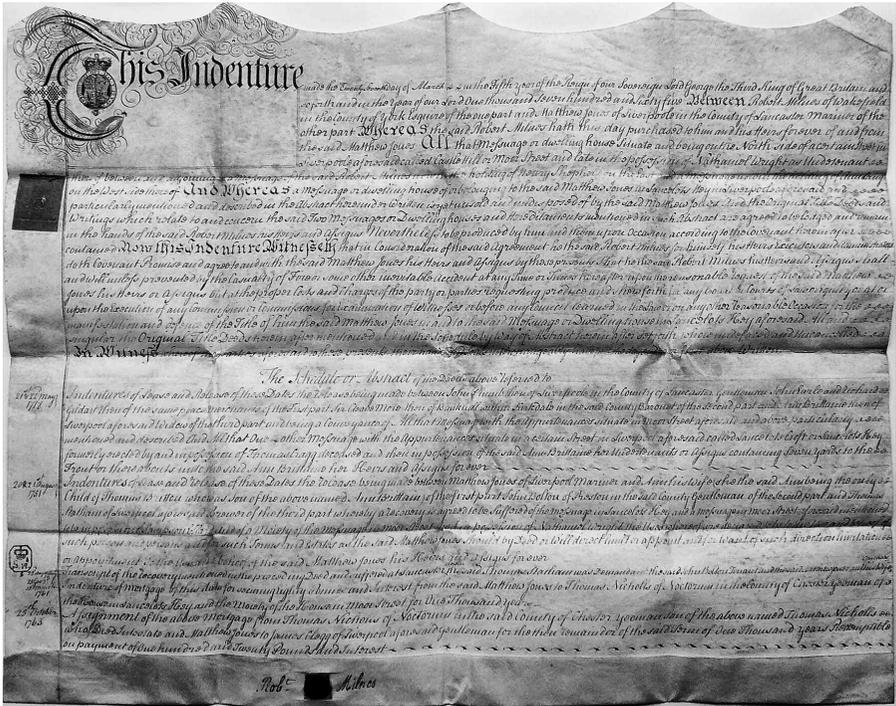


WALKING ON WATER STREET, PART 4 THE SALE OF A HOUSE IN MOOR STREET IN 1765

Graham Jones



'27th March 1765. Rob^t. Milnes Esq^r. to Matthew Jones. Deed of Covenants to Produce Writings. No. 9.' Robert Milnes' signature and seal is visible at the bottom. (Private collection).

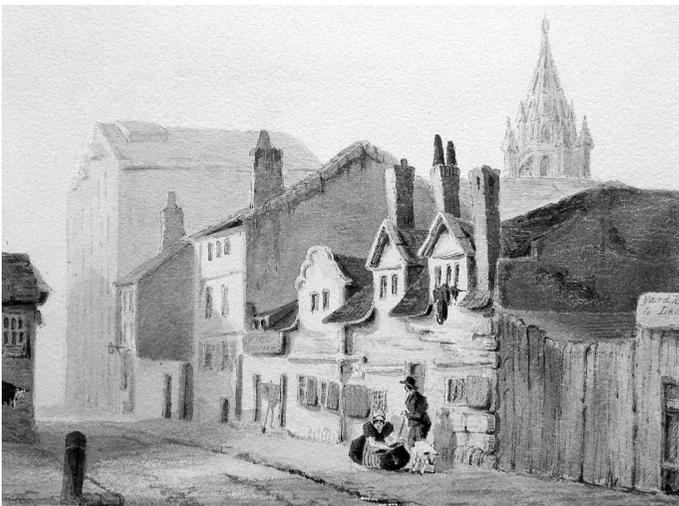
In 1765, a year before the very first *Gore's Liverpool Directory* was published, Matthew Jones, a mariner of Liverpool, held property in Lancelot's Hey and in Moor Street. Matthew decided to retain the former and to sell the latter in which Nathaniel Wright was the undertenant. He sold it to Robert Milnes who owned an adjoining property to the east in which Henry Shepherd lived.

Not until 1774 were dwellings given street numbers, and so it was important when transferring ownership to identify properties with respect to the people living in them and in those which were adjacent. To the west of Matthew's property dwelt Ann Lang. In the directory of 1766 Nathaniel Wright is shown as a breeches-maker and Henry Shepherd as a shoemaker, although Ann Lang was not listed.

