

1 Introduction

Great Ayton was a centre for leather tanning for centuries, with easy access to animal skins, oak bark, and a plentiful supply of water. Of all the families involved, the Richardsons are by far the most important. William Richardson had a small tanyard in Ayton in the seventeenth century. His descendants went on to establish tanneries at Whitby and Newcastle, the latter growing into the major business of E & J Richardson Ltd. The industrial chemist Professor Henry Richardson Proctor was an international figure in the application of science to leather tanning.

2 Pre-industrialisation leather tanning

Tanning is the process of turning animal skins into leather. Before the application of science and industrialisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was a long, messy and very smelly process. First, the feet, tail and upper skull with horns attached, had to be removed from the hide, which was thoroughly washed in water. Then all hair, wool and flesh had to be removed by scraping after steeping in lime, in ash solution or in urine for over a week. The hair was sold for use in mortar and upholstery, the fleshings went into the manufacture of gelatine and glue. Next came mastering, the soaking of the skins in a hot mixture of water and dog faeces, to remove the lime and soften the hides. In cities the collection of dog faeces was a recognised occupation by the whimsically-named 'pure-finders'. The hide was now cut up, 'rounding', to separate the pieces of different quality. Tanning was by placing alternate layers of hides and oak bark in a tanning pit, and adding a little water. This part of the process would take between seven and eighteen months. After a final washing and drying, currying was the final stage, the treating the leather with oil to soften it.

Instead of tanning with oak bark, thinner hides could be treated with alum or other salts to produce tawed leather. This was of better quality and did not have the dark colour associated with tanning. It was used for producing white leather, and leather used for gloves and book binding. Some leathers were partly tawed and then slightly tanned.

In medieval times most towns and villages had a tannery, situated alongside a river or stream. The early process was particularly unpleasant, producing various smells and polluting watercourses. Since it was by no means a continuous process, and did not require much special equipment, farmers might tan leather to supplement their income.

Industrialisation began with mills to grind the oak bark and mechanical hammers to impregnate the hides with oil. In the nineteenth century mechanically agitated soaking drums appeared, and tanning using chromium salts was developed.

3 Evidence of tanning in Ayton

3a) Manorial records

Leather had been tanned in Ayton since at least the seventeenth century. The manorial records show that in 1651 John Balmer was fined 1/8d for 'washing and steeping skins in the river'. The following year he was in trouble again: 'John Bulmer hath washed skins in the river contrary to a paine ... 10s.'

3b) Parish Registers

The parish registers sometimes record the occupation of the fathers of children baptised in the village, or people who were buried in the village. These listings cannot be considered comprehensive, for many entries do not include an occupation. In addition, it is likely that farmers might supplement their income by processing animal skins, and were thus part-time or occasional tanners. The list below refers to specific records of 'tanner' against the man's name. The

associated trades of skinner and tallow chandler are occasionally mentioned in the registers, but are not included here. It is possible that some of the many men described as 'labourers' might have worked in tan yards. A further difficulty lies in the large number of Quakers living in the village. For example, the Richardsons and the Martins were important tanners, but as Quakers would not be included in the Church of England parish register.

In spite of these factors, a good number of tanners are mentioned in the parish registers:

