WORKING IN AN EARLY-MODERN SMALL TOWN: LOUGHBOROUGH, 1580–1650

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When considering urban working patterns, the temptation has constantly been to define occupational structure(s), for several reasons. In the context of large incorporated urban places, economic activities at the higher levels were regulated, by gild and other organizations such as the freedom. Structure too perhaps implies the categorization which historians impose on economic activities in urban centres, which is unavoidable but perhaps would not resonate with contemporaries. Attending to structure(s), however, perhaps also suggests deep, enduring ecological entities which are almost reified and invested with their own agency.

I would argue that such detailed exploration of the artisan world is especially appropriate at the present historiographic moment.

1 There is no discussion here of what kind defined urban work; the two criteria usually invoked are diversity or heterogeneity of occupations and the proportion of work which was not directly agrarian. Perhaps the best examination is P. J. Corfield, ‘Defining urban work’ in Corfield and D. Keene, eds, Work in Towns 850–1850 (London, 1990), 207–30. This paper is an initial excursus into early-modern Loughborough. It is based on the churchwardens’ accounts, the bridgemasters’ accounts and the parish register, the entire data from which have been entered into databases and spreadsheets (the references are cited below); the data are accessible at http://www.le.ac.uk/el/eelpot/lough/loughhome.html. The justification for the terminus ad quem, the end date, is the disruption to working life of the 1640s and 1650s; Loughborough was particularly affected by military billeting and occupation. Throughout ROLLR signifies Record Office for Leicester, Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland, to the staff of which I am inordinately grateful. I owe an equal debt to the Huntington Library, San Marino, for permission to use material in the Hastings Manuscripts (HAM) there and especially to Dr Mary Robertson who arranged for a microfilm of the material. A short version of this paper was presented at the Economic History Society Conference at the University of Nottingham in March 2008; I am grateful for the various comments of Henry French, Nigel Goose, and Tony Wrigley, the last pointing to the potential ambiguity of the lack of a category of ‘building trade’.


Examining working practices in an early-modern small town perhaps allows a different window or vista onto the issues. The lack of a corporate (conciliar) organization (mayor, aldermen and burgesses, that is, the corporation) removed the control of the admission to the freedom, although apprenticeship regulations still obtained. Whilst gilds, including trade gilds, existed in some smaller urban places, their regulatory role was attenuated and they acted more like socio-religious associations. If, moreover, we divert our gaze away from the upper echelons of the occupational hierarchy, we encounter the economies of makeshifts which constituted the working lives of much of the population in the urban sector. Here, the issue was less structure than contingency. Employment was discontinuous, interrupted, and people – men as well as women – suffered the vicissitudes of being in and out of work: disruption and interruption of work. We might go so far as to suppose that at this level of work they did not know from one day to the next what their labour might entail. We might also question whether we should categorize labouring as an occupation: it was working, with the emphasis not on what one did, but whether there was work available. Labourers thus suffered not only the vicissitudes of unemployment, but also underemployment. This arrhythmia of the lack and uncertainty of work was paramount. We might refer to those issues of unemployment and underemployment as structured insofar as they were inherent in the casualization of the labourer’s life, but to the labourer personally they were contingent: expected to happen, but uncertain as to when they would occur.

4 For this category within the urban hierarchy, see now A. Dyer, ‘Small market towns 1540–1700’ in P. Clark, ed., The Cambridge Urban History of Britain Volume II 1540–1840 (Cambridge, 2000), 425–50. The literature on incorporated boroughs in general and such individual urban places in particular is vast; again, the Cambridge Urban History serves as a succinct introduction to this category.

5 I intend to consider these aspects in more detail in a future paper on the politics of governance of this small town, where I shall also elucidate office-holding. J. Lane, Apprenticeship in England, 1600–1914 (London, 1996) under the Statute of Artificers of 1563.

6 Woodward, Men at Work, 93–115. The term ‘makeshift’ was coined by Olwen Hufton and was used by contemporaries in the form ‘to make shift’.

7 I intend to explore support for those temporarily unable to work in Loughborough in a separate place; see, in general, S. Hindle, On the Parish? The Micro-politics of Poor Relief in Rural England c.1550–1750 (Oxford, 2004). We might, however, refer here to the ideology and rhetoric of work: the expectation that people would work and that they would only receive relief when not working; and the dignity of work, at whatever level.

8 Anyone who worked as an unskilled labourer in the building industry in the 1950s and 1960s like my late father (a ‘brickly’s oppo’) would recognize these issues. The current building boom has made this casualization less severe, but still many building labourers experience periods of time without work. See also, Woodward, Men at Work, 94.


10 By comparison with the above, S. Rappaport, Worlds within Worlds: Structures of Life in Sixteenth-century London (Cambridge, 1989), with its emphasis on both structures and the concomitant roles of livery companies in the metropolis; the two phenomena are inter-related. His emphasis is decidedly on those trades and crafts which later came to comprise ‘the middling sort’: 22, 25, 27. Rappaport also has the most succinct rehearsal of occupations in the larger incorporated boroughs. For ‘structural poverty’, K. Wrightson, Earthly Necessities: Economic Lives in Early Modern Britain (New Haven and London, 2000), 197. None of the above is to deny divisions within work according to skill (and gender): Joyce, Historical Meanings of Work, ‘Introduction’, 21–2; people would have been conscious of different rates of remuneration at the least, which is approached below. See also,
In two respects, then, we must reconsider time and work-discipline in pre-industrial England. First, the pertinent question is perhaps less the imposition of regulation of working time but access to work at all. Second, piece-rates were not quite as predominant as has been suggested; day-rates existed widely, perhaps less so for crafts, but particularly for labourers. This issue of day-rates for labourers, but also for some crafts, is addressed below. To a some extent, then, conditions of work in the pre-industrial urban world have been misrepresented.11

We comprehend much now about rural by-employment and multiple occupations and about organized trades and crafts in incorporated boroughs.12 Although small towns comprised a substantial part of the urban sector, work in small towns remains largely concealed. Perhaps we can begin to reveal the contours of working in small towns through the example of Loughborough.

Reconstructing the full range of occupations in any early-modern context is difficult. Admissions to the freedom in incorporated boroughs define only the upper level of urban employment. Where musters or censuses exist, a static representation is available, but such enumeration is infrequent, (for musters) bounded in time, and the categorization is made by officialdom.13 The more intensive reconstruction through probate material allows a diachronic approach to occupations, but probate material may provide only a partial representation and is self-evidently occupation achieved at the end of life or in maturity, revealing little of employment processes through the life-course.

The information used here for Loughborough is slightly more robust. Leicestershire is fortunate in that several of its small, market towns have been subjected to critical examination for their early-modern progress.14 A local context for small-town evolution is thus available. Loughborough, nonetheless, began in the late middle ages to outstrip other market towns in the county, a differentiation


11 Pace, then, E. P. Thompson, ‘Time, work-discipline and industrial capitalism,’ Past and Present 38 (1967), 56–97, structured around a perceived transition from ‘task-based time’ to clock time. Criticism of Thompson is not new, of course, but has largely focused on the continuation of traditional and customary time into industrialization: Joyce, Historical Meanings of Work, ‘Introduction’, 25 and in the same volume Richard Whipp, ‘“A time to every purpose”: an essay on time and work’, 210–36.


13 J. K. Cornwall, Wealth and Society in Early Sixteenth Century England (London, 1988), explains the musters of 1522 (1–3) on which part of his examination is constructed; at 16–17 (Table 1.2) he presents an occupational analysis.

which intensified in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The character of its
development contrasted in some respects with those of the other Leicestershire
market towns. Opportunities for work within Loughborough reflected on and
influenced the way it evolved. All market towns were closely embedded in their
region(s). Loughborough was no exception in the early sixteenth century. Like
many of the small towns which survived the vicissitudes of the later middle ages, it
remained both closely associated with its region(s) but also experienced some
transition to a different sort of entity. In Loughborough, change was more intense
than in those other small towns.

