in draining the Fens, on 2 occasions when the constabulary were found unequal to put down the mob.

In one of these rows J. Booth was one of a party who were ordered to surround a Public House in the Parish of Leverton where some of the navvies were drinking after leaving Friskney where a poor Farmer named Paul, had been shot dead. The Horses made such a noise in coming up, that the fellows inside were alarmed & scampered away so fast as their legs would carry them, out of the back door, into some Extensive Pastures. All the Horsemen dismounted, & instantly gave chase, but Boots, tight shorts, swords & Pistols, were a sore hindrance. The nearest to J. Booth was a stout navvie in a blue jacket, whom he pursued. On the opposite side of a ditch were two exceedingly powerful men running away as fast as they could & little Sam Rockcliffe after them. This trooper was about 5 feet high, but he went on swearing and Hectoring at these big men, that if they did not stop he would shoot them both; the fellows looking back & perceiving him in the act of cocking his pistol, stopped whereupon he went up to them, stretched out his short arms, took them by their collars, and came back skipping between them in the most absurd manner imaginable to the Public House. True to his oath, if the men had not stood still, there is not a doubt but the impetuous little fellow wd have fired. It is scarcely necessary to add that as J. Booth could not swear à la Rockcliffe, or fire at the men, the Navvie in a Blue jacket escaped by running down amongst the reeds & hiding himself in the Fen. However 11 were captured & escorted by some of the Troop to Lincoln Castle abt 40 miles distant.

One of the Navvies turned out a humorous character. All the Prisoners travelled upon separate horses surrounded by the Cavalry; the man alluded to vowed he had never had the honour of riding in the company of

gentlemen before, & in his whole life never found anything so delightful. But when he was left in Prison, he was the only man who was brought to his Tears.

Upon another occasion & for a similar offence about the same number of these men were captured & conveyed from Tattershall to Louth in the same style.

At the Peace of Amiens, the Troop was broken up, for gov.t would not continue to fund stores, &c. In 1803 when the war had broken out again after the short Peace of Amiens, an offer was made to Gov.t from Spilsby & the neighbourhood at T.A. Franklin's suggestion, to raise some companies of Infantry, which was accepted in Aug.st of that year. At that time there was considerable alarm lest the French should invade England & the Lincolnshire Coast was known to present the least difficulty in the way of their landing.

Men were roused almost to a state of frenzy with the desire to be drilled as Volunteers that they might defend their families. That feeling was paramount to every other consideration. This zeal T.A. Franklin joined heartily in, & endeavoured to turn it to good account at Spilsby.

Burgh being much nearer J. Booth's residence (Ingoldmells) than Spilsby, a meeting was summoned there to consider what was best to be done. It was held in the Church. Mr. Massingherd had recently been married to the Heiress of Gunby. He came in the plenitude of his property; with a manner perfectly courteous & gentlemanlike he addressed the meeting with 'I thought to have seen here the peasantry of the County, but I see before me influential persons whom I am most happy to meet on this occasion. I beg leave to propose that we form some Companies of Volunteer Infantry to be well drilled - but that we do not incur the Expenses of clothing them in Military Array'. Then Mr. Wm. Cook, known better as Squire Cook of Burgh got upon his legs, & after the calm which followed Mr. Peregrine Massingherd's speech, in a marvellous speech proposed 'that the men be armed with a Musket, [?] or Gun'. From his wealth & position, the Orator was likely to be at the head of the Force at Burgh, - for fear of having the honor to be chosen his Lieutenant, J. Booth went & retired the ranks at Spilsby.

Some time after, there was a Review of the Wainfleet, Burgh, & Spilsby Volunteers in the Market Place of the latter town. The Field Officer General Ainsley, desired Captn. Cook to take up a different position. So entirely was the Captn. unacquainted with discipline that he returned for answer that he would if the General would make him a Major but not without - whereupon they rode up to him, took his sword from him & broke [it?]

T.A. Franklin entered the Infantry as Captn. of a Company under Thos. Coltman, & for 3 years was indefatigable in drilling the men & advancing their discipline. They were so pretty alive to the pains he took that they presented him with a handsome Silver Cup bearing the following inscription. 'The Cup was presented to Lieut. Colonel Thomas Adams Franklin of the late Spilsby, Wainfleet & Burgh Regiment of Volunteer Infantry, by the Privates of the Spilsby Volunteers, as a token of their gratitude for his unremitting attention, strictures of discipline & officer like conduct upon all occasions'. 15th April 1806.

This cup is now in the possession of Willingham Franklin Esq. his Nephew.

When the coalition between the Volunteers of Wainfleet & Burgh took place, T.A. Franklin was made Lieut.

Col. His affability, activity, & military bearing endeared him to the Volunteers of Spilsby, to whom he was much known. These men were enthusiastic in their attachment to him, & the misfortunes which afterwards for a time befell his family left this feeling unabated.

Whilst he was at School at St. Ives he had the misfortune (& indeed it subsequently proved the bane of his life) to have a School fellow, one Wm. Walker, the son of a poor Farmer living at Langton, a village about 4 miles from Spilsby. This boy was sent to School by his Uncle, well known as Tom Walker, who was originally a servant in the family of Mr. Chapman, a respectable attorney in Spilsby. Through his plausibility and industrious habits he was taken into the office, & eventually tho' very ill educated he set up for himself at Mr. Chapman's death.

This happened about the close of the American war. The produce of the soil which for years had been awfully low, as well as land itself, rose suddenly in value. Though Tom was scarce of money & credit, he had the wit to connect himself with a Farmer of the name of Ash who had both. They bought land, & sold it out in lots. In this way Tom began, - his maxim was to 'get money honestly when he could - if not, to get money'. From this rule he never deviated & at his death he was supposed to possess £80,000, having never had a family.

From some Individuals in, or near Spilsby, who went out to America, Washington Irving must in all probability based his tale of the Devil & Tom Walker, the scene being laid in Boston (which in Lincolnshire is only 17 miles from Spilsby) - the humanity related there, which led Tom Walker to decline entering into the Slave Trade, the avidity with which he foreclosed mortgages, were so characteristic of the old attorney that there seems no reasonable doubt of it. Tom had certainly a share of kindly feeling which was evinced in educating his poor relations - in fact, this was his redeeming point. He was twice married, but left no family. Tom Walker was at the whole expense of bringing out Wm. Walker (who has been mentioned before) as an attorney. He shewed his ingratitude to his Uncle, by setting up immediately in business at Spilsby against him, so soon as it was possible for him to do so. This conduct Tom rewarded by leaving him without a shilling.

J. Booth has been the more particular about all these matters relating to the Walkers because as it will be seen afterwards under Providence, the successful diabolical villainy of Wm. Walker, done under the most aggravated circumstances, became the means of pressing down to the verge of destruction, Mr. Franklin & his interesting Family. But it pleased a merciful Providence to check this calamity at a time, when it seemed insurmountable, but not before it had hastened the death of Mrs. Franklin & their eldest son T.A. Franklin, though the other children by the blessing of the almighty took root downwards & bore fruit upwards - the rank of knighthood being bestowed upon 2 of them, & the youngest Son John a spectacle of interest to the whole world.

Under the circumstances alluded to it was, that Wm. Walker settled at Spilsby. He was not without some industry, & coarse aptitude for business. He soon went by the name of Bill, but later in life (when he became very fat & blustering) by that of Spanker - a name bestowed upon him by Mr. Rawnsley - there was no telling whether his body when he grew large, his habits, or his manners were the coarsest. He was an Officer in the Volunteer

Infantry under T.A. Franklin. Such was the man whom he was induced to serve by every means in his power, because he was his Schoolfellow, & because of the unpopularity of Tom Walker he rendered the nephew good service in bringing him into business amongst his acquaintances. By the end Willm. Walker became apparently the Sincerely attached Attorney of the Family. The great obligation they had laid him under by introducing him into business, led them to put almost unbounded confidence in him, & indeed an outward corresponding zeal appeared to discover itself which seemed to render him discerning of confidence. But all this was false, for it turned out in the sequel that the very Devil was in him. We will now leave him for a while, bearing this always in mind.

In 1798 or 9, before Mr. Franklin left Spilsby, his son Thomas became intimate with Mr. John Bourne of Dalby, a gentleman of good property. He had married his cousin, a Miss Madder [Mather] of [Lancaster?], a Lady of great energy & penetration who readily perceived the advantages of setting up a Bank at Spilsby, where there never had been one.

Though a small town, the villages close by it are very numerous & the Market is very large. The neighbourhood also sent up prodigious quantities of fat cattle & sheep to Smithfield, for which the money every week was paid into the Bankers' hands in Town & was sure to be drawn out in Country notes at home. The advantage of this, had long been enjoyed by the Bankers at Boston. Thomas Franklin had perceived this for some time & he proposed the establishment of a Bank at Spilsby to Mr. John Bourne. The overture was warmly seconded by Mrs. Bourne who was anxious her husband should have something to do. Mr. B. was apt at calculation & his manner acceptable to the Farmers & graziers. It was his misfortune to be of rather a fidgety temper - to tell the truth he was somewhat wrong in the head (tho' this was not fully ascertained until some time after) he was partially deranged, yet never wholly so, but Wm. Walker found quite sufficient of it to act upon.