- 1721 James Benison (son Thomas baptised), William Richardson (daughter Hannah baptised)
- 1722 Thomas Masterman (son William baptised), William Richardson (son Christopher baptised),
John Richardson (burial)
- 1723 William Wilson (son John baptised), Joseph Richardson (son James baptised)
- 1727 Thomas Masterman (burial)
- 1744 Lawrence Jackson (son John baptised)
- 1757 John Lott (daughter Jane baptised), Christopher Humphrey (daughter Jane baptised)
In that year 5 out of 11 girls were christened Jane; fashions in names is nothing new.
- 1760 Lawrence Jackson (daughter Mary baptised), Ralph Jackson of Ayton (marriage to Martha Masterman of Ayton)
- 1762 Thomas Ligoie (burial of his daughter Elizabeth)
- 1763 Thomas Lamb of Ayton (marriage to Elisabeth Simey of Ayton)
- 1764 James Somervell of Ayton (marriage to Barbara Bennison of Ayton)
- 1765 John Bradley of Ayton (marriage to Mary Williamson of Ayton)
- 1776 William Gibbon (daughter Jane baptised)
- 1776 William Gibbon (daughter Elizabeth baptised)
- 1783 William Marsingil (son Robert baptised)
- 1784 John Harrison junior (daughter Mary baptised), William Gibbon (daughter Sarah baptised)
- 1785 William Marsingil (daughter Margaret baptised)
- 1786 John Harrison junior (daughter Alice baptised), John Harrison junior (daughter Alice buried),
William York of Ayton (marriage to Margaret Nichols of Ayton)
- 1787 William Gibbon (daughter Maria baptised), John Harrison junior (daughter Anne baptised),
John Danby of Ayton (marriage to Elizabeth Holburne of Ayton on 18 January), John Danby (daughter Isabel
baptised 29 June),
- 1788 Thomas York of Ayton (marriage to Anne Watson of Ayton on 18 January), Thomas York (son John baptised 4
August)
- 1789 William Gibbon (daughter Mary baptised), William York (daughter Elizabeth baptised)
- 1791 John Danby (daughter Eleanor baptised)
- 1793 John Danby (daughter Jane baptised), William Gibbon (son baptised)
- 1794 William Hinsley of Nunthorpe (son Stephen baptised)
- 1798 Thomas and Ann York (daughter Ann baptised)
- 1799 John and Elizabeth Danby (son John baptised)
- 1801 William and Elizabeth Danby (son Robert baptised)
- 1803 William and Margaret York (son George baptised)
- 1809 Thomas and Ann York (twins William and Mary baptised), Ralph Jackson (wife Martha buried)

Condensing the above into ten-year periods:

- 1720-1729 6 tanners mentioned
- 1730-1739 no tanners mentioned
- 1740-1749 1 tanner mentioned
- 1750-1759 2 tanners mentioned
- 1760-1769 7 tanners mentioned
- 1770-1779 1 tanner mentioned
- 1780-1789 6 tanners mentioned
- 1790-1799 4 tanners mentioned
- 1800-1809 4 tanners mentioned

Given the omissions in the data, there were a significant number of tanners living in the village at any one time. It is not possible to say if they all had their own tan yards, but it is likely that most of them did. Some may have been run by members of the same family, for example Thomas and William York, Lawrence and Ralph Jackson.

3c) Churchwardens' Accounts

The churchwardens lists include occupations. There are some tanners:

1737 William Richardson, tanner.

1754 John Lott, tanner.

3d) Wills

Thomas Butterwicke, who died in 1601, was a tanner. He must have been comparatively wealthy, owning two houses in Yarm and a sword.

4 Location of tan yards

Robert Kettlewell, in his publication of 1938, wrote that:

“There were also a number of tan yards, one belonging to the Jackson family in Yarm Back Lane, two others lying off the High Green and bordering upon the River Leven occupied by the family of Martin, another belonging to the Richardsons of Langbaugh, situate at Langbaugh Farm, and yet another occupied by the Yorke family. Portions of the buildings of these tanneries, notably the former drying sheds, still stand though put to other uses, but the tan-pits have in each instance been filled in.”

Little is known about the Yorke tannery, save that T York, tanner, was reported as bankrupt in the press in 1817.

Dan O'Sullivan says that there were several tan yards in the village in the early nineteenth century, the largest being Martin's tannery, situated between the High Green and the river, on ground now owned by Ayton School. The tan pits were where the school swimming baths and sports hall are now. When the foundations for the sports hall were being dug in 1980, the wooden tanks of the old tanpits had to be taken out. From at least the late eighteenth century this tannery would have been run by the Martin family. Isaac Martin was Philip Hesleton's brother-in-law, the two having married sisters Mary and Rachel Richardson.

William Richardson (1660-1740) lived at Old Langbaugh, just off the Middlesbrough road at the northern edge of the parish. After his marriage in 1684, he opened a small tan yard to supplement his income from farming. This would be the tan yard at Langbaugh farm mentioned by Kettlewell. It is uncertain whether this original tannery was operated much after William's death. Whilst the ownership of Old Langbaugh, over several succeeding generations of Richardsons, is chronicled by Anne Boyce in her book on the Richardson family, she does not state explicitly that the tan yard continued in operation, but it seems likely. There were press reports in 1774 of the bankruptcy of John Richardson, tanner, of Great Ayton. It is likely that the tan yard concerned was the one at Langbaugh, which was probably quite small and unable to compete with the much larger tan yards, such as the Richardson tannery behind High Green. The John involved could either have been William's eldest son, or his grandson, both of whom lived at Old Langbaugh. In either case, the Langbaugh tannery would have ceased to exist long before the last Richardson to live at Old Langbaugh, yet another John Richardson. Incidentally, he married Jane Proctor from North Shields in 1833; she was a granddaughter of the John Richardson who had set up the tan yard at North Shields on the Tyne, John himself being a son of the original William Richardson above.

