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# Useful things in the landscape: the Sulphur Bathhouse and inn at Kedleston, Derbyshire, 1760–1900

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## ABSTRACT

In comparison to larger English spa resorts like Bath, Buxton and Cheltenham, the commercial development of minor spas is an under-represented area in scholarship. Yet, they proliferated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The commercialisation of health saw landowners, like Nathaniel Curzon of Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, capitalise on mineral springs on their estates. The development of Kedleston as a minor spa with a Sulphur Bathhouse within sight of the Hall and an Inn on periphery of the park, however, necessitated balancing the aesthetics of their setting in the landscape and family privacy with commercial realities. As a place purpose-built for the public to ‘take the waters’, Kedleston operated in a competitive market place. The proprietors of the spa relied on newspaper advertising and took advantage of Kedleston Hall’s appeal as a celebrated destination and the broader growth in leisure and tourism. Analysing the positioning of the inn and bathhouse in the commercial arena points to how and why the spa’s lifespan extended well beyond that often characteristic of many similar places. Based on original extensive archival research, this article provides new information and insights into the development of minor spas and contributes to the wider discourse on health commerce.

## ARTICLE HISTORY

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Minor spa; advertising; cold bathing; hot baths; health commerce; innkeeping; Kedleston

## 1. Introduction

Derbyshire in the English Midlands emerged as a tourist destination in the eighteenth-century fostered by publications such as Charles Cotton’s *The Wonders of the Peak* (1681), Dr Thomas Short’s, *History of the Mineral Waters of Derbyshire* (1732), and William Gilpin’s *Observations Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty* (1786). Gilpin’s itinerary, including Ashbourne, Dovedale and Matlock, Chatsworth House, Buxton and Castleton, is instantly recognisable to today’s visitors. He rated Kedleston Hall, near Derby, ‘a composition of elegance and grandeur’, more highly than Chatsworth, ‘the glory of the last age’.<sup>1</sup> Gilpin was not alone. The Hall was much admired nationally and a fixture

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<sup>1</sup>William Gilpin, *Observations, Relative Chiefly to Picturesque Beauty, Made in the Year 1772, on Several Parts of England; Particularly the Mountains, and Lakes of Cumberland and Westmorland*, 2 vols. (London: 1786), ii, 211–44, especially 220, 239.

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**Figure 1.** Map of Derbyshire (detail), engraved by Thomas Kitchin, after Peter Perez Burdett, 1791 (2nd edition). Derby Museums collection / photo credit: Richard Tailby.

on the tourist itinerary.<sup>2</sup> In contrast, in a county renowned for its mineral waters, Kedleston's bathhouse and inn had a more regionalised appeal. Both are shown on Burdett's map of Derbyshire (Figure 1).<sup>3</sup> Providing an indication of their renown, a search of newspapers published in six regional centres reveals a diminishing level of notices referencing the bathhouse and inn. Between 1760 and 1870, they feature in Derby's newspapers on 273 occasions, followed by Nottingham (n.168), Sheffield (n.144), Birmingham (n.138), and Leicester (n.134), and just sixteen in Manchester.<sup>4</sup> Only twenty-four advertisements reference the baths: nineteen in Derby, three in Nottingham and one each in Leicester and Manchester.

In 1732, Thomas Short declared that a spring in Kedleston Park contained the 'strongest sulphur water in Derbyshire'.<sup>5</sup> Seventy years later, George Lipscomb observed:

At the verge of Kedleston Park, an inn has been erected by Lord Scarsdale for the genteel accommodation of company resorting to the mineral springs in the vicinity and it is fitted up in such a manner as to afford comfortable lodgings for those who have occasion to continue here during a considerable time, as well as for more transient visitors.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Adrian Tinniswood, *The Polite Tourist: Four Centuries of Country House Visiting* (London: National Trust, 1989), 104.

<sup>3</sup>Noted on the map and initially known as the 'New Inn', it was mostly referred to as the 'Kedleston Inn'.

<sup>4</sup>The search terms were 'Kedleston Bath' and 'Kedleston Inn'. The figures do not take account of when newspapers in these locations started publication, survival rates, nor change over time. The overwhelming majority of notices advertise hunt meetings at the inn from the 1830s onwards. <https://www.britishnewspaperarchive.co.uk> [accessed 20 June 2023].

<sup>5</sup>Thomas Short, *The Natural, Experimental and Medicinal History of the Mineral Waters of Derbyshire, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire* (London, 1732), 305.

<sup>6</sup>George Lipscomb, *A Description of Matlock Bath ... to which is added some account of ... the Mineral Waters of Quarndon and Kedleston* (Birmingham, 1802), 133.

Like many other eighteenth-century minor spas (defined here as predominantly modest buildings offering limited bathing and drinking facilities, and sometimes accommodation, in rural or semi-rural settings), Kedleston's contemporary renown has largely sunk into obscurity. Indeed, apart from Phyllis Hembry's wider survey charting the rise of English spas and a smattering of other articles, minor spas and cold bathing have received little scholarly attention.<sup>7</sup> Hembry assessed the contribution of innkeepers to the development of the larger Derbyshire resorts of Buxton and Matlock Bath and catalogued the establishment of many minor spas across the country.<sup>8</sup> Of the latter, thirty-one, including Kedleston, were instigated either by gentry or aristocratic landowners.<sup>9</sup> This did not mean that they all thrived, however. According to Peter Borsay, scores of eighteenth-century springs and minor spas (Thomas Short listed 225) 'could not remotely be classified as resorts, but they do represent a pool of potential recruits, from which a select band were to rise to prominence ... by offering recreation as well as recuperation'.<sup>10</sup> Instead, most, as R. H. Gamble's survey of spas and mineral springs in Cumbria notes, 'enjoyed a brief moment of glory only to fall into rapid decline when the visitors ... began to demand the provisions of facilities and entertainments which extended well beyond the mere imbibing of waters'.<sup>11</sup> Like Kedleston, Gilsland Spa on the border of Cumbria and Northumberland, and Moffat Spa in Dumfriesshire (the latter discussed by Katharine Glover), lasted rather longer and acquired regional reputations at the very least.<sup>12</sup> Both underwent notable change in the mid-eighteenth century, survived into the nineteenth, enjoyed an 'identifiable status' as polite resorts and attracted an array of visitors.<sup>13</sup> The assessments of Gilsland and Moffat concentrate largely on their social aspects and spaces rather than on the mechanics of commercial development, yet with their waters, accommodation, sports facilities, walks, excursions and advertising, they shared several similarities with Kedleston and, indeed, with larger resorts. Susan Kellerman observes that the place of bathhouses on landed estates 'in eighteenth- or nineteenth-century life is little appreciated'.<sup>14</sup> Where such research does exist, much of it, exemplified by William Hawkes, concentrates on their design, decline and subsequent restoration.<sup>15</sup> Clare Hickman's analysis of private cold baths and plunge pools, however, has moved discussion forwards by exploring the interplay between medicinal, therapeutic, pleasurable and aesthetic benefits with an emphasis on the significance of place.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Phyllis Hembry, *The English Spa, 1560–1815* (London: Athlone, 1990), 159–78. Borsay gives a brief account of Astrop, Northamptonshire: Peter Borsay, 'Town or Country? British Spas and the Urban-Rural Interface', *Journal of Tourism History* 4, no. 2 (2012): 159. See also, P. W. Robinson, 'Commercial, Hydropathic and Private Baths in Calderdale in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries', *Transactions of the Halifax Antiquarian Society*, 3 (1995): 71–89.

<sup>8</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 216–30.

<sup>9</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 361–4.

<sup>10</sup>Peter Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts, 1700–1840', in *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain vol. 2, 1540–1840*, ed. Peter Clark (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 776.

<sup>11</sup>R.H. Gamble, 'The Spa Resorts and Mineral Springs of Cumbria', *Transactions of the Westmorland and Cumberland Antiquarian Society* 93, no. 17 (1993): 184.

<sup>12</sup>Gamble, 'The Spa Resorts and Mineral Springs', 184–7; Katharine Glover, 'Polite Society and the Rural Resort: the Meanings of Moffat Spa in the Eighteenth Century', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 34, no. 1 (2001): 65–80.

<sup>13</sup>Glover, 'Moffat Spa', 65.

<sup>14</sup>Susan Kellerman, 'Bath Houses: An Introduction', *Follies Journal*, 1 (2001): 22, 26.

<sup>15</sup>William Hawkes, 'The Walton Bath House, Warwickshire', *Follies Journal*, 1 (2001): 29–34.

<sup>16</sup>Clare Hickman, 'Taking the Plunge: 18th Century Bath Houses and Plunge Pools', *Historic Gardens* (2010), <https://www.buildingconservation.com/articles/bath-houses/bath-houses.htm> [accessed 2 August 2021].

