

## Nottingham's Highway to the Sea

# WATER!

Pipes, Pumps, Floods and Drains in The University of Nottingham's Water Archives

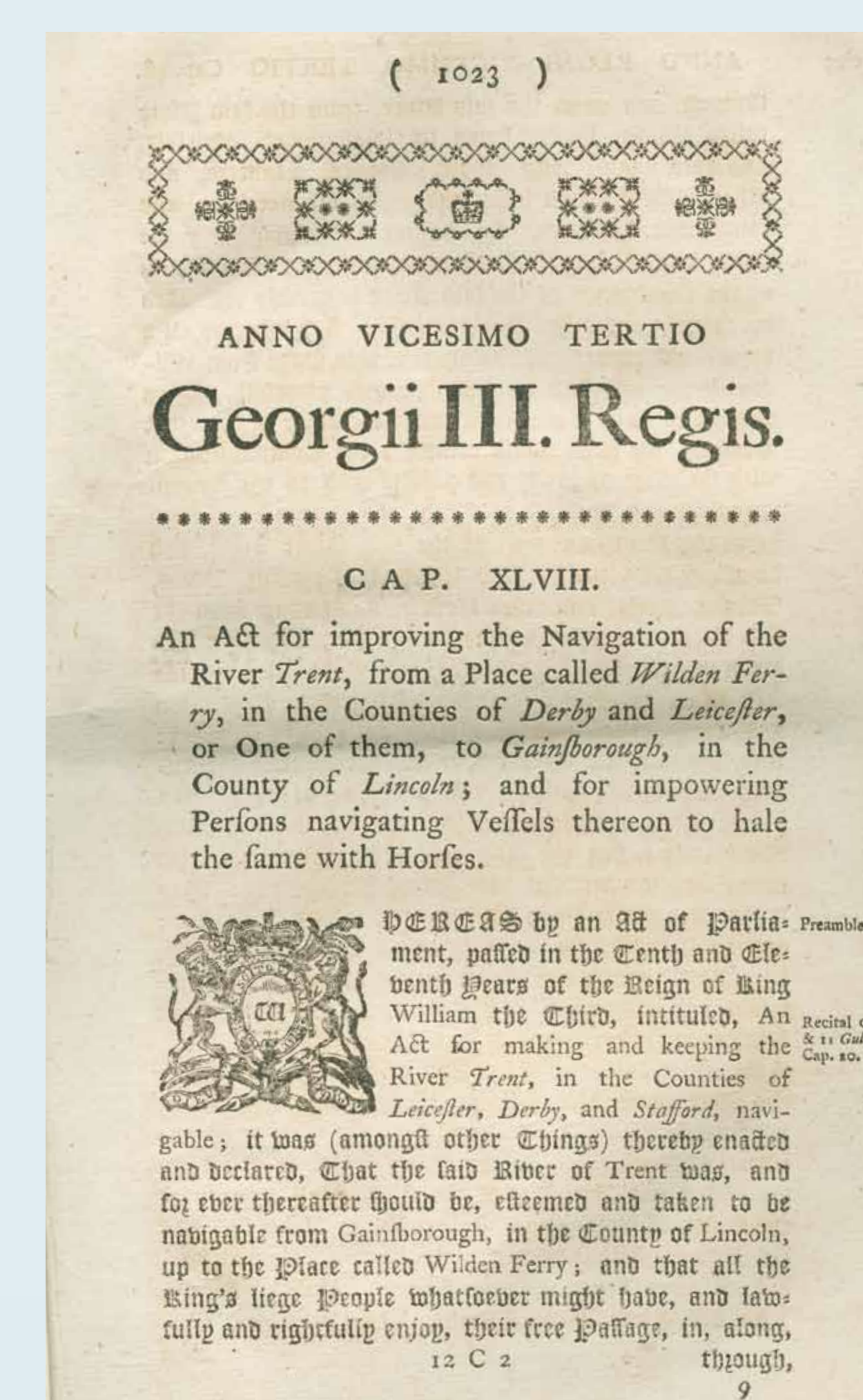
In the days before well-maintained roads and railways, transport by water was the quickest and easiest way to move people and goods.

The Trent Navigation Company was established by Act of Parliament in 1783 to make improvements to the river and maintain canal junctions. The previous year, William Jessop had made a detailed survey and plan of the River Trent from Shardlow downstream to Gainsborough.

