

'FORTY YEARS ON'¹: REVISITING SHEPSHED AND THE TRANSITION TO INDUSTRIAL SOCIETY

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One of the most effective and immediate ways for work-forces to increase real income has been the further commodification of their own labour. They have often sought to substitute wage-labour for those parts of the household production processes which have brought in low amounts of real income, in particular for various kinds of petty commodity production.²

One of the cogent criticisms of a concept of 'proto-industrialisation' is the failure of some places to achieve the transition from 'proto'-industrialism to full industrialisation. In this scenario, the industrial process was aborted and the 'proto' was a dead end; industry in the countryside or rural industry did not make the leap to capitalist production.³ The same problem may obtain in explaining the transition from 'an industrious society' to an industrialised economy.⁴ The further question has been posed of the character of the transition from Phase I to Phase II, from 'proto' to industrial. One of the places which did make this transformation from 'proto' to industrial was Shepshed. The first phase of industrialisation at Shepshed has been fully explained and analysed by David Levine.⁵ Levine's discussion finished in 1851, effectively before the final development of a fully fledged industrial capitalism. The explanation is that Levine was interested mostly in two aspects: firstly, in redefining

¹ Alan Bennett, 'Forty Years On' (first performance 1968).

² Immanuel Wallerstein, *Historical Capitalism* (London, 1983, repr. Verso, 2011), p. 36.

³ D. C. (Donald) Coleman, 'Proto-industrialization: a concept too many?', *Economic History Review* 2nd series 36 (1983), pp. 435–48; Patricia Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A Perspective on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press [CUP], 1989), pp. 24–68; Hudson and John K. Walton, 'Proto-industrialization and the first industrial revolution: the case of Lancashire' in Hudson (ed.), *Regions and Industries*, pp. 41–68 ; Martin Daunton, *Wealth and Welfare: An Economic and Social History of Britain 1851–1951* (Oxford, Oxford University Press [OUP], 2007). For the concept, P. Kriedte, H. Medick and J. Schlumbohn (eds), *Industrialization Before Industrialization: Rural Industry in the Genesis of Capitalism* (Cambridge, CUP, 1981). For a critical assessment, Rab Houston and K[eith] D. M. Snell, 'Proto-industrialization? Cottage industry, social change, and Industrial Revolution', *The Historical Journal* 27 (1984), pp. 473–92. For the initial approach to industry in the countryside, Joan Thirsk, 'Industries in the countryside', in F. J. Fisher (ed.), *Essays in the Economic and Social History of Tudor and Stuart England* (Cambridge, CUP, 1961), pp. 70–88.

⁴ Jan de Vries, *The Industrious Revolution: Consumer Behaviour and the Household Economy, 1650 to the Present* (Cambridge, CUP, 2008); C. Muldrew, *Food, Energy and the Creation of Industriousness: Work and Material Culture in Agrarian England, 1550–1780* (Cambridge, CUP, 2011); E. A. [Tony] Wrigley, *The Path to Sustained Growth: England's Transition from an Organic Economy to an Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, CUP, 2016).

⁵ David Levine, *Family Formation in an Age of Nascent Capitalism* (London, Academic Press, 1977), so just over 40 years ago. For a comparative region, Patricia Hudson, 'Proto-industrialization: the case of the West Riding wool textile industry in the 18th and early 19th centuries', *History Workshop Journal* 12 (1981), pp. 34–61.

the ‘proto’ as a phase towards industrial capitalism, eschewing the concept of ‘proto-industrialisation’; and secondly, as the title of his book demonstrably indicates, in the relationship between family formation, pauperisation, and the capitalist process. Fundamental to this development was female age at marriage, longer fertility, immiseration through the industrial process, and the consequent household economy (the full engagement of all in the household in the industrial enterprise).⁶ ‘In every case, proto-industrialisation and proletarianisation intersected.’⁷ The concern with the effect of the industrial advance on household structure was seminal also in the investigation of Preston in the middle of the nineteenth century by Michael Anderson and in the Potteries by Marguerite Dupree.⁸ What were the characteristics of local industrial society in Shepshed 40 years after 1851 as factory industry intruded and partially replaced frame shops?⁹

The following reinvestigation of Shepshed does not ignore the implications of industrialisation for family and household structure and organisation, but places it within a more advanced situation of industrialisation. The focus is 1891, 40 years after the *terminus ad quem* of Levine.¹⁰ First, however, it is necessary to recapitulate the character of the first phase of industrial development in Shepshed, which by the early nineteenth century had become ‘the most intensively industrialized village’ in Leicestershire.¹¹ The census of hosiery frames in 1812 supports this contention. In Leicestershire, Shepshed, with 900 frames, appeared third only to the county town (1,650) and the small industrialising town of Hinckley (1,500). The number of frames in this county accounted for 39 per cent of the total complement of frames in Great Britain, another 32 per cent concentrated in Nottinghamshire. Nottingham, with 2,600, had an impact on Loughborough and its locality.¹²

The initial evidence of industrial activity in the village is mention of the ‘silkstocking weaver’ Thomas Trowell in 1655. In the first decade of the eighteenth century, 4 per cent of entries in the parish registers referred to framework knitters, which had increased to a quarter by 1730.¹³ The incursion of industry in this local countryside had been enabled by the freehold landholding associated with a poor environment, which resulted in the relative poverty of agrarian income. This combination fostered the expansion of framework knitting as a household economy, engaging the whole family. Local household structure consisted of ‘coresident wage earners’, the largest households concomitant with framework knitting and the related textile processes (seamers). These family groups experienced a ‘culture of poverty’.

⁶ Levine, *Family Formation*, pp. 11–12; for the general impact of population expansion in the western half of Leicestershire between 1761 and 1851, E. A. [Tony] Wrigley, *Energy and the English Industrial Revolution* (Cambridge, CUP, 2010), p. 168 (Fig. 6.5).

⁷ Sven Beckert, *Empire of Cotton: A New History of Global Capitalism* (London, Penguin, 2014), p. 184.

⁸ Michael Anderson, *Family Structure in Nineteenth-century Lancashire* (Cambridge, CUP, 1971), p. 1; Marguerite Dupree, *Family Structure in the Staffordshire Potteries, 1840–1880* (Oxford, OUP, 1995).

⁹ Levine, *Family Formation*, p. 33 for frameshops.

¹⁰ The National Archives (TNA) RG12/2516, fo. 110-RG12/2517, fo. 67.

¹¹ Levine, *Family Formation*, p. 16.

¹² Stanley Chapman, *Hosiery and Knitwear: Four Centuries of Small-scale Industry in Britain, c.1589–2000* (Oxford, OUP, 2002), p. 56 (Table 2.3).

¹³ Levine, *Family Formation*, p. 19.

