

Master of Studies in Local and Regional History,
University of Cambridge

**The Occupational and Organizational Structures of the
Northamptonshire Worsted and Shoemaking Trades, circa 1750-1821**

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DECLARATION

In accordance with Regulation 10 of the General Regulations of the Master of Studies degree, I declare that this thesis is substantially my own work. Where reference is made to the work of others, the extent to which that work has been used is indicated and duly acknowledged in the text and bibliography.

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ABSTRACT

Northamptonshire, along with other agricultural counties in southern England, went into industrial decline sometime in the second half of the eighteenth century. This de-industrialization was a result of the shift of the worsted textile trade to the West Riding of Yorkshire. Unlike other southern counties, Northamptonshire later industrialized through the growth of shoe manufacturing. This distinctiveness offers the opportunity to better understand some aspects of the early industrialization processes at both the county and the parish levels. This study adds to the historiography through analysis of the occupational and organizational structures of the two industries, 1750-1821. Historians have debated the causes of de-industrialization and have examined a number of factors. These include mechanization, wage differentials between the north and south, the ready availability of alternative work, particularly in southern counties with a strong agriculture presence, the influence of guild governance, inadequate supply of capital, poor quality of labour, and a weak network of producers. These potential causal factors have been considered in this study. A number of primary sources have been used to enable the timing of the decline of the local worsted industry to be more precisely defined than has hitherto been possible. These sources indicate that the worsted trade began to collapse in the 1770s and 1780s, a period before the mechanization of the industry. The evidence examined here suggests that there was a combination of other contributory influences to the decline. These include an inability to recover from the loss of trade through the American War of Independence 1777-83, a rise in the demand for worsted yarn rather than for plain woven cloth, a poor marketing network and the unavailability of local cloth halls to allow for direct commercial contact between weaver and merchant.

Shoemaking grew at the beginning of the nineteenth century, not only in the established urban centres of Northampton and Wellingborough but also in the rural

parishes. The shoe industry did not develop significantly in erstwhile worsted parishes during the period of study. The provincial shoe trade developed originally through the provision of footwear to the military and as a cheap source of labour for London shoe merchants. By 1830, this had changed and there is a clear indication that Northamptonshire had become more specialized by this time.

In addition, this study has shown that parish marriage records post the 1753 Hardwicke Act are a barometer of economic and population change. From evidence gleaned through analysis of the trends in the number of annual marriages it appears that worsted parishes de-populated during the de-industrialisation period. The population of the urban weaving town of Kettering decreased at this time but recovered to original levels during the early nineteenth century. Populations in the rural worsted parishes did not recover as quickly. By 1817, some rural parishes had still not returned to the population levels of 50 years earlier. In contrast, the population of agricultural and rural shoemaking parishes grew. The growth accelerated in shoemaking parishes from the 1790s onwards. This use of marriage records is of particular value in the absence of parochial population data prior to the first census of 1801. It is also of significance as a proxy in the absence of direct occupational data. As such, it is likely to be a valuable primary source in future studies to establish occupational and economic changes elsewhere, 1754-1800.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BL British Library, London

HRO Huntingdonshire Record Office, Huntingdon

LRO Leicestershire Record Office, Wigston Magna

NRO Northamptonshire Record Office, Northampton

PRO National Archive, London

1. INTRODUCTION

The aim of the introduction is to briefly consider economic growth in England during the eighteenth century. It will place Northamptonshire in a national perspective and highlight the reason for selecting the country as a region worthy of study. The introduction will consider the historiography of the worsted and shoemaking trades also. It will conclude by listing those questions that the study is attempting to answer.

1.1 Economic Growth during the Eighteenth Century

The industrial revolution in England marked the beginning of modern economic growth. The dependence of the English economy on agriculture had been in decline since the sixteenth century.¹ A cottage economy became established with small holders engaged in the manufacture of goods, initially and primarily for their own use. These rural industries played an important role in augmenting farm incomes.² This manufacture of goods evolved and by the eighteenth century some small holders and artisans produced a surplus of goods in sufficient quantities to enable sale beyond their local community. These industries were conducted from the home, chiefly in rural areas, and with a symbiotic, by-employment relationship with farming.³

The onset and speed by which the national economy grew continues to be the subject of debate (Figure 1, see page 2). In the 1960s, Deane and Cole examined national accounts and output estimates and suggested that a sharp increase in both national income and growth occurred around 1780, driven largely by innovations in textile manufacture. Others believe that Deane and Cole overestimated the growth post 1780, their estimates assuming that other industries grew as fast as cotton. Crafts used re-weighted estimates to

¹ E. A. Wrigley, 'Urban growth and agricultural change. England and the continent in the early modern period', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 15 (1985), pp. 683-728.

² J. Thirsk, 'Industries in the countryside', in F. J. Fisher (ed.), *Essays in economic and social history of Tudor and Stuart England*, (Cambridge, 1961), pp. 70-88.

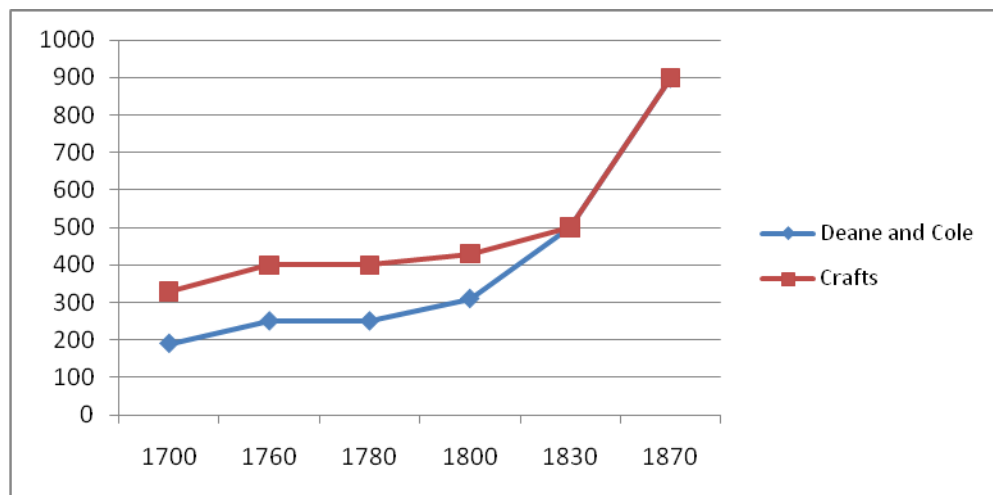
³ F. F. Mendels, 'Proto-industrialization. The first phase of the industrialization process', *The Journal of Economic History*, 32 (1972), pp. 241-61.

argue that output was higher at an earlier date and that the sudden rise in growth did not occur until around 1830.⁴ Shaw-Taylor and Wrigley have lent support to the Crafts' argument. Their aggregated occupational data has shown manufacturing to have been an important element of the English economy as early as 1710. By this date, nearly 40 per cent of the male workforce was employed in manufacturing goods (Figure 2, see page 3).⁵

Figure 1

Per Capita Income in England, 1700-1850

(normalized to 1970 USA \$)



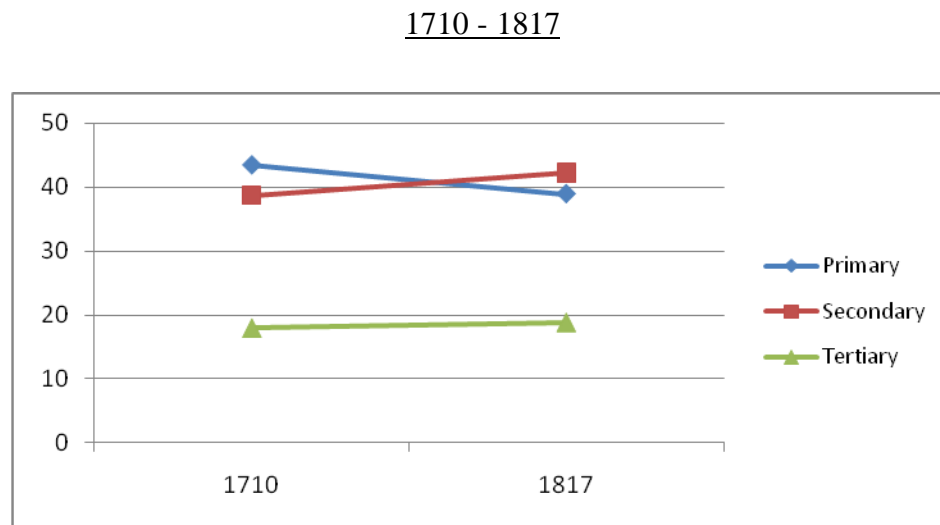
Source: C. Knick Harley (1999).

⁴ C. K. Harley, 'Reassessing the industrial revolution: A macro view' in J. Mokyr (ed.), *The British industrial revolution. An economic perspective* (Second edition, Colorado, 1999), pp. 160-205.

⁵ L. Shaw – Taylor, , E. A. Wrigley, R. S. Davies, P. M. Kitson, G. Newton, and A. E. M. Satchell, 'The occupational structure of England c. 1710 to 1871', work in progress, <http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/>, paper 22, pp. 1-22, last accessed October 2010.

Figure 2

The percentage of men working in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in England,



Notes: Definitions of the sectors: Primary includes agriculture, fishing and mining, the secondary includes manufacture of good and tertiary includes the support services.

Source: L. Shaw – Taylor, E. A. Wrigley, R. S. Davies, P. M. Kitson, G. Newton, and A. E. M. Satchell, paper 22, <http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts>.

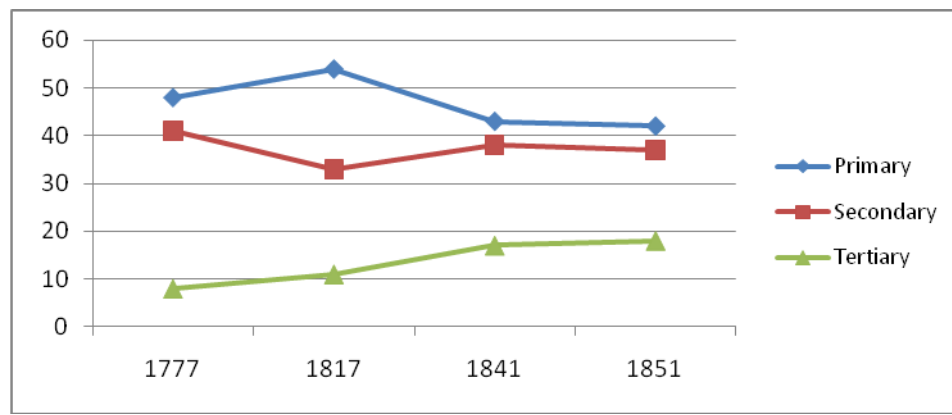
A similar analysis of the county of Northamptonshire shows a different picture. The change in occupational structure at this regional level differs from that at the aggregated national level (Figure 3, see page 4).⁶ In 1777, Northamptonshire had a significant manufacturing sector but this went into decline over the following 40 years. The decline was due largely to the collapse of the local worsted industry which forced

⁶ L. Shaw-Taylor and A. Jones, ‘Male occupational structure in Northamptonshire, 1775-1851. A case of partial de – industrialization’, a preliminary report, <http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/>, paper 5, pp. 1-17, last accessed March 2010.

male labour into either agriculture or the tertiary sector. This partial de-industrialization was a feature of many agricultural counties in southern England in this period.⁷

Figure 3

The percentage of men working in the primary, secondary and tertiary sectors in Northamptonshire, 1777 - 1851



Source: L. Shaw – Taylor and A. Jones, paper 5,
<http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts>.

The woollen trade, encompassing both wool and worsted, was of major value to the English economy from medieval times. The manufacture of woollen cloth accounted for 26.6% of the English industrial output in 1700.⁸ The cotton industry, sometimes referred to as the driver of the industrial revolution, did not grow until later. It was not until the turn of the nineteenth century that cotton output was on a par with that of the woollen

⁷ L. Shaw-Taylor, paper 22.

⁸ S. Broadberry, B. Campbell, A. Klein, M. Overton and B. Van Leeuwen, 'British economic growth, 1270-1870', some preliminary estimates, <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/broadberry/wp>, pp. 18,46, last accessed August 2010.

industries.⁹ The early woollen industry was widespread with significant centres in East Anglia, the West Country and Yorkshire. The geography had changed little since the Middle Ages. According to Ashton, ‘there was probably no county of England and Wales in which woollen cloth was not produced by the part-time work of peasants, farmers and agricultural labourers’.¹⁰

Historians have long known that the de-industrialization of southern counties of England was substantial during the eighteenth century. The scale on which this occurred has been explored more recently by Shaw-Taylor and others, but in general, the matter has received limited scholarly attention.¹¹ What makes Northamptonshire potentially unique is that unlike other southern agricultural counties, it later industrialized through the growth in shoemaking. Moreover, the county has excellent occupational sources and it provides an opportunity, perhaps unrivalled, to study changes in occupational and organizational structures at the local and regional levels during the early part of the industrial revolution.

1.2 The Northamptonshire Worsted Trade

The Northamptonshire worsted trade began in the late seventeenth century.¹² The Poll Tax Returns, 1691-92, list a number of freeholders engaged in the industry in the market town of Kettering. The establishment of the trade is attributed to the local supply of the long - staple wool that was necessary for worsted cloth production.¹³ Bowden argued

⁹ M. Berg, *The age of manufactures. Industry, innovation and work in Britain 1700–1820* (Oxford, 1985), pp. 40-42. P. Deane, ‘The output of the British woollen industry in the eighteenth century’, *The Journal of Economic History*, 17 (1957), pp. 207-223.

¹⁰ T. S. Ashton, *The industrial revolution 1760–1830* (Oxford, 1968), p. 23.

¹¹ L. Shaw-Taylor, ‘The Occupational structure’, paper 22.

¹² E. Kerridge, *Textile manufacture in early modern England* (Manchester, 1985), p. 64. A. Randall, ‘The Kettering worsted industry of the eighteenth century. Part 2 The growth and decline of the industry’, *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 4 (1971/72), pp. 349-56.

¹³ A. Randall, ‘The Kettering worsted industry of the eighteenth century. Part 1 Origins, products and organization of the industry’, *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 4 (1970/71), pp. 313-320.

that, as a consequence of enclosure, Northamptonshire pastures became more lush and ‘made light fleeces heavier, fine wool coarser, and short wool longer. This long wool was unsuitable for the manufacture of fine broadcloth but better adapted for the manufacture of worsted fabrics and, to a lesser extent, the coarser varieties of cloth’.¹⁴ Writing in 1712, Morton believed ‘many of the [Northamptonshire] pastures to have Excellent Wooll.....there is no county in England a better race of sheep than here’. He noted, too, that Northamptonshire wool was in surplus supply ‘a great part of our wool is bought up by factors, and convey’d to Sturbridge Fair, and thence to Norwich, and to Braintry, Bocking and Colchester....A part of it is us’d within the County, being com’d and weav’d into Serges, Tammies, and Shalloons at Kettering and other towns’.¹⁵ The district of Kettering was the centre of the Northamptonshire industry. Cloth manufacture was limited to small number of simple products, produced en masse and controlled by sergeweavers.¹⁶ Pitt described the organization of the trade thus:

The wool, in the first instance, is bought by the manufacturers of the growers or farmers in which are found in every fleece are appropriated to supply the proper markets in the different parts of the kingdom where they are respectively manufactured. Thus, for instance, the finest is sent into Yorkshire for clothing, or the longest to Leicester for the hosiers; and some of the longest staple wool is worked at home into moreens, tummies, calimancoes, and everlastings. After the wool is sorted, and the different kinds are assigned to the respective purposes for which they are best adapted, that which is intended to be manufactured at home is combed, and then delivered out, in small quantities, to the lower class of people in the neighbourhood, to be spun and reeled, for which they are paid so much per pound, according to the fineness of the thread into which it is converted; it is then returned home to the

E. Kerridge, ‘Wool growing and wool textiles in medieval and early modern times’, in G. J. Jenkins (ed.), *The wool textile industry of Great Britain* (London, 1972), p. 26.

¹⁴ P. J. Bowden, ‘Wool supply and the woollen industry’, *The Economic History Review*, 9 (1956), pp. 44-58.

¹⁵ J. Morton, *Natural History of Northamptonshire* (1712), p.16 cited in A. Randall, ‘The Kettering worsted industry of the eighteenth century Part 1. Origins, products and organization of the industry,’ *Northampton Past and Present* 4 (1970/71), pp. 313-320.

¹⁶ E. Kerridge, *Textile manufacture*, pp.190.

manufacturer, who has it wove into such kind of stuff as the quality of the thread will best answer.¹⁷

Woolcombing and weaving were essentially male trades. Spinning was undertaken by women and boys. Finished cloth was dressed and dyed in London.¹⁸ Although Northamptonshire production was relatively small, it was nonetheless significant to the local economy. It is often problematic to take eighteenth century statistics literally, but by 1741, Kettering was producing shalloons and said to be sending upwards of 1,000 pieces to the London market weekly. In comparison, a late edition of Defoe's 'A tour through the whole island of Great Britain', published after his death in 1748, states that Halifax, a parish in the West Riding, produced 100,000 shalloons per annum, double the Northamptonshire output.¹⁹ Competition from Yorkshire manufacturers was clearly evident by the mid-eighteenth century. A contemporary writer noted that 'Yorkshire was already rivaling them [Kettering] since by under – working them, and very much decreased their trade, as also lowered their prices; they have also robbed the west and east'.²⁰ In the 1790s, at the beginning of the French wars, Northamptonshire wool continued to be sent elsewhere, including some of the finest into Yorkshire. The 'Extracts from the Annals, 1788' reveal that Northamptonshire fleece was sent to Bristol and bought by merchants in the western counties.²¹ Finished cloth, chiefly tammies but also moreens and harratans and some shag, was sent to London. By 1794, the Kettering workforce was reduced by approximately half from its previous peak of 5000 to 6000 people.²² In comparison, worsted manufacture in Norwich and the West

¹⁷ W. Pitt, *General view of the agriculture of the county of Northampton* (London, 1809), pp. 241-242.

