

# Brickmaking in Holy Sepulchre Parish, Northampton

by

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## SUMMARY

*There is only one area of brickworkings recorded in the Holy Sepulchre parish of Northampton and this dated from at least 1755, with production continuing to c.1925. During the middle of the 18th century, there were two separate adjacent kiln sites totalling c.10 acres, positioned in a field next to a turnpike road half way between Northampton and Kingsthorpe. The evidence points to both sites being run as a single large scale business by a brickmaker while being owned by wealthy residents in Northampton. Later 19th century owners were more often brick-makers, for instance, the Johnson family who worked in all aspects of the building trade including the buying of land.*

*The area was the only brick kiln shown on the pre-1825 map of Northampton and the 1827 Bryant map shows it was by far the biggest workings in the Northampton area. The brick kilns are on six maps from the pre-1825 map to the 1901 map. Buildings on the site are shown as sparsely distributed and short-lived structures. They are initially relatively small and rectangular but by the later 19th century they were often larger and a few were circular.*

*In the later 19th century the brickworking expanded from the original site to include areas adjacent to the north in Kingsthorpe Parish so that in all, four separate brick kiln owners were producing on the site. By the end of the century most of Northampton's brickmakers worked in this area but outside mass-produced bricks and the lack of new house building in Northampton from c.1890 resulted in successive kiln closures.*

## INTRODUCTION

This article describes the brickworks that lay within the 18th/19th century Holy Sepulchre parish boundaries of Northampton (Fig 1; SP 756 619). The Holy Sepulchre parish is approximately one quarter of Northampton (the other three parishes being All Saints, St Giles and St Peters). The area of the former kilns lies partly within a wildlife site looked after by the St George's Community and Wildlife Group (Fig 2). In 2000, as part of successful lottery grant bid, the St George's Community and Wildlife Group published a booklet on the wildlife site and a history of the area was summarised in it (Atkins 2000). Since then, further research has been conducted into this brick kiln area and the history reappraised. Primary documents especially conveyances, maps, militia lists, parish rate books, poll books, trade directories and wills have been used. Documents that may be relevant to this site such as from the Markham collection have not been archived yet by the Northamptonshire Record Office and these could provide further information.

The 1632 Pierce map of Northampton records the site was formerly pastoral land just within the northern boundary of the medieval town with a stream running through it. In the later 1779 Inrolment awards for the site the area is called the former "Barnes Meadow" (Inrolment awards book E, 536). It is uncertain when the brickworks were founded and they may date from far earlier than the first documentary evidence of 1755 (see concluding discussion below).

The geology of this area was suitable for brick-making as the site is within the Upper Lias clay series (Ordnance Survey, 2002). This was mentioned in the 1887 sale document which states, "Extensive beds of stone and clay underlie the land, and brick-making has been and is carried on upon part of the estate, for which purpose there is a considerable bed of clay."

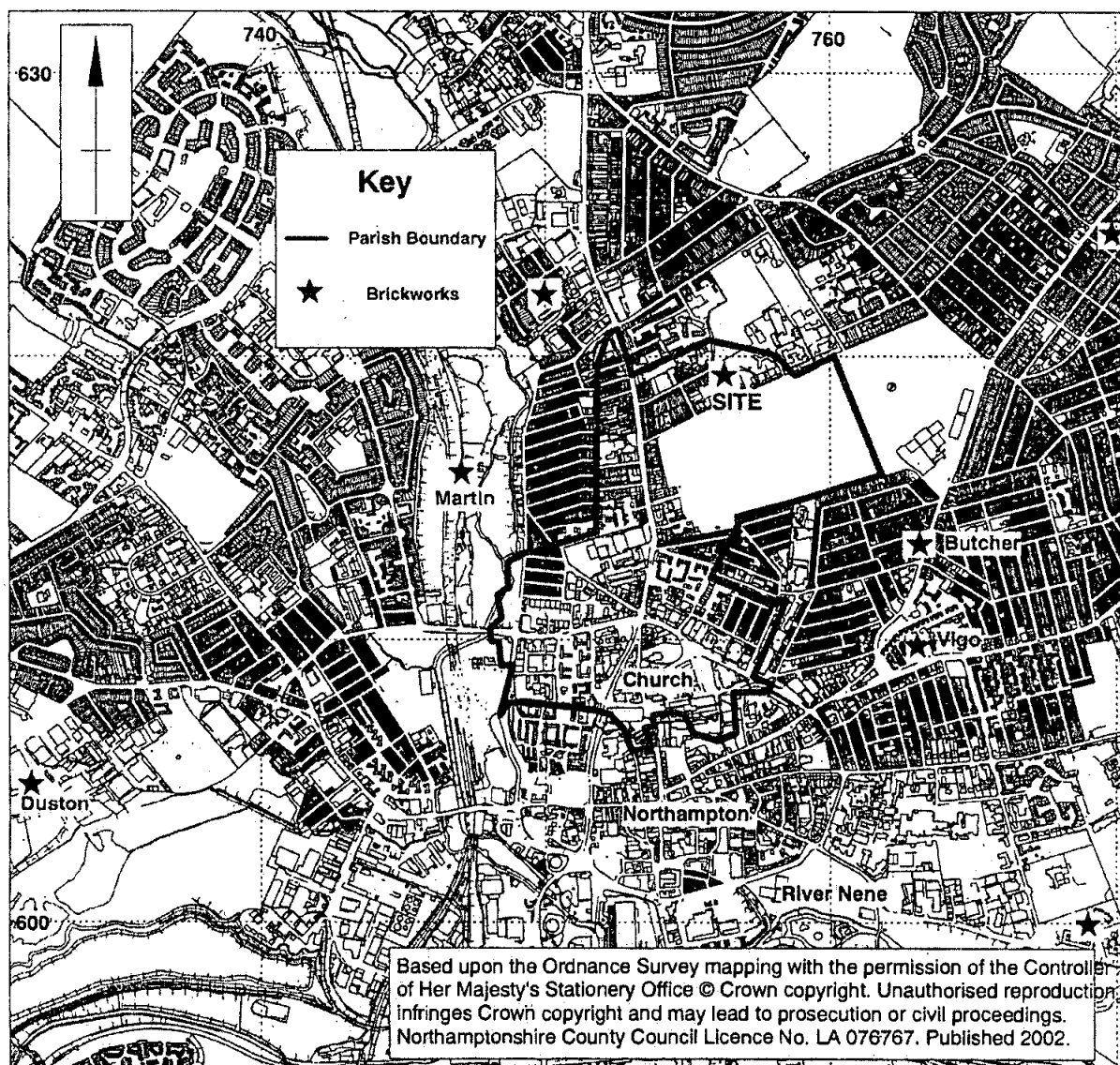


Fig 1 Position of the Holy Sepulchre parish boundary with known brickworks  
(after O'Rourke 1970, 20) (1: 25,000)

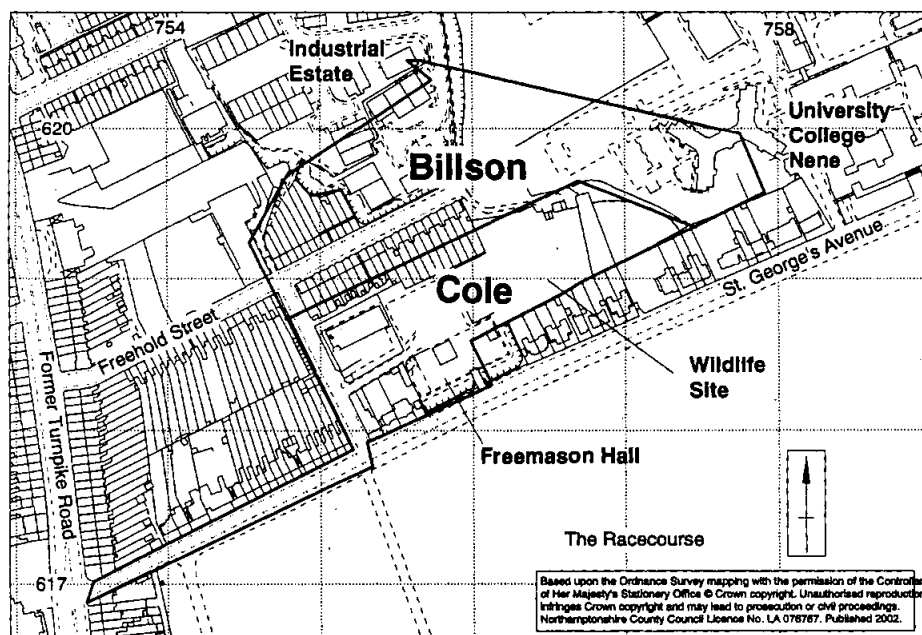


Fig 2 Property boundaries of brick kilns in 1778 overlaying modern Ordnance Survey map (1: 5,000)

## BRICK KILNS IN HOLY SEPULCHRE PARISH

### BRICK KILNS c. 1755-1790

The establishment of the brickworks may have been because of its location next to a good transport route (turnpike road) between two centres of population, Northampton and Kings-thorpe (Fig 3). In this period the brick kilns seem to be worked as a capitalist enterprise by a brickmaker on behalf of wealthy Northampton individuals.