The persistence of outdoor relief supplemented low wages and underemployment.¹⁴ The mean household size connected with the hosiery households extended to 4.73, co-resident children engaged as soon as possible in hosiery work.¹⁵ By the 1831 census, 553 heads of household were employed in 'manufacturing', 123 in retail and craft enterprise, and 138 agricultural labour.¹⁶ Family formation and its associated employment was predominantly endogamous, Shepshed comprising 64 per cent of places of birth in the 1851 census.¹⁷

When incomers were accepted, they derived invariably from the proximate villages, which consistently had an agrarian economy. This analysis implicitly paints a portrait of Shepshed as an industrial island in a sea of rurality. Perhaps here there is a slight misrepresentation of Shepshed. One formative interpretation has insisted on the importance of the region in industrialisation, such that: 'In the first half of the nineteenth century industrialisation in Britain was even more than in the eighteenth a regional phenomenon ...'¹⁸ Although some of the villages immediately surrounding Shepshed had a predominantly agrarian economy, Shepshed was at one extreme of a domestic hosiery industry which extended north from Leicester up the Soar Valley to Loughborough and thence to Shepshed.¹⁹ Indeed, the proximity of Loughborough introduces another intervening variable, as the unincorporated town (which was created a borough in 1888) was transformed industrially from lace making to hosiery production.²⁰ The significance of Loughborough is reflected in the activity of a Shepshed brewer: '8 January 1800 William Starts money put in Middeltons Bank £115 0s 0d.'²¹ This bank was the foremost in Loughborough, although it succumbed, like many others, to later failure.

When the parish clerk of Loughborough temporarily noted occupations in the parish registers in the middle of the seventeenth century, the industrial complex can be perceived. On 7 September and 7 October 1653, John Browne and William

¹⁴ Levine, *Family Formation*, pp. 27–32.

¹⁵ Levine, *Family Formation*, pp. 46, 49.

¹⁶ Levine, *Family Formation*, p. 17 (Table 2.1).

¹⁷ Levine, *Family Formation*, p. 44 (Table 3.5). Levine's thesis has more detailed analysis of the 1851 census: 'The demographic implications of rural industrialization: a family reconstitution study of two Leicestershire villages, 1600–1851', unpublished PhD, Cambridge, 1975.

¹⁸ Hudson, *Regions and Industrialization*, p. 28.

¹⁹ For the south of the county, extending from Leicester, Rebecca Carpenter, 'Peasants and stockingers: socio-economic change in Guthlaxton Hundred, Leicestershire, 1700–1851', unpublished PhD thesis, University of Leicester, 1994; W[illiam]. G. Hoskins, *The Midland Peasant: Economic and Social History of a Leicestershire Village* (London, 1957; repr. Chichester, Phillimore, 2008), pp. 227–9 (Wigston Magna).

²⁰ The earlier development is discussed by Peter Clark, 'Elite networking and the formation of an industrial small town: Loughborough, 1700–1840' in Neil Raven and Jon Stobart (eds), *Towns, Regions and Industries: Urban and Industrial Change in the Midlands, c. 1700–1840* (Manchester, Manchester University Press [MUP], 2005), pp. 161–75. For a cognate development of a smaller town in the county, Penny Lane, 'An industrializing town: social and business networks in Hinckley, Leicestershire, c.1750–1839' in Jon Stobart and Penny Lane (eds), *Urban and Industrial Change in the Midlands 1700–1840* (Leicester, Leicester University Press, 2000), pp. 139–66; for Hinckley's later development, Stephen Royle, 'Aspects of the social geography of Leicestershire towns, 1837–71', unpublished PhD, University of Leicester, 1976 (Coalville, Hinckley, Lutterworth and Melton Mowbray).

²¹ Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR) 21D60 (neither foliated nor paginated).

Lowe, both weavers, were interred.²² Between then and 1658, 16 other weavers were mentioned in the register, with additionally a combmaker and two clothworkers. Then again, between 1664 and 1713, 27 weavers were entered in the registers.²³ More significantly, the daughter of Mr Folgamm, ‘stocking weaver’, was baptised on 25 April 1687. Considering the title accredited to him, the status of hosier (putting-out merchant) seems appropriate. On 13 February 1690/91, John, the son of John Sharpe, ‘Silkeweaver’, was baptised, reflecting some diversity in textile production. Ten years later (22 December 1700), the son of the ‘Jersey=Comber’, James Dickinson, was christened. Finally, Mary, the daughter of ‘Mr Rotherham’, ‘Framework knitter’, was received into the church on 5 August 1701, perhaps also intimating a putting-out hosier. Of equal importance, first references are made to ‘stockingers’ in 1721–28.²⁴ When a later parish clerk resumed the references to occupations, of fathers of baptised children, during the effective decade between January 1748/49 and October 1759, 62 stockingers were entered in the register. That particular contingent represented only part of the textile workforce, men in households still producing children. This male workforce was complemented in the register by seven combers, four framesmiths, one specific framework-knitter, two stocking weavers, and three generic weavers.²⁵

As might be anticipated, given the adjacency of the parishes, the chronology of industrial development in Shepshed and Loughborough was coeval. However it is defined, this type of industrialisation had already become a formative process in Loughborough by 1754. The significance of this association between Loughborough and Shepshed cannot be over-emphasised.

Firstly, the changes in Shepshed between 1851 and 1891 should be clarified. The demographic expansion which Levine depicted in the early nineteenth-century was not sustained. The population of 2,627 in 1801 had increased to 3,872 by 1841. Thereafter, however, several decades of stagnation occurred through mid century, so that the population amounted to 3,759 in 1851, 3,626 in 1861, recovering slightly to 3,784 in 1871. In the next two decades, expansion resumed to 4,437 in 1881 and 4,416 in 1891. The mid-century demographic hiatus was consistent with the general trend throughout the country.²⁶ In Shepshed, however, the stagnation of population might have been exacerbated by the absence of immigration and some degree of out-migration. Some of the mid-century difficulty might have resulted from out-migration, not least to Loughborough. There in 1851, heads of household who had originated from Shepshed included 44 framework knitters, 28 other textile workers, 14 labourers, eight retailers, and 19 female heads.²⁷ (This explanation is rather cursory as the author intends to examine the late nineteenth-century demography of Shepshed in greater depth.)

²² ROLLR DE667/2.

²³ ROLLR DE667/2, 667/3.

²⁴ ROLLR DE667/3 29 April 1721, 1 February 1724/5, 27 September 1728.

²⁵ ROLLR DE667/4.

²⁶ Robert Woods, *The Population of Britain in the Nineteenth Century* (Cambridge, CUP, 1992), p. 18 (Fig. 2). In general, Woods, *The Demography of Victorian England and Wales* (Cambridge, CUP, 2000).

²⁷ TNA HO107/2085, folios 7-363v.

As Levine indicated, the industrial character was significantly altered in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The general trend in the textile industries to concentration in factories occurred after 1850, but more particularly in Loughborough, adjacent to Shepshed and thus probably a local stimulus, in the 1850s and 1860s.²⁸ In particular, new factories in Shepshed impinged on the production of hosiery manufactures, not least stockings: William Cotton & Sons (Charnwood Works, Navigation Street); the Cooperative Hosiery Manufacturing Company; Harriman Brothers; Beer & Sons (Queen Street); and Thomas White/Whyte. Complementary in character were some boot and shoe manufacturers, such as George Shuttlewood and Joseph Shuttlewood, and the Cooperative Industrial Stores. Bag hosiers still inhabited the village, but were increasingly superseded.²⁹ The bag hosier, Thomas Pallett, of Charley Way, Shepshed, was declared bankrupt in 1888.³⁰ Thomas had succeeded his father, George, hosier, in this trade, operating from Charley Way.³¹ The expansion of stone quarrying at Neverscliff provided new opportunities for the workforce, if limited in extent, at the Charnwood Granite Quarry Company (or Garendon and Charnwood Granite Company).³²