Both Kedleston Inn and the Sulphur Bathhouse survived long into the nineteenth century, but scholarship on Kedleston's Hall, Park and Gardens focuses largely on the influence of architect Robert Adam.<sup>17</sup> One consequence is 'a want of an understanding and appreciation of the complexity of interactions and importance of the designed landscape'.<sup>18</sup> In response, the present article draws on estate papers, bills, licensed victuallers' recognisances, newspapers, correspondence, journals, travel guides, Census returns, and treatises on cold bathing to evaluate the shifting significance of Kedleston's Inn and Sulphur Bathhouse in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Despite its contemporary repute, Kedleston spa, comprising the Sulphur Bathhouse within the park and the inn on its periphery, unsurprisingly fails to make it into Jon Stobart's analysis of the hierarchy of leisure towns.<sup>19</sup> The bathhouse's parkland setting gave it some of the trappings of a resort – walks, rural views, woodlands, and landscaping – while the inn provided accommodation, a bowling green and archery butts. It did not have, however, the amenities that would classify it as a leisure town: a theatre, assembly room, shops, circulating libraries, resident medical practitioners, or a dedicated guidebook containing up-to-date information on the contents and benefits of the waters.<sup>20</sup> In the 1830s, scientific and medical support for Kedleston's waters still relied overwhelmingly on Thomas Short's century-old analysis. In a hierarchy extrapolated from the facilities and perceived popularity of watering places in Derbyshire noted by James Pilkington in 1789, however, Kedleston ranks third behind Buxton and Matlock; one above the nearby village of Quarndon. Of the twenty minor spas and springs Pilkington listed, four had baths. Three of these were open to the elements and consequently were ill-frequented while that at Middleton near Wirksworth was 'lost'.<sup>21</sup> Nearly all were of local renown only. Kedleston's ranking, its continued existence, and its wider fame, therefore, depended upon how it 'catered and competed for the visitor population ... [in] ... a fiercely contested market'.<sup>22</sup> Its eventual decline in the later-nineteenth century owed something to the challenge posed by seaside resorts but more particularly to the development of specialist medical expertise and elaborate facilities aimed at in-house patients in substantial establishments run by the likes of John Smedley at Matlock.<sup>23</sup> Exploring Kedleston spa's appeal as a tourist destination, and how its proprietors navigated this changing environment and attracted custom, contributes to a greater understanding of developments in, and limitations to, health commerce at a minor spa, the

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<sup>17</sup>Leslie Harris, ed. Gervase Jackson-Stops, *Robert Adam and Kedleston: the Making of a Neo-Classical Masterpiece*, (London: National Trust, 1987); Eileen Harris and Alastair Laing, 'No fishy tale: a True Account of the Fishing Room at Kedleston', *Apollo* 163 (2006): 23–6; Judith Appleby, 'Farm Building Designs for Lord Scarsdale at Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire: a Study of the Designs of Robert Adam and Samuel Wyatt, 1760–1765', *Journal of the Historic Farm Buildings Group*, 9 (1995): 25–34.

<sup>18</sup>Christopher Gallagher, Sarah Ashmead and Howard Price, Executive Summary to 'Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire, parkland conservation plan: text and figures' (report prepared for the National Trust, Kedleston Hall, 2013), n. p.

<sup>19</sup>Jon Stobart, 'In Search of a Leisure Hierarchy: English Spa Towns and their Place in the Eighteenth-Century Urban System', in Peter Borsay, Gunther Hirschfelder and Ruth-E. Mohrmann (eds.), *New Directions in Urban History: Aspects of European Art, Health, Tourism and Leisure since the Enlightenment* (Munich, Germany: Waxmann, 2000), 19–40.

<sup>20</sup>Borsay, 'Town or Country?', 157, 162, 163; Angela Schattner, "'For the recreation of gentlemen and other fit persons of the better sort": Tennis Courts and Bowling Greens as Early Leisure Venues in Sixteenth- to Eighteenth-Century London and Bath', *Sport in History* 34, no. 2 (2014): 209, 211–2.

<sup>21</sup>James Pilkington, *A View of the Present State of Derbyshire*, 2 vols. (Derby, 1789), i, 211–55.

<sup>22</sup>Borsay, 'Health and Leisure Resorts', 783.

<sup>23</sup>Jane M. Adams, *Healing with Water: English Spas and the Water Cure, 1840–1960* (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2015), 60, 71, 78.

commercialisation of leisure and the ‘broader emergence of recreational travel as a pastime among the elite and the upper middle class’.<sup>24</sup>

## 2. Useful things in ornamental landscapes

From the 1760s, Kedleston’s house, grounds, inn and bathhouse were open to visitors. Nevertheless, like other estates, it was a place of ‘ambiguous publicness’, permitting and limiting access simultaneously.<sup>25</sup> Railings, fences, gates, lodges and belts of trees around its periphery announced the presence of the park but also its separation from the wider landscape.<sup>26</sup> Within the park, the Sulphur Bathhouse (1759) was physically separate from the more private Pleasure Grounds adjacent to the hall, and the circular route around the park. It was also separate from the Fishing Pavilion by the upper lake below which the Curzon family had its own private bathing facility. Serving only to emphasise that separation further and though visible from the front of the Hall, the usual approach to the Bathhouse was from the inn along a half-mile causeway through woods rather than from the estate’s main drive. In 1922, half of the bathhouse was demolished, diminishing, though not wholly eradicating, its presence in the landscape. What remains, the portico and two enclosed pools, sits on a golf course and is not readily accessible. It is easy, therefore, to overlook the appeal it once had for tourists and its commercial interaction with the inn and the estate in which it is situated.

After inheriting Kedleston in 1758, Sir Nathaniel Curzon (1726–1804) commissioned the bathhouse and inn as part of his grand reconstruction of the estate in which a new mansion was built, gardens uprooted, the village (except the church) removed, and the turnpike road rerouted. Like many landowners, Curzon’s attitude to eighteenth-century landscaping mirrors the advice given by Joseph Spence in 1751:

To assist or correct the general character of the ground ... To correct or conceal any particular object that is disagreeable. To open a view to whatever is particularly agreeable. To manage your plantations in such a manner that you may be led to some striking object ... [and] to mix useful things even in the ornamental parts.<sup>27</sup>

Inspired by classical ruins, pastoral examples and painterly interpretations, English Arcadian landscapes encompassed hills, vales, rivers, sheets of water, and belts, groves, and stands of trees.<sup>28</sup> Paths, walks, and carriage drives were laid out and vistas opened up. Grottoes, temples, hermitages, ruins, obelisks, statues, urns, and summerhouses, pavilions, banqueting houses, bridges, lodges, and triumphal arches appeared as incidents in the landscape.<sup>29</sup> ‘Useful things’ included cold baths, inns, ice houses, dairies,

<sup>24</sup>Borsay, ‘Town or Country?’, 168; Stobart, ‘In Search of a Leisure Hierarchy’, 20; Clare Hickman, *The Doctor’s Garden: Science, Medicine and Horticulture in Britain* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2021), 75.

<sup>25</sup>Jocelyn Anderson, *Touring and Publicizing England’s Country Houses in the Long Eighteenth Century* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 8. See also, Hickman, *Doctor’s Garden*, 78–82.

<sup>26</sup>Tom Williamson, *Polite Landscapes: Gardens and Society in Eighteenth-Century England* (Stroud, Gloucestershire, UK, Sutton Publishing, 1998), 77.

<sup>27</sup>John Dixon Hunt and Peter Willis (eds.), *The Genius of Place: the English Landscape Garden, 1620–1820* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), 269–70.

<sup>28</sup>Tim Mowl, *William Kent: Architect, Designer and Opportunist* (London: Pimlico, 2007), 40, 76, 168, 233; Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, 75, 77.

<sup>29</sup>Anderson, *England’s Country Houses*, 1–2; David Jacques, *Georgian Gardens: The Reign of Nature* (London: Batsford, 1983), 35–40; Louis Hawes, *Presences of Nature: British Landscape, 1780–1830* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1982), 50–5.

and farms. Kedleston included many of these features. Henry Skrine's tour of Derbyshire in 1795 encompassed Buxton, Matlock and Chatsworth and Kedleston. He thought Kedleston Hall was 'happily placed in the midst of a park distinguished by groves of the finest trees, well grouped, and divided by a broad sheet of water'.<sup>30</sup> Skrine made no mention of the bathhouse or inn, but when viewed across the riverine lake from the hall, the classically influenced Sulphur Bathhouse in its wooded setting constituted a significant incident in the landscape.<sup>31</sup>

Alongside their coal, mineral, and timber reserves, landowners regarded the exploitation of mineral waters as a source of income. This gave parklands a duality of function that integrated commercial profit with cultural display.<sup>32</sup> The provision of on-site drinking water and bathing facilities together with inns, lodgings, and tenancies all generated monetary returns, for comparatively modest outlay.<sup>33</sup> In 1789, James Pilkington noted that 'a considerable quantity' of Kedleston's mineral water was conveyed to the inhabitants of Derby three miles away, but large-scale exploitation of the sulphur spring and the prospect of higher financial reward was tempered by the reality that with the Bathhouse visible from the hall the Curzons needed to maintain the integrity of the designed landscape and a degree of privacy.<sup>34</sup> Yet, together, the mansion and park, spa facilities and associated publicity ensured Kedleston's place as a viable destination on the tourist itinerary.

As Hickman notes, siting cold baths and plunge pools in landscaped grounds was as much about practicality and controlling expense as it was about aesthetics; it was easier to construct a bathhouse over the source of the water than it was to lay pipework to a mansion.<sup>35</sup> For practical and aesthetic reasons, Kedleston's Sulphur Bathhouse was constructed directly over a spring. For aesthetic reasons, the Curzon's private bathing facility below the Fishing Pavilion derived its water from a separate source at Bentley Well several hundred feet away. Other considerations also came into play. While Ilkeston Baths in Derbyshire sold water by the bottle and gallon on site, and in Derby, Leicester, Loughborough, Manchester, Nottingham and Sheffield and elsewhere, many medical and scientific authorities were adamant that mineral water deteriorated when removed from its source.<sup>36</sup> At Witham Spa in Essex, Dr James Taverner held that the volatility of the water resulted in a reduction in quality when transported 'tho' the bottles are ever so carefully cork'd and cemented'.<sup>37</sup> Kedleston's waters attracted similar comment: 'when carried only five miles and kept one night in a clean well corked Bottle, its smell was much weakened'.<sup>38</sup> Such claims had commercial implications and worked to reinforce

<sup>30</sup>Henry Skrine, 'Travels in Derbyshire, Yorkshire and Nottinghamshire', in *Three Successive Tours in the North of England and Great Part of Scotland* (London, 1795), pp. iv–vi.