However the Bank was opened, & principally through the popularity of T.A. Franklin became a very large concern, was exceedingly profitable, & realised every expectation. Mr. Franklin lent his name, & having good reason to put unbounded confidence in his son, he never troubled his head about it, or went near the Establishment. Here we leave the Spilsby Bank which for a few years prospered to an extent almost unparalleled, & say something of the childhood of Mr. Franklin's second Son, Willingham in whose future career the welfare of the family was closely bound up. He first went to school at Spilsby where by his vivacity & talents he very soon became a prime favourite with the Master Job Lound, who though an awful fellow to flog the boys, found no occasion for flogging Willingham for his lessons, which were always well said without any difficulty; he was only in peril of the rod for setting the boys off giggling and laughing. Nature had bestowed upon him a singularly well formed active frame; he could at this time & long after he arrived at full stature (about 5 feet 7 1/2) jump over anything his own height. He bounded over the Tall Bar Gate at Toynton which was particularly massive & high. His father before him excelled in feats of this sort in no ordinary way. The son's graceful manners & handsome countenance will never escape the recollection of those who had the pleasure of knowing him. He was besides as full of fun as an egg is full of meat, yet nothing of a low sort by way of joke, ever escaped his lips.

After passing through the school at Spilsby Mr. Franklin took his son Willingham to St. Ives & from thence to Westminster where he came in head of his Election & soon became a great favourite with Dr. Vincent. The Chomleys & several young friends had gone to Oxford, - for fear he should run the risk of being sent to Cambridge, if he went off Captain from Westminster & thus become unable to follow those to whom he was sincerely attached, he applied, & obtained leave of Dr. Vincent, (unknown to his Father) to go down to Corpus Christi & stand for a scholarship - this he obtained, & whilst at that College stood for a Fellowship at Oriel - in this he was also successful.

He was next engaged by Mr. Wall, who had married a daughter of Sir Francis Baring, to educate their only Son, with a Salary of £200 a year for 2 years. He had only recently retired upon that duty, when the Earl of Bristol applied to Dr. Vincent to recommend a Tutor for his Son, with the tempting offer of a Salary of £500 a year & the sending both Tutor & Son to travel in Italy &c. Not knowing Willingham's engagement to Mr. Wall, Dr. Vincent strongly recommended him to the Earl. Willingham would most gladly have embraced the opportunity of going abroad, independent of the consideration of increase of stipend. But the engagement he had made was in his upright mind, a complete barrier, so he went on without wincing, or naming the matter at all to Mr. Wall, to whom, & to all his family he had given great satisfaction. The whole of them were much attached to him & this was no way diminished by Mr. Wall's subsequently finding out either through Dr. Vincent or the Earl of Bristol, what had been refused. Had Willingham accepted this tempting offer, all would have been over with his family as the sequel will show. They wd. have been driven into the lowest depths of woe which poverty is calculated to inflict, in the storm which was permitted to assail them had not a merciful God so overruled events that he remained at home & closely connected with a strong minded friend who treated him with unbounded confidence. By these means he was enabled to rescue his family after a struggle of many years, from the grasp of that villain Spanker. The severe suffering brought on Mr. Franklin & his family had much to do in bringing on a decline upon Thos. A. Franklin, & certainly shortened the days of poor Mrs. Franklin during the 12 or 13 years the storm lasted.

It is believed Spanker did not at first contemplate doing a third part of the mischief he occasioned, but he forgot the Proverb which tells us to 'shut the door & the Devil will pass by' - for as he proceeded he was driven from bad to worse until he was forced to have recourse to bribery in the attempt to preserve his character and prevent his being struck off the Rolls. He is perfectly well aware that no person living at this time April 25<sup>th</sup> 1853, knows so well of his wicked doings as J. Booth; when he was down in Lincolnshire & saw Spanker at Spilsby, he would turn away rather than look him in the face. After his coarse manner he would say 'D[amn] - him there is no good to be done when he comes, d[amn] knave'. Primarily there was something of the political bearing of the Radical in this, but the throes stirred up in his conscience, had also their full share.

The extreme suffering which fell upon the Franklin family was solely confined to Poverty, for the young members of the family were most happy in having Parents of sound religious views, whose hearts were set upon

bringing up their children in piety & honest principles, & scarcely any Parents more successfully attained this end, for without exception everyone of them proved in afterlife, the advantages of a sound religious training in their youth.

Their eldest son Thomas attained the rank of Lieut. Col. in the Volunteers - the second son Sir Willingham became a Judge in India at Madras. The 3rd Son James became Major in the 1st Native Regt. of Bengal Cavalry & a Fellow of the Royl. Soc. (All the officers of this Regt. were happily remarkably temperate men, & very few deaths occurred amongst them in a great number of years). The 4th Son Sir John Franklin was Governor of V.D.L. for 8 years, & became renowned for having gone on 4 Expeditions towards the N. Pole, & he, at the time this is penned, is an object of interest to almost every nation under the Canopy of Heaven because of the peril he & his 137 brave companions are in from being 8 years out with only 3 years provisions. In reference to the Father of these 4 who fell like ripe fruit at the age of 84, the mind is led to the Royal Psalmist when he says

That man is blest who stands in awe  
Of God & loves his sacred Law  
His seed on Earth shall be renowned  
And with successive Honors crowned.

Under the firm of Franklin, Bourne & Franklin, the Bank prospered at Spilsby beyond anything ever known out of a large town, until a disgraceful transaction between Mr. Bourne & his Cousin (who scarcely ever came down into Lincolnshire) of the same name occurred. It appears that the latter owned a good Estate at Dexthorpe, adjoining Dalby where Mr. Bourne resided. The cousin wished to sell this & the cupidity of Mr. Bourne was excited; seeking a tool to carry out his views, he found one ready made to his hands in William Walker - these 2 cajoled the Cousin out of his Estate greatly below its value.

The Bank at Spilsby was situated in the centre of the Town, in a house belonging to Mr. Franklin Senior. The 1st floor over the Bank was occupied by Thos. A. and his brother James Franklin, but Mr. Bourne as the Partner in the Bank, & Wm. Walker as the confidential Attorney of the Family, had access to it at all times. James Franklin devoted himself to scientific pursuits from which it was almost impossible to divert him, & spent very little time in the room alluded to, because of so many interruptions.

Thos. A. Franklin had occasion to be absent fm. Spilsby, returning rather unexpectedly & entering his sitting room, he found Papers &c. on the table which he had just looked at, and perceiving they did not relate to anything wh. concerned him, like any other high minded Person under similar circumstances, he instantly put them from him. Unfortunately the documents contained unequivocal proof of a scheme to put Mr. Bourne into possession of Dexthorpe at a price grievously below its value. Mr. Bourne & Wm. Walker returned to the room, found Thos. A. Franklin there & that there had been sufficient time for him to read the Documents & never doubted but that he had done so. From that hour, without there being any inference or the least appearance of a quarrel, those 2 men conspired ever after to blight Thos. A. Franklin's career if possible wither all his prospects. Had there been anything observable in the demeanour of these men which could have given the least glimpse of their spleen, the quick eye of T.A. Franklin would have seen it & their wicked schemes would have been frustrated at least as far as regards himself, but he was left entirely unconscious of any cause of offence & thus lulled into a state of security.



Mr. Bourne's partial derangement might & probably would account for his conduct, but no other intelligible explanation ever appeared to account for Wm. Walker's treachery, no discontent between the parties having ever existed to explain it.

After the Bank had gone on for a few years, (3 or thereabouts) very prosperously, there was an Estate to be sold at Halton Beckering, near Wragley, belonging to the Chomley's to whom Col. Sibthorp Senr. was Trustee. This Estate Thos. A. Franklin discovered, could be bought for £30,000, & he pressed his Partner Bourne to join him & buy it as, on a resale there was little doubt of its clearing £10,000.

Mr. Bourne at this time first began to shew symptoms of being more than usually crazy & he positively refused to have anything to do with the purchase but urged Thos. A. Franklin to purchase it himself. He held this to be a very questionable undertaking without his Partner, & the more so because he was well assured it was a profitable one. After urging Mr. Bourne over & over again to be a party to it & finding him inexorable, he bought the Estate on his own account, trusting with the full consent of his Partner to have some accommodation at their Bank until the property could be sold again, & he paid down £11,000.

Directly this was done Mr. Bourne on purpose to stop the Bank, instantly let go £24,000 to Messrs. Lister & Maddison (at that time great speculators in Land) for some years. All these notes being payable in London & issued without any preparation for their reception in Town, threw Thos. A. Franklin into the utmost alarm, & to provide against the mischief he actually went up to Town in a Post chaise and four, 3 times in a week, & by his address succeeded in saving the credit of the Bank & providing against this momentous & sudden issues of notes.

Mr. Bourne driven on by the crazy state of his mind, was not to be deterred from his purpose - he went on a Market day to Spilsby, stood at the entrance of the main Inn (the White Hart) in the Market Place, and proclaimed in the hearing of all and more at the Market that the Bank would soon fail, & that all therefore who had deposits would do well to go immediately & draw them out - a piece of advice which was promptly acted upon. A severe run of course ensued, & after the desperate efforts Thos. A. Franklin had previously made in Town, there was no chance but the Bank must stop payment. Of the £11,000 mentioned before as paid down for the Beckering Estate, the principal part was made up of deposits for which either the money or security was immediately demanded. The Bank being perfectly solvent, as well as Parties belonging to it, considerable progress was made in giving security, but great confusion prevailed, during which (instigated by Satan himself) Bourne & Walker incredible as it may seem concocted a plan for preventing the conveyance of the Beckering Estate to Mr. Franklin which they never hoped to carry out unless they could get Thos. A. Franklin out of the way. He had given them such a foretaste of what he could do in surmounting difficulties, that their villainy had no chance of success unless they could separate the Son from the Father - so they stimulated Dr. Wright (the same who married the Grandmother of John Booth) to arrest him for £300 which Thos. A. Franklin had made available as part of the Deposit before mentioned.