The evidence deployed here consists firstly of parish register data recorded
between 1636 and 1650. Initially in 1636, the incumbent recorded the
occupations of fathers, males who died, and grooms. The recording continued
consistently into the late 1640s, but in the final few years the recording of
occupations was intermittent. Even so, it does provide a particularly
comprehensive listing of working males in the parish in these fourteen years. For
the purposes here, the information about grooms has been excluded since it is not
always determinable whether the male partner was endogamous or exogamous.
Those whom the data omit will be bachelors who did not die within the
timeframe. A second source for work are the churchwardens’ accounts, from the
1580s through to 1640, which will allow a window on certain opportunities for
work for the parish, which might be anachronistically defined as ‘public works’. Similar material is derived from the bridgемasters’ accounts which are extant
from 1570. These two officers were responsible for the maintenance of the
extensive bridges, large and small, and also the grammar school. Repair of these
edifices required constant attention and the allocation of work to crafts and
labourers in the town.

For a variety of quotations from Leland (1539) to Burton (1621) about the seniority of the town
behind Leicester, J. Nichols, History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester (4 volumes,
1795–1815), iii, 889. The potential for work is reflected in Leland: ‘yn largeness and good building
next to Leyrecestor of all the markette tounes in the shire, and hath in it 4 faire strates or no well pavid...’; Camden professed it ‘the largest and best-built town in the county next to Leicester’,
according to Nichols; imminently before the fire (1621–2), Burton adjudged it to contain ‘many fair
buildings and a large church’.

For Leicestershire, Goodacre, Transformation of a Peasant Economy, 19: ‘It must be remembered,
however, that throughout the period agriculture remained the essential context in which the town
functioned; not only the agriculture of the area around, but also that of the town community itself’.

ROLLR DE667/1. Events are cited by month and year below.

For labourers and building workers, Woodward, Men at Work, which incorporates ‘small amounts
of information’ from some ‘sleepy little market towns’ such as Louth, Appleby, Howden, Bridlington and Penrith (10). By and large, however, his discussion focuses on regulation of the
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more dismissive of the churchwardens’ accounts which he analyzed (5).
The serious objection to this methodology is its failure to address the family and household economy. Female labour is irrecoverable from these data. In some cases, such as weavers, the male’s occupation might give some indication of household involvement. Before its usurpation by male practitioners in the seventeenth century, women operated at childbirth, which retained a female focus exclusive of males. Mistress Hebbe, from one of the most important local families, was buried in July 1631 with the memorandum that she had been midwife. She had been preceded by Joan Renold, about whom the register made the same comment on her interment in October 1584. By and large, however, we are reduced to investigating only male work. Categorization of occupations and work remains a conundrum.

PART I WORKING, 1580s–1640

We can discover more about work practices in early-modern Loughborough from the churchwardens’ accounts, in two respects: payments for being unable to work; and engagement in labour for the parish. Discussion of the former will be reserved to another place. Here will be examined opportunities for employment afforded by ‘public works’ (to employ an anachronistic phrase). Urban ‘public’ buildings have been considered in particular from the perspective of capital accumulation and investment and their transformation of the urban landscape. What their construction and maintenance also furnished was local employment, at a range of levels. Without concrete detail, we can, nonetheless, assume that the regeneration of the town after the fire in 1622 involved much building work.

We might, in fact, approach the parish church as a fount of opportunities for work as well as for worship. Maintenance of Loughborough’s parish church demanded extensive investment in the early seventeenth century, with large capital


24 See the comments by Rappaport, Worlds within Worlds, 91. The difficulties are compounded where there is no gild ‘structure’ (Rappaport) which is integral to the formal constitution of the borough and acts as a container for occupations – so in a small, unincorporated town town like Loughborough.

25 The exception is Woodward, Men at Work. The approach to capital accumulation was pioneered by C. W. Chalklin in a number of articles, including, for example, ‘Capital expenditure on building for cultural purposes in provincial England, 1730–1830’, Business History, 22 (1980), 51–70.

26 The register noted the calamity. A petition for a brief for relief after the fire was initiated as late as 9 June 1623: Huntington Library (San Marino, CA) (HL) HAM Box 25, folder 13. Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 893. The town was plundered in 1645, thus necessitating further reconstruction, and the parish church sequestered as a barrack, requiring rebuilding work: Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 893.
projects at certain junctures: refurbishing the bells; rebuilding the steeple; re-
glazing the windows; and painting the interior. These immense injections of funds afforded ample work for local crafts and trades. Continuously, moreover, constant small investment was required for routine maintenance, making available regular employment and intermittent casual work. Each of these aspects of work will be considered below.

Perhaps we can dispose of one of those categories fairly quickly: external, specialist contracts. Some projects demanded the attention of specialists from outside the town, from Nottingham and Leicester, but other places too. The recasting of the great bell and third bell necessitated the retaining of Mr Ouldfield in 1613 and 1616, with payments to him extending to some £50.27 When the steeple collapsed and had to be reconstructed in 1635, Mr Sarginson and his crew effected the rebuilding at a cost of at least £42.28 On a less formidable, but more regular scale, William Ragg of Lockington attended frequently between 1603 and 1624 to survey the bells. Despite these impressive external awards, we should not imagine that the specialist contracts escaped local crafts and trades: quite the reverse. Substantial work for glazing, ironmongery, masonry, ropes, carpentry and joinery, and painting, sustained local crafts and trades.

Three resident glaziers were involved in the maintenance of the parish church: Edward Hinckley and Thomas exon; and earlier Thomas Wells. Hinckley was hired for the glazing work between 1613 and 1636. In 1613, his remuneration amounted to £5 2s. 6d.29 He continued to maintain the windows as necessary for modest sums of money: 36s. 8d. in 1617; £2 and earnest money of 6d. in 1622; £2 12s. 8d. with 4s. earnest money in 1623; 19s. in 1626; £1 16s. 10d. in 1628; £1 7s. 4d., 10d., and 19s. 2d. in 1633; £1 15s. 3d. in 1634; and, by his bill, £9 5s. 6d. in his final year in 1636.30 Hinckley was succeeded in the regular glazing work by Thomas Exon, who was recorded as glazier in the parish register on the baptism of his son Henry in October 1637. Initially, Exon received small jobbing work: 11s. 3d.; 13s. 7d.; 4s. 10d.; 6s. 4d.; 5s. 5d.; 4s. 3d.; 6s. 3d.; 8s. 4d.; and 4s. 8d., but he entered into more lucrative contracts from 1635 when he received remuneration of £2 1s. 8d., 19s., and £3 16s. 8d., and in 1636 £2 5s. 0d. and £8 14s. 4d.31 These two men had been preceded as casually contracted glaziers by Thomas Wells. Wells had performed numerous small jobs on the windows between 1589 and 1596, but retained for an annual fee of 10s. in 1598 to maintain the glass.32

None of the three later glaziers were native to Loughborough: all were seemingly immigrants. Hinckley married first Elizabeth Smith of Loughborough in

28 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 161v, 162r, 166r.
29 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 85r.
30 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 108r, 119r-v, 126r, 142r, 149v, 152v–154r, 170v. In 1624, he apparently had a contract for a year to maintain the windows for 13s. 6d., but it obviously proved unsatisfactory: fols 130v–131r.
31 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 156r, 157r, 161r, 170v. I have not pursued his work after 1640.
32 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 39r.
February 1607; after her death in October 1620, he espoused secondly Joan Knifton, another Loughborough resident, in May 1622. Although he did not enjoy the same level of working opportunities for the church, it seems likely that Wells too had migrated into Loughborough. He married in 1583 Helen Walmsleye of the town; when his first son, Roger, was baptized in January 1585, Thomas was unusually recorded as a glazier. Although his involvement in the glazing work of the church seems to have diminished by the end of the sixteenth century, he did not die, it seems, until August 1612, when it was again noted that he had been a glazier. This notation in the register that he was and had been a glazier might reflect upon his relationship with the parish church. All had then married into Loughborough, migrated there and taken advantage of the opportunities of a rapidly developing small town. The existence of a larger parish church provided the assurance of substantial, if irregular, custom. We should reiterate, however, that all these glaziers, specialized craftsmen, were apparently immigrants into Loughborough.