### WOOLSTONS AND BARRATT'S OWNERSHIP

The first evidence of brick kilns was in the 1755 parish rate book which states in consecutive listings 'Mr James Woolston for Brick Kilns £0 4s 8d' and beneath this 'George Barratt for Brick Kilns £0 2s 4d.' These amounts were the annual rates paid to the parish. No brick kilns were recorded in three earlier rate books (dated 1732, 1733 and 1746). James Woolston may have taken over both sites as George Barratt is not referred to again in later rate books, only James Woolston. Woolston soon also stopped being involved in the brick kilns as the St. Sepulchre's rate book for 1761 lists Edward Cole "for Woolston's Brick Kilns" with a rate of 2s 4d.

There is nothing documented to tell us about the type of kilns initially on site, though we have some information on the land owners. George Barratt in his will of 1759 is recorded as being a malster and living in Abington Street but no brick kilns are mentioned. He is recorded as having two messuages or tenements

with the building yards on the north side of Abington Street and two tenements on the south side of Abington Street. He also gave each of his daughters £150, one of his son-in-laws, Edward Cole, was the later owner of the site. Edward Cole is recorded as a malster and living in Abington Street in the 1768 poll book, implying he may have taken over that business from his father-in-law.

There is less known about James Woolston. A James Woolston is listed in conveyances of other Northampton areas surviving in the Northamptonshire Record Office dated 1769 which implies, that he may have been involved in land speculation (NRO YZ 4132, 4134 and 5358). The Woolston family were wealthy, the mural memorials to the several generations of the Woolston family in the Holy Sepulchre church show they did good service to the community including some being aldermen (Cox and Sergeantson 1897, 91). The Woolston family are known to have been involved in at least part of the building industry with John Woolston, an alderman of Northampton in 1740, recorded as plastering the interior of both Lampport church and hall.

### EDWARD COLE'S AND ROBERT BILLSON'S OWNERSHIP

From 1761 to 1768 Edward Cole is the only person listed in the rate books as having brick kilns and it is possible that Edward's Cole inherited the kilns from Barratt and then brought out Woolston. From 1772 to 1781 Edward Cole and Robert Billson are registered as having land at the brickhill in the rate books. The 1778 map of the enclosure awards, records the land ownership of both sites with Billson owning 6 acres, 3 rods and

14 perches and Cole 4 acres 1 rod and 36 perches. For both areas, brick kilns continued to be worked within their boundaries into the 20th century (Tables 1 and 2).

With the Inclosure award of 1778 both Billson and Cole were awarded a new road, "one private carriage drift road of the breadth of 15ft from and out of the Turnpike road from Northampton towards Kingsthorpe" (Inrolment awards book E, 544). There is some discrepancy over the situation of the brick kilns. The Inrolment award rightly mentions that there were "present brickworks on this allotment being the property of the said Robert Billson" but the awards do not mentioned the brick kilns also on Cole's land (Inrolment awards book E, 536). The

continual mention in the parish rate book of brickworks on Cole's land and in his will implies this was a clerical error.

Only in Cole's 4 acre site do we have a vague idea of use of the land. In his will dated 3rd February 1792, he records that by articles dated the 29th April last he contracted and agreed to sell and convey the c.4.5 acre brick site to John Johnson of Kingsthorpe, aforesaid yeoman for the price or sum of £800. He records that there were, "brick kilns, lime kilns and all other buildings, erections sheds and appurtenances there in ..." The lime was presumably for mortaring bricks and or manuring fields.

It is probable that Robert Billson's and Edward Cole's brick kiln areas were run as a single capitalist enterprise under John

Table 1: Owners and occupiers within the former Cole area (1778 Inclosure map) using rate books and other sources

Period	Type	Landowner	Occupier	Road
c.1755-c.1761	Brick kilns	James Woolston & ?George Barratt	??	
c.1761-1790	Brick kilns	Edward Cole	?John Turvey	
1790-c.1802	Brick kilns	John Johnson	John Johnson	Field Land
c.1802-1816	Brick kilns	William H Johnson	William H Johnson	Field Land
1816-1822	Brick kilns	Martha Johnson	Benjamin Johnson	Field Land
1822-1839	Brick kilns	Benjamin Johnson	Benjamin Johnson	Field Land/ Kingsthorpe Rd
1839-c.1845	Brick kilns + house	William H Johnson	William H Johnson	Kingsthorpe Rd Brick kilns
c.1845-c.1877	Brick kiln, yard + Houses	Stephen Green	Stephen Green	Kingsthorpe Rd/ Brick Kiln Lane
c.1877-c.1910	brickyard (brickmaker)	Rand Greenough	Rand Greenough	Kingsthorpe Rd/ Northampton Rd

Table 2: Owners and occupiers within the former Billson area (1778 Inclosure map) using rate books and other sources.

Note from c.1793-c.1862 the land seems to have been divided into two areas.

Period	Type	Landowner	Occupier	Road
c.1772-1785	Brick kiln	Robert Billson	John Turvey	
1785-1789	Brick kiln	Richard Earl	??	
1789-c.1793	Brick kiln	Thomas Scriven	??	
c.1793-1811	Brick kiln	??	Kennedy Gordon	
c.1793-1811	Brick kiln	John Cooper	??	Brick Kiln Close
c.1811-1822	Brick kiln	?Thomas Masters	Thomas Masters	
c.1811-1822	Brick kiln	Joseph Cooper	??	Field Land
c.1825-c.1838	Brick kilns	Samuel Johnson	Samuel Johnson	
c.1821-	Brick kilns	Thomas Masters	?Charles Ireson	Field Land
c.1838-1841	Brickyard	Elizabeth Holt	Samuel Johnson	-
-	Brick kilns	? Charles Ireson	?Charles Ireson	
1841-c.1852	Brickyard	Elizabeth Holt	Thomas Johnson	Brick kilns
	Brick kilns	George Masters	George T Masters	Kingsthorpe Rd
c.1852-1857	Brickyard	Francis Rouse	Thomas Johnson	Brick kilns
	Brick kilns	Thomas Masters	Thomas Johnson	Kingsthorpe Rd
c.1857-c.1862	Brickyard	Francis Rouse	Thomas Johnson	Kingsthorpe Rd
	Brick kilns	George Cooke	Thomas Johnson	Kingsthorpe Rd
c.1862-c.1880	Brickyard + Yard	A B Markham	Thomas Johnson	Kingsthorpe Rd
c.1880-1886	Brickyard	C Markham	George Savage	Kingsthorpe Rd
1886-c.1893	Brickyard	C Markham	H Martin	Kingsthorpe Rd

# BRICKMAKING IN HOLY SEPULCHRE PARISH, NORTHAMPTON

Table 3: Comparison of Robert Billson, Edward Cole and John Turvey

	Occupation & Political	Land	Residency
Robert Billson	1768 Carrier (poll book)	1767 32 acre farm in Kingsthorpe (NRO MAP 2845). Various property including messuages in Newland as well as the brick kiln site. Acquired White Lion Inn in 1765 which he leased out (NRO YZ 1726-9)	Abington St
	1774 Baliff		
	1777-80 Chamberlain		
	1784 Gentleman (poll book)		
Edward Cole	1785 Grazier (will)	1792 five acres of farmland in Kingsthorpe & 8 acres in Hardingston (will) Will proved for nearly £2000.	Abington St
	1768 Malster (poll book)		
	1770 Balliff		
	1774 Yeoman (poll book)		
	1778 Mayor		
	1784 Yeoman (poll book)		
	1784 Alderman		
John Turvey	1790 Gentleman (poll book)	1788 five messuages in Woolmonger St & two messuages in Newland (will)	Abington St
	1792 Gentleman (will)		
	1768 Brick Maker (poll book)		
	1774 Brick Maker (poll book)		
	1784 Brick Maker (poll book)		

Turvey as the brickmaker since indirect evidence points to all three being linked by their similar occupations and political interests (Table 3). As both Billson and Edward Cole had various other interests, including land, this is probably why the poll books describe their occupation as 'yeoman' or 'gentleman', which was seen as socially more acceptable than Turvey's 'brickmaker'. The upwardly mobility of Billson and Cole can be attested by their own occupation descriptions and their political attainments.

Documentary evidence implies that Turvey ran both Billson's and Cole's site. Billson in his will mentioned that he was considerably indebted to John Turvey and proposed to give him two messuages in Newland and £150 for "work then unfinished in the brick kiln business" (NRO YZ 1735). Further links can be seen in that Turvey lived in a house in Abington Street owned by Billson (NRO YZ 1737). Turvey is linked to the Cole family by marriage and in his will Edward and John Cole are both given a third of his estate. In Turvey's discharge of expenses he lists Edward Cole, gentleman, as one of his two executors (NRO YZ 1737).

In 3rd July 1785 Robert Billson's will was proved and in it he gave his real and personal estate to Richard Earl (Table 2). In 1789, the brick kiln was among other properties Richard Earl sold to Thomas Scriven, a Sadler and Hatter, in a court agreement in exchange for £160 and was recorded as, "3 acres in St. Sepulchre parish, brick kiln" (NRO YZ 1738; Table 2). As Billson's original area in the 1778 Inclosure Awards was just over 6 acres, it is probable the kiln site had been divided into two later ownerships/rentals one site on behalf of the Cooper family and the other run by the Gordon family.

