Aspects of social and economic change in a small market town: Moreton in Marsh 1850-1914

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Doctor of Philosophy in English Local History

20 January 2024

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Hilary Term 2024

ABSTRACT

The 19th century is recognised as a period of major social and economic upheaval that resulted in substantial movements of population from agricultural to industrial areas. The consequent growth of large urban areas has attracted the attention of historians, at the expense of the smaller settlements, which remained important service centres for rural inhabitants. Consequently, a binary approach to the history of the period has evolved that ignores places that relied on the symbiosis of both rural and urban worlds. This thesis attempts to address the imbalance. It considers how the multifaceted developments of the age affected Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire, a small market town at the heart of an agricultural area, a considerable distance from any industrial centres. It is a qualitative study that has scrutinised all currently available documents for the period. I will argue that, demographic stasis, the pervading paternalistic relationship between the landed elite and the townspeople, and the implications of decisions made elsewhere shaped much of its social development during this period. Both welfare provision and association within the town relied on strong community links that were fostered by religious cooperation. Railway building was a key component in 19th century national economic, technological and industrial developments but again, the impact of railways on small towns has been overlooked. I will argue that the railway was crucial to the survival of Moreton and its transformation from an agricultural to a dealing economy, which laid the foundations for the town's future role as a tourist centre. Recognising the importance of migration as an underlying theme of 19th century social and economic history, the impact of people arriving and leaving the town will also be examined. This thesis enhances the literature on small towns as well as uncovering previously unknown aspects of the local history of Moreton in Marsh.

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Acknowledgements

My sincere thanks to my supervisors, Dr Jonathan Healey and Dr Siân Pooley, whose unfailing encouragement and constructive guidance has been invaluable to the completion of this project. I would also like to recognise the initial input from Dr Kate Tiller.

For the last nine years, the enduring reassurance and wise counsel, which I have received from Dr Christine Jackson has been valued enormously. Gratitude is also due to Dr Elizabeth Gemmill for her caring support at a crucial point on my journey.

Finally, without the wholehearted enthusiasm of my family, this project would not have been possible, and I am enormously grateful to them all. Thank you, Caroline, for your expertise in the final stages that ensured all the words were in the right order! Above all, thank you, Keith, IT consultant, research assistant, photographer, proof-reader, longsuffering domestic help and for appearing as interested in 19th century Moreton as I am.

Abbreviations

Berrow's Worcester Journal	BWJ
Bibliography of British and Irish History	BBIH
British Library Newspaper Archive	BLNA
Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure,	CAMPOP
Census of Enumerator Books	CEBs
Chipping Campden Rural District Council	CCRDC
Evesham Journal	EJ
Gloucestershire Record Office	GRO
Horne Family Archive	HFA
Great Western Railway	GWR
Jackson's Oxford Journal	JOJ
Independent Order of Oddfellows Manchester Unity	IOOFMU
Mean Household Size	MHS
M.Inst.C.E.	Member of Institute of Civil Engineers
Moreton Free Press	MFP
Moreton in Marsh	Moreton
Moreton in Marsh History Society Archive	MMHSA
Oxford, Worcester, Wolverhampton Railway	OWWR
Poor Law Union	PLU
Poor Law Amendment Act (1834),	PLAA
Shipston on Stour	Shipston
Stow on the Wold	Stow
Stratford upon Avon	Stratford
The National Archives	TNA
Victoria County History	VCH
Warwickshire Record Office	WRO

Introduction

> 'We need to know more about the detailed responses of country market towns as they faced the challenges which affected the region as a whole between 1750 and 1900. We lack deep understanding of the processes whereby many market towns emerged in new roles'.[1]

Alan Crosby's critique of urban history research in northwest England is relevant countrywide. In his call for research, he states that, 'national history' should be viewed as 'an aggregation of local history', with the latter shedding, 'a brilliant light upon wider trends'. He requests answers to the question, 'what distinctive local factors can help explain the divergent patterns of development?'.[2] This thesis, a close study of Moreton in Marsh, Gloucestershire (Moreton), between 1850 and 1914, tries to address gaps both in terms of location and topic. Through detailed research of available sources, it attempts to identify the social and economic challenges faced, and the responses made, by the population. Comparisons will be made between the experience of Moreton and similar studies elsewhere. The importance of this study lies in its rarity in terms of place, size of settlement and period and will make a new contribution to the literature on small towns. Additionally, it will examine the role played by the Oddfellows, the development of the cottage hospital together with other aspects of small town life that have received scant attention from historians, and for which calls for more research have been made.[3] The results of the research will not only identify both the physical, social and economic changes made by the developments of the age to the town's life, but also detect aspects of continuity.

Moreton is an excellent example of the synthesis of rural and urban, a point where both economies and cultures met. Stephen Royle emphasized the fusion of rural and urban, rich and poor, trade and industry, which was present in such places.[4] Such a picture of mixed residential, trade and small industry is reflected in the census returns. The wealthier inhabitants lived on the High Street or on the Oxford Road, their residences often doubling as commercial or professional premises. Public houses were interspersed on both roads and, behind the High Street, on both sides, were the Back Ends, providing housing for people as well as domestic or workshop industries. The weekly market brought local farmers into the town to sell produce and livestock, purchase goods in the shops and socialise in hostelries. Other examples of country and town meeting were landowners and clergy, from the surrounding area, carrying out public duties as magistrates, members of school boards or to support cultural and

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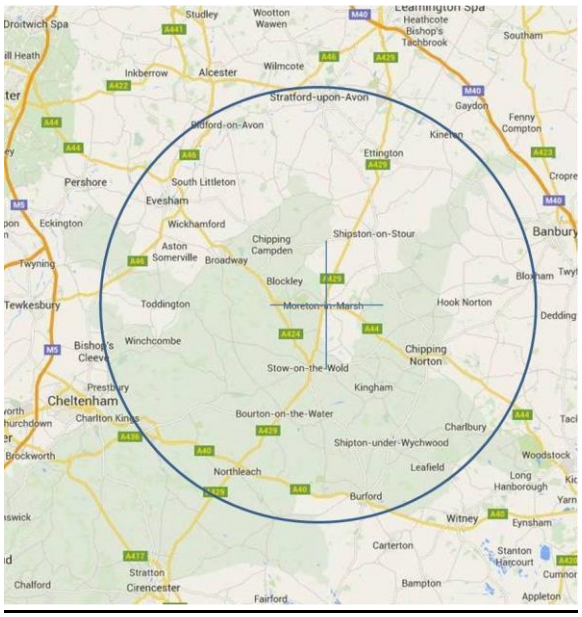
[1] A. Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', *Northern History*, 42/1 (2005), p. 85.
[2] Ibid., p. 82, p. 85.
[3] J. Hall, 'From Cottage to Community Hospitals: Watlington Cottage and its Regional Context', *Local Population Studies,* 88 (2012), p. 33; C. Radcliffe, 'Mutual Improvement Societies in the West Riding of Yorkshire, 1835-1900', *Journal of Educational Administration and History,* (1986), p. 1.
[4] S. Royle, 'The Development of Small Towns in Britain 1840-1950', in M. Daunton (ed.) *Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, *Vol.3* (2000), p. 164.

welfare activities in Moreton.[5] Crosby highlighted similar situations in Lancashire, Co. Durham and South Wales where the discrete identity of places, that were neither town nor village, had not been recognised.[6] The synergy of rural and urban was apparent in many of the issues faced by Moreton in the late 19th century.

Location

Moreton's location is a crucial factor in its development and fortune therefore it is imperative to establish the town's geographical position. The town is at the northern tip of Gloucestershire, close to the boundaries of Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and Oxfordshire. Figure 1 shows it occupies a level position in the upper reaches of the Evenlode valley, bounded by wolds to the south and west and more distant hills eastward. The blue circle indicates an area of 15 miles from Moreton. The river Evenlode, which joins the Thames near Oxford, rises on the Cotswolds hills, west of Moreton. In contrast to the nearby limestone hills, the valley comprises lower lias soils with a high water table.[7] Historically both Moreton and the surrounding low-lying land have suffered from recurrent episodes of flooding, evidenced in local newspapers and by entries in the logbook of the British School, on the western side of the town, recounting instances of it being cut off.[8] Figure 2, one of many archival photographs of floods in Moreton, illustrates the persistent problem.

Figure 1: Moreton's position in relation to other Cotswold towns.[9]



[5] GRO, PS/MO/RM, Moreton Petty Sessions Division (Magistrates Court).
[6] Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 86.
[7] L. Richardson, *The Country Around Moreton in Marsh,* HMSO, (1929), pp. 2-3. www.archive.org/details/moreton-geology-1929-images/page/n12/mode/2up (16 February 2021).
[8] C.R. Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh', in C.R. Elrington (ed.), *A History of the County of Gloucester: Vol. 6*, (London, 1965), pp. 240-250; GRO, S221/2/1 Moreton British School Logbook 1863-1882*,* February 1869.
[9] Based on Google Maps, (6 May 2015).

Figure 2: Flooding in Moreton c.1900.[10]



In terms of agriculture, the valley is a pocket of mixed arable and dairy farming, in contrast to the upland sheep farming on the Cotswold Hills, a position that has remained unchanged for centuries. The primarily agrarian nature of Moreton's hinterland is also important to its location. Small market towns were the nexus between town and country, a theme that was explored in contemporary 19th century literature. Thomas Hardy's description of Casterbridge as the 'complement of the rural life around' could equally apply to Moreton, as does the evocative description of daily life whereby,

> 'The farmer's boy could sit under his barley mow and pitch a stone into the office window of the town clerk; reapers at work among the sheaves nodded to acquaintances standing on the pavement-corner'.[11]

Unlike the local villages, where farms remained a central geographical feature, close to the churches and pubs, the Moreton farms were on the outskirts of the urban development or surrounded by fields, some distance away. It was these fields that many of the population walked to and from for work each morning and evening. These fields were in the ownership of the landed gentry, to whom the town had strong links both as the owners of the cottages in which people lived, and the farmland on which they worked. The dual threads of paternalism and reflected deference coloured the

[10] David Hanks, Private Postcard Collection.
[11] T. Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge,* (London, 1886, Kindle edition, 2013), chapter 14, location 1220.

lives of the townspeople throughout the period. The farm waggons in the main street in figure 3 illustrates the agricultural nature of the town with the proximity of fields shown in the 1880 map, figure 4, and in the view from the Redesdale Hall, figure 41.

Figure 3: Moreton c.1868.[12]

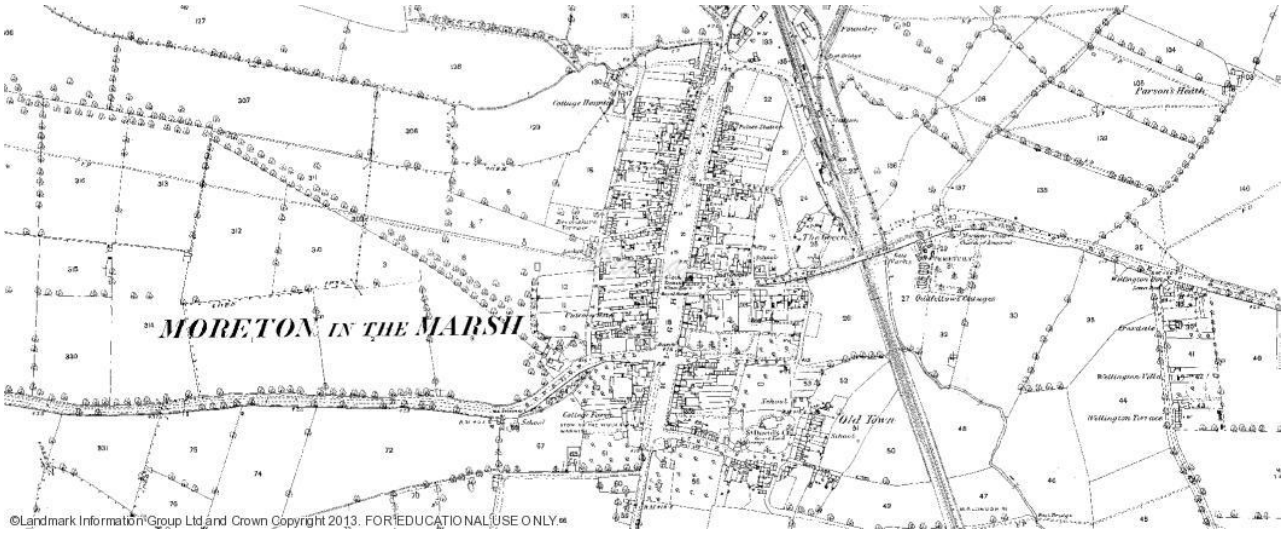


Moreton's position in relation to other north Gloucestershire towns, as shown in figure 1, also demonstrates its nearness to towns in Worcestershire, Warwickshire and Oxfordshire, within the 15-mile radius. The map establishes its position on the crossroads of two major historic routes: the north-south Roman Fosseway and a major east-west route from London and Oxford to Worcester and Wales. The nearest neighbouring towns are Stow on the Wold (Stow), in an elevated position, four miles to the south, and Shipston on Stour (Shipston), in a similar lowland position, seven miles to the north-east. Chipping Campden to the west and Chipping Norton to the east are both in higher positions eight miles distant. The north Cotswold towns were sufficiently distant from each other to be service centres for a cluster of smaller villages and hamlets as set out by Christopher Chalklin, who considered the radii of these hinterlands to be between three and four miles.[13] Based on Chalklin's premise, the villages of Batsford, Bourton on the Hill, Evenlode, Longborough, Lower Lemington, Sezincote, and Todenham in Gloucestershire and Great Wolford and Stretton on Fosse in Warwickshire could be considered part of Moreton's rural hinterland. Dennis Mills said the operation of the postal system was important in reflecting a hierarchy of villages and market towns.[14] Entries in *Kelly's Directories* consistently list Moreton as

[12] Moreton in Marsh History Society Archives.
[13] C. Chalklin, 'Country Towns', in G. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, Vol.1, (London,1981), p. 276.
[14] D. Mills, *Rural Community History from Trade Directories,* (Aldenham, 2001), p.16; Kelly's Directories, 1868, 1872, 1880, 1884.

the main postal town for the Gloucestershire villages listed above, thus supporting Mills' assumption.

Figure 4: Map of Moreton and surrounding area c.1880.[15]



Alan Everitt described how 19th century travel was dictated by topography as horses were protected from over exertion resulting in carrier routes ending at the foot of steep escarpments.[16] This is another crucial aspect of Moreton's location as it benefited from being the point where long-distance coaches changed horses, before or after, negotiating the Cotswold Hills. The town's commercial activity was biased towards accommodation and sustenance for passing travellers. On a local level, the hills to the west impacted on its relationships with its neighbours. Short distance carriers from the west terminated their routes on the other side of the escarpment, at Broadway, and the upland villagers may have avoided a strenuous return journey from Moreton, focusing instead on upland centres such as Blockley and Chipping Campden. This perception is reinforced by the classification used in *Harrison's Directory of Gloucestershire* in 1859 which follows its entry for the town with a section entitled 'villages around Moreton in Marsh' listing the lowland villages of Batsford, Longborough, Lower Lemington, Sezincote and Todenham.[17] Similarly, *Harrison, Harrod & Co.'s Bristol PO Directory*, of the same year, classifies Bourton on the Hill, at the top of the Cotswold slope, as one of the 'villages around Chipping Campden' despite being five miles from that town but only two from Moreton.[18]

Being the northernmost town in Gloucestershire, Moreton was something of an outlie. Its position on the intersection of two major travel routes, close to a steep escarpment also singled it out from its neighbours. As will be discussed in chapter

[15] GRO, OS/1/6/15/SW Ordnance Survey 1st edition, 6" to 1 mile sheet 15/SW showing Bourton on the Hill, Batsford and Moreton in Marsh, c.1880.
[16] A. Everitt, *Landscape and Community in England,* (London, 1985), p. 287.
[17] Harrison, Harrod & Co*, Bristol PO Directory* (London,1859), pp. 487-8.
[18] Ibid., p. 478.

three, it was physically closer to larger towns in different neighbouring counties, on which it relied for services, not found locally. Connections with Shipston, in Warwickshire, forged because of the Poor Law Amendment Act (1834) (PLAA), endured into the 20th century, as the location for meetings of Chipping Campden Rural District Council, to which Moreton belonged, even though Shipston was part of a different county council.

In summary, Moreton was a small town, prone to flooding, at the centre of a rural hinterland of smaller villages and hamlets making it the interface between rural and urban life. Its closest neighbouring towns were of comparable size and performed similar functions as service centres. Its topographical position at the intersection of primary transport routes provided Moreton with additional service opportunities. All these factors were crucial to Moreton's development and fortunes during the study period.

Study period

The period 1850-1914 was chosen because of the availability of primary sources, to be analysed in more detail later. However, it was also a period of dramatic physical and economic change for Moreton. The building of the railway line and station in 1853 and the general decline in agriculture from a high point in the 1840s to depression in the 1870s were significant to the town's social and economic development.[19] Simultaneously, developments in England that led to the burgeoning of industrial towns and commercial centres and improvements in communication added to the opportunities available for the residents of small towns such as Moreton.[20] The changes to society, and especially to communities with previous links to large estates, wrought by the 1914-1918 war, meant that the onset of conflict was a natural place to terminate the study.[21]

Why study small towns?

The following section examines the historiography of small towns in the United Kingdom, the dearth of which underlines the need for research in this area. A further review of the historiography relating to each of the themes examined will be contained in the individual chapters.

Thirty years before Crosby's call for research, Alan Armstrong, in his study of York, stated that, 'country towns both large and small tended to be ignored. Yet, in they were still the norm, as far as urbanisation in the mid-19th century was

[19] E.J.T. Collins, 'The Great Depression', in E.J.T. Collins (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol. 7, pp. 138-207.
[20] J. Long, 'Urban Migration and Socioeconomic Mobility in Victorian Britain', *The Journal of Economic History*, 65/1 (Mar, 2005), p. 28.
[21] F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century,* (London, 1963).

concerned'.[22] Later, Gail Malmgreen also highlighted the importance of small towns to the life experiences of most of the population,

> 'It was in places such as market towns, border towns, satellites and suburbs, ecclesiastical centres, and the smaller ports and industrial towns...and not in the "shock cities", that most Britons experienced town life during the industrial revolution and well into the nineteenth century'.[23]

In the years since, few inroads have been made to redress the situation. Albion Urdank's in depth study Nailsworth, a weaving town in South Gloucestershire, from 1780-1865, provides some analogies with regard to region but the particular industrial setting and the earlier period limits direct comparison. A recent thesis, examining 19th century Usk, by Elizabeth Jones, provides better opportunities.[24]

Two studies have demonstrated the significant insights that can emerge from studies of small towns. Barry Reay's *Microhistories* is an in-depth study of three communities near Canterbury, Kent in which demographic and social trends are examined. Many of Reay's conclusions will be used for comparisons with Moreton.[25] Another study, B.J Davey's, *Ashwell 1830-1914: The Decline of a Village Community,* considers comparable topics to Reay but is significant in relation to Moreton as it contemplates the response of the local community to the arrival of the railway.[26]

Historical writing and commentary about Moreton are even more limited and, with one exception, is descriptive rather than analytical.[27] As may be anticipated, Christopher Elrington's chapter in *Victoria County History (VCH)* is a detailed work of reference describing relevant events in the history of the town from the Norman Conquest to the mid-20th century. Its references represent the most comprehensive review of available documentary sources for Moreton to the date of its publication.[28] Most recently, Moreton has been the focus of Christopher Dyer's *A Country Merchant 1495-1520,* an account of John Heritage, a 16th century farmer and wool merchant

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[22] W.A. Armstrong, *Stability and Change in an English Country Town: a Social Study of York, 1801-1851,* (London, 1974), p. 10.
[23] G. Malmgreen, *Silk Town: Industry and Culture in Macclesfield 1750–1835,* (Hull, 1985), p. 1.
[24] A. Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale: Nailsworth, Gloucestershire, 1780-1865,* (Berkeley USA, 1990); E. Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', (PhD. thesis, University of Leicester, 2021).
[25] B. Reay, *Microhistories: Demography, Society and Culture in Rural England 1800-1930,* (Cambridge, 1996).
[26] B. Davey, *Ashwell 1830-1914, The Decline of a Village Community,* (Leicester, 1980).
[27] S. Rudder, *A New History of Gloucestershire* (Cirencester, 1779); J Mann, *Recollections of My Early and Professional Life*, (London, 1887); E. Belcher, 'The History of Moreton in Marsh', *Transactions* of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society,16 (1891-2); W. Warne, *A Short History of Moreton in Marsh,* (Evesham, 1948); J. Norris, *The Stratford & Moreton Tramway*, (Southampton, 1987); G. Stapleton (ed.), *Memories of Moreton,* Moreton in Marsh District Local History Society, (Shipston on Stour, 1989); *Four Shires Memories,* Moreton in Marsh District Local History Society, (Shipston on Stour, 1992); Moreton in Marsh District Local History Society, *Moreton History*, 1997-2012; A. Jackson, 'The Gas Works at Moreton in Marsh', *Gloucestershire Society for Industrial Archaeology*, (1996); J. Johnson, *A Short History of Moreton in Marsh,* (Moreton in Marsh, 1997).
[28] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.

whose business operated from Moreton and provides the only critical analysis of the town's position and economy but is of minor relevance to the 19th century.[29]

The historiography of economic and social developments in Britain has taken a binary approach, focusing on either urban or rural topics, as evidenced by *The Agrarian History of England and Wales* and *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain.*[30] Scholarly writing about the fortunes of 19th-century market towns, the impact of railway building, population decline, and migration exists but relates to towns larger than Moreton.[31] The commission of detailed academic histories of small market towns, larger than the villages of their hinterland, but small compared with burgeoning industrial towns and historic county towns, appears to be a casualty of this methodology. Such places fall between the two spheres: mongrels that span both realms but not garnering sufficient interest from specialists in either field. Possessing urban characteristics such as markets, service, and administrative functions, many of their residents remained employed in agriculture or related industries. Scholarly articles contain repeated requests for what Peter Clark terms 'close-textured study at the local level'.[32] As with all disciplines, historiography is subject to the caprices of what is deemed fashionable and again this can be found in the change of focus of the *VCH*, that will be discussed later.

Crosby's article charts the developments of town histories, rooted in blatant civic pride and local rivalry. Prosperous newly industrialised towns facilitated such histories in a way not possible for smaller settlements, with fewer inhabitants, less spectacular histories, unimpressive civic buildings, and a shrinking and poorer audience unable to buy the published volumes to recoup production costs. Changing national and local fortunes meant that by the mid-20th century the mood was less celebratory and, except for histories commemorating the centenaries of noteworthy events, impetus was lost, and the genre became unfashionable. Crosby rejected the idea that towns were not a valid subject for research and welcomed the idea that 'biographical analysis is again accepted'. Using the example of Garstang, Lancashire, with a population of 7,659 in 1851, he challenged the perception that small towns, where the population decreased or remained static, are regarded as failures believing this to be a construct

[29] C. Dyer, *A Country Merchant, 1495-1520*, (Oxford, 2012).
[30] J. Thirsk, H.E. Hallam, S. Piggott, G. E. Mingay, E.H. Whetham, E. J. T. Collins & H. P. R. Finberg, (eds.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, (Cambridge, 1967); D. M. Palliser, P. Clark, & M. J. Daunton (eds.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain*, (Cambridge, 2000).
[31] Chalklin, 'Country Towns,' P. Clark, 'Small towns 1700-1840 in P. Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain,* (Cambridge, 2000), pp. 733-773; Davey, *Ashwell 1830-1914:* A. Dyer, 'Small Market Towns 1540-1700', in P. Clark (ed.), *The Cambridge Urban History of Britain,* (Cambridge, 2000); B. Trinder, *Victorian Banbury,* (Chichester, 2005); P. Waller, *Town, City and Nation, England 1850-1914*, (Oxford, 1983); WEA (Slough and Eton Branch), *A Town in the Making, Slough 1851,* (Berkshire, 1974); D. Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy, Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861-1900*, (Cambridge, 1985); D. Mageean & W. Pryce, *Patterns and Processes of Internal Migration,* Open University, D301, Units 9-10, (Milton Keynes, 1982); C. Pooley & I. Whyte (eds.), *Migrants Emigrants and Immigrants, A Social History of Migration*, (London, 1991); M. Casson, 'The Determinants of Local Population Growth: A Study of Oxfordshire in the Nineteenth Century', *Explorations in Economic History,* 50 (2013).
[32] Clark, 'Small towns 1700–1840', p. 748.

of historians who measured success purely in terms of demographic growth.[33] Crosby points to the cyclical nature of economic success and advocates taking a much longer view before making such classifications.[34] As will be demonstrated in chapter one, this speaks directly to Moreton's position.

Chalklin calculated that in 1841 a typical market town had a population of between 1,000 and 4,000 people.[35] This wide numerical classification encompasses an extensive range of diverse settlements whose economic, political, and social developments affected the lives of a huge proportion of the population. The need for numerical classification ignores the status and significance of these places especially within regions of low population density. Small market towns are important to the economic, social, and political history of Britain during the 19th century as not only are their histories valid as a record of the experiences of significant numbers of people, for whom they were the nearest centre of exchange, culture, and connection with central government, but they also provide a microcosm of the developments and trends within the country as a whole. Analysis of Moreton between 1850 and 1914 demonstrates how this small market town, at the lower end of Chalklin's classification, maintained its important local position in the face of national trends that directed the attention of both central government and the general population towards the newer industrial centres. Of equal significance is the glaring lack of interest shown by historians of the period to these lower ranked settlements. In 1851 Moreton's population was approximately 1500 people and by 1911, with an identical registration district, it had decreased to about 1400, in face of rapidly rising national figures.[36]

The process of finding places of a comparable size, which have been the subject of scholarly investigation, has the potential to be extremely haphazard. A thorough search of the contents of 11 online journals for the last 30 years, undertaken to discover any academic research on 'small market towns', produced limited results.[37] The need to identify specific locations to assist bibliographical searches became apparent. Consequently, data files from *A Vision of Britain Through Time* were employed to locate settlements with population totals between 1400 and 1600 in 1851 and determine the types of environments in which they were situated: rural, urban, suburban, industrial, and coastal.[38] This produced just over 200 named places from across England and Wales, searchable through the *Bibliography of British and Irish History (BBIH).* There were multiple returns covering all periods, but topics were more specific: war memorials, archaeology, church architecture, single census analysis,

[33] Great Britain Historical GIS Project, (University of Portsmouth, 2017), www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10352356/cube/TOT_POP (22 February 2023).
[34] Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 76, p. 86.
[35] Chalklin, 'Country Towns', p. 276.
[36] *Ancestry,* England Census, Moreton, 1851-1911.
[37] Journals examined: *Family and Community History, History Workshop Journal, Local Population Studies, Midland History, Northern History, Oxoniensia, Rural History, Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History Proceedings, Transactions of Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, Urban History.*
[38] www.visionofbritain.org.uk (26 June 2022).

precise trades, inns, and alehouses. Only a total of seven articles and 15 books related to the 19th century and, apart from Reay and Davey, most books were narrative or photographic accounts.[39] This demonstrates the need for studies such as this.

Likewise, to determine places with a similar profile to Moreton over the period, the 200 sampled towns' populations in 1911 were ranked. The consistency of registration district presented a greater issue with the later figures, as by then changes in local government organisation had occurred at various levels. With allowances made for this, the 1911 figures reveal the extent of the very differing fortunes for these places with population ranges from 183 (Woodhorn, Northumberland) to 133,487 (East Ham, London). To accommodate the reduction in Moreton's population in 1911 the file was refined further to places with populations between 1400 and 1600, in 1851 **and** 1300 and 1500 in 1911, which resulted in a list of 37 settlements that met both criteria and, from a purely numerical perspective, were comparable to Moreton. The same exercise was conducted with *BBIH* resulting in one article and five books, again one being Reay's *Microhistories.* This underlines Crosby's article and validates the reasons for this research project and thesis.

The *VCH* was established in 1899 to write a comprehensive history of every English county, an ambitious and colossal task that speaks of the self-confidence of the age of its conception. In its 120-year history its realisation has been subject to national crises, uncertain funding, together with the necessity for revision and the prerequisite to account for advances in research and changing approaches to historiography. Moreton formed part of the Gloucestershire volume completed in 1965.[40] Of the 37 small towns comparable to Moreton, only 13 have been covered by the *VCH* with eight published prior to 1950; one in the 1960s; two in the 1980s and two in the 2000s. The latter two, Fordham (Cambridgeshire) and Huntspill (Somerset) provide an opportunity to make comparisons to Moreton with Fordham, due its rural rather than coastal position, being particularly relevant. However, to date, neither of these places have been subject to any other in-depth analytical historical study.

At present 22 *VCH Shorts* have been published that bridge the gap between detailed available studies of individual parishes and the greater undertaking of completing or updating the county volumes.[41] These reflect the growing interest in all communities, irrespective of previously conferred status, and the rich layers of information now available to historians but none of the identified towns feature. The one of most relevance covers Colwall, Herefordshire, however its population figures increased in the second half of the 19th century, therefore it fits the more usual narrative of success being measured in terms of demographic improvement rather than the stasis present in Moreton.[42]

[39] Reay, *Microhistories;* Davey, *Ashwell 1830-1914.*
[40] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[41] www.history.ac.uk/research/victoria-county-history/vch-publications/vch-shorts (9 January 2023).
[42] www.history.ac.uk/publications/colwall (9 January 2023).

One of the major developments in Moreton was the construction of the railway line and station, the impact of which is discussed in chapter six. The historiography of railways and trains in the United Kingdom is extensive but, with a few exceptions relates to architecture, rolling stock and engineering rather than the wider socio-economic impact. Six studies consider the social and economic repercussions of railway development, and these will be considered in chapter six.[43] This thesis provides direct comparison to the existing studies and provides a benchmark for future research in other places.

Therefore, it can be seen from the dearth of publications relating to small towns across the United Kingdom, this research fills an important gap in academic knowledge. This study provides an in-depth study of the demography of a small town together with its responses to contemporary economic and social challenges. Additionally, it examines the responses of local government and the population to the gradual encroachment of central government into the everyday lives of the nation.

Methodology and sources

My methodology has been both quantitative and qualitative. Excel spreadsheets have been used extensively as they allow relevant facts to be extracted and sorted to provide comparative pictures at various points and for different scenarios. Census enumerators' books (CEBs), parish birth, marriage and death records, vestry and parish council minutes and petty sessions records have all been transcribed onto spreadsheets. The benefit of this approach is that patterns can be identified that can be investigated in more depth via other sources and case studies developed.

With one exception, Moreton's inhabitants do not appear to have been sufficiently self-conscious to consider the daily transactions of their lives worthy of preservation for posterity. One major personal source, the two volumes of Baron Redesdale's memoirs does not mention Moreton or Batsford, which is a major and puzzling omission. An explanation, which must be taken at face value, is given by Edmund Gosse in the introduction to the second volume, that from 1910 he was not living in the area and, 'that it was irksome for him to magnify in print' something that

[43] F. Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming of the Railway to East Kent 1841-1914' (PhD. thesis, University of Kent, 1993); M. Allen, 'A Railway Revolution? A Census Based Analysis of the Economic, Social and Topographical Effects of the Coming of the Railway upon the City of Winchester c.1830-1890', (PhD. thesis, University of Southampton, 1999); A. Giles, 'Railway influence in Kingston upon Thames: Paternalism, 'Welfarism' and Nineteenth Century Society 1838-1912', (PhD. thesis, Kingston University, 2007); R. Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway: A Study of Social Change in Five Rural Thameside Parishes 1831-1901' (PhD. thesis, University of Reading, 2009); F. Newman, 'The Socio-economic Effects of the Coming of the Railways to Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire, 1838-1900', (PhD. thesis, University of Hertfordshire, 2014); A. Baxter, 'Great Marlow 1835-1891, the Impact of Railways and Industrialisation', (Student dissertation for module A826, MA History part 2, The Open University, 2019).

was in the possession of another. He returned to Batsford in 1915, intending to write a further volume about the house and garden but died suddenly and unexpectedly.[44]

Consequently, this project has required a tenacious quest for original documents and the need to mine extensively each available source. Moreton's location and the consequences of changes and fragmentation in local government boundaries are discussed in chapter two but these also have implications for the present-day researcher in that documents are scattered between archives in Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, and Worcestershire. This project has relied on sources that are available electronically, as well as those at Gloucestershire Warwickshire and Worcestershire record offices, The National Archives, Evesham Library and the British Library Newspaper Archive (BLNA).

1841-1911 Censuses

This study period provides the historian with opportunities to analyse decennial census returns that were instituted in 1801 and have become more detailed and refined thereafter. The foundation of *The Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure* (Campop) in 1964 made huge inroads into demographic research before widespread digitization, and the quantities of data now accessible means that there are still untapped sources available to create microhistories of specific areas.[45] Fortuitously, Moreton's parish boundaries were unchanged during the whole period and its demographic history will be considered in terms of total population, age and gender profiles, household structure, all taken from census material. Additionally, using parish registers, an attempt will be made to assess ages at marriage, the sourcing of partners, the levels of pre-nuptial pregnancy and infant mortality. Comparisons will be made with population levels in neighbouring towns over the same period and the supplementary metrics compared with close studies in other areas to assess parallels in Moreton.

A substantial source for this project has been the censuses accessed via *Ancestry*. In 2023, the global site claimed access to 30+ billion searchable records and its UK launch in 2001 has transformed the practice and experience of local history research.[46] The database cross references individuals from different censuses and in different areas, based on name, age, place of birth, occupation, and family members. Before 2002, to obtain the same information, census researchers needed to visit local record offices to examine microfiche copies of CEBs for each local area. *Ancestry's* benefits far outweigh its imperfections, but, as with all sources, its inadequacies must be considered. *Ancestry* comprises digitised copies of CEBs as well as transcriptions of these. It is possible to use the database without recourse to the transcriptions as was done for this research. The functionality of the database relies on transcriptions

[44] Lord Redesdale, *Further Memories,* (London,1917), p. 3.
[45] www.campop. geog.cam.ac.uk (5 June 2019).
[46] www.ancestry.com/corporate/about-ancestry/company-facts (11 January 2023).

of the CEBs, a labour-intensive process. In the same way that the original CEBs were dependent on the expertise of the individual enumerators, so too are the modern transcriptions. In an ideal world this should be done by people with local and historical knowledge. Experience of other genealogical sites suggests it is done by volunteers or for little reward in a modern-day cottage industry scenario. *Ancestry*'s American base implies recruitment there, resulting in poor knowledge of British geography and unfamiliar names. Transcribers are faced with antiquated handwriting, peculiar names, and poor spelling e.g., the Keyte family at Moreton's Unicorn hotel in 1851. Transcription of the hotel household covered two pages: on the first the proprietor's surname was incorrectly transcribed as 'Taylor' but on the second, where the children were enumerated, the error was compounded when it became 'Fugle'.[47] Benefits of the transcription section are location of an individual on a CEB page if handwriting is difficult or digitization blurred. Specifically, regarding Moreton, there are further peculiarities associated with its name and the options of being Moreton in Marsh; Moreton in the Marsh, just Moreton or a variety of all three using the spelling 'Morton'. Besides these six alternatives, to date I have listed 25 other variations on the name derived from the *Ancestry*.

In using census material, several caveats must be considered; census returns provide a snapshot of one day and are not evidence of a persistent pattern. The pitfalls of working with CEBs have been well documented and a source of frustration for demographic historians.[48] One commentator cautioned against any use on the basis that they were formed and contaminated by the interests and abilities of the period.[49] The intention of successive Victorian and Edwardian government officials was to obtain information to benefit their own forthcoming policies and not to assist future generations of researchers. Consequently, the criteria for collecting information changed with each census, reflecting contemporary concerns at the time. This means that information is inconsistent between censuses e.g., the 1841 census only provided information about county of birth and age to an approximation of five years. Each census generated detailed instructions and specimen returns, but completion was fraught with subjective responses.[50] The earlier enumerators were untrained and unsupervised; local evidence points to them being the junior staff in solicitors' practices.[51] Progress in education and literacy improved the CEBs and by 1881 the local enumerators were professional people however, returns remained subject to the theirs and householders' knowledge of spelling, geography, and occupational details.

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[47] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 207, Folio: 324, p. 20.

[48] E. Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, (London, 2005); W. Armstrong, 'The Census Enumerators' Books: A Commentary', in R. Lawton (ed.), *The Census and Social Structure,* (London, 1978); W.D. Adair, 'Can We Trust the Census Reports? Lessons from a Study of Domestic Servants in Tenbury Worcestershire, 1851 and 1861', *Family and Community History,* (2002); C. Miller, 'The Hidden Workforce: Female Field Workers in Gloucestershire,1870-1901', *Southern History,* 6 (1984).

[49] H.C Binford, 'Never Trust the Census Taker; Even When He's Dead', *Urban History Yearbook,* (1975), p. 28.

[50] Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited*, p. 32.

[51] Ibid., pp. 16-17; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 290, p. 2; 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 104, p.1.

Details for females in extended families and lower domestic service positions were often vague with only counties of birth, not precise locations, stated which implies ages and names may be equally imprecise.[52]

Enumerators were not instructed to follow a route around a town and were not explicitly instructed to enter the household returns in any order, although geographical ordering was implied from the early notes given to the enumerator.[53] Consequently, in small towns with limited roads and no numbering tradition, one cannot assume that households that appear next to each other are neighbours. This presents problems in attempting a detailed reconstitution of streets or to classify neighbourhoods. In earlier censuses, the terminology of households relied on the subjective judgement of the enumerator to distinguish between people who lived as lodgers with another family or those who lived in the building but comprised their own distinct household. One instruction to enumerators suggested that the distinction should be drawn by establishing whether the additional people shared a meal table, but it is apparent that this rule was not always followed. Similar confusion arises over the distinction between visitors, lodgers, and boarders.[54] By 1911, returns were completed by householders, which meant information at this stage may be more accurate but was subject to the householders' perceptions.

Church Records

Both St David's Church and Moreton Congregational Church records from 1841-1914 have supplemented the census data. The Parish Church records can be accessed via *Ancestry,* but the Congregational Church records are only available at Gloucestershire Record Office (GRO). Before censuses, church registers were the only demographic records available to the historian, and their shortcomings highlight the census's value. Both churches' records are useful for inter-census information, but neither are subject to refinements regarding age and occupation required for the census. The patriarchal nature of both churches often resulted in mothers being nameless on baptismal records.[55] Disparities in diligence are apparent between different incumbents with less formal Congregational Church regulation resulting in major gaps in record keeping. It is difficult to estimate the percentage of the Moreton population who attended the Congregational Church as members came from surrounding villages. However, the register of members in 1880 lists 130 Moreton residents, 9% of the total population in 1881.[56] In both records, details of occupation are incomplete, and no distinctions are made between agricultural or trade and transport labourers. Nonetheless, both provide useful information that confirms census data, and evidence of endogenous marriage.

[52] Ibid., 1861, Class: HO107, Piece: 1476, Folio: 84, p.18.
[53] TNA, HO107/2291, Example of Census Enumerators' Book 1851.
[54] Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited,* pp. 71-75.
[55] GRO, D12117, Moreton Congregational Church Records.
[56] GRO, D12117/1/8, Register of Members 1880-1890; *Ancestry,* England Census, Moreton, 1881.

Newspapers

Local newspapers have been a significant resource for this research. A longstanding and enduring maxim is that reports in newspapers should be treated with scepticism. Prior to the 1850s, newspapers were subject to direct censorship and taxation that restricted both content and circulation. In 1856, stamp duty was abolished leading to the burgeoning of national and regional titles.[57] Provincial newspapers reported national and local events: the former directly reproduced from national titles; the latter provided by peripatetic journalists and correspondents, based in each community, to whom relevant news items were submitted.[58] On occasions, details of foreign conflicts and military manoeuvres, not necessarily involving the British, took up column inches, suggesting a wish to avoid parochialism, a desire to impart information and knowledge of what appealed to the reader. National and local advertisements, providing an interesting history of the growth of consumer culture and the influence of women within it, increasingly financed publications. Advertising revenue enabled newspaper prices to remain static, thereby, at a time when education was improving literacy, widening the readership to the less affluent.[59]

In September 1858 Edward Webb, a printer and stationer, established *Moreton Free Press,* from premises in the centre of Moreton, placing it in the vanguard of the growing contemporary local press industry. Andrew Hobbs suggests that newspaper publishing was an opportunity for printers and stationers to use up spare printing capacity, so Webb fulfilled this characteristic.[60] The original articles of association are not available, but correspondence, archived by a local solicitor, detail the shareholders at the end of the 1870s, listing a cross section of local gentry, professionals and tradesmen with Lord Redesdale being the major shareholder.[61] Few copies of *Moreton Free Press* are available locally, but all extant issues were examined at the BLNA. Despite its shareholders Webb appears to take a more anti-establishment stance than would be expected with little obvious respect paid to the local elite and greater promotion of Nonconformist culture. A letter of 1881, the exact background to which cannot be ascertained, written by Lord Redesdale's land agent, John Scovell to R. G. Francis, both shareholders, implies that Webb's position was causing concern among the shareholders and that an agreement should be made whereby 'Webb should be bound to do as the Directors' wish' and that 'knowing his vacillating character, I say "have it very straight before we begin"'.[62] The presence of this paper in Moreton is important in providing a range of perspectives in a town where reverence appeared to

[57] K. Williams, *Read All About It! A History of British Newspapers,* (London, 2009), p. xii.
[58] A. Hobbs, 'When the Provincial Press was the National Press (c.1836-1900)', *The International Journal of Regional and Local Studies,* 5/1 (2009), p. 27.
[59] A. Hobbs, *A Fleet St in Every Town: The Provincial Press in England, 1855-1900,* (Cambridge, 2018), p. 148.
[60] Hobbs, 'When the Provincial Press', p. 39.
[61] GRO, D4084/Box12/10, Francis, Wickins and Hill of Stow-on-the-Wold, Solicitors, 1604-1965, letters.
[62] Ibid.

be the accepted stance. There were 12 local newspapers in the wider area, but one must conclude that until its demise, in December 1896, this paper was the main means of circulating news in Moreton. Lying equidistant between Oxford and Worcester, items of news from the town appear in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* and *Berrow's Worcester Journal,* however the distances render coverage intermittent and superficial. Sensational items of Moreton news reached more far-flung titles such as *Birmingham Post* or *Bristol Mercury*.

Evesham is 15 miles away, but Moreton received regular coverage in *Evesham Journal*, founded in August 1860 by William and Henry Smith, the former a solicitor; the latter a printer.[63] Until his death in 1906, William managed the editorial and wrote articles while Henry controlled the production and commercial operations. Both benefited financially from the venture, leaving estates more than £8,000 and £16,000, respectively.[64] The paper was originally priced at 1 1/2d, which remained unchanged for the next 55 years. A complete range of *Evesham Journal* copies are only available locally, on microfilm at Evesham library, and these have been scrutinised for the period in their entirety from 1860 to 1914.

Moreton featured in most issues with varying degrees of column space. Apart from prominent national events signalling lack of space, one must conclude that the weeks in which the reports from Moreton were sparse reflected a lack of items. It is evident that different tradesmen were designated as the Moreton correspondent or the collection point for news items. In 1868 it was 'Mr Lawrence', from the 1871 census George Lawrence, a master baker with a High Street shop, who was also an overseer.[65] In 1885, it was 'J.W. Drury', John Drury, a butcher who later became the rate collector.[66] The identity of reporters attending social events or parish meetings is difficult to uncover except for two instances. Firstly, an oblique reference to the death of a nameless staff member in 1897 - described as a Moreton native, led to a decline in editorial references. Secondly, in January 1901 an announcement is made of the appointment of 'Mr E.W. Folkes as resident reporter in Moreton', confirmed by the census, a few months later, when 21-year-old Ernest Folkes is listed lodging in Oxford Street.[67] The *Evesham Journal* reports provide an invaluable detailed chronology of noteworthy events: the building of the Congregational Church, the Redesdale Hall, the Mann Institute; improvements to the Parish Church, the National School, the paving of the town, the creation of cemeteries and controversies relating to the town's name and upgrading its water and sewerage systems.

From the above it is evident local newspapers have an essential role in providing the local historian with information, not available elsewhere. Lack of

[63] *Ancestry,* England Census, Class: 1851, HO107, Piece: 2044, Folio: 127, p. 22.
[64] *Ancestry,* England & Wales, National Probate Calendar, 1858-1995, (1906 &1917).
[65] *Evesham Journal* (Evesham)*,* 28 November 1868; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG 10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 96; p. 10.
[66] Ibid.*,* 1 August 1885; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Class: RG 12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 87, p. 7.
[67] *EJ,* 5 January 1901.

contemporaneous journals by local people have already been noted, but the weekly news reports, faithfully deposited to the local collection point in the main street by a cross section of the population, goes some way to fill this void. *Evesham Journal, Moreton Free Press* and to a lesser extent, *Jackson's Oxford Journal* and *Berrow's Worcester Journal* have been a crucial part of this project.

Trade Directories

The dearth of any specific business information has meant that the prime source for examination of businesses in Moreton are the trade directories which covered the town through the period. They provide data relating to traders, population, persons of influence, buildings of historic importance, and adjacent villages.[68] The cameo appearances made by trade directories in contemporary novels suggest that they were an enduring feature of 19th-century life.[69]

The directories were keen to promote the efficiency and accuracy of their research with frequent introductions like the following, from the 1856 *Post Office Directory of Gloucestershire, Bath, and Bristol:*

> 'No expense has been spared, experienced agents having visited every city, town, village, and hamlet throughout the county; and the information so collected has been compiled with the greatest attention. The Proprietors have to return their thanks to the Clergymen and other Gentlemen who have given the work the benefit of their local knowledge by kindly correcting the proofs of this work while passing through the press'.[70]

Jane Norton's 1950 guide to English and Welsh directories, published up to 1856, details their history, authorship, methods of compilation and reliability. Norton's work is valuable for its comprehensive listing of the directories for each county and its detailed descriptions of the production.[71] Gareth Shaw and Alison Tipper's *British Directories* (1989) continued Norton's research, shedding light on the competition for business, plagiarism and difficulty obtaining information.[72]

The use of directories for research purposes has been scrutinised with mixed results. Questions have been raised concerning their accuracy in relation to the percentage of the population engaged in trade; the problems of multiple entries; inconsistency with descriptions changing between directories and commonly the classification of trades. Additional criticisms are levelled at the omission of shops that operated from front rooms of residential dwellings, people describing businesses

[68] G. Shaw & A. Tipper, *British Directories, a Bibliography and Guide to Directories Published in England and Wales 1850-1950 and Scotland 1773-1950*, (Leicester, 1989), pp. 5-7.
[69] B. Disraeli, *Coningsby*, (London, 1844, Kindle, 2012), p. 3.
[70] *Post Office Directory of Gloucestershire, Bath & Bristol,* 1856.
[71] J. Norton, *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories of England and Wales, excluding London Published Before 1856*, (London, 1950) p. 11, pp. 16-17.
[72] Shaw & Tipper, *British Directories, a Bibliography and Guide,* p. 23.

differently depending on their audience, and a misogynistic approach where female-led concerns such as dressmaking and straw plaiting received less coverage.[73]

However, more positively, Penelope Corfield described them are valuable tools for modern social and local historians, as they provide a snapshot of commercial life at regular intervals, over a prolonged period, for a wide range of places.[74] Detailed research of directories enabled both Everitt and Barrie Trinder to provide valuable insights into Victorian carrier routes in and around both Leicester and Banbury.[75] Edward Duggan emphasized that directories are most useful to judge wide shifts in commercial activity.[76]

In view of the paucity of economic sources relating to Moreton, the town's entries in the various 19th century directories cannot be disregarded. In this study trade directories have been used primarily to compare the number, nature, and diversity of trades in the town before and after the arrival of the railway and to make similar comparisons between Moreton and neighbouring towns, an approach which Duggan believed to be most appropriate.[77]

The Horne Family Archive (HFA)

Thomas Horne and his descendants were successful traders in Moreton from the early 19th until the early 21st centuries, whose importance to Moreton life will be examined in chapter four. The crucial role played by generations of the Horne family in all aspects of Moreton life is apparent from multiple sources. From early in this research, it was apparent that a private archive existed, as a copy of its catalogue is held at GRO.[78] Various unsuccessful enquiries were made but in early 2022, an introduction enabled me to visit the Moreton home of Mrs. Judy Horne to examine original volumes of account books, minute books, wills, diaries, letters, photos, and other miscellaneous papers. This invaluable exercise provided an understanding of the characters involved and the interaction between family members and between the family and the wider community. The archive filled gaps in the political life but there

[73] W. Hoskins, *Local History in England*, (London, 1972), p. 217; Lewis, 'Trade directories - a Data Source in Urban Analysis', pp. 185-187; G. Shaw, 'The Content and Reliability of Nineteenth-Century Trade Directories', *The Local Historian,* 13/4 (1978), p. 206; P. Wilde, 'The Use of Business Directories in Comparing the Industrial Structure of Towns. An Example from the Southwest Pennines', *The Local Historian*, 12/4, (1976), pp. 152-156; J. Newman, 'A Want of Better Information? Some Early Trade Directories of Southern England', *Southern History*, 16, (1994), p. 181; C. Crompton, 'An Exploration of the Craft and Trade Structure of Two Hertfordshire Villages, 1851-1891: an Application of Nominal Record Linkage to Directories and Census Enumerators' Books,' *The Local Historian*, 28/3 (1998), p. 150.

[74] P. Corfield with S. Kelly, 'Giving Directions to the Town: the Early Town Directories', *Urban History*, 11 (1984), p. 26.

[75] A. Everitt, 'The Village Carrier' in *Perspectives in English Urban History*, (London, 1973); B. Trinder 'Country Carriers Revisited', *The Local Historian,* 42/2 (2012), pp. 135-147.

[76] E. Duggan, 'Industrialization and the Development of Urban Business Communities: Research Problems, Sources and Techniques', *The Local Historian,* 11/8 (1975), p. 458.

[77] Duggan, 'Industrialisation and the Development of Urban Business Communities', p. 458.

[78] GRO, D13668/8/2/2, Copy of Horne Family Archive Catalogue.

were limitations in the papers including a dearth of information concerning employee wages. Equally, the lack of detail concerning the extensive network of shops, through the north Cotswolds, and their relationship with the Moreton head office was disappointing as it would have illuminated the regularity of contact between Moreton and its hinterland villages.

Local Government Minutes

GRO holds complete vestry minutes for Moreton from 1843 to 1914, which have been scrutinised. Meetings averaged four per annum until the advent of the parish council in 1894, after which they became annual, and the business was solely church related. Vestry meetings were held in church and open to all. When matters of significance were discussed the number of meetings per annum increased, as did the number of attendees, the highest being 72 when the vexed question of the water supply was discussed in 1892. Lighting committees were features of larger urban settings from the early part of the 19th century and 1872 Public Health Act extended these countrywide, with a requirement for regular minuted meetings.[79] A complete set of these minutes is available for Moreton from 1873-1887. The name is misleading in that the committee's business extended beyond lighting to general environmental maintenance including waste disposal, and fire fighting. The Local Government Act (1894) established civil parishes, with elected members, and combined the work of the vestry and the lighting committee. Moreton Parish Council minutes are complete from January 1895, and all have been examined.