Two Bailiffs came down to take him away to the King's Bench. These men demeaned themselves so properly & behaved so well, & being strangers, he (Franklin) conceived them to be without a motive for injuring them. He

was therefore induced to place more confidence in them than they deserved, for they were bribed (as appears afterwards) by Messrs. Bourne & Walker to betray him.

The Bailiffs held poor Franklin in custody in the 1st floor of the house where all the business of this once prosperous Bank used to be transacted. Finding himself in this dreadful strait, he sent for his friend Mr. Christopher Taylor, to bail him. He came immediately from Tothill, distant about 12 or 14 miles from Spilsby.

Wm. Walker as has been before observed, was at this moment the confidential attorney of Franklin. He was seen driving & walking about with a most considerable industry seeking for Bail, but he would have been well nigh frightened to death if he had found it.

In this active search, it suited his purpose to mock Mr. C. Taylor as soon as he reached the White Hart in Spilsby, & with a treachery rarely surpassed, warned him by no means he give the required Bail, for if he did he would certainly have the money to pay without its being of any Service to the Franklins.

Walker returned to the Bank and (let it be distinctly observed) in the presence of the 2 Bailiffs who were seldom out of the room, addressed his Friend & employer that no argument he could use wd. prevail upon Mr. Taylor to come forward. Well knowing how staunch a friend he was, Franklin was astonished at this, & desired Walker to return & ask Mr. C. Taylor to come to him. A like answer was brought back, that nothing cd. induce Mr. Taylor to do so.

Mr. Taylor told J. Booth afterwards that he came to Spilsby with a fixed determination to give the Bail, & nothing could have deterred him but this interference of Walker's whom he supposed to be a friend who knew all about the affairs.

Thos. A. Franklin next applied to Mr. Garmston Chapman, one of the Lieuts. in the Volunteer corps, a gentleman of good property resident in Spilsby, who would have given the required Bail but for the like deception practised upon him by Wm. Walker.

The next person was Mr. Thos. Cracroft junr. the Eldest son of Thos. Cracroft Esq. of West Keal, who had the same deception practised upon him (He subsequently married Thos. A. Franklin's sister Isabella). From Walker's position as the confidential Friend of the Franklins & who was supposed to know all about their affairs, his opinion had great might, & by its force, this attempt to procure bail, proved abortive.

Lastly, a like subtle trick was played upon J. Booth with similar success, under circumstances of more wicked contrivance as will be seen hereafter. Let it be observed that Wm. Walker delivered unfavourable answers from all these gentlemen in the presence of the Bailiffs who listened to & observed them distinctly.

The impossibility of procuring Bail aroused the suspicion of Mr. Joseph Brackenbury who was Clerk of the Peace & the first attorney in Spilsby, & he advised Franklin to have the Bailiffs sworn to the fact, on the spot, but fatally for Franklin's cause, the candid manner of the men threw him off his guard, & he neglected this salutary advice as seeming to betray too strong a suspicion of the Bailiffs.

The misery entailed upon the Franklins by the failure of the Bank in 1804, distressed J. Booth beyond measure & he took the first opportunity of visiting the family at Mavis Enderby feeling at the time if he were separated from them he should be cut off from the society of good spirits, to whom the calamitous event had but more closely knitted

his soul - and on the 3rd of April 1805 he had the good fortune to marry Mr. Franklins 3rd daughter Hannah. As the chaise which took the Bridal party from Mavis Enderby down to Ingoldmells, entered Partney, on a high Bank in the fence on the right hand side of the road, some men were felling a large Ash tree, towards the top of which, a rope was fixed with two or 3 men at the end endeavouring to pull the tree into a pasture of Mr. Maddison's. Their united force proved insufficient to draw it that way, & just as the chaise drew up, down came the tree & entirely blocked the road. The outer branches just came upon the horses' heads, the chaise of course came to a dead stop - in another second or two it would have been under the tree & crushed down to the ground with all those who were in it.

The Post Boy lived many years after, as a Driver of Chaises in Horncastle. Whenever J. Booth met him afterwards he always had a good natured grin upon his countenance expressive of reminiscences about that tree, & generally muttered something about it. Before the Chaise could proceed, the tree had to be cut in two twice, an operation in which J. Booth took part notwithstanding his bridal costume.

The ominous fall of the tree at that critical moment served but to shew how omens, like every thing else are completely over ruled by the hand of the Almighty, for though it pleased God to permit the family (whom J. Booth esteemed so much) to be afflicted with severe pecuniary losses for a season, the marriage proved the crowning blessing of J. Booth's life.

The arrest of T.A. Franklin happened about a month after this wedding, & as a last resource, finding all other means of procuring Bail fail, he at the last hour prevailed upon his brother James to go down to Ingoldmells (12 miles off). He reached there with a heavy heart abt. 2 o'clock in the morning, summoned the inmates & told his deplorable errand, stating that he came over to please his brother, but, acting under an ill founded notion of Walker's knowledge of his brother's affairs & unquestionable sincerity, he urged J. Booth both at Ingoldmells & over & over again on the road, to follow Walker's advice & by no means to Bail his brother. He declared that Walker had obtained a promise from him before he left Spilsby, that he would advise J. Booth to that effect.

James Franklin & J. Booth made all haste to Spilsby where such a scene took place as beggars all description. For a better understanding, an attempt will be made to describe the locality. Immediately adjoining the Bank was an old House (part of which has since been pulled down & a new one erected) where the Revd. Thos. Booth had resided, but which at this time was occupied by a Surgeon named Denis Jones who had married J. Booth's Aunt. This house had a small space behind - something between a garden & a Back yard, secured from what really was a back yard to the premises by a Wall. In the last mentioned yard were the stables & a haystack. Into the first mentioned a window looked from the lowest floor of that Bank House. The Surgeon's house was in the form of an L and the Bank House being much the largest, went back so far as to admit the window alluded to, and the back door of Mr. Jones's house, to be nearly opposite each other, divided only by the little yard. So open in those days were the back premises of Mr. Joseph Brackenbury, Mr. Jones & Mr. Franklin that they well nigh ran together.

The knave Walker knowing something of the strong will of J. Booth & fearing his being intractable, had (serpent-like) got his Father & Mother to sit up all night in Mr. Jones's house. About 5 in the morning James Franklin & J. Booth entered Mr. Jones's back yard & were about to put up their horses, when J. Booth heard his mother screaming out for him to come to her. At that moment James Franklin overcome with anxiety & fatigue, fainted. J. Booth prevented his falling by catching him in his arms, & laid him upon some hay which was just by. Not being much accustomed to fainting fits, J. Booth was horror struck, supposing the poor fellow was breathing his last. Meantime Mrs. Booth continued screaming at the very top of her voice 'for God's sake come to me immediately'. After James Franklin began to revive, J. Booth went with as little delay as possible to Mr. Jones's back door & found his Father & Mother standing outside the house, the latter in an agony of grief. At that instant the sash of the window which looked into the yard from the lowest room of the Bank House was dashed up, & out jumped Walker. Mrs. Booth immediately remarked that nothing could exceed his kindness in taking so much pains to preserve her son from loss & ruin. To their entreaties the plausible rogue added every argument he could think of to convince J. Booth he would lose the £300 if he gave it, without its being of the least benefit to the Family. Not having at that time the least reason to doubt Walker's veracity, J.B. reluctantly relinquished all hope of being of service, left his poor brother in law to his fate & returned to Ingoldmells, after having a promise screwed out of him by his Parents that he would not see Thos. A. Franklin.

So the poor fellow who deserved kindness at the hands of every body, was taken away by the Bailiffs to the Queen's Bench. But no sooner had he got into London & clear of the horrible practices of Wm. Walker, than Mr. Stephen Peacock, (who lived in London & had married T.A. Franklin's sister Anne) bailed him immediately.

No sooner was T.A. Franklin taken away from Spilsby by these foul means, than the fiend like scheme of the authors of his removal began to develop itself. It opened by Mr. Bourne's artfully placing in Mr. Franklin's hands a paper in his (Mr. Bourne's) own hand writing giving the names of parties to whom he owed £13,000. Mr. Franklin's whole property being at that time only £10,000. Now Mr. Franklin had never meddled nor interfered with the Bank in any way, save only by lending his name. He lived upon his nice snug little Estate at Enderby which he cultivated himself, totally disregarding the Bank which he scarcely ever entered.

Startled & horrified at the statement given him by Mr. Bourne, he replied that if that was the case, all that was left to him was to give up his property & pay as far as he was able. This Mr. Bourne urged him to do. His natural course was to consult his attorney Wm. Walker, whose villainy had not yet become apparent, & the Arch Knave advised him as the only means of keeping out of Prison to go over immediately to Col. Sibthorp, to whom as Trustee for the Chomleys (on account of the Beckering Estate) he was the greatest debtor, & without loss of time strike a docket against himself. By this act he made himself a Bankrupt.

By such means did these 2 rogues succeed in their diabolical scheme for preventing the Beckering Estate ever being conveyed to the Franklins for if a conveyance were made out at all, it must be to the Assignees under

the Bankruptcy, which would prove the entire ruin of Mr. Franklin & his family.