It might seem surprising to include rope-making in the specialist trades which benefited from ‘public works’, but Herbert Clerk remained the exclusive and constant provider of ropes for the bells. He not only supplied new ropes, but fitted them and restrung the old ropes. Between 1617 and 1640 (and afterwards), he received regular commissions for this work. At least twenty-nine payments were recorded in the churchwardens’ accounts in those twenty-four years, the highest comprising 39s. 6d., with a mean of 6s. 10d. (standard deviation 91.6), and median of 4s. (first and third quartiles of 2s. 8d. and 7s. 2d.) He too was probably an immigrant to the town, through his marriage to the local Elizabeth Stocken in 1620.

Ironmongery had long been established as a principal craft in the town, with a distinct ‘quarter’ in the market place. Accordingly, the blacksmith George Bayley had origins within the town, where he was probably baptized in November 1608. It seems that in June 1635, he married another local, Ann Judde. When their first daughter, Helen, was baptized in April 1637, he was registered as a blacksmith. Between 1634 and 1640 (and later), he received a constant stream of income for work for the church, fittings iron bars, locks, latches, hooks, pins and coppers, staples and spikes: each small amount not exceeding 10s.

Of those who received lucrative contracts for maintenance work on the parish church before 1640, the final exemplar is Thomas Sewell who in 1627 was awarded the contract (with earnest money of 1s. to confirm the agreement) to paint the interior, a transaction worth £13 6s. 8d., but supplemented by additional work in that year accruing a further mark (13s. 4d.) and £2 5s. 0d. 33

Apart from those major contractual arrangements, a multitude of other inhabitants benefited from irregular, casual work for the parish church, perhaps some seventy in all over almost sixty years. Excluded from this number are those who engaged in providing, or carriage of, materials. Although those townspeople

33 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 146r.
acquired part of their living through this supply, there are three problems which influence their omission: first, the difficulty of establishing that they were resident in the town; second, their engagement did not involve work on the fabric; and finally, if less perplexing, their role may have ensued from their position within parochial governance. Although the carriage of lime, sand and gravel and the hire of horses was remunerated, the payment might have comprised compensation to those who were involved in parish affairs. Payments to the parish clerk, John Wright, composed almost certainly allowances to him for payments which he made to others for supplies and work. The furnishing of communion wine presents another conundrum. Between 1598 and 1602, the provisioner was Robert Wollands, the bailiff of Loughborough, an office attached to the lordship of the manor, which at this time passed within the family. Robert’s father, Nicholas, died in February 1603, the entry in the parish register including the memorandum of his office of bailiff of Loughborough. Robert was baptized in the parish church in July 1562 and married locally in April 1589 Alice Sheppard. The registration of Robert’s burial in June 1611 also remembered his status as bailiff of Loughborough. After Robert’s relinquishment of the role, the provision of wine was exclusively reserved to William Salt and his widow between 1609 and 1637, despite the existence of another vintner in the town, Iveson.

At lower levels of remuneration and employment, the parish church required continuous, if part-time, work from a number of workers. Amongst these requirements was maintaining the environment of the parish church, which effectively meant sweeping the street along the church wall. To ensure diligent execution, the parish retained a succession of workers, to prevent the defilement of the churchyard and church. In fact, the churchyard is of such a size that the church itself was fairly well immune from the impurities of the street. We encounter first in the churchwardens’ accounts Thomas Michell cleaning the street there from at least 1584 to 1586, for which he was remunerated at the rate of 3s. 4d. per annum, that is, 10d. each quarter as he received the instalments. Confusingly, Thomas Rowbotham was also involved in the work in the 1580s up to 1588. Hollins or Hollands was engaged from at least 1588 to 1596. Hugh Cheshire became responsible for sweeping from at least 1596 until 1605, at the same rate. When he died in September 1606, his widow performed the work until 1609, when she too died (buried in January 1610). She, Agnes (Waryn), had married Hugh in November 1584. Temporarily, Clement Shawe assumed the work between 1612 and 1613, although Bartholomew Tracye also executed the work in 1612. From at least 1614 (he was certainly in Loughborough by 1609) until 1623, Clement Gibson was retained at exactly the same remuneration. When he died, his widow, Widow Gibson, continued the role until 1628. This arrangement thus contributed to the sustenance of a succession of inhabitants, but only partly towards their livelihood. Although it ensured a regular, small income,

34 His wife was buried in August 1647, leaving him a widower.
35 Other bailiffs had also been buried in the parish: William Browne, February 1560, and George Hybbyties, December 1571.
the occupants of the role needed to supplement their wages through other work. Its significance too is its vista onto the role of widows in continuing the labouring work of their late husbands.

The extent to which that additional work and income was essential is divulged through the activities of the career of William Ragsby, the sexton. Between 1612 and 1618, he contributed on a casual basis to the work of the parish. His occasional employment was regularized from 1618. From 1623, his remuneration was evidently 1s. per quarter, but the level was substantially increased to 2s. 6d. each quarter from 1635.36 Even with this enhanced compensation, he nonetheless needed further income through other occasional work. In 1635, he assisted the glaziers for additional wages of 3s. 4d. and 5s. 2d. Four years later, he was assigned eighteen days of miscellaneous work in the church accruing 12s. 8d.37

With his son, he engaged in additional work, assisting the glaziers and helping to truss the bells.

To Ragsby’s example can be added John Thackam. On his burial in March 1609, it was recorded in the register that he had been ‘the clerk’. Indeed, more clarity was expressed in the churchwardens’ accounts in 1590, where he was defined as ‘the Towns clarke’.38 In fact, Thackam’s salary as clerk was acquitted by the bridgемasters, appearing each half year in their accounts as 24s. (that is 48s. per annum).39 He nonetheless supplemented his wages through casual labour, assisting Bancks for one day, and in different years working alongside the glazier for two days, one and a half days, and eight days.40 For this additional labour, Thackam was remunerated at the unskilled labourer’s rate of 6d. per day. Although the holders of these posts were permanently retained then with regular rates of income, the position contributed only partially towards their livelihood. Other resources and recourses were essential.

Now we can progress to those townspeople who benefited from casual work on the church and examine the constituents of their labour. What was involved here was irregular, casual employment which did not accrue any highly remunerative, consolidated contracts. We might begin with the masons. One of the principal components of their work was laying graves (‘pits’) and gravestones in the church and making good. Succession of masons (and probably some casual labourers) were employed in this work. William Banckes, for example, laid six gravestones in 1595 for a payment of 3s. 4d., followed by two more at 8d. each.41 John Fox laid the odd gravestone about the same time. In 1587, 1593, and between 1603 and 1616, Robert Lambley (latterly ‘ould’ Lambley, reflecting the

36 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 161r.
37 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 156v, 161r, 178r.
38 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 19v.
39 ROLLR DE667/112 passim; e.g. fol. 25v. He was succeeded by Edward Polle for the same remuneration: e.g. fol. 39v (1611).
40 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 31r, 38v, 46r. The parish register was engrossed from 1538 to 1598 by John Dawson, the schoolmaster, however, as he frequently noted in the register.
41 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 9v, 17r, 32v.
imperative of even the old to work) laid ten stones. Simultaneously, in 1614–15, William Kempe put down stones. Following on, from 1614 to 1635, Richard Charnock benefited from this occasional opportunity, completing at least sixteen stones, for which he was rewarded at the mean rate of 17d. (standard deviation 4.3) and median of 16d., from which we perceive clearly that the rate for laying stones had effectively doubled since the 1590s (although the actual rate varied according, no doubt, to the difficulty of inserting the stone and making good afterwards). Charnock was a local man, baptized in the parish in June 1576 and espousing locally in 1606 Ann Woodcocke. Another mason, however, was also engaged between 1624 and 1639, William Hickson. Apparently not a denizen, Hickson had espoused the local Margaret Coopeland in June 1625. On the baptism of their first son, John, in June 1625, the register inscribed William’s occupation as mason. Hickson probably laid another eight stones in this time. His work was complemented by Henry Foster who also put down stones between 1635 and 1640.