The industrialisation of Shepshed has been putatively ascribed to the poverty of agricultural income in the locality and the proliferation of smallholdings. It is therefore necessary to consider the structure of landownership in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. The parish was dominated by the lordship of the Phillips/DeLisle family, lords of the manor, at Garendon Hall. The estate (6,857a. 1r. 7p.) was, however, located to the east of the village, although over 2,500 acres were leased in 1823.³³ In general, however, the estate intruded little on the central township.³⁴ Excluding this estate, 57 inhabitants in the village owned land in 1873 which extended to more than one acre. These owners were resident in the parish. It is possible, but unlikely, that their real property included land elsewhere in the county. The mean acreage amounted to 16 acres (standard deviation 3.73), but the mode and median were more representative at two and five acres. Indeed, 28 owners possessed fewer than five acres, including 11 with fewer than two acres.³⁵ At the apex, with more than a hundred acres, were the Peach family, farmers, and the Rev. C. Phillips, incumbent, of the family of the manorial lords. Fully 38 owners had, however, acquired under ten acres. Earlier, however, the fragmentation of landownership had been more extreme, represented in a survey of the parish undertaken by the land surveyor Granville Smith in 1823 (which will be explored in more detail elsewhere).³⁶ Then well over a hundred freeholders possessed less than one acre,

²⁸ Chapman, *Hosiery and Knitwear: Four Centuries*, pp. 118, 124, 126.

²⁹ S. Barker & Co., *General Topographical and Historical Directory for the Counties of Leicestershire, Rutland &c* (Leicester, 1875), pp. 243–4; C. N. Wright, *Commercial and General Directory of Leicester and Fifteen Miles Round* (Leicester, 1884), pp. 472–4.

³⁰ *London Gazette* (LG), Issue 26004, p. 7404.

³¹ ROLLR DE610/22, p. 74 (no. 147) (1888).

³² Barker, *Directory* (1875), p. 243; Wright, *Directory* (1884), p. 473.

³³ ROLLR DE2736/2 (survey and valuation of the parish of Shepshed in November 1823 by Granville Smith, land surveyor).

³⁴ *The Return of the Owners of Land 1873 Volume I Leicester* (London, C.-1097, 1875), p. 10.

³⁵ *Return of Owners of Land, Leicestershire*.

³⁶ ROLLR DE2736/2.

often substantially less, numbered in perches. A considerable number owned just an acre or two. Confirmation is afforded by the Poll Books for the Parliamentary elections for the county, the franchise consisting of freehold land valued at 40s per annum. The poll in 1830 enumerated 82 voters, mainly enfranchised through ‘house and land’ (including 27 framework knitters, two needle makers, a sinker maker and four engaged in silk production); that of 1857, 78 (living in the parish); and in 1865, 109.³⁷

The ownership of land does not necessarily correlate with the size of farms. The census returns of 1881 reveal some particulars about farm size, extending from a farmer of merely four acres to Thomas Merriman’s 700 acres.³⁸ Although not quite all farm sizes were itemised, details of the acreages of 24 were recorded.³⁹ Only two graziers possessed fewer than 20 acres. Ten farms exceeded 100 acres, with maximum extents of 300 (two), 570 and 700 (two) acres. If meaningful, the mean farm size amounted to 156 acres (standard deviation 211.23), although the median and mode resulted in 55 and 21 acres. Certainly, some farm sizes had become consolidated. The stimulus by the late nineteenth century, despite agricultural depression, was probably the proximity of the cattle market in rapidly expanding Loughborough.⁴⁰ The existence of at least seven cattle dealers in Shepshed in 1881 affords confirmation.⁴¹ Among these, the Merriman family, father and two sons in the same household, were perhaps pre-eminent.⁴²

The social and economic organisation of the parish thus exhibited those characteristics which complicate the binary division into close and open parishes.⁴³ Landownership was dominated by a single lordship, of high gentry status, although two aristocratic landowners held small amounts of freehold land. (The Duke of Rutland possessed 26a. 3r. 36p. and the Earl of Stamford almost 100 acres.⁴⁴) The freehold landownership was, in contrast, otherwise fragmented amongst a multitude of occupiers. The local economy depended on a vibrant textile industry, not by-employment but engaging the full household in industrial output. On the other hand, immigration was circumscribed, either because the inhabitants were non-receptive or the economy insufficiently attractive, not least in the later nineteenth-century context of the competition from Loughborough.

From the census of 1891 all the details of 941 heads of household are legible, comprising 830 male heads and 111 female (mostly widows) (Table 1). Reflecting first on engagement of heads of household in textile production, the number of heads designated framework knitters declined between 1851 and 1891, from 366

³⁷ *The Poll at the Election of Two Knights of the Shire ... 1830* (Leicester, 1830), pp. 62–3; *The Poll Taken on Friday, the 3rd of April, 1857* (Leicester, 1857), pp. 37–9; *The Poll Taken on Monday, the 24th July, 1865* (Leicester, 1865), pp. 45–7.

³⁸ TNA RG11/3147, folios 56, 59v, for Merriman; RG11/3146, fo. 102–3147, fo. 60.

³⁹ TNA RG11/3146, folios 105v, 111v, 116r-v, 125v, 130r-v, 135v; RG11/3147, folios 13r-v, 14, 18, 48v, 55, 56, 59r-v, 60.

⁴⁰ G. and M. W. Green, *Loughborough Markets and Fairs* (Loughborough, 1964), pp. 48–52.

⁴¹ TNA RG11/3146, folios 111, 117v, 129v; RG11/3147, folios 24v, 41v, 49.

⁴² TNA RG11/3147, fo.49.

⁴³ Sarah Banks, ‘Nineteenth-century scandal or twentieth-century model? A new look at “open” and “close” parishes’, *Economic History Review* 2nd series 41 (1988), pp. 51–73.

⁴⁴ ROLLR DE2736/2.

to 209, but in the 1891 census an additional 86 heads were described as 'stocking makers'. The discrepancy in the designations causes some concern, but overall there was a decline in the households headed by a knitter. As elucidated below, part of the decline can be attributed to the infiltration of new factories and other sources of employment, like the stone quarries. There is also a difference in the description of the framework knitting between 1851 and 1891. In 1851, 185 were assigned to cotton framework knitting, 100 to worsted, 37 to angora, 31 to silk, seven to merino, and three to thread framework knitting (three others are ambiguous).⁴⁵ In 1891, the designations are simply hosiery or stocking framework knitting, without reference to the material. (The marriage registers contain only one reference to silk, a silk warper in 1866.⁴⁶) The cotton hosiery factories in 1891 certainly concentrated on cotton hosiery. The imputation is a conversion entirely to lower-quality products.

Occupation	Male	Female	Total
All textiles	377	49	426
Of which framework knitters	204	5	209
Of which 'stocking makers'	84	2	86
Of which 'factory hands'	33		33
Labourers	154		154
Of which quarrymen	56		56
Of which agricultural	36		36
Farmers	53		53
Retail	111	8	119

Table 1.

[The sub-sets of numbers in Table 1 do not comprehend all the textile workers or labourers.]

The principal demographic characteristics of early industrial expansion in Shepshed before 1851 consisted of early age at the marriage of both partners, a consequently longer period of fertility, and large family size engaged in industry with several incomes compensating for low wages. As factory organisation impinged on, but did not replace, domestic framework knitting, what happened to family formation? Indeed, as new sources of income – such as stone quarrying – provided another avenue for income, were there any changes in household structure? (In 1881, the quarries were in the possession of William Lowe, the District Surveyor.⁴⁷) The progress of factory organisation is reflected in the appointment of Certifying Surgeons for the Shepshed District under the Factory Acts by the late nineteenth century.⁴⁸

The census of 1891 furnishes data of effective fertility, estimated from the age of the eldest surviving child and the age of the mother (Table 2). The following analysis concerns 228 households in which the wife's age was below 40 and in which children were normatively less likely to have departed the household. There will, of

⁴⁵ TNA HO107/2085, folios 384-505v.