Although extensive, none of Moreton's local government minutes provide the historian with any illuminating material about town life. Apart from the early months of the parish council, where there is palpable enthusiasm about newly acquired powers, the recording of the business of vestry, lighting committee, and the council appears prescribed and routine. All the minutes are succinct with no record of discussions or disagreement and are particularly disappointing in not providing any acknowledgement of wider national and international events.

Petty Sessions Records

Moreton's Petty Sessions records from 1887 to 1914 have also been thoroughly examined. The court was held on the last Monday of each month at Redesdale Hall, with provision for an emergency session that was rarely invoked. Its authority extended beyond the boundaries of the town to the hinterland villages. The records, required by act of parliament from 1886, are factual with highlights reproduced regularly in *Evesham Journal* and *Moreton Free Press*. As there are no extant records prior to 1887, these represent the only indication of criminal and anti-social behaviour. The records chart the steady encroachment of national regulations and bye laws in the

[79] A. Hawkins, *Victorian Political Culture: Habits of Heart and Mind',* (Oxford, 2015), p. 156.

provinces as much as they provide evidence of criminal behaviour. They are also important in recording the social changes in the personnel that comprised the magistracy, moving from a church and gentry base to one that incorporated professional, trade and retired industrialists, at the expense of the clergy.

Shipston on Stour Poor Law Union Records

As will be explained in chapters three and four, in 1834 Stow, rather than Moreton, became the centre of the Poor Law Union (PLU) for the north Cotswolds. Moreton was assigned to be part of the PLU centred around Shipston, in Warwickshire. Warwickshire Record Office (WRO) holds extensive records relating to Shipston PLU but many of these relate to the 20th century with restricted access. The 19th century records were deemed too extensive to research all in detail as it was uncertain how much information would relate to Moreton. A decision was made to sample items from each decade to determine Moreton's coverage. This involved minute books from two years in the 1860s and 1870s and masters' reports from two years in the 1890s and 1900s. The paucity of Moreton information led to the decision not to pursue this source further. However, the sparse details were useful in determining the relationship between Moreton and the PLU and supplemented the workhouse information gleaned from the decennial censuses.

School Logbooks

An Infants' School, a National School and a British School co-existed in Moreton during the study period. To qualify for state grants, completion of logbooks became mandatory for schools in 1863 with daily entries initially which, from 1871, were reduced to weekly. Government grants were dependent on attendance therefore headteachers were keen to account for periods of absence caused by weather, epidemics or parents placing their children in employment.[80] Logbooks survive for all three Moreton schools, but none cover the whole period, however all extant books have been examined. Entries were made by multiple headteachers meaning the degree of detail relies on individual personalities and diligence. As with the church records, the school logbooks provide useful information concerning the religious affiliations of the townspeople and add facts about the weather, health, migration, not found elsewhere. Of more importance is the picture painted of the social calendar of Moreton, the interaction between the townspeople and how a culture of respect that was instilled in children from an early age.

Moreton Cottage Hospital Records

Moreton Cottage Hospital was an important development that made the town self-sufficient in the care of its sick. From its establishment in 1873, annual reports

[80] https://www.archives.norfolk.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/education/school-records-guide/log-books-admission-registers-and-punishment-books (4 October 2023).

were printed detailing its activities, the majority of which are held at GRO. These follow the same format throughout, listing: governors, rules, donations and gifts, the nature of the cases treated, the parishes that benefited, together with an overview of other activities, a balance sheet and report of the previous year's annual general meeting. Due to the routine nature of these documents, not all were examined but samples were taken from each decade. Reports of annual general meetings were also a regular feature of reports in *Evesham Journal* and *Moreton Free Press.*

Other documents

The *Return of Owners of Land,* an 1872 initiative that was the first comprehensive national picture of land holding undertaken since 1085, is available online in book form.[81] In 1909 Lloyd-George embarked on a similar survey of land that included all agricultural land, allotments, and land with any building on it. The extant records for Gloucestershire have been transcribed as part of an ongoing project by the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.[82] Both provide a unique record of land ownership in Moreton and were transcribed onto Excel sheets to allow interrogation of the data.

The diligent work of local historian Guy Stapleton, from the 1970s to 2000s, in collecting and cataloguing ephemera and pictures must be acknowledged in providing a source of additional information about everyday life in Moreton. Following Stapleton's unexpected death, his personal archive was added to an earlier personal collection at GRO, and much of it was catalogued during this project. The Drury Stapleton collection covers a wide range of items, from tradesmen's invoices and business cards to concert programmes and personal school reports, which has served to add colour and personality to the research.[83]

Photographs held by Moreton History Society and available via its website have served the same purpose as the Drury Stapleton collection at GRO. In addition, copies of its now discontinued magazine *Moreton History* have proved a valuable source of additional information about buildings and personalities in the town.[84]

After commencing this project, an effort was made to expand my knowledge of 19th century literature. These uncovered some aspects of small-town life that may have applied to Moreton and when appropriate, these have been used.[85] For a more

[81] Great Britain, Local Government Board, *Return of Owners of Land, 1873: Presented to Both Houses of Parliment by Command of Her Majesty*, Vol.1 (Google Books).
[82] www.glos1909survey.org.uk (26 July 2020).
[83] GRO, D13668.
[84] www.moretonhistory.co.uk (22 March 2022).
[85] A. Bennett, *Anna of the Five Towns,* (London, 1902, Kindle, 2011); A. Bronte, *Agnes Grey,* (London, 1847, Kindle, 2011); *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall,* (London, 1848, Kindle, 2011); C. Bronte, *Villette,* (London, 1853, Kindle, 2011); W. Collins, *No Name,* (London, 1862, Kindle, 2012); C. Dickens, *Bleak House,* (London, 1852, Kindle, 2013); Hard Times, (London, 1854, Kindle, 2012); B. Disraeli, *Sybil or the Two Nations,* (London, 1845, Kindle, 2011); E. Gaskell, *Mary Barton* (London, 1848, Kindle, 2011) *North and South,* (London, 1854, Kindle, 2015); T. Hardy, *The Return of the*

local perspective, the diaries of Rev. Francis Witts, the rector of Upper Slaughter, seven miles from Moreton, give some flavour of gentry life in the years immediately preceding the study period. Information about the daily round of public service undertaken by magistrates and chairmen of PLUs is apparent and provide valuable information about the transport difficulties faced by local inhabitants, especially during prolonged periods of poor weather.[86]

Issues to be addressed and structure.

In responding to Crosby's call for further research on small towns, this is essentially a thesis of discovery.[87] It measures the social and economic effects of known 19th century trends in demography, administration, welfare and railway development on a small rural market town. In so doing it uncovers local information that has not been previously studied, thereby adding to the literature on Moreton and small towns, which themselves are an important part of 19th century English history. Echoing Crosby's research in Lancashire, it demonstrates that an alternative 19th century narrative existed that does not fit accepted ideas relating to population growth, social and religious friction, and booming railway towns. It is equally interesting to discover how places that did not conform to accepted metrics dealt with the multiple changes to society wrought by developments elsewhere.

Chapter one will show that in 1850, Moreton, at the intersection of two major roads, appeared well placed to benefit from the changes taking place in the country: a railway line and station were being constructed linking with the existing tramway to Stratford; it was a GPO post town; had a linen factory, Gas Company, an annual steeplechase meeting and the previous decade had witnessed a flurry of building activity and population growth. Studies by Trinder in Banbury, Turton in Crewe and the WEA in Slough show how the arrival of a railway was the precursor of demographic growth and economic boom.[88] However, these development potentials came to nothing. Moreton's population declined by 7% between 1851 and 1911 and most metrics, relating to demography and social structure, that will be examined in chapter one, reflected continuity rather than change.

In chapter two, I will argue that demographic stasis prolonged traditional social interactions for longer than in other parts of the country. Internal migration, a key factor in population growth, could bring fresh ideas, relating to behaviour and religious beliefs, but this was not part of Moreton's experience. The absence of new people in the town meant that the traditional synthesis of paternalism exhibited by the elite, and deference, by the working classes, remained embedded in Moreton society at least

Native, (London, 1878, Kindle, 2012); A. Trollope, *Chronicles of Barsetshire,* (London, 1855-1867, Kindle, 2009), *Palliser Novels,* (London, 1864-1880, Kindle, 2015).

[86] F. Witts, *The Complete Diary of a Cotswold Parson, The Diaries of Revd. Francis Edward Witts, 1783-1854,* A. Sutton (ed.) vols 1-10 (Stroud, 2008-20).

[87] Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 85.

[88] Trinder, *Victorian Banbury;* B. Turton, 'Crewe New Town in 1851', *North Staffordshire Journal of Field Studies,* 16 (1976); WEA, *A Town in the Making, Slough 1851.*

until the second decade of the 20th century, much later than generally considered by historians.[89] Moreton was dislocated, both geographically and administratively, from the rest of Gloucestershire, and a separate identity was apparent. In this context, Keith Snell's ideas relating to 'belonging' will be considered and instances where these chimed with the experience in Moreton will be identified as well as those where the town's experience differed.[90] An analysis of the town's quest for clean water and viable sewerage reveals how these factors manifested themselves in practical ways. I would argue that the prolonged sanitation saga demonstrated how small towns were affected by legislation, created due to developments elsewhere, but equally sidelined when inclusion relied on demographic metrics and the ability to finance improvements.

The provision of welfare is a recurrent theme in 19th-century history, with much emphasis placed on the 1834 PLAA. This is considered in chapter three and it will be argued that Moreton's initiatives towards self reliance lessened the incidence of indoor relief. Snell demonstrated that, as a whole, the south Midlands was an area where outdoor relief was more prevalent than indoor.[91] I will argue that while the metrics from Moreton agree with Snell's findings, the low level of indoor relief given to the town's residents makes it an exceptional case, accounted for by localised circumstances and traditions. This chapter also uncovers new detail relating to the activities of the Oddfellows, the development of cottage hospitals and the roles of Penny Banks that have not previously been considered in detail by historians. This thesis contributes to the sparse literature on these aspects of small-town life.

Linked with this key aspect of Moreton life, chapter four will explain the importance of both religious and educational association within the town. In 1850, there was an already thriving Congregational church and a long established religious détente existed between it and the Anglican church. This situation remained for the rest of the period, with neither strand of belief challenged by the planting of new dissenting communities that may have been the position had the town witnessed an influx of new people. No evidence has emerged to suggest that the religious cooperation, documented in 1851, had deteriorated by 1914. I would argue that Moreton did not conform to the idea of a 19th century community, divided along religious lines. Additionally, elements of the paternalistic/deferential behaviour gradually included members of the Horne family, prominent Nonconformists, whose activities replicated those of local gentry families and who were accorded the same respect by the lower echelons of Moreton society.

Chapter five evaluates the building of the railway, its effect on Moreton's economy and its importance in the town's survival. Comparisons will be made to other studies of railway development. From scrutiny of trade directories, it will demonstrate how the railway was instrumental in changing the economic profile of the town and

[89] D. Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, (New Jersey, 1979), pp. 5-6.
[90] K. Snell, '*Parish and Belonging: Community, Identity and Welfare in England and Wales, 1700–1950*, (Cambridge, 2006).
[91] Ibid., p. 225.

filling the vacuum created by the declining agricultural industry. I will argue that the change from an agricultural based economy to one reliant on dealing was directly connected to the railway effect and not related to a general economic boom. It will also show the social effects on Moreton's townspeople by tracing the impact it had on their life choices.

Migration has already been recognised as an important theme in the history of the 19th century and Moreton's experience of this is examined in chapter six. Based on the findings of other historians concerning the optimum age for migration, the longitudinal histories of a relevant sample of the population were examined to determine who left and who remained. This revealed a change in popular destinations over time and the importance of kin to migration decisions. Examination of the longitudinal histories of people who arrived in Moreton showed different choices from those who left.

Nationally the period was one that witnessed changes that affected all sections of society. This thesis examines how these changes manifested themselves in a small rural market town and provides a valuable example of how such a community reacted to them.

Chapter 1 Social Structure and Demography

This chapter will report the results of in-depth demographic research on Moreton that enables its social structure and occupational profiles to be analysed. In connection with this, it will examine metrics relating to houses, household structure, servants, and lodgers which help illuminate a location's social structure. Finally the chapter will consider purer demographic trends in relation to population growth, births marriages, illegitimacy and infant mortality, making comparisons with studies elsewhere. The chapter reveals that in a period when change appeared to be a consistent theme, Moreton's experience was essentially one of continuity and stasis.

Social Structure

E.P. Thompson stated that class was a 'fluency which evades analysis' that 'the finest meshed sociological net cannot give us a pure specimen of class' and 'class is defined by men as they live their own history, and in the end, this is its only definition'.[1] Similarly, David Cannadine's appraisal of previous historical thinking underlined its folly by declaring class 'too crude a concept' and that a more nuanced approach should be adopted.[2] These statements succinctly describe the problem faced by historians in attempting to define a town's social structure and to compare it with its neighbours, the wider area or the country as a whole. Distinct groups of society do not merely encompass wealth and status but embody many other aspects, amongst them: occupation, religion, education, language, dialect, social association, and subjective views on respectability. These assume distinct characteristics in diverse locations: with altered dimensions apparent between rural and urban settings and those of city, town, village, and hamlet. As Thompson implied, primarily class is how people perceive themselves in relation to others and their attempts to rationalize obvious inequalities, whether from a privileged or an underprivileged perspective. At a distance, especially when there are few definitive personal accounts, it is difficult to comprehend and provide a conclusive picture. Based on the foregoing, the validity of attempting to create any class structure is questionable, however such analysis is used by historians as the section on Moreton's social structure in 1831 from *Vision of Britain* confirms.[3] By researching the town's social structure in the second half of the 19th century, this thesis provides an extra dimension to the picture of the town and a glimpse into a situation that may have been replicated in other places.

[1] E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class,* (London, 1963), pp. 8-10.
[2] D. Cannadine, *The Rise and Fall of Class in Britain,* (New York, 1998), p. 15.
[3] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10383869/cube/SOC1831 (26 June 2022).

Rich and poor

Wealth is often synonymous with class and a crude measure of establishing a social structure would be to use the assets of the population. Two land surveys provide the opportunity for comparison both for the relevant dates and over time but neither have been subject to detailed academic scrutiny. Firstly the 1872 initiative by the Local Government Board resulted in the *Return of Owners of Land*, the first comprehensive national picture of land holding since the Doomsday Survey.[4] Unlike its 11th century antecedent this was not based on the reports from ground surveys but relied on existing parish data. The land's location was not stated; only the owner's address was given. Contemporary comments suggested large scale inaccuracies and it was revised and reissued later by John Bateman.[5] Both the original return and Bateman's amendment have been scoured for Moreton details and these revealed only 33 landholders with connections to the town, (figure 5). The majority have names that do not appear in any other contemporary Moreton documentation. The suggestion that the facts used were out of date is underlined by the appearance of William Jones, in third place, with landholding, in Oxfordshire and Worcestershire, having a potential rental value of £1,829. From *Ancestry,* the only William Jones listed in Moreton in the 1871 census was an infant, however a William Jones featured in Gloucestershire Land tax records in the early part of the century, and another was present in the 1841 census. Such facts severely compromise the details and validity of this survey.[6]

Once land holdings in other counties were eliminated, the listing reduced to just 12 individuals. Only two of the landowners with addresses in Moreton held land outside Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and Oxfordshire. Due to the proximity of the boundaries and the 'Four Shires' identity, to be discussed in chapter two, this suggests that the land was likely to have been close to the town but in a different administrative area. Another potential anomaly was the issue of people who held land in Moreton but whose main address was in another part of Gloucestershire. Their holdings in Moreton would have been combined with other land in the county and these would be masked by an address elsewhere. This also worked in reverse in that there is no certainty that the people listed for Gloucestershire, with a Moreton address, held land in the town. The survey is interesting for the number of widows listed and because half of the Gloucestershire landholders are unknown. There is little reference to them elsewhere in newspaper reports or other Moreton documents, which questions their contribution to life in the town. Taking all the above into consideration, together with the idea that owner occupation is only a partial measure of wealth, figure 5 illustrates how wealth in the town was in the hands of a small number of people, (less than 2% of the total population). Within that figure there were also huge inequalities in the amounts involved.

[4] *The Return of Owners of Land.*
[5] J. Bateman, *The Great Landowners of Great Britain and Ireland,* (London, 1878).
[6] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 113, p.1; 1841, Class: HO107, Piece: 369, Folio: 26, p. 9.

Figure 5: Rental values of land holdings in Moreton 1872.[7]

Name	Rental Value £	Where held
Lord Redesdale	8894	Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire, Worcestershire
Sir Charles Rushout	4845	Oxfordshire, Worcestershire
William Jones	1829	Oxfordshire, Warwickshire
William S Hitchman	1244	Oxfordshire, Warwickshire
Major Bird	708	Suffolk
Edwin Tilsley	390	Worcestershire
Thomas Horne	278	Gloucestershire
John Timms	211	Warwickshire
W Whitmore Jones	198	Worcestershire
Mrs Davis	190	Warwickshire
Mrs JN Moore	137	Gloucestershire
Robert Harbridge	112	Gloucestershire, Oxfordshire
John Wells	93	Worcestershire
Mrs Whitford	68	Gloucestershire
Rector and Churchwardens	50	Gloucestershire
T and F Horne	45	Gloucestershire
Martha Keitley	31	Gloucestershire
Mrs Shirley	26	Oxfordshire
James Fox	20	Gloucestershire
Mrs Turner	20	Gloucestershire
Thomas Sankey	20	Kent
Rev J W Clarke	18	Warwickshire
J and F Horne	17	Warwickshire
James and Alfred Wilks	14	Warwickshire
W Hemming (Executors)	13	Gloucestershire
Ralph Freeman	11	Gloucestershire
Oddfellows	6	Gloucestershire

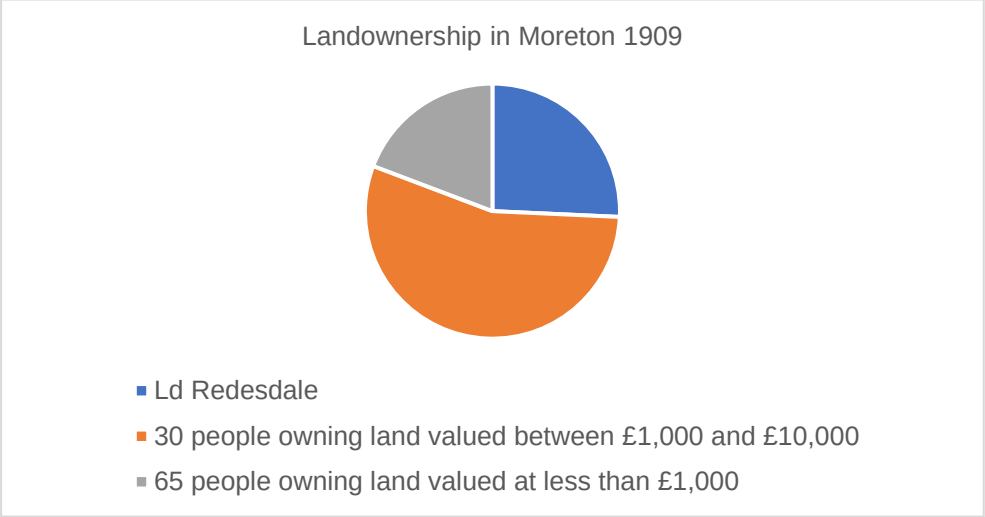
In 1909 Lloyd-George embarked on a survey of land values to establish finance for his 'People's Budget' and to implement far reaching land reforms.[8] Land included all agricultural land, allotments, and land with any building on it. The emphasis was to establish the owners, as of 30 April 1909, who were to be taxed based on the market valuation established by Inland Revenue surveyors. As already noted, the extant records for Gloucestershire have been transcribed by the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society.[9] These provide another record of land ownership in Moreton,

[7] *Return of Owners of Land.*
[8] A. Jones, 'Records of the Lloyd George Survey of Land Values: Comparisons and Insights from Gloucestershire'. *The Local Historian,* 44/3 (2014), p. 201.
[9] www.glos1909survey.org.uk (29 January 2023).

showing those with the biggest portfolio of properties in terms of both value and size and provides a degree of comparison with the 1870s survey. The increased level of property ownership in the town in the 37 years to 1909 is remarkable and offers an opportunity for comparable research elsewhere, to ascertain whether this is a national trend or one peculiar to Moreton. However, it also serves to reinforce the existing questions regarding the accuracy of the *Return of Owners of Land.*

The two surveys use different metrics, making direct comparisons difficult. The 1909 survey does reveal that the number of property owners in Moreton had swelled from 27 to 96, an increase of 355% but still representing only less than 7% of the total population. One explanation for this may be the premature deaths of Sir Charles and Lady Maria Rushout, in 1879 and 1882 respectively, that led to the subsequent sale and division of the Sezincote estate. It also demonstrates that people, other than those traditionally expected to own property, had the confidence and means to enter the market in a modest way when the opportunity arose. In so doing they remove themselves from the dynamics associated with being a tenant. Many of the names from the 1909 data are those of professionals and traders, whose fortunes will be considered in more detail when the impact of the railway is examined in chapter five. Nonetheless, as shown in figure 6, 80% of the land value remained in the hands of just 31 people.

Figure 6: Proportion of landownership in Moreton, based on market value,1909.[10]



Social class based on occupation.

Attempting to appraise social structure in terms of occupation also presents issues for historians. In 1972, whilst researching mid-19th century York, Armstrong developed a method by which occupations were divided into five classes, set out in

[10] Ibid.

figure 7.[11] Some years later Royle attempted to use this classification in a comparison of three Midland towns but rejected it in favour of his own version based on personal details elicited from the census returns.[12] Subsequently, Margaret and Dennis Warwick suggested a more detailed classification in Burley-in-Wharfedale, an area that experienced more industrial development than York.[13] There are flaws in Armstrong's classification: the more obvious omissions being those of independent means, apprentices and paupers. The higher status Armstrong accorded to agricultural labourers as opposed to general labourers may suggest an urban-centric approach. The classification relies on precision by the enumerators and whilst the Moreton census does distinguish between the two, the same was not the case for the parish records, rendering a similar exercise using these futile. Armstrong's research is now 50 years old, and much has changed since: the censuses released to the public since 1978 encompass different terminology and perceptions from both enumerator and householder, an increased range of occupations with the status given to them altered to reflect social and economic changes. York's identity as a cathedral city presented a range of occupations that are not easily transferable to other locations. It is apparent that Armstrong had much greater numbers with which to work, as his parameters do not reflect society in a much smaller location, where contrasts are more sharply focused. An example of this in Moreton is Thomas Horne and his successors who, being grocers, would have only made class three, in York, which did not reflect their wealth, social position and substantial residence in Moreton.

Figure 7: Social class as determined by occupation.[14]

Class 1	Professional
Class 2	Intermediate occupations
Class 3	Skilled occupations
Class 4	Partly skilled occupations
Class 5	Unskilled occupations

Nonetheless, it is a variation of Armstrong's classification, based on the stated occupation in the censuses together with the similar personal details referred to by Royle, as well as those gleaned from local newspapers and local government reports, which has been used to achieve a picture of Moreton society between 1851 and 1911. Children listed as scholars and those without a stated occupation have been

[11] Armstrong, 'The Census Enumerators' Books', p. 54.
[12] S. Royle, 'Aspects of Nineteenth Century Small Town Society, a Comparative Study from Leicestershire', *Midland History*, 5/1 (1979), p. 53.
[13] M. & D Warwick, 'Burley-in-Wharfedale in the Nineteenth Century, A Study in Social Stratification and Social Mobility', *Local Population Studies*, 54 (1995), pp. 43-44.
[14] Armstrong, 'The Census Enumerator's Books', p. 54.

disregarded but those recorded as paupers have been included in class five, while apprentices have been placed in class four, Armstrong's variations relating to land ownership, numbers of employees have been applied together with local knowledge such as the position of the Horne family and attempts to accommodate later concepts such as 'independent means'. The same caveats, regarding enumerator and householder subjectivity and differing perceptions developing over the period, which apply to other categorisations based on the census, apply to an even greater degree here. A comparison is made based on the censuses at either end of the period and using a percentage of the total of those categorised, see figure 8.

Figure 8: Moreton's Social Structure - % of population, 1851 and 1911.[15]

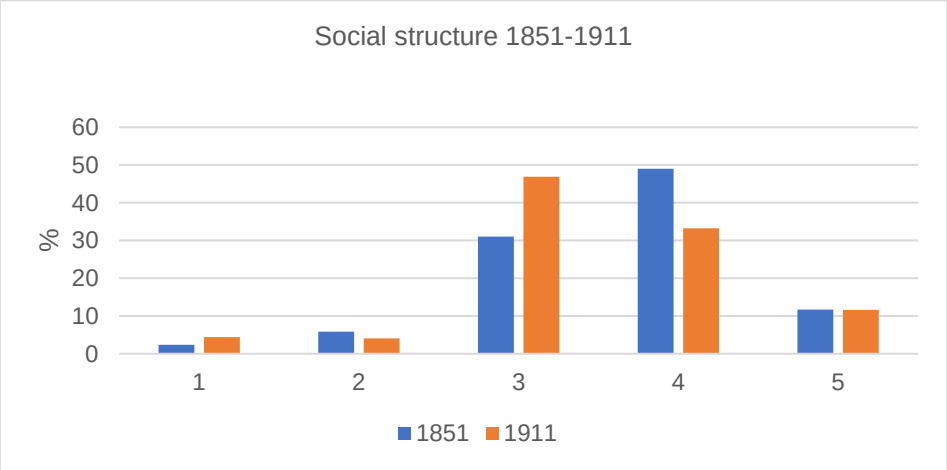


Figure 8 supports the findings of the Lloyd George survey by demonstrating that the bulk of the population were in classes three and four, with a small number of professional and intermediate occupations, who would have been among the 30 people with land holdings of between £1,000 and £10,000. Most people in Moreton were reliant on acquiring skills in either commercial or practical occupations to earn their living. The movement of people from class 4 to class 3 between 1851 and 1911 reflects the move away from agrarian based occupations. Additionally, it is testament both to national trends in improved education as well as indicative of the changing economic profile of Moreton that is the focus of chapter five.

Another metric for measuring class and improved social status are the occupations stated in local church registers when marriages and baptisms are recorded. Both the Parish Church and Congregational Church registers have been examined. As already noted, the Congregational Church records do not match those of the Parish Church for consistency or detail. The impression given, especially from the Parish Church, was that most working-class bridegrooms were deemed to be labourers, with no distinction made between agricultural, building, railway, or road. However, given the agrarian nature of the local area, this may also be an accurate

[15] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851 & 1911, Moreton.

reflection of the religious loyalties of Moreton's agricultural labourers, which accords with James Obelkevich's findings in Lincolnshire.[16] With this bias in mind, analysis of bridegroom and paternal occupations, in the Parish Church marriage and baptismal records, from 1850-1913, using Armstrong's classification, is shown in figures 9 and 10.

Figure 9: Social class of bridegrooms 1850-1913.[17]

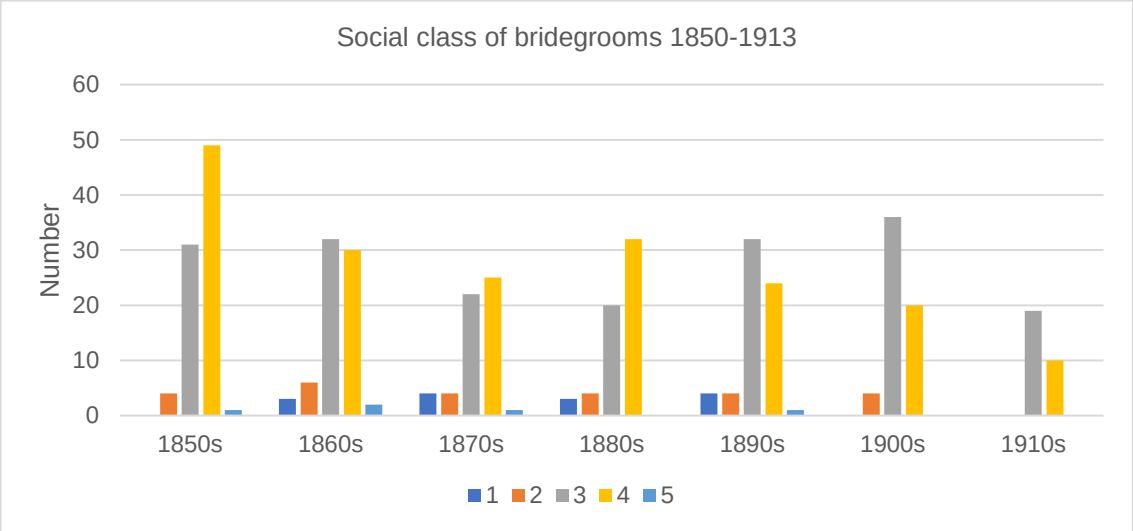
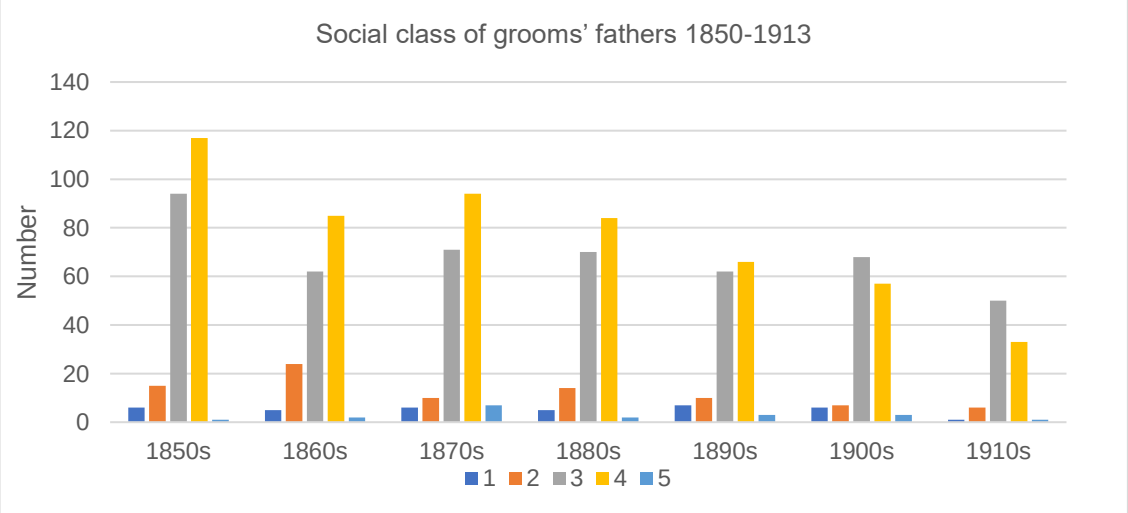


Figure 10: Social class of grooms' fathers 1850-1913.[18]



Of note in figures 8, 9 and 10 is the move from partly skilled to skilled occupations, related to the decline in agriculture as the major source of employment and part of a national trend related to improved education and the growth of opportunities in administration.

[16] Obelkevich, *Religion and Rural Society: South Lindsey 1825-1875*, (Oxford, 1976), p. 128.
[17] *Ancestry,* GRO, P221/1/IN/1/7, P221/1/IN/1/8, Gloucestershire Church of England Parish Registers, Moreton, 1837-1921.
[18] Ibid.

Houses, Household Size and Structure

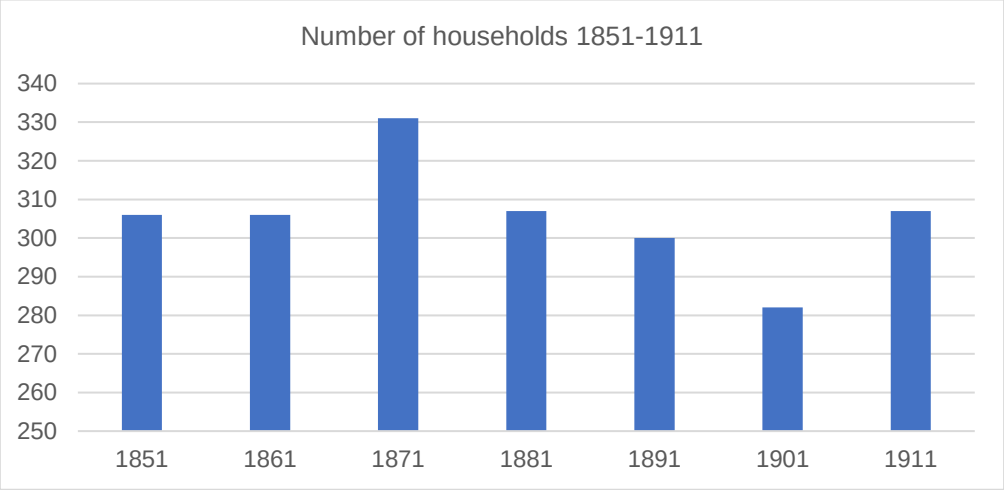
Reflecting the small numbers of wealthy people, with the exception of the Batsford Park and Sezincote estates, there is no evidence of segregated neighbourhoods. There was a degree of homogeneity in the physical environment of the town, comparable with that described by Geoffrey Best in Edinburgh and Peter Jones in Bangor.[19] The more impressive residences of the affluent traders, that frequently doubled as commercial premises, were situated near extremely poor dwellings in the centre of the town. Consequently, as will be described in chapter two, the wealthy experienced the same insanitary environment as the rest of the town's population

The number of houses in each location was a statistic that was gathered in most censuses. Moreton's housing stock increased from 304 in 1851, of which eight were unoccupied, to 365 in 1891 and then fell back to approximately 330 by 1911. In 1857 newspaper reports confirm villas being erected on isolated land on the Evenlode Road, which suggests an attempt to encourage traders to move from the centre.[20] House numbers rising by 22 between 1861 and 1871 suggest a period of economic confidence while the 1901 drop may conversely point to uncertainty.[21] With landownership in private hands, increasing the housing stock was dependent on affluent people releasing land. The need for more housing is apparent in newspaper reports in the early 20th century with enthusiasm greeting Lord Redesdale's agreement to release land on the London Road for that purpose in early 1914.[22]

Numbers of people living in close quarters points to economic hardship that in turn increases the likelihood of disease and mortality. As the century progressed, central government introduced measures to counteract overcrowding with fines and improvement orders being issued by local magistrates.[23] In terms of households captured by the census, figure 11 shows some interesting variables over the period. The spike in numbers in 1871 coincides with a similar increase in the number of houses but should be treated with caution as it may also be due to altered instructions to enumerators concerning the composition of households that required lodgers be counted separately.

[19] G. Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain, 1851-1875*, (London, 1971), p. 68; P. Jones, 'The Urban Morphology and Social Structure of a Working-Class District in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: a Case Study of Hirael, Bangor, Gwynedd', *Welsh History Review*, 15 (1991), p. 573.
[20] *Jackson's Oxford Journal (JOJ)* (Oxford), 1 August & 22 August 1857.
[21] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10383869/cube/HOUSES (26 June 2022); *Ancestry,* English Census, 1911, Moreton.
[22] *EJ,* 21 February 1914.
[23] *Bristol Mercury,* 4 May 1878.

Figure 11: Number of households 1851-1911.[24]



In 1891, for the first time, the census enumerators were instructed to list the number of households where the total number of rooms were five or less thus highlighting incidences of overcrowding. This metric is problematic in that it raises the question of definition about what exactly constituted a room. In the preliminary report, the registrar general suggested that the addition confused enumerators, added to errors in the enumeration of housing stock and was open to manipulation by people avoiding prosecution for overcrowding.[25] Kevin Schürer calculated that, in 1891, 54.9% of the entire population lived in houses of more than 5 rooms and that a rural/urban split was 57.6% and 53.8%.[26] From figure 12, one can see that Moreton's statistics for these three censuses compare favourably with the national and rural figures for 1891 implying that overcrowding was not a major problem.

Figure 12: Percentage of houses in Moreton with less/more than five rooms 1891-1911.[27]

	Less than 5 rooms	More than 5 rooms
1891	37.76%	62.24%
1901	39.24%	60.76%
1911	36.47%	63.53%

[24] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[25] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census/EW1891PRE/2 (26 June 2022); E. Higgs 'The 1891 census: Continuity and Change', *The Local Historian,* 22, (1992), p. 187.
[26] K. Schürer, 'The 1891 Census and Local Population Studies', *Local Population Studies*, 47 (1991), p. 23.
[27] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.

Mean Household Size

Household size and structure provide key indicators of a neighbourhood's economic standing. However, the way households were identified in the 19th century censuses was subject to changing instructions from government for each decade, that in turn was interpreted in diverse ways by enumerators. This provides problems for historians when attempting to draw conclusions from the data, although Edward Higgs suggested that these issues were more marked in urban areas.[28] On this basis the details for Moreton may be interpreted with a degree of certainty. Figure 13 reflects the changing metrics of reduction in household size over the seven censuses and the increasing incidence of lone households.

Figure 13: Household Size 1851-1911.[29]

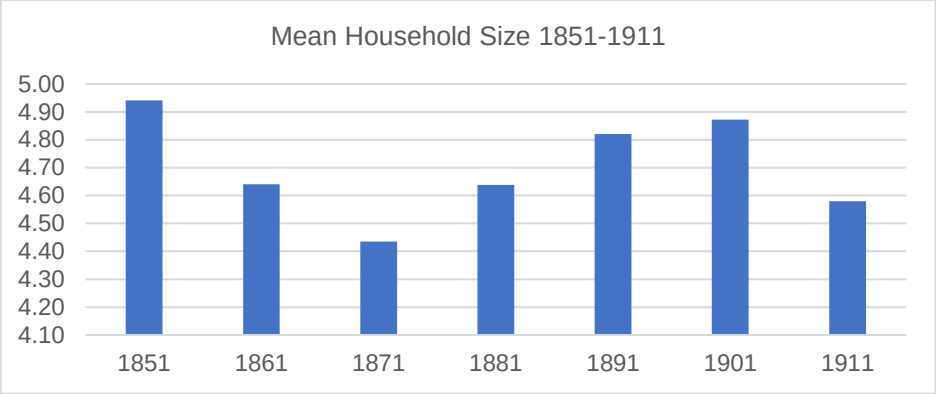
	Household Size						
Number in household	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
Over 12	4	6	2	3	2	0	0
11	5	2	4	2	0	3	0
10	8	10	7	5	6	2	3
9	16	4	8	5	14	6	10
8	17	18	18	14	25	19	10
7	25	25	31	29	22	23	18
6	39	28	27	47	25	25	31
5	42	48	38	30	44	27	52
4	44	45	56	44	38	57	63
3	48	53	56	51	44	65	52
2	40	53	67	56	64	40	42
1	16	14	17	21	16	15	26

Mean Household Size (MHS), calculated by dividing the total population by the number of households, aids commentary on vagaries in economic and social conditions. The changes for Moreton are set out in figure 14, which when seen in comparison with the number of households, figure 11, demonstrate that the increase in the number of houses between 1861 and 1871 did lead to a reduction in overcrowding, confirming the conclusions drawn from figure 10. Laslett's research in this area revealed comparable data for the whole country and specific locations at various times. In 1851 MHS for the whole country was 4.73, and in Ashford and Nottingham, 4.75 and 4.47, respectively.[30] Moreton's 1851 figure, of 4.94, appears high in comparison, however it is lower than Michael Anderson's figures for Preston

[28] Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited,* p. 77.
[29] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[30] P. Laslett, 'Mean Household Size in England Since the Sixteenth Century' in P. Laslett & R. Wall, *Household and Family in Past Time,* (Cambridge, 1978), p. 138; W. Armstrong, 'A Note on the Household Structure of Mid-Nineteenth Century York', in Laslett & Wall, pp. 211-12.

(5.4) and its rural hinterland (5.5), two decades earlier.[31] It could be partially explained by the sharp population rise over the previous decade causing a bulge that could not be accommodated by the existing housing supply. By 1901, the national figure was 5.19, while Moreton's dropped to 4.58, reflecting the reduction in the town's population, a general improvement in living conditions and the difference between rural and urban environments.

Figure 14: Mean Household Size in Moreton 1851-1911.[32]



MHS paints a picture of family reduction as well as the decline in living-in servants. In 1851, the largest household, comprising 16 people, was Thomas Horne, who with his wife, had nine children still living at home, four servants and an apprentice. Although the address is not given in the CEB, from its sequence, which one accepts, cannot be entirely relied upon, it is likely that this was one of the larger houses in the High Street, which at the time was a commercial premises with living accommodation.[33] In 1861, the Horne household, now led by Thomas Horne junior, maintained its position and had increased in size to 18 occupants with a growth in the number of apprentices but a reduction in the number of resident children and domestic servants.[34] The study period witnessed a steady decline in private household size, apart from a brief resurgence in 1881, when Thomas Horne's son, Frederic, having taken over his father's business and property, headed a household numbering 17, comprising his wife, 12 children, his niece and only three servants. This household is a testament to the growing separation of family and business life, as in 1881 there is no evidence of employees living with the family, as was the case for Frederic's father and grandfather. By 1911, only one of the three households, comprising ten people each, had a servant, which was the Burgiss family in Oxford Street. The second were the Railway Hotel's occupants where the Hicks family had one paying visitor. The third was the Howe family who are discussed below.

[31] M. Anderson, '*Household Structure* and the *Industrial Revolution; Mid-Nineteenth* Century *Preston in Comparative Perspective'* in Laslett & Wall, p. 219.
[32] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[33] Ibid., 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 299, p. 23.
[34] Ibid., 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 106, p. 6.

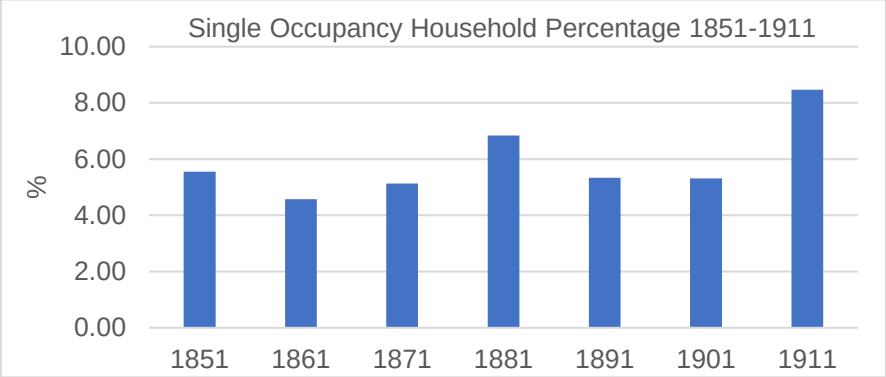
Once again percentages, either parochial or national, hide peculiar local circumstances that indicate incidences of hardship, poverty, and overcrowding. In 1891 in Church Street, the Hine family of ten, comprising husband, wife, four adult, unmarried, children and four teenagers, existed in a four roomed house. In 1901, the Dyer family comprising husband, wife and 11 children, aged from 19 to an infant, were squeezed into a three-room dwelling in Hospital Road. Finally in 1911, a five-room cottage in Old Town, near the church, was occupied by William Howe, a labourer, his wife and eight children ranging in age from 16 to a baby.[35]

Single Occupation

The opposing metric is the number of people living alone and what this tells us of changing economic and social perceptions. Snell's examination of single occupancy households (solitaries) charts an increasing trend in this direction from the late 19th century. He calculated a 'pre-1911 unweighted average of about 5%' of households, being in single occupancy.[36] Figure 15 shows the changing percentage of single occupancy houses in Moreton, that demonstrates a degree of fluidity but with the exception of 1881, correlates with Snell's figures as well as Anderson's for 1851 Preston.[37] On occasions, single occupancy was temporary, as in the 1851 entries for Maria Davies, a policeman's wife, who appeared to be alone on census night due to her husband's occupation.[38] Similarly, of the three married people living alone in 1911, one spouse could not be found, one was visiting parents and the last was a servant in another house in the town.[39] Single occupancy was also related to profession as in the case of young schoolmistresses. Except for Amelia Davies who lived alone in 1871, 1881, 1901 and 1911, very few people appeared in consecutive censuses as single occupants. This implies that singledom was not a usual lifestyle choice. The increased percentage of solitaries in 1881 represented four or five additional people, single migrants arriving in the town, as only seven of the single occupants were born in Moreton. Drilling down into these figures is of interest as the age, gender and marital status of the single occupants provide some clues to how the elderly fitted into the community and the increasing independence of younger unmarried people.

[35] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 67, p. 3; 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 2946, Folio: 104, p. 17; 1911, Class: RG14, Piece: 18861.
[36] K. Snell, 'The Rise of Living Alone and Loneliness in History', *Social History*, 42/1 (2017), p. 8.
[37] Anderson, '*Household Structure* and the *Industrial Revolution',* p. 222*.*
[38] *Ancestry*, England Census, 1851*,* Class: HO107, Piece: 2076*,* Folio: 321, p. 15.
[39] Ibid., 1911, Moreton.

Figure 15: Single Occupancy Household Percentage 1851-1911.[40]



Over the course of the seven censuses, the bulk of one person households were occupied by people over the age of 50, which implies that their situations were connected to another life event such as the death of spouse or, in the case of the unmarried, the death of both parents. In 1871 there were five single women in their 20s in Moreton, all of whom were in-migrants following a profession, but this was the only decade in which there was a sizable number of young singletons present.[41] Ernst Ravenstein's findings that single women were more migratory than men is confirmed to some degree by this metric.[42] The Old Age Pension Act in 1908 provided a pension of 5s each week for people over the age of 70, giving a degree of independence to those in this age bracket and easing the pressure on individuals to seek accommodation with kin.[43] The mean average of people in this age bracket who had lived alone from 1851-1911 was 5.42 with the highest number at seven, in 1871. Its implementation in 1909 does not seem to have had a dramatic impact on the people of Moreton as the number of people in this age group who were living alone remained at six in 1911. Throughout the study period, more females than males lived alone. However, the distribution of this split was uneven with wide disparities in 1871 and 1881 skewing the overall figure, which was closer in the remaining censuses. The 1871 figure can be attributed to the single migrating females but this trend does not appear to have been continued into the following decade, with a greater mix of ages.

The recording of marital status in 1851 was less consistent than later, with little distinction made for widowed people. Between 1851 and 1911, there were more unmarried than widowed singletons in Moreton but, as with gender, this masks comparable figures in four of the seven censuses. In 1851 seven of the single occupants, 41%, were widowed. Comparisons with another study by Jean Robin in Colyton, where the figure was 17%, implies that Moreton families were less likely to offer accommodation to widowed relatives, however it cannot be assumed that

[40] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[41] Ibid., 1871, Moreton.
[42] E. Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', *Journal of the Statistical Society of London,* 48/2 (1885), pp. 167-235.
[43] https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn04817, (18 January 2023).

requests were made and rejected.[44] There were exceptions to this as demonstrated by William and Agnes Lamb's housing of Agnes's elderly mother in 1881.[45] By 1911, there were eight widowed solitaries, a comparable number with 1851 but the percentage of the total single households had fallen to 31%. This higher total figure of 25 results from the greater number of unmarried people in 1911 in comparison with 1851. This correlates to Snell's findings about the increase of single households throughout the 20th century. Finally, in considering the incidence of single households, it is instructive to examine whether the singletons were from Moreton or from further away. It has already been established that some of the spikes in the figures were caused by in-migrants and this trend is reflected across the whole period. Only in one census, 1891, were there fewer in-migrants (seven) living alone than people born in the town (ten).

It can be seen therefore that Moreton followed the national trend in having a higher incidence of single occupancy households at the end of the period than in 1850. It does not seem that singledom was a decision of choice but a result of other circumstances that especially befell older females. It may also be indicative of decisions relating to welfare that will be looked at in more detail in chapter three.

Household Composition

Household composition is a metric used to provide a snapshot of societal traits at given points. Using a simplified version of Schürer, Moreton's households have been analysed to determine their composition and classified into three types. Firstly, nuclear: where a husband and spouse lived together alone or with their own children. Secondly, extended: where there are several members of the same family either of the same generation or multi-generational. Lastly, multiple where unrelated people lived under the same roof either as servants, apprentices, lodgers, or visitors.[46]

Leonore Davidoff cautions against the use of official categories of 'head' and 'lodger' when examining households as in reality the nature of the relationship was more nuanced.[47] A high percentage of extended households can demonstrate the need for co-dependency to overcome economic or social adversity as implied by Davidoff. In Preston, Anderson discovered extended households incorporating parentless children, illegitimate grandchildren, orphans, children living with kin to alleviate crowding elsewhere or to provide help and companionship to aged grandparents.[48] Neil Howlett's 1983 study of mid-19th century Appledore census returns correlated the high percentage of extended households to the local seafaring

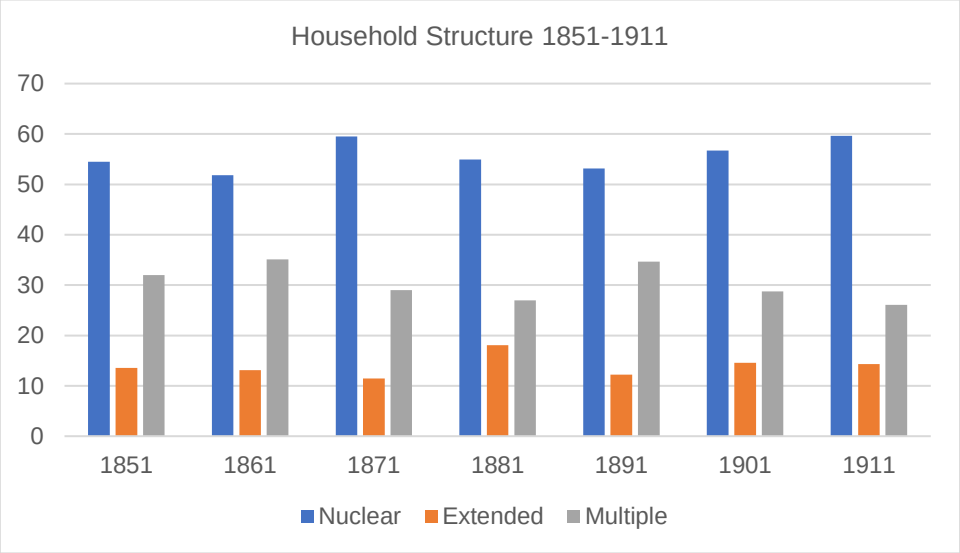
[44] J. Robin, 'Family Care of the Elderly in a Nineteenth Century Devonshire Parish', *Ageing and Society,* 4 (1984), pp. 505-516.
[45] *Ancestry*, England Census, 1881*,* Class: RG11, Piece: 3111, Folio: 102*,* p. 4.
[46] K. Schürer, E. Garrett, H. Jaadla, A. Reid, 'Household and Family Structure in England and Wales (1851-1911), Continuities and Change', *Continuity and Change,* 33 (2018), pp. 365-411.
[47] L. Davidoff, *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830-1960,* (London, 1999), p. 161.
[48] Anderson*,* '*Household structure* and the *industrial revolution',* p. 227.

economy, that forced household heads to spend long periods away from home on trans-Atlantic voyages.[49] Examples of multiple and extended households can be detected in Moreton across the whole period, which fit the scenarios highlighted by Anderson. The incidences of unmarried adult siblings forming part of another brother or sister's home was particularly common, as demonstrated in 1851 by the household of George Jennings, tailor, whose home accommodated four of his wife's younger siblings, three of whom assisted in his business, thereby learning a trade at the same time as having lodging.[50] In 1881, Walter Wiggins began an extended and successful career with the railway whilst living, in Moreton, in the household of his older brother, also a rail employee.[51] As Anderson and Howlett found, extended family households were a pragmatic response to the care of both young and old and reveal instances of childless couples taking over the care of nieces and nephews, as demonstrated by Joseph and Sarah Gardner, who in 1851, had no children of their own but had four nieces and nephews, from three different families living with them.[52] Dividing dependent children between different households on census night may have been done specifically to avoid allegations of overcrowding or for diverse personal circumstances which is harder to determine. An example of the latter was apparent in an earlier census when, inexplicably, five of the affluent Horne children were in the charge of an elderly agricultural labourer, and his wife, at one of the family's farms outside the town.[53]

Figure 16 illustrates the differing household structures during the period and does not demonstrate any dramatic changes in the proportion of each one. Nuclear households were the most common but the percentage of between 50% and 60% is slightly lower than Anderson's figures in Preston and its rural hinterland. By 1871, these households increased to a comparable figure with Preston in 1851, with those in the other categories reduced equally. This implies that the increased numbers of households shown in figure 11 were nuclear units. This may suggest greater economic confidence already mentioned during the last part of the 1860s. It also accords with a higher proportion of under 5s that is apparent from the census, that may have encouraged young families to create independent establishments.[54] With such minor changes, interpretation of these figures is difficult but the increase in extended households in 1881 hints at hardship that coincides with the agricultural depression of the 1870s. Similarly, by 1911 the number of nuclear households had recovered to the 1871 level with the decrease in multiple households partly reflecting the increased separation of domestic and commercial life.