William Richardson (1700-1794) was the second son of William and Elizabeth above. He transformed the Richardson's tannery interests from a part-time venture into a large enterprise, establishing a large tannery behind High Green, running down to the River Leven. It would seem likely, bearing in mind the number of tanners previously working in the village, that he took over several existing tanneries already set up in the vicinity. He certainly did acquire the smaller tan

yard, known as Williamson's, behind the west side of High Green. John Harrison quotes a deed of 1741 which refers to 'that garth known as Tann Garth ... adjacent sd mill dam towards the east'. In addition to the two tanneries, William owned farms and houses around the village. When he died he left his tanning interests to his grand-daughter Rachel, and his farming interests to his grand-daughter Mary. Rachel had married Isaac Martyn (or Martin) and, by the time her grandfather died, they were living in one of William's houses on High Green (No 17) and running the tannery. Mary had married Philip Hesleton, and they also lived on High Green, in the house that would later become the Quaker School (No 5 Richardson Hall). Since it was Philip Hesleton subsequently sold the land behind High Green for the Quakers' School, this must have been separate from the tan yard, which was owned by Rachel and Isaac Martyn.

The Martins, like the Richardsons, were Quakers. Isaac and Rachel's son, Isaac (1788-1843), took over the tannery from his father and, on his death, left it to his unmarried sister Elizabeth Martin (1781-1867). In 1843 she advertised the business to be let; clearly it was a large concern with 92 pits, drying sheds, bark chambers and a bark mill. A short distance away was a small tanyard 'particularly calculated for the currier' had 36 pits and a complete curriers' shop capable of accommodating ten or more men at work. Also, if wanted, a large and commodious dwelling house could be included. The advertisement below appeared in the Newcastle Courant on 20 October 1843 and in the Cleveland Repertory & Stokesley Advertiser on 1 November.

TO TANNERS AND CURRIERS

TO BE LET, at Great Ayton, near Stokesley, Yorkshire, an excellent TANYARD belonging to the late ISAAC MARTIN, of Manchester, containing 92 pits, 46 of which are under cover, with Drying Sheds, Bark Chambers, Bark Mill, and other Conveniences &c., also a Stream of Water passing through the Yard, of a superior Quality for the process of Tanning.

The above Premises are situated 10 Miles from the Seaport of Stockton upon Tees.

Also, to be Let, at a short Distance, a small TANYARD, particularly calculated for a Currier, containing 36 pits, 32 of which are under cover; and in the same Yard may be had, if required, a complete CURRIER'S SHOP, (capable of accommodating 10 or more Men at Work) with Water, Stove, and necessary Sheds, and all requisite Conveniences. Also, if wanted, a large and commodious DWELLING HOUSE, with Garden, Stabling for four Horses, Gig and Cart Houses, &c.

The above may be let separate or altogether.

For further particulars apply at No. 63, Oldham Street, Manchester, and of Elizabeth Martin, Great Ayton, near Stokesley.

Great Ayton, November 1st 1843.

The large tan yard was William's original site, the smaller tan yard was Williamson's adjacent. This smaller tannery, the currier's shop, was situated to the south-west of High Green, adjacent to the waterfall (see comment by Frank Grayson below). Reference to curriers is interesting since the currying process requires alum, which would have been available locally from early in the seventeenth century, and briefly in Ayton in the mid eighteenth century. It would have been logical for the Richardsons to have manufactured the more expensive tawed leather. The large and commodious dwelling house was the three properties now at 17, 18 and 19 High Green; for some years No 18 was the premises of Barclay's Bank. A large slate slab, once used to line a wall of a tanning pit, can be seen in the pavement outside the front door of No 18. The garage at No 19 was originally a stable, and still has tethering hoops, a drained floor and tack room.