⁴⁶ ROLLR DE610/21, p. 122 (no. 244, the groom).

⁴⁷ TNA RG11/3147, fo. 47.

⁴⁸ LG, Issue 27439, p. 3605; Issue 27443, p. 3977.

Age cohort	Percentage 1851	Percentage 1891
20s	15	15
30s	25	26
40s	19	23
50s	24	18
60s	10	14
70s/80s	7	4
N=	358*	204

Table 2.

* ages of eight illegible.

course, be a margin of error, but not a significant one. (Ten households contained no children, the ages of the wives extending from 21 to 38, thus comprehending those who had not yet procreated and those who would not reproduce.) (The marriage registers are defective in that for considerable extents the entries record only whether the partners were of 'full age', 21.⁴⁹) In all textile-related families, comprising 141 mothers, the range of age at delivery of the first surviving child extended from 16 to 34. The mean age cohered around 22.1 years (standard deviation [sd] 2.973), however, and the mode and median at 21, this establishing a precise and significant age. The comparative number for labourers' wives is quite slender, just 30, including all of agricultural labourers, bricklayers' labourers, road and rail workers, and those in ironfoundries. A range of 18 to 32 disguised the mean of 21.2 years (sd 2.614) and mode of 20 and median of 21. The stone quarry labourers have been treated separately as a distinct and novel cohort, but rather a low number at 17. Wives' effective fertility here began between the ages of 19 and 25. The mean age, however, occurred at 21.6 years (sd 2.002) with a mode of 20 and median 21. Considering the mode and the median, there is little difference of effective fertility (and the deduced age of nuptiality) in the three different occupations. Age at female marriage was low and fertility commenced at an accordingly low age, regardless of occupational cohort.

The resultant family size was invariably high, probably four or five children by a wife's 30th birthday. Nor was family size limited by later first procreation. For example, a platelayer's wife, who had her first surviving child at age 25, had by her 41st year six children.⁵⁰ The wife of a stone quarryman began her effective fertility at age 25, but had five children by age 32.⁵¹ The first surviving child of a bricklayer's wife was delivered when she was 28, but she had five offspring when she was 39.⁵² An engine driver acquired his first child when his wife was 21, but by the time she was 34, she had produced five children.⁵³ Another bricklayer's family followed a similar pattern, first surviving child at wife's age 22, but six children by age 33.⁵⁴

⁴⁹ ROLLR DE610/20–22 (1837 onwards).

⁵⁰ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 125v.

⁵¹ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 126v.

⁵² TNA RG12/2516, fo. 127.

⁵³ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 117v.

⁵⁴ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 132v.

An agricultural labourer had seven children by the time his wife attained the age of 33, the first arriving when she was 21.⁵⁵ The wife of another agricultural labourer produced their first surviving child at 19 and by age 41 had ten offspring.⁵⁶ These are illustrative examples of the potential large family formations across occupational groupings with consistency of size regardless of age at first procreation and female age at marriage. What is visible is the persistence of a tendency or predilection for large families which reflected the traditional household size in Shepshed, even though the sources of income and occupation were being transformed. Nor was there any impact of a fertility check at this stage.⁵⁷

In the earlier phase of industrialisation, co-residence comprehended the extended family. In 1891, multi-generational households existed, but constituted only a minority. One or both parents were accommodated in 36 households, grandmothers in two (retired hosiery seamers).⁵⁸ Married and unmarried children, some with their children (the head's grandchildren), remained in 81 households. Unmarried daughters with their children featured occasionally.⁵⁹ More characteristic of this extended household was that headed by Robert Tomlinson, a sinker maker aged 75, and his wife, aged 73, who provided accommodation for their son, a widower, and his two sons (their grandsons), as well as their daughter and her husband (their son-in-law) and this couple's six children (the head's grandchildren).⁶⁰ Multi-generational families thus accounted for about 12.5 per cent of all households in 1891.

Household size might be augmented too by provision for lodgers or boarders, especially in default of lodging houses in the parish. This extension of hospitality served potentially two purposes: as a first point of arrival for incomers; and as an extra source of income for families.⁶¹ In fact, only just over 6 per cent of households included a lodger. Almost two-thirds of these lodgers or boarders were natives of Shepshed. Six of the 60 lodgers comprised medical, educational or religious professionals, all from a distance. The preponderance of lodgers and boarders thus consisted of local people without accommodation, such as two unmarried women with their child.⁶² In some cases, factory hands and their families were compelled to seek lodging.⁶³ By 1891, Shepshed had declined as a destination for incoming families, and local families experienced some hardship in accommodation.

Separating the different strands of textile households presents a problem. As employment in factories as 'factory hands' was a recent development, there are only 15 households headed by a factory hand. These households, moreover, in their nature headed by young partners, were not fully developed. With the possibility of stochastic variation because of the small number, the mean age of a wife at effective

⁵⁵ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 129v.

⁵⁶ TNA RG12/2517, folios 43-43v.

⁵⁷ Simon Szreter, *Fertility, Class and Gender in Britain, 1860-1940* (Cambridge, CUP, 2002).

⁵⁸ TNA RG12/2517, folios 25v, 73.

⁵⁹ TNA RG12/2517, folios 5v, 6v.

⁶⁰ TNA RG12/2517, fo 9.

⁶¹ R. Tressell (Robert Noonan), *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* ed. P. Miles (Oxford, OUP, 2005) (c.1906), pp. 177-81; Jack London, *The People of the Abyss* (London, Macmillan, 1903), pp. 24-9.

⁶² TNA RG12/2517, folios 11, 22.

⁶³ TNA RG12/2517, folios 25, 44v.

procreation was 22.8 (sd 0.87), but the mode of 21 and median of 22 might be more significant. The remaining larger number of households were divided between 'stocking maker' and framework knitters, the latter mostly engaged in mechanical stocking production and a little other hosiery goods. The wives of the stocking makers produced offspring at a mean age of 22.2, but mode and median of 21. The wives of framework knitters were delivered of their first surviving child at a mean age of 22.4 years (sd 0.33), and mode and median both of 22. The difference of at most a year between the three textile sectors suggests that early family formation prevailed, even amongst the recent factory workforce. The economic circumstances both enabled and necessitated early household formation and size. By the late 20s and 30s, the household of a factory hand commonly consisted of three or four children (but the numbers of this advanced stage are small). This size of family was consistent with those of stocking makers and framework knitters. It is also probable that a tradition and custom of early family formation persisted. This persistence can be observed outside the stocking and hosiery sector. A head of household, Jabez Waring, subsisted as a glove maker, aged 34; his wife Mary, his senior at age 37. Their children, aged six months to 16, numbered six.⁶⁴

Whatever the problems of consistency in occupational nomenclature between the enumerators in 1851 and 1891, it is incontrovertible that in 1891 factory hands in the stocking and hosiery factories were drawn from the younger heads of household. Of the 29 heads of household enumerated as factory hands, 17 were in their twenties and another five their 30s. The aged factory workers (66, 71) were employed as warehousemen. This cohort represents the difficulty of the youngest obtaining a foothold in skilled trades outside the factory and their effective proletarianisation. The same situation obtained with the smaller number of factory hands in the shoe factories.⁶⁵

The transformation in employment is, therefore, best represented by considering the occupational destinations of offspring in the households in the census of 1891. Predominantly, the young people over the age of 12 in households in 1891 entered into the factories, usually described as factory hands. (A few 11-year-olds were engaged as winders and Griswold hands. By the existing legislation, education delayed entry into work only until the age of ten, increased to 11 in 1893 and elevated to 12 in 1899, with the exemption of part-time working. The factory workforce in Shephed seems to have been universally at least twelve.⁶⁶) The hosiery factories engaged 211 and the shoe factories 129. The numbers for the hosiery factory hands excludes those simply described as linkers, seamers, menders and winders, without the qualification of factory-based, but many of those too were probably situated in factories as well as households.