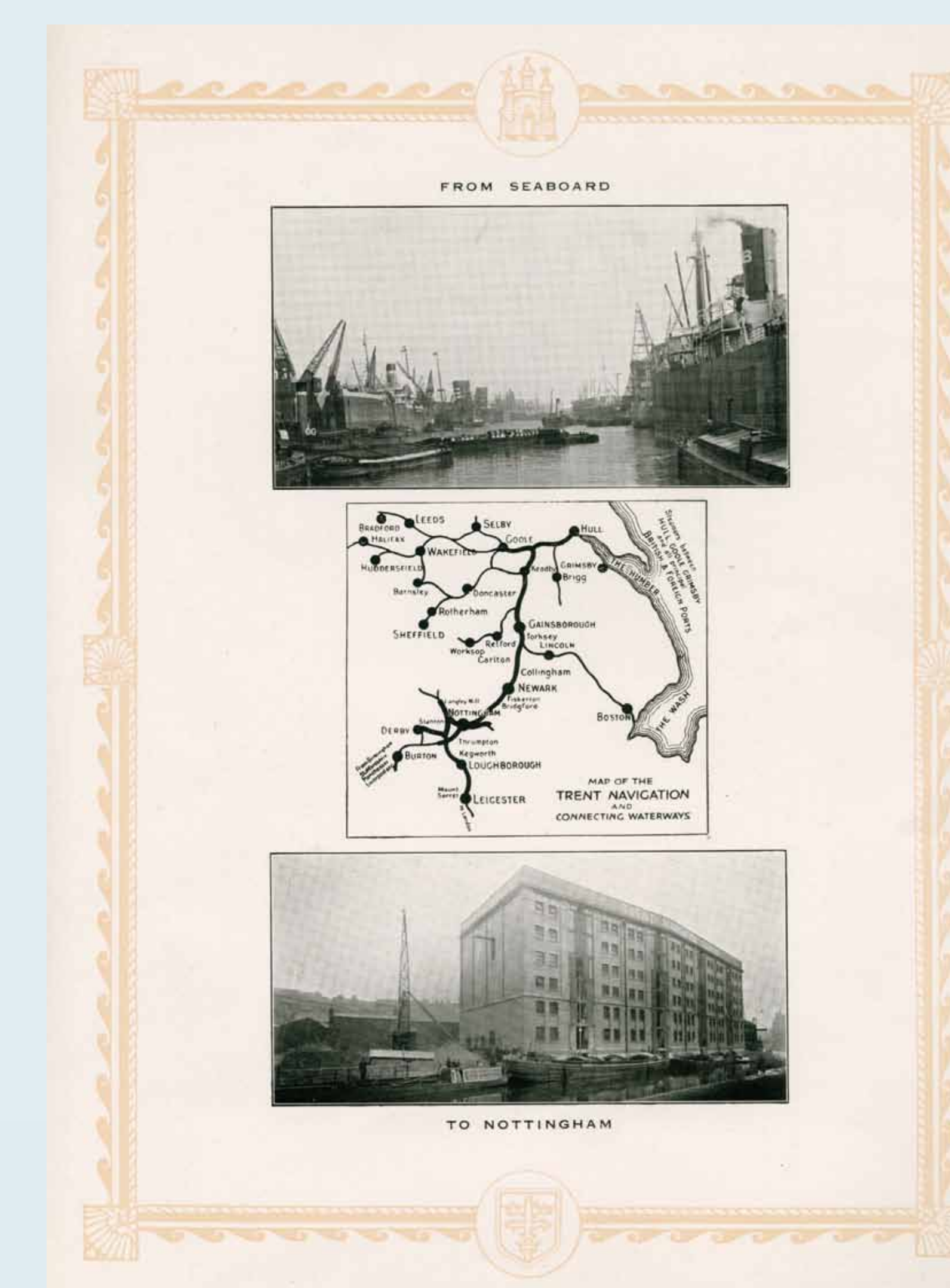
The company began constructing haling paths (towpaths), allowing vessels to be pulled along the river by horses. It also built 'cuts' or canals, such as those at Sawley and Cranfleet, to bypass some shallow sections. In 1794 it began cutting a canal from Beeston Lock to Lenton. This enabled boats to use the Nottingham canal instead of navigating shallows at Clifton and Wilford. The company records show that the works were very expensive. By 1802 the Beeston cut had cost over £9,000. The money was recouped by charging tolls on river and canal traffic.

The Whole Expenditure on the Old Works this Year	4139	17	9
D. on the New Works this Year chiefly Holme Cut and Weir	830	18	2
The Whole Expence of Beeston Cut including the Land	9178	5	3
D. of Long Caton Cut	4491	11	2
The Whole Expenditure on Holme Cut and Weir	6724	13	6
The Expenditure under the new Act including the above Cuts, Weirs, Land for Beeston, Mowson Cut, and Nottingham Capstern	20304	9	11
The Amount of the Bills for obtaining the new Act	3672	3	11
The Whole Expenditure under the new Act of Parliament including every thing	24006	13	10

Detail from Trent Navigation Company accounts for year ending 7 Sep. 1802  
Records of the Trent Navigation Company, RiN 796