Unsuccessful in her attempt to let the Ayton tan yards, by 1851 Elizabeth, or Betsy, Martin was running the business herself, and employing eight men. She lived in a cottage on the south side of High Green, which was later pulled down to make way for extensions to the school. In the 1861 census she was retired, but still owned the business. On 18 July 1863 the local press carried a report of Elizabeth Martin's stacks and shed being almost wholly destroyed in a fire caused by a little boy striking a lucifer match. By coincidence, the E & J Richardson tannery at Newgate Street in Newcastle-upon-Tyne was destroyed by fire in February of the same year.

Betsy Martin died in May 1867, and her executors sold three dwelling houses (Nos 17, 18 and 19) to Dr William Augustus Loy in 1868. The sale also included what had been Williamson's tan yard, bark mill, drying sheds and other buildings, and the currier's shop, situated behind the property, on the land leading down to the river. Dr Loy lived in No 17, while

No 18 became the surgery, and No 19 the groom's cottage. The Williamson yard eventually became Grayson's blacksmiths and, in the later years of the twentieth century, Janggus Hydraulics.

The 1871 census shows no tanning around High Green. By 1881 there were a few tanners left in the village, the most important being John Jackson of Yarm Lane. Part of the Jackson premises still exist today at 12 Yarm Lane, notably the large timber-sided drying shed. John Jackson employed two servants and two young apprentices, Thomas and William Longstaffe. In 1928 this Thomas Longstaffe died, and his obituary describes him as the last link with the Ayton tanning industry. After his apprenticeship he worked in agriculture and then in a local quarry because there were no opportunities in tanning. Tanning clung on in some of the other villages, the Stokesley Rural District Council (as the Sanitary Authority) meeting on 15 August 1896, gave notice to a Mr Sowler at Swainby not to empty tan pits into the stream.

In the first Ayton School history of 1891, George Dixon looked back at the Ayton tanning industry:

"One of the marked features of the woods about Ayton was the stately oaks. This wood was formerly very valuable for ship-building and, however crooked and bent it grew, it was said some place could always be found for it in the construction of the old wooden ships. The bark too was valuable for tanning:- in those days leather was leather, and a pair of cowhide boots would last for years. There were several large tan-yards in Ayton and the vicinity: the Richardsons of Langbaugh, from whom so many Friends are descended, were formerly tanners. Some of them are still engaged in leather works in the North of England. The Martins too had a large tan-yard; the present swimming bath was made out of the tanpits formerly belonging to them. When the school was established (in 1841) the business was carried on by an old lady named Betsy Martin, who took an active part in the work and could often be seen cutting her leather into the required pieces. In order to extend her business she opened a retail shop in Manchester."

In the Darlington & Stockton Times of 3 December 1943, in an article on the death of seven old Ayton residents, it was reported that the village builder, Thomas Pearson, "could recall the time when four tanneries were in operation in Great Ayton, two of which were owned by one of his uncles."

In the early 2000s, Frank Grayson recalled that his father's blacksmiths shop, at the side of the River Leven to the right of the dam in the centre of the village, had previously been a tan yard, and some of the pits were still there. His father used them to shrink the metal tyres onto wooden cart wheels, something he did until well after the Second World War. This was the Williamson yard.

5 The Richardson family

The Richardson family and their descendants were tanners in Ayton and went on to become one of the foremost leather producers in the country. There is more information on the Richardsons under 'Ayton families'.

5a) William Richardson (1660-1740)

William Richardson (1660-1740) was brought up in the Church of England. After marrying Elizabeth Wilson at Lythe Church in 1684, the couple settled at Old Langbaugh in Great Ayton and farmed, with a small tan yard to supplement the family income. William and Elizabeth joined the Society of Friends. They had nine daughters and three sons, John (1698-1786), William (1700-1794) and Isaac (1707-1780). The brothers John and Isaac married the sisters Lydia Vasie and Isabel Vasie from Whitby. His wife Elizabeth died in Ayton and was buried there on 16 May 1719. William Richardson senior died on 29 June 1740 and is buried in the Friends' burying ground at Great Ayton.