It was a great misfortune that he was permitted on this occasion to go alone to Lincoln, and that to an unprincipled attorney named Baldwin who was engaged in these affairs by Col. Sibthorp on behalf of the Chomleys. To this man, Mr. Franklin shewed the list of debts given by Mr. Bourne. At the time Mr. F. was aware of the importance of this document, & before he entrusted it in Baldwin's hands, he obtained a pledge from him that he would certainly return it to him. Upon the strength of this promise, Mr. Franklin struck the fatal docket against himself, and asked Baldwin for the list again. But the knave would never give it up. Had he done so, Mr. Bourne would have been actionable for drawing up such a document which contained the name, in full of the persons to whom Mr. Franklin owed £13,000, since the most part of it was false. Walker & Bourne both knew that £11,000 had been paid down in part of the purchase money of the Beckering Estate & how anxious Thos. A. Franklin was to expedite the sale of that property in order to have that then paid off. Nothing could exceed the anxiety of these gents to have the Docket struck (which at once made Mr. Franklin a Bankrupt) before Thos. A. Franklin came from Town, where he remained about a fortnight most unfortunately, with his sister Mrs. Peacock, to rest a little after the fatigue & anxiety he had undergone, perfectly unconscious of the villainy which was practising upon his worthy Parent. On the contrary, he felt that if any matter required attending to, Walker was upon the spot & would certainly look after it. James Franklin too was at Spilsby, but he was entirely absorbed in scientific pursuits, & like his Father, had taken no interest in the Bank.

On the Monday following, when J. Booth was standing in the Market, Walker accompanied by James Franklin, (neither of them having the least suspicion of the baseness of the attorney) were glad to be able to learn from him (Walker) in their simplicity, what had best be done. With a zeal & activity which made a favourable impression upon them, he urged that someone should immediately be sent over to Lincoln to make sure of the Docket being struck, that Mr. Franklin might be kept out of Prison.

James Franklin & J. Booth immediately sought out Mr. Thos. Spikin to whom Mr. Franklin had been a great friend & who was himself a sharp intelligent man - a gig & horse were hired at the George Inn, & James F. and J. Booth saw Mr. Spikin off in the gig. Away he proceeded to Lincoln in all haste & when he arrived there, the fatal Docket had been struck. As soon as Walker had ascertained this, he felt safe; but when poor Thos. A. Franklin came down soon after & found what was there, buoyant as was his manly spirit, it almost, if it did not entirely, break his heart, for, as his Father was solvent, anything but this fatal Docket could have been got over in the course of time. But the act of Bankruptcy was entirely destructive of all mercantile operations & severed Mr. Franklin from the disposal of his property & rendered him unable to receive money though it were on his own account.

Had Wm. Walker been in any other position than the confidential attorney of the family, it would have been out of his power to bring about this dire calamity. He knew very well that £11,000 had been paid down for the Beckering Estate for which Col. Sibthorp as Trustee for the Chomleys could not allow more than Banking interest (abt 2 p.cent) nor could he be justified in paying back the

money at all, except to the assignees of the Bankruptcy if any were appointed - but Willingham, knowing his Father was not in debt, determined, even if it should blight every prospect in his profession, that there never should be any assignees at all, but that the Bankruptcy should be superseded. In this, after a fearful struggle, by the blessing of God upon his efforts, he succeeded.

Through a merciful interposition of Providence it came to pass that Willingham Franklin was in a position to help his Parents & avert this ruin by being the Tutor to the Son of such a wealthy person as Mr. Wall (who married a daughter of Sir Francis Baring) by whom he was so much esteemed that he treated him as his own child. It ought to have been related before, that Willingham no sooner heard of the failure of the Bank in 1804 than he instantly came down from Town to ascertain the cause. Having convinced himself that his Father was solvent, he returned to Mr. Wall.

As he left Enderby, to take Coach about 3 miles off, at Spilsby, he struck across the fields thus avoiding both the foot & horse roads. By a curious coincidence J. Booth came up to Enderby by the same track, about this hour on the same day. He found poor Mrs. Franklin walking in the garden in the front of their house, wringing her hands in an agony of grief. As J. Booth approached she saw just enough of some one coming up, as to impress her with the idea that her son Willingham had returned. She, poor woman, supposed that such a coming back portended farther misfortune & she did not dare to look up until J. Booth stood close to her & beheld her countenance overwhelmed with grief. When unoppressed by grief, no visage ever expressed more gentleness, amiability, & intelligence than that of this most inestimable woman. On this occasion the transition would have been as quick as a glance of the mind, but nature required a catching up of the breath, two or 3 sighs, & a shudder or two, to intervene, before her sweet smile could rest upon J. Booth. But when it did, her benevolent countenance was radiant with kind expression & wonder how J. Booth came to pay his respects to them at such a juncture.

The parties pressing upon Mr. Franklin for payment were those from whom the £11,000 had been borrowed to pay for the Beckering Estate. Only a part of these could be satisfied by holding the Title Deeds of Mr. Franklin's property.

When Willingham Franklin returned to Mr. Wall, grief of heart was too apparent to escape his notice & he asked the cause. When he learnt it, he enquired farther of Willingham whether he could assure him that his father was solvent. He firmly replied he was sure of it - 'Then what sum of money would answer your purpose?' Willingham replied '£6000 - but I have no security whatever to offer'. The recollection of the transaction with the Earl of Bristol was fresh in Mr. Wall's memory & he replied 'No matter, give me your note, you shall have it'.

Nothing could exceed the astonishment of all men when Willingham came down with Bank of Engd. Notes to this amount & paid the claimants in full. Eventually a larger sum was found necessary, which Mr. Wall supplied & Willingham came down with it, at the time of the Spilsby sessions. For a short time (whilst he went into Court) he put into J. Booth's hands, a Bank of Engd. Note for £1000, one for £500, and one for £200. J. Booth had never seen £1700 in so small a compass before & was perfectly astonished at it.

The paying off of these sums, greatly allayed the fears of the neighbourhood, but it dreadfully alarmed those of Wm. Walker.

After a little time it was determined to sue him for damages. Mr. Bourne escaped from the consequences of the part he took in this iniquitous transaction, by Baldwin's destroying the Paper which gave a list of the names of those to whom Mr. Franklin owed £13,000, which being in Mr. Bourne's hand writing would have made him actionable. His escape was however the less regretted from its being evident that he was more than usually crazy at that time.

The parties mentioned before, whom Wm. Walker had deterred from bailing Thos. A. Franklin were, Mr. Christopher Taylor, of Tothill, Mr. Garmston Chapman of Spilsby, Mr. Thos. Cracroft of West Keal, J. Booth of Ingoldmells, & Mr. Beneworth of Bratoft.

All these as witnesses against Wm. Walker went up to Town in 2 Post Chaises, & were at the Blue Boar in Holborn. Very soon after they got in, on the same Evening, they went to an office in Hatton Garden belonging to Mr. Harmer (there is every reason for supposing that he afterwards became the Editor of the dispatch) at that time held to be a rising man, to whom unfortunately Thos. A. Franklin had confided his cause.

The reception Harmer gave these witnesses, soon made it appear that no good was to be done, for he spoke to them only in general terms, but made no attempt to examine any of them, or take down minutes of what they came up to Town to testify to, though the trial was to come on next morning.

On getting out of the office, Mr. Cracroft turned to J. Booth & said 'What does this mean?' Every one held it to be a bad omen, but none conjectured the cause which did not appear until afterwards when the trial was to come on.

Mr. Franklin (Sen.r) had come up to Town to stay with Mr. Peacock, J. Booth being there also. At the morning when the trial was expected to come on he (J.B.) was walking with Mr. Franklin in Westminster Hall, when suddenly, a very respectable looking man named Jessy Russel, a wealthy soap boiler to whom Mr. Franklin was well known) came briskly up & touched J.B. on the Shoulder & in much haste enquired of him whether he was a friend of Mr. Franklin's. Upon receiving an assurance that he was he said 'I am here on a special Jury & heard what passed between 2 Barristers about a cause of Mr. Franklin's, one of them remarked that the cause must inevitably be lost, for that its merits depended upon the testimony of 2 Bailiffs who were beyond all doubt, bribed to perjure themselves, for that they would swear entirely the contrary of what was expected' - adding 'if you will be guided by me, don't let the case come on - by doing so, much expense will be saved - but I can't stay a minute with you - my name is Jessy Russel' - & he flew back into Court.

Mr. Franklin had walked on a few steps during this short interview, & on J. Booth's coming up & asking him if he knew Jessy Russel, he replied 'to be sure I do - what did he say to you?' J.B. told him all, at which he said immediately that 'the action must be withdrawn - go & tell Willingham' who was walking about, outside Westminster Hall anxiously waiting to hear how matters went on. Upon reaching him, he said 'I know the high character of Jessy Russel - I agree with him entirely as to putting a stop to the proceedings'.

Willingham had at this time £500 in a Bank in Town. This was his reserve fund for expenses on his Circuits. He directly gave a cheque on his Banker for this sum, to J. Booth who went immediately & drew it, and it was handed over to meet the expenses &c of the suit so far as it had been carried on. Of the bribery of the Bailiffs & of Harmer the Attorney too, there did not remain a doubt, & it left a sore feeling of regret as regards the former, that Mr. Joseph Backenbury's advice had not been followed when the men were at Spilsby. It was clear they ought to have been sworn; had this been done, it was quite clear Wm. Walker would have been struck off the list of Attorneys.

Many times after this, Willingham Franklin had the misfortune to have several interviews with Walker. Being the confidential attorney of the family, there were many affairs which could by no means be settled without it, though he felt keenly the degradation of having to transact business with the rogue who had been so recently white washed by the mock trial in Westminster Hall. Yet there was no alternative; he was compelled by circumstances to have dealings with the knave & he managed it without giving way to temper, as he best could.