## BRICK KILNS 1790 – c.1845

For the first time, through map evidence from the 1810s we are able to see the type of buildings on this land. These maps show that the brick kilns continued only in the area formerly owned by Billson and Cole. Documentary evidence seems to show that the former Cole area was run throughout the period by a single building family, the Johnson's (Table 1). The former Billson area

seems to have been divided into two separate brickworking areas, one initially run on behalf of the Cooper family up to c. 1822 and the other initially by the Gordon family (Table 2).

## MAP EVIDENCE

The first map to show the kiln sites is labelled by the Northamptonshire Record Office as pre-1825 but it probably dates from c.1810 (Fig 3). Though not shown in close up, the map shows that there are at least five buildings all within the former area of Billson's and Cole's land. This is the only kiln site shown on the map and it is therefore likely that this is the only brick kiln site outside the town itself in the surrounding fields. The later 1827 Bryant map shows the number of kilns or buildings have increased to eight on the site though they are still within the former area of Billson and Cole (Fig 4). The Bryant map shows there were two other kiln sites within the Northampton boundary.

## JOHNSON FAMILY OWNERSHIP OF THE FORMER COLE AREA UP TO c.1845 (Table 1)

The 1793 rate book states John Johnson's ownership of the "late alderman Cole" land and his last entry is in the 1802 rate book which records John Johnson of Kingsthorpe for brick kilns. John Johnson is probably the same John Johnson who advertised on the 21st April 1783 in the local newspaper selling stone, coals and lime &c from his Kingsthorpe quarries (reproduced in Wright 1997, 120).

The rate books show the brick kiln went from John Johnson to William Johnson. This seems to be the William Johnson who was listed as being a Mason and who died in 1808 when he was a wealthy man with a proved will of £2000. He had property in Kingsthorpe, Cotton End, Hardingstone and Kingshead Lane with his estate passed to his large family, which included six sons. The kiln seems to have passed to his son, also William Johnson as the rate books continue to record William as the owner up to 1815. In his will of 1816 William Johnson is recorded as a builder and in it he left, "messuages, cottages

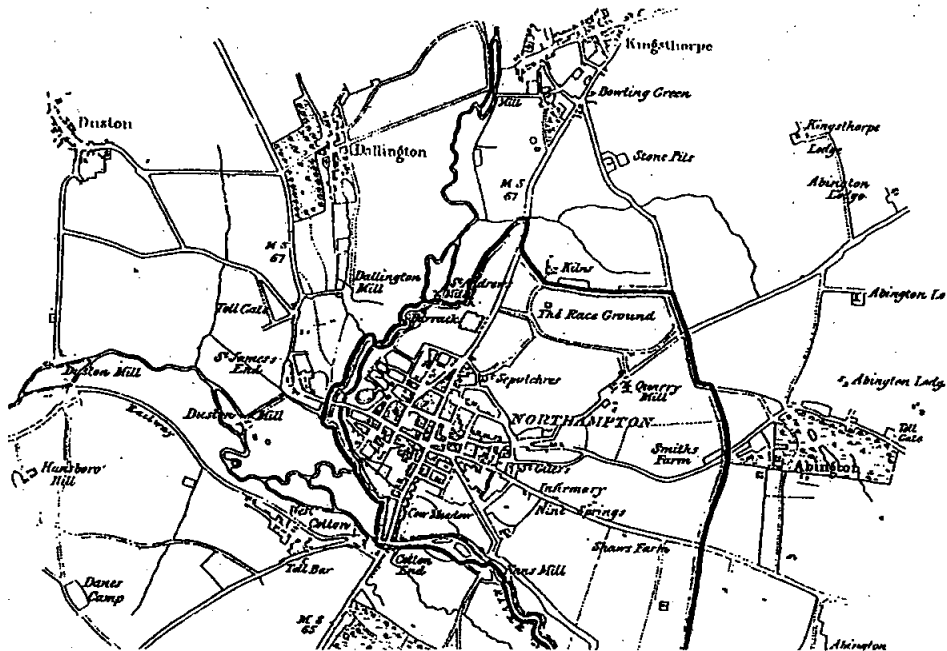


Fig 3 Pre-1825 map of Northampton (note the kilns registered above The Race Ground)  
(Northamptonshire Record Office)

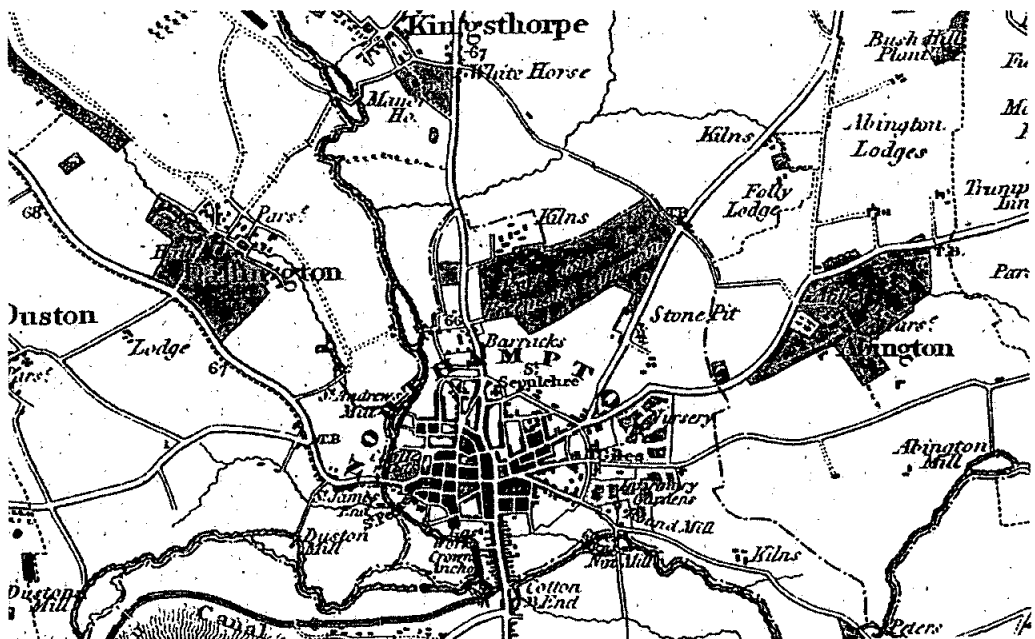


Fig 4 1827 Bryant map (Northamptonshire Record Office)

closes, brick kiln lands, tenements, hereditaments and real estate" to his sons Benjamin and William and wrote that he hoped they carried on the present trade and business. Benjamin may have been too young as Martha, William's widow, is recorded in the rate books from 1817 to 1822. In the latter rate book, Martha's name is crossed out and Benjamin Johnson inserted. Benjamin is listed in the rate books till 1839. In his will of the same year Benjamin records that his son, William was just 15. The family seems to have been unfortunate in that key members of the family died young. The kiln seems to have passed to a kinsman, William H Johnson who in the rate books is listed as owner and occupier of the kilns (and house) at Brick kilns or Kingsthorpe Road till 1845.

Overall, the Johnson family seems to have been involved in various aspects of the building trade, for example, in the 1826 poll book there were seven Johnsons listed 5 builders (Benjamin, James, Samuel, Samuel and William) and 2 bricklayers (Joseph and Thomas). In this 1826 poll book Thomas Johnson, bricklayer, is recorded as living at Brick kilns. This seems to be the house recorded at Brick kilns in later Rate books of our site (Table 2). There are enough wills surviving in the Northamptonshire Record Office to trace most of the Johnsons back to the William Johnson who died in 1808.

There is a likelihood that at least some of the family worked together from initially buying the land to making the bricks and building the houses. Several conveyances surviving in the Northamptonshire Record Office show that both Samuel Johnson and William Hemery Johnson in the 1830s and early 1840s brought land. In 1835 Samuel Johnson acquired eight messuages near the brick kilns (NRO NPL 2306). In the 1830 and 1833 Holy Sepulchre rate books there are properties called Samuel Johnson row and Samuel Johnson's houses. On land at mortar pit close, Kingsthorpe, William Hemery Johnson was recorded in 1841 as having a steam engine for cutting stones implying the family were also possibly using stone on the houses (NRO NPL 2764).

The family's venture in business can be seen to have taken a turn for the worse with the monetary decline of the fortunes of its members from the 1830's. On the deaths of Benjamin (Brick Maker) his will was proved on 2nd August 1839 for less than £200. Samuel Johnson's (Builder) will was proved on 29th April 1840 for less than £100. Thomas Johnson (Mason) will was proved on 12th July 1837 for £30. Another example of the financial difficulty of the family can be seen in William Hemery Johnson, having to mortgage several of his properties in 1841 (NRO NPL 2764/5) including his old "ancestral" land holding at mortar pit close, subject to redemption for £2,200. Financial problems may have induced William H Johnson to sell this family brick kiln site in c.1845-8 to Stephen Green (Table 2).