John Priestman was born in 1707, at Thornton near Pickering, and was apprenticed to William Richardson at Ayton. He left to set up a tan-yard at Thornton, which was still there in 1844. Of his children, Thomas (1736-1811) became a tanner in York, while John, born in 1739, took over the Thornton tan-yard from his father.

5b) William Richardson (1700-1794)

William, the second son of William and Elizabeth above, established a large tannery to the south of High Green, between the Green and the River Leven. He acquired the smaller adjacent yard known as Williamson's. In his will he left the tanneries to Isaac and Rachel Martyn, Rachel being one of his grand-daughters, see above.

5c) Isaac Richardson (1707-1780)

Isaac Richardson, the second son of William Richardson (1660-1740), was born at Old Langbaugh on 18 December 1707. He married Isabel Vasie in 1732 at the Friends' Meeting House in Ayton, and then moved to Boghall, on the outskirts of Whitby, setting up business as a tanner. Isaac and Isabel had eight children. Three of their five sons, John (1733-1800), Isaac (1738-1791) and Henry (1740-1838) were known to have been employed in the tan yard at Whitby in 1757. About 1742 the family moved to the New Tan House. Isaac tanned hides, calf skins and seal skins from local whalers.

5d) John Richardson 1733-1800)

John Richardson was born on 1 June 1733 at Bog Hall, Whitby, the eldest son of Isaac and Isabel Richardson. He left Whitby for Tyneside, where he met and married Margaret Stead. They lived on a farm at Seghill East New Houses, near Cramlington, for six years, but then moved to Pew Dene, near the mouth of the Tyne at North Shields. This land was purchased with a loan from John Walker, one of the Whitby ship-owning brothers who took on James Cook as an apprentice. Here John Richardson farmed for six years, but the price of corn was so low that he could not support his family. His father came to the rescue: one of his friends was John Walker of Whitby, whose son John owned property near North Shields. Thus John and Margaret were able to move to Pew Dean, where they established a tannery known as Low Lights, tanning hides and calf skins, also seal skins brought in by whalers.

In a letter written to his brother William in 1799 and quoted in George Richardson's book, John described the good state of the leather trade:

"We sell our dintle hides at 24d.; backs at 25d.; and skins at 30d. per pound, and cannot serve our customers so fast as they want them. I never knew leather so scarce as at present."

In 1796 John Richardson wrote to Thomas Fenwick, a North Shields magistrate, about the problem of Quakers and church tithes. A constable took leather from John Richardson worth £2 for tithes of only 15s. 5d. and sold it for just under two pounds. On another occasion, sole leather worth £3 3s. 9d. was taken for a charge of £1 5s. 8d.

The Low Lights tan-yard was taken over by their eldest son Isaac (1761-1810). His son John Richardson, born in 1765, was also a tanner in Newcastle. His grandsons John Richardson born at Newcastle in 1799, William born at Sunderland in 1801, and Edward born at Newcastle in 1806 all became tanners. Great grandson James Richardson, born at Newcastle in 1831, became a tanner and married a daughter of Jeremiah Dixon, a descendant of the Dixons of Cockfield

5e) Isaac Richardson (1761-1810)

Isaac Richardson was born on 11 February at Seghill East New House, Earsdon, Northumberland. As a boy he was sent to live with his grandparents at Whitby. Around 1785 he entered the business of John Storey, tanner of White Cross, Newgate Street. By 1800 he entered into partnership with his brother William in dressing leather, and in 1801 he was a tanner of White Cross, Newcastle. In 1808 his White Cross tanyard was consumed by fire.

5f) Edward Richardson (1806-1863)

Edward Richardson was born 12 January 1806, the son of Isaac Richardson and his wife Deborah Sutton, and a grandson of John and Margaret Richardson who built the house and tan-yard at Low Lights. On leaving school he worked as an apprentice in the tan yard in Newgate Street established by his father, in which he afterwards became a partner with John Richardson. In 1847 John Richardson's son James took over his father's partnership, and by 1850 they had established Edward and James Richardson's tannery at the Elswick Leather Works, Shumac Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

6 Edward and James Richardson Ltd

The company of E & J Richardson became one of the leading producers of leather in the country. It has its origins in the Newgate Street tan yard set up by Isaac Richardson, son of Isaac Richardson who established Low Lights, and John Storey. Later Isaac's brother William joined the business.