Laying gravestones, of course, constituted only part of the masons’ work on the church. Banckes, for example, expended five days repairing the church walls for 4s. 2d. and three days restoring the paving and tiles in the church. In 1615, Charnock acquired seven days of work for him and his son in the church for 11s. 8d. and in 1625, when his small business had evidently expanded, seven and a half days for him, his man and his labourer, at respective rates of 7s. 6d., 6s. 3d., and 5s. (respectively 1s., 10d., and 8d. per day according to skills). Hickson performed eleven days of work in the church in 1624 and, in 1639, twenty-five days at the skilled rate of 1s. per day. In 1636, he accumulated much more work, presenting a bill for £1 16s. 6d. A wide variety of work was allocated to Foster, who worked with his two sons (probably William, baptized November 1611, and Robert, baptized September 1613) on the steeple, repaired the floor, and restored the walls.

Another category to enjoy employment from the parish church comprised the numerous smiths and ironmongers in the town. Illustrative of these is Edward Barradall, engaged for numerous small jobs between 1598 and 1606. The opportunities for ironmongers were frequent, but for small amounts. Barradall received 1s. each time for twice repairing the clock, 7d. for mending a spade one time, but only 4d. a second time, 21d. for a small job on the great bell, 5d. for fixing the watch wheel, 6d. for inserting an iron bar in the great bell wheel, and executed a small repair on the steeple door. The same pattern obtained for

42 Several of the essays by M. Pelling, The Common Lot: Sickness, Medical Occupations and the Urban Poor in Early Modern England (Harlow, 1998), address this imperative. I hope to discuss in more detail in another paper the provision for the sick in this early-modern town: ‘The inability to work in an early-modern small town’.
44 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 92v., 136v.
45 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 130v–131r, 170v, 178r.
46 ROLLR DE667/62, fols 38v, 40v, 54r, 55r, 75r, 77v.
joiners and carpenters, with the exception of Michael Litherland who was commissioned to supply timber for the bell frame in 1614 for £6 13s. 4d.\(^{47}\) Otherwise, the work was confined to small jobbing occasions. Robert Joyner did small repairs on the church gates, style, bier, and steeple door, but also inserted a seat in the pulpit, made a tith table for 1s. in 1591 and an hour glass in 1590 for 6d. The myriad little works performed by William Scotton included in his best year, 1625, a wood frame for the little bell for 15s. and three ‘windows’ (lucarnes?) in the steeple for 37s. He still died poor and his burial required assistance.\(^{48}\) When his interment was recorded in the register in November 1611, it was noted that Robert Wilson had been a joiner. He had indeed made the bier for 3s. in 1609, the cover for the font and pulpit for 17s. in 1592, and his own seat in 1587.\(^{49}\)

Finally, we have the scouring of the eagle, the lectern, which was logically entrusted throughout his life to the local cutler, Robert Halliday, who annually performed this cleaning, first for 8d. up to 1590, and then for 1s. until 1628.\(^{50}\)

We should reiterate some of the facets of these specialized tradespeople who were recruited to work on the parish church. Some of them were not indigenous, but had married into the parish. The potential for work on the large parish church might have been one of the attractions behind their movement into the town. They espoused local girls, married in the parish (uxorilocally), but also decided to enter the town rather than return to their place of previous residence. The negative evidence for this assumption is no trace of them or their surname in the register before their marriage. Although the parish church furnished opportunities for work, it was not a total panacea. Whilst some received lucrative contracts – usually once in their working life – to re-glaze, re-decorate or reconstruct, most of the work was discontinuous and in small amounts. The largest contracts, because they demanded specialized skills not available in the town, went to external contractors: the recasting of bells and the supervision and design of the destroyed steeple.

The story, however, does not end there, for the bridgemasters ensured another source of work. The complications of the churchwardens’ accounts do not allow us to present their expenditure in any simple manner, but the bridgemasters’ expenditure was less complex. We can account for some regular deductions which did not involve the employment of labour. Regular deductions consisted of the schoolmaster’s stipend, the chief rent to the Countess through her bailiff (£1 4s. 6d.), and the wages of Woode and Thackam, amounting \textit{in toto} to £21 10s. 4d.\(^{51}\) The remainder was almost all consistently expended on maintenance work, which explains the fluctuations in the expenditure incurred from year to year. Between 1570 and the middle of the second decade of the seventeenth century, the building

\(^{47}\) ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 89v.
\(^{48}\) ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 136r, 162r. He married Ann Harryman in the parish in November 1616 and was buried there in March 1636.
\(^{49}\) ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 11v, 27r, 71r.
\(^{50}\) On the burial of Nevil Halliday in 1637, he was registered as the son of Robert, cutler.
\(^{51}\) ROLLR DE667/112 passim.
expenses were contained at a fairly low level, usually between £10 and £20, with a few exceptional years of activity (1588 and 1590 when total expenditure exceeded £92 and £104 in years of national emergency). From about 1615, expenditure moved significantly in an upwards trend. Deducting the recurrent wages bill, in forty-five years between 1603 and 1650, the annual mean expenditure of the bridgemasters on maintenance, preponderantly on the bridges, but some on the school and school chamber, and minor adjustments to the court house when quarter sessions met in the town, amounted to £49 (standard deviation of 27.51), the median disbursement on this work comprising £49.\footnote{Some small work was conducted on the court house when the justices met there in 1611, for example: ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 39v.}

During those years, £40 to £49 were expended in seven years, £50 to £59 in ten, £60 to £89 in ten, and £115 to £122 in three. Indeed, the zenith of disbursements occurred after the town had been depreciated by military action in the 1640s and it is perhaps testimony to the resources that the bridgemasters were able to raise this money in these disruptive times.\footnote{I intend to consider the respective resources of the churchwardens and the bridgemasters in a chapter (`The politics of diffuse governance’) of a projected book on Loughborough.}

Some skilled workers benefited immensely from the regular opportunities provided by the bridgemasters. The responsibilities of the bridgemasters entailed not only the major stone bridge and its multitude of arches (allegedly fifty), but also numerous smaller bridges, especially plank crossings, at Burley Watergate, the way to Shelthorpe, in the Rushes, at Swangate, Armitage, towards Normanton, Ten Acre bridge, Woodbrook bridge, Tedd bridge and Slat bridge. In 1613, 10s. 2d. was committed to replacing the plank bridge at the end of the Rushes by a stone bridge.\footnote{DE667/112, fol. 45v.}

Most advantage went to the carters, particularly William Looe and Francis Whatton, frequently collecting loads of stones from the Forest for the maintenance of the main bridges. Regular employment was also available to the masons, Robert Lambley, and Henry Fosterd, for paving and work on the bridges. Much of the income and employment of these men must have been afforded by the bridgemasters (and the churchwardens).