¹⁸ S. A. Peyton, *Kettering vestry minutes A.D. 1797-1853* (Kettering, 1933), p. xv.

¹⁹ D. Defoe, *A tour through the whole island of Great Britain* (London, 1748), p. 141.

²⁰ J. James, *History of the worsted manufacture in England* (London, 1857, new impression 1968), p. 231.
E. Lipson, *The history of the woollen and worsted industries* (London, 1921, second impression, 1965), p. 240.

²¹ BL, B545, *Extracts from the Annals* (1788), pp. 291-92.

²² J. Donaldson, *General view of the agriculture of the county of Northampton with observations of the means of its improvement* (Edinburgh, 1794), p. 11-12.

B. Morton, *The natural history of England* (London, 1763), p. 126.

V. A. Hatley, 'Blaze at Buckby', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 4 (1967), pp. 91-96.

Riding reportedly employed 72,000 and 80,000 respectively. Statistics from this period can be inaccurate, but regardless by the late eighteenth century the Northamptonshire industry was clearly much smaller in scale than that in either East Anglia or Yorkshire, perhaps only one tenth of the size of some competitors. It became non-competitive and went into rapid, terminal decline. So much so, that in an 1817 petition to Parliament, the Kettering Vestry, stated that 1,123 people were in receipt of poor relief. In 1821, the population of Kettering was 3,668 of which 1,805 were declared as paupers.²³ Jones and Wilson have considered a number of factors to explain the supremacy of the West Riding woollen trade in the latter half of the eighteenth century.²⁴ Their reasoning, and how it relates to Northamptonshire, will be discussed in chapter 4.1.

1.3 The Northamptonshire Shoe Trade

Shoes were made by hand processes until the latter half of the nineteenth century. Craftsmen working from a small shop at home, sometimes with assistance from journeymen and apprentices, provided bespoke shoes to the gentry and middle classes. In rural areas, shoemaker-cobblers made and repaired cheaper, low quality footwear, and bought second-hand boots and shoes for repair and re-sale. It was economically viable for the shoe production to be specialized and, in consequence, labour was divided into a number of distinct manufacturing processes.²⁵ The first process, and most skilled operation, was to cut out the leather sections to be used to make the upper. This process, called clicking, was undertaken by the master tradesman. Stitching the uppers together and the preparation of the inner and bottom soles, heels and toe stiffeners, were all separate processes. They required less skill and were undertaken by journeymen,

²³ S. A. Peyton, *Kettering*, pp. xv, 43.

²⁴ E. L. Jones, *Locating the industrial revolution: Inducement and response* (Singapore, 2010), pp. 45-164.
R. G. Wilson, 'The supremacy of the Yorkshire cloth industry in the eighteenth century', in N. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Textile history and economic history* (Manchester, 1973), pp.225-246.

²⁵ A. Fox, *A history of the National Union of Boot and Shoe Operatives* (Oxford, 1958), pp. 10–11.

apprentices and probably women. The final process, to fit the upper and sole together, was called closing.

The presence of a shoemaking industry in Northampton as early as 1524 is indicated by the subsidy returns of that year.²⁶ These returns provide the occupations of 390 men, 50 of whom were shoemakers.²⁷ By 1642, Northampton shoemakers were supplying the English army.²⁸ Supply to the military continued into the eighteenth century, by which time Northampton shoemakers were also making bespoke shoes for the London gentry.²⁹ The London shoe trade was controlled and dominated by the guild. Shoe production and bespoke retailing were regulated and undertaken on the same premises. Gregory King estimated that at the end of the eighteenth century, per capita consumption of shoes was two pairs per year.³⁰ Shoe retailing developed as the ready-made shoe market grew, initially as a means of selling off unwanted bespoke shoes. By 1700, the English shoe industry accounted for nearly 15 per cent of the total industrial output.³¹ The trade was of significant importance to the English economy. The trade grew, particularly for ready-made shoes. By 1730, London shoe warehouses had opened to sell to the mass market. With the growth of the market, London shoemakers began to place more importance on the cost of goods. Wages alone accounted for 25 per cent of

²⁶ PRO, E179, 155/124 cited in W. G. Hoskins, 'English provincial towns in the early sixteenth century', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Fifth Series*, 6 (1956), pp.1-19.

²⁷ The returns also show twenty weavers and twelve fullers, indicating the presence of a wool industry. In 1524, the worsted weaving had not yet reached the county.

²⁸ PRO, SP28/139, 'Accounts of Geo. Wood, Commissioner for clothing soldiers in Ireland' cited in P. R. Mounfield, 'Moving the Industrial flywheel; The origins of Northampton's footwear manufacturing industry', <http://mounfieldpublications.com/northamptonshire/>, last accessed March 2011.

²⁹ P. R. Mounfield, 'Leather footwear', in J. Langton and R. J. Morris (eds.), *Atlas of Industrializing Britain 1780- 1914* (Abingdon, 2004), pp. 124-26. R. M. Serjeantson and W. R. D. Atkins, (eds.), 'Boot and shoes', *The Victoria history of the Counties of England. A History of Northamptonshire, vol. II* (London, 1970), pp. 317-319.

³⁰ British Library, Manuscripts collections, Harl Mss 6867, folio 266, cited in G. Riello, *A foot in the past* (Oxford, 2006), pp. 20-2.

³¹ S. Broadberry, B. Campbell, A. Klein, M. Overton and B. Van Leeuwen, 'British economic growth, 1270-1870', some preliminary estimates, <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/economics/staff/faculty/broadberry/wp>, pp. 18,46, last accessed August 2010.

the cost of the shoe.³² In consequence, London merchants looked elsewhere to have shoes manufactured more cheaply, from which the provincial towns of Northampton and Stafford benefited.³³ The driver of the provincial growth was cost, the ability to provide good quality shoes at a cheaper price. Shoemakers everywhere used readily available, simple hand tools. Northampton shoemakers had no technology advantage over manufacturers in London. Neither did they have access to a source of cheaper or better quality leather. They built their business and their reputation on the cost and skill of their labour. In 1820, approximately 30 percent of the debts carried by London shoemakers were held in Northamptonshire.³⁴ This is evidence of a close business relationship between London and Northamptonshire shoemakers. The Northamptonshire shoemakers acted as subcontractors to London master shoemakers. Clicking was undertaken largely in London. Northampton was issued with cut uppers and the sole leathers. The role of these provincial shoemakers was to construct the shoe, pack them in baskets and send them back by wagon to London³⁵. This development of the Northampton trade is witnessed by the number of job advertisements placed in the local newspaper, the Northampton Mercury. An example from 1792 is shown in Figure 4 (see page 11).³⁶

Northampton town was at the centre of the shoemaking trade but manufacture also spread to neighbouring towns and villages, for example by at least 1761 to Wellingborough and by 1783 to Raunds, Long Buckby, Daventry and Kettering.³⁷ It has been suggested that the reason for the growth of the industry elsewhere was perhaps necessitated by the inability of the town of Northampton to expand.³⁸ It is known that land owned by St. Andrew's Priory to the north east of the town was not enclosed until

³² G. Riello, *A foot in the past*, pp. 203-04.

³³ V. A. Hatley and J. Rajczonek, *Shoemakers in Northamptonshire 1762-1911* (Northampton, 1971), p. 3.

³⁴ G. Riello, *A foot in the past*, pp. 228-9.

³⁵ G. Riello, *A foot in the past*, p. 14, 92-98, 224-25.

³⁶ BL, *Northampton Mercury*, 6th December, 1792.

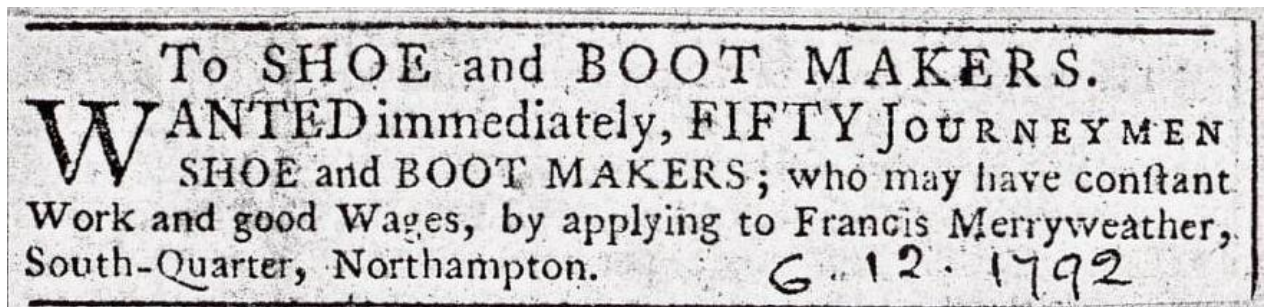
³⁷ P. R. Mounfield, The footwear industry of the East Midlands (III) Northamptonshire, 1700-1911, *The East Midland Geographer*, 3 (1965) p.434 in pp. 434-453.

³⁸ I owe this suggestion to Leigh Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge.

the 1860s.³⁹ It is apparent also from Cole and Roper's town plan of 1810 that land to the south and west was common in 1820.⁴⁰ Further work is required to test this hypothesis.

Figure 4

Advertisement in the Northampton Mercury, 6th December 1792



Source: NRO, Northampton Mercury, 6th December, 1792.

Northamptonshire benefited also from Army and Navy orders. These were also organized and arranged through London contractors who commissioned production in the provinces.⁴¹ Shoe output was stimulated at the time of war. Donaldson stated that 'in Northampton and some neighbouring towns... upwards of a thousand hands are employed, in making shoes for the supply of the army and navy, and the shops in London, and also for exportation to different parts of the world. About 7,000 or 8,000 pairs are manufactured weekly in time of peace; but at present [July 1794] in consequence of the war, from 10,000 to 12,000 may be manufactured in the same period'.⁴² The scale of the business was dictated by the demands of the war. The Gotch

³⁹ Zoe Crisp, *The history of urban back gardens in eighteenth and nineteenth century England*, ongoing PH.D thesis, University of Cambridge.

⁴⁰ G. Cole and J. Roper, 'Town plan of Northampton, 1807', http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~genmaps/genfiles/COU_files/ENG/NTH/cole-roper_northampton_1810.jpg, last accessed June 2011.

⁴¹ G. Riello, *A foot in the past*, p. 48.

⁴² J. Donaldson, *General view*, p. 10, cited in V. A. Hatley, *Shoemakers*, p.4.

family, shoemakers based in Kettering, provided the Navy with 3,000 pairs of shoes a week in 1803, and over 200,000 pairs in 1813.⁴³

1.4 The Questions to be Answered

It has been shown that Northamptonshire had a significant manufacturing sector at least as early as 1777. Along with other agricultural counties in southern England, the county went into industrial decline over the following forty years. The reason for this de-industrialization was due largely to the shift of the worsted textile trade to the West Riding of Yorkshire. Northamptonshire is distinctive in that it later industrialized through the growth of shoe manufacturing. This distinctiveness offers the potential to understand better some aspects of the early industrialization processes at both county and parochial levels. It is the purpose of this dissertation to improve our understanding of these processes through the examination of the change in the occupational and organizational structures of Northamptonshire during the de-industrialization/industrialization period, circa 1750-1821.

This dissertation will use a range of primary sources, described in Chapter 2, to address a number of questions: How and where were the individual occupations within the two industries organized? Where and when did shoemaking grow? Did shoemaking become a significant industry in those parishes in which worsted manufacture failed? Where did women spin worsted yarn? When did the worsted cloth trade begin to decline and hence, more importantly, why? To address the latter, a number of factors are examined. These include the role of transport, change in business organization, the affect of war and the impact of mechanization. This examination will challenge the notion held by others that mechanization elsewhere was the main cause of the Northamptonshire collapse. The study will also consider alternative causes of de-industrialization and

⁴³ R. Church, 'Messrs Gotch and sons and the rise of the Kettering footwear industry', *Business History*, 8 (1966), pp. 140-49.

suggest reasons for the collapse of Northamptonshire worsted. In addition, the impact of industrial change upon marriage, parish population and poor relief will be considered. Data will be presented to suggest that the change in the number of people who married over a given time period was a barometer of economic and population change. From this evidence, it will be postulated that marriage, in the absence of direct occupational data, could be employed as a legitimate proxy for economic change. This observation opens up the potential for further studies, particularly in other counties and parishes for which direct occupational data is unavailable.

The format of the dissertation is as follows: The Introduction examines the historiography of the two trades and places Northamptonshire in a national perspective. This examination is followed by an appraisal of the primary sources. These include: Militia lists; wills; probate inventories; parish records, notably baptisms, marriages and apprenticeships; Quarter Sessions Records; contemporary newspapers. The body of the essay, to provide answers to the above questions, follows. The Conclusion summarises the work and discusses the opportunity for future studies.

2. THE PRIMARY SOURCES

This aim of this chapter is to describe and discuss the primary sources used in the study. Prior to this, it may be beneficial to highlight the data that are available: The Northamptonshire Militia Lists of 1762, 1777 and 1781 describe the occupations of men and are available for analysis in digital and printed form. Male occupational data from baptism registers, 1813-20, and from various Northampton Poll Books 1768-1830 are available in similar form. Marriage records are available on compact disc. These datasets have been used in this work and are referenced accordingly later. Whilst they provide a sound basis for the understanding of occupational changes over time, in themselves they paint an incomplete picture. It is necessary to draw upon other sources in order to monitor more precisely the changes over time.

Accordingly, this study also draws upon a number of other occupational primary sources which are not currently available in digital form. These include occupations taken from the list of army reserves, Kettering sub-division 1803, from wills and inventories and from apprenticeship records. With regard to female occupations, the data are restricted to the role of women in worsted spinning, some of which are available in an unpublished Ph.D thesis. This study builds upon this thesis, adding significantly to the existing data and providing a more comprehensive picture of the role of spinning in relation to weaving and woolcombing.

2.1 Male Occupations

2.1.1 Militia Lists

The Militia Act of 1757 placed a responsibility upon each parish to record annually those men who were qualified to join the English militia for the defence of the country against invasion or rebellion. The Act made men liable to serve if they were able-bodied and aged between eighteen and forty five years. Some occupations were exempt,

including clergymen, parish constables, peers of the realm, articulated clerks, apprentices and those men with three or more children born in wedlock. Actual service was determined by ballot. Each man who was called up had the opportunity to provide a substitute. Many who could afford to pay for a substitute, did so.⁴⁴ The regulations for call-up altered in successive Acts post 1757. Although comprehensive, they do give a good indication of male occupation within the parish and have been used by historians as a key primary source.⁴⁵ Their use is of particular value before 1813.⁴⁶ This study draws upon the militia list from 1777, in particular, and those from 1762 and 1781. It utilises also the amended list of army reserves for the Kettering sub-division, 1803.

2.1.2 Baptism records, 1813-20

Rose's Parochial Registers Act of 1812 decreed and amended the manner and form of keeping the records of marriages, baptisms and burials.⁴⁷ The format for recording these events was standardised and parishes were provided with pre-printed record books with which to do so. For baptisms, it became a pre-requisite to record the father's occupation. The practice was adopted almost universally and many records survive. These records are not in themselves comprehensive, in that they cover the fathers of baptised children only, but as with militia lists, they do provide another snapshot of male occupations. In this dissertation, they are used alongside militia lists to extend the

⁴⁴ J. R. Western, *The English militia in the eighteenth century* (London, 1965), pp.255-64 cited in V.A. Hatley, *Northamptonshire* (Kettering, 1973), p. ix.

⁴⁵ J. S. W. Gibson and M. T. Medlycott, *Militia lists and musters, 1757-1876: A directory of holdings in the British Isles*, second edn., (Bury, 2000). V. A. Hatley, *Northamptonshire militia lists 1777* (Kettering, 1973), p. ix-xxiv. W. Raybould, 'Open for business: Textile manufacture in Northamptonshire c. 1685-1800' (Ph.D thesis, University of Leicester, 2005), pp. 31-6, <https://ira.le.ac.uk/handle/2381/7428>, last accessed February 2011.

⁴⁶ L. Shaw-Taylor, 'occupational structure', <http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/>, paper 22, pp. 1-22, last accessed October 2010.

⁴⁷ L. Shaw-Taylor and E. A. Wrigley, 'The occupational structure of England, 1750-1871', <http://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/>, paper 1, pp. 7, last accessed February 2011. N. Owen, <http://owenfamilyhistory.net/ParishReg.html>, last accessed February 2011.

time period over which changes in shoemaking and in worsted manufacture are monitored.

2.1.3 Wills and Probate Inventories

The NRO holds the will and probate inventory records from the Archdeaconry Court of Northampton and the Consistory Court of Peterborough, 1674-1857. A catalogue dataset is available in index card form, listing the person, their occupation, the parish of residence and the year of testament. In this study, the occupation and the year of testament have been used to monitor changes over time.

It is noted that these testamentary records need to be treated with some caution for at least three reasons. First, they are socially selective. The social hierarchy of wills and inventories for gentry-yeoman-tradesman-husbandman-labourer has been documented by others.⁴⁸ Those in the poorer occupational groups were less likely to leave either a will or an inventory simply because they had less to pass on. For this study, it is recognised that there also existed a social hierarchy within a particular trade. For example, some weavers were considerably more affluent than others. The less wealthy weavers, therefore, are likely underrepresented. A second caution relates to the number of surviving records. This number for Northamptonshire is small, especially relative to other primary sources such as militia lists and marriage data, but it is considered sufficient in this study to be used as supplementary evidence and enable meaningful and comparative estimates to be made.

