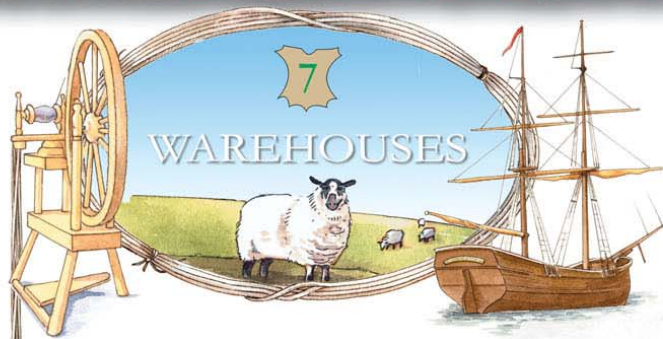


Exeter Woollen Trail



Exeter City Council



We need more space!

After the woollen trade declined, the port was still busy. The quay was extended downstream in the 1830s following the extension of the canal. In 1834-5 two rival builders, Robert Cornish and Messrs Hooper, built the pair

of warehouses to your left to take advantage of the hoped-for increase in trade. Cornish built his warehouse in limestone from Torbay and the Hoopers used local 'Heavitree' stone. You can still see the original pulleys. New storage areas continued

to be built, including the row of cellars cut into the cliff to your right. The extension of the canal, the building of the canal basin and more warehouses across the river in the 1830s was the last great development of Exeter's port.



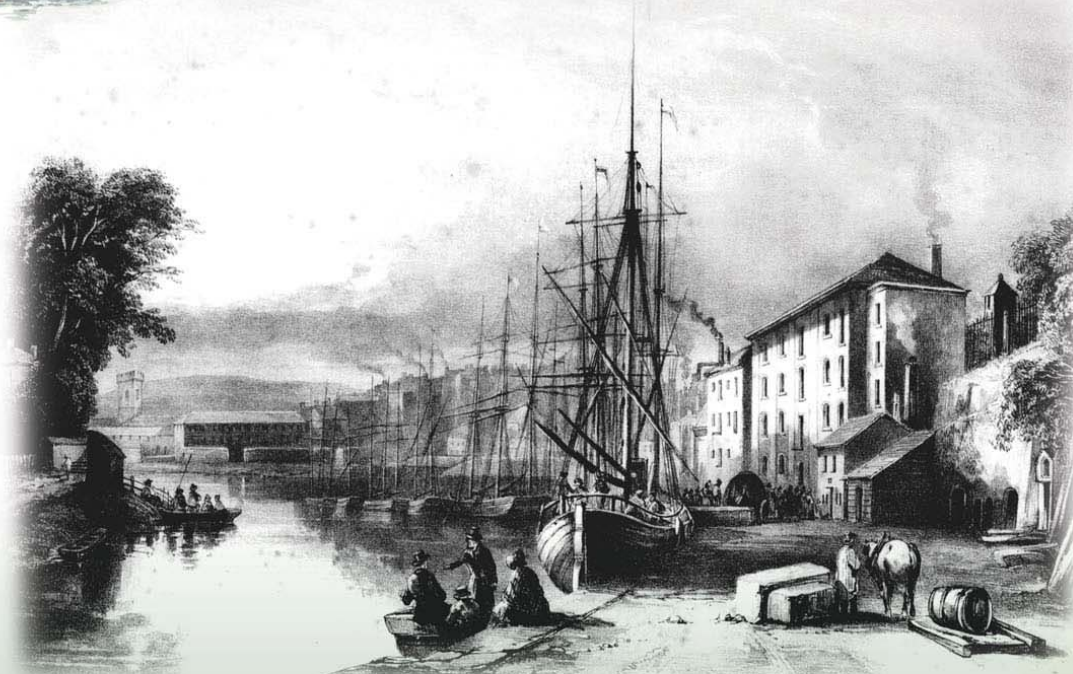
Exeter Quay by Primrose Pitman (Exeter City Museums)



The Warehouses in the 1930's (From a private collection)

Rise and Fall

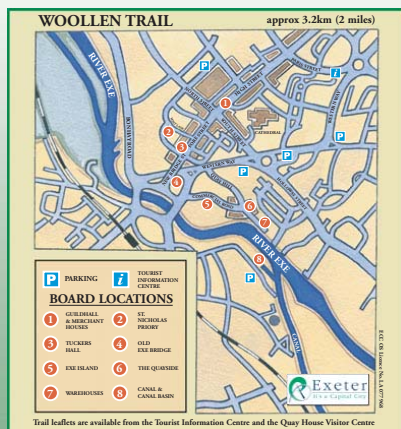
Exeter's cloth industry reached its peak in the late 1600s when over 1000 bales of woollen cloth were being exported daily. Nearly 80% of the local workforce was employed in the industry. Within 100 years, due to the decline in European trade during the Napoleonic wars (1803-1815) and new methods of mass production in the factories and mills of the North, Exeter's cloth industry had fallen into terminal decline.



Lithograph of Exeter Quay by W. Gauci after C. F. Williams (SC 748 Westcountry Studies Library)

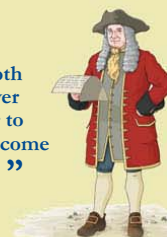
Changing times

The warehouses and cellars were used by a variety of local businesses that continued to use the canal to transport goods such as grain, wine, spirits and oil. It was the arrival of rail transport in 1844 that finally started a long decline in the shipping trade. The warehouses were converted into offices, shops and restaurants in the 1980s and today the area is a flourishing base for crafts and antiques.



“Hundreds of bales of cloth are being shipped every day. That's a lot of wool - not to mention all the other goods waiting for shipment

overseas. However, the cloth trade may not go on for ever and more storage is going to be needed as other goods come down here to be exported.”



Go safely now across the sea. You're sailing with a part of me!