The deed of covenant between Matthew and Robert is shown as being 'sealed and delivered (being first duly stamped) in presence of S Colquitt [and] Ar. Heywood'.

The first *Gore's Directory* lists Scrope Colquitt as an attorney at law in Atherton Street (whose clerk would have been the scribe) and Arthur Heywood as a merchant in Hanover Street (a name which would become famous in banking, with premises in Castle Street when widened in 1786 and subsequently in Brunswick Street). With that lack of punctuation which is so beloved of lawyers, it opens as follows:-

*This Indenture made the Twenty Seventh day of March in the Fifth year of the Reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third King of Great Britain and so forth and in the year of our Lord One thousand seven hundred and sixty five Between **Robert Milnes of Wakefield in the County of York Esquire** of the one part and **Matthew Jones of Liverpool in the County of Lancaster Mariner** of the other part Whereas the said Robert Milnes hath this day purchased to him and his Heirs forever of and from the said Matthew Jones All that Messuage or dwelling house situate and being on the North side of a certain street in Liverpoole aforesaid called **Castle Hill or Moor Street** and late in the possession of **Nathaniel Wright** as Undertenant thereof between and adjoining to a Messuage of the said Robert Milnes now in the holding of **Henry Shepherd** on the East and a Messuage now in the holding of **Ann Lang** on the West side thereof And Whereas a Messuage or dwelling house of or belonging to the said Matthew Jones in **Lancelots Hey** in Liverpoole aforesaid and particularly mentioned and described in the Abstract hereunder Written is yet unsold and undisposed of by the said Matthew Jones And the Original Title Deeds and Writings which relate to and concern the said Two Messuages or Dwelling houses and Hereditaments mentioned in such Abstract are agreed to be lodged and remain in the hands of the said Robert Milnes his Heirs and Assigns Nevertheless... (the indenture continues by requiring Robert to undertake to produce these 'Deeds and Writings' whenever required by Matthew to enable him to prove continued ownership of the Lancelot's Hey property).*



The south-west side of Lancelot's Hey in 1826, looking towards Chapel Street and with the spire of St Nicholas' church peeping over the rooftops. In another view of the same buildings, over one of the doorways hangs the sign 'E Jones. Academy', possibly that of a descendant of Matthew and Ann Jones. Image courtesy of the Athenaeum, ref. 'Liverpool Buildings. Box 4A.'

The second half of the indenture, entitled '*The Schedule or Abstract of the Deed above referred to*', provided a summary of the legal histories covering the period 1718 - 1763, the first two of which read (with the different spellings):-

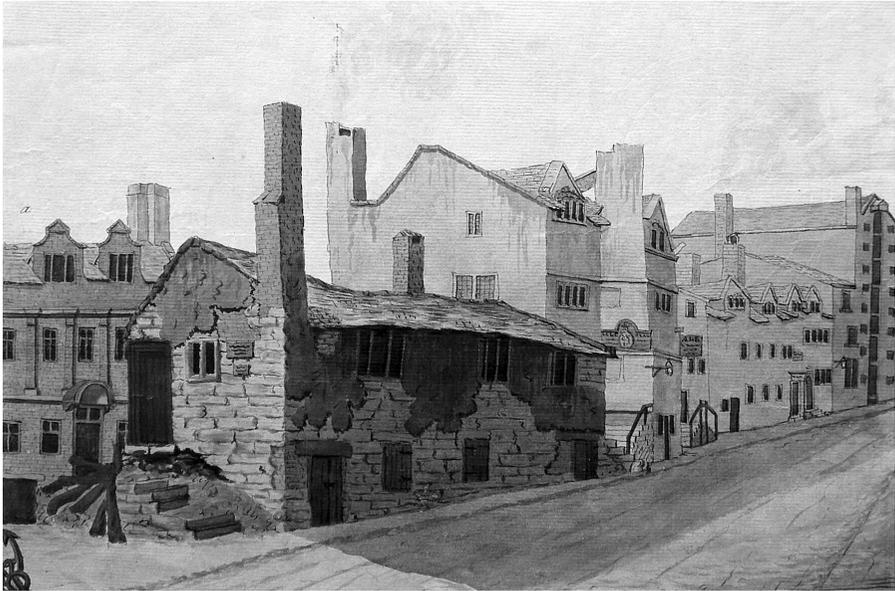
*21st & 22nd May 1718 Indentures of Lease and Release of these Dates the release being made between **John Plumb** then of Liverpoole in the County of Lancaster Gentleman **John Earle** and **Richard Gildart** then of the same place Merchants of the First part **Sir Cleave More** then of Bankhall within Kirkdale in the said County Baronet of the Second part and **Ann Brittain** then of Liverpool aforesaid Widow of the Third part and being a Conveyance of All that Messuage with the Appurtenances situate in **Moor Street** aforesaid and above particularly mentioned and described and All that One other Messuage with the Appurtenances situate in a certain street in Liverpool aforesaid called **Lancelots Croft** or **Lancelots Hey** formerly erected by and in the possession of **Thomas Cragg** deceased and then in possession of the said Ann Brittain her Undertenants or Assigns containing Seven yards to the Front or thereabouts unto the said Ann Brittain her Heirs and Assigns forever*