⁴⁸ L. Weatherill, *Consumer behavior and material culture in Britain, 1660-1760*, (second edition, London, 1996), pp. 166-89, 212-13. L. Shaw-Taylor, 'The nature and scale of the cottage economy', <https://www.hpss.geog.cam.ac.uk/research/projects/occupations/abstracts/>, paper 15, pp. 1-3, last accessed February 2011.

2.1.4 Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships were a means of providing boys and girls with training in crafts and trades. Apprenticeship indentures bound the child, usually around the age of twelve or thirteen, to a master or mistress for seven or eight years. In the eighteenth century, the number of apprenticeships that were placed through the craft guild went into decline, a consequence of increased wage labour and the difficulty of setting up as a master. Pauper apprenticeships, however, continued to a greater or lesser extent as a means for the parish and for charities to prepare children for future employment.⁴⁹ Parish, charity and private apprenticeship indenture records survive for Kettering. The records are problematic in that the actual number of apprenticeships placed year-on-year was small and fluctuated. As a stand-alone primary source, their validity in occupational trend analysis would be questioned, but as with testamentary data, they are legitimate as ancillary evidence in support of the findings from other sources.

2.1.5 Marriage Records

Anglican burial and baptism records before 1812 are considered to be less reliable than marriage records. Wrigley has documented the problems associated with these data, for example, non-registration of non-conformists, incomplete records through failure of the minister to record the event, parental avoidance in the absence of a binding legal responsibility, susceptibility to dramatic events such as an outbreak of smallpox or other disease.⁵⁰ On the other hand, marriage records following Hardwicke's Act of 1753 are of more potential value because for the first time, marriage in England was to be recorded.⁵¹

⁴⁹ PRO, 'Apprenticeship records' <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/apprenticeship-records.htm>, last accessed February 2011. PRO., 'Apprenticeship indentures and disciplinary cases (IA)', <http://www.londonlives.org/static/IA.jsp>, last accessed February 2011.

⁵⁰ E. A. Wrigley, 'The use of Anglican parish registers as a source about the number of births in England before the beginning of civil registration', *Population Studies*, 31 (1977), pp. 281-312.

⁵¹ Hardwicke's Marriage Act, 1754, <http://freepages.genealogy.rootsweb.ancestry.com/framland/acts/pre1812.htm>, last accessed February 2011.

The clergy were required to keep a record of all in a prescribed form. The Act stipulated that only Jews, Quakers and members of the royal family were excluded. The Northamptonshire marriage records are considered to be near complete and to be reliable. In this dissertation, over 60,000 marriages, 1755 - 1817, have been accessed and used for two purposes. The first purpose is to track changes in individual occupations. This is possible because some marriage records denote the occupation of the bridegroom. The occupational coverage for Kettering at the end of the eighteenth century is particularly comprehensive. The second purpose is to track economic change and population trends. Armstrong has used marriage, baptism and burial records to estimate population totals in Norwich.⁵² Wrigley has used marriage data to estimate county and hundred populations prior to the 1801 census.⁵³ He has postulated that ‘changes in national occupational structure will arise from some combination of structural change in given areas and the rates of growth in those localities compared with other areas’. The number who married would be expected to change in line with parish economic fortune. For instance, in those parishes that de-industrialized, the economy would have taken a downturn and people were likely to have delayed marriage or moved elsewhere to find work. Conversely, in those parishes that industrialized, the number of marriages and the population would be expected to rise. If marriage rates are invariant, then any change in the number of marriages is likely a direct reflection of population shift. Wrigley showed that Northamptonshire marriage rates rose by less than three per cent between 1801 and 1821, from 7.59 to 7.80 people per thousand. If these rates were similar during the preceding 50 years, then it is a reasonable assumption that trends in marriage numbers reflect a change in population and not in marriage deferral. In short, marriage numbers may be a barometer of population change and can be used to monitor de-industrialization/industrialization processes as a proxy in the absence of direct

⁵² A. Armstong, ‘Population, 1700-1950’, in C. Rawcliffe and R. Wilson (eds.), *Norwich since 1550* (London, 2004), pp. 243-69.

⁵³ E.A. Wrigley, ‘English county populations in the later eighteenth century’, *The Economic History Review* 60 (2007), pp. 35-69.

occupational data. It is not the intention of this study to measure the absolute population of selected parishes within the county. This study is interested only in trends. Moreover, whereas Wrigley was concerned with county populations, this work is more interested in marriages at the parochial level, comparing worsted, shoemaking and farming communities with one another.

2.1.6 Northampton Poll Books

Between 1768 and 1820, the borough of Northampton returned two members to Parliament. The parliamentary charter permitted all male householders, who were not in receipt of alms or parish relief, to vote. From 1780 to 1832, payment of land tax became an appropriate qualification.⁵⁴ In Northampton, approximately 60 per cent of males aged 21 years or over were entitled to vote.⁵⁵ The names and occupations of those who did vote were recorded and Clerks of the Peace retained duplicate records in poll books. These books cover Northampton only, with no reference to other parishes, but are used in this study particularly for the examination of occupational changes in the shoe industry within the town. Poll books from the years 1768, 1784, 1796, 1820 and 1830 have been used in this study.

2.2 Female Occupations

Whilst there are a number of sources from the eighteenth century that record male occupations, there are relatively few that do so for women. For the purposes of this dissertation, female occupational data is restricted to spinners and then only to those who convicted of embezzlement. Spinning was an occupation dominated by women and children. Few men were involved. The spinners worked from home and were provided with combed worsted. The spun yarn was returned on a reel with a fixed circumference,

⁵⁴ J. Gibson and C. Rogers, *Poll Books c. 1696-1872: A directory to holdings in Great Britain* (Birmingham, 1989), pp. 3-5, 37.

⁵⁵ V. A. Hatley and J. Rajczonek, *Shoemakers in Northamptonshire 1762-1911* (Kettering, 1971), pp.22-3.

normally one yard. This reel was known as a hank and was to be returned to the woolcomber or sergeweaver with an agreed, fixed number of threads. The charge of embezzlement related to either false reeling or to short yarning. These were practices in which the spinner worked with a reel circumference shorter than one yard or returned the hank with fewer than the prescribed threads. Embezzlement of this nature came to a head in the late eighteenth century and led to a series of statutes known as the Worsted Acts. These Acts established Worsted Committees, which were associations of local manufacturers who sought the right to organize an industrial police force. Their role was to regulate the worsted production process.⁵⁶ The first Act was passed in 1777 and applied to the counties of Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire. Other regions followed, including worsted manufacturers in the South and East Midlands. A notice in the *Northampton Mercury* on the 27th January 1785 stated that the worsted manufacturers were ‘unanimously resolved to petition the House of Commons to bring a bill appointing the Inspector of Worsted Yarn’.⁵⁷ A motion was made to the House of Commons in April. The Act was passed to cover the counties of Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Northamptonshire, Leicestershire, Rutland and the Isle of Ely. In July 1785 a notice was published in the *Northampton Mercury* and called for a meeting of the manufacturers to put the Act of Parliament into practice.⁵⁸ The convictions that arose in consequence of the act were reported in the Quarter Sessions Records and in contemporary newspapers. These records do not indicate the absolute number of spinners at work at any one time, but they do provide information on the name, the parish of residence and the date that the conviction was reported. It is the parish that is of particular concern in this study.

The need for Worsted Acts to legally control spinners at this time has been the subject of discussion by social and economic historians. Valenze believes the industry

⁵⁶ R. J. Soderlund, ‘Intended as a terror to the idle and profligate: Embezzlement and the origins of policing in the Yorkshire worsted industry, c. 1750-1777’, *Journal of Social History*, 31 (1998), pp. 647-99.

⁵⁷ NRO, *Northampton Mercury*, 27th January 1785.

⁵⁸ NRO, *Northampton Mercury*, 18th July 1785.

took advantage of the organizational weakness of female labour.⁵⁹ For her, the progress of eighteenth century capitalism changed the meaning of property rights and challenged existing long-held customs and common rights. Styles, in his study of spinner convictions in Yorkshire and elsewhere, is of the opinion that employers turned to the law in response to economic patterns of industrial growth and decline.⁶⁰ For him, the need for control in good times was minimal. On the other hand, if trading was difficult or if spun yarn was in drastic short supply, then regulation of spinners and their product was deemed more necessary. It is from Styles that the work reported here has taken its lead.

⁵⁹ D. Valenze, *The first industrial woman*, (Oxford, 1995), pp. 70-5.

⁶⁰ J. Styles, 'Policing a female workforce: The origins of the Worsted Acts, *Bulletin for the study of labour*, 52 (1987), pp. 1-17. J. Styles, 'Embezzlement, industry and the law in England, 1500-1800, in M. Berg, P. Hudson and M. Sonenscher (eds.), *Manufacture in town and country before the factory* (Cambridge, 1983), pp.173-205.

3. THE LOCATION OF THE WORSTED AND SHOE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES

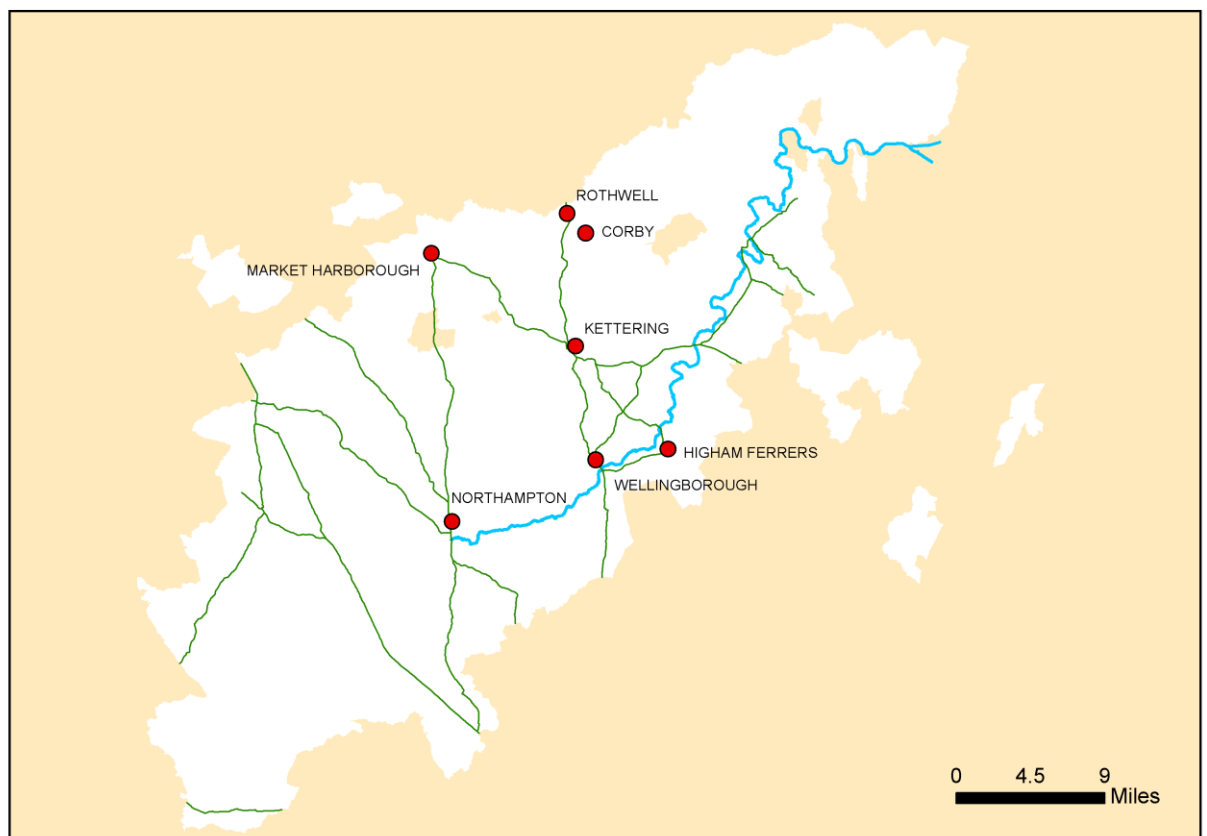
This chapter answers the following questions: How and where were the individual occupations within the two industries organized? Where did women spin worsted yarn? Did shoemaking have a significant presence in those parishes in which worsted manufacture ultimately failed? Did transport play a role in the demise of worsted? Before those questions are addressed it may be beneficial to note the topography of Northamptonshire: Map 1 (see page 23) highlights the major turnpike roads and the urban parishes that will feature in this study. Map 2 (see page 24) shows the division of the county by hundred and Map 3 (see page 25) illustrates the altitude.⁶¹ The latter is significant in that it was at the higher altitudes where pasture sheep were raised, in districts less suitable for arable farming.

⁶¹ A. E. M. Satchell, 'Northamptonshire hundreds', unpublished, University of Cambridge. NRO, map of the turnpike roads of Northamptonshire. A. Cossons, 'The turnpike roads of Northamptonshire with the Soke of Peterborough', *Northampton Past and present*, 1 (1950), pp. 28-45.
<http://www.northamptonshirewildlife.co.uk/ntonpics/nptonm3.jpg>, last accessed January 2011

Map 1

A map of Northamptonshire

The location of the turnpike roads, the River Nene and some parishes, late eighteenth century

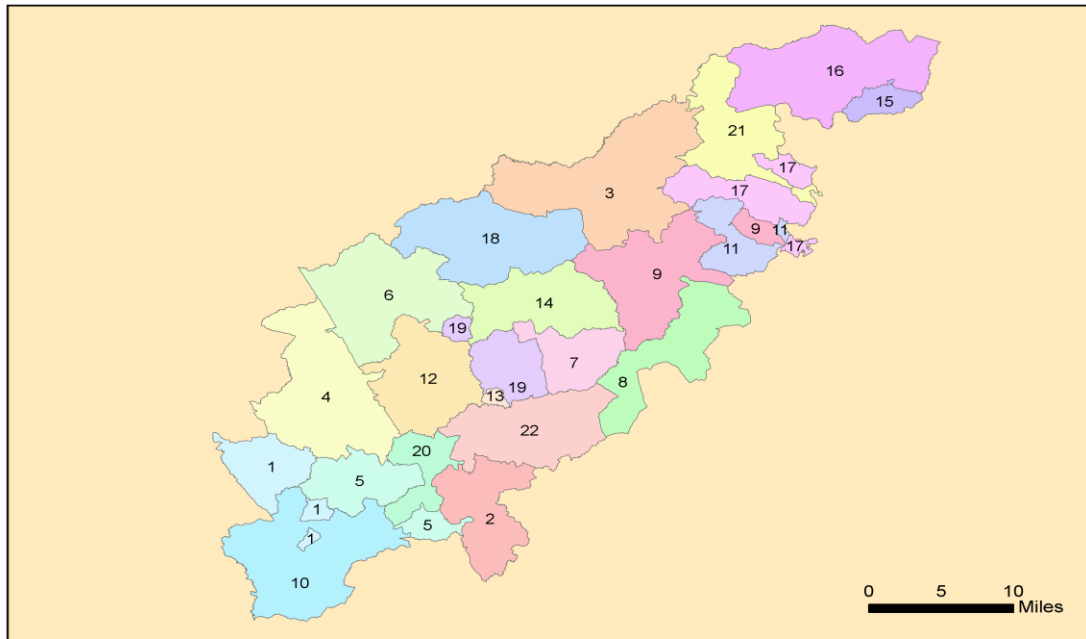


Note: The green lines show the turnpike roads running through the county. The blue line shows the River Nene.

Sources: NRO map. A. Cossons, (1950).

Map 2

The Northamptonshire hundreds



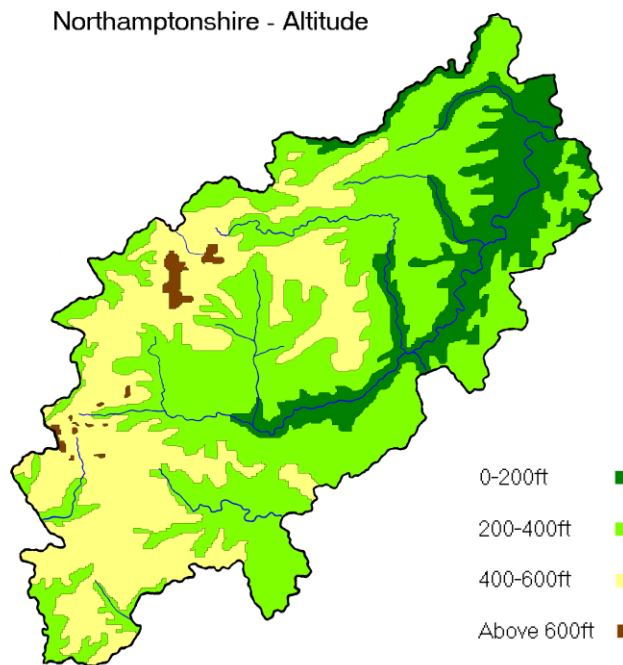
Index

1	Chipping Warden	9	Huxloe	17	Polebrook
2	Cleyley	10	Kings Sutton	18	Rothwell
3	Corby	11	Navisford	19	Spelhoe
4	Fawsley	12	Nobottle Grove	20	Towcester
5	Greens Norton	13	Northampton Borough	21	Willybrook
6	Guilsborough	14	Orlिंगbury	22	Wymersley
7	Hamfordshoe	15	Peterborough City		
8	Higham Ferrers	16	Peterborough Liberty		

Source: A. E. M. Satchell, University of Cambridge.

Map 3

An Altitudinal map of Northamptonshire



Source: <http://www.northamptonshirewildlife.co.uk/ntonpics/nptonm3.jpg>.

3.1 Weavers, Woolcombers and Spinners

The number of weavers, woolcombers and shoemakers named in the 1777 Northamptonshire Militia list is shown, by hundred, in Table 1.⁶²

⁶² V. A. Hatley, *Northamptonshire militia lists, 1777* (Kettering, 1973), p. xviii.