[49] N. Howlett, 'Family and Household in a Nineteenth Century Devon Village', *Local Population Studies*, 30 (1983), p. 46.
[50] *Ancestry*, England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 299, p. 23.
[51] Ibid., 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 3111, Folio: 108, p. 15.
[52] Ibid., 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 331, p. 34.
[53] Ibid., 1841, Class: HO107, Piece: 369, p.1, line 11.
[54] Ibid., 1871, Moreton.

Figure 16: Household Structure 1851-1911.[55]



Servants

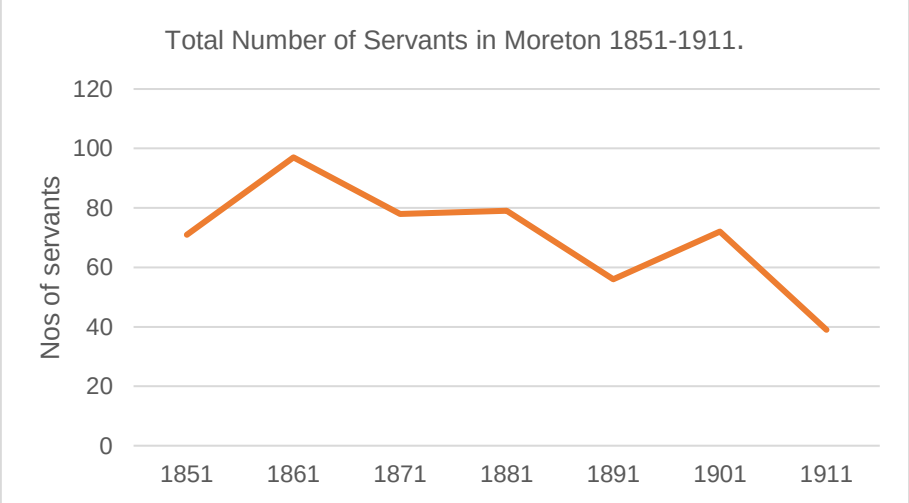
As noted, servants and lodgers within a household provide some indicators of benefit to an analysis of a town's economic and social profile. Issues of the reliability of the terminology of both these categories have also been discussed, but the terminology and status of servant are particularly taxing. There can be confusion with family members who lived at home but worked as servants in other establishments, and the concept of kin doing domestic duties within a household in return for food and accommodation.[56] Additionally, young girls could be acquired from the local workhouse to work as servants for little or no recompense, rendering futile any assumptions made about the wealth of a family whose household included a servant. Instances of such scenarios are evident from the minutes of the Shipston workhouse but not in relation to establishments in Moreton.[57] The two major landed estates, Batsford and Sezincote, that will be discussed in chapter two, did have full complements of servants, but these were outside the town. Within the Moreton enumeration district there were no large houses with a significant body of domestic servants and very few establishments with more than one. The judgement of the individual enumerators is crucial in assessing the definition of servants and it does appear that, through the whole period, Moreton's enumerators were consistent and clear in considering the position of servants in the town's households. Over the 60-year period, there seem to be few instances of kin who performed household duties, classified as servants, in the way Higgs noted in Rochdale.[58] This may be an

[55] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[56] E Higgs, 'Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England', *Social History*, 8/2 (1983); D. Cooper & M. Donald, 'Households and "Hidden" Kin in Early 19th-century England: Four Case Studies in Suburban Exeter, 1821–61', *Continuity and Change*, (1995), pp. 257–78.
[57] WRO, CR0051/985, Minute Book, 1875-1877.
[58] Higgs, 'Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England', p. 206.

interesting reflection both on perceptions of status, familial loyalty and responsibility in various parts of the country.

Throughout the period most servants were female, with a decline in the proportion of male servants, from 12% of the total in 1851 to 2% in 1911. This metric is primarily accounted for by the reduction in farm service after 1861, which saw a decline of 50%, in the number of men classified as servants, between 1861 and 1871. The latter part of the 19th century is the period when the servant class began to contract. Pamela Horn considered this a reflection of greater aspirations among the young women previously employed as servants. Theresa McBride, on the other hand, attributes the decline to smaller families and the desire for privacy among the servant-employing classes.[59] The following evaluation has relied on the status in relation to the household head, attributed in each of the census returns, therefore it is hoped Higgs' concept of 'kin servants' was eliminated. Higgs suggested that the perceived decline in domestic service over the course of the 19th century may have been overstated and may be the result of a change in terminology, however the figures for Moreton, using the relationship status, do not support this idea. After an initial rise between 1851 and 1861, reflecting the improved economy, following the railway opening, the numbers in the town declined, as shown in figure 17. The slight recovery in 1901 cannot be explained, but the dip by 1891 correlates with Higgs' challenge to McBride's belief that 1891 represented the high point for domestic service in England and Wales.[60]

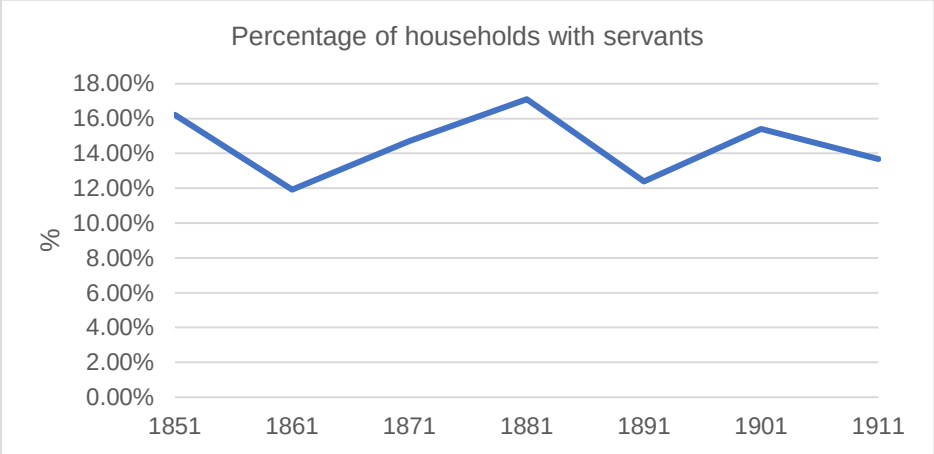
Figure 17: Total Number of Servants in Moreton 1851-1911.[61]



[59] P. Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant,* (Dublin, 1975); T. McBride, *The Domestic Revolution: The Modernisation of Household Service in England and France, 1820-1920,* (New York, 1976).
[60] Higgs, 'Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England', p. 202.
[61] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.

Two other metrics were also considered – the proportion of households in the town that recorded servants through the period and the average number of servants per household. The proportion of households with servants ranged from 11.92% to 17.11%, as shown in figure 18, however of more interest, especially in comparison with the total numbers of servants, figure 17, is how this figure altered over the period.

Figure 18: Percentage of Households with Servants in Moreton 1851-1911.[62]



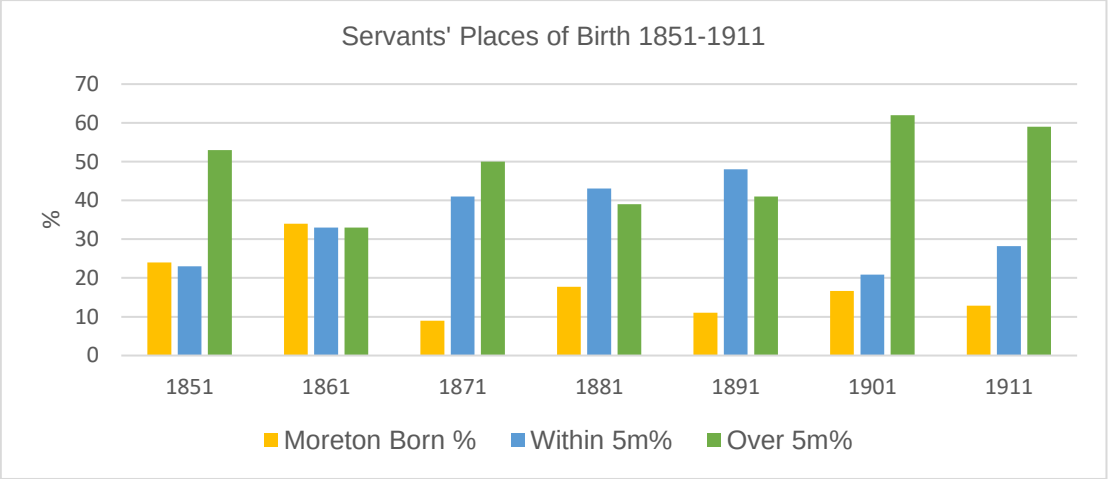
Comparison between the two charts indicates that in 1861, when the town had the highest number of servants, these were concentrated in a small number of households. On the assumption that acquisition of a servant or servants was an indicator of a certain degree of prosperity, the low percentage in 1861 implies that such affluence was not widespread but concentrated in the hands of a small section of the population, supporting the results of the wealth surveys and the assessment of social structure based on occupations. The sharp dip in 1891 and the recovery in 1901 supports a similar trend in the numbers of servants. The average number of servants per household also underlines the 1861 trend when the figure reached 1.77. For the remainder of the period the figure stayed below 1.50 with a downward movement to 1.15 by 1911, supporting the theory that domestic service declined steadily into the 20th century.[63]

Tracing the places of births of the Moreton servant population resulted in some interesting statistics. As figure 19 shows, in 1851, 1901 and 1911 over half the servants had arrived in Moreton from elsewhere. As these were not servants in large establishments, whose employers may have had additional houses in other parts of the country, where recruitment could take place, this diverse body provides an interesting migration dynamic. Much has been written of the exodus of female servants from the country to large towns, but this provides evidence of movement to the nearest

[62] Ibid.
[63] K. Dannehl, M. Ward, & L. Boothman, 'Domestic Service in England, 1600-2000', *Local Population Studies*, 87 (2011), pp. 7-12.

largest settlement as well as movement between small towns.[64] In view of the early marriage of females in Moreton, discussed later in this chapter, which may indicate lack of available work, this finding raises some questions. There may be several explanations: the local population were not interested in this type of employment; local household heads thought they would be better served by people from elsewhere; Moreton was seen as somewhere where there were opportunities for employment that attracted outsiders; or an influx of more affluent people who brought servants with them. It is likely a combination of all four reasons, although the increase in in-migrant servants in 1901 and 1911 suggests movement into the town of more prosperous retired people.

Figure 19: Places of births of Moreton Servants 1851-1911.[65]



Lodgers

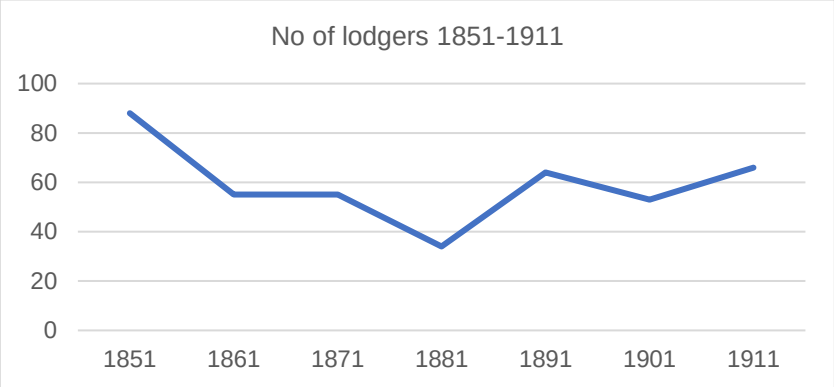
Multiple households span the whole economic spectrum of a town and as already demonstrated in the case of the Hornes, can be immediately associated with pockets of affluence and with the wealth to employ servants or accommodate apprentices for the family business. At the other end of the social scale, in the same way as extended households, multiple households were a realistic response to economic conditions in that lodgers brought additional finance, either in the form of cash or goods in kind, to struggling families. Vicky Holmes related a case in Ipswich whereby taking in lodgers enabled a woman to save enough to buy her own property ten years later.[66] In return the lodgers received accommodation and board at a fraction of the cost of providing it themselves. Lodgers were not automatically in-migrants without kin but could be manifestation of pragmatic solutions to various social and

[64] Higgs, 'Domestic Servants and Households in Victorian England'; Horn, *The Rise and Fall of the Victorian Servant;* McBride, *The Domestic Revolution;* S. Pooley, 'Domestic Servants and their Urban Employers: a Case Study of Lancaster, 1880-1914, *Economic History Review,* 62/2 (2009), pp. 405-429.
[65] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[66] V. Holmes, 'Accommodating the Lodger: The Domestic Arrangements of Working-Class Dwellings in a Victorian Provincial Town, *Journal of Victorian Culture,* 19/3 (2014), p. 327.

economic needs. In Appledore, Howlett identified cases of young single women lodgers, who provided help with childcare and basic household tasks in return for board and lodging.[67] This trend was less evident in Moreton, where female lodgers were in the minority and those present had specific occupations, outside the home, assigned to them. Likewise, in Moreton, for the whole period, most lodgers were from outside the town.

As figure 20 demonstrates, it could be anticipated that in Moreton, in 1851, as the railway was being constructed, the number of lodgers would have been artificially high. Twelve of the 1851 rail labourers were classified as lodgers or visitors, some were single men, e.g. John Ingram and Tom Draper, lodging together in the Sims household, both from Cubbington, in north Warwickshire; others, such as John Smith, brought their wives with them.[68] The rental received from these lodgers and possibly helping hands in the households would benefit local families enormously.

Figure 20: Number of lodgers 1851-1911.[69]



From its peak in 1851, the number of lodgers declined through the identified period of house building, thus easing overcrowding, but increased sharply in 1891 and continued that upward trajectory to 1911. Combined with the sharp decline in servants in 1891, these figures suggest that Moreton's economy was being tightly squeezed at the end of the 1880s. Figure 20 provides an interesting correlation with figure 17, with the decline in the number of servants at key points being in direct contrast to the increase in the numbers of lodgers at the same time.

[67] Howlett, 'Family and Household in a Nineteenth Century Devon Village', p. 47.
[68] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 304, p. 33; Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 330, p. 33.
[69] Ibid., 1851-1911, Moreton.

Demography

Introduction

In 2005 Crosby asked a significant question about one of the Lancashire market towns he was studying, 'Did Garstang fail, or is that simply a perception of those who equate demographic growth with success?'.[70] This suggests that its lack of industrialisation and consequent dramatic demographic decline could, when one takes a long-term view, be regarded in a positive light. This question is equally pertinent to Moreton whose role as an agricultural service centre during a period of agrarian decline led to a much smaller net loss of population between 1851 and 1911. It cannot be disputed that its inhabitants would have been tempted to leave by the prospect of better wages elsewhere, and, for the same reason, new people had no incentive to arrive to fill the vacuum. However, at the start of the 20th century, Moreton was still able to function as a service centre for its hinterland. Unlike other places with similar populations in 1851, it had not been reduced to the size of a rural village with the attendant loss of crafts and trades to serve its inhabitants. In Crosby's terms this must be deemed a success. The following research demonstrates continuity rather than dramatic change with demographic metrics providing comparisons with other places. As shown in the introduction this experience was widespread and, as Crosby stated, too many places have been overlooked unnecessarily because of it.[71]

Decennial census data, from 1841 to 1911, have been entered onto Excel sheets which facilitates enquiries into various aspects of the town's demographic history. This was a labour-intensive process that did not uncover any remarkable trends. Initially changes in Moreton's census population will be examined and comparisons made with nearby towns. Thereafter the overall marital profile, mean age at marriage, the proportion of endogamous and exogenous marriage and pre-nuptial pregnancy will be considered. Birth and infant mortality rates will be examined, and findings will be compared with studies elsewhere of illegitimacy. Finally, a summary of the age and gender profile will be made in comparison with the surrounding area.

Population

Numerically Moreton's census population fell from a century high in 1851 of 1,512 to 1,406 in 1911, recording a decline of seven percent at a time when the population of the entire country increased by more than 126%.[72] The stark contrast between its downward trajectory and the unrelenting increase in the whole country is illustrated in figure 21. Studying Moreton's population is facilitated by the uniformity of the census district, enabling valid comparisons to be made over time. From figure 21 and the knowledge that population figures in industrial and urban centres were rising

[70] Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 86.
[71] Ibid.
[72] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census.(3 August 2022).

exponentially, it would be easy to draw the simple conclusion that the latter was being fed by the former, but the situation is more nuanced.

Moreton's population increased by 12% between 1841 and 1851 to 1,512. The building of the railway in the late 1840s must account for part of this. It is impossible to discover whether this growth occurred in the period after rail construction commenced, but this does seem the most likely scenario. Comparisons with Moreton's immediate neighbours, Stow, Shipston and Blockley, see figures 21 and 22, show that the town's population remained constant.

Figure 21: Moreton's population 1841 to 1911, compared with England and Wales.[73]

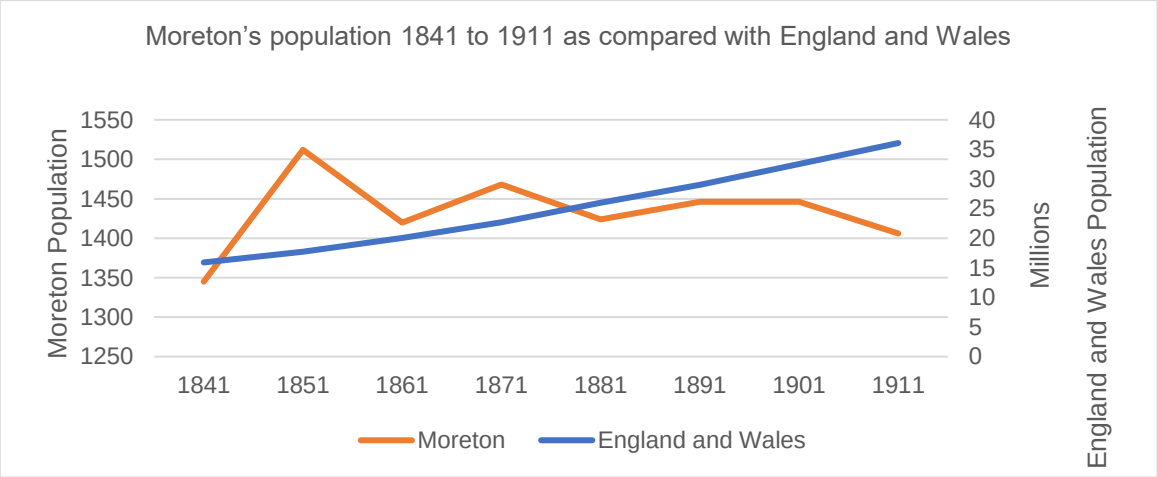
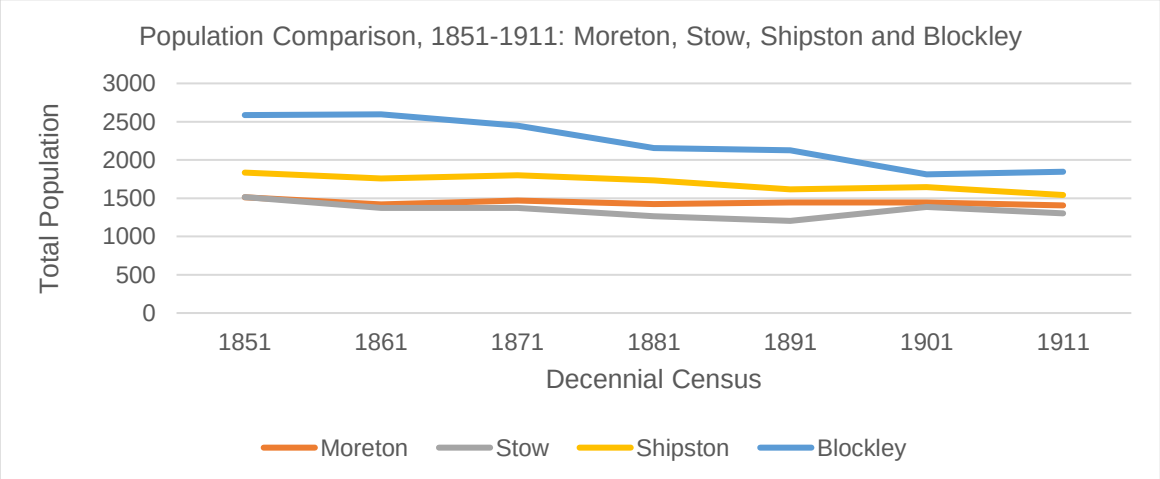


Figure 22: Population Comparison, 1851-1911: Moreton, Stow, Shipston and Blockley.[74]



[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.

Figure 23: Percentage loss between 1851-1911: Moreton, Stow, Shipston and Blockley.[75]

Moreton	7.1%
Stow	14.3%
Shipston	15.97%
Blockley	28.68%

The explanation for the severe population loss in Blockley can be attributed to exceptional local circumstances relating to its being a silk producing centre in the early 19th century which by the 1850s had rapidly declined and Blockley gradually reverted to an agrarian-centric economy.[76]

The two towns further away, Chipping Campden and Chipping Norton, had differing experiences with Chipping Campden recording a 5% decline. However, Chipping Norton's fortunes were in complete contrast, with a net increase of over 35% by 1911, that masked even more spectacular figures in 1881 and 1891. This reflected its strong economy led by local entrepreneur, William Bliss, who established a tweed mill, initially capitalizing on the popularity of rugs for railway carriages.[77] The extremes of Chipping Norton and Blockley demonstrate that population figures can hide complex and unique local circumstances that require further investigation. Moreton's apparent demographic failure, when considered in isolation, can be viewed as a relative success in comparison with its neighbours.

Moreton's population in 1851 was at its highest point and related to countrywide population growth and railway construction in particular. Comparison with settlements across the country, highlighted in the introduction, some of which had similar populations in 1851 but had been relegated to no more than small hamlets by the early 20th century, deems Moreton's survival a success. Similarly, in terms of population decline, it fared better than its immediate neighbours. The reasons for Moreton's persistence were multi-faceted and will be discussed in more detail in chapter five.

Age and Gender

Analysis of the age and gender profile of Moreton's population does not reveal any notable difference from either the national or local figures, for the Cotswold District. Age pyramids have been constructed for Moreton from the CEBs which paint a picture of improved life expectancy, lower child mortality and the beginnings of family limitation. The ratio of men to women remained in the region of 48%-52% throughout. Of most interest is that it is possible to observe clues to the migration of young people where bulges in the 10-14 age bracket are not replicated in the next census in the 20-

[75] Ibid.
[76] H. Icely, *Blockley Through Twelve Centuries,* (Harleston, 1988).
[77] H Hurrell, *The Bliss Mill Chipping Norton, Industrial Lancashire in the Cotswolds,* (Oxford, 1996).

24 range. This connects with Day's comprehensive research into the ages at which young people left home, indicating that 19 was the mean age for males to either migrate or set up their own households and will be discussed in more detail in chapter six.[78] Another interesting observation is the bulge in men, aged between 25-29, in 1851, who appear to relate to men involved in railway construction, which will be examined in chapter five.

Marital Profile

An examination of the marital records and traditions of a locality provide the historian with evidence from which to draw conclusions on many themes, amongst which are: its economic profile, fertility, literacy, promiscuity, its relationship with its hinterland as well as evidence of in and out migration. As Snell stated, 'marriage choices reveal a great deal about local horizons and where people felt they belonged'.[79] Peculiar local circumstances impacted on the marital profile of a location with evidence that places with high rates of domestic service resulted in later marriage, whereas areas with higher male employment levels were likely to experience earlier marriage.[80] The following analysis attempts to draw out relevant details relating to Moreton based on census and parish record data. 1871 was the first census where national figures were published relating to numbers of married men and women. At this point Moreton had a slightly lower percentage of married men, at 34.66% against a national figure of 35.11%. However, the town's percentage of married women, at 34.01%, was marginally higher than the national figure of 33.88%.[81] By 1911, the percentage of married men rose to 37.16% comparable with the national figure of 37.2% and married women to 36.06% again higher than the national figure of 35.2%.[82] Like most of the demographic statistics for Moreton, the differences are only very slight and therefore attempting to draw conclusions from them not particularly relevant.

Mean age at marriage.

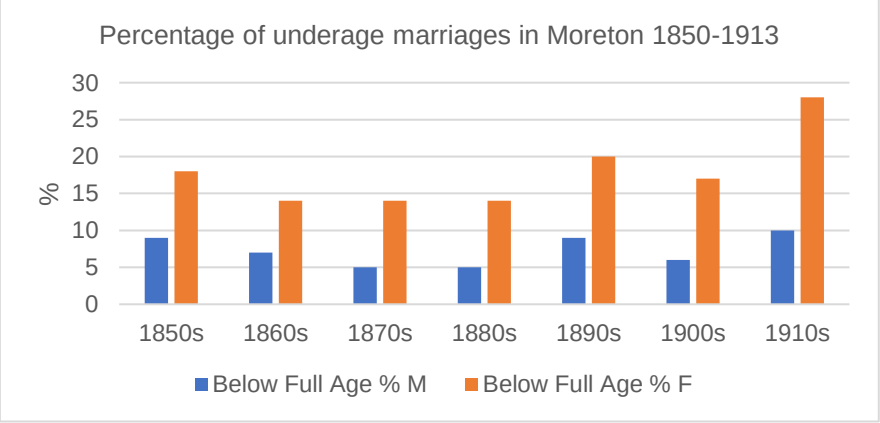
Reay considered a low figure for the mean age at first marriage as a catalyst for population increase.[83] Such a figure relies on precise records where specific ages are entered into marriage records, whereas Moreton's parish records provide merely the required statutory information. In 1850 it was only mandatory to state age if either party was under 21 resulting in over 77% of the marriages recorded, not having specific details, a figure that declined to 22% by the end of the 1880s. Thereafter,

[78] J. Day, 'Leaving Home in 19th Century England and Wales: A Spatial Analysis', *Demographic Research*, 39 (2018), p. 106.
[79] Snell, *Parish and Belonging: Community,* p. 162.
[80] N. Goose, 'Cottage Industry, Migration and Marriage in Nineteenth Century England', *Economic History Review,* 61/4 (2008), p. 799.
[81] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/census/EW1871GEN/3 (3 August 2022).
[82] www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20(by%20date)/1911/England&active=yes&mno=145&tocstate=expandnew&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=42, (16 January 2023).
[83] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 41.

omissions are errors or deliberately withheld due to the perceived elevated age or social status of the marrying parties. Consequently, although the stated mean age at first marriage accords with Reay's findings in Kent, of between 20 and 24 for both males and females the lack of information in the earlier period necessitates cautious treatment.[84] By the early 20th century, the figures are complete and indicate that for both men and women, mean age at first marriage hovered much nearer 25. Nigel Goose's study of Hertfordshire parishes discovered that high employment availability encouraged earlier marriage.[85] Consequently this higher figure suggests a degree of economic uncertainty in Moreton at the time.

The marriage records kept by a succession of the Congregational Church pastors were poor with no entries between 1859 and 1875, therefore the following analysis is based solely on the Parish Church records.[86] Throughout more women than men were married under the age of 21, as shown in figure 24, with the ratio being in the region of 2:1. Apart from the shorter period, 1910-1913, the total percentage of underage women never exceeded 20% of the total married, half Reay's figure in Kent.[87] Of note is the sharp increase in the number of females, marrying under the age of 21, in the period between 1910 and 1913. What is most interesting is that in Moreton, it correlates with a rise in pre-nuptial pregnancy, which is discussed later and highlighted in figure 27, suggesting changes in perceived social values.

Figure 24: Percentage of underage marriages in Moreton 1850-1913.[88]



Endogamous/Exogenous Marriage

Endogamous marriage is the practice of finding a spouse within one's community, which may be social, religious or geographical, while exogenous marriage is the opposite metric. In the following analysis the definition of community is Moreton. Assessing the percentage of endogamous or exogenous marriage provides some

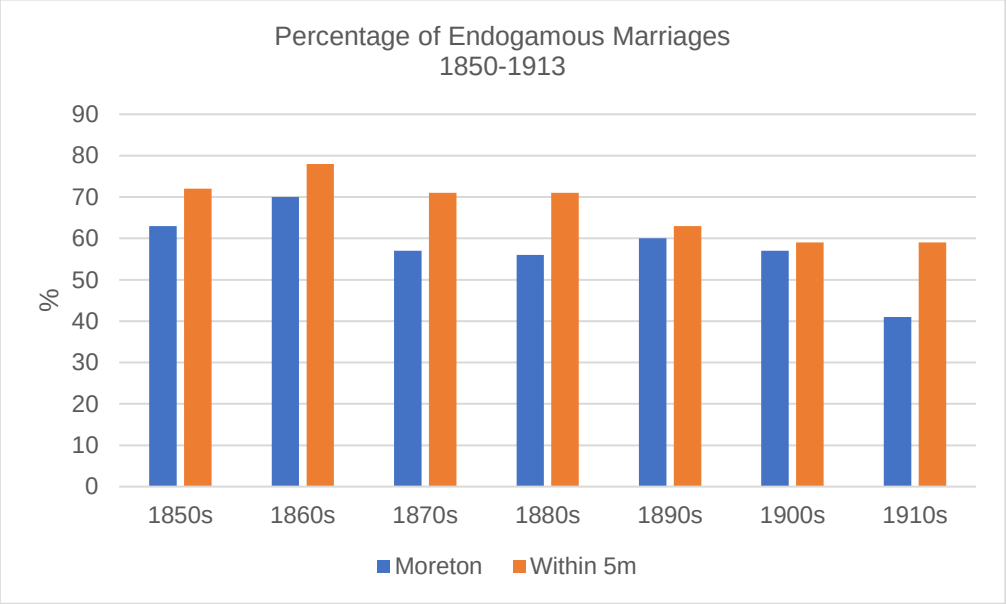
[84] Ibid.
[85] Goose, 'Cottage Industry, Migration and Marriage in Nineteenth Century England', p. 798.
[86] GRO, D12117/1/1, Moreton Congregational Church Registers.
[87] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 43.
[88] *Ancestry,* P221/1/IN/1/7, P221/1/IN/1/8.

indication of population mobility as well as a reflection of a community's horizons. Snell describes the lengths to which some communities went to discourage men from outside marrying local girls, but there is no evidence that these dynamics existed between Moreton and neighbouring towns and villages.[89]

From the parish records it is difficult to detect marriage as being a catalyst for migration, as has been suggested by Colin Pooley, and this will be discussed in more detail in chapter six.[90] People who had migrated from Moreton were unlikely to have returned for a marriage ceremony, as for most these were low key events, carried out to fit in with working lives.[91] Parish registers record the location of the parties at marriage but not their places of birth, so this metric does not preclude people who had moved to Moreton from elsewhere. Figure 25 shows that from 1850-1909, over half of the marriages at St David's Church were for couples who both lived in Moreton, with the percentage higher in four out of seven decades. When spouses living within five miles of Moreton are considered, the percentage increases further. Peter Laslett's assertion that, prior to paved roads 'there was a fixed distance from a labourer's cottage, beyond which a full day's work was out of the question' applied equally to social interaction.[92] The development of bicycles and their economic accessibility to the working man led P.J. Perry, when considering the situation in Dorset, to double the distance of possible daily travel, by the end of the 19th century, which may provide some explanation for the more marked difference after 1910.[93] The figure of five to six miles is taken as an accepted distance to walk and return within a day and this is reflected in the distances between residences of marriage partners, when one lived outside Moreton.

[89] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 62-3.
[90] C. Pooley, 'How People Moved, Researching the Experience of Mobility in the Past', *Local Population Studies,* 82 (2009).
[91] R. Probert, 'How to celebrate a Victorian Wedding', *'BBC History Magazine',* (December, 2018) www.historyextra.com/period/victorian/how-to-celebrate-victorian-wedding-dresses-food-honeymoon (25 February 2023).
[92] P. Laslett, *The World We Have Lost*, (London, 1965), p. 77.
[93] P. Perry, 'Working-Class Isolation and Mobility in Rural Dorset, 1837-1936: A Study of Marriage Distances', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 46 (1969), p. 136.

Figure 25: Percentage of Endogamous Marriages 1850-1913.[94]



Endogamous marriage rates averaged just under 60%, suggesting some limited horizons but is lower than incidences found elsewhere and suggests a less strong idea of belonging, as postulated by Snell.[95] Figure 25 shows that the decade with the highest number of endogamous marriages was the 1860s. This is interesting in relation to the railway's arrival in the town and suggests that it did not increase the marriage horizons of those who had been teenagers when it first arrived. As found in other studies, it underlines that rail travel remained too expensive for most of the population, as these figures suggest few used it to travel to socialise in nearby towns.[96] Sadie McMullon's research into migration in Fletton highlights studies by Schürer and Robin that consider rates of endogamy.[97] These reveal that, in comparison with other places studied at similar time periods, Moreton's endogamy rates are below the mean average, as demonstrated by figure 26.

[94] *Ancestry,* P221/1/IN/1/7; P221/1/IN/1/8.
[95] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 28-80.
[96] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming', p.279; Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway', p. 153.
[97] S. McMullon, 'Migration to Fletton, 1841-1911', (PhD. thesis, University of Leicester, 2018), p. 326; K. Schürer, *Marriage Register Analysis of a Nineteenth century Resort*, Occasional Paper, Bedford College, University of London (1982); J. Robin, *Elmdon-Continuity and Change in a North-west Essex Village 1861-1964*, (Cambridge, 1980).

Figure 26: Comparable rates of endogamy 1850-1913.[98]

Place	Period	Percentage	Mean No of Marriages p.a.
Elmdon, Essex	1853-1902	44.30	4.2
Otmoor, Oxon	1851-1900	52.60	2.7
Moreton	**1850-1914**	**59.77**	**6.6**
Eastwood, Notts	1850-1899	60.40	3.0
Southchurch, Essex	1850-1899	63.80	4.4
Leigh, Essex	1850-1899	69.30	8.3
Prittlewell, Essex	1850-1899	80.80	51.5

Pre-nuptial pregnancy

Both Reay and Robin have considered the question of pre-nuptial pregnancy in their respective studies of parishes in Kent and Colyton, Devon, which prompted a similar investigation to test the incidence in Moreton.[99] It must be emphatically stated that measuring this is an inexact process with few constants and little opportunity to gauge premature births or delayed baptisms, which does question Reay's and Robin's certainties. Arguing against Laslett's concept of a 'bastardy-prone sub society' Reay and Robin underlined that pre-nuptial pregnancy was not a sign of deviancy but could be deemed normal behaviour. Both found it to be more prevalent in the lower classes but was also present, to a lesser degree, in other social groups, with the idea that sometimes these people were better placed to conceal incidences. Robin suggested that pre-nuptial pregnancy had many causes: long engagements, spouse entrapment, shotgun marriages and fertility testing.[100] Reliance on baptismal records to detect pre-nuptial pregnancy is problematic as these depend on parents being committed to baptism, which required a modicum of faith and adherence to societal norms. Equally some marriages remained childless, which is neither proof nor otherwise of pre-marital chastity. To provide an accurate picture, analysis of Moreton relied on parish marriage and baptismal records, being able to trace the couple to future censuses and making judgements on the timing of the birth, in comparison with the date of marriage. There are many variables which mean that the conclusions must be viewed accordingly.

[98] McMullon, 'Migration to Fletton, 1841-1911', p. 326.
[99] K. Schürer, *Migration, Population and Social Structure, A Comparative Study Based in Rural Essex, 1850-1900,* (PhD. thesis, University of London 1988); J. Robin, 'Pre-Nuptial Pregnancy in a Rural Area of Devonshire in the Mid-Nineteenth Century: Colyton 1851-1881', *Continuity and Change,* 1(1986).
[100] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 180. Robin, 'Pre-nuptial Pregnancy in a Rural Area', p.114.

From Moreton's parish records it was not possible to track every couple who married in the church. Figure 27 sets out the numbers of couples traced in each decade who had a child within nine months of marriage. Ascertaining the date of birth of the child is inexact but is taken either from baptismal records or census records. Based on research between 1780 and 1871, Reay believed that 'fifty per cent of brides in Boughton, Dunkirk and Hernhill in the 19th century were either pregnant when they stood in front of the altar or had actually given birth'. Equally, between 1851 and 1881, Robin only detected one five-year period (1861-66), when the rate fell below 50%.[101] As can be seen from figure 27, it was only in the 1880s, and considering both definite and probable pregnancies, that Moreton's figure reached the figures achieved in Kent and Devon. These figures are useful comparisons to the other work and suggest that pregnant brides were either not as widespread as Reay and Robin imply, or that Moreton was an outlier in this metric.

The comparison of figures for pre-nuptial pregnancy between Moreton and Reay's and Robin's study areas shows a mean figure for Moreton of 35.58% that is lower than the suggested other figures of approximately 50%. This lower figure may suggest a more chaste society but equally it raises questions about intolerance of illegitimacy in the Kent and Devon communities. Fewer pregnant brides indicate a greater acceptance of illegitimacy and less pressure to marry, prior to the birth of a child, in Moreton. The most obvious differences between Moreton, Colyton, and the Kent villages are size and a marginally more urban setting. The figures may suggest less familiarity between families, leading to less pressure being exerted to enforce a marriage ceremony. However, it may also imply a greater degree of promiscuity and more liberal societal norms. In view of later findings about kinship in Moreton, the latter explanation seems more likely than the former.

Figure 27 shows higher rates of pre-nuptial pregnancy in the 1880s and in the five years at the end of the period. Due to the availability of more specific birth data later in the 20th century and with forward longitudinal tracing, it is possible to state that six brides, between 1910 and 1914, were pregnant on the day of their marriage. The rise in underage marriage during this period, identified in figure 24, suggests that the pre-nuptial pregnancy data may explain the unexpected rise in under-age marriage. It may shed light on changes in the sex lives of the young people of Moreton but also indicates that locals may have become less tolerant of illegitimacy.

[101] Ibid.

Figure 27: Pre-nuptial pregnancy in Moreton 1850-1914.[102]

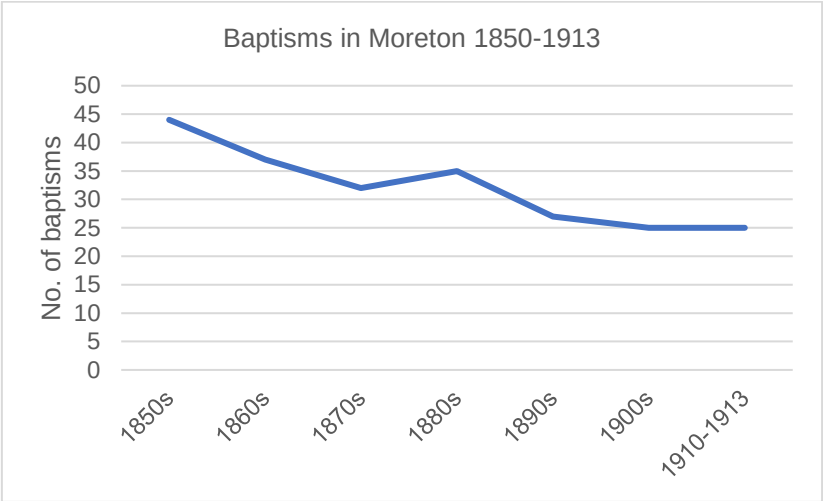
Pre-nuptial Pregnancy 1850-1914			
Decades	Families Traced	Total probable pregnancies	%
1850-59	71	18	25.35
1860-69	54	17	31.48
1870-79	39	13	33.33
1880-89	46	24	52.17
1890-99	50	14	28.00
1900-09	43	16	37.21
1910-14	13	6	46.15

Births

The number of baptisms in a particular location are a helpful, though inconclusive, indicator of birth rate and fertility but rely on the diligence of the recorder. Again, the incomplete records from the Congregational Church render analysis meaningless. This is unfortunate as some aspects of the baptism records that were maintained were more detailed than those of the Parish Church, in that they provided details for date of birth.[103] As with marriage records, therefore, the following analysis is based on the Parish Church alone. An initial analysis of the number of baptisms taking place each year show a remarkable drop from 61 in 1850 to just 27 in 1913, however closer inspection suggests that the figure in 1850 was exceptional, with a similar figure only being reached on one other occasion, in 1887. Nonetheless, taking the mean figure for each decade, the number of baptisms reveals a steady decline as shown in figure 28. This may reflect a progressive lack of faith or dissatisfaction with the Church of England as the century progressed, which unfortunately cannot be verified by reference to the Congregational Church. It also suggests a falling fertility rate in Moreton that is in keeping with national metrics.[104]

[102] *Ancestry,* P221/1/IN/1/7; P221/1/IN/1/8.
[103] GRO, D12117/1/1; D12117/1/8; D12117/1/4, Moreton Congregational Church Burial Register, 1893-1913.
[104] W. Seccombe, 'Starting to Stop: Working-Class Fertility Decline in Britain', *Past & Present,* 126 (1990), p. 151.

Figure 28 Number of baptisms in Moreton 1850-1913.[105]



Illegitimacy

Reay's study of Kent uncovered differing categories of illegitimacy: where the women remained single; cases in which the parents subsequently married; others where the mother married another man; 'repeaters' and women for whom single motherhood was a family trait.[106] Reay's analysis concentrated on instances within social and occupational groups and the ages of the mothers. Robin's scrutiny of Colyton from 1851-1881 revealed a mean illegitimacy rate of 5.5%. Children brought to baptism, at Moreton Parish Church, by single mothers were a rarity but Reay's categories could be identified. Incidences of illegitimacy in Moreton can be detected via the census with households comprising extended families that include adult unmarried daughters and their children. It should be noted that the Congregational Church's incomplete registers record a total of seven single mother baptisms during the entire period, suggesting a less accommodating position. Again, the following rates were detected purely from the Parish Church records. The mean average for Moreton, for the entire period, stood at 5.66%, not dissimilar to that of Colyton. In view of the higher number of pregnant brides in Colyton in comparison with Moreton, it would suggest its illegitimacy rate would be much higher if marriages had not taken place. The two studies saw an increase, in the 1860s, see figure 29 for Moreton, which contrasts with Laslett and Karla Oosterveen's national study that recorded a drop in rates during that decade.[107] Thereafter, Moreton's reduction in its rate did not conform to the national pattern of a consistent decline, as an irregular pattern is evident.[108] Nonetheless, a decline did take place and this correlates with the earlier findings concerning underage marriage and pre-nuptial pregnancy.

[105] *Ancestry,* GRO P221/1/IN/1/4, Gloucestershire Church of England Baptisms, 1813-1913.
[106] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 186.
[107] P. Laslett & K. Oosterveen, 'Long-term Trends in Bastardy in England', *Population Studies*, 27 (1973), p. 266.
[108] J. Robin, 'Illegitimacy in Colyton 1851-1881', *Continuity and Change,* 2 (1987), p. 308.

Figure 29: Illegitimacy rates in Moreton from 1850-1913.[109]

	Total No illegitimate baptisms	Percentage of total baptisms
1850-59	33	7.39
1860-69	29	7.67
1870-79	22	6.72
1880-89	11	3.09
1890-99	14	5.09
1900-09	6	2.33
1910-14	4	3.96

Infant Mortality

Campop has assessed the infant mortality rates across registration districts in England and Wales for the period, with figures labelled to coincide with the decennial census. However, the figures reflect the five years prior to the census rather than for the entire decade.[110] Such broad figures mask hotspots within individual districts. An attempt has been made to gauge the infant mortality rate in Moreton, using the same metrics, based on the Parish Church baptismal totals, and deaths of infants under the age of one from the same burial registers. Again, no consideration can be made for the Congregational Church. Like the pre-nuptial pregnancy rates, infant mortality rates have an element of uncertainty as mothers and children who moved away from the town fall beneath the radar. Besides Moreton, Shipston registration district comprised the towns of Shipston and Chipping Campden, as well as many large villages and smaller hamlets. The comparable statistics are shown in figure 30 and show that Moreton's infant mortality was lower than the district's. From these, Moreton's position seems favourable. However, drilling into the infant mortality rates for each decade in Moreton reveal improvements and setbacks, as shown in figure 31. These percentages, between the total infants who died within a year of their baptism and the total baptisms in the same year, reflect whole decades rather than the five years prior to a census, used by Campop. The fluctuations shown in figure 31, especially the sudden spike in 1891, seem relevant to the public pressures for improved sanitation, which will be discussed in chapter two.

[109] *Ancestry,* GRO P221/1/IN/1/4.
[110] www.populationspast.org *Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population*, (31 March 2022).

Figure 30: Comparison of Infant Mortality Rates between Shipston Registration District and Moreton Parish Registers 1861-1911.[111]

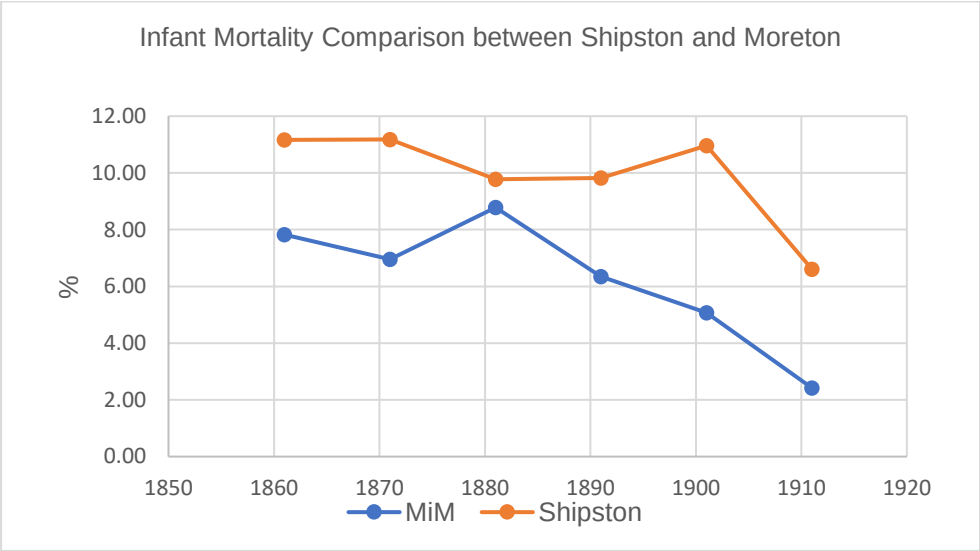
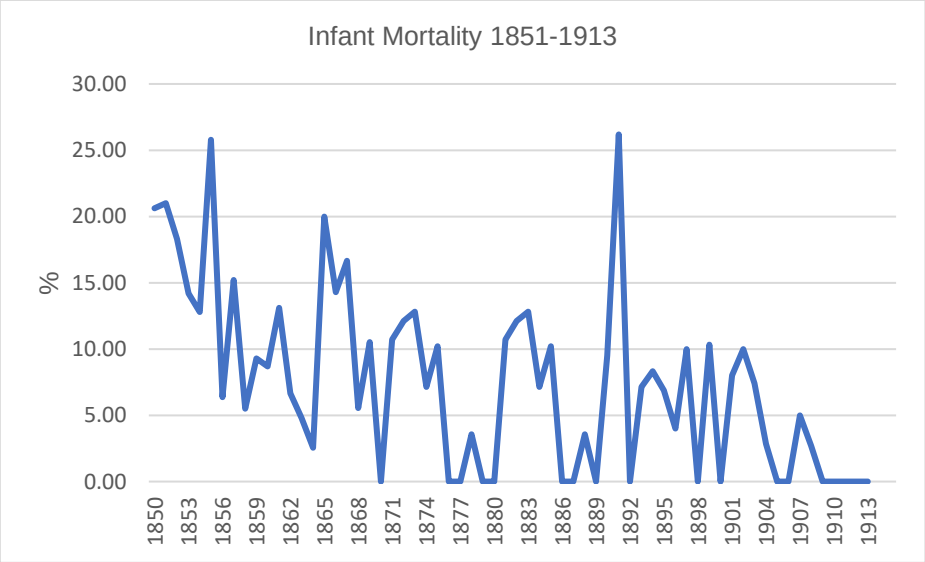


Figure 31: Infant Mortality Rates from Moreton Parish Registers, 1851-1913.[112]

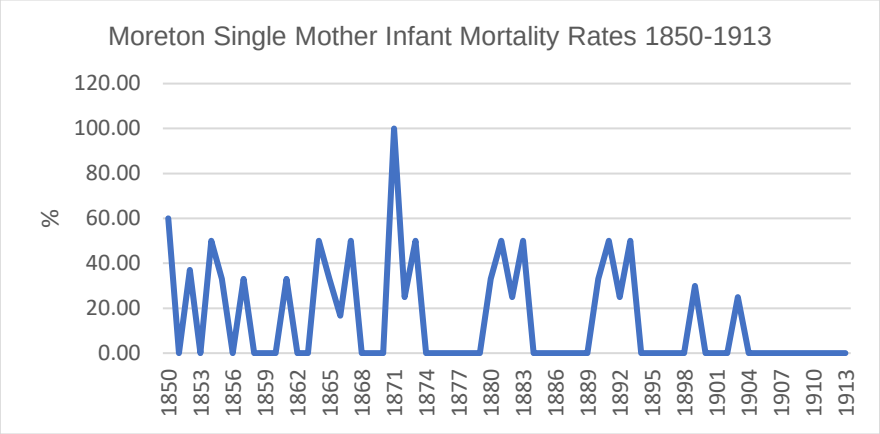


Andrew Hinde and Victoria Fairhurst have detected higher rates of infant mortality among single mothers in their study of rural areas of East Anglia, but no specific reasons were attributed to this.[113] Contemporary opinion linked these two events, as described by Ann Higginbotham, but reasons for infant deaths could be found to have more nuanced explanations.[114] Using whole decades, as opposed to

[111] *Ancestry,* GRO P221/1/IN/1/4; www.populationspast.org *Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population*, (31 March 2022).
[112] *Ancestry,* GRO, P221/1/IN/1/4, P221/1/IN/1/5.
[113] A. Hinde & V. Fairhurst, 'Why was Infant Mortality so High in Eastern England in the Mid Nineteenth Century', *Local Population Studies,* 94 (2015), pp. 48-66.
[114] A. Higginbotham, '"Sin of the Age": Infanticide and Illegitimacy in Victorian London', *Victorian Studies*, 32/3 (1989), pp. 319-337.

the five years prior to the census, as in Campop's data (figure 30), it has been possible to assess the single mother mortality rate in Moreton. This is calculated by comparing single mothers in the baptism registers and tracing the infants to the burial register, within a year of birth, giving an annual percentage, as shown in figure 32. This demonstrates that children of single mothers frequently died within a year of their birth, and in 1871, all those traced did so. Again, no reasons for this can be detected, but the lower general infant mortality rate compared with the higher single mother infant mortality rate, reflects contemporary concern.[115]

Figure 32: Moreton Single Mother Infant Mortality Rates 1850-1913.[116]



This aspect of the research on Moreton demonstrates that close local studies can reveal wide variations in accepted ideas about social issues in different communities. It suggests that statements such as Reay's concerning the percentage of pregnant brides should be treated with caution and that it was symptomatic of local circumstances rather than as a figure which could be translated to the whole country. Pre-nuptial pregnancy rates and illegitimacy rates are opposite sides of the same coin, therefore the relationship between the two is a helpful measurement of local approaches to perceived social problems. One must assume that Robin's figures for illegitimacy rates in Colyton would exceed Moreton's figure, had the pre-nuptial pregnancy figure been lower. Similarly, Moreton's figures demonstrate that the broad national picture of decade-on-decade decline in illegitimacy rates, in the second half of the 19th century, was subject to local bumps which are not apparent without more intense scrutiny at parish level. Likewise, the research indicates that Campop's laudable work on registration districts also masks issues at a parish level.