#### *COOPER OWNERSHIP ON PART OF THE FORMER BILLSON LAND (Table 2)*

It is likely that Thomas Scriven sold the land on to John Cooper who is recorded as having a brick kiln in Brick Kiln Close in the Holy Sepulchre rate books of the 23rd October 1793. The site location seems likely as a later entry in the parish rate book records the site as being in Field Land and map evidence shows the only brick kilns in Field Land was in the former Billson and Cole area. The Holy Sepulchre rate book records that Joseph Cooper had taken over these brick kilns from John Cooper by 1813. This kiln seems to have closed down in 1822 when it is listed in the rate book as "close late Cooper's Brick Kilns" in Field Land with a rate of £1 10 shillings.

John Cooper seems primarily to have been a butcher but also an investor in property. The poll books for 1784 and 1796 both list a John Cooper as a butcher in Sheep Street. He is called butcher in his last will proved on 11th September 1811 for £2000. This will briefly mentions his shop with appurtenances in Butchers Alley but mentions frequently giving his son Joseph "messuages, cottages, closes, land tenements, hereditaments and real estates" without going into details of the estate. By listing himself as a butcher in these poll books he implies that he saw being a butcher as more important than a brickmaker. Joseph Cooper, as with his father, is also in the 1818 poll book listed as a butcher from Sheep Street. Given the affluence of the Coopers, as seen by John's will, and their preference for the butchery trade, it is likely that the brickworks were seen as an asset and the kilns rented out or managed by a brickmaker.

Joseph Cooper seems to have sold this part of the former Billson site to Thomas Masters, as the 1824 Holy Sepulchre rate book lists that Thomas Masters paid the same amount of rates as the former Cooper site (£1 10 shillings) in Field Land. He seems to have been working with Charles Ireson as some of the later rate books have Ireson instead of Masters paying for this plot of land. Thomas Masters is recorded as a mason in the 1818 poll book and a builder in the 1826 poll book. Thomas Masters, builder of Northampton, is recorded in conveyances and mortgages in both Kingsthorpe and Northampton from the 1818 to 1840's implying he was not only a brickmaker but also into land purchasing for house building. The largest land conveyance to Thomas Masters in the Northamptonshire Record Office records two land areas costing £1,200 (for 10 acres, 31 perches) and £1,000 respectively (NRO YZ 4240-4).

#### *GORDON AND LATER MASTERS BRICK KILN ON PART OF THE BILLSON LAND (Table 2)*

A brick kiln was first listed under Kennedy Gordon in the Holy Sepulchre rate book of 24th October 1793 and was charged at 10 shillings. He is recorded as living in Sheep Street though the location of this relatively short lived kiln is not definite. We know the Billson land was divided into two with half going to the Coopers, and the Gordons same start date in parish rate books seems too much of a coincidence. Kennedy Gordon is last mentioned in the 1804 rate book when he pays 18 shillings rates to the Holy Sepulchre parish. In his will, dated 18th December 1805, he is recorded as being a mason, and the will was proved sub £100. Kennedy Gordon was listed as mason in 1774 and 1777 militia lists as well as the 1791 Universal British Directory of Trade and Commerce. It is probable that Gordon went from being a stone mason to being a mason and brick maker in c.1793. His wife, Ann, and Elizabeth Ashby were his executors and both were illiterate as they left their marks only. The Holy Sepulchre rate books show that his wife, Ann, continued with this business for a few years and is last recorded in 1809 as paying £1 for brick kilns.

The rate book shows that Thomas Masters had taken over the brick kiln in c.1811 but the 1822 rate book lists the brick kilns as being empty. At this point Masters seems to have moved to the other part of the former Billson site (see above). Samuel Johnson seems to have taken over this area as he is recorded as having brick kilns in Field Land. The 1838 rate book shows the land was owned by Elizabeth Holt and occupied by Samuel Johnson. This occupation continued to 1840 when he died. The will, dated as 29th April 1840, recorded Samuel as being a builder and was proved for less than £100. Thomas Johnson took over occupation of Samuel's business.

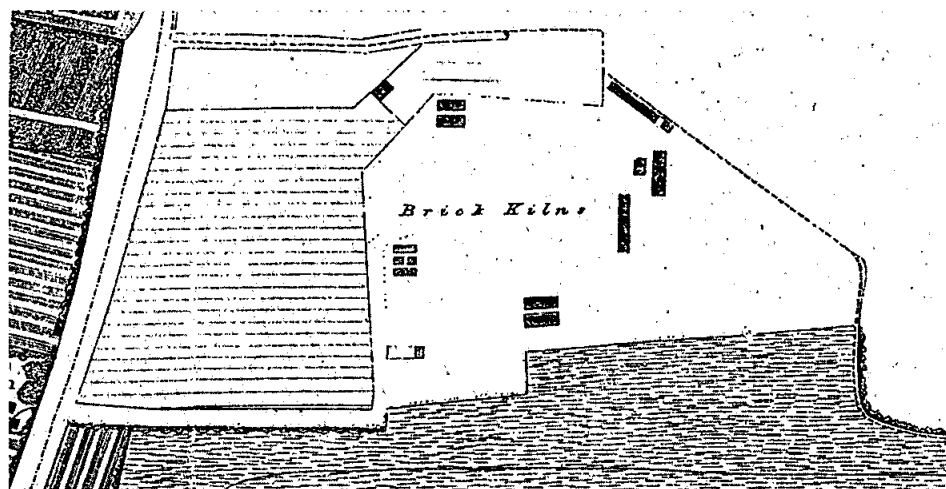


Fig 5 1847 Wood and Law map (1: 5,000) (Northamptonshire Record Office)

#### BRICK KILNS IN THE PARISH FROM c.1845

Brickworks on the former Billson and Cole area continued to be worked up to c.1893 and c.1906 respectively. Documentary and map evidence shows that by 1881 new brick kilns were constructed directly to the north of the Billson and Cole site on land belonging to the Kingsthorpe parish. This venture was short-lived as brickmaking finished in the two areas by c.1914 and c.1925 respectively (Tables 4 and 5). The map evidence shows that throughout the area brick kilns were temporary structures, which were regularly updated to make them more efficient. Documentary evidence shows that on the former Cole site there were only two owner/occupiers in more than 60 years whereas on the former Billson site the owners were using the site as an investment, and in a 50 year period three separate brickmakers leased the site. By the late 19th century, including the new Kingsthorpe area, more than half of the Northampton brickmakers were producing on this site.

#### LAYOUT AND MEASUREMENT OF THE BRICK KILNS FROM MAP EVIDENCE (Figs 5-8)

The layout of the individual kilns and other buildings were for the first time accurately drawn on four different maps from 1847 to 1901. The 1847 Wood and Law map was surveyed probably several years before it was published (Fig 5). It has 14 individual rectangular buildings on the site all within the site of the former Billson/Cole areas and was accessed from the original 1778 entranceway allotted by the Inclosure Awards to Billson and Cole.

The rectangular buildings are often clustered in groups of two, three or four in various parts of the site. Given the small scale of the map, the buildings measurements need to be taken with caution. Some of the buildings appear to be c.10m in length, most were c.20m and two up to 40m in length however these dimensions may be excessive. Studies on other early nineteenth century British brick kilns show that structures were often small

and tended to consist of two walls of between 7 and 10m long, and about 3m high, spaced within 2.5m and 4m apart (O'Rourke 1970, 8). These kilns were known variously as the 'scotch' or updraught kiln. In each of the buildings O'Rourke calculates between 20 and 35,000 bricks were placed between these walls and broken bricks would act as end walls (O'Rourke 1970, 8-9).

The A B Markham estates were surveyed by A Milne in February 1881 (Fig 6). As Markham only owned the former Billson land site, the kilns and other buildings to the south on the former Cole's land site are not shown. New brick kiln areas adjacent to the north of the former Billson Area in Kingsthorpe are not drawn though there is a road marked "to brick kiln" implying there had been an expansion into this area by this date.

In the Markham map, the brick kilns in the former Billson land are in different places compared with the 1847 Wood and Law map. Two large kilns are positioned at right angles to each other, one c.32m by c.8m and the other c.15m by 10m. The size of the kilns seem to be fairly accurate as they are almost identical to the 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (see below). It is likely the kilns were a downdraught type which were appearing by the middle of the 19th century and would hold between 30,000 and 40,000 bricks (O'Rourke 1970, 9).

This 1881 map shows that the area along this part of the Kingsthorpe Road had for the first time been developed, as well as Arthur Street and part of Freehold Street and St. George's Terrace (then called Brick Kiln Lane). This took place in the late 1840s onwards with Freehold Street being constructed in 1857 by the Northampton Town and County Freehold Land Association.

The 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey shows the whole site (Fig 7). On the former Billson land, the two rectangular kilns, shown on the Markham map remain though a new rectangular kiln has been built adjacent to the west, measuring c.30m by c.5m. On the former Cole site, four separate rectangular buildings all c.10m by c.5m are shown at different parts of the site of which two are labelled kilns.