Table 1

The number of weavers, woolcombers and shoemakers in each Northamptonshire
hundred, 1777

<u>Hundred</u>	<u>Weavers</u>	<u>Woolcombers</u>	<u>Shoemakers</u>
Guilsborough	189	71	32
Rothwell	181	9	22
Huxloe	179	35	54
Corby	143	17	24
Spelhoe	90	32	156
Fawsley	68	25	32
Nobottle Grove	51	51	36
Hamfordshoe	35	6	134
Orlingbury	34	9	13
Kings Sutton	29	11	20
Willybrook	17	1	15
Chipping Warden	14	8	19
Wymersley	10	1	23
Cleyley	8	2	15
Towcester	4	2	22
Greens Norton	3	3	9
Higham Ferrers	2	1	45
Navisford	0	3	13
Polebrook	0	2	14
Nassaburgh	n/a	n/a	n/a
County Total	1057	289	698

Source: V. A. Hatley, (1973).

Approximately nine per cent of the men listed were engaged in weaving, approximately two per cent in woolcombing and six per cent in shoemaking. Almost twice as many men were employed in worsted manufacture, therefore, than were engaged in shoemaking, clearly highlighting the relative size of the two industries at this time. Assuming the tradesmen were fully occupied by their respective trades, the data shows that four weavers were required for every one woolcomber. This ratio is in broad agreement with that reported by Heaton and Bischoff who both recorded that one Yorkshire woolcomber could employ three and a half weavers full time.⁶³ In the 1762 Northamptonshire Militia List, 697 weavers and 172 woolcombers were named, also a ratio of nearly four to one.⁶⁴ These data suggest that Northamptonshire woolcombers were providing just sufficient worsted for the local weavers and perhaps had little or no excess to export beyond the county.

The distribution of weavers across the county in 1777 by parish is shown in Map 4 (see page 28). At this time, more than 60 percent of the weavers lived in parishes in the four adjoining hundreds of Rothwell, Guilsborough, Corby and Huxloe in the North West of the county. These districts were commonly at an altitude of 200 feet, in some areas as high as 600 feet. Also, Northamptonshire was widely turnpiked by 1755. The worsted parishes were located within close proximity of these roads, no more than three miles or so distant, and hence traders had easy access to Market Harborough, Leicester, Warwick, London and Huntingdonshire.⁶⁵ In contrast, few weavers were to be found in the Nene valley. The River Nene was not navigable between Northampton to Peterborough until 1761, by which time the worsted industry was already established. The river, therefore,

⁶³ H. Heaton, *The History of the Yorkshire woollen and worsted industry*, second edn., (Oxford, 1965), p.338. J. Bischoff, *A comprehensive history of the woollen and worsted manufactures, vol I*, new impression, (London, 1968), p. 185.

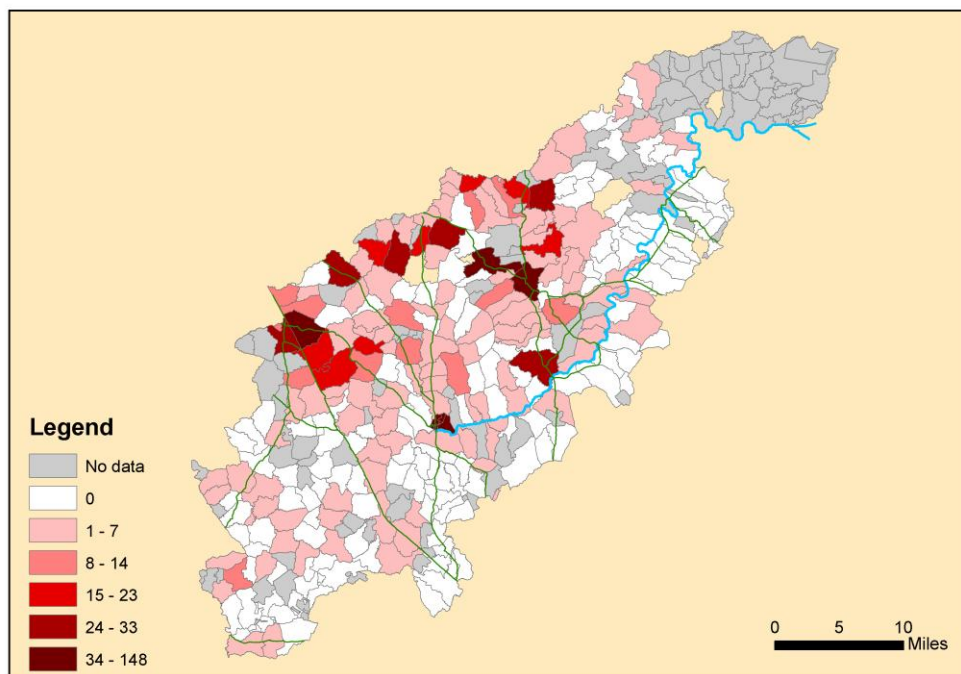
⁶⁴ 1762 Militia List, digital data, courtesy of Leigh Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge.

⁶⁵ NRO, *A map of the turnpike roads in Northamptonshire*. A. Cossons, 'The turnpike roads of Northamptonshire with the Soke of Peterborough', *Northamptonshire Past and Present*, 1 (1950), pp. 28-45.

appears to have had little influence upon the development of the industry although, as will be seen later, it did have a role in shoe manufacture.

Map 4

The number of weavers listed in the 1777 Northamptonshire Militia List, by parish



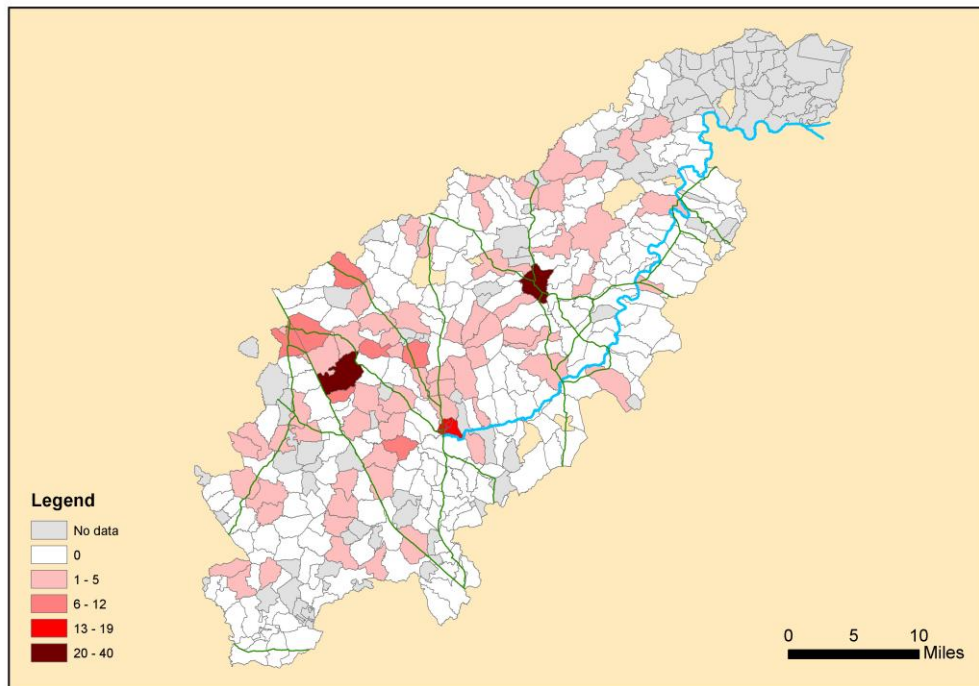
Note: The green lines show the turnpike roads running through the county. The blue line shows the River Nene.

Sources: Militia list, 1777, V. A. Hatley, (1973) and L. Shaw-Taylor (digital dataset). Turnpike data, NRO and A. Cossons, (1950).

The distribution of woolcombers in 1777 by parish is shown in Map 5.

Map 5

The number of woolcombers listed in the 1777 Northamptonshire Militia List, by parish



Notes: The green lines show the turnpike roads running through the county. The blue line shows the River Nene.

Sources: Militia list, 1777, V. A. Hatley, (1973) and L. Shaw-Taylor (digital dataset). Turnpike data, NRO and A. Cossons, (1950).

Woolcombers were fewer in number and woolcombing was more concentrated than was weaving. This trade had a geographical focus, particularly in the uplands of Guilsborough, notably in Long Buckby, and also in Kettering in the hundred of Huxloe and Northampton. This focus was related to the local availability of wool. In 1777,

shepherds accounted for 19 per cent and 22 per cent of those men listed in the militia lists for Guilsborough and Huxloe respectively. These shepherds tended long-haired flocks and provided the worsted fleece. Other shepherds were at work elsewhere in the county, for example in the Nene valley, but these were often in arable districts on which short-haired, wool sheep were raised on the fallow land.

Between 1785 and 1800, 325 Northamptonshire spinners found guilty of embezzlement under the Worsted Act.⁶⁶ Raybould has suggested that Northamptonshire ‘spinning extended well beyond the concentrations of the textile district’.⁶⁷ Whilst this is evident, there are other sources that can be used to allow the geographical distribution of spinning, and its relationship with the weaving and woolcombing, to be more precisely identified. There are two reasons for this. First, weaving was not confined to Northamptonshire but was undertaken also in Leicestershire and Huntingdonshire, both of which were covered by the Worsted Act. Other sources confirm that worsted weavers were at work in the Leicestershire parishes of Market Harborough and nearby Medbourne.⁶⁸ Also, spinner convictions extended beyond the Northamptonshire county border and into Leicestershire in the west and Huntingdonshire in the east. Of the 319 Northamptonshire spinners prosecuted between 1785 and 1798, 127 were convicted in 1785-86. In 1785-6, there were a further 30 convictions in Leicestershire parishes close to the Northamptonshire border and another 74 nearby in Huntingdonshire (Map 6).⁶⁹

⁶⁶ BL, Northampton Mercury 3rd December 1785, BL, Northampton Mercury 17th December 1785, BL, Northampton Mercury 7th January 1786, BL, Northampton Mercury 21st January 1786, BL, Northampton Mercury 11th February 1786, BL, Northampton Mercury 25th March 1786, BL, Northampton Mercury 14th October 1786. HRO, HCP/1/2, HRO HCP/1/4. HRO, Quarter Sessions Presentment Book, Epiphany 1754-Michaelmas 1790. LRO, S3/286.

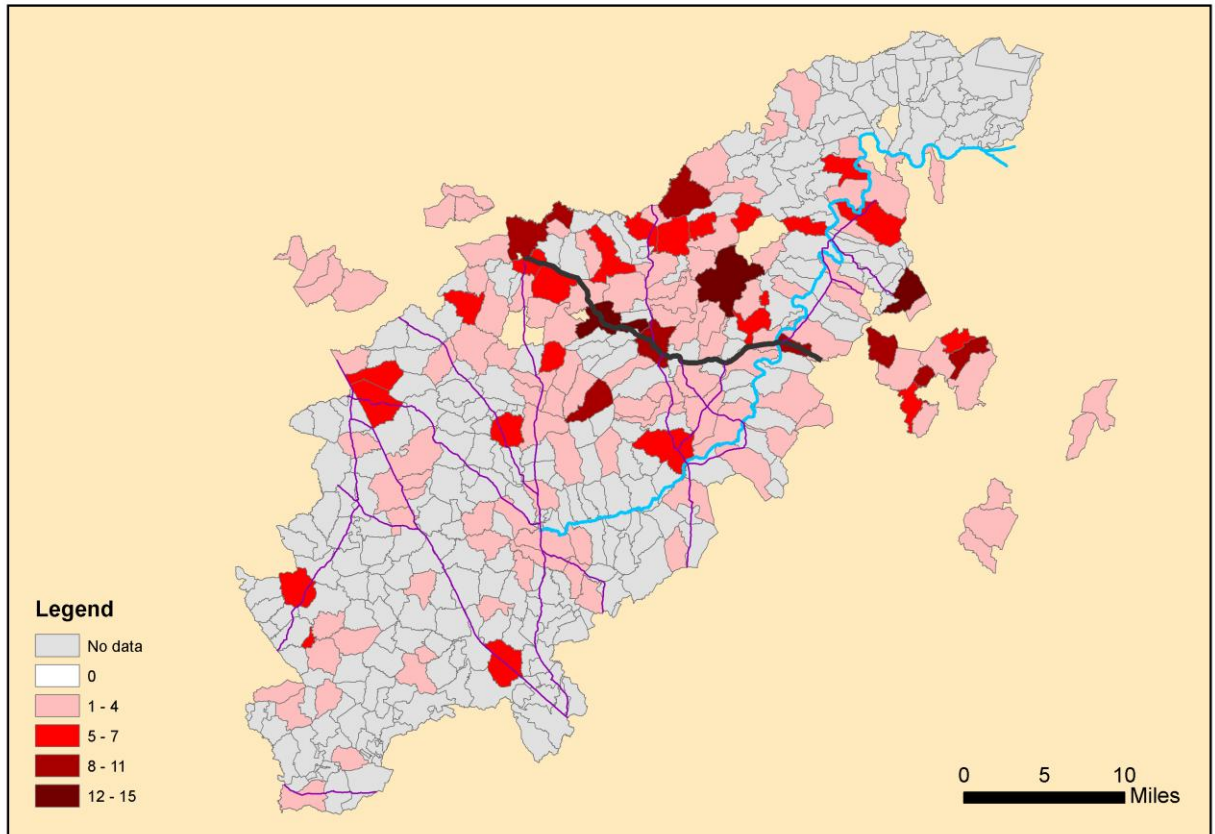
⁶⁷ W. Raybould, ‘Open for business: Textile manufacture in Northamptonshire c. 1685 – 1800’ (PhD. Thesis, University of Leicester), pp. 138-40, <https://ira.le.ac.uk/handle/2381/7428>, last accessed February 2011.

⁶⁸ J. M. Lee and R. A. McKinley, ‘A history of the county of Leicestershire, vol. 5, Gartree hundred’, <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22053> (December 2010). W. Harrod, *The history of Market Harborough in Leicestershire and its vicinities* (Market Harborough, 1808), p. 38.

⁶⁹ LRO, QS3/286. HRO HCP/1/2 and HCP Box 2. HRO Quarter Sessions Presentment.

Map 6

The number of worsted spinners convicted of embezzlement, by parish, 1785 - 1800



Note: The Huntingdon-to-Kettering-to-Market Harborough-to-Leicester turnpike road is shown by the black line running west to east.

Sources: BL, Northampton Mercury (microfiche). HRO. LRO. W. Raybould (University of Leicester).

Moreover, there is a noticeable concentration of spinners along, and in proximity to, the Huntingdon-to-Kettering-to-Market Harborough-to-Leicester turnpike. It is highly probable that the worsted trade did not respect county borders and that some convicted

spinners did not work for Northamptonshire employers. From these data, it is not possible to determine how many. The second reason to expand upon Raybould's observation relates to the Worsted Act itself and in particular the need to raise money to finance the Act through the House of Commons. This money was raised via subscription. Those who subscribed posted various notices in the Northampton Mercury in 1783 and 1784, listing their name and parish of residence (Table 2).⁷⁰

Table 2

The parish of residence of the subscribers to two worsted manufactories

	<u>Parish</u>	<u>County or Northamptonshire Hundred</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
Manufactory 1			
	Kettering	Huxloe	6
	Northampton	Spelhoe	2
	Rothwell	Rothwell	2
	Farndon	Rothwell	1
	Long		
	Buckby	Guilsborough	1
	Barby	Fawsley	1
	Harborough	Leicestershire	5
	Lutterworth	Leicestershire	1
	Kimbolton	Huntingdonshire	3
	Uppingham	Rutland	2

⁷⁰ BL, Northampton Mercury, 20th October 1783, BL, Northampton Mercury, 10th May 1784.

	<u>Parish</u>	<u>Northamptonshire Hundred</u>	<u>Number of Members</u>
Manufactory 2			
	Long Buckby	Guilsborough	2
	West Haddon	Guilsborough	2
	Cold Ashby	Guilsborough	1
	Ravensthorpe	Nobottle Grove	2
	Byfield	Chipping Warden	1
	Spratton	Spelhoe	1

Source: Northampton Mercury, 1783 and 1784.

From these notices, it is evident that there were two groups of manufacturers, one based along the turnpike linking Market Harborough, Kettering and Kimbolton and the other in and around the Guilsborough hundred. Of the total of 231 spinners convicted in 1785-86, 164 lived in the same districts as these members. It can be no coincidence that many of the convicted spinners resided in the vicinity of the same parishes. It appears that the worsted inspectors, in the main, looked after the interest of the members of the manufactories and prosecutions were brought accordingly.

The number of prosecutions gives no indication of the total number of spinners at work. To gauge this number, it is necessary to look elsewhere. Estimates vary for the number of worsted spinners required to keep weavers fully supplied with yarn. Bischoff believed that one woolcomber would employ 14 spinners and keep three and a half weavers occupied.⁷¹ Oakes, a Suffolk merchant who supplied Norfolk weavers with yarn in the late eighteenth century, calculated that his 1,200 journey woolcombers employed

⁷¹ J. Bischoff, *A comprehensive history of the woollen and worsted manufactures, vol. I* (London, 1842, new impression 1968), p. 185. C. Muldrew, 'The ancient distaff and whirling spindle: Measuring the contribution of spinning to household earnings and the national economy in England 1550-1770', *awaiting publication*.