This change is significant. In 1851, whole households were enumerated in which all the offspring, of both gender, were described as framework knitters

⁶⁴ TNA RG12/2517, fo. 44v.

⁶⁵ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, p. 185; for the 'culture of the factory', Patrick Joyce, *Visions of the People: Industrial England and the Question of Class* (Cambridge, CUP, 1991), pp. 114–41.

⁶⁶ TNA RG12/2517, folios 26, 31, for example.

(cotton hosiery).⁶⁷ The principal occupational recourse of sons and daughters was as framework knitters within their own households. There was a succession in the occupation. By 1891, that whole process had been undermined and offspring predominantly found their opportunities for employment only in the factories.

The age profile of the factory workers who were dependants in households was distinctive. That distinction was not just attributable to their being dependants or the numbers of young women who were employed in the factories until marriage, particularly in the shoe factories in which only a fifth of workers who were dependants were female. Young people entered into the factories as soon as they were eligible.⁶⁸ The mean age of the hosiery factory hands who were dependants in households was 19 (standard deviation 4.77) in 1891, with the mode at 17 and median 18. More than a tenth were aged between 12 and 14. More than 71 per cent had not reached their majority (21). Among the 129 dependants employed in shoe factories, fully 114 had not attained the age of majority; 55 were aged between 12 and 14. Although the mean age was 16 (sd 3.33), the mode at 14 and median at 15 years were significant. Girls of 13 were operating machinery in the hosiery factories. One of the operators of the Griswold knitting machines was a daughter aged 14, another reportedly 11.⁶⁹ Boys of 13 and 14 commonly acted as shoe rivetters.

Only 58 managed to become framework knitters; 15 of this number had passed the age of 30; 43 were beyond the age of majority. These framework knitters who were dependants in households had a large mature element.

Employment in the stone quarries was the prospect for another 33, whilst 43 were engaged as agricultural labourers. The 'inducement' of the factories can be illustrated by the family of George Bennett, a builder. His eldest son (20), Frank, became a stocking factory hand, the other son (18), George, a shoe hand (rivetter), and the 15-year-old daughter, Agnes, a stocking factory hand.⁷⁰ Less surprising is that the five daughters of James Neale, himself a hosiery factory hand, followed their father as hosiery factory hands, aged 16–23.⁷¹ Approximately a third of young people in households thus entered into hosiery factories and a further fifth into shoe units. (Strangely, the Anglican marriage registers do not include any references to shoe hands until the early 1890s.⁷²) There existed a residue who might also have been located in factories, but whose precise situation is ambiguous, including 28 stocking makers, five sinker or needle makers, 40 female seamers, 17 menders, eight linkers, 15 winders, and two spinners. The stocking makers were usually male and followed the father's occupation. Thus William Hall, aged 45 in 1891, stocking maker, had four sons of employment age (13–20), who were also stocking makers,

⁶⁷ For example, TNA HO107/2085, folios 388, 390, 393r-v, 395v, 406, 410r-v, 420, 421v, 422r-v, 426v, 428v, 430v, 434r-435r, 436, 437, 438v, 439r-440v, 443r-v.

⁶⁸ TNA RG12/2517, fo. 31 (11-year-old winder in a factory). For the legislation, Eric Hopkins, *Childhood Transformed: Working-class Children in Nineteenth-century England* (Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 219–25.

⁶⁹ TNA RG12/2517, folios 26, 44.

⁷⁰ TNA RG12/2517, fo. 4v.

⁷¹ TNA RG12/2517, fo. 30v.

⁷² ROLLR DE610/22, pp. 98 (no. 195), 104 (no. 208), 106 (no. 212), 128–9 (nos 256–8).

as well as four other sons under the age of employment and a daughter.⁷³ Unusually, his wife also contributed as a stocking maker. Incidentally, this household reflects the continuation of domestic industry, the engagement of the whole family and the persistence of large household formation for aggregate household income.

The demand for labour in the stone quarries (and, indeed, agricultural labour) was less flexible than the requirements of the hosiery and, to some extent, shoe factories, and required different physical attributes. Young males did enter almost immediately into the occupation, from the age of 14 (three of the youngsters in households). The mean, median and modal ages of these young male dependants was consistent at 22, only a dozen being below the age of 20. The demand for agricultural labour was equally restricted. The three sons (aged 17–24) of Elijah Wortley, aged 61, agricultural labourer, found their employment as factory hands (two) and granite quarryman.⁷⁴ (A quarryman first appeared as a groom in the Anglican marriage registers in 1868, followed next by another in 1872, but not frequently until the early 1890s.⁷⁵) The opportunities for labourers on the land were limited by the size of farms, the normative income from agriculture in the vicinity, but also by the impact of agrarian depression.⁷⁶ Only 15 of the agricultural labourers who were dependants in households had followed their fathers into the occupation; 28 were recruited from non-agricultural families, including from outside the parish. The age profile extended from 13 to 39, half a dozen in their 30s. 15 had passed the age of majority. These singleton labourers included a large proportion of mature males.

The sexual division of labour was complicated, not entirely binary, transected by age and status in the case of women.⁷⁷ Stone-quarry work, agricultural labour and other heavy tasks were occupied exclusively by men. Domestic and factory hosiery, however, were not the preserve of men, but provided employment for both sexes. Young women dominated the hosiery factories, their involvement reflecting the general sex ratio.⁷⁸ In particular, they operated as machinists. Their presence in the shoe factories was less pronounced, comprising a fifth of the young workforce. They were engaged in particular as machinists and fitters, whilst rivetting was exclusively a male operation. The difference was that the young women tended to leave the factory on marriage. Women's inclusion in the factory workforce was confined between the ages of 13 and their early 20s.⁷⁹ Married women of the older generation tended to be occupied, as in 1851, as seamers alongside their framework-knitting partners. Framework knitting was not the exclusive domain of men, however, as the smaller frames for stocking work allowed women to operate the frames as well. The

⁷³ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 129.

⁷⁴ TNA RG12/2517, fo. 5.

⁷⁵ ROLLR DE610/21, pp. 155 (no. 310), 202 (no. 404), DE160/22, pp. 112 (no. 223), 114 (nos 227–8).

⁷⁶ Daunton, *Wealth and Welfare*, pp. 44–58; P. J. Perry, *British Agriculture, 1875–1914* (London, 2013).

⁷⁷ Jane Rendall, *Women in an Industrializing Society: England 1750–1880* (Oxford, Blackwell, 1990); Carole Turbin, 'Beyond dichotomies: interdependence in mid-nineteenth century working class families in the United States', *Gender and History* 1 (1989), pp. 293–308.