The kilns built in Kingsthorpe parish are shown for the first



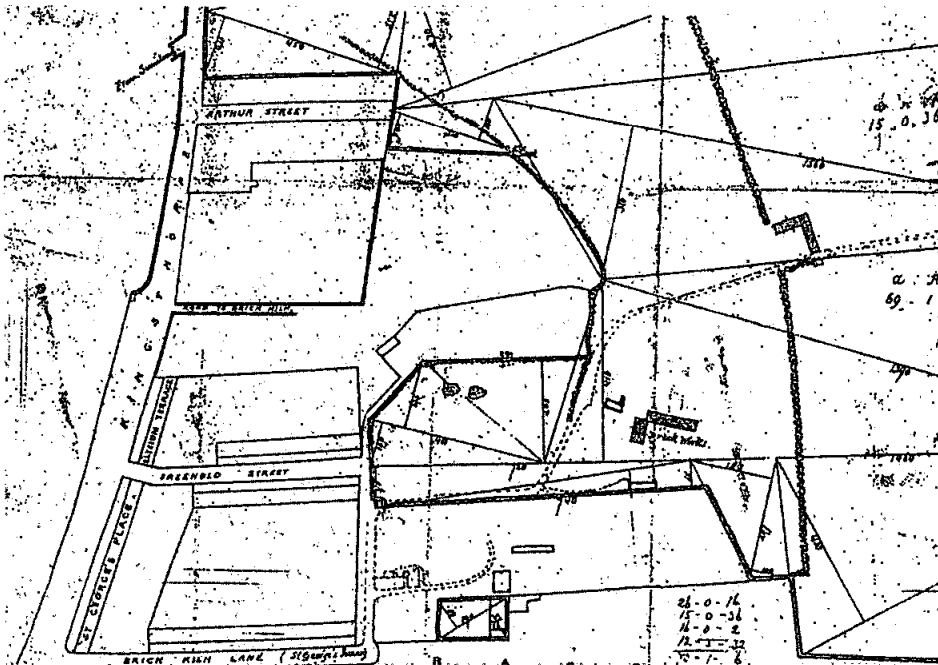


Fig 6 1881 A B Markham estate map (1: 5,000) (Northamptonshire Record Office)

time and they reach as far north as Arthur Street. The kilns are in two areas. Firstly, the road from Kingsthorpe Road (shown on the Markham map) led to three rectangular buildings c.15m by c.5m in size, before continuing to the 'Brick Field'. Here there were six rectangular buildings of various size of which two were recorded as kilns. The two kiln buildings were c.8m by c.5m and c.15m by c.5m respectively. Two of the other four buildings were substantially larger in size both between 25m and 30m in length by c.10m.

Secondly, to the south of Arthur Street lay three circular structures in a line recorded as kilns, all c.10m in diameter, with a large rectangular building, c.50m by c.10m, directly to the north. Circular kilns were a new variant of the downdraught kiln built in the later 19th century in the country they had a capacity to hold between 30 and 40,000 bricks (O'Rourke 1970, 9).

This 1st edition Ordnance Survey map also shows the topography for the first time. The shaded areas denote quarry pits and on the east side there are several ponds, which seems to point to large-scale quarrying having already occurred on the site.

The 1901 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map shows that there were only three areas of brickworks still in production with the former Billson site devoid of kilns (Fig 8). The former Cole area has a collection of three structures labelled 'Brick Works'. This comprised a main rectangular body c.32m by c.10m with a thin rectangular structure c.15m by c.5m attached at right angles to it. Two small rectangular buildings lay immediately to the east and both measured c.15m by c.5-6m.

In the Kingsthorpe Parish area, the road leading to the brick kilns from Kingsthorpe Road and the initial three rectangular

buildings from the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map remained though all the other buildings including the circular kilns had gone. The former kiln area to the east is hashed implying it had been quarried presumably for clay. New kiln buildings are recorded directly to the north east of the quarried area and comprise three rectangular buildings, one c.28m by c.18m and two c.12m by c.6m as well as a small round structure with a c.7m diameter.

The 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map show the bricks works are increasingly being hemmed in by the beginnings of domestic development, for example in the extension of St. George's Avenue and Arthur Street (Fig 8).

#### FORMER COLE AREA FROM c.1845 (Table 1)

In the 70 years to the end of brickmaking on this part of the site in c.1914, there were only two brickmakers, Stephen Green, who owned and ran the site between c.1845-8 and c.1877-80 and Rand Greenough. Within this site Stephen Green built three cottages, stables and sheds with the appurtenances near to or adjoining this brickyard which were mentioned in his 1889 will. The cottages are presumably the three houses listed in Brick Lane in the 1862 Holy Sepulchre rate book. They were rented out to various people, presumably worker at the brick kilns. Stephen Green himself moved from 2 Upper Mounts (1874 Whellan Directory) to 19 Langham Place, a few hundred metres from his brickworks (1884 Wright Directory).

In his 1889 will Stephen Green gave Thomas Green, Jane Ray,

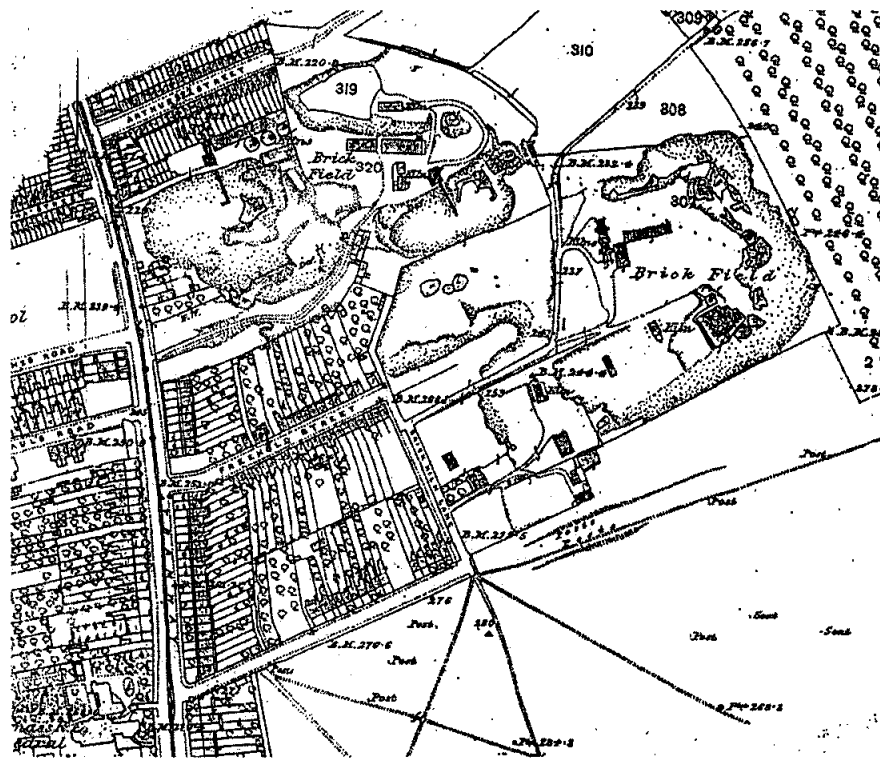


Fig 7 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey map (1: 5,000) (Northamptonshire Record Office)

Harriot Wolf and Clara Stubbs an equal share in the unsold portion of a brickyard with the stables, sheds and other appurtenances near to the Race Course. The will recorded that this brickyard was occupied by Rixon brothers. Mrs Rixon is listed as a brick or tilemaker living at 4 Freehold Street (1874 Whellan Directory) and Thomas Rixon as a brick or tilemaker in Kingsthorpe Road (1884 Wright Directory).

Stephen Green in his will in 1889 described himself as a brick manufacturer and he seems to have been successful as his proved will was valued at £5,432 3 shillings 3d. In addition to the Racecourse brickworks he also owned two other brick businesses which were listed in his 1889 will, the disused brickyard at Vigo garden ground and 2 cottages and a brick business at Wooton. In addition he had property including 6 messuages and a shop situated and known as Palace Yard in Church Lane, Northampton.

Though Green's will shows he owned at least part of the site in 1889, Rand Greenough is recorded in the Holy Sepulchre parish rate book as occupier and owning a brickyard in the site from c.1877-80. Several trade directories from 1884 to 1910 list Rand Greenough as a brick or tilemaker, the 1884 Wright directory lists Rand Greenough at Kingsthorpe Hollow, the 1894 Kelly Directory at Brick Lane and the 1906 and 1910 Kelly Directories as a brickmaker, Racecourse Brickyard, Freehold Street.

#### FORMER BILSON AREA FROM c.1845 (Table 2)

The Parish rate books show that Francis Rouse took over Elizabeth Holt's part of the Billson land in around 1852, though Thomas Johnson carried on occupying the land. On the other part of the former Billson land, George Masters ownership and occupation continued to c.1852. From c.1852 to c.1862, the rate books show ownership went from Thomas Masters to George Cooke, and Thomas Johnson seems to have rented the site as the rate books show him as occupier sometime between c.1848 and 1852. The 1850 Slater Directory shows that Thomas Johnson was a brickmaker and living in Scarletwell Street, the 1874 Whellan directory listed him as a brickmaker though he moved near the site living in Kingsthorpe Road. In around 1862, A. B. Markham took over ownership of both parts of the former Billson land and rented out the site. The rate books show Thomas Johnson continuing to occupy the site to c.1880. This marked the end of the Johnson family era in this industry that can be seen by the fact that in the 1884 Wright Directory there was no Johnsons in any part of the brick/building lists.