[115] Ibid., p. 319.
[116] *Ancestry,* GRO, P221/1/IN/1/4, P221/1/IN/1/5.

Conclusions

Continuity and survival are the key conclusions drawn from this study of Moreton's social structure and demography. Of most importance is that the town survived and was not reduced to the status of a small village, as was the case with many other towns with a similar population in 1851.[117] The period is one in which both social and demographic changes have been subject to meticulous historical scrutiny. That this study did not reveal any startling trends or changes is worthy of note. It places Moreton as an example of a community for whom life was not markedly different in 1914 from how it had been in 1851. This runs counter to the perceived idea of a period of unrelenting change but it seems ingenuous to believe that Moreton was an exception. It is possible that the prospect of continuity does not lend itself to investigation and therefore makes comparisons difficult.

Analyses of the 1873 *Return of Owners of Land*, the 1909 Lloyd George Survey, the censuses, and the parish registers exemplify Moreton as a small town with a broad base of low-income working-class people and a very small wealthy elite. During the study period there was little change in this overall position. The number of skilled workers increased at the expense of the partly skilled, a reflection of national trends in education and the local and national decline in agriculture, and specifically the arrival of the railway to Moreton, that will be examined in greater detail in chapter five. The changes in the professional, intermediate and unskilled categories were not significant**.** Servants were a small but interesting feature of Moreton's community, testament to national trends that the majority were not natives of the town in which they worked. Households with servants comprised less than a fifth of the total underlining the broad-based social pyramid and the narrow distribution of wealth. A survey of the servants' places of birth reveals that the majority came from the surrounding countryside, or from other small towns, demonstrating that large urban centres did not have a monopoly in attracting rural migrants. That so few were born in the town is surprising when other demographic indicators suggest a shortage of available work for females.

Throughout the chief landowner was the Batsford estate to whom the majority paid rent for their houses and which also employed many townspeople as labourers or craftsmen. Similarly the more affluent traders employed the less well off in their respective businesses, or as domestic servants. The result was that for the whole of the period, a small number of people had significant economic control over the majority. One effect of this was a palpable culture of deference towards the owners of the Batsford estate and, to a lesser extent, the Horne family, that will be discussed in more detail in later chapters. The continuity in the social structure of Moreton therefore had significant repercussions on the social interactions of the townspeople, that lasted into the second decade of the 20th century.

[117] E.g. Woodhorn Northumberland, population c1500 in 1851 and c180 in 1911.

Crosby cautions against using population growth as a metric of success and this is evident in Moreton.[118] Counter to national increases, Moreton's population decreased over a 60-year period but the percentage was lower than neighbouring towns. Population decline is reflected in the lack of overcrowding, as figures for both mean household size and the numbers of rooms compare favourably with the national averages, revealed by Laslett's research.[119] This suggests that Moreton's living conditions were above average.

Other demographic metrics also show that Moreton did not conform with research elsewhere. Throughout, more marriage partners were found from within five miles of Moreton than from within the town, suggesting the ability to travel was a more limiting factor than the prejudice towards outsiders, cited by Snell.[120] Similarly lower rates of pre-nuptial pregnancy and higher illegitimacy rates point to a society more tolerant of single motherhood than in the places researched by Reay and Robin.[121] The rates of infant mortality reveal that overall Moreton's figures were lower than average but that there were serious spikes in certain years.[122] It is difficult to ascertain whether these spikes were coincidental or caused by issues with the water supply, However, it is likely that they drove the popular outcry about sanitation issues that will be discussed in chapter two. The concerning incidence of mortality among the children of single mothers chimes with Hinde and Fairhurst's research.[123]

The continuity demonstrated by research into Moreton's social structure and demography may be responsible for the passivity that is apparent within the community that will be discussed in chapter two. This had implications for both political and religious relationships within the town. However, it also reveals the significance of local socio-economic and cultural context, suggesting the importance of conducting further local history research.

[118] Crosby, 'Urban History in Lancashire and Cheshire', p. 86.
[119] Laslett, 'Mean Household Size in England Since the Sixteenth Century', p. 138.
[120] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 28-80.
[121] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 180; Robin, 'Pre-nuptial Pregnancy in a Rural Area', p. 114.
[122] www.populationspast.org *Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population*, (31 March 2022).
[123] Hinde & Fairhurst, 'Why was Infant Mortality so high', pp. 48-66.

Chapter 2 Local Administration

Introduction

'Victorian central government involved itself in the lives of its citizens in many ways.'[1]

This chapter will consider how Moreton and its townspeople dealt with the changes described above, during a period which saw the traditional mechanisms of local government change substantially and unfamiliar regulations imposed on provincial populations. As Pat Thane described, until the 1880s, 'the only agent of the central state whom the provincial citizen could regularly expect to encounter was the benign post office clerk' but from then onwards 'the visible power of the central state grew, as did demands for further growth'.[2] A system grounded in the local parish, where the decision makers had personal knowledge of those affected by their policies, became one whereby resolutions were taken centrally and cascaded to smaller units. James Chandler argued that this restructuring derived from the need 'to deal with the problems thrown up by the growth of cities, the need for a more mobile workforce, the social consequences of enclosures or the demand for improved systems of transport'.[3] Many of the circumstances listed by Chandler were not pertinent to Moreton, nonetheless its administration was subjected to change. Central government deemed the centuries-old parish system to be inefficient and not fit for purpose. Moreton's experience of these regular and persistent changes would mirror the situation in a myriad of other small towns. Everyday life in Moreton did not change in the same way that it had in growing cities and industrial towns, however the encroachment of rules and regulations, many designed for different circumstances, was a growing facet of local administration. New regulations did not always take account of the communities' ability to finance them. The situation in Moreton shows that when the opportunity arose to improve the community, the circumstances of smaller towns could be disregarded by central government. Those without the backing of wealthy people with influential personalities and drive, could be neglected. Moreton's history illustrates that on occasions they were overlooked merely because the total population fell short of an arbitrarily imposed threshold, whilst other instances happened due to lack of material resources.

The 19th century brought new local administrative procedures and greater enfranchisement. This provided opportunities for all residents to influence the affairs of their communities and to take part in decisions that affected their daily lives. E.P Thompson described in detail the persistent actions taken by workers in a range of

[1] P. Thane, 'Government and Society in England and Wales, 1750-1914', in F. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain 1750-1950*, *Vol.3, Social agencies and institutions,* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 1.
[2] Ibid, p. 2.
[3] J. Chandler, *Explaining Local Government: Local Government in Britain since 1800,* (Manchester, 2013), p. 49.

trades to organise themselves into unions in defiance of the Combination Acts.[4] Such experiences bred confidence to take on roles in local government. The impression from Moreton is that the residents were ill-equipped and not prepared to adopt the roles that would be created for them by the new administrative reforms. As seen in chapter one, most residents were indebted to the local landowner, either in respect of their accommodation or their means of making a living, and in many cases both. Autonomy appears alien to Moreton, where a pervading culture of paternalism and deference remained. Apart from some successful tradesmen, who became property owners and whose actions earned sufficient respect to deal on equal terms with the landed elite, there is little evidence that Moreton's residents were prepared to seize the opportunities available to them. Up until 1914, the profile of the people who made the decisions on behalf of the local community changed little from those in positions of authority 60 years before. Growing democratisation of the community, that is considered pivotal by many scholars of 19th century England, appears to be absent in Moreton.

Moreton's place in the hierarchy of local government was further complicated by a unique position, caused by both geographical and historic factors. These dynamics fostered a separate identity among the townspeople and those in local villages that appear to have governed its subsequent approach to local decisions and led to a sense of independence and disdain for centrally imposed decisions. As shown in chapter one, demographic metrics relating to endogamous marriage and attitudes to illegitimacy and pre-nuptial pregnancy differed from some other localities, which may indicate a sense of 'otherness'.

This chapter begins by considering the question of Moreton's unique identity brought about by its location. The second section considers the roles played by different members of the landed elite in the life of the town. Subsequently, rural politics and the workings of local government and law order are examined. Finally, a detailed account will be made of the protracted quest for water and viable sanitation. This encapsulated the issues faced by Moreton and possibly other places in bridging the gap between the needs of the population and the government, within the framework of new regulations.

Geographical Identity

The importance of physical landscape to the development and culture of its inhabitants has been accepted by both social scientists and historians and is a crucial aspect when considering Moreton.[5] Joan Thirsk promulgated the social importance of land types giving rise to distinct farming regions that transcended administrative

[4] Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, pp. 546-69.
[5] J. Lake, 'The English Pays: Approaches to Understanding and Characterising Landscapes and Places, *Landscapes*, 8/2, (2007), p. 36.

boundaries.[6] Over time, the concept was further developed using the French word *pays* to distinguish areas with similar practices, social structures and possible kinship connections.[7] In his biography of Moreton's 16th-century merchant, John Heritage, Dyer also detected this theme, succinctly summarised as follows,

> 'The landscape probably had a stronger influence than shires or hundreds on the sense of identity of the people who lived in and around Moreton. The combination of hills and valleys, pasture and arable, roads and rivers did not just provide people with a source of income, but also influenced their social organization, way of life, and their outlook. The term pays sums up the idea that the country can be divided into types of landscape which also had a particular social and cultural character'.[8]

Being in a lowland valley the everyday experiences of Moreton's inhabitants were markedly different from those living in the surrounding hills, especially when considering the vagaries of the seasons. As shown in figure 2, when prolonged rainfall caused water to gush from surrounding hills, coupled with the high water table, Moreton was subject to floods, an experience it shared with neighbouring riverside settlements. It is clear from research into Moreton in the second half of the 19th century that a distinct sense of a separate identity pervaded the town, and it was joined in this idea with other towns in the nearby counties. The concept of *pays* appears to correspond with this, and the experience of Moreton provides an important example to add to the relevant recent historiography of this theme.

A mile and a half to the east of Moreton is a stone column, the Four Shire Stone, figure 33. This monument, constructed c.1741, is significant to the unique identity of the area.[9] It marks the historic boundaries of Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Worcestershire, and Oxfordshire, with each county's name on the appropriate side of the column. Its longevity and cultural importance to the local area is underlined by evidence that a physical marking of boundaries on this spot has existed since Anglo-Saxon times, when the boundary was marked by four separate stones.[10] References to the stones, with depictions in maps and references in atlases and surveys, date from the 16th century onwards, as evidenced in figures 34 and 35.[11] The county

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[6] Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, p. 4.
[7] R. Jones and C. Dyer, *Farmers, Consumers, Innovators: The World of Joan Thirsk*, (Hatfield, 2016), pp. 9-32.
[8] Dyer, *A Country Merchant,* p. 59.
[9] D. Defoe & S Richardson, *A Tour Thro' The Whole Island of Great Britain,* 6th ed., Vol.2 (1762), p. 272.
[10] G. Grundy, *Saxon charters, and field names of Gloucestershire,* Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society, (1935), p. 128.
[11] Sheldon Tapestry Map, Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford, Gough Maps 262; J. Ogilby, *Britannia. volume The First: or an Illustration of the Kingdom of England and Dominion of Wales by a Geographical and Historical Description of the Principal Roads Thereof*, (London, 1675); Defoe & Richardson, *A Tour Thro' the Whole Island of Great Britain;* T. Habington, *A Survey of Worcestershire* Vol. 2, Worcestershire Historical Society, (1899), p. 65; S. Rudder, A *New History of Gloucestershire,* (Cirencester, 1779), p. 338.

boundaries, (figure 36) established, prior to Domesday, were extremely convoluted, relating to ecclesiastical land ownership and especially the extensive holdings in the area belonging to the see of Worcester, some of which, were detached units within neighbouring counties.[12] Again, this is underlined by Dyer who maintained that 'Heritage's country was…. the most fragmented and complicated in England'.[13] Over the course of the 19th and the early 20th centuries this patchwork became more streamlined, with Worcestershire's boundary being pushed westwards to the Cotswold escarpment. Considering the topography of the area, the east-west turnpike road that negotiated the escarpment, near Broadway, and the disjointed nature of the administrative experience for Moreton and other local towns, it is not surprising that the area developed its own identity focused away from the county towns.

Figure 33 The Four Shire Stone.[14]

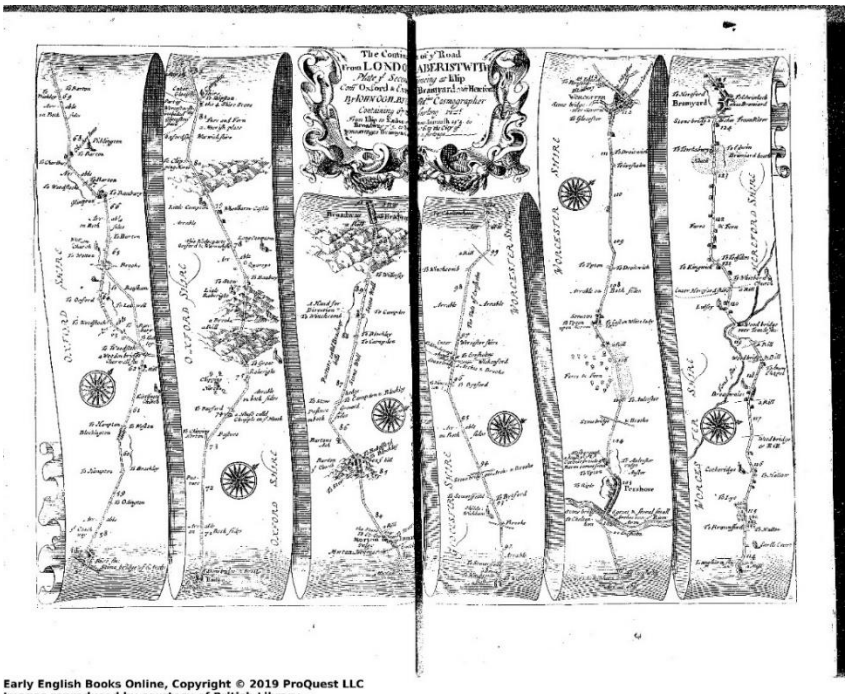


[12] H. Finberg, *Gloucestershire Studies,* (Leicester, 1957), p. 41; Anon, 'Parishes: Evenlode', in *A History of the County of Worcester:* Vol. 3, (London, 1913), *British History Online* http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/worcs/vol.3 pp. 347-352, (23 November 2022).
[13] Dyer, *A Country Merchant,* p. 54.
[14] K. Murphy, 2016.

Figure 34: Depiction of Four Shire Stone on the Sheldon map of Worcestershire c.1580.[15]



Figure 35: Depiction of Four Shire Stone on the Ogilby Britannia Atlas c.1675.[16]


Early English Books Online, Copyright © 2019 ProQuest LLC
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[15] Sheldon Tapestry Map.
[16] Ogilby, *Britannia.*

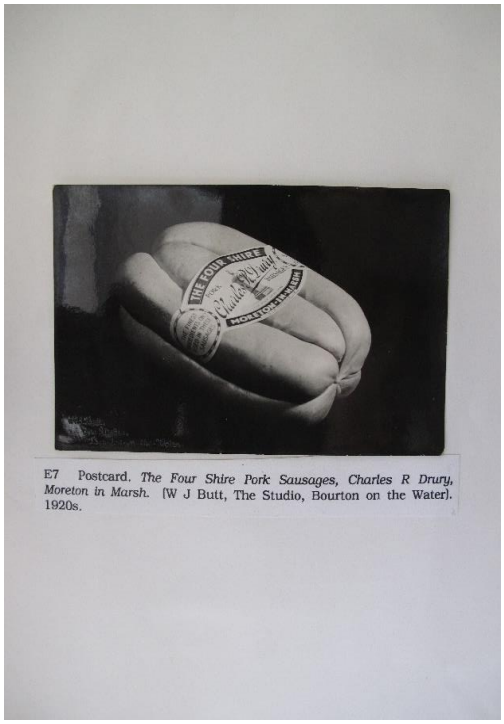
Figure 36: County boundaries of Gloucestershire, Warwickshire, Oxfordshire, and Worcestershire c.1830.[17]



The Four Shire stone is situated at one of the extremities of the *pays,* so its physical presence was of less significance for the other towns, however its name assumed importance to the separate identity of the whole area and to Moreton in particular. A lack of any locally written material means it is unclear whether the idea of a 'Four Shire(s)' identity was tangible prior to the beginnings of more widespread literacy. The concept manifests itself throughout the period in diverse ways and was especially promoted in the columns of *Evesham Journal*. The paper was established initially as *Evesham Journal and General Advertiser for Pershore, Alcester, Bidford, Broadway, Campden Blockley and the District,* but in 1883 it was changed to *Evesham Journal and Four Shires Advertiser.*[18] References were frequently made to events in the Four Shires, the effect of national news on the district in editorials and collections of articles describing how significant national events such as coronations, funerals or triumphant war celebrations were collectively commemorated.[19] Local social groups also used the term in the constitution of organisations that extended beyond the boundaries of one town. An example of this, still present today, is The Four Shires Guild of Bellringers, founded in 1909.[20] Advertisers adopted the term to describe the extent of distribution networks and one enterprising, or eccentric, Moreton butcher, C.R Drury, even developed Four Shire pork sausages.[21] This suggests an unusual extension of Snell's ideas on 'belonging' that went beyond parish boundaries.[22]

[17] S. Hall, *Glocestershire*, (London, 1830).
[18] *EJ,* 7 January 1883.
[19] Ibid., 21 June 1902.
[20] https://www.fourshiresguild.com/ (6 October 2023).
[21] GRO, D13668/1/2/1/6, Drury Family Photographs.
[22] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 475-6.

Figure 37: Four Shire Pork Sausages.[23]



E7 Postcard. *The Four Shire Pork Sausages, Charles R Drury, Moreton in Marsh.* [W J Butt, The Studio, Bourton on the Water]. 1920s.

Snell suggests that evidence of belonging or attachment to a particular place can be identified by the phrase 'of this parish' used on both gravestones and marriage certificates, which reached its height during the period 1860-1890 and was more prevalent in western areas.[24] The widespread use of local limestone for Moreton's gravestones, that is subject to acute erosion, makes it very difficult to test Snell's theory in relation to memorials. Of those that are readable only one could be found that used 'of this parish' and two which named the town.[25] Similarly, the phrase was not used for marriage certificates on which Moreton was used consistently through the period.[26] Although not employed in either memorials or parish records, it is interesting that the concept of the Four Shires was in customary use to a greater extent.

Throughout the entire period, Moreton remained physically within the Gloucestershire county boundary. However, this disguises the fluid nature of its own position within local administration and similarly the changing boundaries of the surrounding area. As shown in figure 1, the county town of Gloucester and the other major centre, Cheltenham, are more than 15 miles from Moreton. It is questionable whether the agrarian, work-related nature of life in Moreton led to any meaningful connections with the genteel and leisure-centric life that was developing at the time in Cheltenham.

[23] Ibid.
[24] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 475-6.
[25] Thomas Hemming d. 1854 (St David's Churchyard), Ralph Freeman d.1878, John Slatter d. 1881 (Moreton Church Cemetery).
[26] *Ancestry, GRO,* P221/1/IN/1/7; P221/1/IN/1/8.

Of greater significance is that both towns are on the western side of the imposing Cotswold hills, with steep escarpments on both sides. The two major roads passing through Moreton were the one that followed the Roman road, the Fosseway, towards Cirencester, turnpiked in 1755, and the London to Worcester road, turnpiked in 1731.[27] Rev. Francis Witts' diaries between 1783 and 1854 provide a daily account of the weather and instances of the difficulties for contemporary travellers on the Cotswold lanes, which were especially hard to negotiate for horse-drawn coaches during winter months.[28] The lack of direct and easily negotiable road communication to Gloucester appears to have contributed further to the serious dislocation on both sides between Moreton and its county town. This situation was intensified with the coming of the railways providing Moreton with an early link to Stratford, via the tramway and later a direct link, via the Great Western Railway, to the larger towns of Evesham and Oxford, both in neighbouring counties.[29] Initially, to reach the county town of Gloucester by rail involved a long journey, via Worcester with the need to change not only trains but to walk between the city's two stations.[30] Later in the century, with the development of branch lines, the journey involved a series of changes that may have shortened the distance but not the time involved.[31] Figure 1 reinforces the concept of the Four Shires *pays* by underlining the shared lowland experiences with Shipston, Evesham and Stratford.

Having established the existence of connections with communities outside Gloucestershire, the local repercussions following the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834 entrenched the position further. Steven King highlights the mistakes and miscalculations caused by the rush to unionization across the country and Moreton appears a casualty of this.[32] Its fate within the county's administrative hierarchy was sealed by the decision to make Stow the centre of the newly formed PLU, which was to cover the northern part of the county. There is little extant documentation relating to the discussions which took place and it is a major omission in the diary of one of the disputes main protagonists, Francis Witts, the rector of Upper Slaughter.[33] David Gowing implies that the discussions were protracted and intense with Moreton's cause being forcefully pleaded by the relatively young Lord Redesdale, but this was ultimately in vain and the battle was lost.[34] The decision effectively formalised the situation already described, as not only did Moreton fail to become the centre of the PLU, but it did not remain a part of it either. Instead, it was annexed to Shipston, at

[27] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[28] F. Witts, *The Complete Diary of a Cotswold Parson: Imperium in Imperio, Vol.5*, A. Sutton, (ed.) (Stroud, 2008), p. 88, p. 90, p. 271, p. 280.
[29] Norris, *The Stratford and Moreton Tramway;* J. Boynton, *The Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Railway*, (Kidderminster, 2002), p. 49.
[30] Boynton*, The Oxford, Worcester & Wolverhampton Railway.*
[31] J. Russell, *The Banbury and Cheltenham Railway 1887-1962*, (Poole, 1977).
[32] S. King, *Poverty and Welfare in England, 1700-1850, A Regional Perspective,* (Manchester, 2000), p. 234.
[33] Witts, *The Complete Diary of a Cotswold Parson,* vols. 4&5, covering 1834.
[34] D. Gowing, 'Migration in Gloucestershire 1662-1865*',* (PhD. thesis, University of Southampton, 1979)*,* pp. 167-8.

that time in a detached part of Worcestershire, but with a section of Warwickshire between it and Moreton.[35] It is unlikely that the decision was based on any belief that the town was more orientated to its northern neighbour and the decision gives the impression that central government paid scant heed to the historic location of the town, merely acting out of convenience. For the next 55 years, until the Local Government Act of 1889, Moreton's local administration was isolated and orientated away from the county town, being focused on Shipston, the venue for most meetings. To a certain extent this led to the development of petty political rivalries that had the potential to be detrimental to the town.

From the above, one can conclude that Moreton's geographical position and topography played a crucial role in its communication links with other towns and led to the fostering of a separate identity, from that of the county to which it was linked administratively. Decisions taken by outside agencies that excluded Moreton from the mainstream county administration further contributed to this concept of distinctiveness.

The Landed Elite

The geographical isolation of the area and the distance from major population centres may have exacerbated the accumulation of land in the hands of a few wealthy families, a trend Reay highlighted in other regions.[36] As explained in chapter one, and illustrated again in figure 38, land in Moreton and the surrounding area was shared between two families, with the third-ranking holder owning just over a quarter of that of the second family. The return listed ownership in different counties, admirably demonstrating the convoluted boundaries already discussed. By the time of *the Lloyd George Survey* in 1909, as explained in chapter one, the ownership of Sezincote had passed to James Dugdale and the estate holdings in the town had been sold off, leaving only one large farm in the parish. These events cemented the Batsford Estate's position as the majority landholder in the town, as figure 39 shows. At a time of growing democratisation, Moreton's townspeople remained in a relationship with the local landowner that was not markedly different from that of the previous centuries.

[35] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton-in-Marsh'.
[36] B. Reay, *Rural Englands, Labouring Lives in the Nineteenth Century,* (Basingstoke, 2004), pp. 11-13.

Figure 38: Landownership in and around Moreton 1873.[37]

Name	Acreage (nearest 100 acres)	Where held
Lord Redesdale (Batsford)	6,800	Gloucestershire Oxfordshire Worcestershire
Sir Charles Rushout (Sezincote)	4,000	Gloucestershire Worcestershire
William Jones	1,100	Oxfordshire
William Hitchman	400	Oxfordshire Warwickshire
Thomas Horne	200	Gloucestershire

Figure 39: Landownership in the Parish of Moreton 1909.[38]

Name	Acreage
Lord Redesdale	506
James Dugdale (Sezincote)	153
John Bowes-Lyon	76

The proximity to Moreton of landed estates enhanced the paternalistic relationship between their owners and the town. Later in the century, the phenomenon of successful businessmen retiring to the countryside, purchasing estates from impoverished families, and buying into this concept is explored by Mark Rothery and illustrated by James Dugdale's acquisition of Sezincote.[39] A palpable sense of paternalism can be gleaned from both the actions of the landowners and newspaper reports of the time. David Roberts, commenting on the paternalism of the earlier part of the century, set out the basic tenets of such a relationship, emphasizing the importance of the landowner in performing three principal duties: ruling, guiding, and helping. By doing so, protection was provided for those in less advantageous positions. In practice following such a set of guidelines translated into acting as a magistrate, keeping the peace in whatever manner was required; supporting the clergy in their efforts to uphold local morals; assisting with education in the locality and aiding the poor. In return the poor were expected to be prompt, polite and conscientious.[40] Joseph Arch's contemporary account of the pecking order for receiving holy communion in Barford, 18 miles from Moreton, demonstrates how this relationship was reinforced each week.[41] David Eastwood described these elaborate rituals,

[37] *Return of Owners of Land.*
[38] www.glos1909survey.org.uk (21 February 2023).
[39] M. Rothery, 'The Wealth of the English Landed Gentry, 1870-1935', *The Agricultural History Review*, 55/2, (2007), pp. 251–268.
[40] Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, pp. 5-6.
[41] J. Arch, *Joseph Arch: The Story of His Life Told by Himself,* (England, 1898), p. 20.

usually performed at the Parish Church, as articulating, 'a social structure resting upon a complex, sometimes intuitively understood, ideology of deference', which is markedly different from the working class dissatisfaction described by Thompson.[42] There are no extant sources to suggest that the townspeople of Moreton did anything to challenge this attitude. *Moreton Free Press* positioned itself as anti-establishment when commenting on national issues but refrained from any direct criticism of the local elite.[43] The limited copies available for scrutiny carry reports displaying respect for the residents of both estates.[44]

The Batsford Estate lands extended to the town's boundaries, including a small entrance lodge behind the High Street, as seen in figure 4, and stretched to the north and east of Moreton as far as the Warwickshire village of Great Wolford. The Sezincote Estate, abutting Batsford to the west of the town, extended in an arc to the south. In 1873 it was owned by Sir Charles Rushout and by 1909, James Dugdale.[45] In accordance with Roberts and Rothery's arguments, it is probable that most Moreton residents paid rent to one or other of these landowners and an equally high number were employed by them as labourers on their estates. By looking at the lives and careers of the individuals who owned these estates it is evident that Moreton experienced different contributions from them towards the local administration of the area. Aspects of the traditional paternalistic approach, as evidenced by Roberts, can be seen in both Batsford and Sezincote for the whole study period.

The Batsford Estate

The connection between Moreton and the Batsford Estate is a constant factor in the town's history. It is impossible to trace a direct family line of ownership and on three occasions, the estate was passed to a nephew or cousin, some of whom took the family name of Freeman or Mitford.[46] Although, the connection with Batsford was recent in terms of lineage, there can be no doubt that the successive owners of the estate exerted an important influence over many aspects of the town and the fortunes of its people. Both the first and second barons were instrumental in the development of the railway in Moreton, the first in connection with the Moreton to Stratford tramway and the second during the construction of the Oxford, Worcester, Wolverhampton Railway (OWWR) and later as one of its chairmen. During the second half of the 19th century, there were two residents of Batsford. Both were influential in Moreton life, and both demonstrated by their actions, and by the way the local people reacted to them, that the paternalism and reflected deference, described by Roberts, lasted into the second decade of the 20th century. The extent of the esteem in which the residents

[42] D. Eastwood, *Government and Community in the English Provinces, 1700-1870,* (Basingstoke, 1997), p. 29; Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class*, p. 222.
[43] *Moreton Free Press* (Moreton in Marsh), 9 October 1869, 30 October 1869.
[44] *MFP,* 25 September 1869, 18 November 1882, 29 May 1886.
[45] *Return of Owners of Land;* www.glos1909survey.org.uk (21 February 2023).
[46] Batsford Park, https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1000431 (18 May 2021).

held the Mitfords was evidenced during the debate about changing the town's name, which will be discussed later, and one suggestion mooted was 'Moreton Mitford'.[47]

John Freeman-Mitford, Earl of Redesdale (1805-1886)

In 1850 Batsford was tenanted by John Freeman-Mitford, created Earl of Redesdale in 1877, who later purchased the estate.[48] Parliamentary interests meant he spent prolonged periods in London, which is confirmed by his absence from Batsford on every census night apart from 1861.[49] Other than newspaper and parliamentary papers, there are very few surviving contemporary accounts of Lord Redesdale's activities. His obituary in *Evesham Journal,* which drew on other newspapers and local observations, provides the most detailed account of his activities. One must acknowledge that the nature of this narrative would naturally paint the subject in a favourable light, however, other isolated accounts together with local government minutes do support the position taken.

Evesham Journal's obituary of Lord Redesdale painted a picture of a man whose demeanour and dress recalled the tastes and habits of a much earlier period,

> 'In costume, he was the last to adhere to the old Whig uniform – blue coat with brass buttons, buff waistcoat and dark blue trousers, habitually worn by Charles Fox……Either in summer or winter, in rain or shine, no man ever saw Lord Redesdale with gloves on his hands, with an umbrella over his head, or with any other garments than the above-mentioned suit. It was his uniform practice to wear low shoes which looked like dancing pumps, with white cotton stockings instead of boots. With this very insufficient covering upon his feet, he would walk across the muddiest of streets and when on a visit to his friends in the country he went out shooting in the tall chimney-pot hat and in the very same garb which he habitually wore in St James's Street'.[50]

This description firmly places him in an earlier era, where the ideals of paternalism remained strong and explains what guided him in his dealings with Moreton and its inhabitants. An entry in Disraeli's diary, for 28 August 1880, also provides an illuminating, and the only uncomplimentary, verdict on him, stating that he 'has many excellent qualities and talents, but is narrow minded, prejudiced and utterly

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[47] *EJ,* 9 February 1889.
[48] L. Sanders & H. Matthew, 'Mitford, John Thomas Freeman, First Earl of Redesdale (1805–1886), Politician', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (2004); C.R. Elrington, 'Parishes: Bourton on the Hill', in *A History of the County of Gloucester Vol. 6*, (ed.) C.R. Elrington (London, 1965), pp. 197-206.
[49] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class HO107 Piece: 1476, Folio: 84*,* p. 18; 1861, RG 9, Piece: 2238*,* Folio: 70, p. 16*;* 1871*,* Piece: 100*,* Folio: 7*8,* p. 46*,* Class: RG11, Piece: 3111; 1881, Folio: 69, p. 17; Class: RG11, Piece: 95*,* Folio: 58, p. 19*.*
[50] *EJ,* 8 May 1886.

unconscious of what is going on in the country, its wishes, opinions or feelings'.[51] His anachronistic appearance, interests and Disraeli's verdict go a long way to explain how his interaction with Moreton, while extremely benevolent, was contrary to the entrepreneurial spirit of the age. At a crucial time in the country's manufacturing and commercial development, fate dictated that Moreton's patron was unqualified to provide leadership in any economic, technological or industrial enterprise. This underlines the importance of personal aptitude and vision in a town's success, such as was the case with William Bliss, a mill owner in nearby Chipping Norton, whose enterprise won national and international recognition and who was instrumental in the construction of a railway branch line to the town, as well as the provision of quality housing and leisure facilities for his workers.[52]

Nonetheless, Lord Redesdale used both his talents and fortune in other ways to benefit the town and its inhabitants. Although not born in Gloucestershire, he assumed the position of paternalistic benefactor in the traditional manner expected of families with historic connections to a particular place. *Evesham Journal* gave Lord Redesdale credit for the arrival of the railway, stating that, 'by his influence the first-class railway accommodation, which has proved so advantageous to the place, was secured'.[53] The railway's construction facilitated his own journey to and from Gloucestershire, so it may be questioned whether his interest was entirely altruistic. However, it is likely to have meant that more of Lord Redesdale's time was spent at Batsford, which enabled him to have greater involvement in the local community. He was instrumental in addressing the impasse that led to the railway construction work being halted in the summer of 1849, described in more detail in chapter five. One imagines that the strongly worded letter to *Jackson's Oxford Journal,* drew on the skills honed daily in parliament.[54]

From its founding, *Evesham Journal* provides the primary record of Lord Redesdale's financial and social patronage towards the town, from donations to the drum and fife band and the soup kitchen to more substantial initiatives such as building the new boys' school and supplying and funding the cost of water to a drinking trough in the town centre.[55] Other instances of his benevolence: paying half the cost of the church tower and spire and the installation of the clock in the tower, are evident from extant vestry minutes and other local government committees.[56] As well as the substantial financial endowment to the boys' school in Moreton, both Lord Redesdale and his sister were attentive supporters of education in the town, making regular visits to see work in progress, instituting and presenting annual prizes to the pupils, and

[51] W. Monypenny & G. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield*, *Vol. 6*, (London, 1920), p. 589.
[52] Hurrell, *The Bliss Mill.*
[53] *EJ,* 8 May 1886.
[54] *JOJ,* 8 September 1849.
[55] *EJ,* 1 December 1860, 15 February 1879, 25 December 1880, 17 February 1877.
[56] *JOJ,* 2 April 1859; GRO, P221a/PC2/1 Lighting Committee Minutes, July 1875.

participating in events to indulge the children.[57] Interest in self-improvement for all was manifest in his presidency of the reading room. Likewise, he was also prepared to gift portions of the estate, on the edge of the town, for facilities for the benefit of the community. In 1855, he facilitated access to the new railway station by demolition of houses he owned on High Street and the construction of a road to the station. During the early 1870s he gifted land on the eastern side of the estate for the construction of the hospital and was one of its major subscribers.[58] Anne Hattersley described such activities in Northumberland demonstrating that they were not unique to Moreton.[59] However they compare favourably to Jones's accounts of the actions of the Duke of Beaufort in Usk.[60]

Redesdale's most important contribution to the town and surrounding area was his enduring and meticulous attention to welfare for over 50 years. His reaction to the 1834 decision to base the PLU in Stow, rather than Moreton, is undocumented, but from then until his death he committed himself to the Shipston PLU, being chairman for over half a century. This situation chimes with Anthony Brundage's findings in Northamptonshire, where the 1834 Act, unlike in urban settings, appeared to reinforce the position of the larger local landowners.[61] On his death a letter from W. Stanley, of Chipping Campden, a co-guardian, to *Evesham Journal* described 'his lordship's arduous attention to the business of the board'. Stanley also related his quick grasp of decisions taken in his absence and his reluctance to rubberstamp policy with which he disagreed.[62] In the last decade of his life, the same skills were extended to the foundation of the hospital, overseeing its construction, and advising on its initial management.

When in residence at Batsford he helped in other administrative roles including chairing the meetings of the vestry.[63] *Evesham Journal* attributes the success of Moreton cricket club to Lord Redesdale's influence and generosity in providing it with suitable facilities, whose maintenance he funded.[64] As befitted the local landowner Lord Redesdale was an enduring presence on the hunting field, supporting all three local hunts, making him an accessible presence to all classes of people in the area. Likewise, he was a prominent supporter of traditional agricultural events: the summer Agricultural Society Show and winter Fat Stock Show. Finally, his presence at social events in the town was highly valued by the residents, increasing the overall attendance and ticket sales.[65]

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[57] GRO, S221/3/1, Moreton Infant's School Logbook, 1863-1883.
[58] GRO, P221/VE, Vestry Minutes; *MFP*, 17 May 1873.
[59] A. Hattersley, 'Paternalism and Education on Landed Estates in Rural Northumberland, 1850-1900', *Northern History*, 44/1, (2007), pp. 111-131.
[60] Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 192.
[61] A. Brundage, 'The Landed Interest and the New Poor Law: A Reappraisal of the Revolution in Government', *The English Historical Review*, 87/342 (1972), pp. 45-46.
[62] *EJ,* 8 May 1886.
[63] Ibid.*,* 14 February 1874; GRO, P221/VE.
[64] *MFP,* 10 May 1873, *EJ,* 3 May 1884.
[65] Ibid., 10 February 1877, 22 April 1882.

Despite a short family connection to Batsford and Moreton, John Freeman-Mitford worked hard to fulfil the traditional paternalistic role expected of the local landowner. That he succeeded in these efforts is demonstrated in *Evesham Journal's* editorial following his death, which aptly summarised the esteem in which he was held,

> 'His independence and honesty are universally admired, while those who knew him best could testify that beneath his uncompromising exterior was to be found a spring of kindly sympathy which could always be relied on when real need arose. The noble earl's death will create a void especially in the management of local institutions of the Moreton district, which it will be very difficult, if possible [*sic*], adequately to fill'.[66]

His affection for Batsford and Moreton can be detected in the estate being chosen as his final resting place. As could be anticipated, the account of the transfer of his body from his London home to Moreton and the spectacle and pomp of the funeral was recounted in detail by *Evesham Journal.*[67]

Algernon Bertram Freeman-Mitford, Baron Redesdale of Redesdale in Northumberland (1837-1916).

On John Freeman-Mitford's death, in 1886, the peerage became extinct. Ownership of Batsford and the other properties together with a considerable fortune, again passed to a cousin, Algernon Mitford, a well-travelled career diplomat and civil servant, on condition that he add 'Freeman' to his name. Within weeks of his arrival in Moreton, Algernon Freeman-Mitford embarked on acquiring the attributes pertinent to being a landowner and a major influence in the lives of his tenants and the local people. The template set down by his cousin was followed to some extent: he was proposed as a magistrate by the end of May 1886 and the following January took over the role as president and trustee of the Moreton Cottage Hospital.[68] He eschewed involvement with the vestry and the PLU but in 1889 took the opportunity, provided by the 1888 Local Government Act imposing an additional layer of local administration, to be proposed as a county councillor for the Moreton division of Gloucestershire County Council. He was elected unopposed and, until his retirement in 1902, frequently championed the causes of agriculture and farmers and expressed the views and ideas of his electors at council meetings.[69] In view of the town's dislocation and distance from Gloucester it would be interesting to know how these contributions were viewed by his fellow county councillors. One must also speculate as to whether the unopposed election was effectively a verdict on the town's disillusionment with this additional layer of local government.

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[66] Ibid., 8 May 1886.
[67] Ibid.
[68] *EJ,* 29 May 1886; 22 January 1887.
[69] Ibid., 2 February 1889, *Western Daily Press* (Yeovil), 4 March 1892; *Cheltenham Chronicle* (Cheltenham), 26 February 1898, *Western Daily Press* (Bristol), 14 April 1891.

Freeman-Mitford's brief excursion into politics in the 1890s appears further proof of Moreton's dislocated position within Gloucestershire's administration and its natural orientation northwards. Moreton was part of the Cirencester parliamentary constituency, whose MP was the Liberal, Arthur Winterbotham. However, in April 1891 Freeman-Mitford was proposed as the Conservative candidate for Stratford, some 15 miles away, to replace the retiring Conservative MP. In the election of July 1892, he won the seat with a majority of 864 votes, the news conveyed to Moreton by carrier pigeon and plans immediately set in motion for him to be greeted by a large crowd on his arrival at Moreton station. Following that, his brougham was drawn by hand to the Redesdale Hall for a formal reception during which an address was presented to him from the Conservative and Unionists of the town.[70] This underlines Freeman-Mitford's personal standing in Moreton, as a few days later, Winterbotham was returned as Moreton's MP. Freeman-Mitford's maiden speech in the House of Commons championed reduced railway fares for agricultural goods, reflecting his background in Moreton rather than as the representative of a semi-urban Midlands constituency. The reasons for Freeman-Mitford's 1895 decision to retire from parliament are unclear and one may speculate whether he appreciated the dislocation of his position. In 1902, as part of Edward VII's coronation honours list, he was raised to the peerage, reviving the title granted to his great-great uncle, an event that was greeted with enthusiasm by the local press.[71] This signalled the end of his career as a County Councillor and granted him regular access to Westminster, without the responsibilities of a constituency.

Algernon Freeman-Mitford was responsible for a considerable transformation in both the physical aspects of the estate and within the wider neighbourhood. Batsford became his and his family of nine children's primary residence for the next 20 years.[72] His previous career as a diplomat and later Secretary of the Board of Works influenced the decisions made concerning both the estate and the town. He embarked on major reconstruction works to the house at Batsford, being one of the few landowners to take advantage of a government scheme to fund these and also being an early adopter of domestic electric lighting.[73] The garden was transformed into a specialist collection of non-native trees and shrubs, knowledge of which had been acquired during postings abroad.[74] In addition to the works on the estate, no time was wasted in establishing a lasting memorial to his predecessor. Within two weeks of Lord Redesdale's death, he proposed the construction of a centrally positioned, multi-purpose building, named in his memory, for the benefit of the townspeople.[75] The scheme was brought to fruition within 18 months, with a lavish opening ceremony conducted by Sir Michael Hicks-

[70] *EJ,* 16 July 1892.
[71] Ibid*.,* 26 July 1902.
[72] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 41, p. 1; 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 2946, Folio: 41, p. 4.
[73] Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century,* p. 321; *EJ,* 3 Mar 1888.
[74] E. Gosse, & H. Matthew, 'Mitford, Algernon Bertram Freeman - First Baron Redesdale (1837–1916), Diplomatist and Author', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (2004).
[75] *EJ*, 22 May 1886.

Beach, previously MP for the county constituency of East Gloucestershire, attended by local dignitaries. Jon Stobart writes extensively about symbolism in the design of public buildings. This ceremony mirrors those described by Stobart in Burslem and certainly fulfils his description of a, ‘gilt-edged opportunity to indulge in ritual and performance’.[76] This imposing building in the centre of Moreton dramatically changed the physical features of the town and was an enduring presence in its social life that served to remind the residents of the tight bonds with the Redesdale family. As is evident in figures 40 and 41, he exercised his arboreal expertise to landscape the area surrounding the building with avenues of trees, thereby enhancing the ambience of the town, that has lasted into the 21st century.

Figure 40: The Redesdale Hall, Moreton.[77]

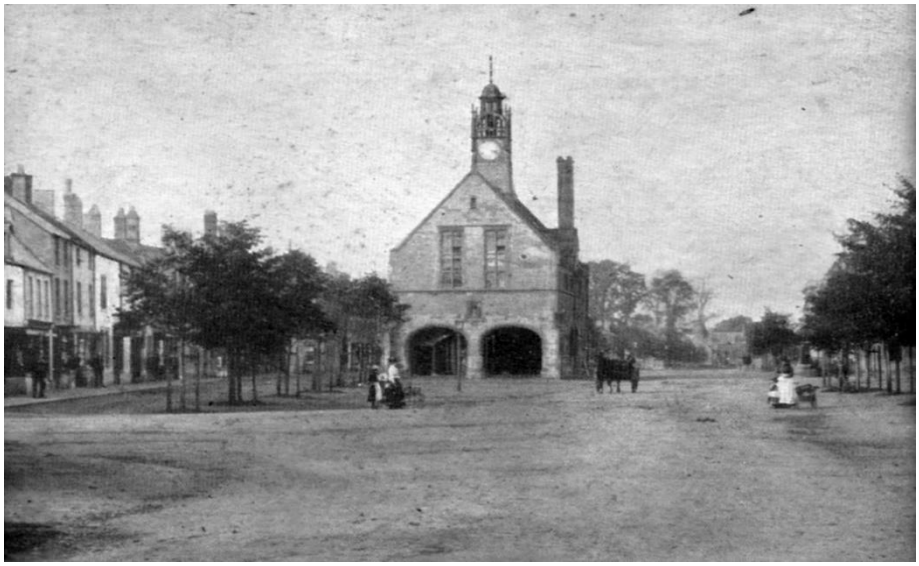


Figure 41: View from the Redesdale Hall.[78]



Looking down the Fosseway to the Fields Beyond

[76] *MFP,* 3 December 1887, J. Stobart, ‘Building an Urban Identity, Cultural Space and Civic Boosterism in a 'New' Industrial Town: Burslem, 1761-1911’, *Social History*, 29/4 (2004) p. 494.
[77] MMHSA.
[78] Ibid.

Freeman-Mitford's *Times* obituary commented, 'with him disappears one of the most picturesque and courtly figures in the social life of the last half-century'.[79] His reputation as a socialite, with a wide circle of acquaintances, meant that Batsford was the venue for house parties, raising the profile of both the estate and town, the apogee of which was a visit by Edward VII in 1905. Photographs of this event demonstrate the excitement felt in the town with crowds in celebratory mood thronging the streets, as can be seen in figure 42.

Figure 42: Moreton High St, during King Edward VII's visit 1905.[80]



In contrast to the more austere atmosphere of John Freeman-Mitford, under Algernon, the house and estate had been rejuvenated with his wife and children becoming a persistent positive presence in the life of Moreton. As happened across the country the family were involved in philanthropic works with the house and gardens being used for community events and to provide hospitality to the tenants.[81] Lady Mitford's influence was evident in many strands of Moreton life: with many gifts to the hospital, the workhouse, regular school visiting and providing treats for local children.[82] More imaginatively she instituted an annual project to bring poor children from London for holidays in the country, simultaneously providing extra income for the local villagers, by paying them for the children's board and lodgings, as well as broadening their horizons by providing them with an insight into the life experiences of others.[83] The younger members of the Mitford family provided an additional dynamic in the town, as recounted in *Evesham Journal,*

[79] *The Times*, 18 August 1916, p. 11.
[80] MMHSA.
[81] J. Gerard, 'Lady Bountiful: Women of the Landed Classes and Rural Philanthropy', *Victorian Studies*, 30/2 (1987), pp. 183-210.
[82] GRO, HO30 50/1 Moreton Hospital Visitors' Book; WRO, CR51/1084, Shipston on Stour PLU Masters' Reports, 1897; *EJ,* 9 Mar 1895.
[83] *Leamington Spa Courier,* 1 August 1891.

> 'the young ladies of Batsford have shown the greatest sympathy with the poorer people of Moreton, Bourton on the Hill, and the other villages, together with help of the most practical kind. The many visits which they are in the habit of paying to the cottagers and the joy and pleasure which they carry with them have gladdened and brightened many a home; indeed, it is impossible to say too much about the good the daughters of Lord and Lady Redesdale have done'.[84]

Frances Mitford, the eldest daughter, instituted projects on her own account: cookery, sewing and dancing classes for young girls and reviving an annual fruit and flower show at Batsford.[85] Of most interest was her scholarship of £10 for local children to attend a private school in Moreton and to receive a bursary of up to £50 on successfully finishing their education, enabling them to acquire professional training away from the town.[86] The younger male members were less visible in the local community but no opportunities were lost to publicly acknowledge milestones in their lives: the majority of the heir, Clement Mitford in 1897 and the safe return of both him and his younger brother, David, from the Boer War in 1902, evoked public displays of pride in the family.[87]

The paternalistic relationship also relied on the submissiveness of the tenants and local people towards the landowners.[88] *Evesham Journal* provides numerous examples of this towards the Freeman-Mitfords throughout the period. The report that amply demonstrates the esteem in which the family were held was part of the account of Frances Mitford's wedding in 1907,

> 'Lord and Lady Redesdale and their family are held in the very highest regard by the whole of their neighbours, rich and poor and are exceedingly popular with everybody. The fact is so well known that it is quite unnecessary for us to enlarge upon the subject'.[89]

It must be recognised that there is no surviving contemporary comment from any of the Batsford estate tenants or employees and that the available evidence stems from celebratory accounts in local newspapers. From these it shows that Algernon Freeman-Mitford attempted to fulfil the role of paternalistic landowner but his inefficient management of some local meetings demonstrated the limits of his capabilities.[90] As will be seen later in the chapter, his actions in relation to the water issues showed that on occasions he could follow the establishment line rather than fighting it on behalf of the local interest. Despite this, surviving evidence suggests, he was accorded the

[84] *EJ,* 4 May 1907.
[85] Ibid.*,* 9 Mar 1895.
[86] Ibid.*,* 19 November 1904.
[87] *EJ,* 18 December 1897; 9 November 1901; 17 May 1902.
[88] Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England,* p. 6.
[89] *EJ,* 4 May 1907.
[90] Ibid., 22 April 1893, 1 December 1894; *JOJ,* 26 November 1892.

utmost respect by the townspeople. This relationship is crucial to understanding the nature of life in Moreton during the second half of the 19th century.