⁷⁸ Robert Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society 1650–1850: The Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (London, Routledge, 1998), p. 167.

⁷⁹ Beckert, *Empire of Cotton*, p. 192.

female framework knitters (wives, widows and daughters) were a small number, but were engaged in the operation. Examples included the unmarried daughters Mary Brotherhood, aged 28, Emily Whitehall, aged 23, and Anne Wortley, aged 17, who all operated stocking frames in the domestic setting.⁸⁰

The difficulty in eliciting the full implications of the sexual division of labour emanates from the laconic recording of wives' occupational status. In different sections, enumerators differed in their approach to wives' positions.⁸¹ Several sections of the 1851 census for Shepshead leave the occupational column for wives blank. One enumerator, however, was more diligent in recording wives' employment conditions. This enumerator inscribed framework knitting as the occupational status of 30 wives and hosiery seamer for another 67.⁸² The details in the 1891 census appear to be more consistent throughout the sections. This consistency imputes that wives were now concerned with the household, represented by constant blanks in their occupational column. Household income was now conceived as the breadwinner's wage, combined with important income from offspring entering the factories at the earliest opportunity.⁸³

Concerning first the wives of framework knitters, 17 were also described as framework knitters, 25 as hosiery seamers and eight others by various engagements. Only five wives of male factory hands were ascribed particular occupations, one as a factory hand and four as seamers. Just five wives of stocking makers were also accorded the occupational status of stocking maker and eight others as stocking seamers. Four others were engaged in other occupational roles. The same position obtained with wives of stone quarrymen, five of whom were seamers and two dressmakers. The wives of other labourers (agricultural and building) had even less opportunity, it seems, three as seamers and one as a dressmaker. Whilst for the most part the position of the others was left blank rather than attributed to household responsibility, it does seem that the emphasis had become placed on the breadwinner's wage in the partnership, importantly supplemented by the wage labour of the offspring.⁸⁴ The preference was for wage income from the children of the household rather than the wife/mother.⁸⁵ During family formation, the breadwinner's wage was paramount, but the persistence of large family size contributed to the household income after the adolescence of the offspring. The income generation of the family thus conformed with the Chayanovian household cycle, if in an industrial rather

⁸⁰ TNA RG12/2517, folios 7v, 24v, 40.

⁸¹ Edward Higgs and Amanda Wilkinson, 'Women, occupations and work in the Victorian censuses revisited', *History Workshop Journal* 81 (2016), pp. 17–38, for a recent examination of the previous debate.

⁸² TNA HO107/2085, folios 410–40.

⁸³ Anna Clark, *The Struggle for the Breeches: Gender and the Making of the British Working Class* (Berkeley, CA, 1995); Colin Creighton, 'The rise of the male breadwinner family: a reappraisal', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 38 (1996), pp. 316–37; Wally Secombe, 'The construction of the male breadwinner wage norm in nineteenth-century Britain', *Social History* 11 (1986), pp. 53–76; Sarah Horrell and Jane Humphries, 'Women's labour force participation and the transition to the male-breadwinner family', *Economic History Review* 2nd series 48 (1995), pp. 89–117.

⁸⁴ Occasional references to 'housework' and 'household duties': TNA RG12/2516, folios 121, 123v.

⁸⁵ Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Europe Since 1500* (London, 1995), p. 89; also for the consequences for childhood, pp. 84–9. For an earlier cohort, Jane Humphries, *Childhood and Child Labour in the British Industrial Revolution* (Oxford, OUP, 2010).

than a rural context: initially small with dependence on the breadwinner's wage; expanding in the middle phase with consolidated income; narrowing again in the later stages with reduced sources of income.⁸⁶ This modification to the breadwinner's wage is important because the supplementary income of the offspring guaranteed the future liquidity of the household. Significantly also, the withdrawal of married women from the labour force occurred at a particular conjunction: the transition to factory-based production.

Female participation in framework knitting receives confirmation from the Anglican parish marriage registers. Between July 1837 and 1858, 237 of the 586 brides were described as framework knitters.⁸⁷ Perhaps significantly thereafter, brides were generally not attributed an occupation, possibly reinforcing the concept of the breadwinner's wage.⁸⁸ The mothers of some bastard children in mid-century were assigned the occupational description of framework knitter.⁸⁹

The potential for engagement of females in framework knitting depended on the size of the frames. The account book of Thomas Abell, framesmith of Shepshed, divulges the details of the sizes of frames.⁹⁰ Between 1855 and 1863, Abell supplied frames to a large number of the local knitters in Shepshed, Long Whatton and Sutton Bonington. The width of the frames varied from 13.5in to 3ft. In 1859, for example, he constructed frames of 13.5 to 17in for Hallam, Pallett and Cotton, at a price of £5 to £5 5s 0d. Frames of 14 and 16in were furnished for Lakin and Corbett in 1855. The 'Prices of New Insides' were graduated for 15in to 30in. He offered 'Carcase Widening from 16 to 20 inches'. In 1863, Parker received a frame of 15in. Interestingly, Abell advertised the 'Prices of setting up Silk frames', the evidence of which had diminished elsewhere. These frames could be erected as 16 to 18in or for 'Extra width silk' 19 to 30in. Other frames, however, exceeded 20in and much of his income probably derived from widening frames as offspring in households matured. The proffered 'Warp Frame & Machine', indeed, extended to 45in in width.

In 1851, the industrial households of Shepshed were largely endogamous, the heads born in the parish, as Levine concluded. There are some aspects of in-migration which do not accord with the conventional expectations. The first aspect which deserves comment, however, is the decline in the reception of textile workers between 1851 and 1891. Although the preponderance of framework-knitting heads of household in 1851 had their origins in Shepshed, about 31 per cent had migrated into the village. In 1891, merely 12 per cent can be categorised as in-migrants. The number of households headed by a framework knitter had diminished between 1851 and 1891, from about 366 to 204 (legible details). In 1891, 86 or so households were headed by a 'stocking maker'. Just ten of these stockingers' households were headed by an in-migrant. Overall, then, combining the framework knitters and stockingers as heads of households, in 1891 in-migrants constituted just 12 per cent.

⁸⁶ Alexander Chayanov, *The Theory of Peasant Economy* (Madison, WI, 1986).

⁸⁷ ROLLR DE610/20-1.

⁸⁸ ROLLR DE610/21, pp. 43ff. and into DE610/22. Eilidh Garrett, 'The trials of labour: motherhood versus employment in a nineteenth-century textile centre', *Continuity and Change* 5 (1990), pp. 121-54.

⁸⁹ ROLLR DE610/14, pp. 192 (nos 1532-3, 1536), 193 (no. 1537).

⁹⁰ ROLLR DE404 (neither foliated nor paginated).

The attractiveness of in-migration for textile work in Shepshed declined significantly in the 40 intervening years.

The respective origins of these in-migrants is analysed further below, but first some consideration must be devoted to some countervailing tendencies which seem contrary to the normative movements of people. The paradoxical points are the large elements of in-migration not just of retailers, but farmers and labourers. Farmers in particular might be expected to be a stable element, especially if freehold landowners.⁹¹ In 1851, 28 of the 46 enumerated farmers and graziers had their origins outside Shepshed. The majority derived from within a radius of ten miles, but some longer-distance migrants originated in Northamptonshire and Birmingham; 19 of the 54 labourers, mostly agricultural workers, were attracted from outside the parish. Of just under 120 retailers of various kinds, 59 were in-migrants. In 1891, the numbers of in-migrants was similar: 27 of 53 farmers and graziers; 39 of 119 retailers of various types; and 26 of 96 agricultural and builders' labourers. In addition, the railway workers were almost exclusively from outside. In the new enterprise, stone quarrying, ten of the 52 workers had origins outside the parish. As in 1851, the immigrant farmers mostly derived from within a radius of ten miles, but with longer-distance origins in Huntingdon, Crich (Derbyshire) and Gressington (Yorkshire).