<sup>31</sup>National Trust, Kedleston Archives, Derbyshire, (hereafter KA), NT 108774, George Cuitt, the elder (attributed), *Kedleston Hall from the South* (c.1780), shows the bathhouse surrounded by trees. See also, Kellerman, 'Bath Houses', 23.

<sup>32</sup>Adams, *Healing with Water*, 70; Williamson, *Polite Landscapes*, 102, 113; Patrick Eyres, 'Commercial Profit and Cultural Display in the Eighteenth-Century Landscape Gardens at Wentworth Woodhouse and Harewood', in *Bourgeois and Aristocratic Cultural Encounters in Garden Art, 1550–1850*, ed. Michel Conan (Dumbarton Oaks, Colloquium on the History of Landscape Architecture, 23, Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection, Washington, DC, 2002), 197, 200.

<sup>33</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 159–66.

<sup>34</sup>Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, i, 237. There is no record of Kedleston supplying water to anywhere else.

<sup>35</sup>Hickman, 'Taking the Plunge'.

<sup>36</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 4 July 1832, 2; Christopher Hamlin, 'Chemistry, Medicine and the Legitimization of English Spas', *Medical History Supplement* 10 (1990): 70–1. Hembry lists 36 places trading in bottled mineral waters: Hembry, *English Spa*, 366.

<sup>37</sup>James Taverner quoted in Hembry, *English Spa*, 159.

<sup>38</sup>Short, *Mineral Waters of Derbyshire*, p. xiv.

the contention that waters were most efficacious when taken at their source.<sup>39</sup> For some writers, the physical act of getting to the baths and the therapeutic benefits engendered by viewing surrounding landscapes were essential aspects of the spa regimen (the routine followed in order to effect a cure), especially if enclosed structures or secluded settings prevented views of the landscape while bathing.<sup>40</sup> ‘Good diet and good spirits, cleanliness and fresh air and good clothing and exercise’, wrote Dr William Heberden in 1801, ‘may all contribute to render the body less susceptible to disease’.<sup>41</sup> Locating bathhouses in parks with trees and water, therefore, aided health.

### 3. Cold bathing and the Sulphur Bathhouse

The development of Kedleston’s mineral springs broadly mirrors the wider fashion for cold bathing that ‘re-emerged at the end of the seventeenth century, flourished through the eighteenth, and began to falter in the early decades of the nineteenth’.<sup>42</sup> The promotion of spas on medical and therapeutic grounds alone, however, was insufficient to ensure their success. Larger spa resorts like Bath and Buxton were ‘systematically promoted as a cure for invalidism’, but they also witnessed the active ‘socio-economic orientation of the spa towards leisure’ in the form of assembly rooms, theatres, shops, gambling, concerts, dinners and alcohol consumption.<sup>43</sup> At minor rural spas, the opportunities for similar levels of social interaction and leisure activities were more limited, although enterprising innkeepers, like those at Kedleston, detailed below, did much to ameliorate them.

The first report of Kedleston’s sulphur spring dates from 1637 when Matthew Boucherett observed:

The mineral waters lately found ... [had a] ... strong smell ... of the nature of brimstone ... Now if it is safe to drink these waters, they are ... good against ulcers in the neck of the bladder ... If they be actually hot, they are good against all old pains in the joints ... being used in the manner of a bath.<sup>44</sup>

In 1663, Philipp Kynder believed that Kedleston’s waters and the nearby chalybeate springs in Quarndon were efficacious in cases of vomiting; and stomach, spleen, and urine complaints; they stopped ‘all fluxes’, ‘bleeding in the breast’, helped conception, cured fevers, and were good against colic.<sup>45</sup> Physician Sir John Floyer of Lichfield, Staffordshire, one of the leading eighteenth-century advocates of cold bathing, knew of Kedleston’s ‘cold bath impregnated with foetid sulphur’, although this did not amount to specific endorsement. As he believed, however, that there was no better ‘method for the preservation of health than the cold regimen’, perhaps his acknowledgement of Kedleston in the multiple editions of his work was sufficient promotion.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>39</sup>Hamlin, ‘Legitimization of English Spas’, 71.

<sup>40</sup>Hickman, ‘Taking the Plunge’.

<sup>41</sup>William Heberden, quoted in Sally Sheard, ‘Profit is a Dirty Word: the Development of Public Baths and Washhouses in Britain, 1847–1915’, *Society for the History of Medicine* 13, no. 1 (2000): 64–5.

<sup>42</sup>Michael Trapp, ‘The Georgian History of the Strand Lane “Roman” Bath’, *The London Journal* 39, no. 2 (2014): 142–3.

<sup>43</sup>Annick Cossic-Pericarpin, ‘Fashionable Diseases in Georgian Bath: Fiction and the Emergence of a British Model of Spa Sociability’, *Journal for Eighteenth Century Studies* 40, no. 4 (2017): 537.

<sup>44</sup>KA, L3–19/16, Matthew Boucherett to the earl of Newcastle, 23 April 1637.

<sup>45</sup>Philipp Kynder, ed. W. G. Dimock Fletcher, *The Historie of Darbyshire* (1663), (London, 1883), 99.

<sup>46</sup>John Floyer and Edward Baynard, *Psychrolousia, or, the History of Cold Bathing: Both Ancient and Modern*, 6th ed. (London, 1732), 37, 173.



Thomas Short analysed Kedleston's waters, described the facilities before the construction of the Sulphur Bathhouse and listed the ailments for which the water was beneficial:

It has a very good basin or receptacle, a foot and a half wide, and five foot long. At its side are flags laid ... with a small gutter in the middle for the water to empty. It fell into a very good bath six foot long and three foot wide and three foot deep, paved at the bottom and walled with good smooth freestone, and seats by the drinking water for twelve or sixteen people. The drinking water is exceedingly clear but stinks intolerably ... It has done many surprising cures in worms, pains of the stomach, old ulcers, eruptions of the skin, king's evil, lameness, swellings, weakness of the joints, fix'd and wandring pains &c by drinking and bathing in it.<sup>47</sup>

Short's description is more positive than the usual accounts given of these earlier arrangements: 'a fairly primitive affair', housed in a 'small rustic building'.<sup>48</sup> Even so, given the bathhouse's visibility from the hall as an incident in the new landscaping and increased expectations from visitors regarding facilities, a new structure was necessary. A flurry of publications on the efficacy of water and bathing in the years immediately prior to the bathhouse's construction may have given the project added impetus.<sup>49</sup>

In 1768, Francis and Ann Dawson, the proprietors of Kedleston Inn, announced, 'There is a new erected handsome stone building over the Wells, with commodious inclos'd baths for the separate accommodation of gentlemen and ladies'.<sup>50</sup> The design, attributed to Jason Harris, shows a front elevation with a central recessed portico supported by four columns (Figure 2).<sup>51</sup> Rooms on either side of the portico house a plunge pool surrounded on two sides by paved walkways and entered via steps. Diocletian windows set high into recessed arches illuminate the pools. A dressing room with a fireplace lay behind each pool. Connecting doors linked each dressing room to a pool and to an apsidal central room behind the portico. The latter housed the spring and seating.

Kedleston's new bathhouse with its stepped access to two pools and separate facilities for men and women matched closely the features found at other cold bathing establishments on estates, including those built by John Floyer on land owned by Sir James Simon near Lichfield.<sup>52</sup> In 1793, however, the Revd James Plumtre made two observations about Kedleston not found in other contemporary descriptions which may account further for its limited development, 'The baths are too small and even as small as they are, the spring does not always afford sufficient water for a change every day'.<sup>53</sup> Perhaps in response to the expansion of Buxton's bathing facilities and its naturally hotter waters (82° F, 27.5° C, compared to Kedleston's 53° F, 11.7° C) and developments at Matlock Bath, improvements were made to Kedleston's bathhouse in 1801.<sup>54</sup> Joseph

<sup>47</sup>Short, *Mineral Waters of Derbyshire*, 305–6.

<sup>48</sup>KA, KAN, 5/87, Sulphur Bath House, 25 January 1987; Hembry, *English Spa*, 166.

<sup>49</sup>Among many: Diederick Wessel Linden, *An Experimental Dissertation on the Nature, Contents and Virtues of the Hyde Purging Water* (London, 1751); John Wesley, *Primitive Physick: or, an Easy and Natural Method of Curing Most Diseases* (Dublin, 1752); Tobias Smollett, *An Essay on the External Use of Water* (London, 1752); Charles Lucas, *An Essay on Waters in Three Parts* (London, 1756).

<sup>50</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 29 April 1768, 4.

<sup>51</sup>Harris, *Adam and Kedleston*, 92.

<sup>52</sup>Floyer and Baynard, *Psychrolousia*, 16–17.

<sup>53</sup>Ian Ousby, ed. *James Plumtre's Britain: the Journals of a Tourist in the 1790s* (London: Hutchinson, 1992), 61–2.

<sup>54</sup>Mike Langham and Colin Wells, *A History of the Baths at Buxton* (Leek, Staffordshire, UK: Churnet Valley Books, 1997), 32–6; Lipscomb, *Matlock Bath*, 134.