Isaac Richardson and his wife Deborah Sutton had a son Edward Richardson, born 12 January 1806. Edward was a grandson of John and Margaret Richardson of Low Lights. On leaving school he worked as an apprentice in his father's tanyard at 66 Newgate Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which apparently replaced the White Cross premises after the fire of 1808. At Newgate Street he became a partner with John Richardson, where they manufactured tanned leather, Morocco (tawed) leather and glue. In 1847 John Richardson's son James took over his father's partnership, leading to the establishment of Edward & James Richardson Ltd.

In February 1863 the Newgate Street tannery was destroyed by fire. It was rebuilt as the Elswick Leather Works in a field between the Tyne and Railway Terrace. In 1888 Henry Richardson Proctor (1848-1927) joined the Elswick Tannery as a chemist, where he developed a reputation as a pioneer of the scientific leather industry. He left in 1891 to take up his academic post at Leeds. With Professor Henry Proctor's knowledge of industrial chemistry at first hand, Richardsons were in the forefront of technical progress. They were one of the first companies to manufacture chrome leather, which they called 'Grained Chrome hide', and it was on this basis that they patented Scotch and other important grained chrome leathers.

In 1971 the Elswick Leather Works, of Edward and James Richardson Ltd, closed down.

7 Henry Richardson Proctor (1848-1927)

Henry Richardson Proctor was one of the most influential figures in the development of modern leather processing. His father, John Richardson Proctor (1812-1888), had learned tanning from his uncles, William Richardson (1771-1842) and Henry Richardson (1778-1834), at the Low Lights tan yard on the Tyne. John had married Lydia Richardson and later took over the business at Low Lights. Henry Richardson Proctor, his son and intended successor at Low Lights, was educated at the Quaker Bootham School in York, where he took a particular interest in science. The young man was

then apprenticed into his father's tan yard, but did not find the business aspects and acute competition for trade very appealing. He was far more interested in science and chemistry, and applying his knowledge to improve the tanning process. Thus on the death of his father, in 1888, he joined the tannery works of his relatives, E & J Richardson at Elswick, as a chemist. He soon became acknowledged as a pioneer of the scientific leather industry, and was invited to lead the new department of applied chemistry at the Yorkshire College Leeds, later to become the university. His name is still remembered today in the Food Science Proctor Building at the University of Leeds.

In 1897 Professor Proctor became a founder member of the International Association of Leather Trades Chemists, and was also active in setting up the British Society of Leather Trades Chemists, later renamed Society of Leather Technologists and Chemists. He published many books, including *Text-Book of Tanning* in 1885, *Leather Industries Laboratory Handbook* in 1898, and *Principles of Leather Manufacture* in 1903. Henry Proctor had earlier withdrawn from the Society of Friends and retired from his professorship in 1913.

8 The Martin family

William Martin is the subject of a chapter in Tweddell's *Bards and Authors of Cleveland and South Durham*. According to Tweddell, William Martin was born on 5 April 1825 in Pilgrim Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne. In his early youth, he was adopted by a kind-hearted maiden aunt, Miss Martin, a Quaker living in Great Ayton. Young William loved poetry, and said that he had been inspired by the works of Robert Burns. He wrote occasional pieces for the press, but never published a book of his poems.

At the age of twenty-one, he married the eldest daughter of Joseph Hargrave, of Monkton Villa, near Shields, and the couple had one son and two daughters. William had contemplated the medical profession, and had studied at the medical school in Manchester, but his career was in the leather trade. Tweddell wrote that "for some years he had the management of the cash department of his aunt's leather warehouse, which had long been carried on at No. 89, Oldham-street, Manchester." This would mean that his maiden aunt was Betsy Martin.

In 1860 William took over the Martin tanyards, which Tweddell calls the 'Cleveland Tanneries'. He was a Quaker, a teetotaler and a vegetarian, three attributes which led to the remark "The he'll never make a mason!" In spite of this, he did join the freemasons and even wrote a poem 'To Masonry'.

He died on 30 November 1863 at Great Ayton, reaching "the Lodge above", and is buried in the Friends' Burial Ground in the village. The address, on death and immortality, was delivered by Isaac Sharpe. He was a Quaker accountant from Darlington, who moved to the new town of Middlesbrough, became a close friend of the Middlesbrough owners, and one of the Middlesbrough Improvement Commissioners.

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