Returning to the framework knitters' origins, the 113 (just under a third of all fwks) in 1851 whose birthplace was not Shepshed derived from almost 70 different places. The vast majority emanated from within ten miles, but some travelled much longer distances from Newcastle under Lyne, Tewkesbury, Manchester, Norwich, Devon, Waterford (Ireland), Coventry, Wolverhampton, Gloucestershire and Northamptonshire (all one migrant). Over a third were received from the immediate locality from Loughborough (15), Thringstone, Whitwick, Long Whatton, Kegworth, Sutton Bonington, Hathern, Belton, Swannington and Coleorton. Additionally, another dozen in-comers supplied the needles and sinkers, all from the familiar places, including four from Loughborough.

By 1891, hosiery had become less attractive to migrants as it was transferred into factories. Only 24 of 204 framework knitters had entered the parish from elsewhere. Only one (from Worcester) had derived from outside ten miles; 11 had origins in the customary local places, Belton, Hathern, Long Whatton and Loughborough (five). The ten outsiders engaged as 'stocking makers' followed the same pattern, from Loughborough, Thringstone and Whitwick. The incomers from long distances were now factory managers, particularly in the shoe operations. As a reminder, it should be specified that the above were all male heads of household and that other members of households are discussed elsewhere.

The economic consequences of the industrial reorganisation to frame shops and then factories are elusive. The business entrepreneurs were unsurprisingly successful, at least in the short run. When Thomas Whyte, hosiery manufacturer of Shepshed, died in 1903, his estate was valued at over £1,170.⁹² More successfully, Samuel

⁹¹ Colin Pooley and Jean Turnbull, *Migration and Mobility in Britain Since the 18th Century* (London, Routledge, 1998), pp. 62–3.

⁹² National Probate Calendar (NPC), 1903, Udall-Zweinger, p. 151.

Harriman's estate, established as hosiery manufacturer, amounted in 1897 to £5,499 1s 0d.⁹³ In 1873, he possessed 2a. 1r. 12p. of land, presumably the site of his works.⁹⁴ Even grander was the estate of £19,975 14s 5d left by William Cotton, the other principal cotton hosiery manufacturer, probate of which was granted to his two youngest sons, Henry Geary and Samuel Geary Cotton.⁹⁵ As might be expected, only a small proportion of Shepshed inhabitants were included in the probate calendar after 1858, a total of 233 before 1903. About a third (71) related to the estates of women (spinsters and widows, supplemented by wives after the Married Women's Property Acts).⁹⁶ Their occupational status is obviously not immediately apparent. Among the male deceased were 16 framework knitters. Before 1881, estates were described as under a certain level.⁹⁷ The five framework knitters who died before 1881 had personal estate assessed at under £20 (two), under £100 (two) and under £200. The mean value of estates of deceased framework knitters after 1881 approached £110, with a mode of £63 and median of £72 (although again the numbers are small). The estates of bag hosiers, evidently in decline, were comparable, two under £100 before 1881 and six between £33 and £270 after 1881, with an outlier of £415. The estates of three framesmiths before 1881 amounted to under £100 (two) and under £200. One needle maker bequeathed only under £20 before 1881, but two after 1881 had amassed £253 and £1,061, whilst a solitary sinker maker's estate did not exceed £58 after 1881. For comparative purposes, there were estates of bricklayers of under £20 and under £100 before 1881 and £15 and £81 after 1881, but higher amounts for quarrymen after 1881 (£114 and £161).

Like most of their workforce, Cotton and Harriman had their origins in Shepshed.⁹⁸ Cotton probably first appeared in the census of 1841 as a framework knitter in Forest Road, aged about 30 (the census of 1841 rounded ages to the nearest five), his wife Ann aged about 25.⁹⁹ Ann was the widow of Thomas Newbold (1808–37), whom she had married in 1830. That marriage had been solemnised in the presence of William Cotton and Sarah Newbold.¹⁰⁰ Cotton was conjoined with Ann shortly after her widowhood.¹⁰¹ On his marriage, Cotton was assigned the occupational status of framework knitter, the son of Thomas, a shoemaker. By 1851, he had established himself as a worsted hosiery manufacturer employing 60 people. Aged 39, his premises were located in Navigation Road, where they remained. This and subsequent censuses confirmed that he was a native of Shepshed. At this stage, his family entailed a daughter, the eldest of the offspring, and four sons.¹⁰² By the time he had attained 59 in 1871, his enterprise employed 62 men, 75 women and 23

⁹³ NPC, 1897 Haarhoff-Jutson, p. 50.

⁹⁴ *Return of Landowners Vol I Leicestershire*, p. 14.

⁹⁵ NPC, 1894, Cabban-Dytch, p. 140; TNA RG12/2516, fo. 124.

⁹⁶ Succinctly, Susan Kent, *Gender and Power in Britain, 1640–1990* (London, Routledge, 1999), p. 251.

⁹⁷ W. D. [David] Rubinstein, *Men of Property: The Very Wealthy in Britain Since the Industrial Revolution* (repr. London, Social Affairs Unit, 2006), pp. 18–24.

⁹⁸ TNA RG12/2516, fo. 124; RG12/2517, fo. 34.

⁹⁹ TNA HO107/596/6, fo. 50.

¹⁰⁰ ROLLR DE610/19, p. 189 (no. 566).

¹⁰¹ ROLLR DE610/20, p. 31 (no. 61).

¹⁰² TNA HO107/2085, fo. 478v.

girls.¹⁰³ Within another decade, the number of employees was recorded in the census of 1881 as 400.¹⁰⁴ His two youngest sons, Henry and Samuel, aged respectively 35 and 33 and still in the household, assisted him as hosiery manufacturers.¹⁰⁵

The third child of seven of William Harriman, needle maker of Field Street in Shepshead, Samuel, when aged 14, in 1861 was still in education, not commandeered into employment.¹⁰⁶ Apparently he initially by age 24 entered the trade of beerhouse keeper on Navigation Road, adjacent to the new location of factories.¹⁰⁷ Ten years later, however, by his 34th birthday, he had established his hosiery manufactory on Tickhill Lane.¹⁰⁸

The exception – but an instructive one – was Thomas Whyte, originally from Loughborough, thus illustrating the synergy between the two places. Ambiguously, the enumerator in 1871 described Whyte as ‘hosier’, with the implication of bag hosier, although he employed 28 men and eight boys.¹⁰⁹ The succeeding enumerator in 1881 attributed to him (aged 52) the full status of hosiery manufacturer employing 35 men and five boys, his premises also located on Navigation Road.¹¹⁰ The premises were subsequently allocated to Charnwood Road by the enumerators.¹¹¹

The scaling up of the units of production threatened the existence of the small producers, little masters, who survived in 1881, such as George Bott and his son, located in the centre in Pick Street.¹¹² In Nelson’s Yard, Mary Nelson persisted as a hosier employing nine men and two boys.¹¹³ In the central district too, in Queen Street, Joseph Lester, hosier (wool), provided employment for six men.¹¹⁴ Table 3 presents the details of the other small masters surviving in 1881. The eclipse of these small employers was a part of the industrial transformation, the progression from a small-scale industry to factory units, affecting employment, workers’ income and some spatial transfiguration of the parish.