**Figure 2.** The Sulphur Bathhouse, Kedleston. Image: Author

Vernon submitted a bill for alterations ‘over and above what was estimated for’.<sup>55</sup> This included the construction of one large and one small reservoir and steps leading to them, two hot baths, a drainage sough, paving, a hole for pipes, and a stone trough. Including materials and labour, these alterations totalled £13 13s 10d. Given that there was no extension to the building, the cost suggests only limited changes.

No further details survive of these alterations or their location within the bathhouse. Information from elsewhere, however, provides an indication. Tobias Smollett’s *Essay on the External Use of Water* included proposals from a Mr Cleland regarding alterations to the hot bathing facilities at Bath’s King’s and Queen’s Baths. These included a hot room containing a fire and a pump to supply hot water from the King’s Bath reservoir. Male and female bathing rooms on either side contained ‘three cisterns, with curtains round each’. Each cistern had three inlets with valves used to regulate ‘the natural or artificial heat of the waters and vapour’. One supplied hot water from the reservoir; a second conveyed the steam or vapour from a boiler and a third supplied cold water. One cistern was ‘to bathe in, either sitting or standing, the other two for bathing, lying or half-lying’.<sup>56</sup> The public baths at Bagnio Court in London contained a large central cold bath and three much smaller separate baths in partitioned booths for individual warm bathing.<sup>57</sup> The hot baths at Varley’s Hotel in Matlock Bath had Italian marble linings.<sup>58</sup> In 1783, James Playfair described how to construct baths for modest outlay.<sup>59</sup> Similar in design to Kedleston, his single storey bathhouse in the country

<sup>55</sup>KA, L3–19/3a, Joseph Vernon, 4 June 1802.

<sup>56</sup>Smollett, *External Use of Water*, 47.

<sup>57</sup>London Metropolitan Archives; q8030070, Plan of the bagnio baths in Bagnio Court near Newgate Street, c.1780.

<sup>58</sup>Trade card reproduced in Christopher Charlton and Doreen Buxton, *Matlock Bath: A Perfectly Romantic Place* (Matlock, Derbyshire, UK: Derwent Valley Mills Educational Trust, 2019), 49.

<sup>59</sup>James Playfair, *A Method of Constructing Vapor Baths ... With a Design and Description of a Convenient Hot Water Bath* (London, 1783), 13, 14, 18, 27.

contained cold, warm, and vapour baths.<sup>60</sup> The hot or vapour bath (measuring three feet six inches high, two feet six wide and two feet three broad) was heated by a tin boiler ‘about a foot wide and ten inches deep’ placed over a fire. Lagged pipework connected the boiler to a regulator and to a ‘bath made of deal in which the person sits on a stool’. Access to the bath was via a hinged side door. A cloth covered the top ‘to draw round the neck or lower as may be necessary’.<sup>61</sup> Though perhaps neither as elaborate as those in Bath, London or Matlock, nor as modest as Playfair’s, Kedleston’s hot baths were probably intended for individual rather than communal use, with similar box-like structures inserted into the heated dressing rooms separated by curtains or booths. In 1801, proprietor Richard Smith advertised that the efficacy of the waters are ‘much increased by the Accommodations which have been lately made for Warm Bathing’.<sup>62</sup> George Lipscomb too noted the improved facilities, ‘a neat building, with suitable conveniences for bathing in hot or cold water’.<sup>63</sup>

In 1791, Erasmus Stevens, the proprietor of Kedleston Inn, informed the public that rules regarding conduct were on display at the bathhouse which was ‘constantly attended’.<sup>64</sup> The rules have not survived, but those at John King’s bathhouse in Bungay, Suffolk, required men to wear linen breeches, banned women being present while men bathed and disallowed smoking and drinking. In what seems to be an unusual arrangement, perhaps reflecting the potential polluting impact of bathers at Bath described in *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, King required the infirm to pay 1s a time while charging just sixpence for those bathing for pleasure.<sup>65</sup> Not all bathhouses were so restrictive. Archaeological excavations undertaken at Kedleston in 2018 revealed the remains of eighteenth-century wine bottles, ceramics and hexagonal bottles.<sup>66</sup> This suggests that as at Somersham Spa in Huntingdonshire, attendants were ‘allowed to sell beverages, wine, spirits, tea, coffee and chocolate and medicinal tinctures, drops and salts’.<sup>67</sup> Most bath attendants kept fires furnished with coal, boilers supplied with water, replenished baths, regulated the flow of steam to hot baths, and provided drinking water. Many were also responsible for maintaining good order. How effective the poem *Kedleston Bath Guide or Monitions that might be of use to several persons who frequent that place* was as a deterrent to unwanted behaviour, however, is unknown, but it does point to a requirement for bath attendants to be vigilant.

But shame, deserved shame, on him abide,  
Whose impious Hand pollutes the hallow’d Tide;  
Or, witless, as unmanly, sneaking scrawls  
Indecent Ribbaldry along its Walls;

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<sup>60</sup>Playfair, *Vapor Baths*, 27.

<sup>61</sup>Playfair, *Vapor Baths*, 13, 14, 18.

<sup>62</sup>*Leicester Journal*, 1 May 1801, 1.

<sup>63</sup>Lipscomb, *Matlock Bath*, 134.

<sup>64</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 2 June 1791, 1.

<sup>65</sup>Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1925), 51; Christopher Reeve, ‘The Cold Bath House’, <https://bungay-suffolk.co.uk/about/history/the-cold-bath-house> [accessed 2 August 2021].

<sup>66</sup>Tristan Wilson, Emma Grange and Michelle Burpoe, ‘Archaeological Monitoring at the Sulphur Bath House Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire’ (report produced for the National Trust, Kedleston Hall, 2018), 19.

<sup>67</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 165.

And, with the Baseness of incendiary Stealth,  
Would injure Virtue, or diminish Health.<sup>68</sup>

As was common elsewhere, at Kedleston the poor were not charged for bathing, although it is likely that there were restrictions placed on who, how many, and when they could bathe.<sup>69</sup> In 1779, John Edge's bill for 'bathing 2 times' was 6d. Edge of Strelley Hall near Nottingham, accompanied the Sabin siblings Thomas (b.1768), William (b.1769) and Richard (b.1770) whose bill for 'bathing 88 times at 3d per time' came to £1 2s 0d.<sup>70</sup> Reflecting the limited facilities available and the commercial realities of a minor spa, the charge of 3d (the only price openly stated for Kedleston's baths) appears cheaper than elsewhere. A range of payment options (possibly with discounted rates) was also available. In 1791, Erasmus Stevens announced that persons residing at the inn had 'every advantage that can be derived from bathing or drinking the water gratis. All others must pay for bathing and the water, as is customary at other watering places, by the week, month, or season'.<sup>71</sup> At Mr Lloyd's baths in London charges for cold water bathing in spring water (a more expensive seawater option was also available) were 2s for a single bath; 10s 6d a month or £1 1s 0d a year. Warm baths cost 4s a time and vapour baths 5s.<sup>72</sup> At Varley's Hotel in Matlock Bath use of either of the two hot baths cost 2s each time, fourteen transferable tickets cost one guinea and the tepid swimming bath, 1s on each occasion.<sup>73</sup>

#### 4. Kedleston Inn

Sometimes, in the belief it failed to attract sufficient customers; struggling on until it became a farm in the late-nineteenth century, the commercial and social significance of Kedleston Inn and its relationship with the bathhouse is underestimated.<sup>74</sup> This interpretation overlooks its long history, the promotional activities undertaken by its proprietors, and most importantly the reality that from the start the inn also operated as a farm. A more nuanced interpretation emerges by examining guidebooks and newspapers, the facilities and events on offer and the importance attached by the proprietors to the farming aspects of the business.

Constructed on the turnpike road between Loughborough in Leicestershire, and Brassington, a village eleven miles north of Kedleston, the new inn (1760–62) (Figure 3) replaced one demolished in the early-1760s that stood much closer to the old Kedleston Hall. The plans for the inn show a ground floor with two parlours, a bar, a kitchen, larder and bedroom, two rooms for servants, four passages and two necessary houses.<sup>75</sup> On either side were walled gardens, to the rear of which were poultry and swine yards. Across the yard were stables and coach houses with haylofts above. On the second

<sup>68</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 30 June 1785, 2.

<sup>69</sup>Buxton Library, Derbyshire, UK, Axon Papers, Ernest Axon, 'Buxton Doctors since 1700' (1939), n. p.

<sup>70</sup>Nottinghamshire Archives (hereafter NA), Edge family of Strelley papers, DD/E/175/45, A bill for boys bathing and chaise, 8 August 1779.

<sup>71</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 2 June 1791, 1.

<sup>72</sup>J. H. Plumb, *Georgian Delights* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicholson, 1980), 153.

<sup>73</sup>Charlton and Buxton, *Matlock Bath*, 49.

<sup>74</sup>Derek A. Wigley, *Quarndon, the Spa* (Matlock, Derbyshire, UK: Derbyshire County Council, 2000), 12; Maxwell Craven, *Derby, an Illustrated History* (Derby, UK: Breedon Books, 1988), 104.

<sup>75</sup>John Soane Museum, London, SM Adam volume 40/58, Finished drawing for an inn, 1759–61.



**Figure 3.** Kedleston Inn. Image: Author

floor (as described on the plan) were the dining room, four bedchambers and two bedrooms, and on the third floor, six bedchambers, two bedrooms and a closet. Across the road were the polite social spaces of an archery ground and a bowling green. As Angela Schattner notes, such facilities were commonly found at inns and spas where participants and observers engaged in recreational and social activities.<sup>76</sup> The inn housed its own brewery and hosted a standard array of events associated with such premises: ordinary dinners, property auctions; sales of household goods and farm equipment, livestock, crops and timber; club and society meetings; inquests and commissions of bankruptcy.