Perhaps some examples will furnish a flavour of the work opportunities provided by ‘public works’ supervised by the bridgemasters. In 1611, extensive work was deployed on the school and school chamber.\footnote{ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 39r–v.} Ragsbye, whom we have already encountered in his employment by the churchwardens, supplemented his income by 8d. by sweeping and smoking the school and chamber and disposing of the ‘rammell’. The ironmonger Barradall supplied a new key and lock. Whilst Robert Joynar refurbished the chamber for 7s., Simon Foster re-slated it for 8s. 9d. Slates and plaster for the school incurred costs of 3s., with an additional 2s. 3d. for wood and coal to burn the lime. New ridge tiles, slates and laths cost 4s. 4d. More workmen plastering the school and chamber increased the expenditure by 5s. 2d. Inserting a ‘Scale’ in the chamber (no doubt wainscoting) added another 1s. A major expense, however, was the re-glazing work on the
school, amounting to 16s. 6d. In 1612, the school chamber was again re-plastered at a cost of 8s. 10d. All this work might have been occasioned by the deaths of two sons of the schoolmaster, John Dawson, in 1611 and higher child mortality at this time.

Lambley also benefited from maintenance of the school, the other principal responsibility of the bridgemasters under the terms of their trust. This maintenance also necessitated a contract with a retainer of 10s. per annum for glazing the school windows.

Irregular, casual work was also generated: cutting willows; scouring ditches; unskilled work at the bridges; and collecting small stones. In 1605, for example, labourers were temporarily hired to take up the dam, level the ground, and filling in a hole at Stanford ‘planks’ (wooden bridge). Casual labourers were retained for two days in 1606 for cropping down willows around the bridges. More pitiful were the poor folks who collectively earned 7s. picking stones in the fields of Prestwold at 3d. the load as well as the poor gathering stones and pebbles in Cotes, no doubt fluvial deposits or grading. Astonishingly, a poor woman on her own collected sixteen loads of stone for 4s. In 1608 two labourers ‘benefited’ from two days of work scouring the ditches in the Rushes. On May Day in 1612, Webster and other labourers were retained to work at ditching again in the Rushes and other places for a collective pot of 15s. 6d. Similarly, four workmen were engaged in ditching at the bridges in 1609. All this unskilled work was repeatedly available, but irregular and on a casual basis. Those labourers who relied on it for their living experienced interruptions in and discontinuity of employment, their livelihood contingent on irregularity of work.

PART II CONSPECTUS OF WORKING, 1636–50

Some preliminary remarks are necessary to introduce this section. As indicated above, the information is extracted from the parish register which between 1636 and 1650 recorded male occupations. To reiterate, occupations of grooms are excluded since we cannot always be certain that the groom was resident in Loughborough. Occupations at burial are equivalent to those which would be specified in testaments/wills, but those of fathers at baptism reflect an earlier stage in the life-course. Why the decision was made in 1636 to record male occupations in the register is elusive. Occasionally, the compiler of the register had previously remarked on occupations, but highly infrequently. The leases of tenements by the

56 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 42r.
58 For example, DE667/112, fol. 28v (1608).
59 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 18r: a combined amount of 7s. 10d.
60 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 21r.
61 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 21v.
62 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 21v.
63 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 28v.
64 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 42v.
65 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 32v.
feoffees of the ‘trust’ for the bridgemasters also contained occupations of the lessees, but, although those details confirm the urban occupational character of the central area of Churchgate and Baxtergate, they too are an insufficient sample for substantive analysis. The decline in consistency of recording in the final few years, the late 1640s, may have resulted from the severe number of deaths in 1647. For the following three years, male occupations were inscribed sporadically and ended abruptly in 1650. Another reason for the deterioration, related to Browne’s (the incumbent’s) death, was the visitation of endemic sickness in 1647, the register having memoranda that the ‘plague’ endured from at least July 1647 to February/March 1648. Endemic sickness in the 1640s profoundly disrupted Loughborough’s demography. Memoranda in the register refer to ‘plague’ in August and September 1645 as well as in 1647–8. This dislocation, combined with the depredation of the town in the civil war, is another reason for not extending the analysis beyond c.1640.

At this point it is also pertinent to describe the topography and character of the town, to elucidate the inter-mixture and inter-relationship of urban and rural work. The large parish contained not only the town, but also a rural environment. Although incorporated boroughs had their field-systems, the character of Loughborough resulted more from the later development of a town within a large rural parish. The agrarian element remained important. In particular, the polyfocal settlement comprised hamlets at Shelthorpe, Woodthorpe and Knighthorpe. The first and last were almost entirely rural settlements, but some industry existed in Woodthorpe, where Edmund Renold pursued the trade of maltster, William Brewin was occupied as a glover, and William Loe as wheaver, in 1637–9. The composite nature of the parish explains, furthermore, the large complement of labourers; we cannot divide them into rural or urban workers and, indeed, to do so might be mistaken, for no doubt they engaged in both forms of work, according to their needs, the temporary labour requirements of urban employers, and the seasonal aspects of rural labour. Some inhabited town space, if on the periphery, like the labourer’s cottage in Hallgate near the pinfold. Others were resident in Knighthorpe and Woodthorpe. The number of husbandmen enumerated in Table 1 is further attestation to the rural environment of much of the area of the parish. Indeed, the court (baron) rolls predominantly consist of the registration of surrenders and admissions to these agrarian copyhold tenements and the rentals illustrate the extent of rural holdings. Here, however, we are less concerned with the rural appendage than with the urban centre.

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66 ROLLR DE2392/186–293.
67 Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 893, suggested eighty-three burials between July 1647 and March 1648.
68 For previous devastation, Griffin, ‘Epidemics in Loughborough, 1539–1640’. In August 1645, the memorandum in the register indicated: ‘A Plague began the second day’.
69 It is in evidence in the rentals of 1559: HL HAM Box 24 folders 6–7.
70 ROLLR DE667/1: Renold’s son baptized February 1637; Brewin’s daughter buried May 1638; and Loe’s son interred August 1639. For Blackfordby as a rural appendage to Ashby, Goodacre, Transformation of a Peasant Economy, 20.
71 ROLLR DG9/177–178 (1576, 1581).
72 Huntington Library (HL) HAM Box 25, folders 3, 8, 9.
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Sub-totals (percent of all)</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Sub-totals (percent of all)</th>
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<td>Matmaker</td>
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<td>Mercers</td>
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<td>Barber</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dyers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bookseller</td>
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<td>Coachman</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>Shearer</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Piper</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>Attorneys/lawyers</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Innkeepers(^{74})</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salter</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vintner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ostler</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>63 (13.4)</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Tailors</td>
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<td>Carpenters/joiners</td>
<td>19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tanners</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smiths</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gloves</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chandlers</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ironmongers</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>Labourers</td>
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</table>

Table 1. Patterns of work in Loughborough, 1636–1650.\(^{73}\)
It is appropriate, nonetheless, to commence with those service trades which depended on the distribution of agricultural produce. Table 1 enumerates the numbers of butchers, bakers, millers and maltsters recorded in the parish register between 1636 and 1650. We can, in fact, complement this information with listings of butchers, brewers, bakers and fishmongers or fish vendors in the view of frankpledge in the middle of the previous century and in the first decade of the seventeenth, as indicated in Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Bakers</th>
<th>Brewers</th>
<th>Butchers</th>
<th>Fish vendors</th>
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<tr>
<td>1559</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1560</td>
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<td>1564</td>
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<td>1565</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>14</td>
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<tr>
<td>1607(April)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>34 (20+14)</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1607 (Oct.)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>31 (13+18)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608 (April)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1608 (Oct.)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1609 (April)</td>
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<td>63</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1609 (Oct.)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1610 (April)</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1625</td>
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<td>47+</td>
<td>Not given</td>
<td>Not given</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The first figure represents indigenous butchers and the last figure foreign butchers (*laniatarii forinsecti*)
+ all defined as common brewers and *tipulatores*