Col. Sibthorp (Sen.r) treated Mr. Franklin with great kindness & courtesy, but his position as regards the sale of the Estate at Beckering compelled him (as Trustee of the Chomleys) to keep the £11,000 & allow [?] Bankers interest about 2 p.cent. The parties from whom this sum was taken, received annually 5 p.cent & this state of things continued for 12 or 13 years, that is until the Chomleys came of age. Willingham Franklin was very intimate with that family, having been at Westminster with some members of it, they were disposed to act very kindly, and when they all came of age, at once conveyed the Estate to Mr. Wall. By this means he got his money back with Interest, & no conveyance (as Bourne & Walker had calculated upon) was ever made out to Mr. Franklin's assignees - none having ever been appointed. But all this was not affected without a serious loss & dreadful distress to the Family, & kept Willingham from going his Circuit during this tediously long period, chiefly for want of funds which a young lawyer invariably requires in the outset.

Poor Thos. A. Franklin died on the 7th Oct. 1807 it may fairly be said, of a broken heart, though as has been observed before, he was eminently cheerful, & retained a buoyant spirit to the last.

Poor Mrs. Franklin lived about 7 years after their calamity, but her natural affection was sorely wounded; the Iron had entered into her soul & her gentle spirit after standing the shock for 7 long years, fled to Him who gave it.

We will return to our account of the Spilsby Bank - this, as was expected, paid 20/ in the Pound; but the plague of straggling notes being brought to Enderby & presented to Mr. Franklin from distant quarters - such as £5 and £10 notes which had been hidden or locked up in Desks & only brought to light by accident, were now & then brought by their owners for payment - this was more than Mr. Franklin could endure. He saw the justice of the claim, & felt if the man had not the money due to him, as if he had been instrumental in robbing him of it.

Before the death of Thos. A. Franklin & Mrs. Franklin, Mr. Franklin from shere [sic] mental suffering became most dangerously ill. The trial (chiefly arising from these demands,) proved too much for his upright mind - he took to his bed, & all around him expected his death to be inevitable.

Poor Mrs. Franklin was almost heart broken at the apparently near dissolution of her husband, & well knowing the cause, she wrote most urgently to Willingham in Town, to bring down the means & agree with Mr. Bourne for a sum of money to undertake payment of all outstanding notes of the Bank. He readily responded to the summons, came down, & had an interview with Bourne on the subject, but the subtle creature demanded £1700 to undertake this.

The illness of Mr. Franklin occurred before the death of his son Thos. A. Franklin, & he urged every argument he could think of with his brother against this imposition, for there was not more than £300 or £400 of outstanding notes to answer for, & Mr. Bourne was answerable for one third of them. Willingham found these arguments irresistible & returned to London without doing anything. Other letters written in the most agonising strain by his poor Mother, soon followed him, entreating him if he meant to save his father's life to adopt the only course which under Providence could save it. The tender heart of Willingham was not proof against such an appeal, & down he came with funds to settle with Bourne. J. Booth went with Willingham to Dalby & this crazy Gent (Bourne) was, or pretended to be, chary about receiving the money for which he had undertaken the business. However for £1700 Bourne agreed at last to take upon himself all out payments for notes belonging to the Bank.

In spite of all the blunders which had been made, the establishment it was evident, had realised a considerable sum, which was entirely absorbed by the extravagant folly which put an end to it. When it was made known to Mr. Franklin that Bourne had made himself responsible for the outstanding notes - though poor man, from illness & being so long in bed, he looked like a Ghost - the tiding acted like a charm upon him. From that time he gradually recovered, & it pleased God to prolong his life for 20 years after the failure of the Bank, though with only £60 a year left of his property.

During the long 12 or 13 years of pecuniary distress as before mentioned, John Franklin was a Midshipman in the Royal Navy. He received no money from home - for years, every thing at Mavis Enderby was forced to be managed with the most rigid economy, though, Mr. Franklin continued all the time to cultivate his own Estate. Letter after letter came from John Franklin replete with the most anxious enquiries after his beloved Parents, his brothers & his sisters. Not content with the most anxious expressions of kindness, he saved £5 from his Pay, & to the astonishment of everyone, remitted it home. By this act, so difficult of accomplishment in the Navy, the heart of this excellent youth shone forth & was the prestige of that future renown, which by the favor of Heaven, rested upon his future career.

Farther account of Major James Franklin

Before he went out as a Cadet to India, he had applied himself to the study of Anatomy with great perseverance & intense interest. This induced him to be present when Willm. Goulsbury (better known under the cognomen of Wilkes) had both his feet taken off above the ankles.

Like his brothers Thomas & Willingham James was sent to St. Ives, & acquitted himself there as well as either of those who preceded him. When he quitted school, & came home, he devoted himself wholly to scientific pursuits. There was a time when he gave some assistance to his brother Thomas in the Bank, but his heart was never in the occupation & his active mind found

no satisfaction except in science. He turned his attention to Mathematics, Anatomy & Painting, with an ardour which led to very satisfactory results.

The Bank at Spilsby was kept in one of Mr. Franklin's houses, adjoining that in which Mr. Franklin resided for so many years until he removed to Mavis Enderby. Both Thomas & James Franklin had rooms in it & an elderly woman whose husband occupied one of Mr. Franklin's cottages at the back of his premises, managed their household concerns. The late Mr. Dennis Jones lived in the next house & was a surgeon at one time in extensive practice in Spilsby. He told J. Booth he lent James Franklin a skeleton & that he applied himself to books on Anatomy with such force as to quite astonish him with the progress he had made in little more than 3 months. Whilst he was studying it was almost impossible to get to see him.

At the approach of night, if he found anyone rapping at the door who must be admitted, he would quickly take up the skeleton, run upstairs with it, & lock it up in a large box in his bed room.

At this time the Bank had failed & he was for the most part quite alone in the House. Had Mrs. Richardson known at all, what sort of Companion he had about him, nothing would have induced her to enter his chamber alone after it was dark. With only a pen knife, he contrived to finish off a model in wood, of the limb of a Man from the knee downwards, with so much accuracy as to render the muscles distinctly visible. With the same knife he shaded on a piece of charred wood (part of the bottom of an old Sugar Hogshead) the head of an aged man in the attitude of Prayer, looking up to Heaven, with a book in his hand. The features are so well delineated & the expression so well preserved as to make it seem like a good old Picture. This production is in the hands of John Booth. It has now been done very nearly 50 years, & he deeply regrets that the worms have got into it.

During the prosperous affairs of the Bank, James Franklin became a Lieut. in the Spilsby Volunteer Infantry. At that time none of the Officers could put the men through more than seven manoeuvres out of 15 which at that period was understood to complete military discipline. The going through of them was a pretty fair state of things for Volunteers. At length the Commander Capt. Coltman, proposed that each Officer should take the Command for a day in turn, to ascertain whether they could be stimulated to greater progress. When it came to James Franklin's turn, without the slightest hesitation he put the men through the whole 15 at once. As soon as the drill was over, the shouting & rejoicing became uproarious, & knowing James Franklin had no military acquaintance, J. Booth went up to him & enquired how he was able to do it, he replied 'I merely applied Mathematics which proved a key to the whole of the Manoeuvres. They were as clear to my view as noon day'. The astonishment & joy at this discovery of Military Tact was not suffered to rest in simple congratulations which poured in from all quarters, but a handsome Silver cup was presented to him soon after. This he unfortunately took out to India, where it was stolen from him in one of his extensive journeys.

After the Spilsby Bank failed, Willingham had interest to procure a Cadetship for James & he went out to India in the autumn of 1805. Previously to going on board ship he bought an Arabic Lexicon, & being a pretty good Latin & Greek scholar, he applied himself to the study of Arabic with such vigour on the voyage, & with such effect that his progress was marked on arrival by a present of £50, and

subsequently by a handsome sword bearing the following inscription.

Honorary Reward  
Cadet Company  
Barashut 1st Feb. 1807  
James Franklin, Cadet

This interesting weapon since the death of its owner nearly 19 years ago, appears to have been much knocked about, & is in but a very moderate state of preservation. It is in the keeping of Emma Franklin, whose mother (the widow of James) was married shortly after his death to Mr. James Evans, Surgeon.

James Franklin entered as a Cornet the 1st Regiment of Native Bengal Cavalry, he afterwards became Adjutant and A.D.C. to Lieut. General Sir Thos. Brown, better known as mad Tom Brown, an excellent officer but his energy was apt to prove an over match for his moderation. The General's estimate of our Cornet scarcely knew any bounds, he left almost every thing which was possible in his hand.

James told J. Booth that upon one occasion of an engagement with the Pindarries, he rode (principally in galloping from one wing of the Army to the other) 95 miles in one day (upon 3 fresh horses) whilst the action was general, & the temperature very high.

On another occasion when they were much in want of information respecting the evening's movements & were on the look out for a messenger of theirs' who it was known bore dispatches containing the required intelligence, James Franklin on horseback thought he spied something like the object he was in quest of. He rode briskly up, on which the fellow began to prepare his matchlock. Just then James F. increased the speed of his nimble, well trained horse, galloped right at the man & knocked him down. The unfortunate fellow being in no way prepared for the extraordinarily rapid movement of the horse, from whose back Franklin immediately jumped with all the activity of his race, seized the dispatch & thus acquired the necessary information.