The Sezincote Estate

In the mid-19th century, the Cockerell/Rushout family at Sezincote complemented the role played by the Redesdales. This family also lacked longevity in the area, dating back only to 1795, when the estate was acquired. A house was constructed that reflected the Indian source of the family fortune and was the inspiration for the Brighton Pavilion.[91] Like the Mitfords, the acquisition of further wealth, through marriage, was conditional upon a change of surname. An equally paternalistic stance was adopted by the family, supporting local organisations and social events: the cottage hospital, volunteer brigades, local military bands and an archery society in addition to regularly providing their tenants with hospitality and leisure opportunities.[92] The family was also crucial to the renowned annual Moreton Steeplechases which took place on the estate lands and brought valuable business to the town's economy.[93] In comparison with John Freeman-Mitford, the Rushouts give an impression of permanence in that there were no distractions with parliament or absences in London. Sezincote was their main residence at which they maintained a large household as evidenced by the census information in 1851, with 36 household members and 19 in 1861, by which time their children had left home.[94] As described in chapter one, this situation was not sustained: in 1869, Charles Rushout died and within 13 years both his heir and his wife had died before their 40th birthdays, with their teenage son inheriting. As an indication of the problems faced by landed estates at the time, in 1884 the 3700-acre estate was sold for £100,000, half its original valuation, after being subject to three unsuccessful auctions.[95]

Sezincote fitted the profile set out by Peter Shipley of the type of estate that was most desired by newly retired industrialists, in that it was primarily agricultural and eminently suitable for hunting.[96] The latter characteristic was attested by multiple local news reports of hunting meets and in the *Sporting Gazette,* where it was described, 'as a sporting and residential property it is one of the best in the West of England'.[97] Equally its new owner, James Tertius Dugdale, fitted the profile identified by David Brown, of the successful industrialist using his wealth to acquire social prestige.[98] The Dugdale family had roots in Lancashire, James's birthplace being Whalley. His family's

[91] www.sezincote.co.uk (25 January 2023).
[92] *JOJ*, 2 March 1861; 21 January 1865.
[93] *JOJ*, 1 February 1851.
[94] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 1970, Folio: 364, p. 11; *1*861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 1790, Folio: 131, p. 31.
[95] *EJ,* 31 July 1880; *Cheltenham Looker On,* (Cheltenham, England) 4 October 1884.
[96] P. Shipley, 'Old Wealth or New Money? The Landed Classes of Mid-Victorian Leicestershire'. *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society,* 85 (2011), pp. 142-143.
[97] 'Estate Sales' *The Sporting Gazette*, 26 July 1884, p. 945, (19th Century UK Periodicals).
[98] D. Brown, 'New men of wealth and the purchase of land in Great Britain and Ireland, 1780-1879' *Agricultural History Review*, 63/2, (2015), pp. 286-310.

fortunes and social standing progressed from his father being a 'calico printer' in 1851 to James, in 1881, aged only 46, demonstrating his aspirations to move away from his cotton manufacturing roots by describing himself as a 'J.P., Col. of 3rd Lancs. Volunteers and a farmer of 15 acres, employing 11 labourers'.[99] Brown highlighted the influence of Dugdale's wife in persuading him to escape the smoke around his cotton factory for Sezincote. He lost no time in establishing his desire to be an accepted part of the local elite by being appointed a Gloucestershire magistrate within months of his purchase of the estate.[100] It is evident that to fulfil the role he, too, was keen to enter into the paternalistic benevolence in return for deference contract, described by Roberts.

The Dugdales remained at Sezincote for the next 30 years, embracing their position within local society and forging a family alliance with an established local gentry family, when their eldest son married the daughter of Colonel Arnold, of Adlestrop.[101] Like the Redesdales and the Rushouts, they fulfilled their obligations to the local community by making donations to charitable causes, assisting with the administration of the hospital, visiting schools and patronising sports clubs and social events in the town.[102] In return the local community accorded them the same esteem shown to the Freeman-Mitfords as witnessed upon the return of both their younger sons following service in the Boer War in 1902: each was met at Moreton station by a deputation of the parish council and other dignitaries where a formal public address was delivered, lauding their accomplishments in the service of the country.[103]

Magistracy

Another dynamic of local administration was the nexus relating to the management of law and order which brought the landed elite into regular contact with members of the local community. For centuries, the magistracy had been the preserve of local landowners and the clergy but as John Tomlinson demonstrated, over the course of the 19th century the latter's involvement waned.[104] As will be demonstrated in Moreton, opportunities arose later for these roles to be filled by tradesmen and professionals. Local justice extended its activities to cover ever-increasing legislative dictates from central government that will be considered in more detail later in this chapter. These are evidence of the adjustments needed to the life of small rural towns

[99]. *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2252, Folio: 351, p. 59; 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 3073, Folio: 24, p. 4; 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 4151, Folio: 118, p. 49. 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 4155, Folio: 20A, p. 35.
[100] Brown, 'New Men of Wealth', referencing B Hall, 'Lower House and The Dugdales' (1976), p.25; *Gloucester Citizen,* (Gloucester), 3 December 1884.
[101] *Ancestry,* Gloucestershire, Church of England Parish Registers, P5 IN 1/10.
[102] *EJ,* 5 November 1892; GRO, HO30/8/1-75, Annual Reports of Moreton Cottage Hospital, 1893, 1903, 1913; *EJ,* 17 February 1912.
[103] *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 2 August 1902; *Burnley Express* (Burnley), 27 August 1902.
[104] Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England,* p. 5; J. Tomlinson,. 'The Decline of the Clerical Magistracy in the Nineteenth-Century English Midlands', *Studies in Church History* 56 (2020), pp. 419–433.

that were caused by developments outside their orbit, but which impacted on their everyday lives.

In 1850, Moreton's magistrates fulfilled the traditional landowning/clerical profile set out by Roberts, comprising major local landowners, or their close family, (Redesdale, Rushout, and Dugdale) and clergy (the Rectors of Moreton, Great Wolford and Lower Lemington).[105] However, by the 1890s there is evidence of a shift away from the clergy towards a more diverse group, including local professionals such as Drs. John Moore and Mark Style, retired army officers, Col. Stanley Arnold and Maj. Vicesimus Knox, retired industrialist, Milne Barnsley and finally the acceptance of local tradesmen, such as Arthur Horne whose provenance had been established by his family's loyal service to the town.[106] Undoubtedly the magistrates' attendance at the Petty Sessions was governed by other commitments and, despite the more varied profile of the later magistrates, this skewed the regularity of attendance in favour of those with the most free time, namely Dugdale, Rushout, Arnold and Knox.[107] Effectively this meant that the defendants appeared before individuals whose profile was not vastly different from the magistrates of the early part of the century. Despite a more democratic bench by the end of the century, people who may have had daily contact with potential offenders and have appreciated their circumstances were less likely to be involved in the administration of local justice. In practice the system had changed little from that at the start of the period.

From examining the actions of the Freeman-Mitford, Rushout and Dugdale families and the deference that was accorded to them by the residents of the town, it is apparent that much of the local administration in Moreton was conducted along lines, reflecting the landlord-tenant status, that existed for centuries. The Freeman-Mitfords and Rushouts came from divergent backgrounds to the Dugdales, the latter being late arrivals in this echelon of society. The lack of any extant personal diaries or accounts from either household makes it difficult to gauge the extent to which the families socialised, however the Dugdales did attend Frances Mitford's wedding.[108] Their acceptance by the Mitfords, similar styles of philanthropy and regular attendance at Moreton's social events cemented the Dugdales' position in the community.[109] There is no evidence to suggest that local people challenged the status quo which underlines the respect elicited by extensive land ownership. Moreton's continuing traditional relationship with the local landed elite provides a further example, to be added to the literature of small rural towns.

[105] Ibid.
[106] GRO, Register of Court of Summary Jurisdiction 1903-1914 PS/MO/RM1/2.
[107] Ibid.
[108] *EJ,* 4 May 1907.
[109] Ibid., 5 November 1892.

Rural Politics

The situation described above induced passivity in the townspeople that is perceptible in the lack of evidence of any involvement in, or coherent challenges to, local decision making. Reay's description of work-dominated agricultural lives involving long days of physical toil, especially in summer, which left little room for leisure or organised protest may provide some explanation for this.[110] As seen in chapter one, a sizeable proportion of Moreton people were agricultural workers. In 1872, 15 miles away in Wellesbourne, appalled by the conditions faced by these workers, Joseph Arch, a self-educated farmworker, founded the National Agricultural Workers Union.[111] Arch's growing influence led to tours, with *Moreton Free Press* detailing one in Blockley in 1874.[112] There is no evidence of Arch visiting Moreton in the early years of his campaign; it was over a decade later, in July 1885, that the first of two public meetings was held in Moreton both facilitated by Frank Horne, with payments to Arch being recorded in his Liberal Association cashbook.[113] It was reported in *Moreton Free Press* but not in *Evesham Journal* with the former's account surprisingly downplaying the event,

> 'On Saturday evening last Mr. Joseph Arch addressed a meeting in Moreton, it being his first visit to the town……. At the time fixed for the proceedings to commence (7.30) scarcely fifty persons had assembled, haymaking operations being alleged as the cause of the absence of the labouring men. At 8 o'clock the company had largely increased, and the number present may be safely stated as between 300 and 400, chiefly working men'.[114]

The report referred to the Union as 'something looked upon by the farmers with great aversion' concentrating instead on eliciting support for the Liberal candidate, Arthur Winterbotham and exhorting the labourers to behave in a seemly manner on the forthcoming election day.[115] As already indicated, *Moreton Free Press* took a more anti-establishment stance than *Evesham Journal* so it is significant that the labouring men of Moreton did not appear to have any opinions worth reporting either for or against Arch and appeared to accept the stance of their employers. At the second meeting, in November 1887, the audience was 'chiefly of labourers' to whom surprisingly Arch spoke for nearly an hour on the Irish question.[116] Arch's sparse visits to Moreton and the tone of local newspaper reports underline the apathetic nature of the local working population. It is also telling that the catalyst for the visits did not come from the workers themselves but from someone who by that time was closer to the

[110] Reay, *Rural Englands,* p.147.
[111] Arch, *Joseph Arch,* p.69.
[112] *MFP,* 31 January 1874.
[113] HFA, HF 102, Liberal Association Cashbook.
[114] *MFP,* 11 July 1885.
[115] Ibid.
[116] *MFP*, 5 November 1887.

local elite. The overall impression was one of an attempt to educate and the reception given was polite acceptance rather than inspiration to action.

Apart from their roles as magistrates neither Algernon Freeman-Mitford, the Rushouts nor the Dugdales took an active role in the day-to-day local administration relating to the Vestry or Parish Council. This was conducted by a diverse body of men, drawn from the town's traders. Prominent among this group were the successive members of the Horne family, whose background was quite different from that of the Freeman-Mitfords and Rushouts but more akin to the Dugdales. The Hornes, who had a network of grocery stores and travelling salesmen, in Moreton and the surrounding area, fitted the profile of the 'shopocracy' described by both John Pritchard and Julie Light in their study of the local government of small Welsh towns.[117] The interaction between the traders and the more established elites provides an extra dimension to life in Moreton.

The vestry and the parish council were crucial to the administration of Moreton. In 60 years, 90 different men held public office, some only fleetingly but many taking on multiple roles and putting in long years of service. Women were not accorded any official roles and there is only one instance, in December 1894, of a female standing for election, when *Evesham Journal* reported 'Mrs. F Horne' as being one of the candidates in the county council elections.[118] This was Frank Horne's wife, Emma, who polled more votes than her husband, but did not receive sufficient to be elected and, unlike her husband, did not contest any future elections. The only instance of a female being given a position of responsibility within local administration, sanctioned by the parish council, was Rebecca Horne, the aunt of Frank, being appointed a trustee of the National School in 1903.[119] Overwhelmingly, these men were involved in trade and, considering the agrarian nature of the area for which Moreton acted as a service centre, less than a quarter were involved in agriculture or in a trade associated with it, see figure 44. Reay's remarks concerning agricultural toil not allowing any leisure time are pertinent here too.[120] Notably, through the whole period, only 17 of the vestry and parish council members, just under 19%, were native to Moreton and many of these were second generation office holders taking over roles from their non-native fathers.[121] This emphasizes not only the important influence incomers had on the life of the town but again emphasizes the passivity of the existing residents.

[117] HFA, HB04; J. Light '…Mere Seekers of Fame'? Personalities, Power and Politics in the Small Town: Pontypool and Bridgend, c.1860-95', *Urban History,* 32/1 (2005), p. 92; J. Pritchard, '"Fit and Proper Person", Councillors of Denbigh, their Status and Position, 1835-94, *Welsh History Review,* 17/2, (1994), p. 195.
[118] *EJ,* 22 December 1894.
[119] GRO, P221a/PC/1/1, Parish Council Minutes, 1895-1905, 17 February 1903.
[120] Reay, *Rural Englands,* p. 147.
[121] GRO, P221a/PC/1/1; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.

Vestry

Until the 1894 Local Government Act, the town was administered by an open Vestry, a body which had evolved over many centuries and whose power and composition had no legal definition. Its main responsibility was deemed to be care of the poor and sick, but this extended to wider housekeeping matters such as maintenance of the churchyard and other areas within the parish. K. P. Poole and Bryan Keith-Lucas highlight that, as there was no central authority or statute to lay down policy and procedure, a wide variety of practices grew up across the country.[122] This is amply demonstrated from the Moreton vestry minutes that are superficial, with little reference to contrary opinion, debate, or disagreement. On occasions it is possible to obtain more detail from local newspapers while the minutes themselves are disappointing. Notice of a meeting was placed on the church door. It is questionable how effective this communication was as the church was away from the town centre. Meetings were arranged for 11am, a time convenient to the gentry and the self-employed but precluding the attendance of working people.[123] It seems unlikely that this was a move designed to limit attendance, as Jones found in Usk, but blind adherence to tradition, with frequent incidences of adjournment until the evening, in the hope that more people would attend.[124] Similarly, the venue was often changed from the church to one of the inns or the school, another means of increasing attendance that also made the venue less intimidating for non-Anglicans.[125] The pervading impression from the sparse minutes is not one of deliberate obfuscation but of tedium and paying lip service to the requirement for a record to be taken. Snell's assertion that the vestry role was reduced and became increasingly secularized is apparent from the Moreton minutes.[126] The business was repetitive with lists of attendees and appointments, and, for some entries, the record appears to have been written in advance, with spaces left for the relevant details, such as the amount to be paid for regular maintenance.[127]

The number of meetings averaged four each year until the advent of the Parish Council in 1894, after which they went to once a year and the core business became purely church related. The higher number of meetings in 1866 and 1877, illustrated in figure 43, reflect discussion of matters of local interest. 1866 saw the decision to end burials in the churchyard and protracted negotiations took place to find a suitable site for a separate cemetery.[128] 1877 related to proposals to pave the main streets and was one of the discussions that reached the local newspapers, resulting in a poll of ratepayers being taken as the vestry was 'not truly representative'.[129] Considering this

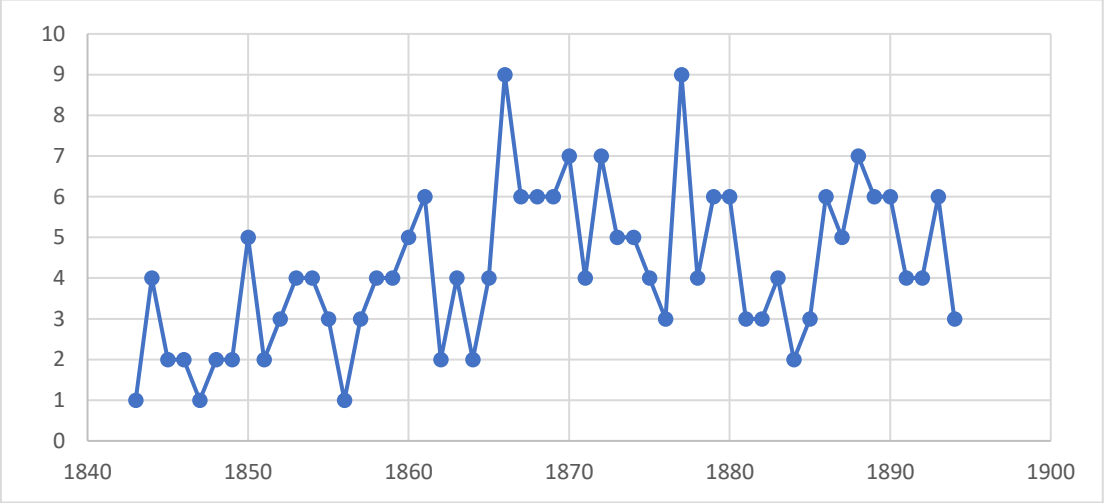
[122] K. Poole & B. Keith-Lucas, *Parish Government 1894-1994,* (London, 1994), pp. 16-21.
[123] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, Vestry Minutes, 7 March 1850, 13 February 1852, 29 January 1858.
[124] Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 174.
[125] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 25 March 1861, 20 December 1866, 20 February 1867.
[126] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 446.
[127] Ibid., 5 April 1877.
[128] Ibid., 20 December 1866.
[129] *EJ,* 16 March 1878.

was an open vestry, attendance was poor with a mean average of 11 people present. More controversial issues brought out more people, with the highest number of attendees in November 1892, when controversy erupted over the water supply. On this occasion, 72 people attended, and it also marked Algernon Freeman-Mitford's only appearance when, unsurprisingly, he was asked to be chairman.[130] Subsequent meetings relating to this issue also brought in larger numbers. Above average attendances were also recorded for church-related matters concerning alterations and seating. The lowest numbers witnessed the approval of charities' accounts and reappointment of overseers and constables. These attendance statistics again point to lethargy within the local community.

In general business was routine: – overseers, churchwardens, and a surveyor or waywarden were appointed every year. Charity accounts and trustees were approved annually and in the 1850s and 1860s the appointment of constables was agreed. At the start of the study period, the setting of a church rate was intermittent but later became an annual feature. From the late 1850s the encroachment of national legislation is evident with the appointment of a Lighting Committee and a Burial Board and from 1870 onwards, Guardians of the Poor.[131] The minutes reveal the desire to be seen to fulfil legislative requirements with members resigning after their prescribed term but then being re-elected a few months later, or as time went on, at the same meeting. There is no evidence of contested elections for these positions, revealing either a lack of enthusiasm in the wider population or a belief that the vestry was a closed shop. Unsurprisingly, the chair was taken most frequently by the parish incumbent, or his curate, with two other prominent members of the Church of England, Henry Busby, and Thomas Sankey, both local tradesmen, stepping in when necessary. However, of most interest, which will be considered further in chapter four, was the acceptance throughout the entire period of three generations of the Horne family into this role, as all were prominent Nonconformists.[132]

[130] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 3 November 1891.
[131] Ibid., 17 June 1866, 25 March 1871.
[132] Ibid., 7 March 1850, 24 March 1853, 29 January 1859.

Figure 43: Number of Moreton Vestry Meetings each year, 1843-1894.[133]



Extant Lighting Committee minutes for Moreton from April 1873 to July 1887 reveal the attempts made to improve the ambience of the town. The dearth of historical comment on this aspect of rural town life makes comparisons with elsewhere difficult. The committee's remit extended beyond providing gas lighting to water supply, timekeeping, fire prevention and various causes of nuisance from poor drainage to errant schoolchildren. Lamps were only lit between September and the end of April and close attention was paid to the phases of the moon relying on natural light for nine days each month. The minutes reveal a greater diligence than those of the vestry with the hours and days of the contract with the Moreton Gas Company negotiated annually and written out in full in the minutes.[134] Similarly, the annual precept application to the overseers was written out in full legalese. Meetings were held at noon at one of the inns or in the reading room, with advance notice communicated by postcard. Again, attendance was remarkably poor with regular adjournments, sometimes to later the same day but on other occasions for a month or more. Implementing local improvements and maintaining a good regime in small towns proved difficult.[135]

Following the 1888 Local Government Act, creating county councils, the awkward position of Moreton in relation to Gloucestershire and its neighbouring counties was once again highlighted, undoubtedly providing the vestry with unwanted administrative problems. Moreton's Highway Board covered parishes that were situated in four different counties and *Evesham Journal's* report of the County Council minutes, revealed that each of the counties had different plans for dealing with the roads: Gloucestershire and Worcestershire planned to take total control of all roads, Warwickshire intended to maintain just the main roads and Oxfordshire was content to maintain the status quo.[136] This provided proof of the impractical situation caused

[133] GRO, P221/VE.
[134] GRO, P221a/PC2/1, August 1879.
[135] Ibid.
[136] *EJ,* 2 Mar 1889.

by Moreton's 1834 annexation to Warwickshire and once again highlighted its incongruous position in local government. There is no certainty in this, but the culture of deference combined with the actions of 1834 may have contributed to the apathy that is evident from the local government records.

Parish Council

The actions of parish councils, formed by the Local Government Act of 1894, had implications for the daily lives of thousands of people, approximately 28% of the population.[137] Roger Ottewill and Ivor Slocombe state their creation established a clear boundary between civil and ecclesiastical administration and were, 'a key element in the political development of the community and in the sociological changes which have affected it'.[138] Their powers were effectively those of the vestry but were now underwritten by act of parliament. A population of 200 people was the required qualification for establishment and all ratepayers had the right to vote in elections, which provoked a flurry of activity across the country generating many column inches in local newspapers.[139] This was amply demonstrated in Moreton, where there were 18 nominations for nine seats. Political affiliations were split equally between Conservatives and Liberals. An attempt was made to avoid the cost of a poll, estimated to be between £10 and £15, by electing the new councillors by a show of hands.[140] From Ottewill and Slocombe's analysis, this was the preferred course of action in Gloucestershire, where 66% of parishes did not have a poll.[141] However, at a meeting, chaired by Algernon Freeman-Mitford, the proposal ended in disarray amid confusion over how many votes each elector could cast, and a ballot was demanded.

The subsequent poll gave positions to regular attendees at the vestry meetings and handed official positions to the local tradesmen. Of note is the absence of any representative of either church, which runs counter to Ottewill and Slocombe's findings in many parishes.[142] J. Howe's analysis of the composition of the initial parish councils in Gloucestershire reveals that the bulk contained either farmers or agricultural labourers.[143] As demonstrated in figure 44, Moreton did not fit this profile, but its make-up reflected the town's function as a service centre for a primarily agricultural community. By 1914 the percentage of councillors who were tradesmen had increased to 77%.

[137] R. Ottewill & I. Slocombe, 'Parish Councils in England and Wales 1894-1974.'*The Local Historian*, 39/1 (2009), p. 50 & p. 62.
[138] Ibid., p.48.
[139] Ibid., p. 51; *EJ,* 1 December 1894-12 January 1895; *MFP,* 12 January 1895 (prior issues missing).
[140] *EJ,* 8 December 1894.
[141] Ottewill & Slocombe, 'Parish Councils in England and Wales', p. 54.
[142] *EJ,* 1 December 1894, 22 December 1884; Ibid., p. 59.
[143] J. Howe, 'A Village Politician in the 1890s', *The Local Historian,* 17/4 (1986), pp. 212-218.

Figure 44: Composition of Moreton Parish Council 1895 and 1914.[144]

Profession	1895 Number	%	1914 Number	%
Trade	3	33	7	77
Farmer	2	22	1	11
GP	2	22	1	11
Professional	1	11	0	0
Unknown	1	11	0	0

Unlike the vestry, the regularity of meetings was prescribed by law and attendance was good, never falling below six councillors.[145] The Mann Institute had opened in 1891, in memory of Dr John Mann, son of Moreton's first Congregational minister, and it was here that the early meetings were held, as it was made available to the Council, free of charge for the first 15 months of its existence.[146] It is interesting that the meetings were not at Redesdale Hall, whose original purpose seemed to be designed for such events. A study of the minutes from 1895 until 1914 reveals that, the zeal and enthusiasm, palpable in the last months of 1894 from both the public and the prospective office holders, waned, a narrative detected across the country by Ottewill and Slocombe.[147] Like the vestry, the impression is of a body whose approach was routine, conservative and parsimonious. Increasingly its hands were tied by Campden Rural District Council (CRDC), and its primary function appeared to be to consult with CRDC over the state of roads and footpaths.[148] The minutes provide evidence of the encroachment of central government on the administration of small towns with notes of new directives requiring the Council's attention.[149] As will become clear, the quest for a sustainable water supply exercised both the parish council and the CRDC and also demonstrated the impact of central government regulations. The frustrations with this may have been key for the loss of enthusiasm and ennui that is apparent.[150]

The composition of the Moreton parish council demonstrated a move away from decisions being made by the landed elite and the clergy towards the end of the period. However, it does not show that the less affluent classes were making any progress towards involvement in local administration. A different kind of elite, that of successful traders, assumed supremacy. Whether due to public apathy or because it was perceived to be a closed shop the parish council gradually embodied that perception, as by 1914, its composition resembled a trade association, as evidenced by figure 43.

[144] GRO, P221a/PC/1/1.
[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid,, 4 January 1895.
[147] Ottewill & Slocombe, "Parish Councils in England and Wales", p. 60.
[148] *EJ*, 19 March 1895, 17 November 1896, 21 December 1899, 15 November 1909.
[149] Ibid., 18 February 1896, 12 April 1897, 20 December 1898, 18 December 1900.
[150] Ibid., 7 March 1898, 5 September 1899, 16 January 1900, 18 June 1901.

Its insularity is also perceptible in the total lack of comment concerning the start of war in the summer months of 1914 or any consideration of the consequences for the town.[151]

Law and Order

The only extant documents relating to law and order in Moreton are the petty session records from 1887-1914, which are supplemented by local press reports.[152] These documents stemmed from national legislation, in 1886, which made it a requirement for summary justice to be recorded. The petty sessions were held on the last Monday of each month, although there was scope for emergency sessions to take place. Four or five defendants appeared before the magistrates each month, but it is possible to detect increases at times when there were influxes of people into Moreton: in the spring for the annual steeplechases or in the autumn for the hiring fair. The Petty Sessions were one of the regular events transferred to Redesdale Hall, following its construction, at the end of the year in which they were instituted. Problematic in relation to a study of Moreton itself is that the petty sessions' orbit extended to the outlying villages. Again, these records speak of the gradual encroachment by central government in the regulation of the day-to-day lives of a community that was remote from it.

David Jones' study of 19th century law and order suggests that crime against people and property rose to the mid-century and then declined.[153] The lack of any documentation for Moreton prior to 1887 makes it impossible to confirm or deny either trend within the town. Figure 45 provides a breakdown of the offences that were processed by the petty sessions between 1887 and 1914, categorised into those that can be deemed criminal activity and those that were contraventions of new administrative legislation. The crude totals relate to 27 years, reducing the mean monthly figures to single digits for the town and its hinterland. Criminal offences comprised 58% of the total appearances before the magistrates, with the remaining 42% devoted to routine administration or the contravention of locally imposed byelaws, described in *The Times* as 'intrinsically trivial' that satisfied 'the pride of municipalities and public bodies to be able to fine or imprison all who do not observe their behests'.[154] As well as dealing with byelaws, much of the routine administration concerned the granting of licences for alehouses, theatrical performances, the sale of petroleum and the ownership of dogs. Snell argued that rural populations' contempt for centralisation is apparent from the high tally of highway offences suggesting Moreton's total of 179 may be an indication of this.[155] Similarly, the number of contraventions of the 1880

[151] Ibid., 18 August 1914.
[152] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1; PS/MO/RM1/2.
[153] D Jones, *Crime, Protest, Community and Police in Nineteenth-century Britain,* (London, 2014), p. 4.
[154] *The Times*, 6 February 1899.
[155] Snell*, Parish and Belonging*, pp. 5-6.

Education Act (155), which made school attendance compulsory for children between the ages of five and ten, suggests its unpopularity amongst rural agricultural workers, where at set times of the year, children's wages formed an important part of the household economy. However, it also underlines the enthusiasm with which school managers embraced legislation to rectify a problem which had troubled them for years.[156]

Neither petty session records nor newspaper reports give any explanation why a crime occurred. Contemporary opinion recognised that criminal activity had many sources amongst which were alcohol, unemployment, the game laws, and poor housing.[157] Initiatives were made in Moreton to address problems caused by alcohol misuse, such as the reading room and societies directed at young men, but from the petty sessions records it is apparent that the problem persisted.[158] Equally, attempts to impose some form of social control via legislation surrounding the sale of alcohol inevitably led to an increase in crime statistics. That drunkenness and associated anti-social behaviour had the highest tally of offences in Moreton, demonstrates the realities of additional legislation and also that the inhabitants of Moreton fulfilled the expectations of contemporary opinion. However, it also reflected the life of a community with many inns and beer sellers, crucial to its traditional market and transport economy as shown in chapter five.[159]

Women were infrequent attendees at the Moreton petty sessions. The offences for which they were summoned did not differ very greatly from those of the men with them being equally culpable regarding the new byelaws. Other offences included drunkenness, abusive language, assault, and larceny being the most common. Harvey Osborne stated that that any women caught poaching were rarely prosecuted, a trend confirmed in Moreton.[160]

Crimes against property (larceny, stealing, game trespass, malicious damage, and damage to the underwood) were the second highest total after alcohol-related crime. One must speculate if this reflected criminal behaviour as much as the hardship faced by the working classes, who had limited options in straitened circumstances and who participated in what is termed 'informal economy'.[161] Such behaviour was described in the letter of David Ellis, an emigrant to Michigan, in comparing his new surroundings, where he has, 'as much firing as we can burn for nothing' in comparison

[156] GRO, S221/1/1, Moreton National School1863-1930, 4 July 1864, 26 September 1879.
[157] J. Tobias*, Nineteenth-century Crime: Prevention and Punishment*, (Newton Abbot, 1972), pp. 11-28.
[158] *EJ,* 1 April 1871, 5 June 1886; *MFP,* 20 January 1872, 3 January 1885.
[159] See figure 72, showing Moreton's most consistent trades in Trade Directories, 1839-1919.
[160] H. Osborne, '"Unwomanly practices": Poaching Crime and Gender and the Female Offender in Nineteenth Century Britain', *Rural History,* 27/2, (2016), p. 150.
[161] S. King & A. Tomkins, *The Poor in England, 1700 -1850: an Economy of Makeshifts*, (Manchester, 2003), p. 24.

with his reminiscences of searching for wood in Batsford.[162] Similarly, there may have been less tangible explanations such as the aggressive materialism brought about by the greater availability of goods and a more fluid notion of possession amongst people with a strong tradition of 'borrowing' or sharing.[163] Property ownership was key to social standing, providing voting rights and qualifications to hold office. Drew Gray calculated that more than 200 new laws were passed to protect the position of the privileged, which in turn criminalised other sections of society.[164]

Figure 45: Offences at Moreton Petty sessions between 1887 and 1914.[165]

Criminal/Anti-social Offences		**Contravening Legislative Orders**	
Drunk, drunk & disorderly etc	216	Highway Regulations	179
Larceny & stealing	164	Education Act	155
Assault	122	Swine Fever Order	55
Game Trespass	100	Straying animals	38
Wilful damage	89	Cruelty to animals	36
Various Rate Arrears	60	Licensing Act	35
Abusive, obscene language	56	Bastardy	28
Begging, vagrancy	54	Dogs	26
Damage to underwood	25	Muzzling Regulations	17
Gaming	22	Matrimonial causes	16
Using catapult	19	Obstructing footway	16
Throwing stones	18	Food & Drugs Acts	15
Guns	8	Making a bonfire on the highway	15
Cruelty to children	7	Public Health Act	15
Letting off fireworks	7	Employer's & Workers Act	13
Breach of the Peace	6	Landlord & Tenant	13
Attempted burglary	4	Byelaws	10
Attempted suicide	4	Weights and measures	10
Embezzlement	3	Factory Act	8
Sureties	3	Illegal fishing & poisoning brook	3
Threats	3	Sureties	3
Arson	2	Removal order	1
Concealment of birth	2	Rescuing goods	1
Hawking	2	Selling coal without licence	1
Obstructing police	2	Trespass on railway	1
Implements for committing a felony	1	Violating petroleum licence	1
	999		711

[162] GRO, D/13668 /7/1/1/1,1850 letter from David Ellis to his Moreton relations.
[163] D. Gray, *Crime, Policing and Punishment in England, 1660-1914*, (London, 2016), p. 123.
[164] Ibid., p. 88.
[165] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1; PS/MO/RM1/2.

As in other areas adjoining landed estates poachers, or people found in possession of the necessary implements to commit the crime, were regular attendees at the Moreton petty sessions. Contemporary opinion and subsequent historiography display conflicted views concerning the criminality of poaching, with some placing it at the forefront of opposition to the encroachment of rural customs and rites by the urban elite, with country estates. Jones provided evidence of farmers refusing to inform on poachers and of gamekeepers being subject to threats, implying that the cases reaching the petty sessions did not cover the full extent of the activity. Across the country poachers varied from boys casually in the fields or men on their way to work, taking advantage of unplanned encounters with game, to others making regular purposeful night-time forays or professional gangs, travelling long distances from urban areas.[166] Evidence from Moreton points to the offenders only being local but whether the incidents were opportunist or pre-planned is difficult to ascertain. Again, the Ellis letter confirms the practice and possibly being caught by the gamekeeper when he compared hunting deer in Michigan, 'bigger than they be in batsfor spark ear is no Dick robing to come to us'.[167] Paradoxically, it was from the landed elite that the magistrates were most likely to be drawn, with Jones proposing that this led to low acquittal rates and longer sentences. As many appearances resulted in fines in Moreton, Jones's hypothesis does not appear valid. However, Jones believed that an appearance before the magistrates heralded the end of a poacher's career, which is apparent in Moreton, as there were no repeat offenders during the period, although men caught poaching were often before the magistrates for other offences.[168] Osborne stated that the most poaching offences took place between September and March which is also confirmed by the Moreton figures.[169] Connected to poaching were other crimes relating to food procurement. Reay paints a vivid picture of the lengths families went to put food on the table and conceded that an economy of makeshift encompassed 'less honest ways of managing'.[170] Such a position is reflected to a small degree in the Moreton with isolated incidents of stealing fowl, turnips, fruit, eggs, coal.[171]

Wilful damage to property and damage to the underwood were crimes that related the wider issue of taking produce from trees and fields as well as breaking the fabric of fences for to the collection of firewood. These could be classified alongside poaching and the combined number of incidents in Moreton were comparable. John Archer demonstrated that in the earlier part of the century the deliberate destruction of tree, plants, and orchards as a form of popular protest was endemic in East

[166] H. Osborne & M. Winstanley, 'Rural and Urban Poaching', *Rural History,* 17/2 (2006), p. 196; D. Jones, *Crime, Protest,* p. 846.
[167] GRO,1850 Ellis letter.
[168] D. Jones, *Crime, Protest,* p. 842.
[169] H. Osborne, 'The Seasonality of Nineteenth-Century Poaching', *The Agricultural History Review* 48 (2000), p. 34.
[170] Reay, *Microhistories,* p.100.
[171] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1; PS/MO/RM1/2.

Anglia.[172] While there is no evidence to suggest that the Moreton figures were forms of organised protest the high number may point to incidents of vandalism by which the poor were subtly exercising agency, while simultaneously obtaining fuel or sustenance.

Horn highlighted the breakup of order and discipline and the rise of hooliganism, a theme also cited in an 1899 editorial in *The Times*.[173] This trend is evident in Moreton, with children, as young as seven, and youths appearing before the magistrates for wilful damage, throwing stones, letting off fireworks, obstructing the highway or making bonfires.[174] As with poaching, it could be considered that such prosecutions were made to prevent future crime or to make an example of them to their peers.[175] Fines imposed were not huge but would have impacted on stretched family budgets. On other occasions, especially in relation to vagrants or school attendance, the magistrates took a pragmatic approach with cautions or discharges as well as asking vagrants to leave the town.[176]

Repeat offending was an issue with 14 individuals appearing before the magistrates, on more than ten occasions between 1887 and 1914, with offences that spanned both criminal and administrative offences. Here it is also possible to detect repeat surnames, suggesting familial connections. Such coincidences would not have gone unnoticed and would have added fuel to the contemporary belief in a criminal underclass.[177] It is in the records of the interaction with these offenders that one can detect a loss of patience on behalf of the magistrates with harsher and more immediate penalties imposed.[178]

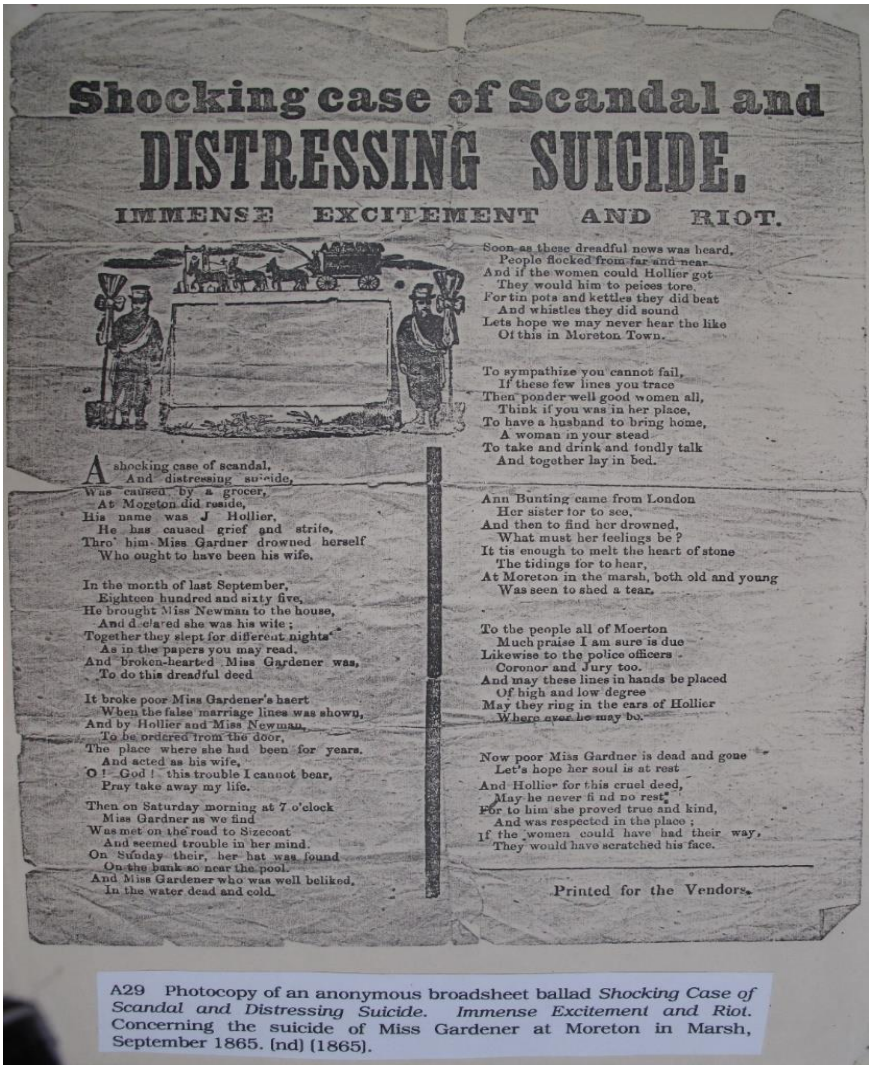
Being unable to make a direct comparison with another similar sized town, it is not possible to make accurate statements about this aspect of Moreton's life. However, the 27 years of petty sessions records do not suggest that Moreton society was in any way a lawless community. There were no murders recorded and only 18 people were sent to a higher court, some of whom were linked to the same offence. It is possible that some crimes did not reach the magistrates and that the community dealt with less serious incidents amongst themselves.

[172] J. Archer, '*By a Flash and a Scare'*: *Arson, Animal Maiming and Poaching in East Anglia 1815-1870,* (Oxford, 1990), p. 17.
[173] P. Horn, *Young Offenders: Juvenile Delinquency 1700 to 2000,* (Stroud, 2010); *The Times*, 6 February 1899.
[174] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/2, 2 January 1905, 26 September 1910.
[175] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1, 26 February 1894.
[176] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/2, 18 April 1910.
[177] D. Jones, *Crime and Protest,* p. 6.
[178] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1, 28 March 1898.

Informal Law Enforcement

Judgement by one's neighbours may have contributed to maintaining law and order within Moreton. Prior to formal law enforcement, public shaming was a societal norm in parts of rural England as evidenced by E.P Thompson and Andrew Walker's research, as well as evidence from contemporary literature.[179] Such social pressures are difficult to detect day to day in Moreton, but two incidents in 1865 and 1892, which reached the newspapers, but seem to have avoided historical scrutiny, gives some clues to the culture and mores within the town. The 1865 case was reported widely and resulted in the circulation of an anonymous broadsheet ballad, shown in figure 46.

Figure 46: Broadsheet Ballad.[180]



Shocking case of Scandal and

DISTRESSING SUICIDE.

IMMENSE EXCITEMENT AND RIOT.

A shocking case of scandal,
And distressing suicide,
Was caused by a grocer,
At Moreton did reside,
His name was J Hollier,
He has caused grief and strife,
Thro' him Miss Gardner drowned herself
Who ought to have been his wife.

In the month of last September,
Eighteen hundred and sixty five,
He brought Miss Newman to the house,
And declared she was his wife;
Together they slept for different nights
As in the papers you may read.
And broken-hearted Miss Gardener was,
To do this dreadful deed

It broke poor Miss Gardener's heart
When the false marriage lines was shown,
And by Hollier and Miss Newman,
To be ordered from the door,
The place where she had been for years,
And acted as his wife,
O! God! this trouble I cannot bear,
Pray take away my life.

Then on Saturday morning at 7 o'clock
Miss Gardner as we find
Was met on the road to Sizecoat
And seemed trouble in her mind.
On Sunday their, her hat was found
On the bank so near the pool,
And Miss Gardener who was well beliked,
In the water dead and cold.

Soon as these dreadful news was heard,
People flocked from far and near
And if the women could Hollier got
They would him to peices tore.
For tin pots and kettles they did beat
And whistles they did sound
Lets hope we may never hear the like
Of this in Moreton Town.

To sympathize you cannot fail,
If these few lines you trace
Then ponder well good women all,
Think if you was in her place,
To have a husband to bring home,
A woman in your stead
To take and drink and fondly talk
And together lay in bed.

Ann Bunting came from London
Her sister for to see,
And then to find her drowned,
What must her feelings be?
It tis enough to melt the heart of stone
The tidings for to hear,
At Moreton in the marsh, both old and young
Was seen to shed a tear.

To the people all of Moerton
Much praise I am sure is due
Likewise to the police officers
Coronor and Jury too.
And may these lines in hands be placed
Of high and low degree
May they ring in the ears of Hollier
Where ever he may be.

Now poor Miss Gardner is dead and gone
Let's hope her soul is at rest
And Hollier for this cruel deed,
May he never find no rest,
For to him she proved true and kind,
And was respected in the place;
If the women could have had their way,
They would have scratched his face.

Printed for the Vendors.

A29 Photocopy of an anonymous broadsheet ballad *Shocking Case of Scandal and Distressing Suicide. Immense Excitement and Riot.* Concerning the suicide of Miss Gardener at Moreton in Marsh, September 1865. (nd) (1865).

[179] E.P. Thompson 'Rough Music Reconsidered', *Folklore,* 103/1 (1992), pp. 3-26; A. Walker, 'Rough Music, Community Protest and the Local Press in Nineteenth Century England, *International Journal of Regional and Local History,* 13/1 (2018), pp. 86-104; Hardy, *The Mayor of Casterbridge,* Chapter 39.

[180] GRO D/13668/7/1/1/1 Broadsheet Ballad.

The 1865 incident related to John Hollier, a prominent tradesman, introducing a younger woman into his household to replace his wife, who subsequently committed suicide. While the ensuing inquest was taking place at the Unicorn hotel, 'upwards of a thousand persons' gathered outside. Hollier was severely censured by the coroner, describing him as 'one of the greatest reprobates that we have that does not come within the jurisdiction of criminal law'. Afterwards Hollier required police protection with the crowd attempting to storm the building 'threatening vengeance on the "murderer" and smashing windows'. Walker described similar protests being relatively spontaneous processions, but in this case, the circumstances differed in that it took place simultaneously with legal due process.[181] *Evesham Journal* did refer to an effigy of Hollier, which fulfils the rural traditions described by Walker, but this did not reach other reports.[182] The eventual outcome was that Hollier was spirited out of the town, never to return, emphasizing, albeit on a large scale, the effect of local opprobrium.[183] The later incident also concerned the maltreatment of a spouse, in this case, Ellen Eeles, the wife of the landlord of The Swan Inn, Charles Eeles, who was also an overseer. The lengthy account of her inquest made allegations of previous domestic violence and her addiction to alcohol, the ultimate cause of her death, which was hastened by her husband's neglect of her while suffering its after-effects. As in the Hollier case, after the verdict a crowd gathered outside The Swan banging implements but by then Mr Eeles had made his escape.[184]

Both these cases are of interest not only as evidence of informal law and order, but also of the moral outrage of the community towards the poor treatment of women. The crowds that gathered suggest a well-oiled communication network in the town and that the townspeople were not afraid to demonstrate their disapproval of people who stepped out of line.

The Quest for a Viable Water Supply and Sustainable Sanitation

The saga of Moreton's quest for suitable sanitation encapsulates the issues that dogged its local administration and highlights problems facing those in charge of the government of small towns. The challenge of obtaining good water supplies and the associated removal of waste existed countrywide and has been sporadically examined by historians. Developments in medicine, engineering, communication, and the nexus between local and central government brought the issue into sharp focus in the 19th century.[185] Central government was slow to implement a national water policy which

[181] Walker, 'Rough Music', p. 96.
[182] *EJ,* 7 October 1865.
[183] *JOJ,* 7 October 1865.
[184] *EJ,* 6 August 1892.
[185] J. Hassan & P. Taylor, 'The Politics of Water in Early and Mid-Victorian Britain: The Experience of Bolton, *Transactions of the Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire for the year 1998,* 148 (1998); A. McTominey, 'Bad Neighbours? Water Supply and the Civic Rivalry of Leeds and Bradford, c.1850-1887, *International Journal of Regional and Local History,* 12/1 (2017); D. Griffiths, 'The Development of the Public Water Supply to the town of Carmarthen in the 19th Century, *The Carmarthenshire Antiquary,* 38 (2002), pp. 83-94; F. Billinge, 'The Management of Water in the Historic Borough of

led to huge variations in the experiences of different neighbourhoods. Small towns and villages were the main casualties in this situation. John Hassan and Peter Taylor quantified the position in the country in 1914 as follows, 'only 29 of over 1,100 boroughs and urban districts were without piped supplies in contrast to the 62% of 12,689 rural parishes which still lacked this service'.[186] Andrew McTominey describes how, in Leeds and Bradford, the provision of sanitation was seized as an opportunity for urban one-upmanship both in the amount of money spent on a project and the speed at which change could be effected.[187] For smaller communities it provided a battleground for differing local vested interests and the prolonged exchange between these could delay improvements in living conditions for decades. Moreton falls into the latter category and a close examination of its attempt to procure a water supply reveals aspects of rural market town life and administration that have not been closely scrutinised: how small rural towns and villages fell under the radar of mid-century central government improvement initiatives; how less affluent communities were hampered in their attempts to raise loans for improvements due to the low value of existing housing; and underlying tensions within the locality not obviously apparent from other sources.

As highlighted in both the vestry and council minutes and local newspaper reports, a huge amount of time and discussion was devoted to the water supply and sewerage question by both the vestry and parish council for over five decades. Obtaining a water supply was an issue in many of the small towns and villages covered by *Evesham Journal,* however the protracted process in Moreton led to sarcastic editorials, detailed reports of council meetings, acrimonious correspondence accusing the editor of unfair reporting, and at one point the banning of the local press from meetings covering the issue. The Four Shires area was not unique in this as in his account of the development of a public water supply in Carmarthen, Griffiths calculated that discussion of water supply occupied more time than any other business in the Council chamber.[188]

Frances Billinge highlighted how little attention historians have paid to the issue of water supply and sewerage provision in smaller communities.[189] This omission is merely a continuance of the treatment those places received from central government at the time. The Public Health Act (1848) effectively abandoned places that were under the status of boroughs and, by excluding them from the legislation, introduced a two-tier system of public health across the country. The requirement to improve sanitary facilities was mandatory only in boroughs where there were more than 23 deaths per

Bovey Tracey', *Report and Transactions of the Devonshire Association,* 146 (2014), pp. 83-102; I. Thomas, *Sewers and Water Supply in 19th C Oundle – Local Government Initiatives; Central Government Directives,* (Oundle Museum Trust, 2003).

[186] Hassan & Taylor, 'The Politics of Water', p. 142.

[187] McTominey, 'Bad Neighbours', p. 32.

[188] Griffiths, 'The Development of the Public Water Supply', p. 83.

[189] Billinge, The Management of the Water', p, 99.

1000 people per annum.[190] In 1851, Moreton's population was 1,512; had it been a borough, there would have to have been 35 deaths each year for sanitary improvements to be compulsory. A study of the burial register from the Parish Church alone records total deaths for the decade of 277, an annual average of 27.7 p.a., but in some years, there were peaks, e.g., 1853, when there were 37 burials.[191] These figures exclude the deaths of people who attended the Congregational Church, whose burial register for that period has not been uncovered. It does not seem unreasonable to suppose that an average of eight people per annum died, who would have been recorded in the Congregational register.[192] By adding these to the annual average from the parish register, the town's total would exceed the base figure to trigger mandatory sanitary improvements. On this basis many small towns across the country must have fallen beneath the radar of officialdom purely because of their local government status. The evidence needed to improve sanitation was missing because it was not being recorded, due to the arbitrary nature of the collection process.

Part of the problem concerning Moreton's water supply and waste disposal again related to its geographical position, on flat ground in a river valley. The Evenlode is little more than a stream as it passes north and east of the town. Many nearby springs were sources for individual household water supplies and contributed to regular floods. Dennis Calow described 19th century night-time waste collections in Leicester, but there are no references to this in any local government minutes, suggesting that the Evenlode was the prime destination for waste in Moreton.[193] Its proximity to the other springs resulted in cross contamination of household water supplies as would be reported later.

The first instance of public comment concerning the sanitation of Moreton appeared in August 1849, in a letter to *Jackson's Oxford Journal.* The 1848 Public Health Act may have been the catalyst for this, but the impending arrival of the railway and the associated hope of economic prosperity also played its part. The letter, signed 'Moreton in Marsh 22nd August 1849, CW', draws attention to recent cholera epidemics in other parts of the country and makes the connection to an:

> '*open sewer* running along the side of premises, now in the occupation of Mr. Beman, as the receptacle for the filth issuing from private dwellings, water closets and privies, of several of the inhabitants of the town, and as there is no regulated supply of water to cleanse and scour the drain, the accumulation of such filth must, as a matter of course, remain; and I am told by people living

[190] HMSO, *Public Health Act, 1848, 11 and 12 Vict, Chapter 63,* (HMSO, 2001), p. 275.
[191] *Ancestry,* P221IN1/15.
[192] GRO, D12117/1/4, a partially complete burial register for Moreton Congregational Church covers 18 years between 1893 and 1913, when there were 95 deaths, an average of 5 per year. Comparing the same period for the Parish Church provides and average of 14 per year. In 1853 there were 37 burials in the Parish Church, an increase of 274% on the later average. Reversing the same calculation would result in a figure of 15 for the Congregational Church in 1853.
[193] D. Calow, *Home Sweet Home: A Century of Leicester Housing 1814-1914,* (Leicester, 2007), p. 8.

close by that the effluvia arising therefrom is most noxious and at times unbearable'.[194]

It goes on to exhort into action gentlemen in the town 'who have concern for the health and comfort of their fellow beings'. This is the earliest detailed description of the problem. Mr. Beman's house was a prestigious property situated in the centre of the town. Reference in the letter to recent changes in the law suggest the writer was possibly Charles Wright, a solicitor's managing clerk, recently arrived in the town from Lincolnshire, thus providing a valuable outsider's view.[195] The following week the paper received an endorsement of the letter from 'T.R. Winder, Civil Engineer of Bourton on the Hill'.[196] He agreed with CW's verdict on the town but suggested that while it was difficult to name a more unsanitary town, it was equally difficult to name one that was so perfectly situated to resolve the problem. His suggestion, relating to waste disposal and not supply, was to divert the Evenlode into a tunnel to run under the town, at a cost to be £750 which he believed would pay for itself, if a tank to collect the sewage could be installed. He proposed completing the scheme in instalments and proposed a committee of leading businessmen and professionals to progress the project, offering his own services for nothing. He recommended an approach to local farmers, nobility, and gentry for donations to the scheme.