36,000 spinners.⁷² It is likely, therefore, that in 1777, the number of spinners at work in Northamptonshire ranged from at least 4,000 to perhaps as many as 9,000.⁷³ The 136 Northamptonshire spinners convicted in 1785-86 represented less than four per cent of those who were likely to have been at work. Evidently many more spinners were employed than were convicted. In consequence, the geographical distribution of spinning was likely more widespread than the convictions suggest although what distance this network covered is unclear. Elsewhere, in East Anglia, Oakes' spinner network stretched over a distance of sixty miles.⁷⁴ According to Bischoff, the spinning network around Halifax covered a distance of up to forty miles.⁷⁵ Since the Northamptonshire industry was smaller, the coverage there was likely considerably less.

3.2 Shoemakers

The parochial distribution of shoemakers in 1777 is shown in Map 7 (see page 35). 705 shoemakers were named. Significant numbers were at work in the towns of Northampton and Wellingborough. Approximately one third of the Wellingborough males with listed occupations were shoemakers, a rise from 16 per cent in 1762.⁷⁶ In 1777 Northampton, approximately 18 per cent were so occupied. Similar to worsted manufacture, other shoemakers, albeit in smaller numbers, were employed in parishes on or adjacent to the turnpike roads. Unlike weaving and woolcombing, there was a concentration of shoemakers along the River Nene. The river was made navigable from Northampton to Wellingborough town in 1761. The industry developed in parishes along the river as master shoemakers put out work to others.

⁷² J. Fiske, *The Oakes diaries. Business, politics and family in Bury St. Edmunds, 1778 - 1827, vol. I* (Suffolk, 1990), p. 43.

⁷³ There were 68,340 females in Northamptonshire in 1801, according to the census of that year. 1801 Census, *Abstract of the answers and returns*, <http://www.histpop.org>, last accessed March 2011.

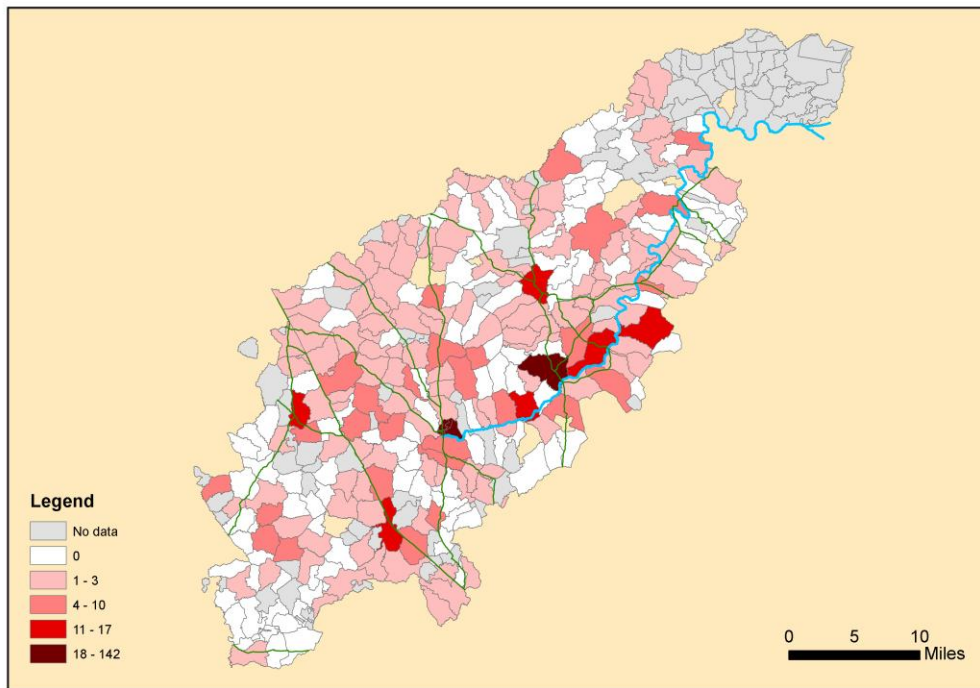
⁷⁴ J. Fiske, *The Oakes diaries*, p. 33.

⁷⁵ J. Bischoff, *A comprehensive history*, on 1968), p. 185.

⁷⁶ 1762 Militia list dataset, courtesy of Leigh Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge.

Map 7

The number of shoemakers listed in the 1777 Northamptonshire Militia List, by parish



Notes: The green lines show the turnpike roads running through the county. The blue line shows the River Nene. Sources: Militia list, 1777, V. A. Hatley, (1973) and L. Shaw-Taylor (digital dataset). Turnpike data, NRO and A. Cossons, (1950).

The 1777 militia list defines most of those who worked in the shoe trade as shoemakers.⁷⁷ A smaller number of men, 41, were recorded as either as tanners or curriers, and were involved in the preparation of leather. The list contains no record of the presence of clickers. There are no clickers recorded in the Northampton poll books of 1768 and 1784, but these do list 15 and 11 men respectively as workers in leather

⁷⁷ V. Hatley, *Shoemakers in Northamptonshire 1762-1911*, (Kettering, 1971), p. 11.

treatment. The national leather industry was dominated by shoemaking and these data do indicate that local material was available for that purpose. The historiography of shoemaking suggests that eighteenth century Northamptonshire was simply a place to assemble shoes, the leather supplied cut and ready for sewing.⁷⁸ Perhaps, however, the Northamptonshire shoemaking trade had not yet specialised into individual trades and clicking was undertaken, albeit on a small scale, as a part of the shoemaking process. This topic will be touched upon again in chapter 4.2.

3.3 The Role of Transport

The location of the worsted and shoemaking trades within close proximity of either a turnpike road or the River Nene, begs the question of cause and effect; did the industries lead to the development of transport or did they take advantage of the existing networks? The first turnpike act to affect Northamptonshire was passed in 1706-07 and linked Old Stratford in Buckinghamshire to Dunchurch in Warwickshire. This was Watling Street, the London to Holyhead, and hence to Dublin, road. Parts of this route originated from the time of the Romans. By the 1760s, nearly all Northamptonshire turnpikes were in place. Like Watling Street, these trails were in existence long before the turnpikes. John Ogilby in his survey of England, first published in 1675, showed that Northampton, Kettering, Towcester, Wellingborough and the villages in-between were linked by trunk road to market towns elsewhere, for instance, to Market Harborough, Nottingham, Rugby, Coventry, London, Bristol, Bury, Cambridge and Halifax.⁷⁹ Since the road network was in place by at least the mid-to-late seventeenth century, and before the development of the worsted industry, it is a fair assumption that the industry grew around the existing road system. For shoemakers, the main market was in London and the

⁷⁸ P. French, 'Continuity and change in the county town: Northampton c. 1675-1841, (unpublished Ph. D thesis, University College, Northampton). Additional Northampton Poll Book data, 1768 and 1784, Excel dataset, courtesy of L. Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge,.

⁷⁹ J. Ogilby, *Britannia: or the kingdom of England and dominion of Wales actually survey'd* (London, 1698), pp. 11, 19, 22, 29, 47, 61.

early industry was based in Northampton. Shoes were transported in baskets by wagon and road. In the eighteenth century, river transportation had little role to play. It was not until the construction of the Grand Junction canal at the turn of the nineteenth century that Northamptonshire became linked directly to London by water.

There are no surviving Northamptonshire records to allow for a direct study of the impact of long-haul transportation upon the cost of goods for either of the two industries. To do this, it is necessary to look at those costs incurred elsewhere. Szostak has argued that the development of the turnpike roads to provide a reliable and extensive transport network was necessary for the industrial revolution to occur.⁸⁰ Gerhold takes issue with this; he acknowledges that turnpike roads improved the productivity of carriers by as much as fifty percent from 1698 to 1840, but he believes that these gains were driven by the transport of heavy goods, for example coal. For him, productivity improvements were less for those industries in which the goods were lighter and of higher value.⁸¹ Textiles and shoes fall into this high-value category. In his study of the West Country, Gerhold has shown that the early nineteenth century conveyance of wool fleece or finished cloth from Exeter to London increased their costs by less than two percent. Leathers skins too were transported relatively cheaply.⁸² Burley has calculated that by the eighteenth century, the carriage of woollen says from Sudbury, in Suffolk, to London added only between one and two per cent to the cost of the delivered cloth.⁸³ The financial impact of long-distance transport, therefore, was likely minimal. There is no evident reason why it would have been any different from Northamptonshire to London. The cost of long-haul road transport, therefore, was not likely a significant factor in the eighteenth century for the competitive viability of either the worsted or the shoemaking industries.

⁸⁰ R. Szostak, *The role of transportation in the industrial revolution* (Montreal, 1993) cited in D. Gerhold, 'Productivity change in transport before and after turnpiking, 1690-1840', *The Economic History Review*, 49 (1996), pp. 491-515.

⁸¹ D. Gerhold, 'Productivity change', *The Economic History Review*, 49 (1996), pp. 511-12.

⁸² D. Gerhold, *Road transport before the railways* (Cambridge, 1993), p. 121.

⁸³ K. H. Burley, 'An Essex clothier of the eighteenth century', *Economic History Review*, 11 (1958), pp. 289-301.

With regard to short haul transport, Northamptonshire goods were transported either by a packhorse, a cart or a wagon. A packhorse could carry up to two hundred and forty pounds, a cart horse or wagon up to three times as much. Packhorses were more suitable in hilly terrain and tended to be preferred perhaps for waterproof carriage. By 1690, sixty nine per cent of services in Northamptonshire were conducted via wagons.⁸⁴ These short haul journeys would carry the wool, yarn and cloth between woolcomber, spinner and weaver. Each journey within the county would have been a short distance, but the number of journeys were necessarily numerous. The effect of these journeys on cost of goods is difficult to determine accurately, but they would have had financial impact. For instance, in his study of Yorkshire, Bischoff showed that the further spinners were from the wool supplier, the less they were paid. Presumably this cut in wages was to offset the cost of getting the wool to and from the spinner. In 1771 a Halifax spinner was paid eleven shillings and eleven and a half pence to provide sufficient yarn for one piece of stuff. A spinner who worked forty miles distant was paid one shilling less, a decrease of approximately eight and a half per cent.⁸⁵ Given that the Northamptonshire industry was more compact than that in the West Riding, it is unlikely that their spinners bore the cost of transport to the same degree. The impact in Northamptonshire was likely no greater than that in Yorkshire, East Anglia or elsewhere.

In summary, this chapter has endeavoured to answer the questions raised at the outset: The geographical location of the industries has been described. The worsted trade has been shown to have developed in the Northamptonshire uplands in parishes alongside the turnpike roads which linked Northamptonshire to London and to market towns elsewhere. It spread over the county border and into the neighbouring parishes in Huntingdonshire and Leicestershire. Those female spinners convicted of embezzlement were concentrated in the districts in which the members of the worsted manufactory

⁸⁴ D. Gerhold, 'Packhorses and wheeled vehicles in England, 1550-1800' in D. Gerhold, (ed.), *Road transport in the horse-drawn era* (Aldershot, 1996), pp. 139-64.

⁸⁵ J. Bischoff, *A comprehensive history*, p. 186.

resided. The number of spinner convictions, however, is low and represents only a small percentage of total number at work. It is highly probable therefore, that spinning was much more widespread. The worsted industry was compact and transport facilitated by road rather than by water. Shoemaking was concentrated in parishes outside of the worsted districts and particularly in the urban centres of Northampton, Wellingborough and in some rural parishes along the River Nene valley. In 1761, the river was made navigable between the two towns and transport by water was facilitated. The cost of transport was not likely a significant commercial factor in the competitive viability of either the worsted or the shoemaking industries.

4. DE-INDUSTRIALIZATION AND INDUSTRIALIZATION

This chapter is in two parts. The first relates to the worsted industry and the second to shoemaking. The aim of the chapter is to answer the following questions: When did the worsted cloth trade begin to decline and hence, more importantly, why? Did shoemaking grow in those parishes in which worsted manufacture ultimately failed? The chapter will consider also the impact of industrial change upon marriage and parish population. Data will be presented to determine whether the change in the number of people who married over a given time period can be used as a barometer of economic and population change. If so, can marriage, in the absence of direct occupational data, be employed as a legitimate proxy for economic change?

4.1 De-industrialization and the Decline of the Worsted Industry

The decline of the worsted industry has been studied by examination of evidence from a number of primary sources. These include militia lists, baptism records, wills and inventories, apprenticeships and marriage records.

4.1.1 Evidence from the Militia Lists and Baptism Records

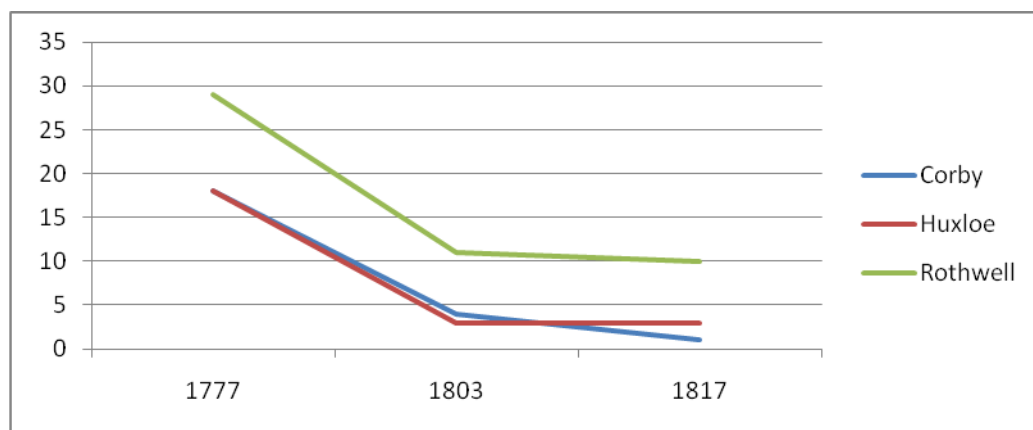
The militia lists of 1777 and 1803 and the baptism registers from 1813-20 have been utilised to determine the impact of de-industrialization upon occupational structure at the hundred and parish levels.⁸⁶ These records were selected because they each contain parochial data common to the three weaving hundreds of Corby, Huxloe and Rothwell. As such, they allow for direct comparison of like-with-like over the time period. Of the men listed in these three hundreds in the 1777 militia list, 21 per cent were weavers. By

⁸⁶ NRO, 1803 Kettering sub-division amended list of Army reserve. V. A. Hatley, *Northamptonshire Militia Lists* (Kettering, 1973). 1817 Baptism data courtesy of Leigh Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge.

1803, this number was reduced to 6 per cent. By this time, the Corby and Huxloe industries had collapsed but there is an indication that, during the first two decades of the nineteenth century, weaving held up to a greater degree in Rothwell hundred (Figure 5). Shaw-Taylor and Jones determined that the decline of worsted began prior to 1817. The use of the 1803 records advances our understanding and places the onset of decline at least as early as the very beginning of the nineteenth century.

Figure 5

The change in the percentage of men employed as weavers in the hundreds of Corby, Huxloe and Rothwell, 1777 - 1817



Notes: 1817 represents the mid date point of the 1813-20 baptism records.

Sources: V. A. Hatley, (1973). L. Shaw-Taylor, Militia List, 1777 (digital dataset). L. Shaw-Taylor, Parish Records, baptism data, 1813-20 (digital dataset).

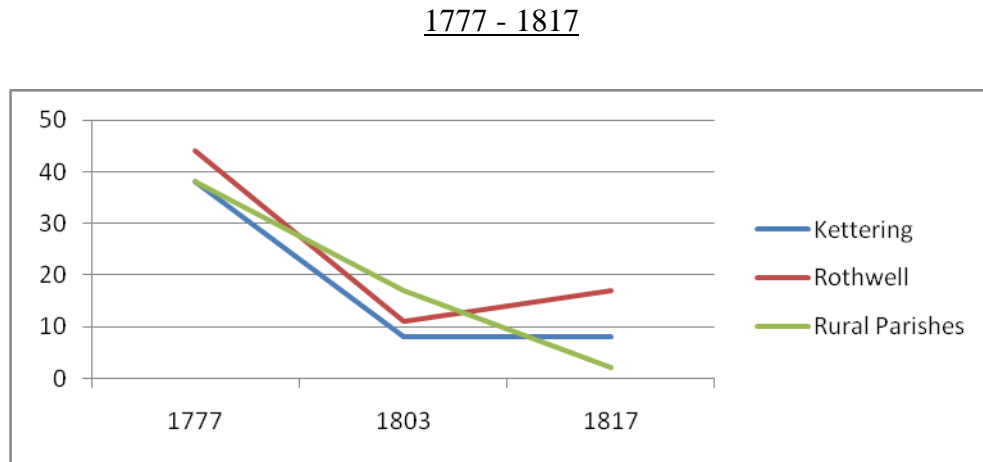
The militia list datasets have been used also to determine differences between decline in urban and in rural parishes. For this analysis, two urban and eight rural parishes were selected. In each of these parishes, at least 20 per cent of the recorded males were weavers in 1777. The urban parish is defined as one with a population of

more than one thousand, as recorded in the census of 1801.⁸⁷ Kettering, in Huxloe hundred, and Rothwell, in Rothwell hundred, had a population of 3,211 and 1,409 respectively and were chosen for study. The selected rural parishes were Corby, Cottingham, Geddington and Stoke Albany in Corby hundred, and Braybrook, Clipston, Great Oxendon and Sibbertoft in Rothwell hundred. In 1801, the populations of the latter ranged from 330 in Sibbertoft to 737 in Clipston. The combined population of these rural parishes was 4,259. Given that the number of weavers present at any one time in any of the rural parishes was small, an analysis of individual parishes would be prone to error. Consequently, in order to minimise the effect of a small sample size, the rural data has been aggregated and treated as one. In that manner, the rural parish size becomes more akin to that of an urban district. In 1777 the combined total number of weavers listed in the selected rural parishes was 181 whilst in Kettering the number was 148. The change in the percentage of men employed as weavers in the parishes is shown in Figure 6 (see page 43). The industry declined in the urban parishes through to 1803. Over the following 14 years, the Kettering industry remained steady but at a much reduced level from that in 1777. Rothwell parish showed some sign of industrial recovery at the beginning of the nineteenth century. This recovery was the driver for the industry to hold up in Rothwell hundred. In contrast, in the rural parishes worsted declined steadily over the forty year period and it was defunct by 1817.