The inn's association with Kedleston Hall attracted tourists and brought in specific business. In 1813, the Curzons and the 'principal gentlemen of the neighbourhood' attended an ox-roast for the estate's tenants and the poor.<sup>77</sup> Once a month each summer the inn hosted the Kedleston Archery Society. Such societies, were 'havens of exclusivity', sport, sociability and conviviality.<sup>78</sup> The Society's Rules stated that although there was no limit on numbers, there were ballots for prospective members with the use of 'Black Balls to exclude'.<sup>79</sup> Annual subscriptions cost one guinea. By 1794, a list of the Society's forty members included the earl of Harrington, twelve reverends, four captains, two knights and two doctors, but no women.<sup>80</sup> Archery societies including Kedleston's, however, did include women, as either full members, patrons, or guests.<sup>81</sup> At the Society's

<sup>76</sup>Peter Borsay, 'The Development of Provincial Urban Culture, c.1680–c.1760', in *The Eighteenth Century Town: a Reader in English Urban History, 1688–1820*, ed. Peter Borsay (London: Longman, 1990), 162; Schattner, 'Tennis Courts and Bowling Greens', 205, 209, 211–2.

<sup>77</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 16 December 1813, 3.

<sup>78</sup>Martin Johnes, 'Archery, Romance and Elite Culture in England and Wales, c.1780–1840', *History* 89, no. 2 (2004): 193–6.

<sup>79</sup>KA, fo. 35, Rules agreed upon by the Kedleston Society of Archers established in 1790, August 12 1794. Balloting, black-balling and admission charges were standard: Johnes, 'Archery', 201.

<sup>80</sup>KA, fo. 37, Archery Society members, 1794.

<sup>81</sup>Johnes, 'Archery', 198.

meeting in June 1821, the duke of Devonshire was president, Frederick Curzon, treasurer and viscountess Kinnaird acted as 'Lady Paramount', while in August 1827, 175 ladies and gentlemen sat down to dinner. Dancing commenced after the awarding of prizes to male and female archers.<sup>82</sup> Alongside the bowling green (for which there was an annual subscription of 5s, or single use 'greenage' fees in 1864), archery continued to be an attraction for visitors, alongside the bowling green, and quoits until at least 1870.<sup>83</sup> In 1863, the then proprietor, William Ault, included these activities in his list of facilities together with the hall's open days, the 'valuable baths of sulphur springs ... for the amusement of visitors staying at the inn', the 'delightful walks to attract the tourist', and the privilege of walking in the Park granted by Lord Scarsdale to guests at the inn.<sup>84</sup> The advertisement thus uses the inn's special relationship with Kedleston and the opportunity to visit the hall while resident together with an overt link to the landscape as selling points. Recognising that Kedleston could not compete with the increasingly sophisticated, specialised treatments on offer at Buxton and Matlock, however, the advertisement also marks a shift from health to amusement in the marketing of the bathhouse.

Innkeeping and farming were common enough dual occupations, but in spa resorts like Buxton and Matlock Bath, many innkeepers also ran bathhouses.<sup>85</sup> Multiple income streams made economic sense. In the nineteenth century, as Stana Nenadic points out, 'excessive reliance on a single source of income was never prudent'.<sup>86</sup> At Kedleston, farming alongside management of the bathhouse was always a significant, if not the major part of the business of the inn. An advertisement from 1803 makes the connection clear: 'Kedleston Inn, farm and baths to be let. A large and commodious house used as an inn with warm and cold baths and excellent offices, barns, stables, yard, gardens, orchard. The farm contains about 80 acres of fertile arable meadow'.<sup>87</sup> To judge from Census returns, the inn's proprietors regarded themselves primarily as farmers, not innkeepers (Table 1).

Farming gained in importance as the amount of land attached to the inn increased from eighty acres in 1803 to 248 acres by 1871. When R. H. Archer became the tenant in 1887, the property was called 'Bath Farm' and by 1890 had become two dwellings.<sup>88</sup>

Of the eighteen proprietors of the inn between 1760 and 1887 (Table 2), Francis Dawson, John Storer, William Gallimore and Edward Kidger racked up seventy-two years between them. Twelve stayed for five years or under. The first proprietor, John Lamb, was the former landlord of the old Kedleston inn in the village and before that butler to Sir Nathaniel Curzon.<sup>89</sup> On Lamb's death in 1765, the inn passed to his brother Thomas as the executor of John's estate and then to John Lamb's son-in-law, Francis Harris. Harris died within a year.<sup>90</sup> In 1767, Francis Dawson (b.1734) married a widow, Ann Marsden (b.1727). They managed the inn, farm and baths for nineteen

<sup>82</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 4 July 1821, 3; 8 August 1827, 3.

<sup>83</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 20 April 1864, 4; KA, L3-27/27, Thomas Heathcote, 28 May 1870.

<sup>84</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 1 July 1863, 1.

<sup>85</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 216-30.

<sup>86</sup>Stana Nenadic, 'The Small Family Firm in Victorian Britain', *Business History* 35, no. 4 (1993): 90.

<sup>87</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 27 October 1803, 1.

<sup>88</sup>KA, L3-27/40, Tenancy of Bath Farm, 4 November 1887; *Derby Mercury*, 27 August 1890.

<sup>89</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 18 May 1759, 4.

<sup>90</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 28 August 1767, 4.

**Table 1.** Occupations of Kedleston Inn's proprietors 1841–81. Source: TNA, HO 107/190/5 and HO 107/594/4, 1841 Census; HO 107/2006, 1851 Census; RG 9/1947 and RG 9/2506, 1861 Census; RG 10/3577, 1871 Census; RG11/3408, 1881 Census.

Year	Name	Location	Occupation as listed	Male Employees	Female Employees
1841	William Gallimore	Kedleston Inn	Farmer		
1841	Thomas Heathcote	Ashby de la Zouch, Leicestershire	Farmer	three servants	
1851	Thomas Heathcote	Penkhull, Stoke upon Trent, Staffordshire	Farmer, forty-eight acres	six men	
1861	Thomas Heathcote	Railway Inn, Leek, Staffordshire	Victualler		one barmaid, one domestic servant
1871	Thomas Heathcote	Kedleston Inn	Farmer, 107 acres	two indoor farm labourers, one errand boy	
1851	Robert Goodson	Harby, Leicestershire	Farmer, 162 acres	two labourers, one servant	
1861	Robert Goodson	Kedleston Inn	Farmer, 107 acres Innkeeper	six labourers, one boy, one ostler	one housemaid, one kitchen maid
1881	Edward Kidger	Kedleston Inn	Farmer, 248 acres	five labourers, four indoor farm servants	one domestic servant, one governess, one nurse

**Table 2.** Proprietors of Kedleston Inn, 1760–1887. Sources: Derbyshire Record Office, Q/RA 1/1–5, Licensed Victuallers' Recognisances, 1760–1827; Derby Mercury, 1760–1887.

Date	Proprietor
1760–5	John Lamb
1765	Thomas Lamb
1766–7	Francis Harris
1767–86	Francis Dawson
1787–94	Erasmus Stevens
1795–9	John Marsden
1800–3	Richard Smith
1804–7	Ann Stevens
1808–12	Mary Bull
1813–31	John Storer
1833–8	John Wade
1838–58	William Gallimore
1859–62	Robert Goodson
1863	Elizabeth Goodson
1863–7	William Ault
1867–72	Thomas Heathcote
1873–4	Mr Stevenson
1874–87	Edward Kidger
1887	R. H. Archer

years. Ann and her first husband, John (d.1765), had a son, also called John (b.1756). He may have been the same John Marsden who became the proprietor of the inn in 1795.

Periods of stability interspersed with a more frequent turnover of proprietors should not lead to the conclusion that all of the latter failed. Proprietors need judging against their stage in the lifecycle and balanced against the reality that most businesses were short-lived or changed hands frequently.<sup>91</sup> John Lamb (d.1765), Francis Harris

<sup>91</sup>Nenadic, 'Small Family Firm', 90–1.

(d.1767), John Storer (d.1831) and Robert Goodson (d.1862) died in post. For others, the inn was one in a series of business ventures. After leaving the inn, Erasmus Stevens returned to Derby as a farrier and veterinarian.<sup>92</sup> Richard and Jane Smith established an Italian Warehouse in Derby; John Wade became landlord of the White Hart, Burton-upon-Trent and then of the County Tavern, Derby, and William Ault combined the roles of innkeeper and farmer with that of an auctioneer.<sup>93</sup> For Thomas Heathcote, it was his last business venture before retirement.<sup>94</sup>

With an inn, farm and bathhouse to run, the scale of the enterprise meant that it could be undertaken neither cheaply, nor by a novice in the business. Innkeepers required an annual licence issued by magistrates backed by guarantors and sureties.<sup>95</sup> Moreover, even when the innkeeping aspects of the business ceased, the annual rent in 1887 was a sizeable £223 2s.<sup>96</sup> Many proprietors, like Thomas Heathcote, came with prior experience of farming and innkeeping (Table 1). Francis Dawson was formerly the proprietor of the Red and White Lion inns in Derby.<sup>97</sup> In 1783, Ann Borrows inherited the Bell and Castle inn, Derby. The following year, she married Erasmus Stevens (d.1796), a horse dealer, blacksmith and owner of the Half Moon in Derby. They became the proprietors of Kedleston Inn in 1787.<sup>98</sup> In an age riven by debt and credit relations, insolvency and bankruptcy, however, prior experience was no guarantee of future success.