The rate books show that the former Billson area was then rented out successively to two short-lived brickmakers: George Savage from c.1880-1886 and then Henry Martin to the end of brickmaking on the site in c.1894. The 1884 Wright Directory

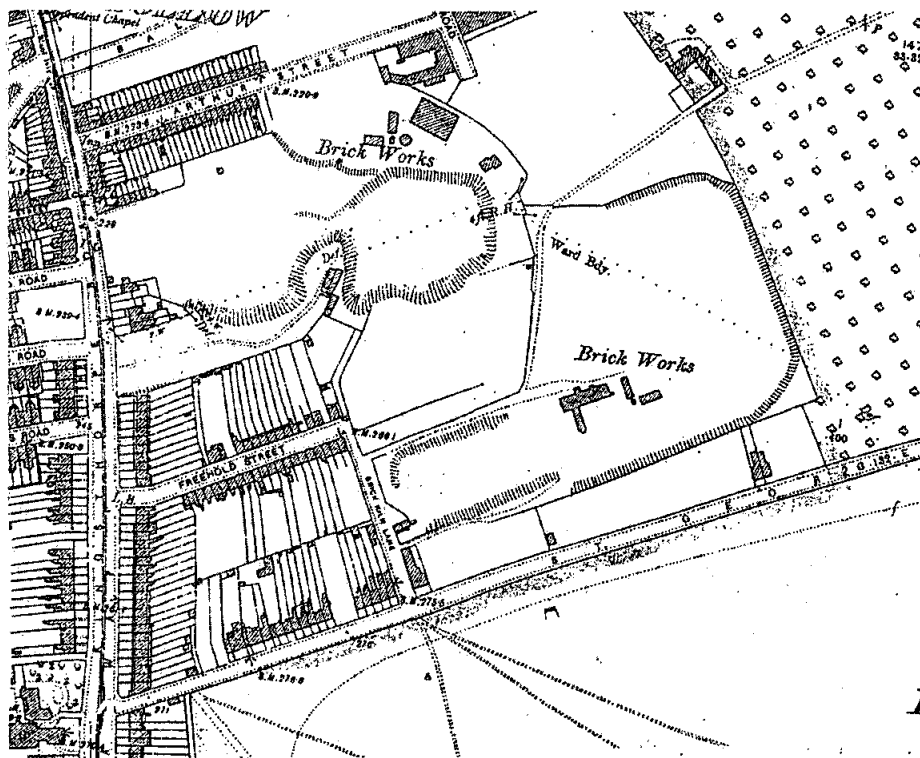


Fig 8 1901 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map (1: 5,000) (Northamptonshire Record Office)

records that Savage was a brickmaker with his address at Cotton End and Stoke Bruerne. This may imply he had more than one business. The 1885 rate book has Savage's name crossed out and Martin's name inserted, though the later 1903 Kelly Directory lists Savage as a brickmaker at South Bridge Wharf, Bridge Street. This presumably implies that Savage continued as a brickmaker elsewhere and presumably used the River Nene to import or export bricks.

Henry Martin is recorded in the 1894 Kelly Directory as a brickmaker at Brick Lane, Northampton. Martin also carried on his business in a new brickworks c.1km to the south-west of the site, next to the railway (O'Rourke 1970, 20). The 1903 Kelly Directory records Martin as a brickmaker listed at Spencer Road, St. James End and Thenford Street, Northampton.

The Markham family were attorneys at law and were interested in very large property deals. When A.B. Markham died in 1874 he left major estates in the county and a £45,000 fortune. The ownership of this site should be seen as an investment, not an interest in brickmaking *per se*. The Markhams estate can be seen in Figure 6, which shows land ownership of part of the estate in 1881. The sale document dated Friday July 22nd 1887 showed that this 70 acre land area was to be sold off in four different lots. The Billson area was part of lot 4 of this estate. Later rate books show this area was owned by C Markham (Table 2).

#### EXPANSION INTO KINGSTHORPE PARISH (Tables 4 and 5)

The Markham map implies that brickmaking expanded into Kingsthorpe parish sometime prior to 1881 (Fig 6). Rate books for the parish survive only from 1893, but at this date shows that there were two areas of brickmaking in this parish.

Manton Laser owned the site in the southern part of this new area to c.1903 with Oliver and Co. the occupier. The 1894 Kelly Directory records that Oliver R and Co. were brickmakers in Kingsthorpe. The Armstrong Brick Company took over occupation sometime around 1896 and seem to have brought the site from Manton (Exec). The 1903 and 1906 Kelly Directories record that George Durant was secretary of the Armstrong Brick Company, which continued to run and occupy the site to around 1914.

Brickworks on land directly to the South of Arthur Street was worked by Josiah Ireson. Josiah Ireson was recorded in the 1884 Wright Directory as Brick Makers in Kingsthorpe Hollow, though the date of arriving on this site is unknown. The 1893 rate book records Ireson as landowner and occupier though he may have been having financial problems as the 1896 Kingsthorpe rate book show the rate paid to the parish was reduced on appeal with the grossed estimated rental cut from £150 to £90.

Arthur Chown, took over c.1910, and this brickworks was still in use in 1925 as the St. Lawrence parish rate book records him

Table 4: Owners and occupiers in the new southern area using rate books and other sources

Period	Type	Landowner	Occupier	Road
?Pre1893-c. 1896	Brickyard + land	Manton Laser	Oliver + Co	Northampton Rd
c. 1896-c.1903	Brickyard+ land	Manton (Exec)	Armstrong Brick	Northampton Rd
c. 1903-c. 1914	Brickyard + Land	Armstrong	Armstrong Brick	Northampton Rd
c. 1914	Factory in Brickyard	Armstrong	P Jeyes + Co	Northampton Rd

Table 5: Owners and occupiers in the new northern area using rate books and other sources

c.1884-c.1910	Brickyard + land	Josiah Ireson	Josiah Ireson	Northampton Road
c.1910-c.1914	Brickyard	A Chown	Josiah Ireson	Northampton Road
c.1914-c.1925	Brickyard + works	A Chown	A Chown	Arthur Street

as owner and occupier of the brickyard and works at Arthur Street. These workings seem to be soon ended as the 1926 3rd edition Ordnance Survey map shows no brick buildings on the site. By 1920, the Kelly Trade Directory has Chown as the only brickmaker in Northampton, though the 1924 Kelly Directory shows a new brickmaker was established called the Weston Favell Brick company. Chown himself was a well known builder and local councillor.

#### LATER USE OF THE FORMER COLE, BILLSON AND KINGSTHORPE AREAS

In the former Cole area, the western part of the site was built over by domestic housing in the 1930's and the Freemason Hall in the 1970's (Fig 2). The eastern part became a dumping area, with leather products deposited in large quantities in around 1920, before becoming allotments by 1938 (4th edition Ordnance Survey map). Presently, it is partly owned by the Freemason's hall as a car park and green 'scrub' land and the remainder is a green wildlife site on land owned by University College Northampton. The former Billson land has been increasingly built over with domestic housing in the 1930's, an industrial estate and recently University student accommodation in the 1990's (Fig 2). There are areas still unbuilt in Trinity School playing fields and next to University College Northampton's car park. The Kingsthorpe expansion area became partly an industrial estate in the 1960s, though part is unbuilt within the Trinity School playing fields.

Two parts of the former brickworks are still standing. The northern boundary of the site and The Racecourse still survives, consisting of a 19th century ironstone wall standing on a bank, which seems to be the original boundary recorded in the 1778 Inclosure awards. A fragment of the exterior wall of the large brickwork structure shown on the 1902 2nd edition Ordnance Survey map survives in the wildlife site. Recent pond digging within the wildlife site has recovered material including 18th century bricks as well as later bricks. There is at least 20 worked stone pieces, including window tracery, lying on the site including a couple with brick pieces attached to the stonework. As several of the brickmakers are also recorded as being involved in stone masonry/cutting (e.g William H Johnson), it is likely the stone/brick pieces on the site are cast offs.

It is possible that parts of the former brickworks may be limited to small islands of survival within the Freemasons land, the wildlife site, other University College Northampton land and Trinity School playing fields. This may be the only brick kiln in the Northampton area, which has standing structures, however fragmentary. Figure 1 shows that only one other brickmaking area has any real potential for surviving remains below ground as later development seems to have built over former kiln sites (and this is a modern kiln started c.1895 and operated by Henry Martin (O'Rourke 1970, 20)).

## DISCUSSION

The discussion looks at the wider brick industry in Northampton putting the information from the kilns from the Holy Sepulchre parish into perspective. The importance of the brick industry is measured in relation to its impact on the town's local economy and society.

## GEOLOGY

A lot of Northamptonshire comprises Upper Lias clay which is good clay for making bricks, and this quality was well known from an early date (Morton 1712, 69). It was not surprising that by the end of the 19th century that it was on the Upper Lias beds that the largest brickworks were built in the county (Starmer 1970, 6). There is also a plentiful supply of good quality limestone bedrock from which Northamptonshire stone has been quarried from the Roman period. In Northampton, this stone working can be seen in the 1632 Pierce map, which shows several stone pits around the town's fields.