⁸⁷ 1801 Census, *Abstract of the answers and returns made pursuant to an Act passed in the forty first year of His Majesty King George III. An Act for taking account of the population of Great Britain, and the increase or diminution thereof*, <http://www.histpop.org>, last accessed March 2011.

Figure 6

The change in the percentage of men employed as weavers in urban and rural parishes,



Sources: V. A. Hatley, (1973). L. Shaw-Taylor, *Militia List, 1777* (digital dataset). L. Shaw-Taylor, *Parish Records, baptism data, 1813-20* (digital dataset).

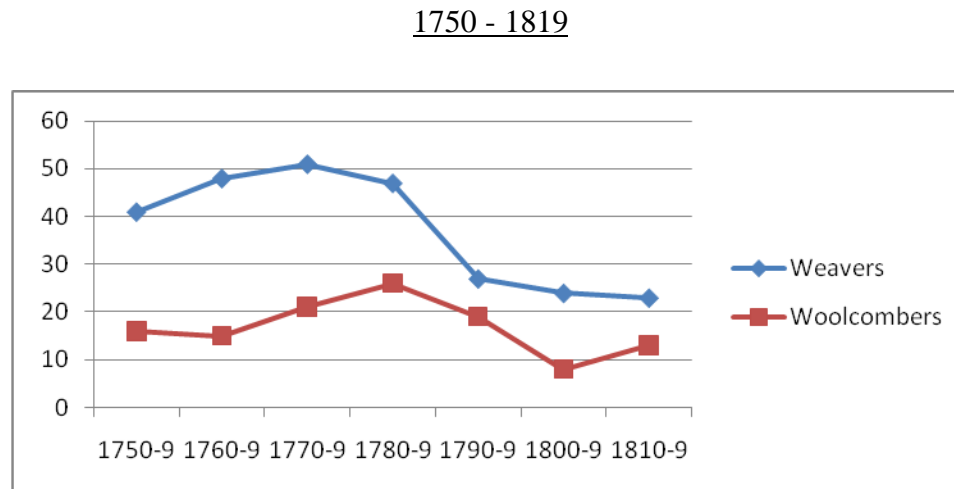
4.1.2 Evidence from Wills and Inventories

Testamentary records can be problematic, as outlined earlier, but for this study they are particularly useful. These records from the late eighteenth century provide occupational information at a higher annual frequency than do the militia lists. As such, they permit a closer analysis of change over the period 1777 – 1803. The annual number of Northamptonshire weavers and woolcombers who left either a will or inventory was small. In consequence, and for reasons similar to those discussed for the rural militia lists, the data has been grouped, in this instance into ten year aggregates. The analysis is summarized in Figure 7.⁸⁸

⁸⁸ NRO, *Card Index listing the testamentary data, wills, inventories and admons, by occupation.*

Figure 7

The change in the number of weavers and woolcombers who left a will or inventory.



Source: NRO, Catalogue card index listing testamentary data by occupation.

These records show a distinct drop in the number of weavers from the 1770s onwards. By 1800, their number was approximately halved. There is an indication that woolcombing did not begin to decline significantly until approximately 10 years after weaving. Smail believes that the demand for worsted yarn in the 1780s by West Riding manufacturers was so strong that it changed the internal worsted market and led to the emergence of a distinct yarn market.⁸⁹ The observation that woolcombing may have held up in Northamptonshire adds credence to this view. Spun worsted yarn from quality wool, of which Northamptonshire had plenty, would have been in demand elsewhere.

Testamentary data is likely representative of the more wealthy tradesmen. Also, the number of testaments that were written, or that survive, likely varied year-on-year. In order to minimise the impact of these effects upon the analysis, the number of weaver and

⁸⁹ J. Smail, *Merchants, markets and manufacture, the English wool textile industry in the eighteenth century* (Basingstoke, 1999), pp. 141-44.

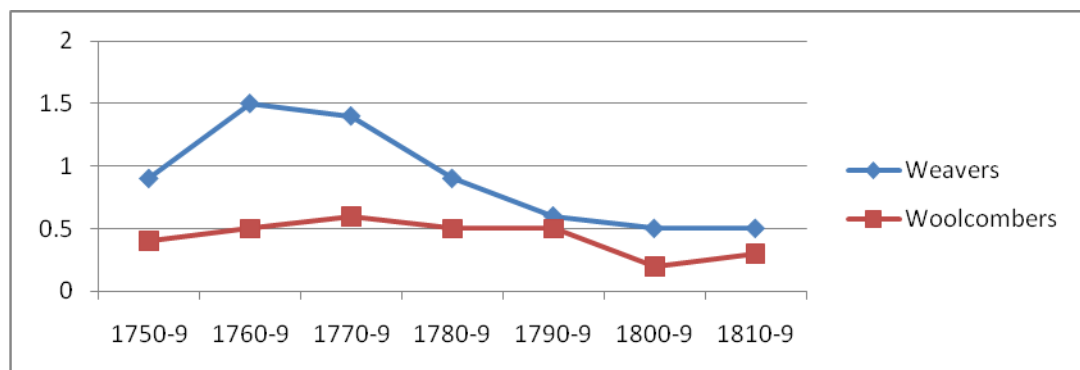
woolcomber wills and inventories has been compared with those left by carpenters. Carpenters were chosen as the comparator because their trade was a relatively constant occupation; Northamptonshire was not growing particularly quickly, building work was not vastly expanding and the number of carpenters was likely steady. This normalised analysis, in which the numbers of weaver and woolcomber testaments are expressed as a ratio of the number of those for carpenters, is given in Figure 8. The trends observed are similar to those found with the non-normalised data. Weaving was in decline by 1770 and woolcombing approximately 10-20 years later.

Figure 8

The change in the number of weavers and woolcombers who left a will or an inventory,

1750 - 1819

Data normalised to Carpenters



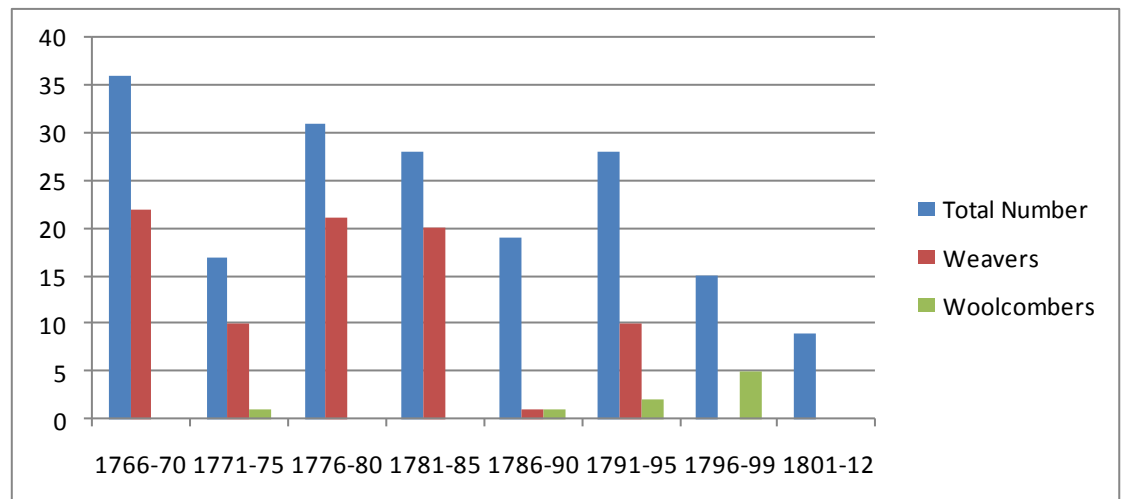
Source: NRO, Catalogue card index listing testamentary data by occupation.

4.1.3 Evidence from Apprenticeship Records

The apprenticeship records are useful because they provide occupational data for the last 30 years of the eighteenth century. The parish, charity and private apprenticeship records for Kettering, aggregated into five year totals, are presented in Figure 9.⁹⁰

Figure 9

The change in the number of Kettering apprenticeships, 1766 - 1812



Source: NRO, Apprenticeships (Kettering St. Peter and St. Paul catalogue).

It is evident that prior to 1785, the majority of apprenticeships were placed with worsted masters, almost entirely weavers. Between 1786 and 1790, the total number of apprenticeships was greatly reduced. In this period, only one weaver was placed. Clearly events happened in these years to preclude the parish from training young men in

⁹⁰ NRO, Kettering St. Peter and St. Paul catalogue 185P/156/8-25, 185P157/1-19, 185P/182/26, 185P/158/1-20, 185P/159/1-31, 185P/160/1-30, 185P/161/1-26, 185P/195/9, 185P/162/1-16, 185P/163/1-19, 185P/164/1-18, 185P/165/1-6, 185P/166/1-5.

weaving. There was a small revival in the first half of the 1790s but this quickly dissipated. There were few apprentice woolcombers over the whole period but it is interesting to note that more woolcomber apprenticeships were placed in the 1790s than previously. This is perhaps supplementary evidence of a need for Northamptonshire woolcombing, and hence spun yarn, but limited demand for the weaving of finished cloth.

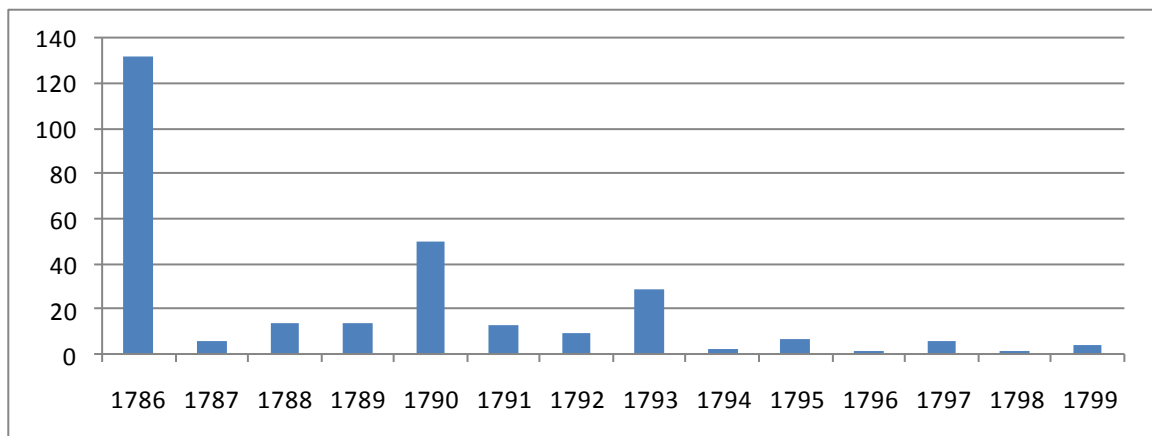
4.1.4 Evidence from the Spinner Conviction Data

The notion that woolcombing may have survived longer than did weaving is supported by closer analysis of the annual number of spinners' convictions (Figure 10).

Figure 10

The change in the annual number of spinners who were convicted of embezzlement,

1786 - 1799



Source: BL, Northampton Mercury (microfiche). HRO. LRO. W. Raybould (University of Leicester).

The high number of prosecutions in 1786 is evidence of the need for spun yarn. By this time, weaving was already in decline. The data is volatile but convictions did continue into the early 1790s. Although these were at a rate much reduced from the level of 1786, they do indicate that combed worsted was available to be spun. Local woolcombing, therefore, was likely still ongoing

4.1.5 Evidence from Marriage Records

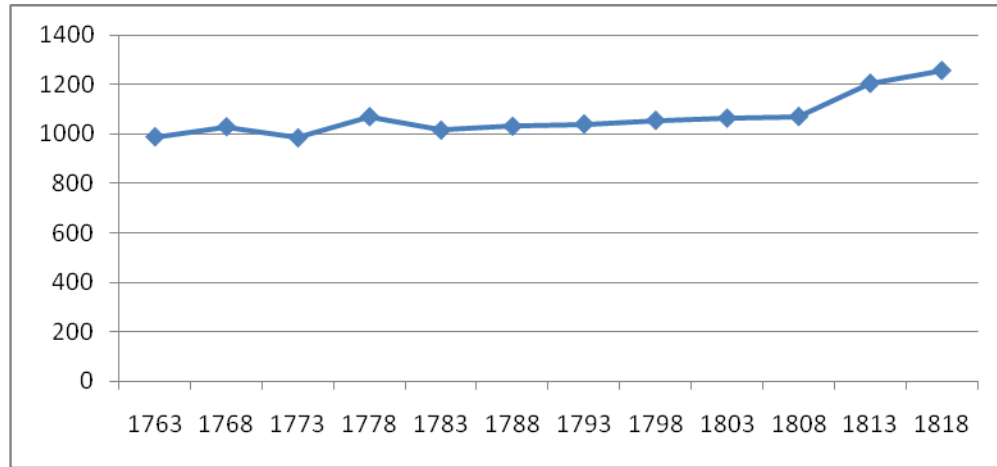
The decline of the worsted industry has been tracked also through an analysis of marriage records, 1756-1820.⁹¹ The Northamptonshire marriage records are comprehensive. They permit a high frequency analysis of data and allow for changes and trends over time to be more precisely defined. The records have been analyzed using a methodology similar to that adopted by Wrigley in his study of pre-census county populations.⁴⁷ This involves the minimization of annual fluctuations by averaging the annual number of marriages over a period of time. For the purposes of this study, five year aggregates have been used. This aggregation helps to even out short term fluctuations in the annual data and it facilitates identification of long-term trends. To set the region into context, and prior to discussion of the parish data, it may be beneficial to show the marriage trend for the county of Northamptonshire. This analysis, from 1761 – 1820, is shown in Figure 11.

⁹¹ A. Clarke and M. Ponting, 'Northamptonshire Marriage Index, 1700-1837', compact disc, www.northants-familytree.net, December 2010.

Figure 11

The change in the average annual number of marriages in Northamptonshire,

1763 - 1818



Note: The year listed is the mid-point of the five year aggregate. For example, 1763 is the average annual number of marriages for 1761 – 1765, 1768 is the average for 1766 – 1770.

Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

These data are for all marriages, regardless of occupation. They were collected through a simple count of the number of bridegrooms. They show that the number of marriages rose steadily, and by approximately 17 per cent, over the period 1763 – 1808. From 1808 onwards, and for the next 20 years, marriages rose more sharply than previously. By 1820, the number had risen by a further 17 per cent. These changes in marriage are in agreement with Wrigley’s estimates of the change in county population, 1761-1801.⁹² They are also in agreement also with the census data from 1801 to 1821

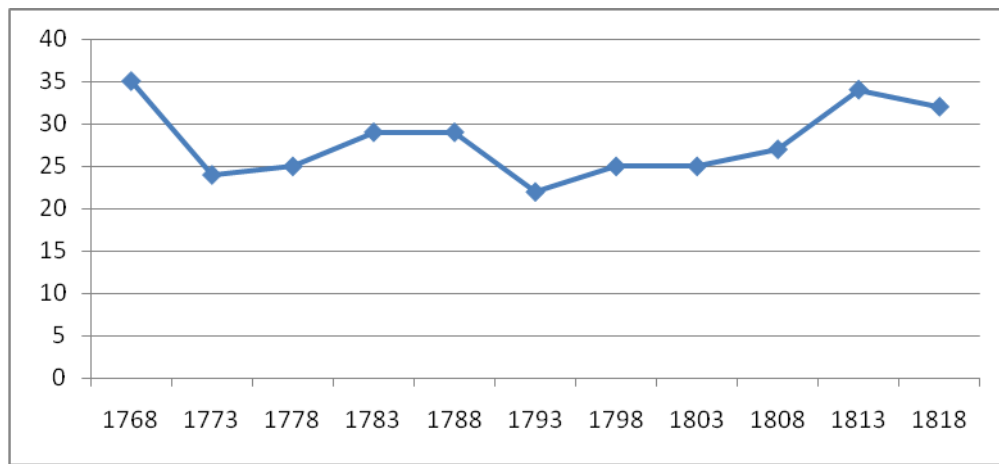
⁹² E.A. Wrigley, ‘English county populations in the later eighteenth century’, *The Economic History Review* 60 (2007), pp. 35-69.

which indicate a rise in county population of 23 per cent over the 20 year period.⁹³ More detailed analysis of the county data indicates that the rise in marriage was near-linear from 1783 – 1808.⁹⁴ This observation suggests that the county was growing steadily and uniformly over this 25 year period. This trend, and agglomerate of the parish data, is in contrast to that experienced at the individual parochial level. For example, examination of the data for Kettering shows that changes in the number of annual marriages in that urban parish were more volatile (Figure 12).

Figure 12

The change in the average annual number of marriages in Kettering,

1768 - 1818



Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

⁹³ 1801 Census, 'County of Northampton', *Abstract of the answers and returns*, pp. 244-54, <http://www.histpop.org>, last accessed April 2011. 1821 Census, 'County of Northampton', *Observations, enumeration and parish register abstracts, 1821*, pp. 222-31, <http://www.histpop.org>, last accessed April 2011.

⁹⁴ R squared value of 0.984.

The number of marriages in Kettering declined between 1768 and 1773. Following a subsequent rise, another decrease was experienced in the early 1790s. It is likely that Kettering suffered economic hardship and depopulated during the period 1768 – 1793. The annual number of marriages did recover at the end of the eighteenth century and by 1813 returned to the levels of the 1760s. The later upturn in marriages correlates with population; census data confirms that the population of Kettering rose by approximately 14 per cent from 1801 to 1821.⁹⁵

The depopulation of Kettering can be explained by examination of marriage occupational data over this time period. The occupation of the bridegroom is stated in few Northamptonshire marriage records; occupational data at the county level is of limited value. For Kettering, however, the records are more comprehensive, less problematic and are available for study.⁹⁶ The number of Kettering weavers who married is shown in Figure 13 (see page 52). From 1773 onwards, there was a steady decrease in the number of weavers who married. The data indicates that from this time, weaving was clearly an occupation in decline.