Departures, bankruptcy and death all precipitated sales of farm stock, equipment and the contents of the inn.<sup>99</sup> The auctions attest to the extensive array of goods, fixtures and fittings needed to satisfy the requirements of discerning visitors. New proprietors had to restock the farm and refit the inn as Erasmus Stevens did when he furnished it ‘entirely new’ and ‘laid in a large stock of wines and other liquors of the first quality’.<sup>100</sup> The outlay required access to capital, loans or credit, or more likely a combination of all three and a real or perceived creditworthy reputation. Trade relied on credit arrangements and good reputations, but creditors eager for settlement could bring down otherwise sound businesses.<sup>101</sup> Given the fragility of many Georgian enterprises, it is perhaps surprising that in the long history of the inn that only two of the inn’s proprietors went bankrupt. This indicates business acumen on the part of most proprietors and the underlying commercial viability of the enterprise overall.

Theoretically, from the early-eighteenth century, bankruptcy proceedings excluded farmers because they potentially denied estate owners income derived from secured rents.<sup>102</sup> Innkeepers occupied a more uncertain legal position regarding bankruptcy because, as Aiden Collins notes, they ‘did not sell but rather “uttered” their provisions’,

<sup>92</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 30 June 1795, 4; 16 June 1796, 4.

<sup>93</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 15 March 1804; 9 August 1810; 27 October 1852; 16 August 1871.

<sup>94</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 28 February 1872, 1.

<sup>95</sup>Derbyshire Record Office, Q/RA 1/1–5, Licensed Victuallers’ Recognisances, 1760–1827.

<sup>96</sup>KA, L3–27/40, Tenancy of ‘Bath Farm’, 4 November 1887.

<sup>97</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 28 August 1767, 4.

<sup>98</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 23 January 1783, 4; 6 May 1784, 4; 24 May 1787, 4; Ann Bull et al, *Sadler Gate: a 1000 Year History of a Derby Street* (Derby, 2010), 65–6.

<sup>99</sup>For example, *Derby Mercury*, 21 August 1767, 4; 15 February 1787, 1; 8 November 1798, 4; 1 February 1832, 3.

<sup>100</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 24 May 1787, 4.

<sup>101</sup>Julian Hoppit, ‘Attitudes to Credit’, 1680–1790’, *Historical Journal* 33, no. 2 (1990): 308, 312–3, 315; D. A. Kent, ‘Small Businessmen and their Credit Transactions in Early Nineteenth-Century Britain’, *Business History* 36, no. 2 (1994): 57.

<sup>102</sup>Aidan Collins, ‘Bankrupt Traders in the Court of Chancery, 1706–1750’, *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 55, no. 1 (2021): 69–70.



supplying to customers ‘when requested rather than through a trading contract’.<sup>103</sup> A grey area existed, however, because ‘one individual could be found within the scope [of the law], while another excluded, depending upon the proportion of goods they bought or sold in relation to their [principal] livelihood’.<sup>104</sup> In consequence, farmers and innkeepers both featured in insolvency and bankruptcy proceedings.<sup>105</sup>

The commission of bankruptcy awarded against John Marsden in 1798 resulted from the networks of credit in which he found himself immured. The proceedings required him to ‘make a full Discovery and Disclosure of his Estate and Effects’ and to surrender all his assets for the benefit of creditors.<sup>106</sup> One consequence was the sale of the contents of Kedleston Inn and the livestock and implements of the farm.<sup>107</sup> If Marsden’s creditors believed that he had been honest in the declaration of his debts, they could ‘assent to or dissent from the Allowance of his Certificate’ of discharge, allowing him to trade.<sup>108</sup> Creditors assented to them if they believed that by doing so they had a greater chance of recouping monies owed.<sup>109</sup> Marsden’s creditors received a dividend in December 1799, after which silence prevails.<sup>110</sup> In 1804, Erasmus Stevens’s widow, Ann, and the administrator of his estate (sworn value £600.) announced her return to Kedleston Inn which, in order to attract visitors, she had ‘handsomely furnish’d and fitted up in a neat and suitable manner for the reception of the nobility, gentry &c’.<sup>111</sup> It is one of the few advertisements specifically targeting these social groups. In an advertisement of 1805 headed ‘Kedleston Bath’ she returned:

her grateful thanks to her Friends and the Public for the liberal encouragement she has experienced since her residence at Kedleston and assures them every exertion on her part will be used to merit the continuance of their Favours. She has completed the fitting up of her House in a manner she flatters herself will merit their approbation.<sup>112</sup>

Arguably, in fitting up and restocking the inn, Ann Stevens over-reached herself. In 1808, a trail of unpaid bills precipitated bankruptcy proceedings. Creditors were ‘desired to send an account of their debts ... in order that a speedy dividend may be made’.<sup>113</sup> Giving a sense of what she may have owed money on and what fitting up the inn entailed, a four-day auction of the inn’s contents took place. It included the furniture of sixteen bedrooms: twenty-six feather beds, five four post beds and eleven tent beds. There were mahogany dining, card and Pembroke tables, sideboards, dressing tables; mahogany chests, dressing and pier glasses; washstands, clocks, a pianoforte, carpets, wardrobes, chairs, linen, bedding, china, tea urns, silverware, pictures, prints, kitchenware, and a plethora of deal tables and painted furniture.<sup>114</sup> What the auction realised is unknown, but an indication of prices comes from a bill of 1779 for unpaid furniture

<sup>103</sup>Collins, ‘Bankrupt Traders’, 70.

<sup>104</sup>*Ibid*, 71.

<sup>105</sup>Kent, ‘Small Businessmen’, 51, 56; Julian Hoppit, *Risk and Failure in English Business 1700–1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 87–96.

<sup>106</sup>*London Gazette*, 29 September 1798, 928–9.

<sup>107</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 8 November 1798, 4.

<sup>108</sup>*London Gazette*, 29 September 1798, 928–9.

<sup>109</sup>Hoppit, *Risk and Failure*, 23, 37.

<sup>110</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 5 December 1799, 2.

<sup>111</sup>Staffordshire Record Office, B/C/11, Admon of Erasmus Stevens, 16 October 1798; *Derby Mercury*, 26 July 1804, 1.

<sup>112</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 13 June 1805, 3.

<sup>113</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 28 April 1808, 3.

<sup>114</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 17 March 1808, 2.

sent to Strelley Hall.<sup>115</sup> A mahogany desk table cost £1 11s 6d, a wine cistern £3 13s 6d, a pair of mahogany bedposts, £1 1s, a pair of stained and turned bedposts, 6s., two headboards, 2s., and a four post bedstead and two mahogany posts, £2 15s.

## 5. Visitors and tourists

Kedleston's proximity to Derby, some three miles distant, and its easy accessibility by turnpike roads seemingly gave it an advantage over other more rural or isolated spas like Buxton or Scarborough, even if the one of the attractions of such places was their remoteness and the arduous nature of the journey required to reach them.<sup>116</sup> The lack of a direct road linking Kedleston to Buxton and successive improvements to the Derby-Ashbourne-Buxton turnpike, however, made the latter the preferred route for travellers and tourists. To compensate, the inn offered horses and chaises for hire. During the summer the 'Kedleston Fly', costing 1s 6d per person, left the Bell Inn in Derby and a post coach ran daily to Kedleston but only if there were at least four passengers.<sup>117</sup> Not all visitors to the hall and park, however, stopped at the inn and took the waters. For many, Kedleston was just a short detour on the way to or from Buxton, Matlock Bath, Ashbourne or Derby, and enjoyed as part of the wider Derbyshire tourist itinerary. Viewing Kedleston between 11am and 2pm when the hall was open left enough time for an onwards journey. Both Matlock Bath and Buxton offered a range of water treatments, bathing options and social activities, including assemblies, concerts and excursions that far outweighed the attractions of Kedleston. Moreover, there was little to be gained from staying at the inn that could not also be achieved by staying in Derby where visitors could see the silk mill and china works, shop or attend the theatre and assembly rooms, or by staying in Ashbourne, with its shops, inns, assemblies and easy access to Dovedale, and taking a trip to Kedleston. It was from Ashbourne in 1772 that William Gilpin made an excursion to Dovedale and the next day visited Kedleston and Derby.<sup>118</sup> In 1774 and again in 1777, Samuel Johnson and James Boswell toured Kedleston on their way from Ashbourne to Derby.<sup>119</sup> In 1810, Dorothy Wordsworth 'Slept at Ashbourne', and the next day, 'went in a chaise to Derby and by the way viewed Lord Scarsdale's grand house and Park at Kedleston'.<sup>120</sup>

The foregoing might lend credence to arguments that the inn and baths struggled to attract sufficient custom – Adrian Tinniswood, for example, states that the 'sulphurous medicinal spring drew the occasional invalid' – but it is worth bearing in mind contemporary accounts.<sup>121</sup> In 1783, William Bray thought that the well and bath were 'used by many persons who are accommodated at the inn' and in 1792, William Bott noted, 'a great deal of company resort [to the inn] during the season, to bathe and drink the

<sup>115</sup>NA, Edge papers, DD/E/175/23, Michael Kayes to the executors of the late Thomas Edge, 2 April 1779.

<sup>116</sup>Borsay, 'Town or Country?', 161; Allan Brodie, 'Scarborough in the 1730s – Spa, Sea and sex', *Journal of Tourism History*, 4, no. 2 (2012): 128–9.

<sup>117</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 10 May 1776, 4; 11 June 1779, 2.

<sup>118</sup>Gilpin, *Observations*, ii, 227, 239.