EVIDENCE FOR EARLY BRICK MAKING IN  
NORTHAMPTON

There is very little physical evidence for early brick-making in Northampton. No seventeenth century or earlier kilns are known, but a Tudor brick Dower House at Fawsley, suggests brickmaking, was taking place in the county. In Northampton most, if not all, of the surviving pre-1750 buildings seem to be made of stone, for example, the 17th century Welsh House on the market square or the 17th century former court sessions building. There seems to be little documentary evidence for early brickmaking in Northampton as the Northamptonshire Record Office holds only three references to pre-1750 brickmaking in the town in its index forms. In all three cases the location of the brick kilns are not recorded. There is the will of Christopher Tompson (Brick Maker) dated 14 February 1689/90. In 1693 Thompson had to pay taxes (5 shillings 6d) for a Brick Kilne (Markham 1898, 64) and a proved will of a brickmaker, Antony Turvey of St. Sepulchre parish is dated 24th February 1742/3. The latter will is unfortunately a pre-printed one so it does not record information such as if Antony Turvey is related to John Turvey brickmaker on our St. Sepulchre site.

That there are only three references to brick making may indicate an absence of such production however Morton wrote that in every one of the twenty hundreds in the county there was a brick kiln, at, or very near to Daventry, Towcester, Northampton, Wellingborough and Kettering (Morton 1712, 69-70). The Towcester site may have been run by William Ratledge whose will and inventory is dated as 25th September 1731. The position of the Northampton kiln is unknown. As many of the above kilns are outside the main towns in the fields away from settlement, it is feasible that the kiln Morton refers to is our Holy Sepulchre kiln area. Certainly, this kiln area dates from at least 1755 and it is the only kiln area shown on the pre-1825 map.

The plentiful supply of stone may be a reason why there seems to be a lack of early brick kilns. Also the evidence suggests that though there was good clay for brickmaking there was no cheap fuel (coal) to use. Morton, himself mentions the scarcity of wood in the west part of the county from Northampton to Higham resulting in a high price for fuel (Morton 1712, 12). Brick making may have been largely uneconomic compared with stone building. Before 1760 Northampton was without a navigable river to

take trade boats and so Northampton traders had to use roads which increased the cost enormously. "Ever since the 16th century, Northampton had suffered from a chronic shortage of cheap fuel . . . various schemes were proposed to enable freight-carrying boats to ascend the Nene as far as Northampton, although none of them was carried out." (Hatley 1980/1, 210-1). Alsop saw the improvement of the River Nene was of critical importance in the development of transportation in Northamptonshire (Alsop 1985/6).

It is therefore likely that for economic reasons there was little early brickmaking in Northampton although it was widely recognised that brick had some advantages over stone (Morton 1712, 70). Morton quotes that a brick oven is sooner hot, than one of stone of the same dimensions. A floor of brick is drier, imbibes any wet that falls upon it, more speedily than a floor of stone of the former sort, and it is not subject to sweating in damp weather. Once these economic reasons were dealt with, the expansion of the industry was easier especially with the major increase in home building in Northampton at the end of the 18th century (see below).

Despite the expansion of brick industry in the 18th and 19th centuries, some of the brickmakers seem also to have worked stone at the same time. Kennedy Gordon was recorded in his will as being a mason though he was also a brickmaker on our site. William H Johnson had stonecutting machinery at Mortar Pit Close, Kingsthorpe, as well as being a brickmaker on our site and the Butcher kiln site also had a stone quarry on that site (see below). It may not be a coincidence that early to middle 19th century houses in Northampton are often stone faced with the remainder in brick.

PERCEIVED RISE OF BRICK KILNS FROM THE MID 18TH  
CENTURY

Towns in Britain expanded (or contracted) depending on different local circumstances. In the 18th century, in contrast to other important East Midland centres of Leicester, Derby, Nottingham and Coventry, Northampton did not increase greatly in population (RCHM 1985, 70). The success of the 18th and 19th century building industry in assisting the growth (or lack of growth) of Northampton has to be a main discussion area. It has been long recognised by economic and social historians that an active building trade can boost the trade (and population) of

a town. "The building trades were active in all areas of expansion, it is often possible to correlate regional bursts of industrial growth with new housing. Moreover the output of the builders represented a very high proportion of new capital" (Checkland 1979, 165).

The expansion in the Northampton brick industry was not insignificant; from the seemingly minimal pre-1750 brickmaking, by 1768 the poll book shows us there were at least four brickmakers in Northampton at that time and by the 1774 poll book records there were five brickmakers. Northampton brick trade seems to be prosperous and running well in this period as at least one of the early brickmakers were attracted from other professions. Thomas Jackson was listed as a bone cutter in the 1768 poll book but by the 1774 poll book he was a brickmaker.

Evidence from this report shows that leading 18th century Northampton citizens were investing and running diverse speculative businesses. The brick area in this report was one of several ventures they (George Barratt, Robert Billson, Edward Cole and James Woolston) were involved in. This brick-making site, even looking at it as a single example, was not a small risk as the site covered over 10 acres in all. This can be seen in Cole's 4 acres sold in 1790 for £800 to John Johnson as a going concern.

These four people from well to do families were establishment figures e.g. Billson had been a bailiff and chamberlain while Cole had been a bailiff, alderman and mayor of the town. As such they may reflect the leading aspirations of the town. It is likely that the economic rise and population growth in Northampton from the 1790's into the 19th century was partly caused by the capitalist climate pursued with vigour from at least the mid 18th century by Northampton's leading citizens. It is important to note that these leading citizens spent decades pushing for the River Nene to be made navigable as they perceived it would have economic benefits and they had been only successful in 1760.

The evidence of the brickmaking industry therefore does seem to some extent, to contradict Hatley's assertions that there is no evidence for quickened industrial activity at Northampton in the years after 1760 (Hatley 1980/1, 217). Hatley was right to point out that it was not until the 1790's that the Northampton population showed any signs of a significant rise. In the second half of the 18th century Northampton's population rose from 5,136 in 1746 to 7,020 in 1801 (a rise of 36.69%). The national growth in population from 1750-1801 was around

50% (Hopkins 1989, 31). Therefore Northampton's growth was significantly less than the national population growth average over a slightly longer period. As population increase can be regarded as a direct cause of economic growth this is significant (Hopkins 1989, 31). The question is, can this lack of growth be blamed on the possible pre-1760 'stagnation' period?

#### THE BRICK INDUSTRY AS PART OF THE ECONOMIC EXPANSION IN THE EARLY TO MID 19TH CENTURY IN NORTHAMPTON

The Northampton population rose from 8427 in 1811 to 51,881 in 1881, an increase of 515.6%. This compares with the rise of the national population in this period from 10 million to 26 million, an increase of 160%. People were therefore attracted into the economically successful Northampton by more than three times the nation population increase.

According to Hatley, Northampton's rise as an industrial town dates from 1815, due to the opening of a branch canal in that year (Hatley 1980/1, 218). He argued, that the real growth in Northampton dates from after 1815 because the price of coal was lowered due to this opening which caused major expansion (Hatley 1965/6, 243). This theory can be over emphasised as it does not explain why Northampton was booming well before 1815 as seen by population rising from 7,020 in 1801 to 8,427 in 1811. The building of the new canal had the active support of the Northampton hierarchy, which had already been investing and speculating in businesses well before 1815 (see above). There were other reasons for growth in Northampton from the late 18th century such as the increase in the demand for service footwear in the late 18th century resulted in the Northampton shoe industry expanding considerably from about 1793 (RCHM 1985, 70).

The lowering in coal price certainly helped many of the industries including the brick industry. It is not insignificant that the number of brickworks also increased after c.1815. Of the eight known Northampton brickwork locations shown on Figure 1, only one (our site) is on the c.1810 pre-1825 map of Northampton, three on the 1827 Bryant map and the others later. Local contemporaries noted this expansion, for example, the antiquarian, Baker, wrote, "a brick kiln has been established within these years in the Abington side of this (Kingsthorpe) parish." (Baker 1822-30, 39).

Past Northampton historians have underplayed the role of the brickmaking/building industry in the expansion of Northampton. In reality this industry had a significant effect on the town in the early/middle 19th century. Brickmakers/builders not only brought tracks of land, often with lent money/mortgages, but also built the houses. This spiral of speculation and investment escalated the capital in the town, increased the employment as well as building new accommodation for a rising population.

Evidence from this report shows that both the Johnson family (in the former Cole area) as well as Thomas Masters (in part of the former Billson area) were pursuing this policy from at least the 1818 into the 1840's (see report for details). Conveyances surviving in the Northamptonshire Record Office show that Thomas Masters and the Johnson family were both, separately, buying tracts of land, and were also involved in brickmaking as well as building the houses. This diversification within the industry can be seen, for example, in the Johnson family where the 1826 poll book shows they were brickmakers (Benjamin and Samuel), bricklayers (Joseph and Thomas) and builders Benjamin and Samuel). Other contemporary Johnsons who didn't seem to have voted, such as builder William H, should be further added to this list. In the Johnson family case this diversification may have occurred since John Johnson brought Cole's brick kilns in 1790.

There may be other extended builder/bricklayer and maker families in Northampton, the 1826 poll book, has four Marriots with a mixture of the building trade jobs. Without going into the records, it is unknown how many other land speculators/brick makers there were. Thomas Grundy, a local iron-founder, built his own brickyard and became a property developer having brought a considerable portion of the Monks Park area in 1832 (Bailey 1981/2, 293). Grundy also set up Northampton's first building society. There was other reasons for house building. The liberals in Northampton (under Joseph Gurney), partly to enfranchise workers, set up the Northampton Town and County Freehold Land Society. Land was brought and in the next two decades with the Northampton Town and County Freehold Land Association setting up three estates on the west and east side of Kingsthorpe Road and at Far Cotton (Lovell 1992/3, 299).