This horse he would not sell when he was obliged to return to England on account of his health. He had him kept there for 2 years with the hope of being able to return to that country, but it was not permitted by the almighty that he should have health to do so.

Sir Thos. Brown had only 2 daughters, Jane & Margaret. The latter told J. Booth that whilst they were in Cantonments at Reitah in 1810 before she & her sister were sent over to be educated; she remembered the looking glasses being brought in & so arranged as to enable James Franklin to see himself whilst he took his own likeness. He succeeded in taking a good representation of himself sitting with his writing desk or table before him with Books & Scientific Instruments. He is in Indian Costume. The drawing had been tossed about in a variety of Portfolios for 39 years, the chief part of the time in J. Booth's possession, until it was stretched & framed in Bristol, & now in May 1853 it is in the keeping of J. Booth.

On the return of his daughters from England, General Brown set his heart upon James Franklin marrying one of them, nor was he disappointed, for he married Margaret the 2nd child, but he never had any portion of fortune whatever with her, for it turned out that Sir Thos. Brown & his wife disagreed so much that they could not live together.

James Franklin & his wife tried repeatedly to reconcile them, but in doing so, the eccentric General took it into his

head that they inclined too much to the weaker vessel. His daughter Margaret whilst visiting her father at his house in Town, having Emma (her own child) with her, had some words with her Father about an Egg or some trumpery matter about the child whom she humoured & made a fool of. She sent word to Major Franklin that she had been insulted & he must come & take her away. The General took so much offence at this, that he left the whole of his property, £12,000 to some poor relations in Ireland. Major Franklin by great exertion & by the sweat of his brow realised about £17,000 in India - £6000 of which he lost by the failure of Mackintosh's Bank in Calcutta. Upon his decease his widow & 2 daughters subsisted upon the interest of £10,500, never having had any thing from Sir Thos. Brown. Mrs. James Franklin was however, as we have before observed, soon married to Mr. Evans to whom she gave £3500 (at her decease in Feb. 1853) which her husband's will unwisely left at her disposal. The rest of the property was equally divided between his 2 daughters, Mary and Emma, giving £3500 to each. The former he had before his union with Miss Margaret Brown. Major Franklin sent Mary Franklin to be educated in England. She went out with her Uncle Sir John Franklin when he became Governor of V.D. Land and there married Mr. John Price (the Son of a Cornish Baronet) whom they found there as a Settler.

Major Franklin was in several engagements in the Pindarree War & was for some time assistant Quarter Master General to the Bengal Army. The progress he made in the Survey of the Province of Bundelund (about the size of Ireland) with his other scientific attainments procured for him the honor of being elected Fellow of the Royl. Society of London. Whilst he was engaged in the Military Survey, he sojourned for some time near some tanks of bad water. He always thought he never entirely shook off the effects of an illness which overtook him at this place.

There was scarcely on record an instance of so little mortality among officers as in the 1st Regiment of Native Cavalry. The men were of remarkably abstemious habits. Had the deaths been anything like the usual average of what is common in India, a higher rank than Major would have been attained by James Franklin. He died at Greenwich in Aug. 1835. By his will he left £100 to set up a Tablet to his memory in the Church at Spilsby, where it now is near his brother Willingham's.

From the literary habits & ready pen of James Franklin, there is good reason to believe that he left interesting memoranda behind him, but the withering influence of a 2nd early marriage was unfavourable to their preservation.

John Franklin, the youngest son born on the 16th April 1786, had such poor health whilst an Infant, that until he was 2 or 3 years old, it seemed doubtful whether he could be raised. He was not noted like his brothers & sisters for neatness & orderliness, but was not behind the chiefest of them in high principle & generous, unbounded benevolence of disposition.

Opposite to Mr. Franklin's house at Spilsby was that of the Revd. Mr. Walls, the owner of Boothby Hall, a gentleman of ample private fortune, who had married an aunt of J. Booth's. Being the principal inhabitant in the Town, he maintained his character as such by an unbounded hospitality particularly to strangers whose carriages were frequently seen at his door.

Knowing that their youngest son's outer man was none of the smartest, & very much disapproving of a curiosity which seemed intrusive, he was strictly forbidden to go over the way & stare at these arrivals, but the child seemed utterly incapable of putting any curb upon his curiosity & he would have died rather than lose a sight of the strangers. Mr. Franklin used to flog his son for this with the family whip which has been mentioned as hanging always upon the landing of their Staircase. This however was hardly ever in request. Though the boy was in no way rebellious upon any other point, neither entreaty nor flogging could prevent his giving his attention at the opposite door whenever a carriage drove up, to the annoyance of his sisters who never felt satisfied he was quite fit to be seen, & yet from the kindness of his disposition they could not bear to think of his being punished. Perhaps in this daring curiosity the germ of that spirit of enquiry might peep out which stimulated him under the blessing of God in his onward course through difficulties, dangers & hardships which have been rarely surpassed.

John Franklin was sent to school first to St. Ives, & then to Louth, at that time under Dr. Orme. The first time of his seeing the sea was when he ran down from that Town to Saltfleet with Wm. Henry Booth, the 3rd brother of J. Booth, who was at the same school.

Their native place Spilsby being a little inland Town, was entirely supported by Agriculture, possessed no commerce & was in no way calculated to put sea-faring notions into a Boy's head, but from the first time he had a view of the sea, the dye seemed thrown over his pursuits, for nothing would serve him but being a sailor. When about 12 years old, he pressed this upon his Father who was made very unhappy by the application. His affect heart longed for some calling less dangerous for his child, & with the hope he would not like the sea when he had experienced some of the hardships of it, he wished his eldest son so make some arrangement with a merchant in Hull for John Franklin's going on an experimental trip to Lisbon in 1800. The lad returned 10 times more enamoured of a sea faring life than ever, so he was entered as a Midshipman on board the 'Polyphemus' Captn. Lawford in 1800 & was soon with Lord Nelson in the severe engagement at the taking of Copenhagen. The carnage in that battle was horrible. The young sailor told J. Booth that he saw a prodigious number of the slain at the bottom of the remarkably clear water in that harbour - men who had perished on both sides in that most sanguinary action.

In 1801 he returned home, having obtained leave to go on a voyage of discovery in the South Sea, with Captn. Flinders. It was then he received a letter known to be written by his kind hearted neighbour Mr. Walls, of which the following is a copy.

Sir

Have Lord Nelson in your mind, think of him often. He did not start with the advantages you have. Blessed with a constitution & talents like yours, a due attention (2 hours at least, every day) to the scientific parts of navigation & geography, & drawing, will carry you in a few years to a summit you at present have no idea of. This with temperance, & daily fervent Prayer (without which all opportunities, all talents, all learning, will avail you nothing) will most certainly render you happy in yourself, a blessing to your relations, & an honor to your native Town. All this depend upon yourself, & that

all may await you to the very sincere wish of your most humble servt.

Spilsby,

May 7. 1801. Amicus

Captain Flinders was the son of a much esteemed Surgeon at Donington near Boston who had married for his 2nd wife, John Franklin's Aunt. His eldest son Matthew Flinders was sent out on a voyage of discovery in the South Seas, in the 'Investigator' in 1801.

During the war, all the Powers gave an undertaking that he should pass everywhere unmolested, provided he engaged in none of the broils of that time. He took his brother Samuel, & John Franklin, with him. This Samuel Flinders was much older than Franklin; he too was a Midshipman. He was not without talent, but totally without industry or capability of applying it, so he made John Franklin do all the work which he was expected to do in making observations &c. All these matters were regularly & most methodically carried on by Franklin, for which Samuel Flinders had the credit, & J. Franklin all the advantages which experience in such matters bestows upon industry. But from Captn. Flinders determination to serve his brother first (which was certainly natural enough) Samuel Flinders stood for many years in the way of J. Franklin's advancement, but at last through his brother's interest, Samuel Flinders was made a Lieut.

He had then a small sloop of war given him; these small vessels, from their capability of taking Prizes, most frequently enabled their Commanders to make fortunes in those days, but the indolence of S. Flinders (which had been the bane of his life) unfortunately followed him closely, & the vessel was soon taken from him because he would spend so much time ashore.

When the Investigator reached Port Jackson, she was found to be unseaworthy & the Governor furnished Captn. Flinders with 2 small vessels, the Porpoise & the Cato with which he prosecuted the voyages, which in those seas was rendered dangerous at that time for want of sufficient charts to notice the coral rocks which are continually rising up from the bottom of the sea. On a rock of this sort, one of the above named vessels was wrecked & both the crews were on board the other. When there was no particular storm, about 10 o'clock at night some time afterwards, the remaining vessel struck upon the same kind of rock. The ship being crowded with men, & the danger great, a night of dreadful suspense was passed. One poor Seaman (Franklin told J. Booth) did nothing but cry about his mother - so bitter was the cry of the poor fellow, & so loud, that they were forced to threaten to flog him if he did not give over making such a noise. After this dreadful night, the morning enabled them to perceive that they were upon a narrow & rather long rock, covered with sand, & only about 3 feet above the sea; and about 500 miles from land. The vessel did not break up entirely, but John Franklin lost his clothes & every thing he possessed. The men set to work, got out some sails & made tents, securing such provisions as were not spoilt, with all the water they could recover. The first fortnight passed away under the most awful anxiety lest the next spring tides would cover the rock & wash them off, but providentially they were so far out at sea that the tide made very little difference, perhaps a foot & a half, leaving dry another foot & a half.