With regard to other Kettering occupations, the number of Kettering shoemakers who married remained low and constant whilst those of labourers rose slightly. The number of bridegrooms who were soldiers was significant, particularly at the time of war around 1798 (Figure 14, see page 52). The data suggests that Kettering occupations did not shift in large numbers from worsted and into agriculture or shoemaking. Other factors, not determined in this study, were at play.

⁹⁵ 1801 Census, *Abstract of the answers and returns*, <http://www.histpop.org>. 1821 Census, *Observations, enumeration and parish register abstracts, 1821*, <http://www.histpop.org>.

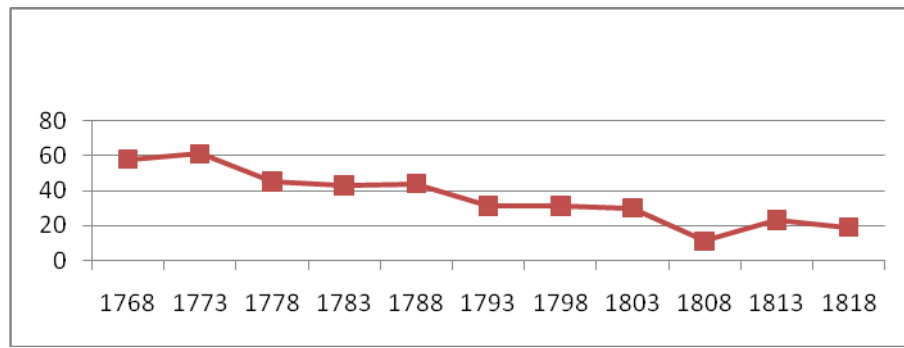
⁹⁶ V. A. Hatley and J. Rajczonek, *Shoemakers in Northamptonshire 1762-1911* (Northampton, 1971), p. 21.

Figure 13

The change in the average annual number of marriages of Kettering weavers,

1768 – 1818

(Expressed as a percentage of the total number of bridegrooms)

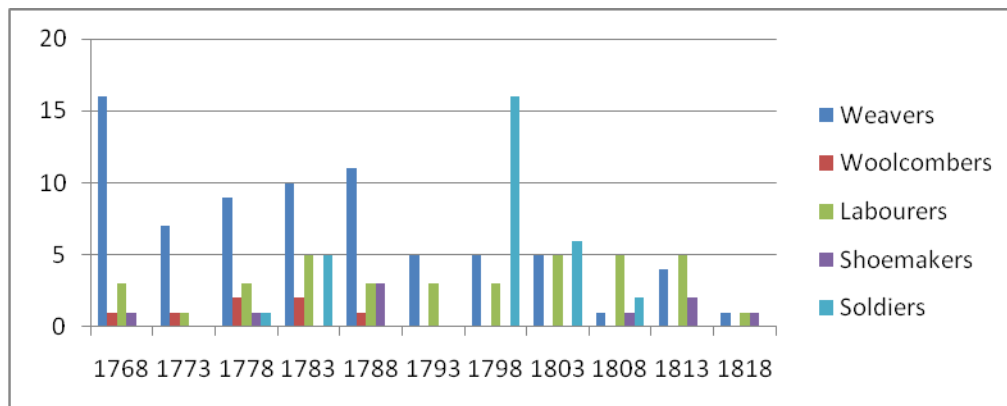


Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

Figure 14

The change in the average annual number of marriages of Kettering weavers,

woolcombers, labourers, shoemakers and soldiers, 1768 - 1818



Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc

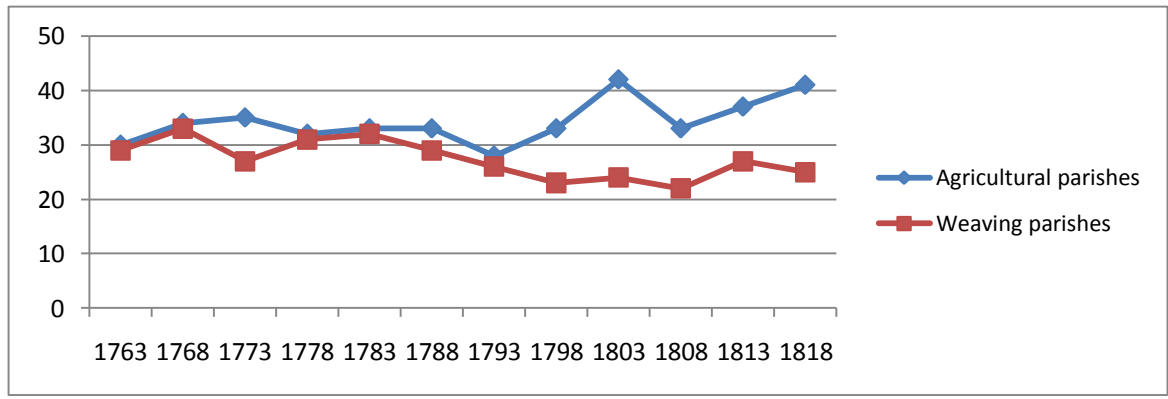
In order to further examine marriage patterns, two distinct groups of rural parishes have been studied. The distinction is based upon occupational structure. One group consists of parishes which were essentially agricultural with less than five per cent of the male population working as weavers in 1777. The agricultural parishes selected were Abthorpe, Barnwell St. Andrew, Blatherwyke, Chipping Warden, Denton, Duddington, Gayton, Greatworth, Greens Norton, Maidwell, Passenham, Plumpton, Radstone, Tiffield, Whitfield, Wicken and Yardley Hastings. In the second group, each parish had at least 20 per cent of the male population working as weavers in 1777.⁹⁷ The weaving parishes selected were Braybrooke, Clipston, Cottingham, Corby, Geddington, Great Oxendon, Stoke Albany and Sibbertoft. These are the same parishes used in the examination of militia list and baptism data. The result of this comparative analysis of marriages is given in Figure 15 (see page 54). There are clear differences between the two types of community; in the agricultural parishes between 1763 and 1788 the number of marriages was largely invariant. From 1793 onwards, marriage numbers rose until at least 1818. In the rural weaving parishes, marriages declined steadily from 1783 until 1798. After 1798, marriage numbers were invariant until 1820. The likely cause of the decline was depopulation. By 1820, the number of annual marriages in worsted parishes had still not reached the peak of 1768. Census data confirm that the population of the combined rural parishes rose by less than 10 per cent from 1801 - 1821.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ V. A. Hatley, *Northamptonshire militia lists, 1777* (Kettering, 1973).

⁹⁸ 1801 Census, 1821 Census, <http://www.histpop.org>.

Figure 15

A comparison of the changes in the average annual number of marriages in rural agricultural and weaving parishes, 1763 - 1818



Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

A further comparison of the change in the number of marriages in weaving parishes with that in non-weaving parishes is given in Table 3 (see page 55). In this analysis, 22 worsted parishes were compared with 227 non-weaving parishes.⁹⁹ Between 1771 and 1805, the number of annual marriages fell in 19 of the weaving parishes but rose in over a half of the non-worsted parishes. De-industrialization clearly impacted the local population and, in consequence, the number of marriages.

⁹⁹ A weaving parish is defined as one in which at least 20 per cent of the men with named occupations in the 1777 militia list were weavers.

Table 3

The change in the number of marriages in weaving and non-weaving parishes, 1771-1801

<u>Parish</u>	<u>Number decreased</u>	<u>Number increased</u>
Worsted	19	3
Non-worsted	106	121

Note: The annual number of marriages is calculated from the average of 13 year aggregates. 1771 is the mid-point of the 1765 – 1777 aggregate and 1801 is the mid-point of the 1795 – 1807 aggregate.

Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

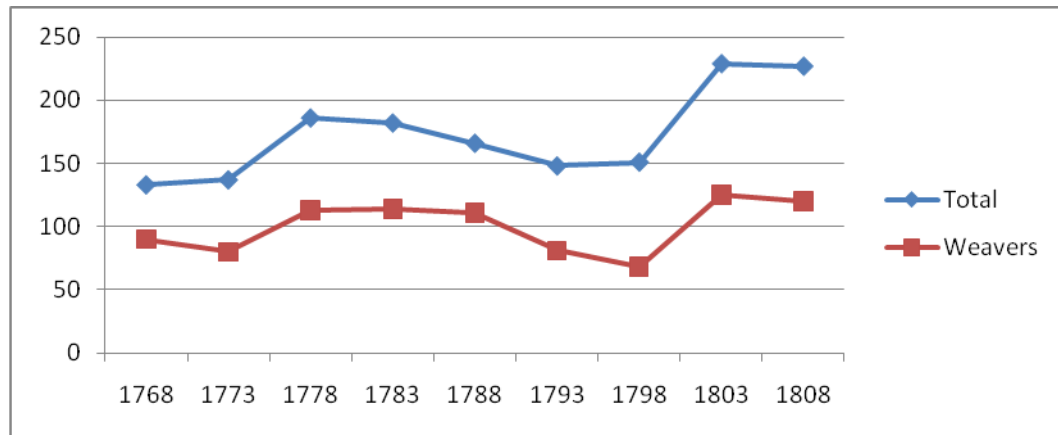
This impact of de-industrialization in Northamptonshire is in contrast with the experience in the industrializing West Riding of Yorkshire. The records for Sowerby, a village in the parish of Halifax, from 1771-1811 show that both the total number of marriages and the number of weaver marriages increased by the order of 50 per cent between 1771 and 1811 (Figure 16, see page 56).¹⁰⁰ These increases, however, were not continuous. Marriages decreased around the 1780s before recovering. The decrease was likely caused by the loss of trade as a consequence of the American War of Independence, 1775-83. Jenkins believed that the War was still affecting the worsted industry in the 1790s.¹⁰¹ In contrast to Northamptonshire, however, the Sowerby recovery was rapid. The decrease in Sowerby was a blip in the otherwise continual growth of weaving and of population.

¹⁰⁰ Calderdale Family History Society, *Halifax St. John's parish registers 1754-1812 and 1813-1838, West Riding of Yorkshire* (Calderdale, 2006), two compact discs.

¹⁰¹ D. T. Jenkins, *The West Riding wool textile industry 1770-1835*, (Edington, 1975), p. 4.

Figure 16

The change in the average annual number of marriages in Sowerby, 1768 - 1808



Source: Halifax St. John's parish registers 1754-1812 and 1813-1838.

4.1.6 The Cause of the Decline

This study of the various primary sources has shown that the Northamptonshire worsted industry was in decline by the 1770s and 1780s. This brings us to the question of why? Donaldson, too, believed that by 1794 the Kettering worsted workforce was reduced by half from its earlier peak. The dates are significant because the 1770s and 1780s were before the mechanization of the worsted industry. Although the spinning jenny was available by this time, and used elsewhere in the cotton and wool industries, it was unsuitable for spinning long-haired wool and not adopted in the worsted industry.¹⁰² Chapman noted that the first worsted spinning mill employed Arkwright's frame and was opened in the West Riding in 1787, but he found no evidence of a commercial supply of spun yarn until the 1790s. Hudson believed that centralized, mechanized worsted

¹⁰² S. D. Chapman, 'The pioneers of worsted spinning by power', *Business History*, 7 (1974), pp. 97-116.

spinning was not widespread until the 1820s.¹⁰³ The development of the spinning factory in the West Riding, therefore, was not the causal factor for the beginning of the decline. Neither was mechanization of either weaving or woolcombing. Worsted was not mechanically woven until the 1830s.¹⁰⁴

With regard to long-haul transportation, it was noted earlier in this dissertation that the cost of road transport was not prohibitive, impacting less than two per cent upon the cost of cloth. Any competitive advantage that the canals may have brought to the Yorkshire industry could only have been slight. The Aire and Calder navigation was opened in 1704 and whilst it undoubtedly facilitated transport, its value in the reduction of long-haul costs was not a likely significant factor. With regard to short-haul transport, wagons were needed equally in Northamptonshire and Yorkshire. Yorkshire merchants had to move materials from the canal quay to their point of destination and for this they used wagons.

Jones has examined a number of other possible explanations for the de-industrialization of southern England. These factors include the drag of guild governance, inadequate supply of capital, poor quality of labour, and a weak network of producers.¹⁰⁵ None of these appear to have had significant bearing upon Northamptonshire. There is no evidence of a worsted guild in operation in the county, nor an indication of poor quality workmanship. Worsted production, pre-mechanization, did not require large capital, although the availability of ready credit was a necessity for master weavers. In Northamptonshire inventories, a loom was typically valued around £1.¹⁰⁶ In contrast,

¹⁰³ Hudson, P., *Regions and Industries*, (Cambridge, 1989), p. 85.

¹⁰⁴ M. T. Wild, 'The Yorkshire wool textile industry' in J. G. Jenkins (ed.), *The wool textile industry in Great Britain* (London, 1972), p. 215.

¹⁰⁵ E. L. Jones, *Locating the industrial revolution: Inducement and response* (Singapore, 2010), pp. 45-164

¹⁰⁶ NRO, Inventories of John Marling, 1750, Joseph Eady, 1728, Robert Lane, 1724, Robert Clark, 1722, William Wilson, 1721, William Preston, 1709.

William Dye, a Corby sergemaker, put-out wool to a value of £45 to his spinners.¹⁰⁷ According to James, ‘a good [Yorkshire worsted] weaver in 1780 would gain ten shillings a week.’¹⁰⁸ Clearly, £45 was a substantial sum, even for a master weaver like Dye. Hunt attributed the initial rise of industry in the north of England to the wage differential between the north and south. For him, the low agricultural wages in the north enabled alternative industries to grow. Industry was less competitive in the south and east where wages were high. Whilst this was a plausible explanation true for Essex, Norfolk and Suffolk, it is less valid for Northamptonshire, which itself was a low wage agricultural county.¹⁰⁹

To look further into the causes of decline it is necessary to study the national market conditions. It is important to understand that Yorkshire weavers concentrated upon the manufacture of cheap cloth. In this regard, these manufacturers were in direct competition to Northamptonshire weavers whose cloths were largely plain and undyed. The Northamptonshire trade was built upon the local availability of good quality wool but with limited added-value in the finished cloth. Northamptonshire traded largely upon price and it was upon price that they competed with the West Riding. This contrasted with those cloths manufactured in Norwich and the West Country; these were more fancy, coloured and expensive. This may go some way to explain why the worsted weaving trade survived longer in these two districts than it did in Northamptonshire. Also, the Northampton industry sold their cloth through London merchants. The distances between merchant and woolcomber or weaver were such that little regular contact was made and business relationships were not easy to develop. The worsted trade in Northamptonshire had a weak marketing network, in contrast to West Riding

¹⁰⁷ Inventory of William Dye, 1723, cited in W. Raybould, ‘Open for business: Textile manufacture in Northamptonshire c. 1685 – 1800’ (PhD. Thesis, University of Leicester), pp. 138-40, <https://lra.le.ac.uk/handle/2381/7428>, last accessed February 2011.

¹⁰⁸ J. James, *History of the worsted manufacture*, p. 329.

¹⁰⁹ E. H. Hunt, ‘Industrialization and regional inequality: Wages in Britain, 1760-1914’, *The Journal of Economic History*, 46 (1986), pp. 935-66.

tradesmen who had direct access to their merchants through the cloth halls. By 1779, there were such four halls in Halifax, Bradford and Wakefield alone.¹¹⁰ These halls enabled weavers to meet regularly, perhaps weekly, with their merchants. Close relationships would have developed. Weavers would have had a greater awareness of consumer demand and greater flexibility of response. The cloth halls were more likely to enable weavers to make the cloths that consumers required at the right price.¹¹¹ Wilson believed that West Riding salesmen became specialists in the sale of cloth, keen to explore new markets. In this, the cloth halls played their role. The West Riding woollen industries were part of a complex industrial area. Moreover, after the 1770s and the mechanization of cotton cloth production, the textile industry in the north became more responsive to change.¹¹²

In addition to these factors, it is apparent that the worsted market changed in the 1780s, driven by the demand from West Riding manufacturers for spun yarn. In the 1790s, Northamptonshire fleece and yarn may have been in higher demand than was their undyed cloth. If so, that demand for yarn that may have been the cause for local woolcombing to survive for 10 years or so longer than did weaving. In addition, the market was affected by the loss of trade through the American War of Independence, 1777-83. In 1772, Yorkshire exported approximately three quarters of its wool production.¹¹³ At this time, over one quarter of English wool textile exports were sent to the Americas.¹¹⁴ The loss of trade inflicted by the American War was therefore

¹¹⁰ E. Lipson, *The History of the Woollen and Worsted Industries* (2nd impression, London, 1965), p. 80.

¹¹¹ S. A. Cuance, 'Complexity, community structure and competitive advantage within the Yorkshire woollen industry, c. 1700-1850', in M. Casson and M. B. Rose (eds.), *The institutions and the evolution of modern business* (London, 1998), pp. 26-43.

¹¹² R. G. Wilson, 'The supremacy of the Yorkshire cloth industry in the eighteenth century', in N. Harte and K. G. Ponting (eds.), *Textile history and economic history* (Manchester, 1973), pp.225-246.

¹¹³ P. Maw, 'Yorkshire and Lancashire ascendant: England's textile exports to New York and Philadelphia, 1750-1805, *Economic History Review*, 63 (2010), pp. 734-768.