It is remarkable that Winder's proposal and offer seem to have been completely ignored. No reference can be found to it in the vestry minutes, and nothing more appeared in the press. One must reflect whether, as both correspondents were not natives of the town, their comments and suggestions were easily dismissed. Here it is possible to detect evidence of the parish loyalty referenced by Snell which, while not apparent on gravestones, parish registers or the choice of marriage partners, was exercised more subtly in choosing to ignore advice when it came from outside.[197]

It would be another 20 years before the vestry meeting reported on the need for remedial drainage work to be carried out. Westmacott, the engineer, was summoned to explain the cost of £101 and the vestry meeting in June 1874 attracted a greater attendance than usual, with the battle lines for future disagreements drawn.[198] In 1877 an improvement to the water supply was made through the generosity of Lord Redesdale and an unexpected gift from Lady Camperdown of Weston House, near Long Compton in Warwickshire. The former arranged for a piped supply from the estate, paying £25 towards the cost of installation, while the latter funded the erection of a granite drinking fountain, in the centre of the town.[199]

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[194] *JOJ*, 25 August 1849.
[195] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1851, Moreton Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 290, p. 2; 1841, Kirton in Lindsey, Enumeration District: 12*;* Class: HO107, Piece: 638, Book: 31*,* Folio: 16, p. 25, Line: 1.
[196] *JOJ,* 1 September 1849.
[197] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 475-6.
[198] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 18 June 1874.
[199] *JOJ,* 24 February 1877.

During the 1880s, references were made to the 'impurity of the drinking water' in an inquest reported in *Evesham Journal* in September 1884.[200] A poor water supply was blamed for problems fighting a fire at the Black Bear Inn in June 1886 and hampering the production of gas at the Moreton Gas and Coke Company's AGM in early 1889.[201] Referring to figure 31, this was also the decade that witnessed a rise in infant mortality to 11% of all births and a dramatic jump to 36% of the infant mortality experienced by single mothers. The local population now had concrete examples of the problems faced to underline the need for change.

Some months later, the question of Moreton's extended name began to trouble local people, and as discussion continued, the issue became connected with the town's sanitation. The 'in Marsh' part of the town's name has never been satisfactorily explained with several equally plausible suggestions.[202] What does seem likely is that the arrival of the railway created the need to distinguish the town from other Moretons, in various parts of the country, and led to the adoption of the suffix, together with an additional erroneous 'the'. In early 1889 the question of a change of name arose after a chance remark, the exact source of which is in dispute and not relevant. For the next two years there were intermittent spats in the correspondence section of *Evesham Journal* suggesting alternative names.[203] From the more constructive emanated the belief that the extended name deterred visitors and investment in the town and underlined that the reality of living in the town was reflected in the name. Eventually the debate turned directly from the name issue to the sanitation question with a letter from 'Verite Sans Peur' suggesting that the correspondents divert their energies to improving the town's moral and physical welfare, describing,

> 'houses where I am sure a decent person would not live …… Sir, it is a disgrace in our nineteenth century civilisation that we allow such things to be in our midst. I am sure we ought as Christians, to help these people, whom I am sure we must all claim kinship with. What are we doing for them? Truly God will require a reckoning from us'.[204]

The debate over the name was ended in November 1891, when a poorly attended public meeting opted to maintain the status quo by a slim majority. However, a request was made to the GWR for the removal of the definite article from signage and timetables.[205]

Apart from the above instances, the subject of sanitation did not appear in any local government context until July 1891 when Shipston Board of Guardians' meeting

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[200] *EJ,* 13 September 1884.
[201] GRO P221a/PC2/1, June 1886; *EJ,* 19 January 1889.
[202] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh' & www.moretoninmarshtowncouncil.gov.uk (1st August 2023).
[203] *EJ,* 16 & 23 February 1889, 24 & 31 October 1891.
[204] Ibid., 2 March 1889.
[205] Ibid., 12 December 1891.

on 4 July, was reported in *Jackson's Oxford Journal.* The Guardians were presented with a letter from the rector of Moreton, Rev. Spencer-Jones, complaining of the bad state of the town's drainage. As he was in the best position to witness the higher levels of infant mortality and which sections of the population were affected, it hints he could have been the 'Verite Sans Peur of 1889'. The Board's sanitary inspector, Mr. H Gander, responded with a detailed report,

> 'which showed that many of the cottages were in a bad state, foul places being situated close to doors of houses; washing being done in the only living rooms of over-crowded cottages and other evils of a like nature existing. There was no systematic flushing of the sewers, and this tended to stagnate sewage, and might lead to more cases of diseases arising from bad smells than at present occurred. With one of two exceptions the town was supplied with shallow surface wells, and in many cases the wells were close to drains and cesspools, and in dry weather a little surface water or liquid matter tended to moisten the soil, and after rainfall the soil being saturated with water filled the wells, and consequently an amount of cesspool soakage was carried into them. He reported nine wells that were condemned by doctors'.[206]

This suggests that whilst the open sewer of 1849 had disappeared, the general situation was little changed. Now the fallback position for local government in the area was adopted: form a committee to discover more information, consult with the relevant people and report back later. Directions were given for water samples to be taken and analysed. In the months that followed, Moreton's sanitation was only raised once at the Guardians' meeting and only in the context of deferring discussion to a later date.

The debate remained underneath the radar for the next 15 months and in the meantime Shipston on Stour Rural Sanitary Authority had replaced the Board of Guardians as the body responsible for public health. In October 1892, the local doctor, John Moore, attended the Sanitary authority meeting, and repeated the facts relating to cross contamination of wells. Moore, a native of the town was a prominent and trusted figure in Moreton's society. He claimed to boil and filter all the water at his own residence, in the centre of the town. He upped the stakes by suggesting that an outbreak of typhoid or cholera in Moreton would quickly find its way to the drinking water, and thus wipe out most of the population. Moore stated that a great many of the people did not recognise the danger and others were indifferent to it. These shock tactics failed to gain anything better than a request to the overseers of Moreton to call a meeting of the inhabitants.[207] Surprisingly, Moore's standing in the town failed to garner support and instead served to marshal those people who believed he was scaremongering, as evidenced by a letter the following week from 'Philo-Moreton'. This accused the doctor of 'sanitary mania', believed to be more contagious than

[206] *JOJ,* 11 July 1891.
[207] *Birmingham Daily Post* (Birmingham), 24 October 1892.

'religious mania' and suggested his actions would deter people moving to the town.[208] This response reveals a familiar divide within the town between those attempting to use scientific evidence for the common good and those trying to protect their own commercial interests and maintain the status quo, implying that vested interests overrode loyalty to one's neighbours.

The public meeting on 3 November 1892, attended by 72 ratepayers, was an ill-tempered affair, poorly chaired by Freeman-Mitford. Moore's opponents led by local tradesman, James Gray showed that the ideals of municipal socialism, embodied by Joseph Chamberlain, 50 miles away, were alien to ratepayers in a small market town.[209] A record of the meeting is amongst the vestry minutes together with the following resolution, passed with only the two local doctors, Moore and Mark Style voting against it.

> 'That this meeting having read the statement and complaints respecting the water supply and drainage of Moreton in Marsh made by Mr. J.N Moore before the Shipston Rural Sanitary Authority on the 15th ultim is of the opinion –
> That such statements and complaints are reckless and misleading, not being founded in facts and are calculated to be most injurious to the welfare of the town, the general healthy state of which is shewn by:
> 1 The very low death rate among all classes of the community
> 2 The entire absence of infectious disease
> 3 The extraordinary longevity of many of its inhabitants
> 4 That the water supply except in certain local cases, arising from want of proper precautions or neglect, is invariably good.
> That this meeting, representing a large proportion of the inhabitants will gladly assist the sanitary authority in remedying any defects in the drainage or water supply which may be found to exist and in maintaining the town in a good sanitary condition. That as this if the first opportunity the ratepayers have had of publicly considering this question which so deeply affects their interest this meeting regrets that Mr. Moore did not take them into consideration thereon before troubling the sanitary authority with his complaints'.[210]

The reports veracity is questionable; the total burials in the Parish Church register had been 26 in 1891 and 20 in 1892 with outbreaks of infectious diseases recorded in school logbooks over the whole period undermining the first two points.[211] However, the fierce and blinkered defence of Moreton's image supports Snell's idea of belonging. The resolution, together with suggested measures to remedy the situation,

[208] Ibid., 1 November 1892.
[209] *EJ,* 5 November 1892; P. Marsh, Chamberlain, Joseph [Joe] (1836–1914), Industrialist and Politician, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography,* (2004).
[210] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 3 November 1892.
[211] GRO, P221/IN/1/15, Burial Register 1848-1933; e.g.S221/1/1, 3 October – 5 December 1868, 4-18 February 1895, 9 July 1895.

was delivered to the sanitary authority and was reported widely in newspapers. Moore, also present at the meeting, suggested that the deputation was not representative of 'the more thoughtful and reflective inhabitants' but were 'angry and somewhat alarmed ratepayers fanned by the eloquence of Mr. Freeman-Mitford to a state of indignation'. He complained of unfair treatment and said his report had been founded on the analysis of more than 20 water samples found to be contaminated with sewage. After two hours' discussion the matter was again referred to a committee.[212] Moore's remarks relating to the input of Freeman-Mitford reinforce the argument that the local elite was still able to influence people and policy.

The position was unchanged for the next decade. Water and sanitation were the subject of reports by engineers and discussions in vestry minutes throughout 1893 and 1894; the former always concluding that the sanitary state of the town was unsatisfactory but the latter reverting to both cost and the belief that the townspeople did not suffer ill health because of the shortcomings. The forthcoming Local Government Act provided the perfect excuse for the vestry to prevaricate further. Simultaneously the Moreton sanitation question became *Evesham Journal's* topic of choice when wishing to highlight the inadequacies of local government, with increasingly sarcastic reports detailing attempts to obtain water. Initially, the focus was on finding a more distant supply to replace the town springs and provide a means to flush the sewers. A proposal to share a supply with Shipston collapsed under circumstances reminiscent of the competition between Leeds and Bradford in their fight to obtain pure water and chimes with Snell's beliefs regarding animosity between parishes, albeit at a more formal level.[213] By 1901 the press was regularly asked to withdraw from council meetings, when sanitation was discussed.[214] Estimates from engineers continued to be challenged by the parish council and the mechanics for obtaining money to do the work, via a loan from the Local Government Board, was a matter of great concern to councillors and ratepayers.

Matters came to a head when the Thames Conservancy began to take an interest in the discharge of waste into the Evenlode. This succinctly demonstrates the encroachment on and authority over the distant lives of rural communities that were vested in non-government bodies by the end of the century. In September 1901, CCRDC was summoned before the local magistrates 'for suffering sewerage to flow into the river Evenlode'. The magistrate added to the prevarication by adjourning the case on five occasions over the next 18 months.[215]

Fifteen months after the initial action, a public enquiry was conducted to consider the application for a loan to the Local Government Board. The many attempts to source a water supply and the reasons for failure were detailed. The one, in vogue

[212] *JOJ,* 26 November 1892.
[213] McTominey, 'Bad Neighbours', p. 35; Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 55.
[214] *EJ,* 16 September 1893.
[215] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/1, 27 October 1902.

at the time, proposed to take water from a spring generating 300,000 gallons per day on the Batsford estate. This fell under scrutiny from the Severn Commissioners whose interest in Moreton's water related to springs which fed the rivers Stour and Avon, that in turn fed the Severn at Tewkesbury. The Commissioners supplied two engineers to report that taking water from springs at Batsford would have an adverse effect on tidal flow in the Severn. Providing two engineers to deliver identical reports demonstrates the resources available to commissioners and the unequal ground on which the battle was fought. The representatives of Moreton residents were struggling to find enough money to afford a water supply and sanitation for the town but were being challenged by people with unlimited resources at their disposal. After a day of discussion, the enquiry was adjourned for six weeks, and no record remains of the subsequent one. From press reports one can glean that the scheme at Batsford failed due to Lord Redesdale withdrawing his offer of use of the spring which questions whether he had been 'swayed' by the Severn Commissioners' opinions. Therefore, it is conceivable that the adjourned enquiry did not take place. In the following years there were more arguments over money with engineers with contractors dismissed and new ones employed. Finally, the engineers who had been consulted ten years previously, were appointed to complete the scheme. Dr Moore died in 1904, well before there was any prospect of the scheme being completed.

In 1906 another public enquiry, of which there is only newspaper reference, took place and led to the district council agreeing to a loan application. The scheme sourced water at Upper Swell, and pumped it, via pipes and a reservoir, into Moreton. At the same time, proposals were made for new sewers throughout the town and a pumping station and outfall works to be constructed on its eastern side. The total cost of the work was £12,080 (£6,350 for the water and £5,730 for sewerage). According to calculations made under the terms of the Local Government Board regulations, this was more than the rateable value of the town could support.[216] To resolve this, work on the water supply alone commenced immediately, in the hope that savings could be made and then used on the sewerage works. Regular reports in *Evesham Journal* noted the steady but slow progress of the work, together with protracted negotiations with contractors and landowners, until, in June 1910, the water inspector confirmed that all the houses were connected to the water main. Meanwhile, without any obvious local reason additional monies were made available through economies and further borrowing and in November 1910, work concentrated on the sewerage scheme which was completed by March 1911.[217]

[216] *EJ,* 14 April 1906.
[217] *EJ,* 25 February 1911.

Figure 47: Construction related to the sanitation works c.1908.[218]



The quest for effective sanitation is an important aspect of Moreton's 19th century history and one that has not been covered previously. It shows that the well documented encroachment of 19th century central government on local communities was inconsistent in its approach. Moreton was effectively left behind in the much-heralded improvements in public health due to its lack of status – initially progress was dependent on historic significance and not on population numbers or prevailing statistics. Later, the Thames Conservancy was prepared to exercise its muscle when the Evenlode became polluted, the result of the earlier omission. Likewise, the reaction of the Severn Commissioners to prevent the town obtaining water perceived to be in its ownership thwarted Moreton's progress. The ability to exercise financial pressure was manifest in the Commissioners production of two qualified engineers at the 1903 public enquiry, whose arguments were identical. Ioan Thomas detailed this is in Oundle in the success of the Grocers' Company in facilitating sanitation improvements but in Moreton's case, money was used to work against the best interests of the local population.[219]

The Moreton water saga shows that new legislation relating to local government served to delay implementation of improvements for smaller communities. In the lead up to the changes, the existing administration, the vestry, was able to dissemble in anticipation of future non-responsibility, whereas in fact the personnel changed little. Likewise, the new parish council took time to become effective and be in control of the revised procedures, as shown in the transition between waywardens and highway authorities.

The water question underlines the parsimonious approach within local government, which is unlikely to have been unique to Moreton. An overriding desire

[218] MMHSA.
[219] Thomas, *Sewers and Water Supply,* p. 11.

not to spend money is apparent in both the vestry and council minutes and this comes into sharp focus throughout the sanitation negotiations. The rural district council's difficulties with obtaining a suitable loan to meet the cost of the works demonstrate again the conflicting nature of central government legislation. The calculations based on rateable value, inherent in the laws to determine the amount that could be borrowed by a council, did not accommodate small towns with modest properties, which had low rateable values. It served to prevent these small communities from long-term improvement as the cost of improvements was likely standardised and no cheaper in Moreton than in more affluent towns. Although from polar opposites, these issues are not dissimilar from those experienced between London boroughs, in the next decade, that led to the Poplar Rates rebellion of 1921.[220]

Snell believed that what he termed , 'local xenophobia' was most detectable among the more vulnerable sectors of society but that it had the ability to spread upwards.[221] This is evident in this saga as it reveals s that local rivalry was as much of an issue between small rural communities as between proud northern industrial towns, as evidenced by Shipston's successful wrecking of the town's claim on water sourced from their wider hinterland.[222] It also reveals prejudices within the community. In 1848, when the question was first aired by a relative newcomer to the town and supported by a resident of a neighbouring village, the local population failed to respond. This echoes Snell's belief in an inherent distrust of non-natives, a stance continued in the treatment of Dr Mark Style, who supported Moreton-born Dr Moore in the water issue. Style, was sidelined persistently both in his pronouncements on hygiene and sanitation and, following Moore's death, in later issues relating to the hospital management.[223]

Throughout the narrative one has the impression of dogged local indignation that the state and health of the town should be questioned and that the status quo should be challenged. That Freeman-Mitford chose to support this stance made innovation even more difficult as the community mindset was one in which the landed elite must know best. It reinforces the belief that even in the first decade of the 20th century, the local elite held sway over the general population in matters that seriously affected the latter's daily lives. Only Freeman-Mitford features in the account of the quest for sanitation, with occasional references to water divining on other landowners' property or the negotiation of easements. It is not known whether Winder's original suggestion of approaching the local landowners and farmers for financial backing ever occurred, but it seems certain that none made any attempt to make voluntary donations to the subsequent project. Through the period, all made contributions to church improvements, gifts to the local hospital, annual teas for children, but it appears

[220] N. Bransom, *Poplarism 1919-1925,* (London, 1980).
[221] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 73.
[222] McTominey, 'Bad Neighbours', p. 35.
[223] GRO, HO301/1 Moreton Hospital Minute Book.

that delivering basic water provision for the local inhabitants was too mundane and insufficiently grandiose.

Freeman-Mitford's association with events does not place him in a particularly good light. Firstly his involvement in the 1892 public meeting, in which he firmly aligned himself with the ratepayers to the detriment of the poorer residents and his subsequent failure to pursue the Batsford spring project when challenged by the Severn Commissioners suggest someone unwilling to challenge unpalatable situations. However, most questionable was his funding of the construction of Redesdale Hall, situated in a prominent position in the centre of the town, near to Mr. Beman's house, described in the 1848 letter, at the heart of the area subject to regular flooding. It was heralded as something to benefit the community. Much clearance, cleaning and window dressing would have been done in the surrounding streets in preparation for its ceremonial opening in December 1887. One must wonder whether it occurred to any of the distinguished guests if this was the best use of money to assist the local community. However, either through fear of repercussions in terms of employment or shelter or as part of the paternalism/deference contract, his actions never appeared to have been questioned.

Conclusions

The 19th century can be perceived as a time that witnessed a gradual loosening of the control exerted by members of the ruling elite, in favour of a more democratic footing, that provided opportunities for all. This micro study of Moreton demonstrates that the situation in a small rural town did not reflect this trend and that change was not as universal as may be supposed. Until the eve of the 1914-18 war, the major landowners and recipients of Moreton residents' rent remained the owners of the Batsford and Sezincote estates. Similarly, should anyone break the law, it was likely that they would appear for sentencing before their landlord or one of his close associates. Either from gratitude or fear, the reverence in which the Redesdale, Rushout and Dugdale families, and to a certain extent their wider circle of acquaintances, were held by their tenants, the people of Moreton, is repeatedly underlined by the way in which they were feted and revered consistently in press reports. Roberts' description of the paternalism/deference contract of the early part of the 19th century, that was manifest in the social rituals described by Eastwood could still be detected in Moreton in the early 20th century.[224] Reay suggests that protest could take the form of insincere deference, popular songs, and graffiti but there is no extant evidence of such in the locality.[225] Therefore, it is likely that John Freeman-Mitford or Charles Rushout would not have felt out of place in the Moreton of 1914, as their successors were not treated very differently from the way they had been 50 years

[224] Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, pp. 5-6; Eastwood, *Government and Community,* p. 29.
[225] Reay, *Rural Englands,* p.158-160.

before. The concept of paternalistic rule may have been waning in the face of urban growth but its persistence in rural communities is apparent from this study of Moreton.

Chandler and Eastwood's different conclusions about developments in 19th century local government summarise Moreton's situation succinctly. Chandler highlighted the intent when he described how the developments in the legal framework of local government from the vestry to the tertiary system of county, rural district and parish council were an opportunity for local administration to be placed in the orbit of people democratically elected from a cross section of the community.[226] However, Eastwood encapsulates the reality when he stated that, 'the political primacy of the elite within local communities was rarely challenged' and that, 'the principal legitimization for public status in the parish was private wealth'.[227] This study of Moreton confirms Eastwood's conclusion that the reality was that the new developments only served to ratify the positions of the people previously part of the less formal vestry system, with the personnel unchanged.

Moreton displayed great enthusiasm for the new parish council system when the first elections were held, with more nominations than seats available. This dissipated quickly with no evidence of a poll in elections after 1896; with new councillors being co-opted to take the place of resignations.[228] One explanation for this may be found in a letter to the editor of the *Evesham Journal* in March 1896, from 'a Ratepayer'. The letter criticised the cost of a poll and suggested that the money should be spent, 'to employ some of those who can't get work and lay the money out to some advantage……we want the rates lower and not higher', with the suggestion that the people in question should 'cool their ambition for the sake of the principle and withdraw their candidature…….we don't want any help in losing money'.[229] This is an interesting view which takes a very practical approach and questions the cost of democracy. If this opinion were widespread in the town, it would suggest that the lack of elections may not have been solely due to apathy. However, the result was the same: as with the deference accorded to the elite and the composition of the magistracy, the parish council was also effectively evidence that the local administration of Moreton was an exercise in the maintenance of the status quo.

Chapter one demonstrated that in its choice of marriage partners Moreton did not fulfill Snell's ideas of 'belonging', which is further apparent in this chapter from the low references to 'of this parish' on gravestones and in registers.[230] However, from this study of Moreton's local government, it is apparent that the advent of new legislative orders and the prolonged quest to obtain sanitation did bring the idea of parish loyalty to the fore. The high number of contraventions of highway and educational legislation

[226] Chandler, *Explaining Local Government: Local Government in Britain since 1800,* p.104.
[227] Eastwood, *Government and Community,* pp. 42-3.
[228] *EJ,* 16 April 1898.
[229] *EJ,* 14 March 1896.
[230] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* pp. 28-80.

indicates people exercising some form of agency against new directives that did not fit with their traditional lifestyle. Similarly, the vehement and at times fictitious reaction by the vestry and parish council to the claims that the town was unsanitary provides evidence to support Snell's hypothesis. Likewise it is possible to detect animosity between Moreton and Shipston when the idea of sharing a water supply was mooted. However, above all it would seem that criticism by strangers provoked a reaction from the townspeople, and those in authority, that may have ultimately delayed the implementation of sanitary improvements by some decades.

Chapter 3 Welfare

Introduction

Welfare is a widely understood term relating to the provision of help, either monetary or in kind, at times of hardship. Traditionally this was viewed in terms of elite officialdom recognizing a need and delivering it accordingly. In recent years the concept of agency, defined as 'acting with intention', has been developed, when considering the actions of the poor in their dealings with officialdom.[1] This alters historical perceptions relating to charity and welfare, placing the poor in a less passive position than traditionally thought. Such actions covered a wide spectrum from exaggeration of circumstances to the examples of insubordination detailed by David Green in London workhouses.[2] The lack of any extant first hand accounts or written pleas by the people of Moreton make it very difficult to assess the extent to which Moreton people exercised agency in their dealings with the official channels of welfare provision. Likewise, the records examined from Shipston PLU do not highlight any instances of protest by the few Moreton people in the workhouse. Given the passivity already revealed in relation to local government, such an outcome cannot be regarded as surprising.

Chapter two examined the difficulties Moreton faced in complying with the growing demands of centrally imposed legislation relating to local government. In addition to this there was an increasing body of regulations and byelaws, covering the relationships between institutions and the public, as well as between individuals themselves. The minutiae of everyday life was progressively regulated and, in addition to legislative initiatives, the second half of the 19th century witnessed increasingly creative national approaches to charitable works, and attempts at the moral reform of the working population. Whilst it is possible to detect the overarching influence of government in the life of Moreton, the crusading zeal of nascent national charities, as described by Michael Roberts, is less visible although one cannot rule out their sway in the motivations of local individuals.[3] Again, ground-breaking initiatives in small towns, such as the ones found in Moreton, are frequently overlooked by historians whose efforts are concentrated on larger projects in national and regional centres. In 2003 Steven King and Alannah Tomkins suggested that little work had been done on 'economy of makeshifts' and 'coping strategies'.[4] Whilst King has continued research into welfare prior to 1850, reference to BBIH again shows that this situation has not changed for the later 19th century.

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[1] M. Webber, 'Troubling Agency: Agency and Charity in Early Nineteenth-century London', *Historical research : the bulletin of the Institute of Historical Research* 91.251 (2018), p. 118.
[2] D. Green, 'Pauper Protests: Power and Resistance in Early Nineteenth-Century London Workhouses', *Social History* 31.2 (2006), pp. 137–159.
[3] M. Roberts, *Making English Morals: voluntary Association and Moral Reform in England,1787–1886,* (Cambridge, 2004), p. 260.
[4] King & Tomkins, *The Poor in England,* p. 24.

Margaret Hanly's scrutiny of censuses of the poor in Lancashire reveals that 'work alone was not often a sufficient avenue to guarantee subsistence'.[5] Evidence of the need for welfare can be found in contemporary PLU documents but few of these are available for Moreton. However, references can be found in other documents such as school logbooks. Henry Long, the schoolmaster's entry in 1872, stating that, 'in consequence of the high price of provisions some of the boys have been sent to work as the parents could not afford to keep them longer at school' furnishes us with a contemporary analysis of the hardships faced by families.[6] As demonstrated in chapters one and two, both financial resources and skills were distributed unevenly. In 1851 over 60% of Moreton's population comprised partly or unskilled labourers, with less than 10% being in professional or intermediate occupations with the highest earning potential. By 1911, the situation had improved with a higher percentage of skilled occupations but the numbers in the higher earning brackets had remained static. This meant that a large body of people lived on low wages and were reliant on the altruistic gestures of those with surplus income.[7] Additionally, an economy dependent on agriculture meant that family budgets suffered from income being weather dependent and unpredictable, resulting in seasonal instances of hardship. Lack of resources fostered a wide-ranging culture of self-help that was both formal and informal and embodies the concepts of a 'mixed economy of welfare' or 'an economy of makeshifts'.[8] Both are more widely associated with the 17th and 18th centuries, as indicated by the time frame of King and Tomkins' collection of essays.[9] The experience of Moreton demonstrates that communities in provincial rural England operated in similar ways until the early 20th century. Self-help extended beyond the boundaries of social welfare to encompass education as well as wider attempts to improve the cultural life of the community.

Snell's research demonstrates that despite its significant place in welfare history, the 1834 Act did not result in greater numbers receiving relief inside workhouses. He calculated that on average outdoor relief numbers were 4.4 times greater than indoor.[10] Snell also highlighted regional differences in the provision of outdoor relief showing that the south Midlands area, of which Shipston was a part, was among those areas where outdoor relief exceeded 75% of total relief.[11] It will be shown from an examination of the relationship between Moreton and the Shipston workhouse that this trend was replicated to an even greater extent in the town.

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[5] M. Hanly, 'The Economy of Makeshifts and the Poor Law: a Game of Chance?' in King & Tomkins, *The Poor in England,* p. 91.
[6] GRO, S221/1/1, October 4, 1872.
[7] Figures, 7, 8, 9 and 10.
[8] J. Innes, 'The "Mixed Economy of Welfare" in Early Modern England: Assessment of the Options from Hale to Malthus (c. 1683-1803), in Daunton (ed.) *Charity, Self-Interest and Welfare,* (London, 1996), p. 141.
[9] King & Tomkins, *The Poor in England.*
[10] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 218.
[11] Ibid., p. 225.

The chapter will examine the various agencies that provided support for the townspeople and the role played by the local PLU in the provision of welfare in Moreton. An economy of makeshift bred a spirit of self-reliance which was displayed in the innovative establishment of the Moreton Cottage Hospital and attempts to help people build up buffers against future hardship through the establishment of savings banks. The roles the Parish and Congregational churches played in this will be examined with the input of the landed elite and prominent trade families.

Welfare

Shipston on Stour Poor Law Union

From 1834, Moreton people facing adversity and unable to achieve sufficient support from local charities or the community, encountered officialdom in the form of the Shipston PLU. As already discussed, the arbitrary central government decision in 1834, to make Stow the centre of the north Gloucestershire PLU, may have bred a sense of detachment on both sides. The workhouse was built on the northern outskirts of Shipston, seven miles from Moreton, with two guardians elected from the town, to assist with its governance.[12] As already noted, Lord Redesdale fulfilled one of these positions for over 50 years, from the PLU's inception until his death, in 1886, acting as chairman when in attendance, emphasising the importance he had placed on it and his pivotal position within welfare administration. This is highlighted by the obituary in *Evesham Journal* quoting fellow guardian, Mr. W Stanley's tribute, referring to his 'singlehearted devotion to public kindness was perhaps the most conspicuous feature of his character.'[13] After his death, it is possible to detect a significant change in the relationship between Moreton and the PLU, with less regular attendance at meetings from the Moreton representatives.[14]

The local overseers, up to seven of whom were appointed annually by the vestry, were the immediate point of contact for people facing hardship. The overseers' responsibilities were extensive and the position unpaid.[15] Echoing Snell's findings in the previous century and the earlier part of the 19th century, it was a fluid body of people, whose personnel changed annually, drawn primarily from the town's tradesmen.[16] The majority were young men, some of whom were appointed soon after arriving in the town, which implies that it was a position that did not appeal to long standing residents, was seen as an opportunity to make one's mark on the town or nobody from the town was considered a suitable candidate.

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[12] P. Higginbotham, *The Workhouse Experience,* (2014).
[13] *EJ*, 8 May 1886.
[14] WRO, CR51/981-999, Shipston on Stour PLU, Minute Books 1866-1914.
[15] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 363.
[16] *K. Snell*, *Annals of the Labouring Poor: Social Change and Agrarian England, 1660–1900,* (Cambridge, 1985), pp.107-8. GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 24 March 1855; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 325, p. 23, (George Gray); & Folio: 290, p. 3 (John Wells), & Folio: 294, p. 10 (Charles Gore).

Figure 48: Shipston on Stour Workhouse (now renovated).[17]



The Moreton 'Overseers' Receipts and Payments Book 1848-1867' demonstrates how few requests for relief came directly before the overseers. Over the period the amount collected was between £350 and £400 per annum, of which approximately £80 per quarter was sent directly to the PLU. Of the remainder, the majority was spent on administrative costs: stamps, stationery, printing, oath swearing and overseers' expenses for attending meetings in Shipston. Other expenses related to the removal of people to either the workhouse or other parishes; two payments (2s 6d and 5s) to Dr Moore for medical attention to local residents and four payments of 1s.1d to named paupers, none of whom can be located in Moreton.[18] Stark figures make it difficult to assess the tone and culture of the overseers: their social standing implies that they were present in the community and may have been considered approachable, but the payments made suggest parsimony especially in comparison to expenses of 7s.6d paid to the overseers for visits to Shipston. However, if the payments made were to people passing through with no connection to the town, they demonstrate a degree of compassionate generosity.

There are no comparable figures for this period regarding outdoor relief. Original documents relating to the workhouse between 1850 and 1914 are limited to minute books and masters' reports, which reveal little detail about the identity of inmates but do provide some insight into the relationship between the town and the PLU. In the 1860s, the relieving officer assigned to Moreton was Oswald Wheatcroft, by then a resident of Blockley, four miles away, implying remoteness and a lack of personal knowledge of the plight of the Moreton poor.[19] The absence of a suitable Moreton resident as a candidate for this position can only be the subject of speculation but again raises the possibility of either apathy or incompetence. The minute book lists

[17] I. Murphy, 2019.
[18] GRO, P221/OV/8/1, Overseers' Receipts and Payments Book 1848-1867; P221/OV/8/2, Collector's monthly statement, 1864-67; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851 & 1861, Moreton.
[19] *Ancestry*, *1861 Slater Directory of Worcestershire,* p. 6.

names of 16 ‘able-bodied’ Moreton residents to whom outdoor relief was provided and the medical reasons why it was given. Most of the reasons were genuine medical conditions: e.g., rheumatism, whooping cough, confinement, pleurisy, but for six, the reason given is the less definable one of ‘debility.’ None of the decennial census entries for the individuals listed suggest any were long-term disabilities. The exact relationship between the relieving officer and the Moreton overseers is not traceable but the minute books suggest that by the 1860s Wheatcroft was responsible for provision in kind. In the first quarter of 1866, £116 was paid in outdoor relief to Wheatcroft, as relieving officer for Moreton, for distribution to the residents, which was higher per head of population than for Shipston. During the same quarter £8 was spent on inmates from Moreton.[20] These figures are significant: higher amounts of outdoor relief than indoor relief given to people in Moreton points to admission resistance, and reliance on other sources of help and support. However, the total outdoor relief payment for Moreton was also lower than that given to the people of Blockley. This may have been due to Wheatcroft’s remoteness from Moreton or preferential treatment given to Blockley residents, whose circumstances were better known to him.

The minute books quantify the amount of out relief, in the form of loaves of bread and money, provided to Wheatcroft. During the late 1870s and the early 1880s, when Moreton’s population was between 1400 and 1450 people, these averaged approximately 200 loaves and £15 in cash each week, or £180 quarterly, a considerable increase on the 1866 figure, which reflects the national downturn in agriculture during the 1870s. Robin’s research in Colyton suggested two loaves were provided each week to a household.[21] The Moreton figure implies that 100 households and therefore not an inconsiderable number of people received this benefit in kind. During the same period school fees for some Moreton children were met by the PLU but there is no record of funeral expenses being paid.[22] Later there are reports of tradesmen from Moreton taking young people from the workhouse as apprentices and of children being boarded out to Moreton households, a system of mutual benefit to the workhouse and the community.[23] There is no evidence of Moreton tradesmen being used to supply the PLU, possibly the result of the distance between the town and the workhouse but it may also have reflected a ‘closed shop’ in the acceptance of the supply tenders that were frequently advertised in the local press.[24]

The masters’ reports provide a slightly more personal record than the minutes. Occasional references were made to people from Moreton requesting leave of absence to visit friends, assumed to be necessary due to the distance between the workhouse and their previous residences. Acknowledgements were also recorded of

[20] CR51/981 Minutes,1866-1868.
[21] J. Robin, ‘The Relief of Poverty in Mid-Nineteenth Century Colyton,’ *Rural History,* 1 (1990), p. 203.
[22] WRO, CR51/985, Shipston on Stour PLU, Minutes 1875-1877; CR51/988 Minutes 1882-1884.
[23] WRO, CR51/991 Minutes 1889-1892.
[24] WRO, CR51/991; WRO, CR51/998 Minutes 1912-1914; e.g., *Berrow’s Worcester Journal* (*BWJ)*, (Worcester), 29 August 1857.

the gifts of tea, tobacco, fruit, and sweets, given to the inmates by the affluent ladies of Moreton including Lady Redesdale and the doctors' wives.[25] By the end of the century, attendance by Moreton guardians at the weekly meetings was intermittent. By 1914, out of a possible 26 meetings, one guardian had attended ten and the other only five.[26] Another incident of note occurred in 1891, when the rate collector, Francis Page, who had been in post for just over a year, had his salary withheld and was dismissed for dereliction of duty, as reported in the minutes,

> *'*On being reported that this Collector was sending in no statements and not doing his work satisfactorily, the Clerk was directed to inform Mr. Page, the Collector, that is was proposed to dismiss him from his office as Collector in a month's time'.[27]

Page's response was that he was too busy with his own business to attend any meeting and it was reported by another guardian that,

> 'in this opinion the Collector was incapable of performing the duties of the office neither having made or collected any rates for some time'.[28]

This account suggests that the task of collection may have been onerous, due to the reluctance of the townspeople to make contributions. It also implies that the position was not treated with the respect it deserved by either the community or by the office holder and is further evidence of the dislocation between the town and the PLU.

The seven miles from Moreton to the workhouse may have been crucial in fostering a culture of resilience amongst the population. The school logbooks supply only one reference to children being admitted to the workhouse, James and Ann Evans in April 1886, who were discharged and returned to school, within a month.[29] Without any extant workhouse admissions and discharge logs, the decennial censuses are the only source with which to assess the demographics of the workhouse. The inmates' birth places provide clues as to their residency before admission, but it is not foolproof. However, it allows longitudinal tracing to take place, which offers some certainty regarding previous residency, for example, recent child baptisms. This technique was employed by Robin for Colyton, which was a similar distance from its workhouse in Axminster.[30]

As noted, March 1866's minute book lists £8 for indoor relief of Moreton residents and £116 for outdoor relief, suggesting an exceptionally small number of

[25] WRO, CR51/1084, 1897-8; CR51/1087, Master's Reports, 1903-5.
[26] WRO CR51/998 Minutes 1912-1914.
[27] WRO, CR51/991.
[28] Ibid.
[29] GRO, S221/3/2, Moreton Infants' School Logbooks, 1884-1895, Apr- May 1886.
[30] Robin, 'The Relief of Poverty', p. 212.

inmates from the town.[31] This meant that 93.5% of Moreton's support was paid as outdoor relief, which was higher than any of the averages quoted by Snell and, while supporting the latter's findings for the area as a whole, may also indicate peculiar local circumstances.[32] This is supported by census analysis from 1851 – 1911, based on place of birth, and allows similar comparisons to be made with Shipston natives. Figure 49 provides a breakdown of Moreton-born in each census, compared with those from Shipston. Moreton natives never exceeded 10% of the total and in two decades were less than 5%. The workhouse's remoteness from Moreton implies people viewed admission as the last option. Conversely proximity may have meant Shipston paupers took the opposite approach or that relieving officers took a harsher stance.

Figure 49: Comparison of inmates at Shipston Workhouse from Moreton with those from Shipston in each census.[33]

Census	Total Inmates	From Moreton	% of total	From Shipston	% of total
1851	95	8	8.42	14	14.74
1861	91	2	2.20	16	17.58
1871	134	11	8.21	21	15.67
1881	137	11	8.03	18	13.14
1891	135	5	3.70	23	17.04
1901	133	5	3.76	19	14.29
1911	143	9	6.29	18	12.59

Joseph Harley identified strategic use of the workhouse, as part of the economy of makeshift in an earlier period; the following account of the Sharp family's stay seems to fit this criteria.[34] The eight inmates from Moreton in 1851 were related, comprising the family of Elizabeth Sharp, from Moreton, her husband, Thomas, from Blockley, and five of their children: the oldest nine; the youngest, a few weeks old, and Elizabeth's younger sister, Ellen.[35] Whole families were unusual: Robin found none from Colyton during her study period and Simon Gallaher's study of Antrim emphasized their rarity, while in 1881, in north and central Kent, there was only one family group across eight workhouses.[36] Audrey Perkyns' research in north Kent suggests that whole family admissions were caused primarily by unemployment but 1851 in Moreton, during the period of railway construction, appeared a time of prosperity and more job opportunities.[37] It suggests that the circumstances which

[31] CR51/981.
[32] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 225.
[33] *Ancestry,* England Census, Shipston Workhouse, 1851-1911.
[34] J. Harley, 'Material Lives of the Poor and Their Strategic Use of the Workhouse during the Final Decades of the English Old Poor Law', *Continuity and Change,* 30/1 (2015), p. 90.
[35] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 2076, Folio: 516, pp. 45-50.
[36] S. Gallaher, 'Children and Families in the Workhouse Populations of the Antrim, Ballymena, and Ballymoney Poor Law Unions in the Mid-nineteenth Century', *Local Population Studies,* 99 (2017), p. 88; D. Jackson 'Kent Workhouse Populations in 1881: a Study Based on the Census Enumerators' Books', *Local Population Studies,* 69 (2002), p. 59.
[37] A. Perkyns, 'The Admission of Children to the Milton Union Workhouse, Kent, 1835–1885,' *Local Population Studies*, 80 (2008), p. 65.

forced the Sharps into the workhouse may have been personal rather than a reflection of local economic conditions. This temporary use of the workhouse is confirmed from, 'The Overseers' Receipts and Payments Book' which recorded a payment of 17s.6d to remove the family from Shipston to Blockley, where they remained for the rest of the century, while Ellen returned to Moreton.[38] The sisters were from the Webb family whose kinship links within the town were extensive, suggesting a family rift, however the episode demonstrates that Moreton people were employing strategies associated with an earlier period in a bid to overcome periods of financial stress.

Only two Moreton natives were present in the workhouse in 1861, comprising just 2.2% of its total population, coinciding with the period of greatest prosperity in the years following the railway's arrival. However, within a decade the situation had changed but it was children who appeared to suffer most. Of the nine inmates in 1871, six were under 13, orphaned or abandoned. There appeared to be two pairs of siblings: Charlotte and Elijah Hopkins, (seven and four), and Sarah and Mary Perkins (ten and six) the children of untraceable single mothers.[39] The situation in 1881 was similar with 11 Moreton born inmates, six of whom were two sets of siblings: the Bubb children, aged five, three and one and the Jones children, aged 12, ten and eight.[40] Both sets of siblings seemed to have been part of nuclear families within the previous few years, with the latter having older siblings. This high proportion of Moreton children compares to the numbers found by Robin in Axminster and Gallaher in Antrim, although the imbalance does not appear as great in either of the Perkyns' studies in Kent.[41] These findings highlight the precarious position of children in society, especially if they were illegitimate, abandoned or had suffered the loss of either parent. They were unable to make decisions for themselves and did not have the agency to resist entry into the workhouse, but the problem of their care was solved easily by their admission. Gallaher and Perkyns identified a common trend of children entering the workhouses with only their married or single mothers, but there is no evidence to support such circumstances amongst the Moreton children.[42] Perkyns related cases in Milton of single mothers being allowed to leave their illegitimate children in the workhouse for them to find work in return for payment towards the children's maintenance.[43] Without the Shipston account books to provide verification, it is possible that such an arrangement was made explaining the presence of both the Hopkins and Perkins siblings. Perkyns identified cases of lone children being sent to the Milton workhouse due to accidents or chronic illness, however there was no suggestion, in the additional comments, that any of the Moreton children had been admitted for these reasons.[44]

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[38] P221/OV/8/1.
[39] GRO, P221IN1/4.
[40] *Ancestry,* England Census,1881 Class: RG11*,* Piece: 3112*,* Folio: 108, pp. 33-38.
[41] Robin, 'The Relief of Poverty', p. 212; Gallaher, 'Children and Families in the Workhouse Populations', p. 84; Jackson, p. 57; Perkyns, p. 63.
[42] Gallaher, 'Children and Families in the Workhouse Populations', p. 89; Perkyns, 'The Admission of Children', p. 64.
[43] Perkyns, 'The Admission of Children', p. 69.
[44] Ibid., p. 71.

The demographic in 1891 and 1901 was different with extremely small numbers of Moreton people suggesting an improved network of alternative support. Only one of the five 1891 inmates, Esther Rolph, was under 20, and from her location in future censuses, at Barnwood asylum, seems to have been admitted for medical reasons.[45] In 1901, all five inmates were elderly, two of whom were a married couple, Thomas and Eliza Howe, part of a large kinship network in Moreton.[46] One of the others, Thomas Higley, was part of the extended Webb family, that also had a wide kinship network in Moreton. The presence of all three in Shipston suggests that kinship support at this point was not as effective as it may have been previously. Gallaher highlighted a growing national trend, towards the end of the century, of saving abandoned and illegitimate children from the workhouse and admitting them to orphanages.[47] The absence of Moreton children in these censuses seems to reflect this and is supported locally with the foundation of an orphanage, albeit only for girls, in Honington, that was referenced in the later Masters' reports.[48] In 1911, there was a greater demographic mix of Moreton natives, including three people over 50 and four children, two of whom, George and John Lootes, appeared to be siblings, but although from a familiar Moreton name, it is not possible to ascertain their precise family circumstances at the time.[49]

The physical inability to work in old age, infirmity, the loss of a partner and the lack of pension meant that, like children, the elderly, especially those widowed, had fewer choices in avoiding admission, as demonstrated by the presence of Thomas Higley in 1901.[50] Over the course of the seven censuses, only 13, or 25%, of the Moreton inmates were over the age of 60. In David Jackson's assessment of the Kent workhouses, this section of the population averaged 36% of the inmates.[51] The comparatively small numbers of elderly from Moreton suggests that community provision to care for the elderly within a mixed economy of makeshift was more workable than in other places. This supports the findings in chapter one relating to single occupation households and while it implies families may not have provided accommodation for elderly relatives, it does suggest an informal means of community support.

The analysis of the Shipston workhouse censuses illustrates the small number of Moreton residents who found themselves as inmates. That a high proportion of these were minors, with little input into the decision regarding admittance or the ability to self-advocate, indicates that adults, who were in a better position to make alternative arrangements, invariably took steps to avoid it. The comparison with the numbers

[45] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2485*,* Folio: 30, p.4; 1901, Class: RG13*,* Piece: 2423*,* Folio: 52, p. 14; 1911, Piece: 15280*.*
[46] Ibid., 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 2946*,* Folio: 142, pp. 1-6.
[47] Gallaher, 'Children and Families in the Workhouse Populations', p. 89.
[48] www.childrenshomes.org.uk/ShipstonOrphanage (28 January 2023); CR51/1084.
[49] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911, Piece: 18865.
[50] Ibid., 1901, RG13, Piece: 2946.
[51] Jackson, 'Kent Workhouse Populations in 1881', p. 59.

entering from Shipston itself suggests that proximity to the workhouse may have reduced fear of admittance, making it an easier option than that considered by Moreton people. These factors would have been irrelevant without alternative welfare provisions within the town. Consequently, it is necessary to consider the other options, from the mixed economy of welfare, available to people in Moreton.

The Oddfellows

> 'The Friendly Society has done so much for its members and contributed so largely to industrial welfare by increasing their self-respect and independence, - it has been so powerful an instrument or foresight and economy and has led many men to positions of influence and dignity, - that it has a strong and genuine claims upon the community whose interest it has largely promoted.'[52]

Edward Brabrook, the Senior Registrar of Friendly Societies during the later 19th century, wrote legal guides for working class self-help institutions. His verdict on friendly societies encapsulates their position in Moreton. No history of the town would be complete without an assessment of the role and importance of the Oddfellows to it. The number of houses still visible in the town is testament to their presence. Mutual support societies, or friendly societies, emerged during the early 18th century when the medieval trade guilds were in decline. The Oddfellows were so called as they did not represent one trade. During the later 18th century, the focus of their activity moved away from London to the burgeoning industrial cities in the north of England and, in October 1810, The Independent Order of Oddfellows Manchester Unity was formed.[53] During the entire period of this study Oddfellows were a vibrant presence in Moreton and it was to this organisation that the town's three branches were affiliated and during which time, national membership increased from just under 225,000 to just under a million.[54]

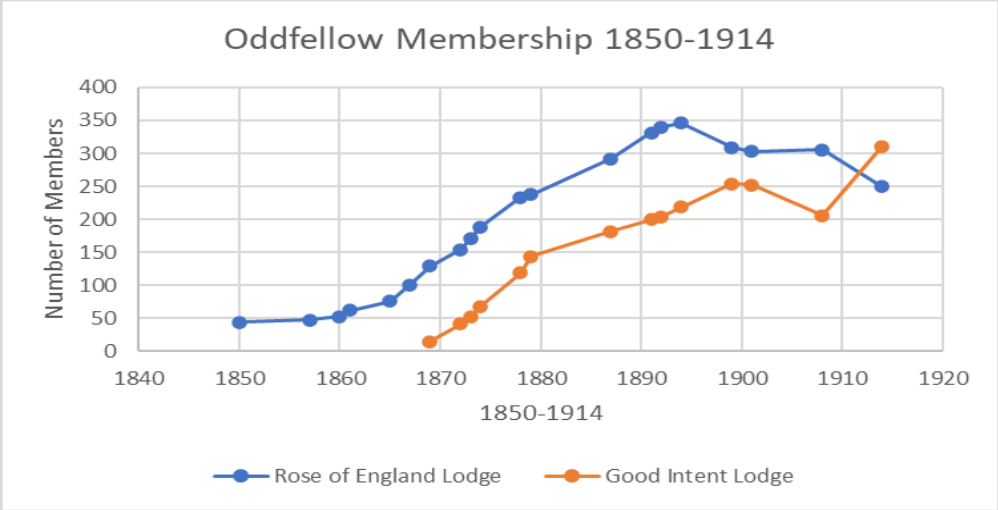
With the exception of Daniel Weinbren's comprehensive national history, there has been little historic research on the role specifically played by Oddfellows in different localities. Their ubiquity is evident by the number of public houses bearing their name, highlighting their importance to local communities and the likely venue of meetings. The Oddfellows has its own private archive but contains little information about activities in Moreton, other than times of meeting and membership numbers, meaning details of their activities have to be gleaned from indirect sources.[55] From a report in the *Evesham Journal,* celebrating the golden jubilee dinner, it is apparent that the Loyal Rose of England, Lodge No 3385 of the Independent Order of Oddfellows Manchester Unity (OOFMU) was established in Moreton in 1843, and met at the Swan

[52] E. Brabrook, *Provident Societies and Industrial Welfare,* (London, 1898), p. 46.
[53] D. Weinbren, *The Oddfellows, 1810 - 2010: Two Hundred Years of Making Friends and Helping People,* (Lancaster, 2010), p. 5.
[54] Ibid., p. 314.
[55] www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/history (28 January 2023).

Hotel.[56] By 1869 there were two branches, the second being the Good Intent Lodge, No 5749, designed for agricultural labourers, which met at the Crown Inn.[57] This is also confirmed by reports in *Moreton Free Press*, advising that the inaugural meeting would take place, and that, 'those wishing to become members should give in their names to Mr. Jesse Timms at once'.[58] By 1870 the United Juvenile branch had been established, as revealed in the report of the testimonial dinner organised when the curate, Henry Bullocke, who was instrumental in its founding, left Moreton. It was still in existence in 1908, although the detail of membership numbers is unknown.[59]

Figure 50 shows that the membership climbed steeply through the 1860s and 1870s. By 1882, the branches' funds stood at £2,700.[60] Another report from 1896 in *Evesham Journal*, celebrating the service of Thomas Peach, whose loyalty and service to Moreton Oddfellowship had been celebrated nationally, stated that the total membership in Moreton stood at 600.[61] In 1891, there were 411 men over the age of 16 in Moreton, demonstrating that Oddfellowship extended beyond the bounds of the town, thereby drawing people into it for weekly meetings.[62] In more populous Chipping Norton, Malcolm Bee calculated a total membership of 1300, from a district population of approximately 6000, describing the lodge as, 'by a substantial margin, the biggest friendly society unit in Oxfordshire'.[63] In comparison, Moreton appears eminently more successful.