<sup>119</sup>George Birkbeck Hill ed., revised and ed. L. F. Powell, *Boswell's Life of Johnson*, 6 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon, 1934–1950), iii, 160, and v, 432.

<sup>120</sup>Ernest de Selincourt, ed., revised, Mary Moorman, *The Letters of William and Dorothy Wordsworth: the Middle Years, 1806–1811*, part 1, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), 432.

<sup>121</sup>Tinniswood, *Polite Tourist*, 104.

water'.<sup>122</sup> *The Universal British Directory* also noted the popularity of the spring and the commodious inn 'where the resorting company live upon the same plan of communicative society as at Buxton [and] Matlock'.<sup>123</sup> This entailed dining at a common table and engaging freely in conversation.<sup>124</sup> The most convincing statement regarding Kedleston's popularity comes from James Pilkington in 1789: 'For the accommodation of those, who wish to try the efficacy of this water, his Lordship has built a good house in its neighbourhood. But some seasons it has been found scarcely large enough to receive all the company who have resorted to the place'.<sup>125</sup>

Few visitors detailed their precise purpose in taking the waters at Kedleston. Consequently, there is scant evidence to determine whether the specific nature of the waters acted as a decisive draw or indeed, whether they were considered truly beneficial. Samuel Johnson berated his friend the Revd Dr John Taylor of Ashbourne for this lapse, 'Of your health I expected that you would have given me some account. Have you been at Kedleston? And are you better for it?'<sup>126</sup> Feeling unwell in 1826, Lucy Hey (1813–26) informed her brother that she was taking the waters at both Kedleston and at Quarndon but preferred the former.<sup>127</sup> The reason for the visit of the Sabin brothers is unknown. Perhaps their relatively close proximity to Kedleston (Strelley was twenty miles away) influenced the decision. Perhaps also publications such as John Wesley's *Primitive Physick*, which stated that cold bathing cured a host of illnesses in young children, had an impact.<sup>128</sup>

One of the perceived attractions of spa resorts was the potential for visitors to mingle with an aristocratic clientele. There was, however, a fashion among the super elite to distance themselves from those below.<sup>129</sup> At Kedleston, it was unlikely that most visitors to the sulphur baths would encounter the estate's owners. For much of the time the Curzons were absent, and when at home, their own cold bathing facility below the Fishing Pavilion negated any health reason to visit the Sulphur Bathhouse. Moreover, piecemeal evidence suggests that, apart from those who attended elite events like the archery meetings, the inn generally attracted a local or genteel clientele of more modest means. Lincolnshire resident Lucy Hey arrived by cart and donkey from Ockbrook near Derby where she had been staying; the Revd James Plumptre from Cambridge arrived on foot during his tour of Derbyshire in 1793, but noted that 'the company was not very good'.<sup>130</sup> Arguably, while availing themselves of what Kedleston had to offer, such persons could not afford long stays and the higher prices of more modish places like Buxton and Matlock Bath.

For those accommodated at the inn, a few extant bills cast light on prices. In 1779, John Edge was charged 8s per week during his six-week stay.<sup>131</sup> Four weeks spent at

<sup>122</sup>William Bray, *Sketch of a Tour into Derbyshire and Yorkshire*, 2nd edn (London, 1783), 116; William Bott, *A Description of Buxton and the Adjacent County* (Manchester, 1792), 45.

<sup>123</sup>P. Riden, ed. *Derbyshire Directories 1781–1824* (Derbyshire Record Society, xxxiii, Chesterfield, 2006), 87–8.

<sup>124</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 217.

<sup>125</sup>Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, i, 238.

<sup>126</sup>Samuel Johnson, *The Letters of Samuel Johnson, 1731–1772*, ed. Bruce Redford (Oxford: Clarendon, 1992), 392.

<sup>127</sup>York Archives, Hey family letters, HEY/5/6, Lucy Gray Hey to William Hey, 27 April 1826.

<sup>128</sup>Wesley, *Primitive Physick*, 133–6.

<sup>129</sup>Peter Collinge, "'I Swim Like a Frog that has Lost the use of its Hind Legs': The Pursuit of Health and Leisure in Buxton, 1781–1790", *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* 40, no. 3 (2017): 388–9; Glover, 'Moffat Spa', 71.

<sup>130</sup>Plumptre spent two nights in Buxton: Ousby, *Plumptre's Britain*, 62–6; York Archives, HEY/5/6, Lucy Gray Hey to William Hey, 27 April 1826.

<sup>131</sup>NA, Edge papers, DD/E/175/44, Edge's bill for lodgings at Kedleston, 7 August 1779.

the inn by the Sabin brothers cost a lower 1s 4d each per week.<sup>132</sup> Given that in 1821, John Storer informed the public that ‘in consequence of the low price of provisions he has reduced his terms for board ... Gentlemen and ladies 4s 6d per day, servants 2s per day’, the charges for accommodation for Edge and the Sabins are suspiciously low.<sup>133</sup> Behind the headline prices, however, was a more expensive reality. Hotel and inn-keepers routinely charged for ‘extras’. Accommodation for lord and lady Macartney’s month in Buxton in 1789 cost £13 5s 6d, but extras for just one week cost £10 14s 10d.<sup>134</sup> In 1779, Mr Lyle’s two weeks and two days at Kedleston amounted to £1 3s but additional charges included: ‘the gentleman’s eating’, 6s, milk punch, 1s, servants’ food 3s, and ale, 6s 7d. Horse and chaise hire added a further £1 0s 9d.<sup>135</sup> A bill drawn up by proprietor Francis Dawson included costs for washing, the hire of chaises, greasing a carriage, a servant’s dinner and ale, food for a post boy, and corn and hay for the horses. The total came to £3 7s 4½d.<sup>136</sup>

Bills together with newspaper advertisements show that the inn provided board and lodgings in comfortable surroundings, transport options and a range of health, leisure and social activities. Unless visitors had their own transport and brought their own provisions, however, and with no other alternatives nearby, guests were reliant upon the inn’s proprietors to provide for their needs. Even so, the latter could not afford to be complacent.

## 6. Promoting the bathhouse and inn

All resorts relied on publicity. For minor spas, publicity was critical though its nature changed over time. Like elsewhere, in the first half of the eighteenth century, medical treatises noted Kedleston’s waters and the ailments they alleviated but from mid-century newspaper advertising became much more significant in the drive for custom.<sup>137</sup> Attention moved from ‘detailed chemical analyses carried out by the pioneer spa physicians to a more general and less scientific focus’ on health.<sup>138</sup> Newspaper advertising for the bathhouse and inn thus falls overall into two categories: announcements regarding the arrival or departure of proprietors and publicity relating to amenities or events such as auctions and meetings. Unlike the year-round advertisements for patent medicines in newspapers, repeat advertisements for the bathhouse and inn never ran for more than a few weeks at a time at most. The inn’s proprietors (Table 2) deployed stock phrases to convey information about facilities, accommodation and service at the inn, improvements made, the location, the quality of the water, and opportunities to visit Kedleston. With the exception of the poem about graffiti, there were no attempts at more creative approaches to advertising. Neither were there any testimonials or verses in the *Derby Mercury* praising the inn or waters as was common at other spas.<sup>139</sup>

<sup>132</sup>NA, Edge papers, DD/E/175/43, John Cade’s two bills for the boys when at Kedleston, 31 July 1779.

<sup>133</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 18 July 1821, 3.

<sup>134</sup>Collinge, ‘Health and Leisure in Buxton’, 390.

<sup>135</sup>NA, Edge papers, DD/E/175/35, Kedleston Bath bill, 22 June 1779.

<sup>136</sup>NA, Edge papers, DD/E/175/41, Kedleston Bath bill, 4 July 1779.

<sup>137</sup>Hembry, *English Spa*, 59–60.

<sup>138</sup>Ian Bradley, *Health, Hedonism and Hypochondria: the Hidden History of Spas* (London: Taurus Parke, 2020), 96.

<sup>139</sup>Glover, ‘Moffat Spa’, 67.

In 1767, Francis Dawson espoused the inn's pleasant situation, good air and bowling green, adding 'Whoever please to favour him with their company, may depend upon being well treated, with genteel accommodations, and proper attendance for bathing in Kedleston Bath'.<sup>140</sup> In 1787, certain of the spring's fame, Erasmus Stevens declared 'The salutary effects of the water in cutaneous and bilious complaints are so well known that it is not requisite to say anything on the subject'.<sup>141</sup> For John Marsden, the water was a decided selling point. He offered board and lodgings upon reasonable terms before adding 'the advantages which may be derived from bathing and drinking the waters, will be no considerable inducement to favour him with their company'.<sup>142</sup> In 1804, Ann Stevens pronounced,

There are warm and cold baths and it now being fully ascertained, that the Kedleston water is much more efficacious, in most cases as a Warm than Cold Bath, Mrs S. has the satisfaction of acquainting those who resort to Kedleston for the benefit of their health, that the baths have been lately repaired, and the accommodations for Warm Bathing much improved.<sup>143</sup>

Most of the advertisements issued by the inn's proprietors and guidebooks reveal their continuing reliance on dated scientific analysis of Kedleston's waters (James Pilkington, for example, relied on Thomas Short's observations) or a presumption that fame alone was sufficient inducement to attract regular custom.<sup>144</sup> In consequence, such descriptions as existed barely distinguished Kedleston's waters from general accounts that mineral waters were effective in cases of gout, rheumatism, ulcers and skin complaints. Kedleston's approach, therefore, ran counter to the emphasis placed by many resorts on the latest scientific and medical evidence to legitimise their claims, even if the evidence was not always as objective as it might appear. Some treatises, written specifically to promote a particular resort, did so while also denigrating others.<sup>145</sup> Nevertheless, they formed an important weapon in the marketing arsenal of a spa. Supplemented by books such as the Revd R. Ward's *A Guide to the Peak of Derbyshire Containing a Concise Account of Buxton, Matlock and Castleton* that by 1827 was in its seventh edition, Dr Charles Scudamore boosted Buxton and Matlock's ability to advance their positions as medical spas with two publications. The first, in 1820, was a report on the chemical and medical properties of mineral waters at England's leading spas.<sup>146</sup> The second, *The Analysis and Medical Properties of the Tepid Springs of Buxton* came out in three editions between 1820 and 1839.<sup>147</sup> There were no equivalent publications for Kedleston. Consequently, it failed to develop what John Walton described as a 'reputation for the treatment of specific kinds of condition'.<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>140</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 28 August 1767, 4.