In all, the number of houses in Northampton grew from 1,600 houses in 1811 to 5,016 houses in 1851. But this expansion was not constant. Between

1831-1841 1,284 new homes were built in Northampton whereas between 1841-1851 there were only 521 new homes. This may be partly due to problems of some brickmaking/building speculators in this later period. The financial problems of two of the building speculators from the later 1830s period, Samuel and William H Johnson has been catalogued in records held by the Record Office and William seems to have sold his brick kiln site by 1845. This seems to have affected the Johnson family as a whole as can be seen in Benjamin, Samuel and Thomas Johnson's wills, which were proved for less than £200, £100 and £30 respectively. It is presently unknown if other speculators/brickmaking/building families had similar financial problems in the later 1830s to 1840s.

#### POSITIONING OF THE NORTHAMPTON BRICK KILNS AND THE CHANGE OF THE WORKING/OWNING PATTERNS IN THE 19TH CENTURY BUILDING TRADE

The brick kilns shown on Figure 1 (apart from our site) were all 19th century in origin and were positioned in the former Northampton town fields next to roads, prior to expansion of the town. Once the new town's expansion passed the kilns by, they mostly closed. Often these kilns lasted only a few decades. This report shows that, by the 1880s, up to four brickmakers were located in one area in the St. Sepulchre parish comprising over half the town's brickmakers. These kilns were in the right position as, "The main growth of the town in the 19th and 20th centuries has been to north-east in the direction of Kingsthorpe" (VCH 1930, 33). The expansion of area of our brick kilns northwards into Kingsthorpe parish in the 1880's shows that the location was sought after. Overall, the fact that so large a brick-making site survived in so small an area of town for about 200 years is at least partly testimony for this positioning.

The number of people working in the brick/building industry increased from the early 19th century, for example, in the 1818 poll book, there was the occasional brickmaker listed as voting. In the 1826 poll book many more brickmakers (12) and bricklayers (19) and a brickburner (1) was listed. The 1823/4 Pigot Directory included stone masons but no brickmakers, by the 1830 Pigot Trade Directories has six brickmakers and ten bricklayers and builders listed. After this date, the numbers of builders listed in the Trade Directories constantly rose so that by the

1894 Kelly Directories there were 56. Although there was never more than seven brick makers listed in the Trade Directories, the lack of increase is due to the increasing size and efficiency of the brick kilns through the 19th century. This can be seen in our brickmaking area where map evidence shows that kilns were successively replaced often with larger buildings.

In the 19th century there were progressively more modern methods and machinery, usually driven by steam engines and benefiting from the improved communications of the age. Large works were the cause of many of the smaller yards going out of business (Starmer 1970, 6). One of the smaller brickworks was the Butcher kiln at the junction of Kettering Road and The Racecourse. The relatively small nature of this kiln can be seen that in its rental where the agreement dated 18th March 1834 with Martin Smith involved a brickyard, clay pit and stone quarry for £48 a year (NRO NPL 2791 + NRO ZB 91/16). The plot contained a "brick kiln, stable sheds hovels and other buildings." The kiln seems to have been used only part time as in the 1851 will of William Butcher he is described as a brickmaker and inn-keeper. The kiln seems to have gone out of use soon after William's death.

At the same time there seems to have been some evidence for some brickmakers in the later 19th century owning or running several different brick works in different parts of the town. Stephen Green who died in 1889 left a will proved at £5,452 and was called a brick manufacturer. In addition to the former Cole site, he had owned the Vigo and Wooton brickworks. By owning three brickworks he would have gained efficiencies of scale. Other brickmakers such as Henry Martin, after he left working on our site, seems to have run at least two brickworks simultaneously including outside the town.

#### DECLINE IN THE NORTHAMPTON BRICK INDUSTRY IN THE LATER 19TH AND 20TH CENTURY

Northampton's population stagnated from the very late 19th century to 1968. In 1901, 87,021 people were recorded in Northampton and by 1951 there was just a small increase to 104,432. This later figure is even inflated by the expansion in Northampton's Borough boundaries in 1901 to include such small towns as Abington, Duston and Kingsthorpe.

This fifty year period therefore saw little populat-

ion increase in the town, which explains why Northampton has virtually no art deco housing in contrast with places such as Birmingham. At the same time mass produced cheaper bricks were brought in cheaply by rail from the end of the 19th century. These affects meant that brickmakers went out of business so that by 1920 just one brickmaker was listed in the Kelly Directory (A Chown of Arthur Street).

#### BRICK KILN REMAINS IN NORTHAMPTON

Remains of only two Northampton brick kilns seem to have survived. Map evidence implies that later development have destroyed the other brickworks. These two areas are our brickworks in the former Holy Sepulchre parish and Henry Martin's late 19th century brickworks near the railway (Fig 1). In the former, fragments of a brick kiln shown on the 1901 2nd Ordnance Survey survives above ground in the former Cole area as well as the 19th century boundary wall dividing the brick kiln area and The Racecourse. Below ground, it is possible that parts of the former brickworks may be limited to small islands of survival within the Freemasons land, the wildlife site, other University College Northampton land and Trinity School playing fields. 18th and 19th century bricks have been recovered during tree planting and pond digging in the wildlife site. Given the impressive history of this site and its role in Northampton's brick/building industry, potential remains in the above areas should be viewed as of at least county importance.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks are due to staff of the Northamptonshire Record Office especially Crispin Powell for their help and advice. The staff from the Northampton Studies Collection, Central Library, Northampton and the National Record Office, Kew, London for their help. I am particularly grateful to Steven Parry, Head of Northamptonshire Archaeology for support in this project and to Andy Chapman for comments on the first draft. I am also grateful to Ian Lakin and Zorina Ishmail-Bibby of the St George's Community and Wildlife Group for their comments and support. Bob and Fiona Jones kindly allowed me to use their computer.



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- Abstract of Title Brickyard clay pits + kiln near N'pton Race-course owned by Michael Smith (NRO ZB 91/16)
- Agreement, memorandum of Renting out a brick yard to Robert Butcher in 1834 (NRO NPL 2791)
- Conditions of Sale 70 acres of freehold building and accommodation land, with extensive frontages, immediately adjoining the race-course and the Kingsthorpe Rd, in or near Northampton. Dated 22nd July 1887. (Sales Categories, Northamptonshire Studies Collection, Central Library, Northampton)
- Conveyances James Woolston in 1769 (NRO YZ 4131, 4134 and 5358)
- Thomas Masters (including NRO YZ 4240-4)
- Deed Brick Kiln in Northampton 1789 (NRO YZ 1738)
- Discharge of expenses For the late Mr. Turvey (Brickmaker) under will of Mr. Robert Billson (NRO YZ 1737)
- Inrolment of awards 1779 Inclosure Book E, 519-547
- Mortgage William H Johnson in 1841 (NRO NPL 2764)
- Poll books Records of various Northampton elections (Held in NRO)
- Rate books Holy Sepulchre 1732-1896 (Held in NRO 241P/....)
- Rate books Kingsthorpe 1893-1914 (Held in NRO 189P/...)
- Rate Books St Lawrence 1914-1925 (Held in NRO 236P/...)
- Trade Directories Various Trade Directories held in both the Northamptonshire Studies Collection, Central Library, Northampton and in the NRO
- Will George Barratt 1st May 1759
- Will Robert Billson 31st July 1785 (NRO YZ 1735)
- Will William Butcher (Brick Maker and Innkeeper) 15th December 1851
- Will Edward Cole (Gentleman) 3rd February 1792
- Will John Cooper (Butcher) dated 24th February 1809, updated in 1810 and proved 11th September 1811
- Will Stephen Green (Brick Manufacturer) 1889 Vol 16 No 9
- Will Kennedy Gordon (Mason) 18th December 1805
- Will Benjamin Johnson (Brick Maker) 2nd August 1839
- Will Samuel Johnson (Builder) 29th April 1840
- Will Thomas Johnson (Mason) 12 July 1837
- Will William Johnson (Mason) 6th June 1808
- Will William Hemery Johnson (Builder) 30th August 1816
- Maps Used
- 1632 Marcus Pierce (NRO MAP 4647)
- 1767 Kingsthorpe Inclosure (NRO MAP 2845)
- 1778 Inclosure Map (NRO MAP 691)
- pre 1825 1832 Parliamentary boundaries based on earlier map (NRO MAPS 1181 and 1182)
- 1827 Bryant Map
- 1847 Wood and Law (NRO MAP 4309)
- 1881 Plan of land belonging to the executors of the late Arthur B Markham (NRO MAP 789)
- 1887 1st edition Ordnance Survey Northamptonshire (XLV 5)

ROB ATKINS

Will           A B Markham (NRO will 1874, no.13)  
Will           Antony Turvey (Brick Maker) 24th February  
                1742  
Will           John Turvey (Brick Maker) 6th October 1788  
Will and Inventory William Ratledge (Brick Maker) 25th  
                September 1731