Being on a voyage of discovery, & likely to be out some years, they were well provided with ships carpenters tools, &c &c. The wreck remaining almost entire & hanging to

the rock, timber was procured from it & in about 6 weeks, a boat capable of carrying away half the men was built & another was laid down upon the stocks.

Meanwhile Captn. Flinders had selected 12 of his best sailors, & in an open boat effected a passage of about 500 miles to Botany Bay, & sent 2 Merchantmen to take the poor fellows from the rock, and convey them to China.

It was most remarkable that whilst they were suffering from great anxiety & on what allowance both of food & water a ship hove in sight which they could plainly discern was the Bridgwater. The men in this vessel, cruelly left them to their fate - but very singular it was, that the Bridgwater was never heard of afterwards nor any vestige of her.

John Franklin was wretchedly off on reaching China having lost his clothes & every thing he possessed by the wreck, but even here, his wants were supplied by a merciful Providence through the medium of a worthy Captn. of an East Indian of the name of Birch who was there, & knew him. A long & most intimate acquaintance & friendship having existed between their mothers & consequently between their families. In truth they were very similar to each other, both in their bringing up & subsequent career. South Thoresby being but 9 miles from Spilsby, there was no difficulty in perpetuating amity & friendship between such kindred spirits.

A large E. India fleet (the cargoes of which were of immense value) under the escort of a Frigate or 2, put into Canton & took in the shipwrecked seamen. The French at home had received intelligence of the probable situation of these Merchantmen & their Admiral Linois, had managed to ship out of Port during a fog & had got down into these seas with 4 Men of War, to capture them. The whole of Captn. Flinders men were fine expert seamen who had seen service during the war, & in consequence, were conversant with serving guns & c &c.

They were dispersed throughout the fleet of Merchantmen. These ships had each 2 & some 3 guns. At the sight of the French men of war, the English sailors cleared the decks of their ships, fell into line & prepared for action, & so well directed a fire was kept up, chiefly by the aid of the Sailors from the wreck, that the enemy in spite of their utmost efforts, cd. not break the line but were compelled to steer off without doing any damage. Had the line been broken, the loss would have been that of nearly the whole Fleet.

Franklin being then a Midshipman received £30 from the E. India Company, for his services in this remarkable action. Eventually the 4 French ships of war were captured before they could reach a French port.

Soon after reaching England he joined the *Bellerophon* which was cruising off Brest & in the North Sea until the battle of Trafalgar in 1805. John Franklin gave J. Booth the following account of that action. Very early in the engagement the *Bellerophon's* masts became entangled with & caught fast hold of the rigging of a French Line of Battle ship. Though the masts were pretty close together at the top, there was a space between them below, but not so great as to prevent the French sailors from trying to board the *Bellerophon*. In the attempt, their hands received sharp blows as they laid hold of the side of the ship, from whatever the English sailors could lay their hands on. In this way numbers of Frenchmen fell between the ships & were drowned. Whilst the *Bellerophon* was fastened to the enemy on one side, another French man of war was at liberty to turn round & fire first one broad side

& then another into the English ship. In consequence 300 men were killed & wounded on board the *Bellerophon*. At last after a very severe conflict, the French ship which was at liberty, received such a severe handling that it veered about, & sailed away. But still a desultory yet destructive warfare was carried on between the 2 entangled ships until out of 47 men upon the Quarter Deck (of whom Franklin was one) all were either killed or wounded but seven.

Towards the end of the action, only a very few guns could be fired in either of the ships, the sailors were so disabled. But there remained a man in the Skettles [foretop?] (about half way up the masts) of the enemys ship, wearing a cocked hat, who had during the engagement, taken off with his rifle, several of our officers & men. This mode of warfare was first adopted by the French in this battle. It was by the hand of one of these murderers, that poor Lord Nelson fell. Franklin was standing close to, & speaking to, a Midshipman, his most esteemed friend when the fellow above shot him, & he fell dead at his feet. Soon after Franklin & a Serjeant of Marines were carrying down a black seaman to have his wounds dressed when a ball from the rifleman entered his breast & killed the poor Fellow as they moved him along. Franklin said to the Serjeant, 'he'll have you next' but the Serjeant swore he shd not for that he wd go down into what is called the sides of the ship (a place where he cd. point a common musket at the fellow with tolerable personal security) & never give over firing until he had killed him. As Franklin was going back on the deck, keeping his eye on the Rifleman, he perceived the fellow begin to lift his rifle to his shoulder, & prepare to take aim at him. With an elasticity very common in his family, he bounded behind a mast, rapid as the movement was, the ball from the rifle entered the deck of the ship a few feet behind him.

Meantime, so few guns went off, that he could hear the Serjeant firing away from below, & he just ventured to peep by the side of the mast & saw the Rifleman (whose features he vowed he should never forget so long as he lived, fall away head foremost into the Sea. Upon the Serjeant coming up, he asked him how many times he fired - he replied 'I killed him at the 7th shot'. This murderous warfare was much worse to endure than the raging of a battle.

It was during the time of Franklin's being still a Midshipman that the Bank at Spilsby failed, & the pecuniary distress of his beloved Parents reached its utmost height - for though this Bank paid everyone 20/ in the Pound, the shocking havoc made in his father's property, overwhelmed him with grief - nothing for years could be remitted from his Parents, to eke out his Pay as Middy. By a frugality which must have occasioned him many severe privations he however contrived to save £5 from his scanty Pay & remitted it to his Parents. This pious act & proof of affection threw a sunbeam over their dwelling & they joyed until the shed tears of affection over their beloved Son.

The *Bellerophon* having been almost destroyed in this fierce battle, Franklin was transferred to the *Bedford* of which Captn. Walker had the command, & went with the Portuguese Royal Family to the Brazils. He was afterwards in that Squadron which went to the unfortunate attack upon New Orleans.

At no great distance from that City, there were in the River 2 American frigates. Franklin was dispatched in one of the several Gunboats which were sent to cut them out. This was intended to be attempted abt. 3 in the



morning just before daylight, but the frigates had moved 10 miles farther up the River during the night & the Boats had to make a later attack in open day. The Balls from the Enemy's guns came whizzing over their heads as they advanced, & one of them struck a splinter from the boat Franklin was in. Being hit by the piece of wood, he was stunned & fell to the bottom of the boat, & at first his comrades thought he was killed but it was the will of merciful Providence that the injury was slight & he soon recovered from the effects of the blow.

When the boats got up, volleys of musketry soon cleared the decks of the American sailors, our men swarmed up the sides of the Frigates & they were taken in a few minutes. Fortunately for the undertaking, the American guns were fired too high to be destructive to the assailants. Immediately after this, Franklin volunteered to go with the troops on shore to the attack of New Orleans on the land side, & witnessed with much sorrow the failure of the assault, owing to the Soldiers demurring about filling up the ditch with fascines (small faggots) with which each had been provided for that purpose. This calamity was almost entirely owing to the want of bravery in their commanding officer who deemed his men & himself inevitably lost if he made the attempt. Franklin in his account of the matter to J. Booth, said if sailors had been employed they would have rushed to the work & then in all probability the Town would have been taken. As it was, the army being cut off from the Fleet, were forced to make a most disastrous retreat of several weeks continuance principally through ill drained marshes of vast extent. They had to cut up Reeds & [cast?] them upon the boggy parts of their track - one of the Soldiers venturing too near the edge of this preventive sort of bridge, sank down in the mire in an erect position until he was over head & perished. Another slipped by the die of the way, but having had a sword belt thrown to him he was fortunately hauled out.

Franklin lost his hat in the above engagement & one of the officers was kind enough to supply it by a cocked hat. Without any thing like half shelter enough by night or food by day, their sufferings were intense. Fortunately for them, they had given the Americans such a taste of their valour that they did not think proper to pursue them or every soul must have been cut off, they were rendered to such a state of extreme debility.

At the conclusion of the War, Franklin took the Duch-ess d'Angoulême in the Bedford over to France from England. In this instance though he was 1st Lieut. promotion failed him, a very unusual thing to an officer so situated having the charge of Royalty, but it led subsequently when Sir John & Lady Franklin were in Paris to his being much noticed by Louis Philippe. He had him at the Tuileries & in his Bar at the Theatre & on his departure presented him with a Good Snuff box with a handsome likeness of the King of the French upon the lid.

Sir John & Lady F. went also into Russia where the Empress Mother shewed them every possible attention & would have Franklin witness her Grandson going up the rigging of the ships which lay there, to ascertain whether he acquitted himself as he ought to do.

Every thing in the Palace at St. Petersburg was shewn them, & the aged Empress as they went over the Palace, repeatedly entered up different doors of the immense building, meeting them in several different rooms & speaking to them for a short time during their progress. She farther commanded the governesses of

a vast female School, numbering some thousands of children to examine them in the presence of Sir J. & Lady Franklin. After a long time one of the Mistresses enquired of the former in French whether he was not tired with the length of the examinations - half asleep & nearly worn out, he faintly answered 'oui' to the great consternation of his wife.

These visits were made after Sir John's marriage with Miss Griffin in 1828 after his 2nd Journey to the Polar Sea, & he had sent his books giving an account of these Expedns. before they went to St. Petersburg. The Empress had read them & was well versed in their contents. On their taking leave, she said to Sir John 'I shall never cease to honor a man who has twice faced the hardships & dangers you have gone through'.

In 1817 and 18, John Franklin as Lieut. had command of the Trent under Captn. Buchan when he went out with 2 ships on a voyage of discovery in the Polar Seas. Upon one occasion the Trent was placed in the most imminent danger by being driven upon some packed Ice, & almost lifted out of the water by the rising of the pack.