Table 2. Provisioning trades licensed in the view of frankpledge, 1559–65, 1607–1610.79

73 Rappaport effectively revisits previous categorization of ‘occupational structure’ in early-modern incorporated boroughs and presents data for London: 92 (Table 4.2). The ‘classic’ analysis is W. G. Hoskins, ‘English provincial towns in the early 16th century’, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 5th ser., 6 (1956), 1–19, but see also the revision by N. Goose, ‘English pre-industrial urban economies’ repr. in J. Barry, ed., *The Tudor and Stuart Town* (London, 1990), 63–73. The traditional division is into the following categories: food; clothing; leather; crafts; trading *et al.* (the last including schoolmasters and medical men). As Goose has indicated, that categorization tends to conceal industrial activity which might differentiate urban from rural. Goodacre, *Transformation of a Peasant Society*, 251–6 (Appendices, Tables 8–9) presents comparative data, although Loughborough has greater density of workers and practitioners.
75 John Taylor, *The Carriers Cosmographie* (London, 1637), advised (under L) that carriers from Loughborough congregated at The Axe in Aldermanbury.
76 On his burial in April 1647, William Best alias Ragsbee was described as the bellman.
77 Perhaps the most notorious holder of this office was William Dore; the register contained the remark on his burial in November 1643 that he had had seven wives (serially). He had been preceded by his father, William, interred in April 1602 with the remark that he was the hogherd.
78 The manorial offices are derived from HL HAM Box 24, folder 5 (1559–60).
79 HL HAM Box 24, folder 5; HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 5, 23–4, 73–5, 94–5, 106–7, 127, 143; HAM Box 26, folder 1.
Although superficially fines for contravention of assizes of bread and ale and regulations about other provisioning services, the listings in the view of frankpledge constituted a licensing system. What is evident is a concentration of these activities in the urban centre. It should be emphasized that the common brewers were explicitly described as ‘uxores’ (wives) of townsmen, so that the household economy does surface in this capacity. The locational advantages of Loughborough were conducive to the flourishing of these sectors: the intersection of Wolds, Soar valley and its flood plain (meadows), in particular, as well as the concentrations of population, extending from Loughborough to Quorn, Barrow, Sileby and Mountsorrel.

Butchers were, indeed, attracted from other parishes to trade in the town: in 1559 two butchers registered in the view resided in Melton; in 1565 the list of butchers included those from Wymeswold, Seagrave, and Sileby. In the early seventeenth century, the listing of butchers in the view of frankpledge twice divided butchers into indigenous and foreign (outsiders) as illustrated in Table 2. There was an influx of foreign butchers to sell meat in the town. In 1608, half the butchers were amerced 1s. each for opening up their windows on the sabbath and setting up open stalls on stones in the street.80 In the following year, seven were adjudged to have sold ‘murren beef & filthy bad mutton.’81 In 1625, Robert Cawthorne was found to have sold spoiled meat and fined 3s. 4d., but more seriously, since he was amerced £2, George Benskin was accused of the sale of spoiled pork, commonly called ‘Meazelld porke’82.

Unusually, it is from this trade that we recover some insight into the work experience of women, although confined to widows. The widow Alice Waythe continued to engage in the butchery trade of her late husband. She was listed amongst the butchers each year in the view between 1559 and 1563. In 1564, she was presented in court for keeping a shop in the market place from which she sold meat.83 Women participated too in baking bread, comprehending in 1559 Joan Glosse, widow; 1560 Glosse again, Agnes Cutler, Mary Applyarde and Margery Nocton, widow; in 1564 Joan Smyth, Mary Barfoote, and Cecily Nocton; and in 1565 Glosse, Applyarde and Margery Nocton again.84 In 1560, Waythe was responsible for overstocking the commons with her horses, as did Emmota Cawdewell, widow, with oxen, and Agnes Blower and Isabella Andrew with sheep. Uncharacteristically, the register contained a comment on another woman trader, Besse the maltster, when her daughter was buried in June 1610.

The views of frankpledge in the early seventeenth century obfuscate the bakers and it is difficult to establish that the activity became more concentrated, although that ostensibly seems to be so. Most of the tenants were still required to resort to

80 HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 94–5 (‘staciones aperte super lapides’).
81 HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 127.
82 HL HAM Box 26, folder 1.
83 HL HAM Box 24, folder 5 ‘Alicia Waythe vidua Custodit unam shopam in foro ibidem ...’ In this instance, however, she may have been instructed not to sell from her shop.
84 When Applyarde was buried in August 1581, a memorandum added ‘somtyme barfot’ – i.e. of the Barfoot kinship.
the common bakehouse. This imperative was reiterated by an ordnance at the turn of the century which commanded all copyholders to bake their bread in the ‘common backhouse’.\textsuperscript{85} The common baker was seriously fined in the early seventeenth century to the tune of 6s. 8d. for not observing customary expectations for he ‘did not sett in the bread of the husbandmen and Cottyers before the small bread.’\textsuperscript{86}

Brewing and baking were not, of course, full-time activities, so many people occupied in other trades also engaged in the production of bread, but more particularly ale. The numbers of people fined for brewing reflect that sideline. Occasionally, moreover, those fined for brewing were ascribed another occupation in the court roll: William Hebbe, ironmonger; Robert Hollyday (Hallyday), cutler; Woolley the weaver; and Richard Smyth, brewer; for example.\textsuperscript{87}

We should not misconstrue this association of a large sector of Loughborough’s work with the countryside and with the intersection of rural with urban as reflecting \textit{urbs in rure} or \textit{rus in urbe} as has been illustrated for some other small towns and market towns, such as, at the other end of the county, Lutterworth. Loughborough certainly did not pertain to that category of small towns totally embedded in the countryside. It certainly benefited from its location at the intersection of three \textit{pays}: Wolds; Forest; and river valley. Exchange of rural produce between these entities had probably been its original \textit{raison d’être}. Through the later middle ages, that relationship to its hinterland continued to further its development. From the early sixteenth century, however, its further rapid development was also associated with wool, woollen cloth, and a small industrial base (textiles). No subsequent merchant of Loughborough replicated the commercial status in the wool trade as Lemyngton and Burton who had been merchants of the Calais Staple, but the town still sustained drapers, and, especially, numerous weavers. The industrial element was also expanded by the prolific numbers of shoemakers, tailors, and also carpenters and smiths/ironmongers.\textsuperscript{88}

The street pattern, of course, reflected the development of the productive environment of the town. Baxtergate existed as one of the earliest streets of the town, as also the marketstead. In the early seventeenth century, messuages and \textit{officine} (shops) were held by copyhold tenure in Hucksters’ Row in the market place; the intimation is that this last development was recent since there was no mention in earlier court rolls.\textsuperscript{89}

The three inns (\textit{hospicia}) appeared early and were valuable properties in the early seventeenth century: the Swan on the corner of Bigging and the Rushes; the

\textsuperscript{85} HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{86} HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 71. The common bakehouse was probably the \textit{domus fornic\textprime} or ‘kill house’ next to the churchyard: HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 5.
\textsuperscript{87} HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 5, 95, 106.
\textsuperscript{89} HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, pp. 11, 78, 104–5; HAM Box 25, folder 5, pp. 14, 18; HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 2, 43, for example; HAM Box 25, folder 11, p. 5 (1620).
White Hart in the Bigging; and the George in the market place. In the early seventeenth century, the White Hart was held in copyhold by William Hebbe, maltster, and his wife Dorothy, and after her death he renewed the three lives adding those of his two sons William and Henry.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 9; HAM Box 25, folder 5, p. 2; HAM Box 25, folder 6, pp. 161, 167–8, 175, 203; HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 9.} The White Hart was lucrative enough for the entry fine for renewal of the copyhold amounted to £12.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 106.} Nicholas Woollandes had also held the George as his free tenement with the adjacent two shops in the market place, but he had disseised the previous copyhold tenant George Ragg\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 24; HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 5; HAM Box 25, folder 4, pp. 2, 14. Ragg was listed as the copyhold tenant of the George in the marketstead in an earlier survey: HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 5; for his apparent disseisin, HAM Box 25, folder 5, p. 2.} By 1617, The Swan had been acquired in the customary copyhold tenure for three lives prevalent in the town by William Webster for his life and those of his sons, Samuel and William.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, court book section, p. 13.} At an earlier time a fourth inn had been in business in the town, the Unycorne in Highgate, held by Nicholas Henshawe, but it was discontinued and converted into a messuage by George Henshawe.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 25; for its later conversion, HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 15 (1614).}