*20 & 21st August 1751 Indentures of Lease and Release of these Dates the release being made between **Matthew Jones of Liverpool Mariner** and **Ann his wife** (she the said Ann being the only Child of Thomas Britton who was Son of the above named Ann Brittain) of the first part **John Bolton** of Preston in the said County Gentleman of the Second part and **Thomas Statham** of Liverpool aforesaid Brewer of the third part whereby a recovery is agreed to be Suffered of the Messuage in Lancelots Hey and a Messuage in Moor Street aforesaid mentioned to be in possession of **Sampson Ellard** And of a Moiety of the Messuage in Moor Street then in possession of **Nathaniel Wright** the Uses whereof are declared to be to the Use and behoof of such person and persons and for such Terms and Estates as the said Matthew Jones should by Deed or Will direct limit or appoint and for Want of such direction limitation or appointment to the Use and behoof of the said Matthew Jones his Heirs and Assigns forever*

Of the various names mentioned in these earlier indentures, the most interesting is that of Cleave More; he was the son of Edward Moore who was the son of John Moore (their family name and that of Moor Street itself appearing in documents with numerous spellings). For centuries the family, one of the earliest to settle in Liverpool, had resided at Bank Hall. Colonel John Moore took Cromwell's side in the 1642 civil war and was a signatory to the death warrant of Charles 1st. Sir Edward Moore married Dorothy Fenwick and laid out Moor Street and Fenwick Street. He is beloved of historians for his, at times, highly amusing 1667/8 '*Moore Rental*'. Sir Cleave More, having sold the Moore estates in the early 18th century to, amongst others, the Earl of Derby, subsequently left Liverpool, gained additional property in the south of England through marriage, and died in 1730.

In the view of Moor Street in 1792, the property in the background on the left hand side is identified in the margin of the scene as having once been '*S^r Cleave Moors house*'. A century earlier, before the docks arrived, the western end of Moor Street

(behind where the artist was standing) had extended to the shore of the Mersey, but by the time of this scene the ‘*Old Custom house*’ had long since become redundant, as also had the one at the foot of Water Street. Castle Hill, the continuation of Moor Street at its eastern end (to the right of the 1792 view), originally ran as far as Castle Street, but in 1786 it found itself rudely terminated at its junction with Lower Castle Street when the west side of Castle Street was widened and rebuilt. Castle Hill must now be one of the shortest streets in the city.



Written upon the margin: ‘View of the Old Custom house at the Bottom of Moor Street taken 20 Feby. 1792. Upon this Scite is now erected Harper & Co’s Warehouse 1793.’ Image courtesy of the Liverpool Record Office, ref. Local Coll. 437.

Lancelot's Hey (which had run parallel to New Quay) no longer exists, whilst Moor Street today is a shadow of its former self. At its Fenwick Street end it is no wider than it was in the time of Edward Moore when he wrote his rental, ‘*Liverpool in King Charles the Second’s Time*’, or when, a century later, Matthew Jones sold his property there to Robert Milnes.

On the right of the 2011 view can be seen a pedestrian route to James Street station, whilst the scene ends in the distance at the rear of a building on Lower Castle Street.