<sup>141</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 24 May 1787, 4.

<sup>142</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 27 October 1796, 4.

<sup>143</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 26 July 1804, 1.

<sup>144</sup>Pilkington, *Derbyshire*, i, 236.

<sup>145</sup>Hamlin, 'Legitimization of English Spas', 69.

<sup>146</sup>Charles Scudamore, *A Chemical and Medical Report of the Properties of the Mineral Waters of Buxton, Matlock, Tunbridge Wells, Harrogate, Bath, Cheltenham, Leamington, Malvern, and the Isle of Wight* (London, 1820).

<sup>147</sup>Adams, *Healing with Water*, 72.

<sup>148</sup>John K. Walton, 'Health, Sociability, Politics and Culture. Spas in History, Spas and History: An Overview', *Journal of Tourism History*, 4, no. 1 (2012): 9.

Publicity for the bathhouse and inn of a different sort came from the proprietors of other businesses and properties who referenced Kedleston to promote their own interests. What impact such advertising had on Kedleston is unknown, but there was little point in others referencing the inn and bathhouse if they did not have at least local renown. In 1811, Mrs and Miss Moss promoted their boarding school in Quarndon through its location, 'being so well known on account of the Spa, its proximity to the Kedleston waters, as well as for its acknowledged salubrity'.<sup>149</sup> The following year a house in Quarndon was to let, 'less than a mile distant from Kedleston Bath'.<sup>150</sup> When William Thorpe of Quarndon announced his intention of opening a boarding school in 1824, he repeated the claim made by Erasmus Stevens: 'The sulphur well and baths at Kedleston Park, are too well known to require any observation'.<sup>151</sup> In 1827, Park Nook was to let, a 'delightful residence ... within ten minutes' walk of Kedleston, the Baths and Inn and Quarndon'.<sup>152</sup> In 1849, the vendors of a house also used its location in 'the immediate vicinity of Kedleston's baths' as an inducement to potential buyers.<sup>153</sup> Revealing changing attitudes towards bathing at a minor spa, however, the last indirect advertising reference to baths in the *Derby Mercury* appeared in 1851; direct advertising of them in the *Mercury* appear to have ceased in 1868, though advertisements for the inn continued.<sup>154</sup>

## 7. Conclusion

For all the advertising and claims made, Kedleston's Sulphur Bathhouse and waters were never truly fashionable. Moreover, the inn's proprietors were never wholly reliant on the income derived from them. As such, steady rather than spectacular business, much of it generated locally, was the secret of their longevity before (according to received accounts) earth tremors precipitated their decline.<sup>155</sup> On 6 October 1863, much of central England and Wales felt the effects of an earthquake.<sup>156</sup> The *Derby Mercury* reported a 'trembling of houses' and a 'clatter of windows'.<sup>157</sup> In 1865, Edward Lowe of Nottingham published evidence gathered from multiple witnesses: in Derby, a reservoir wall fell, there was a violent shaking of beds and some houses gave way.<sup>158</sup> There were no reports, however, of disrupted water supplies.<sup>159</sup> In 1867 and 1868, Thomas Heathcote announced that the hall, park and inn were open, 'also the baths, which are ... supplied with hot and cold water'.<sup>160</sup> In 1896, the *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal* reported another earthquake but concluded, 'No

<sup>149</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 1 August 1811, 3.

<sup>150</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 1 October 1812, 1.

<sup>151</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 7 July 1824, 3.

<sup>152</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 3 October 1827, 2.

<sup>153</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 4 July 1849, 2.

<sup>154</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 6 August 1851, 2; 24 July 1868, 4.

<sup>155</sup>Louise Maskill, *The Spa Waters of Derbyshire* (Buxton, Derbyshire, UK: Curlew, 2021), 5; Wigley, *Quarndon Spa*, 10; Craven, *Derby*, 104.

<sup>156</sup>R. M. W. Musson, 'A History of British Seismology', *Bulletin of Earthquake Engineering* 11 (2013): 777.

<sup>157</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 7 October 1863, 5.

<sup>158</sup>E. J. Lowe, 'History of the Earthquake, 1863, October 6th', *Proceedings of the British Meteorological Society*, ii (1865): 55, 80.

<sup>159</sup>Searching the British Newspaper Archive (11 October 2022) using terms 'Kedleston', 'baths', 'water', 'bathhouse', 'Quarndon', 'earthquake' and 'springs', 1863–1900, revealed no references disrupted to water supplies.

<sup>160</sup>*Derby Mercury*, 22 May 1867, 5; 24 July 1868, 4.

serious damage occurred'.<sup>161</sup> Rather than earthquakes, and as the ending of direct and indirect advertising indicate, newspapers reveal a more prosaic reality.

A gradual tailoff in the use of the bathhouse was the result of a desire for greater privacy on the part of the aristocracy, changing fashions and innovation, things that even the most determined advertising could do little to alter. Bathing at Kedleston declined over the same time as developments in hydrotherapy, balneology, and medical hydrology revived the fortunes of other inland spa resorts like Buxton and Matlock.<sup>162</sup> Kedleston also faced additional competition from Derby Infirmary's artificially heated public baths (1811), revitalised cold baths at Bakewell (1816), the 'warm, vapour and shower baths' at the New Inn, King Street, Derby (1829), and from 1832, swimming baths at Ilkeston.<sup>163</sup> Additionally, in an age of improved transport connections and the growth seaside resorts, those spas that failed to upgrade or augment their facilities struggled.<sup>164</sup> The reality was that these locations offered more facilities in modern, often urban, settings, which, with their attendant attractions and social events, gave the sick increased opportunities 'to care for their health in public', and tourists more ways to spend their money.<sup>165</sup> Viewed in this light, Kedleston was neither public nor commercial enough. Even after the provision of hot bathing facilities and periodic repairs to the building's fabric, the Sulphur Bathhouse remained too small and isolated in its landscaped setting to capitalise on new trends and did not warrant an expansion of facilities at the inn.<sup>166</sup> A reduction in the Hall's opening arrangements from six days a week to two reduced the number of potential visitors to the bathhouse and inn.<sup>167</sup> The latter continued to host dinners, balls and club meetings, but by the mid-nineteenth century there was a greater emphasis in advertisements on hunt meetings and sales of crops and livestock.<sup>168</sup> Put simply, farming, always a mainstay of the business, became more lucrative. An article in 1873 on artist Thomas Creswick (1811–69) underscores this shift. Creswick had been fond of Kedleston, 'at whose once stately inn he fixed his headquarters'.<sup>169</sup> Evidently, the inn had lost its former appeal.

In 1897, an article by George Curzon (1859–1925) about his ancestral home and grounds contained details of the bathhouse which, 'within the memory of the present writer, was on certain days in the week frequented by crowds of visitors, who combined the consumption of its peculiarly evil-smelling waters with the inscription of their names on every square inch of the building'.<sup>170</sup> Seemingly, the bathhouse no longer attracted the type of customer it had once had, bathing no longer took place and the building was in decline. This reinforces the impression given in the *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal* in 1878 when it reprinted parts of Lipscomb's 1802 account of Kedleston Spa. It prefaced the extracts with 'The following interesting notions of the medicinal springs ... are

<sup>161</sup> *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal*, 26 December 1896.

<sup>162</sup> Adams, *Healing with Water*, 59–62; Mike Langham, *Buxton: A Peoples History* (Lancaster, UK: Carnegie, 2000); 55–6.

<sup>163</sup> *Derby Mercury*, 25 July 1811, 3; 17 July 1816, 1; 21 October 1829, 1; 4 July 1832, 2.

<sup>164</sup> Adams, *Healing with Water*, 60.

<sup>165</sup> Roy Porter and Dorothy Porter, *In Sickness and in Health: The British Experience, 1650–1850* (London: Fourth Estate, 1988), 197.

<sup>166</sup> KA, L3–19/10a, E. and G. Broomhead, 16 January 1828; L3–19/11a, N. Couslon, 17 January 1828.

<sup>167</sup> *Derby Mercury*, 13 June 1805, 3; 1 July 1863, 4.

<sup>168</sup> For example, *Derby Mercury*, 27 February 1861, 5; 27 May 1863, 4; 1 January 1873, 1; 4 March 1874, 1.

<sup>169</sup> *Derby Mercury*, 5 February 1873, 6.

<sup>170</sup> George Curzon, 'Kedleston Hall', *Magazine of Art*, January 1897, 23.

well worth preserving'.<sup>171</sup> No mention was made of the bathhouse being in use. Indeed, as occurred at many other minor spas, by the late-nineteenth century the attraction of bathing and taking the waters at Kedleston had faded. No longer considered a 'useful thing' in the landscape, the bathhouse had become nothing more than an historical curiosity of ornamental value only.

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<sup>171</sup>*Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal*, 5 April 1878, 7.