**PART III TIME AND WORK-DISCIPLINE**

The distinction that has sometimes been made between pre-industrial and post-industrial labour regimes mentioned in the introduction requires some further little revision. Although some trades, particularly textile workers, were doubtless accustomed to task work and remuneration, day rates sometimes prevailed for skilled as well as unskilled workers. Day rates of pay proliferated through the churchwardens’ accounts, with the standard skilled wage at 1s. per day (occasionally 1s. 6d.) and the regular unskilled rate of 6d. per day.\footnote{ROLLR DE667/62, fols 16v, 17r, 20v, 23r, 23v, 27v, 31r, 38v, 43r, 51v, 54v, 56r, 57v, 60v, 65r, 71r, 75r, 78r, 88r, 92v, 93v, 95r, 100r, 107r, 108r, 130r, 130v, 131r, 135v, 136v, 141r, 146r, 153r, 156v, 157r, 160v, 173r–v, and especially 178r.} The unskilled labourers repairing the stone bridges offered their services for 6d. per day, like Poole who laboured there for five days for 2s. 6d or Randolph Blackshaw who constantly worked at this and that for this rate.\footnote{ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 11v and passim.} A few others were deemed worthy of an enhanced wage of 8d. per day, like the four men who each spent two days scouring the Rushes.\footnote{ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 10v.}

As far as differentials were concerned, remuneration was the principal criterion. It is manifest when a skilled artisan brought along a small team. For example the mason, Richard Charnocke, was recompensed for seven and a half days of work at 7s. 6d., but his ‘man’ with 6s. 3d. and his labourer 5s., all for the same amount of time: differential rates of 1s., 10d., and 8d. (by this time the
labourer’s rate occasionally extended to 8d. rather than 6d.). In 1625, whilst Thomas Wamsley received the highest rate, his ‘man’ laboured for the daily rate of 10d., and Wamsley’s son for 8d. per day (the last 20d. for two and a half days). Whether it was artifice or not, even the repair of a church seat by John Robinson, a casual worker, was construed as half a day of work for 6d. in 1637. William Looe was often paid on a daily basis for carting stone from the Forest, but on other occasions at the piece rate of 15d. per load, as for example seven loads transported in 1606.

Indeed, task work was as frequently associated with the skilled workers, masons or tilers and carters. Lambley, when he paved the bridges, contracted for 2d. per yard. Another eighty yards of paving were completed by Fosterd at the same rate in 1606.

PART IV ‘LEARNED’ SERVICES

Although not confined to urban places, the concentration of higher status practitioners (‘learned services’) in towns has been assumed to be indicative of urban status. Here, we decline to use the term ‘professions’, which might be an anachronism. Within the category in Loughborough are encountered (as well as the clerical element, not examined here) schoolmaster, apothecaries, lawyers and attorneys, and surgeon.

The free school was established when Burton’s chantry was dissolved and the proceeds diverted to the establishment of the new educational institution. Much is appreciated about the most longevious of the initial schoolmasters, John Dawson. Shortly after his arrival, he married the local Elizabeth Sarson, in November 1567. He had been preceded by John Sharpe who was buried in the parish in September 1558. Successors to Dawson included Mr Atkinson and Richard Laughton, and, after those two, Mr Robert Wilde who was buried in the parish in February 1644. As indicated above, in the late sixteenth and

98 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 136v. For a skilled rate of 1s. 6d., ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 157v William Warde receiving 22s. 6d. for fifteen days in 1635.
99 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 135v.
100 ROLLR DE667/62, fol. 173r.
101 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 21v.
102 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 11v.
103 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 22r.
104 See also Goodacre, Transformation of a Peasant Society, 214–16.
106 Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 895–6.
108 For the schoolmaster’s stipend, see above.
early seventeenth century, the schoolmaster’s stipend amounted to £10 13s. 4d. per annum, delivered by the bridgemasters.

Lawyers and apothecaries arrived in the town only later, it seems, not until the seventeenth century. In March 1632, the apothecary George Parker was interred in the parish. The apothecary James Cooper had settled in the town by September 1636 when his daughter Jane was baptized. Later to establish themselves were Thomas Machun or Macham, apothecary, there by July 1641, and the surgeon Robert Skelson, there by June 1642, according to the parish register.

First in evidence of the identity of the lawyers was Thomas Cattell, attorney-at-law, established by September 1638. In May 1642, Sarah, the wife of Mr William Aston, lawyer, was buried, and Mr Thomas Martin, lawyer, had arrived by April 1648. Loughborough was certainly the venue for taking examinations and depositions in litigation, particularly that initiated by the Herricks of adjacent Beaumanor, not least because the lordship of Beaumanor included Woodthorpe.109 Examinations and interrogatories were taken in the town in 1613, 1616 and 1634–5.110 In 1641 a commission of the Court of Requests was held in the Red Lion in the town.111 As noted above, Loughborough was also a venue for quarter sessions. The regular work of the manorial court and view of frankpledge, nonetheless, also demanded the presence of an attorney. The court was attended by the attorney alongside the steward, bailiff, and sergeant in the early seventeenth century if not before then.112

PART V GENTILITY AND URBAN CONSUMPTION

One category that should be examined in a little detail is gentle status, or, at least, those to whom the register applied the epithet Mr.113 This sector is important not for its own contribution to urban work, but as potential clients of workpeople and as consumers of produce and products. It also involved, of course, pretensions to higher status, not least with the formation of an urban ‘middling sort’ .114 Even by the middle of the seventeenth century, however, that process of status inflation had not proceeded far in Loughborough. Through the almost hundred years 1538

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109 ROLLR DG9/2343–2345, 2818 (1653, 1663): the lordship embraced Woodthorpe and Shelthorpe, both in the parish of Loughborough.
110 ROLLR DG9/2005 (1613, ex parte Herrick); DG9/2270 (litigation by Thomas Rawlin and other inhabitants of Woodhouse and Woodhouse Eaves, 1616); DG9/2276–2277 (1634–5); DG9/2283 (Herrick v. Boardman et al., 1641).
111 ROLLR DG9/2281.
112 ROLLR DE667/112, fol. 36r.
113 Goodacre, Transformation of a Peasant Society, 214–16.
to 1636, fewer than thirty males mentioned in the register were attributed the title Mr. or gent.\footnote{Atkinson; Spicke; Edmund; Woodmansey; Cateline; Draper; Cawdwell; Culmer; Chard; Lasselles; Willock; Davis; Villers; Poulson; Jordan; Barfoote; Peach; Holt; Dawson; Henshaw; Darbye; Neale; Cleveland; Davenport; Brocke; and Skipwith. Additionally, buried in the parish in November 1603, Mr John Smallay, who had officiated as steward of the manor for about thirty years. Sir George Hastings is noted below.}