One consequence of the factory-based industrial reorganisation was a partial spatial reconfiguration of the village and parish (Fig. 1). As traditionally, the central precinct – Market Place and Bull Ring – remained the retail core, with butchers, grocers, a printer, but a few interspersed framework knitters. Customarily also, framework knitters and stockings inhabited the village nucleus, especially in places like Hall Croft, Field Street, Bridge Street and Moorfield Place. The new factories, however, were located outside the traditional built-up area, on the periphery of the village, not least Cotton’s factory adjacent to Charnwood Villa, to the south. Closer towards the centre, but still outside, was another factory on Charnwood Road. Also to the south was the factory on Sullington Road. Factory Street was

¹⁰³ TNA RG10/3258, fo. 17.

¹⁰⁴ TNA RG11/3147, fo. 31.

¹⁰⁵ Also 1891: TNA RG12/2516, fo. 124.

¹⁰⁶ TNA RG9/2275, fo. 111v.

¹⁰⁷ TNA RG10/3258, fo. 17v (1871).

¹⁰⁸ TNA RG11/3146, fo. 111; RG12/2517, fo. 34.

¹⁰⁹ TNA RG10/3258, fo. 14v.

¹¹⁰ TNA RG11/3147, fo. 33v.

¹¹¹ TNA RG11/3147, fo. 33v.

¹¹² TNA RG11/3146, fo. 107v.

¹¹³ TNA RG11/3146, fo. 136.

¹¹⁴ TNA RG11/3146, fo. 146.

Master	Location	Description	Census Reference (TNA)
Joseph Onion	Pick St.	Hosier	RG11/3146, f. 106v
Michael Smith	Pinfold St.	Hosiery master, 12 men	RG11/3146, f. 125
Charles Harriman	Field St.	Hosiery mfr (wool, cloth), 24 people	RG11/3146, f. 138
John Beer	Queen St.	Hosiery man, 6 men + 7 women + 37 girls	RG11/3146, f. 145v
Benjamin Jaques	Forest St.	Bag hosier (aged 38)	RG11/3146, f. 153
William Beer	The Lant	Hosier	RG11/3146, f. 155v
George Pallett	Navigation Rd	Hosier, 22 men	RG11/3147, f. 33v
John Parker	The Lant	Hosier, 20 men	RG11/3147, f. 34v
Ames Dexter	The Lant	Hosier, 10 men	RG11/3147, f. 35
Henry Start	Kirk Hill	Hosiery mfr	RG11/3147, f. 36v
Joseph Wood	Kirk Hill	Cotton hosier, 12 men	RG11/3147, f. 37
Joseph Angle	Kirk Hill	Hosiery mfr, 5 persons	RG11/3147, f. 37
James Whitworth	Kirk Hill	Hosiery mfr, 15 hands	RG11/3147, f. 38
Samuel Cook	Sullington Rd	Hosiery mfr, 3 men	RG11/3147, f. 40v.

Table 3.

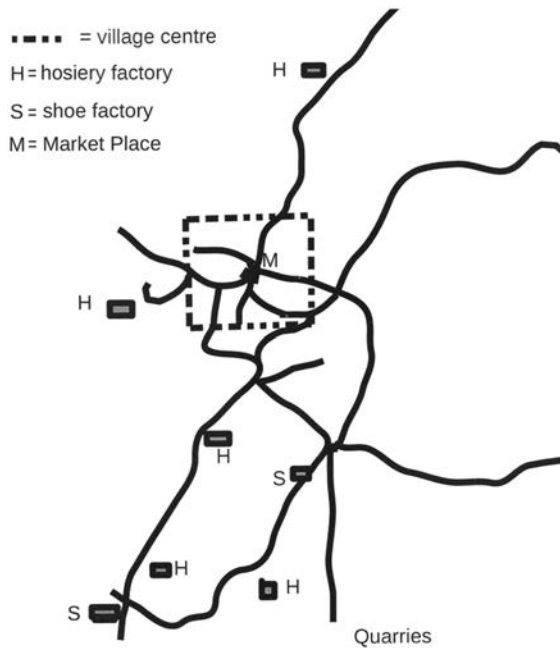


Fig 1

constructed on the western perimeter. To the north, the hosiery factory on Brook Street was as distant from the centre as Cotton's factory. Boot and shoe factories were also built outside the traditional centre, to the south, on Sullington Road, and in the vicinity of the railway station. The decisions to build in these places was no doubt partly influenced by the availability of land, but perhaps also to prevent

noxious new developments in the centre. Two consequences ensued. New building extended to the south in particular. Industrial and domestic housing developments insinuated into the previously rural character. Stockingers and a few quarrymen became housed along Ring Fence and Sullington Road. Domestic dwellings were constructed for framework knitters and some labourers in the Cotton Mill houses adjacent to Cotton's factory.¹¹⁵ Although stone quarrymen inhabited various places in the village, they were concentrated in Worley Lane, Ashby Road and Moscow Lane, constituting a separate neighbourhood.¹¹⁶ To some extent there evolved then a polyfocal spatial division of the parish with elements of residential segregation. Established framework knitting continued in the central location interspersed amongst retail units. The new factories and at least part of their workforce relocated to the periphery of the parish. The agricultural element, separate since enclosure in 1777, was joined on the south by the new quarry workforce.

Understanding the transformation of the industrial economy of Shepshed may have wider implications. It was one of those industrial locations which achieved the transition from 'proto-industrial' or 'proto-capitalist' enterprise to factory-based industrial organisation. The 'stages' conceptualisation of Rostow has been abandoned long ago.¹¹⁷ Emphasis has been placed in recent years on 'regional' industrial development, although still on sectoral economies. Although surrounded by predominantly rural parishes, Shepshed did occupy a place in an industrial spatial spectrum which extended from Leicester through Loughborough to Shepshed. The spatial conjunction with Loughborough in particular produced a minor 'agglomeration' which was at once beneficial and detrimental.¹¹⁸ In 1851, employers in Loughborough had recruited 44 framework knitters from Shepshed.¹¹⁹ 'Broadly speaking, all these concentrations form and survive because of some form of agglomeration economies, in which concentration itself creates the favourable economic environment that supports further or continued concentration.'¹²⁰ The industrial organisation of Shepshed followed on from a cumulative process, which enabled transition from domestic production through frame shops to factory production. The entrepreneurs were local and endogenous. In that sense, there was an organic transition from household industry to factory-based industrialisation. Despite this relocation of the workplace, the importance of the household economy persisted, with customary large families at one life-cycle stage of the household expanding household income through factory working.

¹¹⁵ TNA RG11/3147, folios 14v-17, 44-5; ROLLR DE160/22, pp. 24 (no. 48), 30 (no. 59), 47 (no. 94).

¹¹⁶ TNA RG12/2517, folios 57ff.

¹¹⁷ W. W. [Walt] Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (Cambridge, 1960).

¹¹⁸ Masashisa Fujita, Paul Krugman and Anthony Venables, *The Spatial Economy: Cities, Regions and International Trade* (Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1999), p. 1.

¹¹⁹ TNA HO107/2085, folios 7-363v.

¹²⁰ Fujita, Krugman, Venables, *Spatial Economy*, p. 2.