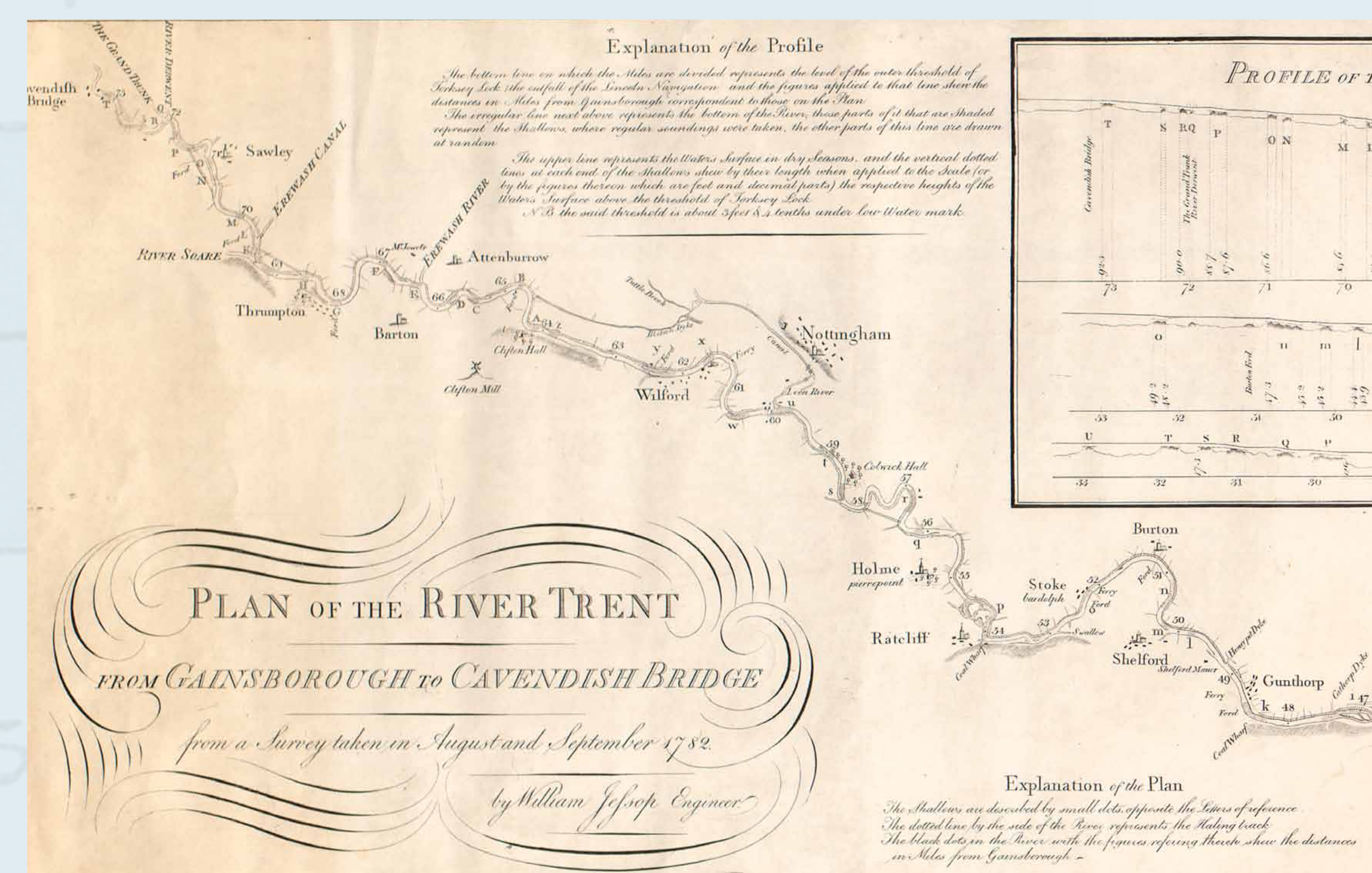
Front page of Act for improving the Navigation of the River Trent, 1783 ... 'and for empowering Persons navigating Vessels thereon to hale the same with Horses'  
Records of the Trent Navigation Company, RiN 2



'From Seaboard to Nottingham', 1926  
'Nottingham's Highway to the Sea', East Midlands o/s pamphlet Em.G24 APP

In 1915 the City of Nottingham took over management of the river from Nottingham to Averham. Improvements costing over £450,000 were completed in 1927. Now goods from Europe, landed at the docks at Hull, could travel in wide river barges up the Humber Estuary and the River Trent, all the way into Nottingham city centre. While other rivers and canals suffered from competition with the railways, trade on the River Trent increased four-fold.

The Trent Navigation Company was taken over by the River Trent Catchment Board in 1940, and in 1948 the British Waterways Board took over responsibility for navigation and maintaining the locks.



Detail from plan of the River Trent from Gainsborough to Cavendish Bridge, 1782  
East Midlands Collection Em.B8 D82



Illustration of a tug pulling three barges along the River Trent, 1926.  
'Nottingham's Highway to the Sea', East Midlands o/s pamphlet Em.G24 APP