¹¹⁴ C. Knick Harley, 'Trade: Discovery, mercantilism and technology' in R. Floud and P. Johnson (eds.), *The Cambridge economic history of modern Britain, vol. I, Industrialization 1700-1860*, (Cambridge, 2008), pp.175-203.

substantial. Small producers, such as those in Northamptonshire, were likely less able to cope with both the immediate loss of export trade and with the increased internal competition from West Riding manufacturers who sought alternative markets. Sowerby recovered quickly, whereas Northamptonshire did not. So, the cause of the decline was possibly a combination of the loss of trade through war, the role and growth of cloth halls, and the change in market conditions caused by the demand by the West Riding for yarn. Mechanization came later in the 1790s and was likely a nail in the coffin, extinguishing any hope of revival, but it was not the primary causal factor.

4.2 Industrialization and the Growth of the Shoe Industry

The shoe industry has been studied at the urban and rural parish levels. Militia lists, baptism records, Northampton Poll Books and non-occupational marriage records have been used. Shoemaker apprenticeship records are very limited and so are not employed here.

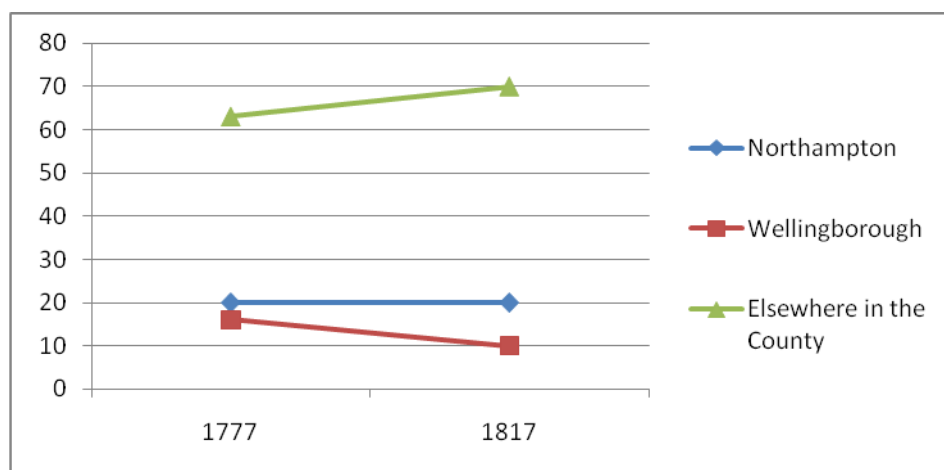
4.2.1 Evidence from the Militia Lists and Baptism Records

The change in the relative percentage of Northamptonshire shoemakers who were at work in either of the urban towns of Northampton and Wellingborough, or elsewhere in the county, 1777 – 1817, is shown in Figure 17 (see page 61). In 1777, around 20 percent of the county shoemakers were employed in each of Northampton and Wellingborough. The bulk of the workforce, approximately 60 per cent, was at work elsewhere. By 1817, the Northampton industry still accounted for one fifth of shoemakers but by now Wellingborough had dropped off. Shoemaking was growing faster in other parishes in the county. The River Nene which connected to Northampton and Wellingborough was made navigable in 1761 but this does not appear to have facilitated the development of the Wellingborough trade. Perhaps this is not unexpected. The two towns were connected by a turnpike and, similar to the worsted industry, road transport

was not cost prohibitive for the transport of a light, high value commodity such as a pair of shoes. Whilst Northampton remained the commercial hub of the industry, clearly shoemaking was taking importance elsewhere. It became a very significant male occupation in rural parishes in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In 1777, shoemakers were present in 62 percent of the Northamptonshire parishes. By 1813, this number had rise to 84 per cent.

Figure 17

The percentage of shoemakers in Northampton, Wellingborough and elsewhere in the county, 1777 - 1817



Sources: V. A. Hatley, (1973). L. Shaw-Taylor, Militia List, 1777 (digital dataset). L. Shaw-Taylor, Parish Records, baptism data, 1813-20 (digital dataset).

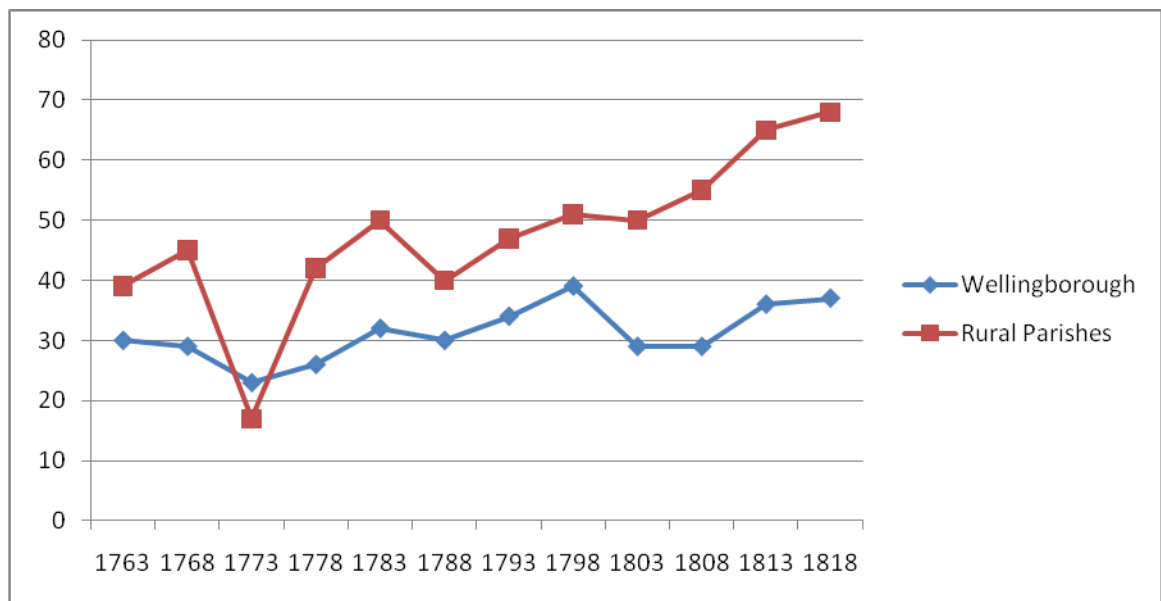
4.2.2 Evidence from Marriage Records

The marriage records from 1755 – 1817 provide very limited direct occupational data for shoemakers. Consequently, non-occupational marriage records in shoemaking parishes have been analysed in a manner similar to that employed for the worsted parishes. To do this, one urban and nine rural parishes were selected. Wellingborough,

with an 1801 population of 3,325 was chosen as the urban centre. The rural parishes were selected on the basis that the 1817 baptism records listed at least 12 per cent of fathers as shoemakers. These parishes are Earls Barton, Higham Ferrers, Hardingstone, Irchester, Irthlingborough, Piddington, Raunds, Rushden and Wollaston. Each parish is situated within five miles of the River Nene and the Northampton to Wellingborough turnpike. As with worsted, these parish data have been aggregated. They are presented in Figure 18.

Figure 18

The change in the average annual number of marriages in Wellingborough and in rural shoemaking parishes, 1763 - 1818



Source: A. Clarke and M. Ponting, compact disc.

There is a marked contrast with those trends observed in the worsted communities. Whereas the worsted parishes depopulated, the shoemaking villages grew. In these latter parishes there was growth in the last quarter of the eighteenth century at least through to

1820. The dip in rural marriages in 1773 is unexplained and may be a reflection of the data records. Regardless, from 1788 onwards, the annual number of rural marriages grew at a rate faster than they did in Wellingborough. This observation is further evidence for the relatively high growth of the industry in rural districts. The number of annual marriages in the rural parishes rose by approximately 36 per cent between 1803 and 1818. Census data confirms these observations; the combined population of these rural parishes increased by 34 per cent from 1801 to 1821.¹¹⁵

4.2.3 The Rise of Specialism

In chapter 3.2 it was shown that there was no evidence of clicking as a specialist trade in the latter part of the eighteenth century. By 1820, this had changed. A degree of specialism had developed. The 1813-20 national baptism registers contain the names of 14 clickers, of whom three were from Northamptonshire and 11 were from Middlesex.¹¹⁶ By this time, clicking in London was still dominant but it was also a stand-alone trade in Northamptonshire. The growth of clicking is confirmed by the Northampton poll books (Table 4, see page 64).¹¹⁷ They indicate that the number of Northampton shoemakers grew particularly strongly in the early nineteenth century. The rise in clickers is notable. By 1830, Northampton shoemakers had become more skilled and some were more specialised. Currying remained an important occupation but it appears that tanning declined and more unfinished hides were brought into the county from elsewhere.

¹¹⁵ 1801 Census, *Abstract of the answers and returns*. 1821 Census, *Observations, enumeration and parish register abstracts, 1821*, 'County of Northampton', <http://www.histpop.org>, last accessed March 2011.

¹¹⁶ Baptism data courtesy of L. Shaw-Taylor, *University of Cambridge*.

¹¹⁷ V. A. Hatley, *Shoemakers*, pp. 22-3. P. French, 'Continuity and change in the county town: Northampton c. 1675-1841, (unpublished Ph. D thesis, University College, Northampton). *Additional data courtesy of L. Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge*.

Table 4

The change in occupations associated with shoe manufacture, 1768 - 1830

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Voters</u>	<u>Shoemakers</u>	<u>Clickers</u>	<u>Curriers</u>	<u>Tanners</u>
1768	1140	170	0	15	10
1784	906	127	0	9	11
1796	991	193	1	11	7
1820	1432	363	1	28	8
1830	1919	598	32	35	4

Sources: P. French (Ph.D thesis). Leigh Shaw-Taylor, University of Cambridge. V. A. Hatley, (1971).

In summary of the chapter, a number of primary sources have shown that the Northamptonshire worsted industry began to decline in the 1770s and 1780s. These dates are before the mechanization of the industry elsewhere. Other causes for the decline have been suggested. These will be discussed in the Conclusion in chapter 6. Shoemaking developed across the county and by 1817 shoemakers were at work in most parishes in the county. The growth of this industry was insufficient or came to late to provide significant alternative employment opportunities to the erstwhile urban worsted industry in Kettering. In addition, the change in the number of annual marriages within a parish has been shown to be an indicator of economic circumstance and population. Marriage in the worsted parishes has been shown to decline, likely as a consequence of depopulation. In contrast, marriages rose in agricultural villages and in shoemaking parishes in particular. Further work on this topic is required, but the indications are that the annual numbers of marriage can be employed, in the absence of direct occupational data, as a legitimate proxy for economic change.

5. CONCLUSION

This study posed a number of questions: How and where were the individual occupations within the industries organized? Did shoemaking grow in those parishes in which worsted manufacture ultimately failed? Where did women spin worsted yarn? When did the worsted cloth trade begin to decline and hence, more importantly, why? The notion that mechanization was the main cause of the Northamptonshire collapse was challenged. In addition, the study aimed to provide evidence to show that the change in the number of annual marriages was a legitimate proxy for the study of economic and population change. To answer these questions, a number of primary sources have been used. Some of these sources were already in digital form. For others, original documents were consulted. The latter include the 1803 list of army reserves, Kettering sub-division, wills and inventories, marriages, apprenticeships, Quarter Sessions records and contemporary newspapers.

The organization of the worsted trade and the inter-relationships of weaver, woolcomber and spinner have been described. The industry developed in the Northamptonshire uplands in parishes alongside the turnpike roads which linked Northamptonshire to London and to market towns elsewhere. The industry was compact and transport facilitated by road rather than water. The industry was likely self sufficient in that it produced enough combed wool for its own use. Worsted fleece and woven cloth were sold elsewhere, outside of the county. Through study of the indictments under the Worsted Act, over 300 hundred women engaged in spinning have been identified. This number represents only a small percentage of those likely at work. Those spinners identified were concentrated in the districts in which the members of the worsted manufactory, the subscribers to the Worsted act, resided. Also, spinners were found immediately outside the county, along the turnpike road which linked Huntingdon, Kettering and Market Harborough, Leicestershire. The worsted industry was not confined

to Northamptonshire but spread into adjacent counties. It is probable that some Northamptonshire spinners supplied yarn to Leicestershire and Huntingdonshire manufacturers.

The concentration of shoemakers was found outside of the worsted districts, particularly in Northampton, Wellingborough and the River Nene valley. The river did not play an important part in the early development of the Wellingborough shoemaking industry. Until the turn of the nineteenth century, the role of the Northamptonshire shoemaker was to provide footwear for the military and cheap, quality shoes for London merchants. The absence of clicking as a stand-alone occupation until the nineteenth century suggests that Northamptonshire shoemaking did not specialize into individual trades until that time. The historiography suggests that clicking was not undertaken in Northamptonshire in the eighteenth century. Data presented in this study, however, show that some local leather was prepared, albeit in limited quantities. Presumably these leathers were used by the Northamptonshire shoemaker and, if so, clicking would have been undertaken, not perhaps as specialist occupation but more as an occupation within general shoemaking.

The primary occupational sources that have been studied all indicate that weaving began to decline in Northamptonshire by the 1770s and 1780s. This time period is before the introduction and commercialisation of mechanized worsted spinning, weaving or combing. The evidence indicates that the availability of alternative agricultural work was not a factor in the decline. Whilst the numbers employed in the Northamptonshire agricultural industry rose in this period, agriculture did not appear to pick up the employment gap created in Kettering by the collapse of weaving. Other potential causal factors of the decline have been postulated. Of these, road transport was also an unlikely significant factor. Transport costs were only a small part of the total cost of production. The more likely causes were a combination of other influences. These include the loss of

trade through the American War of Independence, 1777-83, a sudden demand in the 1780s by the West Riding and other manufacturers for yarn, and the absence of local cloth halls. The West Riding weavers used these halls to meet directly and regularly with their merchants. These weavers developed greater understanding of consumer need and were more flexible to production demands. For Northamptonshire weavers, their main market was in London, too distant for regular meetings. Northamptonshire weavers were remote and had a weak marketing network. Style's believes the worsted acts were passed as a response by employers to industrial decline. The timing of the act covering the Midland counties in 1785 supports this view. It is not a coincidence, perhaps, that Northamptonshire manufacturers began their petition for their Worsted Act in 1785, reacting to the downturn and the need to maximise the yarn supply.¹¹⁸ Regardless, by the 1790s, with the beginning of the French wars and the introduction of mechanization, the local weaving industry was in terminal decline. There is evidence from the spinner convictions and from occupational data from wills, inventories and apprenticeships that woolcombing was undertaken in Northampton in the 1790s, post the decline in weaving. These data support the notion that Northamptonshire yarn was in demand elsewhere.

Parochial marriage data indicates that urban and rural worsted parishes de-populated in the 1780s and 1790s. The population of the urban centre of Kettering recovered in the first quarter of the eighteenth century but those in rural parishes did not. By 1820, these rural parishes had not still returned to their population levels of the 1770s. Unlike the rural worsted parishes, marriages and population grew in agricultural parishes in the first 20 years of the nineteenth century. The shoemaking parishes grew also. Northampton and Wellingborough remained the main urban centres for shoe manufacture but the trade developed too in rural parishes. By 1813, shoemaking was evident in 84 per cent of all Northamptonshire parishes.

¹¹⁸ BL, Northampton Mercury, 24th January 1785.

There are a number of further opportunities for additional work. Hudson has made the case for measuring growth from a regional perspective.¹¹⁹ This study has focussed upon Northamptonshire. The works of Deane and Cole and of Crafts were concerned with growth at the national level. Their work was aggregative and based upon weighted estimates. The debate around national per capita income in the eighteenth century continues. It was in this period when regional de-industrialization and industrialization processes were in force, not only in Northamptonshire, but also elsewhere. There is an opportunity to engage in this economic discussion through application of the occupational primary sources to other regions and industries of England. Several primary sources are available for use, some of which have been employed in this dissertation. Rowlands has made more extensive use of Probate inventories and Quarter Sessions records than has this study. She has identified the occupation and parish of metal workers in the West Midlands.¹²⁰ All of these sources could be considered and used appropriately to investigate other regions, for example, the rise and fall of the woollen trades in East Anglia and the West Country, the growth of hosiery in Leicestershire.

Also, the development of the shoe industry needs more detailed study. The reason for the expansion of the industry away from Northampton is unclear. It may be related to the inability of the town to grow, limited by the presence of unenclosed common land around the perimeter, but further analysis is required. The growth in population in the rural shoemaking parishes begs the question of where did the increased populace come from? Sharpe, in her work on the de-industrialization and re-industrialization in Colchester, 1750 – 1800, believes that re-industrialization occurred because of the availability of a local unemployed labour force, mainly women.¹²¹ Perhaps the Northamptonshire worsted

¹¹⁹ P. Hudson, 'The regional perspective' in Hudson, P. (ed.), *Regions and industries* (Cambridge, 1989), pp. 5 – 38.

¹²⁰ M. B. Rowlands, *Masters and men*, (Manchester, 1975), pp. 1 – 3.

¹²¹ P. Sharpe, 'De-industrialization and re-industrialization: Women's employment and the changing character of Colchester, 1700 – 1850, *Urban History* 21 (1994), pp. 77 – 96.

communities depopulated and moved to shoemaking parishes? Further work is needed to investigate this notion. Moreover, as the rural industry grew and the skill base developed in the nineteenth century, how was the industry split by trade? What was the role of the bespoke shoemaker, the mass manufacturer and the village cobbler? What role did women play in this, particularly in the second half of the nineteenth century upon the introduction of the sewing machine and the mechanization of the industry? How fast did this mechanization occur and what was the impact as it changed from domestic manufacture to factory production?

A further opportunity for study is to develop the use marriage data as a barometer of economic and population change. This work is of particular relevance to those regions and parishes for which direct occupational data is absent. This topic was touched upon in this work by a brief study of a parish in the West Riding. Other West Riding parishes could be studied and compared, their parochial development could be determined. Moreover, post 1753, marriage data should allow for a more precise timing of the demise of the wool and worsted industries elsewhere, for instance in parishes in Norfolk, Suffolk and Essex. These studies have not hitherto been possible in detail.

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