

inventors and patentees (rubber, coaches, and steam engines, respectively); William and James were cabinet makers like their father; and Charles was a portrait painter. Only Thomas, however, was successful in business, and only he died both wealthy and

respected. The authors imply, but offer no full analysis, that Thomas was as shrewd and determined as he was honest and devout, whereas Walter was obsessed with invention and was a poor judge of character, William lacked ambition, and Charles was the naive victim of his own duplicity; John died young, and it appears James did too.

Besides the family history, the book is a treasure house for anyone interested in inventors and how they managed their intellectual property prior to the reform and consolidation in 1852 of the UK's patent system. Although the cost of a patent that covered England, Wales, and Scotland was not quite as high as the £400 cited on page 24, it was nonetheless very expensive-approximately £100 for both England and Wales, and an additional £100 each for Scotland and Ireland. It is evidence of Thomas's financial well-being that he was able to file at least 14 patents, as he describes it, "for the treatment and application of India rubber," which he collected and republished in 1853 to assert his priority, and that he prosecuted infringements of them in England's notoriously expensive courts. To what extent those patents were also a cause of his wealth merits further analysis. He decided not to patent his second most important invention—the rubber masticating machine—hiding it under a false name ("the pickle") and trusting his co-religionist workers to keep the secret.

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