In fact, Loughborough was frequented by those of genuine gentle status who contributed to opportunities for work. Many of the affairs of the Herricks of Beaumanor were conducted through Loughborough.\footnote{Bodleian Library MS Eng. Hist. c.476, fol. 32; c.477, fols 122–3, 166; c.482, fols 111–12 (1594–[1622]).} The Babingtons of Rothley acquired property in the town in the seventeenth century.\footnote{ROLLR 2D31/10, 17, 19, 27, 40–41, 78, 87, 93, 103–107.} The Skipwiths held lands by knight service in Loughborough as well as Cotes, Prestwold and Hoton.\footnote{Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 886.} The Skipwith element contained Knighthorpe from the 1620s to 1641, when it passed through Henry’s daughter Jane.\footnote{Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 906; HL HAM Box 26, folder 1: Henry Skipwith esquire, free tenant at Knighthorpe, fined 6d. for default of suit of court (1625).} Loughborough Park continued to be the place of residence of the gentle Willocke family.\footnote{ROLLR DG9/5.} The Park itself, however, had belonged to the Hastings family since it escheated in 1554 on the arraignment of the Greys.\footnote{Nichols, History and Antiquities, iii, 886–7.} The proximity of Hastings did not dominate the town as at Ashby.\footnote{Moxon, ‘Ashby-de-la-Zouch’.} Sir George regularly, however, had his children baptized in the parish church of Loughborough.\footnote{ROLLR DE667/1: January 1579 dau. Dorothy (a locally prolific forename) baptized; January 1609 son Nathaniel baptized, but buried in August 1611; May 1614 dau. Elizabeth baptized; October 1616 son John baptized; July 1619 son Samuel baptized; April 1622 dau. Dorcas baptized. In July 1587 Mr Henry Hastings married Mistress Willoughby in the parish church.}

One survey of the manor thus contained a separate section for the lands, meadows, pastures and mills in the tenure of Sir George Hastings. The total rent amounted to £101 10s., comprising £20 for the capital messuage called Lemyngton’s House, the Conygre and two meadows; £4 13s. 4d. for the close of meadow called the Ten Acres (3a. of which were reserved for deer in the new park); £14 13s. 4d. for Cotes Hern consisting of 22a. of best meadow at the rate of 13s. 4d. per acre; £1 13s. 4d. for ten leas; 10s. for Bramsholme; £40 for the Soar mills and the Holmes; and £20 for the malt mill.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 4, p. 29.}

The involvement of the Skipwiths with the town, other than for provisionings, was sporadic. The countess authorized William Skipwith, knight, to preside over her court baron with the assistance of her steward in the early seventeenth century.\footnote{HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, pp. 38–9, 43, 47, 49, 52, 76, 80, 101–3; Box 25, folder 6 (1606); HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 6, 33, for example.} Importantly, he, with George Belgrave, esquire, and Dr John Chippingdale, with the advice of the steward, presided over the court which accepted the ‘recognitions’ of all free tenants holding copyhold land at the turn of
the century. When not so engaged, however, he constantly defaulted from his suit to the court, as did other resident gentry such as his kinsman, Henry Skipwith, esquire, and Edward Calton, gent. Other men described as gentlemen were engaged more actively in the administration of the town. Hugh Maskal gent. acted as one of the streetmasters in the early seventeenth century. Streetmasters were appointed for each of the principal streets to enforce its proper cleanliness. Maskall supervised Baxtergate where he had a messuage which he later alienated.

The gentleman who participated most in the affairs of the town was Robert Henshawe, consistently described as gent. when he was mentioned in the court rolls of the manor. He served on the inquisicio magna of the view of frankpledge, as constable, and regularly stood as a pledge for transactions in copyhold land. For a time, the countess allowed two of her tenants to preside over the manorial court with the advice of her steward; Henshawe operated in this capacity too. He even served in his turn in the rather lowly office as one of the two fieldmasters (supervisores camporum). His most important position, nonetheless, was his continuous membership of the trustees of the bridge fund (feoffati pontium) and as bridgemaster. George Henshawe had married Dorothy Villers, daughter of a gentry family, and Robert’s arrangements of his copyhold lands in the early seventeenth century were concerned partly with making appropriate provision for her as a widow: a cottage and garden in Fishpool Head; a messuage and virgate; three cottages in Churchgate; and a messuage or tenement in Baxtergate with the appurtenant bovate of land. In addition, as might be expected of his status, he was also a free tenant.

The Villers family had been actively engaged in the land market in the town in the late sixteenth century. Margaret Villers held a tenement at the head of the market place and four shops in copyhold tenure and another shop and a croft called Dexters Thing. She had consequently invested in copyhold tenure in the town and the second life of the three lives of the tenure belonged to Thomas Villers. It should be explained at this point that copyhold for three lives was the dominant tenure for both urban and rural land in the manor.

126 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, pp. 43 (Curia Recognicionum terram [sic] liberorum tenentium quam tenent per Copiam Rotuli Curie per Indenturam ad terminum vitae & Annores necnon ad voluntatem prenobilis Dominae), 47, 49, 52, 58.
127 HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 107, for example.
128 HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 21, 47.
129 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 11; Box 25, folder 6, pp. 155, 172; HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 3, 20, 88, 89, 124, 128.
130 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 83.
131 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 65.
132 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 11. I will consider the bridgemasters elsewhere in a separate discussion of the politics of diffuse government in the town.
133 HL HAM Box 25, folder 6, p. 192 (1611); HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 48–50; HAM Box 25, folder 11, p. 8 (1607).
134 HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, pp. 19, 26.
135 HL HAM Box 25, folder 4, pp. 5–6; HAM Box 25, folder 5, p. 7.
Other gentry were attracted into the town to some of the larger mansions, in particular that commonly known through the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as Lemyngton’s House, the former residence of the wool merchant, William Lemyngton. This large structure was held in copyhold tenure successively by Robert Wyeth, gent., William Peach, gent., and in the early seventeenth century by Edward Fynnis, gent.\textsuperscript{136} Fynnis was retained by the countess as her gentleman servant and this ‘cottage and garden’ called Lemyngton’s House provided his base in the town.\textsuperscript{137} The house was located on the periphery of the built-up part of the town, on its edge at Sparrow Hill.\textsuperscript{138} Peach later moved out to the hamlet of Woodthorpe for which he was entered on the \textit{inquisicio} in the early seventeenth century as Henry Peach, gent.\textsuperscript{139} He also served as an afferior for the hamlet.\textsuperscript{140} The indigenous Tysley family ascended locally to respect as gentle status. By 1623, it was natural for the petitioners after the great fire of Loughborough to address Mr Edmund Tysley.\textsuperscript{141}

The development of Loughborough in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries – despite the vicissitudes of endemic sickness and civil strife – presents a different picture of the circumstances of small towns. This urban place contained more of the industrial processes identified by Goose. Overall, moreover, despite the rural element of the parish, the urban centre exhibited a greater density of crafts and trades than in other Leicestershire small towns because of its more rapid expansion. We have a different character of early-modern small urban place, less conservative. Indeed, the town attracted some of those specialist trades not yet clearly evident in the other urban centres, glaziers in particular. Through the churchwardens’ accounts we are able to perceive how ‘public works’ might have sustained both craftsmen and casual labourers for at least part of their livelihood. The character of the work of urban labourers is also illustrated, confirming what is known from larger, incorporated boroughs. Although remaining unincorporated until the late nineteenth century, the town was beginning to occupy an intermediate place in the urban hierarchy above small market towns, but below incorporated county boroughs, reflected in the work and working practices of its residents. It did not pertain to the category of more conservative market town.

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\textsuperscript{136} HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 115.
\textsuperscript{137} HL HAM Box 25, folder 3, p. 41.
\textsuperscript{138} HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 35.
\textsuperscript{139} HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, pp. 91, 141.
\textsuperscript{140} HL HAM Box 25, folder 9, p. 141.
\textsuperscript{141} HL HAM Box 25, folder 13.