Soon after Franklin returned in the Trent, finding there was little to be done in his profession, he made an offer to Government to conduct an Expedition on an overland excursion to the shores of the Polar Sea. The offer was accepted & though only a Lieut. he was made Commander of it. This expedition occupied the years 1819 - 1820 - 1821 - and 1822. On their return from the Polar Sea after surveying about 500 miles of its coast, they were reminded in Augst. 1821 by unquestionable signs, of the approach of winter. The geese & Reindeer were making their way to the South. They were under the necessity of quitting their boats which being made of Bark were more like Canoes, and as it was impossible to return by the way they came, they had to cross about 140 miles of barren ground, to reach the Old Fort (Enterprise as they called it) at which they had wintered the year before & at which Mr. Wentzel belonging to the Hudson Bay Comp.y had distinctly & faithfully pledged himself to deposit an ample stock of provisions for the Expedition to fall back upon whenever return became necessary.

Several native Canadians & some Esquimaux were taken out as Shooters (being excellent Marksmen) to supply food for the party. No argument could convince these men that the road to the Fort could be traced across the barren grounds, none of them having been in that direction before. By dispatch, they were reduced almost to madness, having no faith whatever in the knowledge the officers had of the compass. In going the first hundred miles the whole party suffered the most dreadful privation from the want of provisions, wood & shelter from the weather when the ground was covered with snow & the frost bitterly keen. They were dreadfully emaciated from long suffering both before & after they had quitted the boats, when they arrived at a spot where there were some stunted willows about 40 miles from the Fort. Here poor Mr. Hood's strength entirely failed him & Dr. Richardson & Hepburn remained behind with him urging Captain Franklin (who was made about this time) to proceed with the other 6 men to the Fort & send them provisions from thence.

Next morning the Captain started; but after going a couple of miles, 2 of the Indians failed entirely and begged to be allowed to return to the party who had encamped amongst the Willows. Suddenly another Canadian named Michel who was the stoutest fellow amongst them & who

was well armed, determined to return too. The 2 poor men never arrived & there is hardly any doubt that Michel murdered them, for he brought some very suspicious looking flesh which he tried to pass off as that of a Fox which he said had been killed by the horn of a Deer. The surly savage remained with Mr. Hood who repeatedly urged him to go & assist in getting fire wood as he had usually done. Suddenly Dr. Richardson & Hepburn who were collecting wood, were greatly startled at the report of a gun & some time afterwards Michel came forth & said that Mr. Hood was dead.

Dr. Richardson immediately examined the wound & found that a ball had entered the back part of the head & came out at the forehead. Michel looked very odd & suspicious & it became obvious that it was no way safe for him to see what he was suspected of, so they went on with their work. John Hepburn knowing that murder had been committed took an opportunity when they were alone (a communication which Michel never ceased to prevent) with Dr. Richardson to offer to go & shoot the savage. Dr. Richardson said he could give no such order; if it was to be done he must do it himself. After an awful struggle with himself he took a pistol which Hepburn loaded for him, & blew his (Michel's) brains out.

There is not a shadow of doubt that thus poor savage meant to kill first one & then the other & subsist upon their flesh until he made his way South so far as to save his own life.

Impelled by the utmost anxiety to send back food to supply the want of the party left behind, Captn. Franklin hastened as well as he could with 3 Indians to Fort Enterprise. So reduced was the strength of these men & so wretched was the nutriment on which life was to be sustained, that the depth of the snow seemed an almost inescapable barrier to their progress, so that out of the 40 miles which lay before them they could not make more than about 4 in a day.

At last however on reaching the much desired Fort, what was their horror to find the house utterly without provisions, the oiled paper in the windows rent to slivers & everything completely desolate. This cruel disappointment seemed a death blow to all expectation of preserving their lives, nothing seemed to have been in the building but wild Beasts. The poor men however set to, & raked out the snow & made a fire, they then laid bare some of the bones of the animals they had picked last year, together with many of the skins of the deer &c. The latter was their main stay after the hair was singed off.

Broth was made of these materials but it proved so acrid as to excoriate their mouths & throats to such an extent that nothing but the most dire necessity could have compelled them to take it.

After the murder of Mr. Hood, Dr. Richardson and Hepburn with much difficulty reached the Fort. The hollow sepulchral tone issuing from the voices of the inmates when they were spoken to, filled them with horror, & the sight of the poor sufferers no way diminished it. Two of the poor Indians were so reduced that they died soon after, the 3rd (Adam) was in bed. Franklin had nursed him with much solicitude & lay close to him for the purposes of inducing a little heat into his shivering frame.

Captn. Franklin told J. Booth that he tried to keep up a little spirit & life in the poor man by telling him all the little tales he could recollect of what happened to him in his childhood. Dr. Richardson scarified Adam & let out much water which relieved him a good deal. It appears

that Franklin & his comrades passed at one time 30 days between one full meal & another; in the interval, life had been sustained by Tripe de roche & Leather.

It should have been mentioned before that in the beginning of Oct. 1821 before the shocking murder of Mr. Hood, Captn. Franklin had dispatched Lieut. Back to go forward and ascertain whether there were any Provisions at Fort Enterprise & if not, he was to go on & endeavour to find out the Indians & induce them to supply the Fort immediately. After dreadful suffering he reached the Fort & finding nothing there, he went on to the South. In doing this, their privations were of the most fearful character. They were reduced to such a state that one of the Indians named Beauparlant sank exhausted & died by the way. Mr. Back with the other 2 fortunately succeeded in finding Akaitcho with whom they had previously had much intercourse. He instantly forwarded provisions to Fort Enterprise; in this way a merciful Providence preserved the lives of the inmates of that desolate habitation. Two Indians were the first to arrive with some venison; had they reached the Fort 3 or 4 hours later, Adam would have been released by death, & in a very few days, Franklin, Dr. Richardson & Hepburn must also have perished.

The proper quantity which the stomach of each Individual could bear of venison, was left by common consent to be decided by Dr. Richardson who was to dole it - this he did admirably, for everyone but himself, if report be true, the delicious food went down so imperceptibly & unawares that the emaciated frame of the poor Doctor had to struggle between life & death for some hours afterwards.

This heavy penalty was forced to be paid for a slight excess of which he was perfectly unconscious at the time, but which served as somewhat of a joke against him afterwards.

After the first supply other Indians soon arrived with more food which enabled the whole party under a thankful sense of the gracious bounty of almighty God, to reach Fort Providence. There, after some time had elapsed, they were able to reward the great service the Indians had rendered, by presents of powder &c.

Mr. Wentzel threw himself upon the mercy of the Commander, declaring the universal belief that the Expedition was a forlorn hope & that every individual engaged in it must inevitably perish, so there was no use in laying up a store at Fort Enterprise.

By the time the party had reached England, they had entirely recovered their health, though it was several months before the swelling of their emaciated frames entirely disappeared.

In 1823 Captn. Franklin married Miss Porden who was attacked in about 2 years with a most painful & fatal disorder & was at the point of death when the ship which was to convey the husband & Dr. Richardson to Canada on their 2nd overland journey to the shores of the Polar Sea, was appointed to sail. Under these discouraging circumstances, this courageous Lady urged her husband by every argument she could think of, to take his departure, & do his duty. She would on no account hear of his giving up the Expedition though she was so near her end that Death put a period to her sufferings the next day.

Only one child remained, named Eleanor Isabella who grew up & eventually became the wife of the Revd. John P. Gell.

The 2nd Journey occupied the years 1825 1826 and 1827. It had its risks & hardships though it was most happily exempted from the almost unparalleled sufferings of the last Expedition.

On his return Captn. Franklin was Knighted & appointed to the Rainbow, & was out for about 3 years in the Mediterranean. He had previously married Miss Jane Griffin.

In 1836 he was sent out governor to V.D. Land where he remained about 8 years. Whilst there, he gave £500 from his private purse towards founding a College, & wrote to the late Dr. Arnold to request he would recommend a fit person to carry out the details of this undertaking. The Doctor strongly recommended the Revd. J.P. Gell, to whose talents, unwearied industry & exertions, the governor bore the most ample testimony.

The Government of V.D. Land proved a most arduous undertaking, chiefly owing to the treachery & intriguing of Franklin's Colonial Secretary Mr. Montagu with the Home Govt for which he was compelled to suspend him. In addition to the deceitful practices of this artful knave who had obtained the ear of the Secretary of the Colonies in Engd., there were the thousand & one disagreeables of such a government as V.D. Land with its thousands of Convicts - yet the Governor was able to win the regard, if not the affection of the Settlers. As proof of their attachment to him, the inhabitants 9 years after he had quitted the government subscribed £1700 & sent over of this sum in 1853, £1500 to assist Lady Franklin in prosecuting the search for her husband by sending out the little Steamer Isabel to go up the Pacific under Kennedy. Lady Franklin had previously (at her own expense) fitted out this tough little vessel under Captn. Inglefield & sent it up the Atlantic where it did excellent service.

Sir John Franklin went out in the Spring of 1845 in command of an Expedn. To the Polar Sea with the Erebus & Terror. Their crews consisted of 138 men provided with 3 years of provisions. What may have befallen them during an absence of 8 years can only be known to our merciful God who in a wonderful & almost miraculous manner had been pleased to protect & shelter Sir J. Franklin throughout his perilous career, & in the hope of a continuance of the Divine Blessing his relatives cling to the expectation that by the favour of Heaven upon the efforts of the able men who are now searching for him, he & his brave companions may yet be heard of.

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