Figure 50: Oddfellow Membership in Moreton 1850-1914.[64]

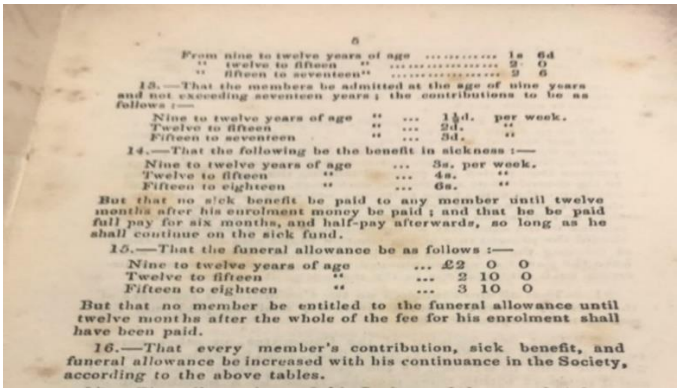


[56] *EJ,* 28 January 1893.
[57] www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/history (28 January 2023).
[58] *MFP*, 14 August 1869.
[59] *EJ,* 31 January 1874, 18 January 1908.
[60] Ibid., 28 January 1882.
[61] Ibid., 21 March 1896.
[62] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Moreton.
[63] M. Bee, 'Within the Shelter of the Old Elm Tree: Oddfellowship and Community in North Oxfordshire, 1871-2002', *Family and Community History,* 6/2 (2003), p. 87; https://www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10547155/cube/TOT_POP (23 August 2023).
[64] www.oddfellows.co.uk (28 January 2023).

Dot Jones argued whether friendly societies were successful in assessing risk due to improving healthcare and life expectancy, and outdated actuarial tables. She has also claimed that they benefited the more frugal members at the expense of those who fell on challenging times and were forced to cease their membership, thereby losing paid subscriptions, and forfeiting future benefits.[65] It is impossible to consider this argument in relation to Moreton as there are few surviving documents relating to the financial management of the three branches.

The only extant document relating to the rules, contributions and benefits available to Moreton Oddfellows are those from the junior branch, with members as young as nine, established in 1870, that met initially at the Parsonage. The rules state that the branch was administered by a committee comprising senior branch members. Contributions were collected and payments made on the fourth Wednesday of each month, when two committee members visited the sick, providing that they did not have any infectious disease. The breakdown of contributions and benefits for 1870 is shown in figure 51 and in subsequent years amendments were made to the rules to increase these. It is difficult to assess the extent of the sacrifice necessary for young people to make these contributions, as their weekly commitments were less than an adult, but the weekly costs were equivalent to school fees. Also, without membership lists the ages of the members cannot be assessed, but by April 1873, the membership stood at 50.[66] In 1871 the number of children in the town was 352, of whom 275 were of working age, between 11 and 20, meaning that the membership percentage was only 18% of the older group and only 13% of the total. However, it is instructive that children so young were being imbued with ideas of thrift and self-sufficiency, reflecting on the economic uncertainty of the period and the culture among the working people of Moreton.

Figure 51: Contributions and Benefits for The Moreton in Marsh United Juvenile Branch of Oddfellows Manchester United Friendly Society.[67]



5

From nine to twelve years of age 1s 6d
" twelve to fifteen " 2 0
" fifteen to seventeen" 2 6

13.—That the members be admitted at the age of nine years and not exceeding seventeen years; the contributions to be as follows :—

Nine to twelve years of age " ... 1½d. per week.
Twelve to fifteen " ... 2d. "
Fifteen to seventeen " ... 3d. "

14.—That the following be the benefit in sickness :—

Nine to twelve years of age ... 3s. per week.
Twelve to fifteen " ... 4s. "
Fifteen to eighteen " ... 6s. "

But that no sick benefit be paid to any member until twelve months after his enrolment money be paid; and that he be paid full pay for six months, and half-pay afterwards, so long as he shall continue on the sick fund.

15.—That the funeral allowance be as follows :—

Nine to twelve years of age ... £2 0 0
Twelve to fifteen " ... 2 10 0
Fifteen to eighteen " ... 3 10 0

But that no member be entitled to the funeral allowance until twelve months after the whole of the fee for his enrolment shall have been paid.

16.—That every member's contribution, sick benefit, and funeral allowance be increased with his continuance in the Society, according to the above tables.

[65] D. Jones, 'Did Friendly Societies Matter? A Study of Friendly Societies in Glamorgan, 1794-1910', *Welsh History Review*, 12 (1984), p. 344.
[66] *MFP,* 19 April 1873.
[67] TNA, FS 15/1259, Rules of The Moreton in Marsh United Juvenile Branch of Oddfellows Manchester United Friendly Society.

Weinbren refers to Oddfellows granting mortgages to its members but does not detail any housebuilding.[68] Likewise, Shani D'Cruze and Jean Turnbull's study of lodges in Preston and Lancaster and their assessment of households refers to lodge members living in areas where houses had been built in the early years of the 19th century.[69] However, in Moreton this was a key feature of their activities but, as there is little published research on the topic elsewhere, it is difficult to assess how unusual this activity was. In January 1880, *Evesham Journal* reported that four cottages had been built in 1877 and that four more were planned adjacent to them, which were finished by the 1881 census.[70] These cottages were constructed on undeveloped land and on the opposite side of the railway line from the town, close to the gas works. It was the first residential development to extend the nucleus of the town in this direction, leading to the eventual link with the previously isolated development of villas on the Evenlode Road. Oddfellows houses showed the working people of Moreton taking a degree of control over their own destinies by making a small dent in the housing stock holdings of the local landed estates. This is evidenced by the 1909 survey that placed the Oddfellows within the top 12 landowners in Moreton, with holdings of 13,408m^2, sites valued at £5,570 and total rental value of £490 p.a.[71]

The houses, aptly named Oddfellows Terrace, were functional dwellings with little ostentation, as can be seen from figure 52. An analysis of the residents in the 1881 census is informative. Of the eight household heads, one was professional, John Slatter an accountant, five were skilled workers, one unskilled and one retired. Of more interest is their residence in the previous census: five had not lived in Moreton in 1871, of the others one lived in High Street, although it is unclear whether this was in the Back Ends, on the east side, and the other two were from the Old Town area, surrounding the church.[72] One can only speculate how residency at these cottages was achieved and whether those who had not previously lived in the town were of good standing with the Order in their former communities. Slatter was from a Moreton family with strong connections to the Oddfellows, his father being the landlord of the Swan, where the Loyal Rose met. He had moved back in the preceding two years, as the census confirms that his youngest son was born in Bourton on the Hill, in 1879. Being an accountant, it is possible that he was a lodge officer and having five children, under nine, may have acted in his favour.[73] The previous locations of those in Moreton are also significant: all were from parts of the town closest to the new development, albeit with the railway in between. This may suggest a reluctance to move on the part of residents living in areas of the town that were further away, such as the Back Ends on the west side of the High St.

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[68] Weinbren, *The Oddfellows, 1810 – 2010,* p. 185.
[69] S. D'Cruze & J Turnbull, 'Fellowship and Family: Oddfellows' Lodges in Preston and Lancaster, c.1830-c.1890', *Urban History,* 22/1 (1995), p. 43.
[70] *EJ,* 31 January 1880.
[71] www.glos1909survey.org.uk (29 August 2023).
[72] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881, Class: RG11*;* Piece: 3111, Folio: 119, p. 8.
[73] Ibid.

Alpha and Devonshire Terraces were built in Hospital Road, close to the Back Ends, identified as overcrowded in the census returns, and subject to flooding and cross contamination from sewers, as detailed in chapter two. The dating plaques for these are unreadable, but Elrington dates them to the 19th century and some of the houses are identifiable from the 1891 census.[74] Again, the occupancy in the census suggests that these new developments were either not aimed at the people in the most overcrowded areas or that their circumstances prevented consideration for tenancy. In 1891, the heads of the four Alpha Terrace households comprised two pensioners, one skilled worker and one unskilled. One retiree was the school master, Henry Long, whose previous accommodation was a tied house. Likewise, the census listings for Devonshire Terrace list houses as occupied by skilled workers.[75]

Figure 52: Oddfellows Terrace Moreton.[76]



Figure 53: Oddfellows Terrace plaque.[77]



Plaques on other terraces, as well as demonstrating local pride, in the buildings reveal the chronology of developments: in 1886, 1887 and 1899 in Evenlode Road, the most remote from the centre, and finally, in 1909, in Cicester Terrace on London

[74] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[75] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Class: RG12; Piece: 2485, Folio: 92, p. 16.
[76] K. Murphy, 2022.
[77] Ibid.

Road, figure 54. The latter increased the town's footprint in an easterly direction, further linking Oddfellows Terrace with Evenlode Road. Elrington claimed that the Oddfellows owned approximately 60 houses in the Moreton, which represented approximately 16% of the housing stock at the end of the period.[78] Architectural observations suggests that to reach Elrington's total other houses were purchased from existing stock. This is supported by a report in *Moreton Free Press* of an auction where property was purchased by Thomas Peach on behalf of the Rose of England Lodge and evidenced by the 1909 survey.[79] These figures demonstrate the importance of the Oddfellows in improving the housing stock of Moreton. The houses did not immediately address issues of poverty and overcrowding amongst the unskilled or paupers in the town, but they relieved pressure on housing by increasing its total provision thereby allowing dispersion away from the crowded areas.

Figure 54: Cicester Terrace, London Road, plaque 1909.[80]



Until the early years of the 20th century, one of the most striking features of Moreton life was the part played by the Oddfellows in its social life. Moreton's calendar was punctuated by the weekly meetings, annual general meetings and especially commemorations of the anniversaries of the founding of both adult lodges: a formal dinner in January to celebrate the Loyal Rose Lodge and a procession, fete, and dinner in August for the Good Intent Lodge, as can be seen in figure 55. The January dinner was held at the Swan, with 'bro (sic) host Slatter providing a capital dinner' and was an opportunity to entertain Oddfellows from other districts. It was an occasion for mutual congratulations, to make presentations to individual members in recognition of their service and to reinforce the basic tenets of the organisation. A speech by Rev Bullocke, the curate at St. David's Church, referred to the prime importance of relief granted to the sick and suffering and to the equality among its members, irrespective of positions held outside the organisation. The latter is underlined by lists of attendees

[78] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[79] *MFP,* 25 July 1896.
[80] K. Murphy, 2022.

at the different events, who represented a cross section of the social classes.[81] The event in early August, a more family orientated occasion, was reported annually in *Evesham Journal* in differing amounts of detail, as well as reaching more distant newspapers. In 1867 the brethren processed from the Swan to the church, each member wearing either a gold or silver star, headed by the Moreton and Little Compton bands, accompanied by a peal of church bells. After a service conducted by Bullocke, they returned to the Swan for dinner. In the afternoon there was another procession around the town, a fete, picnic, and dancing.[82] In other years there were races, a donkey derby, and prizes for all ages. In 1871, the attendance was reported as approximately 1,000 people and, as with the dinner, the entire range of Moreton society was represented.[83] The processions were public displays that asserted the members' joint pride in the organisation and promoted their common commitment and mutual respect. Evelyn Lord's account of festivities in the East Midlands suggests that the format of these days was similar across the country, either due to ideas being exchanged or from a nationally prescribed plan.[84] Throughout the year, regular small concerts were held in which members entertained the public with their diverse talents and simultaneously raised funds for local causes.[85] Lord emphasized the importance of the annual celebrations in displaying the worth of the working classes and demonstrating that they could be seen as 'civilised beings'.[86] In a community like Moreton where reverential deference to the local landowners was the norm, the fete days allowed the focus to be reversed. Lord suggests that employment of the clergy, by the working class, for conducting a service also altered the accepted social balance.[87]

Figure 55: Oddfellows Procession c.1900.[88]



[81] *EJ,* 31 January 1880.
[82] Ibid., 10 August 1867.
[83] Ibid., 12 August 1871.
[84] E. Lord, 'The Friendly Society Movement and the Respectability of the Rural Working Class', *Rural History,* 8/2 (1997), p. 172.
[85] *EJ,* 6 August 1870, 12 August 1871, 17 December 1881, 6 August 1892; *BWJ*, 10 August 1867.
[86] Lord, 'The Friendly Society Movement and the Respectability', p. 172.
[87] Ibid.
[88] David Hanks Postcard Collection.

Alun Howkins's study of friendly society events in Oxfordshire, argued that the societies were an additional form of social control, imposing middle class values on the working class and thus toning down its culture. The lack of information about community events in Moreton prior to the 1850s makes it difficult to assess the tone of earlier events and therefore it is impossible to see the Oddfellow impact on Moreton's calendar as anything other than a positive influence on the town.[89]

Bee cited the social equality championed by the Oddfellows as one of the important facets of the organisation and this is manifest in the lists of attendees at the Moreton events.[90] Membership enabled men from lower classes, likely to be poorer and less well educated, to move in the same circles as more affluent clergy, doctors, and schoolteachers. A system of rules and fines regulated general behaviour, with additional regulations relating to conduct during meetings and social occasions. Given that many took place in public houses such guidelines were crucial to maintaining the ethos of good conduct so critical to the Oddfellows' public persona.[91] The lack of formal membership records means it is difficult to assess whether the Oddfellows not only provided a safety net against hardship but also a network, via which members' careers could progress through relationships forged at the weekly lodge meetings. Such a scenario seems highly likely as the traders in the town were provided with opportunities to assess the behaviour and work ethic of a body of people that would be remembered when openings arose in their businesses.

Local career progression may have been a useful benefit of Oddfellow membership, but through its complicated local and national chain of command, it also provided diligent members with the chance to progress within the wider organisation itself and receive national recognition. One such person was Thomas Peach, whose career within Oddfellowship was chronicled in the organisation's magazine, *The Friendly Societies Recorder,* under the title 'The Salt of the Manchester Unity – one of Nature's Noblemen' and subsequently reported in *Evesham Journal.* Peach was born and baptised in Moreton, in 1820, the eldest son of a shoemaker. In 1841 he was living with his parents and six siblings in Back Ends and had joined his father's trade. In 1851, when he was already an officer of the Loyal Rose Lodge, he married and had his own family. By 1861, he had moved to the High Street, living with his family, and coincidently providing the future relieving officer, Oswald Wheatcroft, with lodgings, above or behind his workshop, where he remained until his death in 1897.[92] The *Friendly Societies Recorder* article recounts Peach's 50 years of service, being a founder member of the Loyal Rose lodge in Moreton, his composition of Oddfellow songs and his election as Lodge Chairman (or NG in Oddfellow terminology) before

[89] A. Howkins, *Whitsun in 19th Century Oxfordshire,* (Oxford [Ruskin College History Workshop], 1973), pamphlet, no. 8.
[90] Bee, 'Within the Shelter of the Old Elm Tree', p. 89.
[91] Weinbren, *The Oddfellows, 1810 – 2010,* p. 46; Lord, 'The Friendly Society Movement and the Respectability', p. 168; TNA, FS 15/1259.
[92] *Ancestry*, England Census,1841, District: 1*,* Folio:13*,* p. 21; 1851, Class: HO107*;* Piece: 2076*,* Folio: 321, p.15; 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 107, p. 7*;* GRO, P221IN1/15 *&* P221IN/1/3*.*

1850. Later he was elected as District Chairman (Prov. GM) in 1876 and assisted in the organisation of the national annual general meetings (AMC) in 1883 and 1886, which presented him with opportunities to travel to other parts of the country.[93] In 1886, he was awarded the title of Past Provincial Grand Master and presented with a gold jewel and a public testimonial that hoped,

> 'his life of usefulness may encourage the younger brethren of this order to follow in his footsteps and that……. his remaining years may be passed…. knowing that his life had been spent for the benefit of his day and his generation'.[94]

Peach's life story admirably encapsulates the wider respect and life experiences that could be achieved by someone born into relative poverty. His diligence and loyalty within the Loyal Rose lodge 'gained public recognition, via progression from modest supporting roles to lodge or even district chairmanship'.[95] Through travel, the Oddfellows enabled him to broaden his horizons from those of a small country market town, learn how things were done elsewhere and replicate them in Moreton. The report of him purchasing properties at auction on behalf of the lodges demonstrates that, by the end of his life, someone from humble origins had acquired the knowledge and self-confidence necessary to conduct business with people born in hugely different circumstances.

Oddfellowship permeated life in Moreton and appeared to have contributed to cooperation and collaboration between people of different classes in building safety nets to assist those in need. There is evidence of friendly societies, not always affiliated to the Oddfellows, in nearby towns and villages. The societies in Stonesfield, have been thoroughly researched but in others their existence is only visible on the ground, in housing stock in nearby Stow, and in Chipping Norton's Oddfellows Hall.[96] It was a major facet of the mixed economy of makeshift that continued to exist in Moreton into the 20th century. This cooperation in matters of welfare in Moreton paved the way for more ground-breaking initiatives.

Moreton Cottage Hospital

> 'I sing of something nobler, and more enduring far,
> Than rich or costly pageant, or heroes off to war,
> 'Tis something far more noble, when rich join hand in hand,
> To raise a Cottage Hospital, for the ailing in our land,
> The gift befits the donors, and all honoured to be brave,

[93] Abbreviations explained via www.oddfellows.co.uk/about/traditions (28 January 2023).
[94] *EJ,* 21 March 1896.
[95] Bee, 'Within the Shelter of the Old Elm Tree', p. 89.
[96] S. Morley, 'Community, Self-Help, and Mutual Aid: Friendly Societies and the Parish Welfare System in Rural Oxfordshire, 1834-1918', (DPhil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2012).

Who spend their money and their time the poor to help and save!

So build on, O ye builders, and make it strong and sure,
Memento of a noble race, that shall for long endure,
"The charity that never fails" was here exemplified,
When up rose Moreton, heart and hand, o'er all the country wide,
A blessing rest upon it, and the true and nobly brave,
Who spared not gifts, both rich and rare, the poor to help and save'.[97]

The words of the anonymous 'Bonnie Red Rose of Collier's Hill' encapsulate the emotional pride generated in the community by Moreton Cottage Hospital that was, and remains, palpable within the town. Its establishment placed Moreton at the forefront of developments in this area and was another strand in the town's self sufficiency in matters of welfare. Prior to its founding, beds for the sick of Moreton, at Gloucester Infirmary, were made possible through the Warneford trust that was created in the 1850s, however with no extant documentation, it is difficult to assess how frequently the charity was accessed. Gloucester is more than 30 miles from Moreton and the difficulties of travelling to that area of the county were assessed in chapter two. In the 1850s, there is newspaper evidence of an infirmary in Stratford but no obvious connections with Moreton regarding patients or in the names of patrons and subscribers.

The dearth of nearby hospital provision again highlights Moreton's isolated position in terms of welfare. In 1851 the census records three GPs and newspaper reports through the period recount their attendance at accidents. The only local recourse for care in prolonged sickness was the Shipston workhouse, out relief as already documented, or reliance on the community. As the workhouse censuses revealed, Moreton inmates did not appear to be there for temporary nursing care. This position was replicated in neighbouring towns, but Moreton led the way in providing organised community health care that became a blueprint for others to follow.

John Hall states that the growth of cottage hospitals from the 1850s onwards has been neglected by historians who were more focused on large urban teaching hospitals, an historiographical gap also referenced by Reay.[98] Hall charts the development of Watlington cottage hospital, whose evolution ran along parallel lines to that of Moreton and similarly was one of the earliest to grow from cottage dispensaries.[99] *Evesham Journal* in 1870 and 1871 refers to the success of a cottagers' dispensary in Moreton which, by the end of 1871, had 362 members. Details are also recorded in successive copies of the *Moreton Parish Almanack* which stated that the subscription was 'one penny a week'.[100] A letter to *Moreton Free Press* by the

[97] *MFP,* 14 September 1872.
[98] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 70.
[99] Hall, 'From Cottage to Community Hospitals', p. 33.
[100] *EJ,* 2 December 1871; D/13668 /7/1/1/1, Parish Almanack, 1875.

curate, Henry Bullocke emphasised the value the poor placed on making a contribution rather than accepting indiscriminate charity.[101] While the existence of the cottage dispensary laid the foundations, the impetus for the hospital came from one of the GPs, Dr Leonard Yelf, who had arrived and set up a practice in Moreton by the 1861 census. An account of his vision is provided by the reminiscences of Rebecca Horne, who served as matron of the hospital for 26 years,

> 'It was in the year 1870, Dr Yelf Senior…. said how much he wished he could get a bed in some cottage, which he could use for some poor patient. On his next visit he told me that he had talked the matter over with the Committee of the Cottagers' Dispensary and also with Miss Grace of Batsford and all approved of his suggestion. Lord Redesdale offered to give a site for a small hospital and £150 towards the building'.[102]

From Miss Horne's account, it is possible to again see the importance of the residents of the Batsford Estate to developments in Moreton. The identity of 'Miss Grace' is problematic as nobody with that surname lived in the village at that time. It may have been Miss Grace Malcolm, the unmarried daughter of a local clergyman, who by 1871, had established her own household in the village. It did not take long for the idea to take hold within the community and for the project to be completed. The site given was on the extremities of the Batsford Estate, adjoining Back Ends, on the western side of Moreton. In May 1872, a church service, at which the sermon was preached by the Bishop of Gloucester, launched a building fund for the hospital, which resulted in promises of £472, although it is unclear whether this included the contribution from Lord Redesdale.[103] Rebecca Horne stated that, 'All the records of the very early days of planning about the hospital were lost on the removal of Rev H Bullocke from Moreton' but it is possible to track some of it via the newspapers.[104] Two months after the launch, the plans, drawn up by William Callaway, Redesdale's personal architect, were made public, the building contractor was announced as G. Davis of Chipping Campden, the lowest tenderer, and less than a year later the building was complete.[105] The total cost was £875 which was funded by subscriptions (£666.9s); proceeds from bazaars (£272.18s), and church collections (£56.15s).[106]

The hospital was opened, to great acclaim on 24 July 1873, with *Evesham Journal* devoting a column and a half to its report. The school was closed for the afternoon to allow the children to witness the event and take part in the celebrations.[107] *Moreton Free Press* referred to a 'noble institution modestly called a cottage hospital

[101] *MFP,* 27 April 1872.
[102] GRO, HO30/25/1, Transcription of Rebecca Horne's reminiscences on Moreton Cottage Hospital, November 1920.
[103] *EJ,* 18 May 1872.
[104] HO30/25/1.
[105] *MFP,* 6 July 1872; *EJ*, 5 April 1873.
[106] HO30/25/1.
[107] GRO, S221/1/1, 24 July 1873.

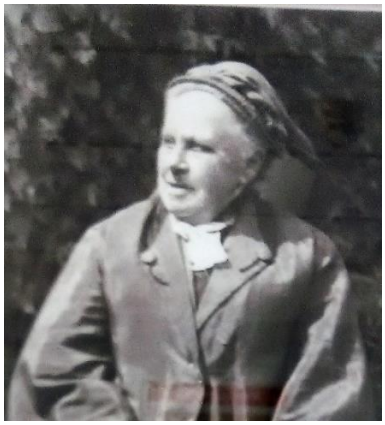
but in reality, a handsome and spacious building for the especial benefit of the poorer of the district'.[108] Initially there was accommodation for seven patients. The honorary surgeons were Dr Yelf and Dr John Moore, with the latter's father, Dr George Moore, being the consulting surgeon, all of whom provided their services free of charge.[109] During the intervening period, between Dr Yelf's original suggestion to her and the hospital's opening, Rebecca Horne, had trained at Winchester with The Nightingale Fund. She was matron, also without payment, until her retirement in December 1899.[110] The building was conveyed from Lord Redesdale to trustees and was managed by a board of governors comprising the trustees and seven others who were to be elected by subscribers of upwards of one guinea.[111] The first AGM reported that between the opening and the end of the year, 22 patients were admitted.[112] Moreton Cottage Hospital immediately became the town's proudest possession and the envy of the surrounding area. It was years before other towns were able to follow suit: hospitals built in Evesham in 1876, Shipston in 1896 and Chipping Norton, as part of the war memorial hospital scheme, in 1920.

Figure 56: Moreton Cottage Hospital.[113]



[108] *MFP,* 26 July 1873.
[109] GRO, HO30/8/1-75,1873.
[110] GRO, HO30/25/1; *EJ,* 2 August 1873, 23 December 1899.
[111] *MFP,* 17 May 1873.
[112] *MFP,* 11 April 1874.
[113] MMHSA.

Figure 57: Rebecca Horne, Matron Moreton Cottage Hospital 1873 -1899.[114]



The commitment of the townspeople did not end once the hospital was built. Raising money for day-to-day costs and funding facilities to accommodate improving medical techniques required the enthusiasm, time, and talents of the whole town. As with the Oddfellows, events relating to the hospital became regular and diverse features of the local social calendar. Amateur concerts and plays, fetes and bazaars were initially the main source of funds from the community, which supplemented the annual subscriptions of the more affluent. In the early 20th century, the national 'hospital Sunday' model was adopted with church services and a procession to raise funds and, not long after, this was amalgamated with the annual Oddfellows procession and fete.[115] At the first AGM, Dr Moore issued a plea for gifts in kind such as rabbits, poultry or wine that would improve the patients' diet and the list of these items and their donors was a weekly feature of the local newspapers.

The ground-breaking nature of the hospital brought Moreton national attention and acclaim. This was manifest in 1876 when it received a legacy from the will of William Sands Cox, an eminent surgeon and pioneering medical educator. The trustees only knew of their good fortune from newspaper reports.[116] This comprised £3,000, his entire medical library and instruments, and the chair, upon which Charles 1 had sat during his trial! Cox, based in Birmingham, had no personal association with Moreton, other than fleeting connections with Rev Samuel Warneford, a previous rector and Dr George Moore.[117] This initiated the first extension in 1878, increasing patient accommodation. In 1887 a separate ward for infectious patients was constructed, costing between £300 and £400, that was retrospectively funded by Joseph Mann, a Moreton resident.[118] Other substantial bequests included x-ray equipment from Lord Redesdale, in 1900, just five years after its development; money from Piers Thursby, of nearby Broadwell in 1903, to construct an operating theatre in memory his nephew, a Boer War casualty; and partial central heating funded by James

[114] I. Murphy, from a picture in North Cotswolds Hospital, 2017.
[115] *EJ,* 26 Sep 1903, 10 August 1907.
[116] D. Pearman, *A Brief History of Moreton in Marsh Hospital*, (Evesham, 1974).
[117] G. Bettany & P. Wallis, Cox, William Sands (1802–1875), surgeon and a founder of Queen's College, Birmingham, *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, (2004).
[118] *EJ,* 23 Feb 1895.

Dugdale. Following the announcement of the operating theatre plans, *Evesham Journal's* editorial declared, 'Moreton will possess one of the most complete hospitals which any town in England of its size can boast'.[119]

The hospital's reputation grew steadily, serving 35 local parishes by 1899. There were 12 beds, and a total of 122 patients were treated during that year: the average length of stay was 25 days, and the cost per week for food and medicine for each patient was 5s 7d.[120] This success presented the governing body with several issues, not least that of turning patients away, due to the lack of beds. AGMs provided the local press with plenty of copy with changes to admission rules, gripes about parishes not contributing their fair share, whether infectious patients from outside Moreton should be admitted, thus putting the residents at risk and various issues related to the constitution. The retirement of Rebecca Horne in 1899, and the necessity to replace her with a salaried matron, brought the question of costs into sharp focus. The 1902 AGM suggested that the hospital was under severe financial strain, leading to an editorial in *Evesham Journal*, exhorting the residents to remedy this situation.[121] The community accepted the challenge with the advent of 'hospital Sunday' underlining the town's commitment to providing for its own welfare.[122] By the next AGM, the trustees were able to report that 'for the first time in some years income was greater than expenditure'. Towards the end of the century, alongside the hospital, a nursing association was established to provide care in peoples' homes that was funded through regular community fund raising events.[123]

Although undoubtedly successful, the hospital narrative was not always straightforward. AGMs provided opportunities for petty point scoring between individuals and other communities that chimes with Snell's conclusions relating to parish loyalty.[124] However, the greatest threat to its existence occurred in 1909 when the local bank manager, and secretary to the governing board, S Hunston, suddenly disappeared from the town. It was revealed that 'large defalcations had taken place, extending over a considerable period' which had been concealed from the auditors. This situation had the potential to undo the sterling work achieved by the community over the previous 30 years. Fortuitously Hunston's employer, the Metropolitan Bank, repaired the hole in the accounts, allowing the hospital to continue to serve the people of Moreton.[125]

Moreton Cottage Hospital demonstrated the way in which well organised self-help was able to benefit a small town with limited resources. With all sections of the community contributing to its success, the hospital provided a service to the town and

[119] *EJ,* 20 October 1900, 22 August 1903, 17 February 1912.
[120] GRO, HO30/8/1-75, 1899.
[121] *EJ,* 22 February 1902.
[122] Ibid., 21 February 1903.
[123] Ibid., 2 September 1899.
[124] Ibid., 23 January 1886; Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 55.
[125] Ibid., 19 February 1910.

district that was a continuing source of pride. The original building, with various additions remained in use for over 135 years, until a new hospital opened in 2010.

Self Help within the Community

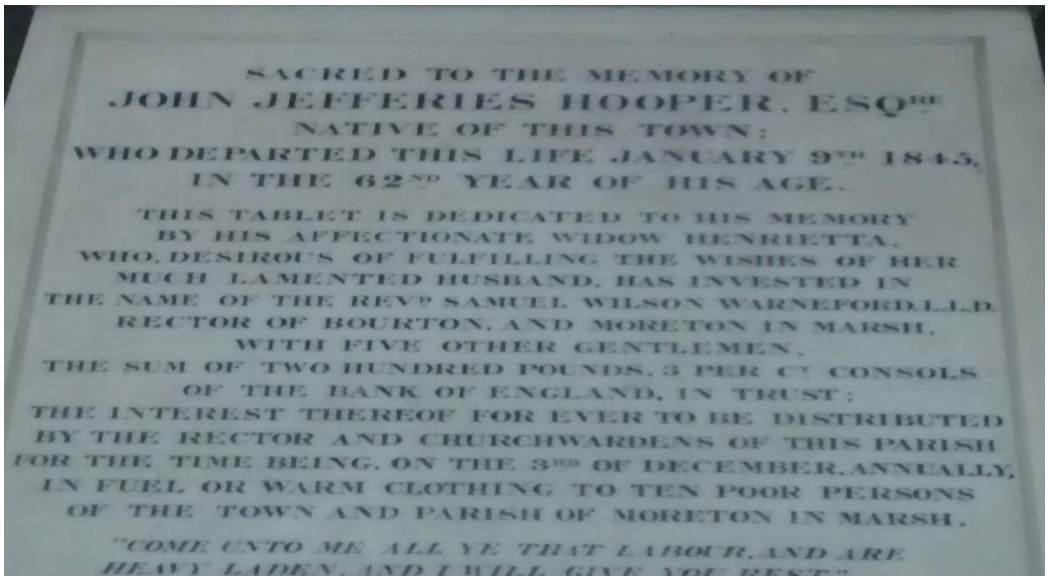
Charity was a common means of support for the poor in many small towns. Robin's analysis of welfare provision in mid-19th century Colyton and Steve Hindle's for an earlier period in Geddington, describe the part played by charity in economies of makeshift.[126] Moreton was not so fortunate which, in view of the paternalistic links with endowed charity highlighted by Hindle, and the town's relationship with the Batsford estate, is surprising.[127] One explanation for this may be the relatively recent arrival of the Redesdales at Batsford, as Colyton's and Geddington's charities were established in the 16th and 17th centuries.[128]

By the 1850s, there were four established charities in Moreton administered by the churchwardens, all relatively recent creations. In 1815 Thomas Simm gave £50 to be invested and the interest given to seven poor families, with the largest number of children, to provide warm clothing. The Poors' Allotment emanated from the 1824 Enclosure Act when 11 acres of land was let out as allotments and for gravel extraction, for highway maintenance. Such foundations were a common attempt to mitigate the loss of income experienced by the poor following the forfeiture of grazing rights.[129] The interest on the revenue from both activities was used for purchase of coal for the poor. The Hooper Charity, figure 58, was a £200 legacy from the 1845 will of Henrietta Hooper. Again, interest was given, each December, to provide fuel and warm clothing for ten poor people, but all were much less extensive than the position in Colyton.[130] During the 1850s, two further charities were created: by Harriet Warneford to provide beds for Moreton people at the Gloucestershire Infirmary and a general one by the Redesdale family.[131] There are no extant documents relating to any of the six charities and the only evidence of their continued existence is provided in vestry and parish council minutes, along with isolated references in *Evesham Journal*.[132] The Redesdale charity was administered directly by the Batsford Estate and provided pensions to people over 60 in Batsford, Bourton on the Hill, Lower Lemington, Moreton and Snowshill.[133] One of the early meetings of the new parish council, in February 1895, records the history, purpose and value of the charities when trusteeship was passed from the churchwardens to the newly elected councillors. At

[126] Robin, 'The Relief of Poverty' pp. 193-218; S. Hindle, '"Not by bread only"? Common right, parish relief and endowed charity in a forest economy, c.1600–1800', in King & Tomkins, *The Poor in England,* pp. 36-75.
[127] Hindle, 'Not by bread only?' p. 40.
[128] Robin, 'The Relief of Poverty', p. 194; Hindle, '"Not by bread only"?', p. 57.
[129] Hindle, '"Not by bread only"?', p. 64.
[130] GRO, P221a/PC/1/1.
[131] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[132] P221/VE/2/1, 8 April 1880, 11 April 1890; *EJ,* 1 March, 1873, 19 April 1884, 21 December 1885.
[133] Elrington, 'Parishes: Bourton on the Hill'.

that time, only the Poors' Allotment had a value placed on it, of £626 but a persistent problem was that over time the material value of endowments fell.[134] Charity formed part of the resources for the people of Moreton but the lack of a thriving local charity, administered by officials, familiar with the circumstances of the population, meant they had to deal with officialdom or rely on community or kin assistance if they found themselves in need.

Figure 58: Hooper Charity Memorial, St David's Church, Moreton.[135]



Alongside the work of the Oddfellows and the success of the hospital, the importance of self-help within the community cannot be ignored as it was a crucial part of a mixed economy of welfare. Such assistance was not unique to Moreton, and its ubiquity presents problems for historians in that the majority was unrecorded. The culture of deference meant that gifts, such as the ones given by the local elite to the hospital or the workhouse, were recorded. Reay and Weinbren detail a vigorous spirit of sharing and exchange within communities that went beneath the official radar, primarily because it was deemed to be normal behaviour. This took many different forms: sharing and exchanging vegetables and fruit grown in gardens; supplying sick or elderly neighbours with meals; accommodating children, either relatives or those of neighbours, to relieve housing pressures; lending cash with little expectation of it being repaid and dealers providing credit to customers in the expectation of payment at harvest time.[136]

The significance of the agricultural calendar and the relevance of farming to providing for the whole community can be determined from regular newspaper reports

[134] Hindle, '"Not by bread only"?', p. 60.
[135] I. Murphy, 2016.
[136] Reay, *Microhistories,* p. 125; D. Weinbren, 'The Good Samaritan, friendly societies and the gift economy', *Social History*, vol. 31, no. 3, (2006), pp. 319-336.

relating to good and bad yields. References made in logbooks of both the National and British schools underline the importance of contributions from all age groups in food production and the consequent disruption caused to education. District harvests were dependent on geographical position and weather, and it is apparent that, prior to centrally issued directives, the timing of school summer holidays was closely related to these. School terms were determined locally and sometimes ended suddenly due to prevailing weather conditions.[137] Poor school attendance accompanied hay making in early summer, late harvests in September and other odd tasks such as potato planting or collecting acorns, when children were required to contribute to the community effort, by helping with less arduous tasks.[138]

Newspapers and church records furnish accounts of more formal community self-help. The downturn in agriculture and attendant hardship in the 1870s, is recounted in reports of soup kitchens being set up in the town during the decade. In 1871 *Evesham Journal* stated that 80 gallons of pea soup had been distributed.[139] Later, *Moreton Free Press* implied that the soup kitchen was a regular annual service by stating that, 'owing to the severity of the weather, the kitchen had been opened earlier than usual'.[140] In general, these were financed by donations from the more affluent, staffed by the wives of the clergy and prominent church members, distributed from a central point with a charge made of a halfpenny for a quart of soup. Sometimes, the soup kitchen funds were raised through community events for instance a concert held in February 1879.[141] Besides food, the need to provide warmth was also high on the self-help agenda. In 1873, a strike by miners in south Wales resulted in a countrywide coal famine and a hike in the price to 38s per ton or just under 2s per cwt. However, a coal cooperative existed in Moreton, whose exact terms of reference, can no longer be traced, which was instrumental in maintaining the price at 4d per cwt, a huge saving.[142] In the early 1880s the Congregational Church instituted a separate weekly collection for needy church members.[143] Another semi-formal initiative was a clothing club at the Infants' School that was recorded in the logbook in 1869.[144]

Christmas was traditionally seen as an opportunity for distributing food and gifts but in 1869 there is evidence that this became a more formalised custom within Moreton. There was no official charity but following a meeting in early December a subscription was set up. 'towards providing the Poor with a substantial dinner on Christmas Day, …. donations …. can be paid at either of the Banks'.[145] In subsequent

[137] GRO, S221/1/1, 23 July 1868.
[138] Ibid., 4 July 1864, 25 April 1865, 4 October 1865, 7 June 1869, 14 September 1863, 23 September 1881; GRO, S221/2/1, Moreton British School Logbook, May 1867.
[139] *EJ, 7* January 1871.
[140] *MFP,* 21 December 1878.
[141] *EJ,* 8 February 1879.
[142] Ibid., 1 March 1873.
[143] GRO, D12117/1/8.
[144] GRO, S221/3/1,1863-1883, 1 Feb 1869.
[145] *MFP,* 18 December 1869.

years, letters appeared in the press expressing the hope that the tradition would be maintained.[146] This was the case, with regular notices summarising what was given, and the number of people involved,

> 'At the Corn Exchange on the 24th ult., 103 persons were presented with a piece of beef and 40 widows received in addition a packet of tea and sugar, the proceeds of a subscription from the gentry and tradesmen of Moreton, headed by a donation of £3 from Lord Redesdale'.[147]

These gifts continued and were reported until at least 1912, when donations were replaced with money. Annually about 100 families received gifts. From the later reports it is evident that the gifts were somehow means-tested as in 1911 recipients were given between 1s 6d and 3s rather than a set amount.[148]

Incidents of individual acts of charity to meet specific needs are apparent from different records. Donations were from affluent people, who were unlikely to have been approached directly, as the Redesdales were, but who stepped in when they recognised a need: Miss Mann, Rev John Mann's granddaughter agreed, 'to pay for some of poorer children's school clothing'; Algernon Rushout, the younger brother of the late Sir Charles Rushout of Sezincote, gave £50 to the poor and Mr. Winterbotham, the local Liberal MP, gave books to the Mann Institute library.[149]

Informal spontaneous giving occurred at times of personal family tragedies. Two such instances happened within four years of each other in the mid-1870s, and it is possible that the memory of what had been done for the first family, that of Benjamin Miles, was remembered when disaster struck again. Miles was a railway plate layer for GWR, who was killed by a train, when working in Marlborough station, leaving a widow and five children.[150] A week after his death, *Evesham Journal reported* that a fund had been established to support the family, although there were no subsequent reports of the amounts raised.[151] Four years later, the local police constable who had worked in Moreton for over 20 years, George Heath, died suddenly, after contracting an illness in the course of his duty. He was a widower which meant his children, the youngest of whom was 11 were orphaned. His death highlighted an injustice in the organisation of the local police welfare fund, in that had he left a widow, she would have received a substantial pay-out from the fund to cover the costs of the funeral, whereas his children would receive nothing, even though Heath had contributed to it for over 25 years. To remedy this situation a subscription was immediately established, which by the beginning of July 1878 had reached over £85.[152] This action prevented

[146] Ibid., 16 December 1882.
[147] Ibid., 4 January 1873.
[148] *EJ,* 30 December 1911.
[149] GRO, S221/2/1, Sep 1867; *MFP,*11 January 1873; *EJ,* 4 June 1892.
[150] *MFP,* 4 July 1874.
[151] *EJ,* 11 July 1874.
[152] *MFP,* 4 July 1874

the children from being taken to the workhouse but by the following census only the youngest child, Charles, was still in Moreton, an apprentice to Richard Strong, the local draper.[153]

Loss of life and destitute children were not requisites to evoke community support and generosity, as was evident in 1895, when a fire broke out in the carpentry workshop adjoining the family home of George Lyddiatt. It destroyed tools, raw materials and equipment collected over a period of 40 years' work. Apart from practical help to extinguish the flames that succeeded in preventing his house being obliterated, the town immediately organised a subscription to provide financial support, raising £35 at the first meeting and reaching £90, a week later.[154]

Despite Moreton's gravestones, parish registers and level of endogamous marriage not conforming to Snell's belief in parish insularity, one incident suggests the provision of mutual aid within Moreton appeared to favour long-term residents. The harrowing account in *Moreton Free Press,* in April 1885, of the death of a malnourished child, living in Old Town highlighted this. Five-month-old Frank Evans was the youngest of eight children, and only son, whose mother had died when he was a month old, leaving him and his sisters in the charge of their father, James, a farm labourer, and 18-year-old sister, Emily. The family lived in a three-roomed cottage and were newcomers to the town, arriving in Moreton at some point during the 1870s. After his mother's death, Dr Yelf had recommended that Frank be given milk and nourishing food. Emily gave evidence at the inquest that she had given the baby about half a pint of milk daily but, 'that her father's wages were very small to support a family of nine.' The foreman of the jury was Edward Webb, the proprietor of *Moreton Free Press,* leading to speculation about the influence of the local jury over the coroner, who came from Gloucester. Both Emily and James were severely reprimanded by the coroner, telling them that they 'narrowly escaped being sent for trial' but he accepted the dire situation in which the family were living contributed to Frank's death.[155] It is conceivable that the tragedy may have been prevented had their residency been more longstanding. By the next census all the family had left Moreton, apart from the second eldest daughter, Fanny, who had married into the extensive Howe family, remaining in the Old Town area until at least 1911, and thereafter probably benefiting from a healthy support network.[156]

The low levels of Moreton natives in Shipston workhouse suggests that overall community initiatives paid off. The Moreton townspeople made valiant efforts to assist those in the community facing difficulties, either via formal or spontaneous initiatives. These took the form of gifts of both goods and money and extended over a prolonged period, however, it seems likely that recent arrivals may have struggled to find support.

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[153] *EJ,* 11 July 1874.
[154] *MFP,* 13 July 1895, 12 October 1895, *EJ,* 20 July 1895.
[155] Ibid., 25 April 1885.
[156] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911, Piece: 18861.

Financial Self Help

The presence of the Oddfellows is indicative of a degree of financial awareness within Moreton. The desire of townspeople to set aside savings for the future and to build some form of buffer against future adversity is also manifest in the presence of a Penny Bank in the town from 1859 onwards. The two differed in that there was no mutual aspect to the Penny Bank as there was in the Oddfellows; accounts in the former were for the benefit of the account holders alone. Again, there is a dearth of historical writing concerning Penny Banks with no detailed studies published. From this one can only guess that, with few exceptions, relevant documentation has either not survived or remains undiscovered, and details of these organisations can only be gleaned from press reports.

Penny Banks had developed from legislation permitting savings banks in 1817 and gained momentum in the 1850s.[157] Writing in 1859, Henry Clarke, a JP and member of the London County Council, described Penny Banks as 'stepping-stones to Savings Banks' where people could keep money for rent or medical bills safely outside their own homes and also away from the temptation to use the funds for other purposes.[158] They provided a savings account below the threshold of a shilling that was required for savings banks.[159] Writing in 1875, Samuel Smiles described them thus,

> 'the Penny Bank is emphatically the poor man's purse. The great mass of the deposits are paid in sums not exceeding sixpence, and the average of the whole does not exceed a shilling. The depositors consist of the very humblest members of the working class, and by far the greatest number of them have never before been accustomed to lay by any portion of their earnings'.[160]

Penny Banks certainly fed into the contemporary rhetoric of the need for parsimony and temperance, as the following lines from Clarke's *Penny Banks: their Formation and Management,* demonstrates,

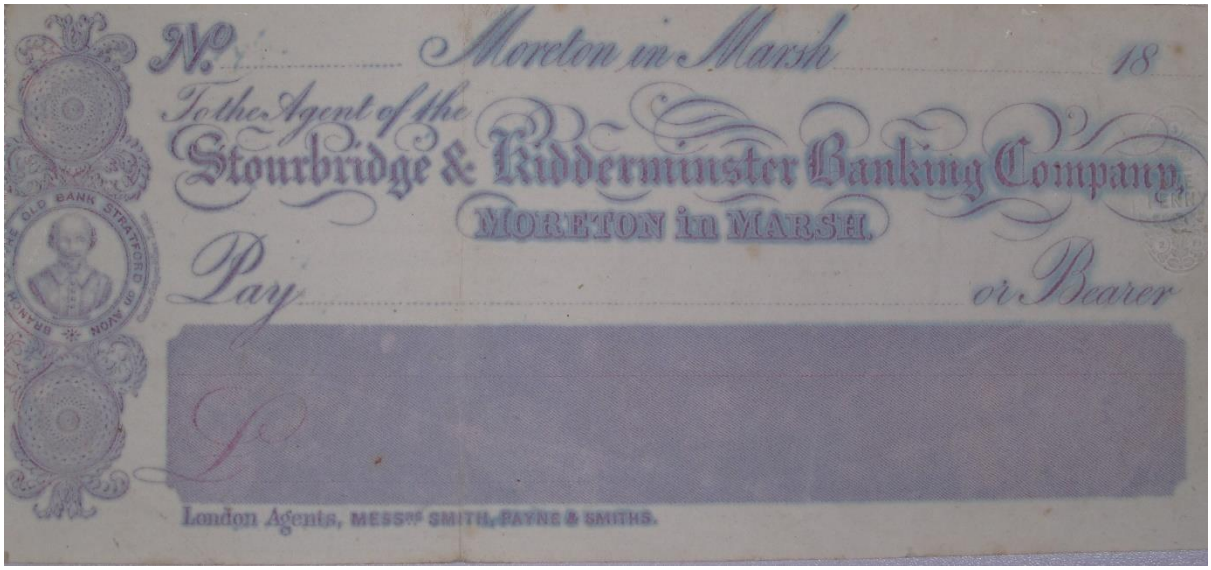
> 'With the industrial classes possession of money leads to self-respect and self-respect is a powerful incentive to *temperance, honesty* and *industry.* Starting with this axiom, I appeal at once to the promoters of temperance, to the philanthropist, and to the political economist for their assistance in disseminating the usefulness of Penny Banks'.[161]

[157] H. Clarke, *Penny Banks: their Formation and Management,* (Southampton, 1859).
[158] Ibid., p. 7.
[159] L. Perriton & J. Maltby, 'Working-Class Households and Savings in England,1850–1880', *Enterprise & Society*, 16/2 (2015), p. 425.
[160] S. Smiles, *Thrift*, (Illinois, 1875), p. 157.
[161] Clarke, *Penny Banks: their Formation and Management,* p. 5.

A Penny Bank was first founded in Moreton, at the Reading Rooms, in April 1859, at the height of the movement's national popularity, being reported in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* and referencing the pamphlet written by Clarke. This placed Moreton at the forefront of the national drive, being within the first 100 banks to be opened nationally.[162] However, it is unclear how successful this was as it did not come to the attention of any local papers in the following years.

Ensuring that savings were made towards rent and medical costs assisted the traders and town's professionals as much as it did the savers themselves. It must be acknowledged that this aspect of the town's culture may have been learned behaviour, driven by those with prominent positions within the community. The concept of banking was not alien to the working classes of Moreton as larger scale commercial banking, of benefit to the tradesmen and farmers, had been a feature of Moreton since 1835, when the Stourbridge and Kidderminster bank opened a branch in Busby's linen factory. A copy of a cheque that would have circulated in Moreton is among the artifacts of the Drury Stapleton collection and is shown in figure 59. The bank operated from different professional premises until a grand bank building was opened in a central position in the High Street in October 1878.[163]

Figure 59: Cheque from Stourbridge and Kidderminster Bank c.1878.[164]



The Penny Bank regained press attention when it was relaunched at the Coffee Rooms in early 1880.[165] This date is significant in that it suggests that for the people of Moreton, or those driving the development, the agricultural downturn of the 1870s, caused by falling wheat prices, was beginning to recede. Savings implies that there

[162] *JOJ,* 2 April 1859.
[163] *MFP,* 12 October 1878.
[164] GRO, D13668/7/2/8.
[165] *EJ,* 14 February 1880.

were surplus resources and optimism that the worst was over. Equally, the hardship of the preceding years, evidenced by the soup kitchens, was also a fresh incentive for people to put resources aside in case of future adversity and to mitigate against uneven income.

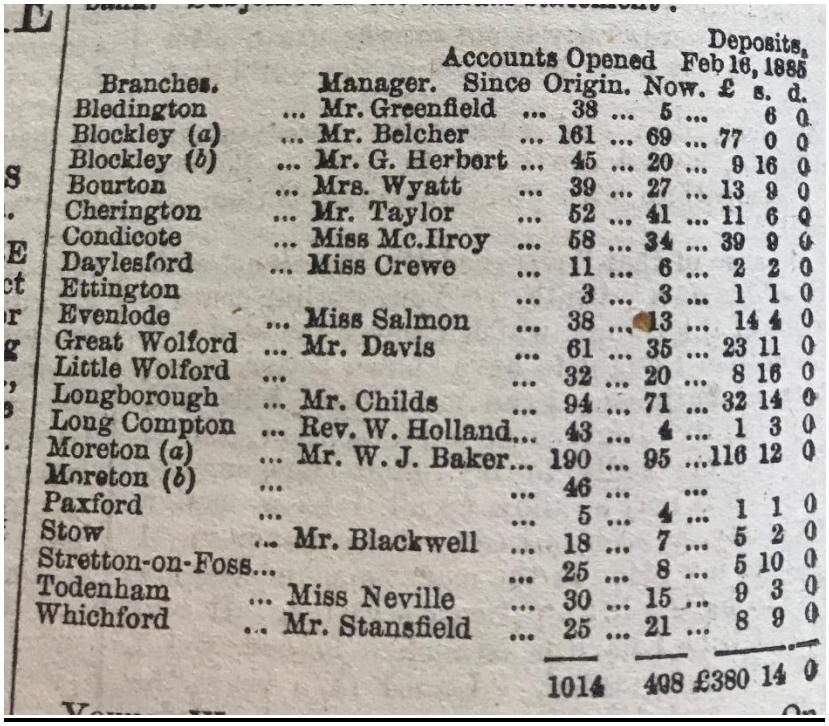
The bank in Moreton opened for an hour, early on a Monday evening, in the YMCA reading room and the manager was W.J. Baker. Funds were deposited in the Stourbridge and Kidderminster Bank. Basic rules for transactions were published in the local paper: the minimum deposit was 1d; interest was 1d per annum for every 3s invested and withdrawals required one week's notice, although proof of immediate hardship would enable instant withdrawal.[166] Research by Margaret Mitchell in Hornsey suggests that having interest added to deposits was quite difficult to achieve, due to Christmas occurring at the end of a calendar year.[167] It is unclear from the Moreton rules whether interest was paid at the end of the year or on the anniversary of the initial deposit. Duncan Ross's research in Glasgow stated that the most popular day was Saturday, designed to capitalise on full pay packets.[168] Monday, the day Moreton's opened, was unusual, implying a degree of trust from the administrators that money would be forthcoming and that commitment towards saving from the population was genuine.

Figure 60 shows most of the nearby villages had their own banks which meant subscribers came from within Moreton. Within two years the total deposits amounted to £287 taken from 734 depositors, half of the population, demonstrating the extent of the town's commitment.[169] In subsequent years the local papers published tables of the balances and number of depositors, designed unashamedly to promote competition between the different communities, showing that, in comparison with local towns, such as Stow and Blockley, the support which Moreton's bank received was exceptional, as shown in figure 60.[170] After the late 1880s the Penny Bank once again dropped out of the local press with just one reference to its continued success, in April 1897.[171] Mitchell's research in Hornsey, albeit in a different environment, implies that the bank there was very short lived, opening in January 1888 and 'fizzling out' by the end of the following year, with the focus being directed towards savings banks in schools, of which there is no evidence in Moreton.[172] The Penny Bank infers a degree of unsophistication and simplicity that appealed to the local population far more in a rural setting than in a suburban one. The bank's success in the Moreton again points to widespread community loyalty that was part of the self-help ethos of the town.

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[166] *JOJ*, 21 Apr 1888.
[167] M. Mitchell, *Victorian Thrift, a Local Penny Bank,* www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk/victorian-thrift-a-local-penny-bank (28 January 2022).
[168] D. Ross, 'Penny Banks in Glasgow,1850-1914', *Financial History Review,* 9/1 (2002), p. 29.
[169] *EJ,* 7 January 1882.
[170] *MFP,* 14 March 1885.
[171] *EJ,* 3 April 1897.
[172] Mitchell, *Victorian Thrift*.

Figure 60: Penny Bank Balances in Moreton and surrounding area, March 1885.[173]



Branches.	Manager.	Accounts Opened Since Origin.	Now.	Deposits, Feb 16, 1885 £	s.	d.
Bledington	Mr. Greenfield	38	5		6	0
Blockley (*a*)	Mr. Belcher	161	69	77	0	0
Blockley (*b*)	Mr. G. Herbert	45	20	9	16	0
Bourton	Mrs. Wyatt	39	27	13	9	0
Cherington	Mr. Taylor	52	41	11	6	0
Condicote	Miss Mc.Ilroy	58	34	39	9	0
Daylesford	Miss Crewe	11	6	2	2	0
Ettington		3	3	1	1	0
Evenlode	Miss Salmon	38	13	14	4	0
Great Wolford	Mr. Davis	61	35	23	11	0
Little Wolford		32	20	8	16	0
Longborough	Mr. Childs	94	71	32	14	0
Long Compton	Rev. W. Holland	43	4	1	3	0
Moreton (*a*)	Mr. W. J. Baker	190	95	116	12	0
Moreton (*b*)		46				
Paxford		5	4	1	1	0
Stow	Mr. Blackwell	18	7	5	2	0
Stretton-on-Foss		25	8	5	10	0
Todenham	Miss Neville	30	15	9	3	0
Whichford	Mr. Stansfield	25	21	8	9	0
		1014	498	£380	14	0

Conclusions

This research into Moreton has demonstrated a lack of any long established vibrant charities that were a feature of other localities. This resulted in self-help being rooted in the community. Oddfellowship, the hospital, formal and informal community initiatives and the penny bank shows that the town was extremely resourceful in maintaining the fabric of life through challenging periods. Established scholarship, in particular the work of King, Tomkins and Hindle, has placed such strategies firmly in the two preceding centuries to this study.[174] The existence of these options in Moreton suggests that mixed economies of welfare continued in small market towns well beyond the 1834 legislation, that was previously deemed a watershed moment in the delivery of welfare. It would appear that the provisions of the 1834 Act were more appropriate to urban settings, where the various instruments were close at hand, but were less effective in a rural or semi urban environments. This further emphasises the need for more research into such locations.

Both contemporaries and welfare historians have established that there were regional variations in the delivery of outdoor relief.[175] Moreton fits well into Snell's conclusions that in the south Midlands there was more outdoor relief provided than indoor relief during this period. The small numbers of Moreton residents, identified by this research, at the Shipston workhouse corresponds with the metrics detected by Snell for the area during the same period. However, in Moreton the incidence of indor

[173] *MFP,* 14 March 1885.
[174] King & Tomkins, *The Poor in England;* King, *Poverty and Welfare in England, 1700-1850.*
[175] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 223.

relief was even lower at 6.5%, when compared with Snell's averages for the area, that were in the region of 25%.[176] It is possible that this particularity was borne of the unique geographical and administrative circumstances that were highlighted in chapter two. The extremely low level of indoor relief underlines the success of the town's measures for self-help and points to an idiosyncrasy that can only be tested with comparable in-depth research elsewhere.

Lack of any extant written testimonies from those requesting assistance, or PLU documents, makes it difficult to assess how much agency was exercised by the poor of Moreton in their dealings with officialdom. However, it is possible to detect the existence of agency in other areas, specifically in the house building activities of the Oddfellows. In view of the national nature of the Oddfellows' activities, it is highly unlikely that Moreton was unique in building houses that relieved pressure on existing housing stock. This renders remarkable the lack of references to, or pictures of, Oddfellow housing in Weinbren's history.[177] Again, research in other areas may uncover places where such activity took place. Further evidence survives of existing houses being purchased by the Oddfellows. This meant that by the first decade of the 20th century their aggregate stock had made incursions into the traditional land holding profile of Moreton, thereby altering the social dynamics, by which residents were indebted to the elite for accommodation. Likewise, the success of the Penny Bank, shown by the published numbers and balances, so favourable in comparison with other local towns, provides another instance of the poor taking control of their circumstances. As with the Oddfellows the lack of comparable research relating to Penny Banks makes comparisons difficult.

The final testament to the success of Moreton's population's self reliance was the early establishment of the Cottage Hospital. This was a ground breaking initiative that was the envy of neighbouring towns and was not replicated locally for many decades. The scale of the project places it within the traditional concept of charity and philanthropy dependent on the actions of the elite and outside the agency of the poor. However, the rapid fundraising and swift construction of the building is testament to what was possible when a community acted cohesively to attain a common goal. It is also instructive to appreciate what could be achieved before the advent of rules and regulations that were later to hamper the sanitation works, as shown in chapter two.

[176] Ibid., p. 225.
[177] Weinbren, *The Oddfellows, 1810 – 2010.*

Chapter 4 Association

The growth of urban leisure culture in 18th century Britain has been the subject of research and scholarship and similarly how this was replicated in industrial areas and developing cities in the 19th century.[1] Again, with few exceptions, investigation relating to small market towns has been limited.[2] As chapter three demonstrated the townspeople of Moreton possessed a spirit of self-reliance in providing a safety net for community members needing either financial assistance or healthcare. Much of this was achieved through the input of the more affluent inhabitants, not part of the landed elite, who besides providing monetary support were also generous donors of their time and intellect for the benefit of other residents. Chapter three highlighted the role played by the Oddfellows in establishing a festive calendar in the town; other opportunities for association were connected with the two churches in Moreton. This chapter will examine the leading personalities involved in these undertakings, the organisations through which they were delivered, and describe a selection of the events that took place. The activities demonstrate that small towns made strenuous efforts that were successful in replicating the urban leisure culture reported in much larger places.

The Horne Family

Figure 61: The Horne Family at 'The Steps',1896.[3]



[1] E.g., P. Borsay, *The English Urban Renaissance Culture and Society in the Provincial Town, 1660-1770*, (Oxford, 2002); H. Cunningham, 'Leisure and culture' in F. Thompson (ed.), *The Cambridge Social History of Britain, 1750–1950* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 279-340; Clark, 'Small towns'.
[2] E.g., Trinder, *Victorian Banbury;* Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk'; R. Locke, 'Middle Class Women, and the Public Life of an English Market Town: Banbury 1844- 1894', (Student Dissertation for Module A826, MA History part 2, The Open University, 2019).
[3] Personal collection of June Dyer, a direct descendant.

No discussion of the community links in Moreton can be made without consideration of the Horne family. The family's importance to the transformation of Moreton from an agriculture reliant economy to one which focused on dealing and capitalised on the arrival of the railway, will be discussed further in chapter five. Running alongside their economic importance was the enormous contribution that the family made to other aspects of life in Moreton throughout the second half of the 19th century. They were the benevolent glue that held together many facets of the town. Thomas Horne (c.1787-1861), who founded an extensive dynasty, was first recorded in Moreton in 1799, apprenticed to James Baldwin, a grocer.[4] As chapter one revealed, in 1851, his household was the largest in the town, with his eldest son, Thomas's family, close by, a trend that continued with family houses in different areas of the town throughout the period.[5] Thomas and his descendants were influential in every aspect of the town's life: commerce, religion, education, health, welfare, local politics, property, and justice. Faithful members of the Congregational Church, all the family demonstrated ecumenical traits being equally generous benefactors to the Parish Church and other 'establishment' institutions. His obituary in *Moreton Free Press* in January 1861, that could apply equally to the rest of the family, described Thomas thus,

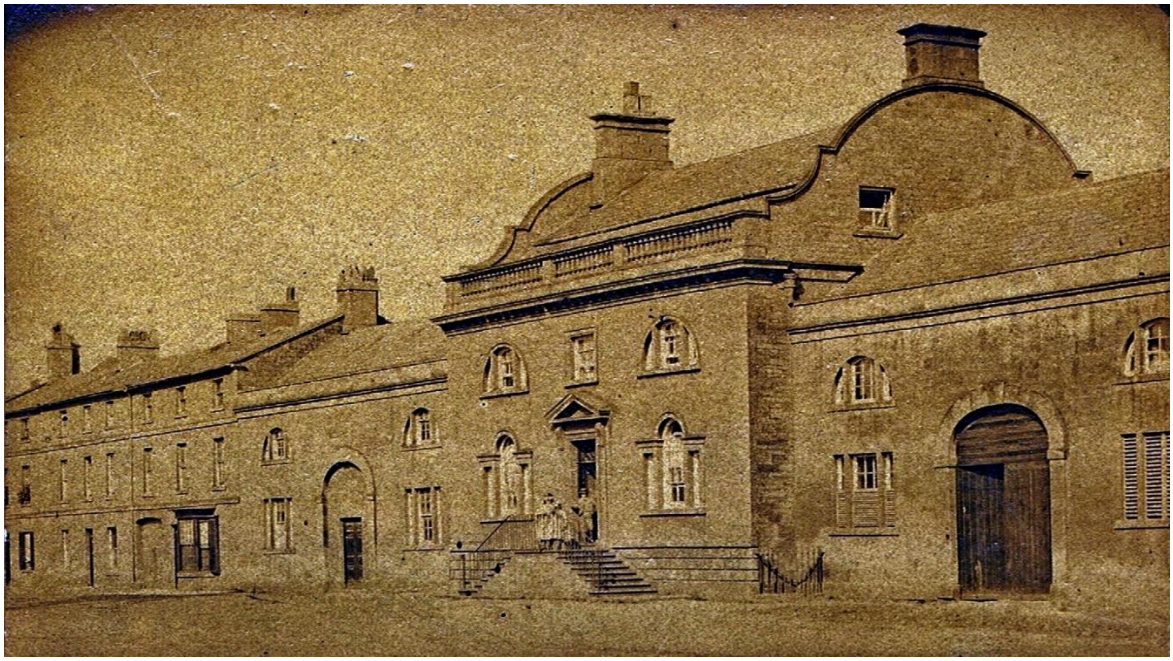
> 'a noble example of what may be accomplished by strict integrity, through business habits and indomitable perseverance….by indefatigable industry he lived to see himself the possessor of an ample fortune, the owner of considerable part of his town, and the head of business whose commercial transactions and trade is not to be equalled in any of the Four Shires. He contributed also most handsomely to our Church Building Fund, local charities, Reading Room and in fact every object being for the benefit of Moreton without regard to party or sect'.[6]

Until the end of the 20th century, the family's principal home was 'The Steps', an imposing edifice, near the junction of Worcester Road and the High Street (Fosseway), one of the central positions in the town. With adjoining commercial buildings, it was both the family home and the operational centre for the business empire, which had other premises in Moreton and branches in nearby towns and villages. 'The Steps' provides an interesting contrast with the more remote home of the Redesdales at Batsford, surrounded by formal gardens and accessed by a series of long driveways, some two miles distant. Maintaining a property close to one's commercial operations had been customary for centuries but during the 19th century, this was eschewed in favour of suburban living by the successful grandees of most towns.[7] That the Hornes did not follow this trend and move to the edges of Moreton

[4] HFA, HF3.
[5] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1851, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 126, p. 6.
[6] June Dyer, personal papers.
[7] L. Davidoff & C. Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class, 1780–1850*, (London, 2002), p. 43.

suggests a degree of affection as well as a sense of responsibility towards the town. In Usk, Jones recounts that the urban elite were responsible in provision of space for leisure.[8] This is evident in Moreton when 'The Steps', and the other Horne homes, welcomed townspeople for small meetings, thus providing hospitality and a no cost venue for smaller meetings.[9] Whether by design or not, the position of 'The Steps' implies that the Hornes remained conscious of their roots in Moreton and the importance of keeping contact with their customers and peers. As already discussed in chapter two, the Redesdales were granted unfailing deference by the people of Moreton; the Hornes' close association with the town earned them equal respect from its inhabitants that continued into the 20th century.[10]

Figure 62: 'The Steps', Moreton.[11]



Thomas Horne Senior fathered at least 15 children, of whom Thomas, from his first marriage, and Frederic and Rebecca, from the second, remained in Moreton to continue both the expansion of the business and the tradition of community support. Thomas Senior acted as parish surveyor in the 1840s; in 1852 both he and his son, Thomas, were joint overseers and by the late 1850s Thomas Senior regularly chaired the vestry meeting.[12] As shown in chapter three, the family's prosperity enabled Rebecca to serve the Moreton community, as unpaid matron of the Cottage Hospital for over 25 years. Thomas Horne Junior and Frederic maintained the trend for large

[8] Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 123.
[9] *JOJ,* 29 May 1880.
[10] Personal testimony of Horne family descendants.
[11] MMHSA.
[12] GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 7 March 1850, 24 March 1853, 29 January 1858.

families with 11 and 13 children respectively. Third generation Hornes prolonged the family influence on local administration and justice, being members of the parish council, with Arthur a JP and Frederic T a county councillor.[13] The Horne reputation was maintained by early marketing techniques of personalizing labels of nationally available products with their own business details, as shown in figure 63.

Figure 63: Food labels personalized with Horne business details.[14]



David Beddington and Timothy Larsen describe Nonconformists nationally as taking an enlightened attitude to female progression.[15] This was demonstrated by the Hornes with Rebecca's prominent position at the hospital, and, as noted in chapter two, Frank's wife Emma's candidature in the early county council elections. Likewise, Alice Horne, Frederic's daughter, and Arthur's sister, left Moreton in 1893 to follow Congregationalist tradition and became a Christian missionary in China, returning intermittently to give lecture tours about her work improving the education of women.[16] It cannot be judged whether business acumen governed the family's personal decisions but a trend whereby surplus males left the town to develop independent businesses elsewhere is evident. Such moves spread the risk and protected the family against downturns in one sector. It also extended the family business into other trades

[13] GRO, P221a/PC/1/1/2; PS/MO/RM1/2; *Cheltenham Chronicle*, 20 February 1904.
[14] HFA, HB20.
[15] D. Beddington, 'Conscience and Politics' in L. Husslebee & P. Ballard, (eds.), *Free Churches and Society: The Nonconformist Contribution to Social Welfare 1800-2010,* (London, 2012), p. 58. T. Larsen, 'Congregationalists', in T. Larsen, and M. Ledger-Lomas (eds.), *The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions, volume III: The Nineteenth Century*, (Oxford, 2017), pp. 47-8.
[16] *JOJ,* 22 December 1894; *Cheltenham Chronicle,* 11 September 1909.

and localities. Consequently, by the end of the century four of Thomas Horne Senior's male heirs, Walter, George, Charles, and Harold, were dealing in local towns, thereby extending the family's influence in Moreton's hinterland. There was an imbalance towards females in the family and some of these made beneficial marriages with other traders, either in nearby towns or in Moreton itself. One of these, Leonard Truby, joined the Hornes on the parish council, thereby forging a political and commercial alliance.[17] Other male and female heirs moved further away from the town, two overseas, often marrying into prominent Congregationalist families.

The Horne family was crucial to every aspect of Moreton life in the second half of the 19th century and vital to the generation of community life in the town. Through an assessment of developments in religion, education, and leisure, it is possible to determine their significant role. It is also instructive to realise how small market towns depended on the goodwill of families like the Hornes to improve the quality of life for everyone.

Religious Association

It is clear from the reports of social gatherings in Moreton that religion played an important part in forming associations within the community. The link between the church and the provision of welfare in communities has a long history, but in the 19th century, it is apparent that this stretched to various aspects of community life, in a bid to promote lasting change for the better.[18] As no references can be found for any local Catholic services, it meant that between 1851 and 1914, there were only two options for religious observance in Moreton: St David's Church and the Congregational Church. Due to their proximity, the residents of the Batsford and Sezincote estates attended the parish churches at Batsford and Longborough. Other than the parish records, extant documents relating to both churches are sparse so it is difficult to obtain an in depth impression of the religious life of the town. It is instructive to examine the histories of both churches to contextualise their roles in Moreton.

Religious observance during this period is often portrayed as one of denominational competition, or in binary terms of 'church versus chapel'.[19] While some evidence exists of subtle rivalry being exhibited by the Church leaders, especially in the early years of the century, that Moreton was not subject to the population growth, present in other parts of the country, may have mitigated against the competition for souls evident elsewhere. While it must be acknowledged that preferences for Sunday attendance at either church existed in Moreton, it has been difficult to uncover any strong evidence of entrenched positions in favour of the different ideology of

[17] *EJ,* 17 July 1875; GRO, P221a/PC/1/1/2.
[18] R. Pope, 'Congregations and Community' in L. Husselbee & P. Ballard, (eds.) *Free Churches and Society*, p. 24.
[19] E.g. K. Snell & P. Ell, *Rival Jerusalems,* (Cambridge, 2000); Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', pp. 153-158.

Anglicanism or Congregationalism among the townspeople. Urdank uncovered a similar situation in the earlier period in south Gloucestershire, stating that, 'leading Nonconformists desired collaboration and by obtaining it their churches complemented rather than undermined the pre-eminence of the Church of England'.[20]

Background

Until 1887 Moreton was not a separate Church of England parish but was part of the benefice of Bourton on the Hill, with a stipendiary curate, appointed by its rector, in charge of St David's Church.[21] The burgeoning of Moreton during the mid-century, in comparison with the stagnation and smaller physical extent of Bourton meant that this separation, when it was finally achieved, was long overdue.[22] Despite the physical disparity between upland and lowland and the extent of the original parish, Dr John Mann, whose father, also John Mann, became the first minister of the Congregational Church, described the situation prior to 1800 as the Church of England being in, 'undisputed possession of the ground both at Morton and in all the adjoining parishes'.[23] This contemporary assertion supports Snell and Paul Ell's comprehensive account of religious affiliation in Victorian England.[24]

Any study of religious practices at this time must consider the local evidence provided by the national religious census, taken on Sunday, 30 March 1851.[25] With some explanation for the reason, the returns for Moreton are not particularly helpful to the historian. The entry for St David's was part of the 1.1% of total returns that lacked data for both sittings and attendance.[26] Henry Stowers, the curate completed the nil return with the remarks, 'sufficient accommodation for the parishioners, rich and poor – service attended by over half of the population'.[27] This statement seems dismissive of the whole exercise as well as being exaggerated until it is referenced to the entry from the Congregational minister, Benjamin Cowper. His return, also incomplete, was ambiguous in terms of totals but provided an explanation for lower numbers at his establishment in the evening, 'in consequence of an evening service held at the Parish Church on Sunday evenings during Lent, which draws off a large number of the general congregation'.[28] Over 700 people attending the evening service at the Parish Church, as implied by Stowers, seems plausible, and indicates flexibility in religious observance.[29] Urdank referenced this trend in Nailsworth at the same time and Snell

[20] Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale,* p. 54.
[21] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[22] www.visionofbritain.org.uk/unit/10357445/cube/TOT_POP (19 October 2022).
[23] Mann, *Recollections,* p. 3.
[24] Snell & Ell, *Rival Jerusalems,* p. 57.
[25] TNA, Ecclesiastical Census Returns, HO 129/406.
[26] P. Ell & T. Slater, 'The Religious Census of 1851: a Computer Mapped Survey of the Church of England', *Journal of Historical Geography,* 20/1 (1994), p. 46.
[27] TNA, HO 129/406.
[28] Ibid.
[29] A. Beecher, 'Keeping the Faith: Church and Community in Alresford c.1780-1939', (DPhil. thesis, University of Oxford, 2017), p. 233.

highlighted this as common practice in some areas, quoting the rector of Swaby in Lincolnshire as saying that, 'few attend the church or chapel exclusively'.[30]

This fluidity suggests a lack of entrenched positions, drawn along religious lines, among the townspeople. It is also reflected in the behaviour of the Horne family, from whom it would be expected some of the Congregational Church community took its cue. A leaflet from 1858, circulated through the town, outlining the proposed improvements to the Parish Church, listed promised gifts to the building fund. Both Thomas Hornes are recorded for having agreed to contribute a total of £12, with the elder's contribution being comparable to that of local landed gentry and clergy.[31] Thus not only were the Horne family important to the Congregational Church community but they were also important in fostering religious cooperation within Moreton.

Whether this tolerance extended to the leaders of the two churches is debatable, with evidence of healthy competition between them to attract the loyalty of the inhabitants. It seems unlikely that the decision to build a new Congregational Church in 1860 was completely divorced from the extensions made to St David's in 1858. Likewise, the decision to extend the Parish Church's tower and steeple in 1861 and install a ring of eight bells, as shown in figures 64 and 65, appears a similar reaction to the developments of the Congregational Church. The latter improvement indicates that the Parish Church was trying to emphasize its physical and auditory presence, when faced with a competitor in a more central position.[32]

St David's Church

Robert Andrews stated that by the 1850s the Church of England catered for about 25% of the population's religious needs; in an agrarian area with more traditional views, such as Moreton, the percentage would have been higher.[33] Other than the register of baptisms, marriages and burials and 18 months' accounts of weekly collections, documentation relating to St David's, is sparse. Extant parish almanacks and magazines were nationally produced with local information (excerpts from the registers, details of regular weekly services and general local information) added as outer covers.[34] This paucity makes it difficult to understand the dynamics of relations among the congregation and between the church and the town. There is little evidence of tension between 'High Anglicanism' or 'Anglican Evangelism' or protracted discussions relating to seats, as was apparent elsewhere.[35] St David's was the focus

[30] Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale,* p. 305; K. Snell, *Church and Chapel in the North Midlands : Religious Observance in the Nineteenth Century*, (Leicester, 1991), p.11.
[31] GRO, D13668/8/2/2, Horne Family.
[32] *Worcestershire Chronicle, (*Worcester), 10 July 1861, *BWJ,* 20 December 1862.
[33] R. M. Andrews, 'High Church Anglicanism in the Nineteenth Century', in R. Strong (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, volume III: Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion 1829-c.1914* (Oxford, 2017), p. 156.
[34] GRO, D/13668/7/1/1/1, Parish Almanacks.
[35] Snell & Ell, *Rival Jerusalems,* pp. 321-363.

of national or local civic celebrations such as the death of the monarch, the Oddfellows celebrations and the launch of the fund for the Cottage Hospital.[36] It featured in relatively anodyne newspaper reports of Christmas decorations and improvements such as the steeple, gas lighting and organ, for which voluntary donations were sought from the community.[37]

Figure 64: St David's Church, Moreton c.1850.[38]

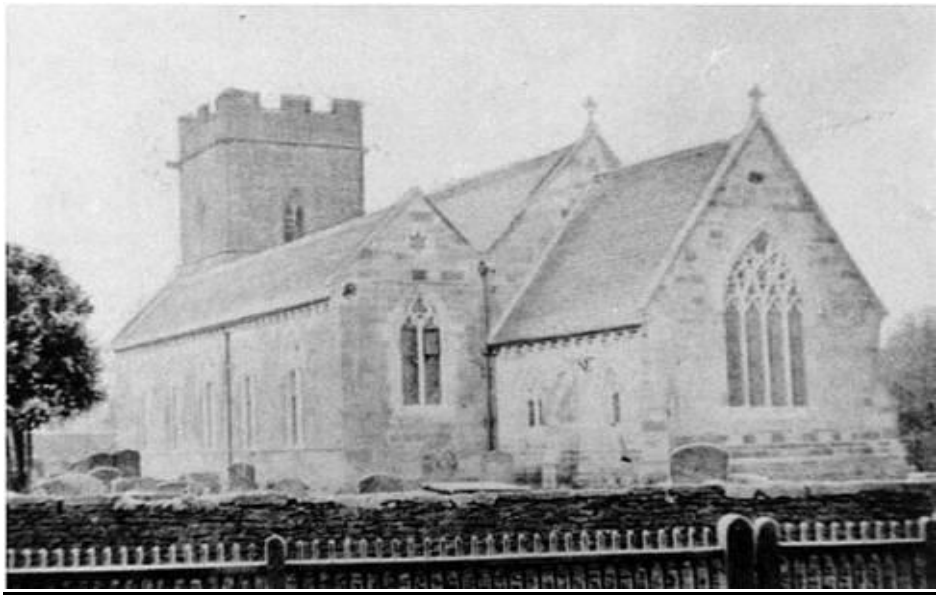
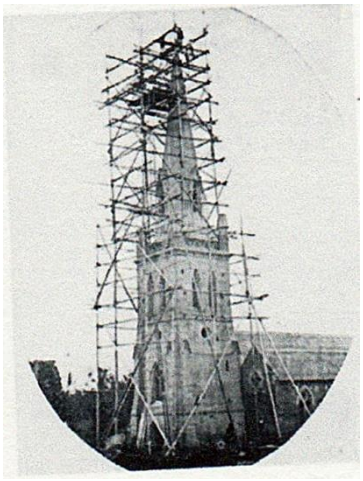


Figure 65: St David's Church, Steeple Construction 1861.[39]



The weekly collection record provides a small insight into the congregation's nature during 1889-1891. The account book, which was not completed in full, was of

[36] *EJ,* 28 May 1910.
[37] Ibid.*,* 4 Oct 1871, 1 January 1876, 2 October 1886; J. Wolffe, 'British and European Anglicanism', in Strong (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism,* p. 31.
[38] MMHSA.
[39] Ibid.

standard issue and allowed for four services each Sunday with collection records divided into denominations from cheques to postage stamps. Most weeks there were three services, early, morning and evening, with the highest amount of money taken in the evening, reflecting both the working lives of the congregation and the more ecumenical congregation referenced in the 1851 census. The total offertory only exceeded £2 on Easter Day and at harvest thanksgiving when it was earmarked for the hospital and reached £4.11s.3d. As already mentioned, the churches at Batsford and Longborough served the two landed estates, so the lack of cheques, notes or large value coins underline that the congregation was drawn from the less affluent members of the community, with most coins given being halfpennies.[40]

Congregational Church

Congregationalism developed in the 17th century and by the mid-19th century it was a considerable force, especially in rural areas, being the largest of the older dissenting denominations, with Gloucestershire identified as one of its patches of strength.[41] Bourton on the Hill parish, of which Moreton was part, fits the model identified by Snell of a sprawling rural parish that provided fertile grounds for Nonconformists to respond to local demand.[42] The main tenet of its beliefs was that each 'congregation has absolute spiritual freedom….and does not submit to any other human authority besides its own membership' was key to its popularity.[43]

The writings of Rev J Stannard, a Congregational minister in Huddersfield, encapsulate the belief that the gospel was not purely for religious people but also designed to save society in general. This concept of 'social gospel' was propounded in the late 1860s.[44] Robert Pope described it thus,

> 'the initial establishment of a godly society consisting of believers covenanted to walk together and offer mutual help and oversight became a means to establishing an alternative society catering for all the social and cultural, as well as spiritual, needs of its members … It was part of their calling as Christians to make a difference through service in the wider community.'[45]

Comparable pastoral and missionary initiatives developed simultaneously in the Anglican church but again the dearth of documents from St David's makes assessing

[40] GRO, P221/CW/2/1, Church Collections Cash Accounts 1889-1891.
[41] G. Rimmington, 'Congregationalism and Society in Leicester 1872-1914', *The Local Historian*, 37/1 (2007), pp. 29-44; Snell & Eli, *Rival Jerusalems,* p. 101.
[42] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 392.
[43] Larsen, 'Congregationalists', in Larsen, and Ledger-Lomas (eds), *The Oxford History of Protestant Dissenting Traditions,* pp. 42-43.
[44] R. Michael, *The Social Gospel,* (London, 1867).
[45] Pope, 'Congregations and Community', p. 42.

its extent difficult.[46] However, the role played by the Congregational Church and the Horne family in promulgating the ethos of 'social gospel' is apparent through their work in Moreton.

The register of Congregational Church members includes a handwritten account of the church's planting in Moreton. Importance is placed on the role of Joseph Proctor, a local draper, who encountered the dissenting minister, John Moody while serving an apprenticeship in Warwick. He wanted his family and friends to have a similar experience and initially brought Moody to evangelise in Moreton. Shortly afterwards, John Mann, from Hoxton Academy, was persuaded to be a permanent minister with his first service conducted on midsummer day 1796.[47] Dr John Mann's account of his father's ministry and establishing a school described initial hostility, with the Dissenters being persecuted by 'ignorant peasantry, aided and abetted by the higher classes and the small chapel built in the centre of the town being vandalised'.[48]

A typhus epidemic in 1815, during which Mann's congregation provided aid for the poor and sick, served to bring about unity between the established church and the Dissenters. Evidence from both Parish and Congregational records points to this being the time when Thomas Horne Senior changed allegiance from the Church of England. Having married his first wife in St. Edwards, Stow in 1808, his first two children Charles and Selina were baptised in St. David's in 1809 and 1812, respectively. However in 1815 his daughter, Louisa and all his subsequent children were baptised at the Congregational Church, beginning the family's close connection to that church.[49] Later Thomas was ordained as a lay evangelist reinforcing the family's influence in many aspects of Moreton life.[50] The Church minute book at the beginning of the 20th century underlines the extent of the family's involvement, where, out of the 23 listed church positions, 17 were held by someone named Horne and two by a Truby, who, as already noted, were related to the Hornes through marriage.[51] As Thomas Horne's obituary reported, he contributed to the building of the church in Oxford St, seating 450 people, which was completed in 1861.[52]

Ell and Slater's mapping of the 1851 Religious Census points to north Gloucestershire being one of the areas of England, where the Church of England

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[46] Andrews, 'High Church Anglicanism', pp.156-7; J. Pereiro, 'The Oxford Movement and Anglo-Catholicism', in R. Strong (ed.), *The Oxford History of Anglicanism, volume III: Partisan Anglicanism and its Global Expansion 1829-c.1914,* p. 200, p. 209; ; S. Brown, *Providence and Empire : Religion, Politics and Society in the United Kingdom, 1815-1914*, (London, 2013), pp. 425-7.

[47] GRO, D12117/2/1, Moreton Congregational Church Register of Baptisms Marriages and Burials and Minutes 1880-1892; E. Francis & G. Booth, *The History of Two Hundred Years of Christian Fellowship (1796-1996) at the Congregational Church Moreton in Marsh,* (Moreton in Marsh, 1996), p. 4.

[48] Mann, *Recollections*, p. 27.

[49] GRO, P221/IN1/2*; Ancestry,* General Register Office: Registers of Births, Marriages and Deaths Surrendered to the Non-Parochial Registers Commissions of 1837 and 1857*;* Class Number*:* RG 4, Piece Number: 763*.*

[50] Francis & Booth, *The History of Two Hundred Years of Christian Fellowship,* p. 8.

[51] GRO, D12117/3/1, Minutes of Church, 1863-1879.

[52] *JOJ*, 25 May 1861.

faced little competition.[53] This is supported by Dr Mann's statement that evidence of early 19th century rural Nonconformism in the north Cotswolds is difficult to detect. The dearth of Nonconformist congregations in Moreton's rural hinterland is confirmed by the member register noting that a proportion of the attendees came into Moreton from the surrounding villages. In 1863 the register records that the total membership was 77, of whom 31, 40% of the total congregation, came from outside Moreton.[54] As most villages in the area had their own parish church, it is unlikely that this was a feature of St David's congregation. Nonconformist congregations existed in Blockley and towns of a comparable size to Moreton such as Stow, Shipston and Chipping Campden, but there was no presence in the smaller villages.[55] Evangelisation in villages within six miles of Moreton had begun in the 1840s, the responsibility of Thomas Horne, and from the earlier figures and the establishment of a church in Longborough in 1850, appears to have been successful.[56] Kate Tiller, in her study of Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, identified similar ties between town and villages such as these.[57] As the century progressed, Congregational churches were built in Evenlode, Aston Magna and Draycott, but these developments did not appear to impact on the percentage of members attending from the villages, as in 1900, it stood at 47%, suggesting evangelisation in different villages from those where churches had been built.[58]

Figure 66: Moreton Congregational Church.[59]



[53] Ell & Slater, 'The Religious Census of 1851', p. 51.
[54] GRO, D12117/21/1, Register of Members.
[55] Icely, *Blockley Through Twelve Centuries*, pp. 120-128.
[56] Francis & Booth, *The History of Two Hundred Years of Christian Fellowship,* p. 8.
[57] K. Tiller, 'Patterns of Dissent: The Social and Religious Geography of Nonconformity in Three Counties', *International Journal of Regional and Local History*, 13/1 (2018), p. 5.
[58] GRO, D12117/1/4, Moreton Congregational Church Register of Baptisms Marriages and Burials and Minutes 1892-1914.
[59] K. Murphy, 2016.

Figure 67: Interior of Moreton Congregational Church.[60]



Some of the Congregational Church records note the occupations of its members but only baptismal and marriage registers provide similar information for the Parish Church. Consequently, it is impossible to make valid comparisons about age, gender, or occupations between the two establishments. That many of the Congregational Church members came from the hinterland villages provides some explanation for the high proportion of labourers on the register. Of equal interest in relation to the Hornes is the number of grocer's and draper's assistants amongst the congregation, hinting at different scenarios: that evangelisation took place in the workplace, that the Hornes offered employment opportunities to members of the congregation or that their Nonconformist business contacts provided a rich source of employment for people prepared to transfer to Moreton. The church records point to the dichotomy in the position of women within the congregation, likely to be reflected in wider society. Women comprised the higher proportion of members and were instrumental in bringing children to baptism, with fathers' names often left blank, but equally the women were given little identity themselves, merely referenced by their husband's occupation, e.g., 'Mrs. Webb, plasterer's wife'.[61]

The Congregational Church records provide insights into attempts to exercise control over the congregation's lives. Condemnatory comments were made in the register over lax attendance and in April 1899 the leadership attempted to influence leisure habits with the following announcement, 'The Church deeply regrets the publication of the Daily Telegraph and the Daily Mail on Sundays and urges the members of the Church and congregations to show their disapproval by refusing to purchase any of the papers or magazines issued by these publishers'.[62]

The register of baptism, marriages, burial, and minutes from 1880 to 1914 illustrates the financial problems faced by the Church. The earlier entries correspond

[60] Ibid.
[61] GRO, D12117/2/1, D12117/1/4.
[62] GRO, D12117/2/1.

to the general downturn during the agricultural depression in the previous decade. In January 1882, funds were in deficit and some challenging decisions were made to overcome this. A separate weekly collection purely to raise funds for members in need was instituted and all requests for donations to other causes were refused. These measures were not immediately successful as, in June 1883, the pastor offered to resign, as the church was unable to maintain him. However, a finance committee was appointed, and an offertory system put in place, the successes of which enabled him to remain in position. During this period, the Hornes and other deacons were crucial in bailing out the Church by making donations for specific items. By the end of the decade some form of equilibrium was achieved. The extent of this can be measured in that a substantial legacy was used for outreach in the villages, to improve Longborough and to build a church in Aston Magna. Most remarkably in 1889 a collection of £1.12s was made to the Poplar dockers' strike fund, an unlikely cause for a primarily rural agrarian community. As well as compassion, this suggests a degree of political and national awareness among the leaders towards reports of others facing dire circumstances.[63]

It is evident that religious observance played a significant role in the lives of the working people of Moreton, as it did across the country.[64] Local evidence and that of the 1851 Religious Census show weekly collections comprising lower denomination coins and that the most popular services were in the evening, indicating attendance by a high proportion of less affluent townspeople. The presence of traders and craftsmen in both records demonstrates that weekly services provided opportunities for connections between different sections of society which was replicated in other aspects of association.

Educational Association

The different types of associations that revolved around education and culture formed an integral part of Moreton's social calendar. As well as being crucial to the daily association between young people, the different school buildings also played important roles in the gatherings of the town's older people. As with the churches, the available documents for all the schools are incomplete but the extant logbooks provide a range of interesting facts about the day-to-day life of the town that is difficult to find elsewhere, as well as detail relevant to welfare and social dynamics. Sydney Wood, in studying Aberdeenshire school logbooks, stated, 'it is in entries written to explain absenteeism that insights into working and living conditions are most frequently found' which applies equally to Moreton.[65] Epidemics of measles, whooping cough and influenza can be tracked via logbooks, as attendance became poor, or the schools were shut for days or sometimes weeks.[66] Similarly, insights can be gleaned about

[63] GRO, D12117/1/3, Moreton Congregational Church Register of Members & Minutes 1880-1892.
[64] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 15.
[65] S. Wood, 'Social History from School Logbooks', *The Local Historian,* 14/8 (1981), p. 471.
[66] GRO, S221/1/1, 3 October – 5 December 1868, 4-18 February 1895, 9 July 1895.

other aspects of daily life: instances of children being kept away to assist with agricultural tasks or in the family business are apparent as well as decisions relating to emigration.[67] The schools were integral to the community, with both momentous and mundane occasions in the town's life being recorded. The autonomy of the masters and mistresses allowed them to close the schools to enable the children to attend sporting or cultural events, perceived to be educational or unique, such as county cricket matches, the hospital opening or travelling circuses. Linking to chapter two, the increasing encroachment of national legislation on day-to-day life of a small rural town is detectable. References to vaccinations, attendance officers, fines, interventions by Medical Officers, and children, who had already been working for some years, compelled by legislation to return to school illustrate how national regulations impacted everyday life.[68]

Dr Mann's account of his father's ministry in Moreton placed importance on his establishment of a school in the first decade of the 19th century and provides evidence of some early rivalry between the institutions. He emphasised that John Mann's school made no distinction in the education given to those able to pay, and those whose family could not, but that the ones able to pay came from a Church of England background and did not attend Sunday services. That Mann was happy to accept pupils from both denominations demonstrates the concept of the social gospel in action in Moreton 50 years before the idea was more widely promulgated. Mann's school was a catalyst for wider education provision in Moreton, as its success spurred the rector, Dr Samuel Warneford, into building a National School that was endowed by Lord Redesdale in 1813.[69] Underlining earlier rivalries, Dr Mann claimed that the National School's foundation was to prevent the Dissenters having a monopoly on education in Moreton.[70] In 1845, John Mann's original school was replaced with a building, funded by Thomas Horne, on Bourton Road and operated under the aegis of the British and Foreign Schools Society. A Church of England Infants School, together with a teacher's house, in Oxford Street, was also endowed by Samuel Warneford and built in 1851.[71]

The three schools operated for most of the period, and their co-existence mirrored the town's religious situation. At various times small fee-paying independent schools opened in private houses in Moreton, evidence of which was apparent from newspaper advertisements, but no documents exist to provide an additional dimension to the overall educational provision.[72] The three main schools played a part in the town's social dynamics and, when not required for educational purposes, were used as venues for social events and meetings.

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[67] Ibid., 4 March 1869, 14 March 1870; S221/3/1, 21 October 1870.
[68] Ibid., 4 May 1870, 11 January 1875, 6 October 1877, 6 December 1877.
[69] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[70] Mann, *Recollections*, Chap. 6.
[71] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[72] *EJ,* 19 November 1904.

National Schools

By 1858, the Infants School, figure 68, accommodated approximately 80 pupils but in practice, from the logbook had nearer 60 on the register.[73] In compliance with national legislation, a logbook was kept from 1863 and two of these remain to provide a detailed picture of daily life at the school. The logbook was written up in the third person by the mistresses and the amount of detail varies according to their individual style. One of the persistent concerns was keeping the children warm through the winter months and the attendant issues caused by the smoke from the stove. Cold hands prevented needlework being taught and the temperature led to inventive ways to keep warm being incorporated into lessons such as marching and singing.[74] Attendance and payment were two persistent and related problems that demonstrated the fluidity of religious allegiance. Children who were sent home to collect unpaid fees often did not return.[75] As described by Mann, the British school operated on a payment if able basis which led to children whose parents were behind with their fees, being withdrawn from the Infants school and sent there instead, sometimes returning when finances improved.[76] On a different occasion, the logbook stated that, 'Anselm Wheeler has gone to the British school; his mother sending me word "that there were too many holidays here"', indicating the importance of schools as vehicles of childcare for working mothers that overrode religious loyalty.[77]

Figure 68: Infants School.[78]



Hattersley's findings in Northumberland described how the gentry monitored educational standards and attendance with regular visits, during which respect and politeness were expected, and treats, such as summer picnics or Christmas parties,

[73] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'; GRO, S221/3/1.
[74] GRO, S221/3/1, 3 November 1863, 11 January 1864.
[75] GRO, S221/3/2, 3 May 1886.
[76] Ibid., 8 August 1866; 3 December 1880; Mann, *Recollections*, p. 20.
[77] Ibid., 13 April 1883.
[78] K. Murphy, 2013.

provided in return.[79] Such a situation was replicated in Moreton with the Infants School logbook reinforcing the paternalistic situation between the town and the Redesdale family. The school, endowed by Lord Redesdale, had regular visits from Miss Mitford, and any accompanying family or friends, recounted with detail and palpable excitement. Any child who stepped out of line on these occasions was severely sanctioned.[80] After Algernon Freeman-Mitford's arrival in Batsford, Lady Clementine and her daughters were frequent visitors who brought many practical gifts for the children.[81]

As related by Mann, a school for both boys and girls was built in 1813 close to the Parish Church. Details of the school building, spacious teachers' houses, and the qualifications of both teachers are apparent in a detailed report, prepared in 1855 by Rev. Robert Jarratt, as part of the annual grant application. Additionally, a list of expenditure, amounting to £140.2s.8d for the year ending 1853, was provided and calculated to be 17s. 6d per child.[82] The girls being included is innovative and they were housed in a separate class and, unlike the infants' school, do not feature very frequently in the logbook, suggesting they both demanded and were given less of the masters' attention. In September 1881, a new boys' school was built close by with the girls remaining in the existing building.

The logbook was completed from 1863-1896, with daily entries to 1871, and thereafter weekly ones. As with the Infants' School, it was written in the third person, including a particularly tragic series of entries relating to the illness and death of the master's son. The school had close links with St. David's Church with regular school services, frequent visits by the clergy, their wives and daughters, and practical teaching assistance offered by the curates. Again, there is evidence of fluidity of attendance, between the boys' school and British school. David Vincent suggested that this was customary practice across the country with parents 'willing to make full use of such purchasing power as they possessed and exercising judgement about the quality of a school or teacher'.[83] This was irksome to some rectors, with an attempt, in November 1863, to coerce all pupils to attend Sunday school, forcing boys, who came from Congregational Church families, to join the British School. Henry Long, the master in the 1860s, may have been the driving force as his log is peppered with waspish comments that display elements of paranoia, 'two boys have moved to British School, I find that the parents were bribed to send them. The dissenters are making strenuous efforts to undermine our schools'.[84] The 1860s inspection reports paint a picture of poor attainment and lax discipline, the result of Long's increasing deafness,

[79] Hattersley, 'Paternalism and Education on Rural Estates in Northumberland', pp. 111-131; S221/3/1, 3 November 1863.
[80] S221/3/1, 16 August 1867.
[81] GRO, S221/3/2, 18 & 25 February 1887.
[82] GRO, D13668/7/2/7/3, St. David's House, Moreton; Transcription of Preliminary Statement in respect of Moreton National School, dated 17 July 1855, PRO Ed 7/35/224.
[83] D. Vincent, *Literacy and Popular Culture: England, 1750-1914*, (Cambridge, 1989), p. 70.
[84] GRO, S221/1/1, 2 November 1863, 20 September 1864.

which may provide a more practical explanation for the movements. Grading was consistently, 'third class, third division' with some concerns that funding may be withheld if an improvement was not apparent.[85] After his retirement, at the end of 1872, the competition and anxiety in relation to the British school receded.

As with the Infants School the relationship with the Redesdale family was strong. Lord Redesdale, a manager, was a regular attendee who took the opportunity to test the pupils on their work and, with his sister, presided at prizegiving ceremonies. The arrival of Algernon and Clementine Mitford brought a softer approach with more lavish treats including on one occasion tickets for 11 boys to attend a concert.[86]

British School

The logbook (1863-1882) and account book (1868-1903) for the British School provide an invaluable insight into the crucial role played by the Horne family in the alternative provision of education for Nonconformists in Moreton, and the surrounding area. The logbook was a diary kept by the master, not using dedicated stationery. Children came from as far away as Paxford and Stow, which made attendance weather dependent, and the school's position meant flooding resulted in it being cut off from the town a few times each year. The narrative mirrors that of the National school in the interchange of pupils between the two and references the attitude of Henry Long. The curriculum appears wider than that of the National school including history, world geography, with specific attention to the geography of Gloucestershire. From 1863, in a particularly enlightened move, it also offered an evening school for teenagers already at work.[87] Honoured visitors were much fewer than the National school and were the local minister and members of the Horne family, some of whom also provided practical assistance in classes.

The more personal nature of this logbook provides a greater insight into the efforts by the school to inculcate the pupils with Nonconformist beliefs whereas there is little evidence of anything similar at the National school.[88] The Moreton Steeplechases that took place each spring caused a recurrent headache for the staff with exhortations in advance for pupils to stay away and rewards provided to those who took heed.[89] This compared with a much more relaxed attitude by the National school to local events. Similarly, the trials and tragedies that were faced by Moreton's population are more evident from this logbook. The fragility of life is evidenced in the sudden deaths of four pupils and one pupil teacher and recounts the attempts made to counsel pupils at these times. The most tragic of these occurred in January 1881

[85] Ibid., 26 March 1872.
[86] Ibid., 25 October 1888.
[87] GRO, S221/2/1, Moreton British School Logbook, 27 October 1863.
[88] Ibid, 21-22 February 1866.
[89] Ibid.

when Minnie Sharp's dress caught fire through being too close to the stove and she subsequently died of her injuries.[90]

The British School account book is the most illuminating of all the Moreton school documents and evidence of the prolonged struggle to keep the school in existence. Its relaxed attitude to fee payments meant that during the entire period, the school was running at a loss and reliant on generous donors and fundraising teas and concerts to keep it afloat. Donations came from both national and local sources: Huntley and Palmer, the Quaker biscuit manufacturer in Reading, and the Oddfellows Lodge. The Horne family owned the building, on occasions allowing it to operate rent free, increasing their annual contribution in 1874 from £2 to £10 and in 1889 clearing the school debts of £278.12s.7d.[91]

The school closed in 1907, by which time the roll had fallen to 64, caused in part by members of the Horne family moving from Moreton and those remaining having smaller families.[92] However, by joining the National Passive Resistance Movement, the Hornes did not allow the 1902 Education Act legislation, funding National Schools through the rates, to pass unheeded.[93] Horne family members appeared regularly before local magistrates, for non-payment of a proportion of their rates, resulting in distress orders for the seizure of goods.[94] The protest finally ceased when Arthur Horne was appointed a magistrate.

The logbooks for all three schools provide additional insight into the social life of Moreton and the opportunities provided for association between the townspeople. The schools played complementary roles in the town's life and showed the fluidity of religious allegiance among the working classes. The demise of the British School at the start of the 20th century and the diminished influence of the Anglican Church over the National school resulted in less variation in education provision.

Education in the community

Historical scholarship has debated the motivations behind the provision of recreation and education for the poorer classes, veering from the idea of social control to a more benevolent desire to improve the lives of the less fortunate.[95] Again, without any extant first hand accounts it is difficult to judge the exact motivation in Moreton.

[90] Ibid., January 1881.
[91] GRO, S221/2/2, Moreton British School Account Book, 1868-1903.
[92] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'; P. Gordon, 'British and Foreign School Society', *The Oxford Companion to British History,* (Oxford, 2015).
[93] D. Pugh, 'English Nonconformity, Education and Passive Resistance 1903–6', *History of Education*, 19/4 (1990), p. 359; S. Brown, *Providence and Empire 1815-1914,* (London, 2013), p. 418.
[94] GRO, PS/MO/RM1/2, 25 January, 29 August 1904, 30 January 1905, 25 April 1911.
[95] E.g. P. Bailey, '"A Mingled Mass of Perfectly Legitimate Pleasures": The Victorian Middle Class and the Problem of Leisure', *Victorian Studies* 21.1 (1977), pp. 7–28; H. Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution, c.1780-c.1880,* (London, 1980).

The provision of informal education, and the cultural and sporting opportunities available to all the inhabitants demonstrates the breadth and depth of cooperation within the town and how it mirrored activities in bigger locations. Moreton was not unique in this as is demonstrated by the wealth of literature relating to 19th century urban culture in larger settlements.[96] However, apart from Trinder's work on Banbury and more recently Jones on Usk, there are no in-depth studies of small towns to compare how these places attempted to replicate the contemporary cultural activities, albeit on a smaller scale. The calendar of annual, monthly, and weekly events initially took place in assembly rooms at different hotels and inns or the churches. Moving later to the reading room, the Redesdale Hall and Mann Institute confirms the idea of dedicated space being created to accommodate these activities. The identities of the attendees at these events are difficult to ascertain, so it is impossible to gauge whether these were truly ecumenical occasions or whether there were parallel calendars, created along religious lines. A newspaper report in 1884, with details of two concerts, held in the same week, at which one contained prominent Nonconformist names, who were absent from the other, suggests that it was a mixture of both with the wider population benefiting from the gentle competition for audiences between the two tenets of religious belief.[97] The range of organisations and entertainment is extensive but fragmented reporting makes it difficult to track through the whole period. The following provides some sense of what was provided and reports in the regional newspapers, such as *Jackson's* and *Berrow's,* indicate that Moreton was representative of many other similar sized towns.

Moreton Mutual Improvement Society (MIS), evident from the 1850s to 1880s was one avenue for community education. In 1986, Christopher Radcliffe claimed that 'the history of the mutual improvement society remains to be written', a situation that appears unchanged. Jonathan Rose described the societies as 'ubiquitous in Victorian and Edwardian Britain' but that 'they left few surviving records'.[98] The histories that have been written concentrate on the movement's presence in northern or Scottish industrial areas, whereas Moreton demonstrates that their influence extended to semi-rural agrarian communities. The lack of extant records for Moreton means that costs for membership are unknown, but one must assume it was less than 2s per annum, as that was the cost reported for a Scottish society in 1912.[99] Societies were intricately linked with Nonconformism, and the influence of the Moreton Congregational Church and clergy is apparent. However, religious tolerance is evident from the contributions made by leading members of the Parish Church, which differs from the situation

[96] P. Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City,* (Cambridge, 1998); B. Beaven, *Visions of Empire: Patriotism, Popular Culture and the City,* (Manchester, 2017); A. Davies, *Leisure, Gender and Poverty: Working-class Culture in Salford and Manchester, 1900-1939,* (Buckingham, 1992).
[97] *JOJ*, 16 February 1884.
[98] J. Rose, 'Mutual Improvement' in *The Intellectual Life of the British Working Classes*, (New Haven, 2001), p. 58.
[99] Ibid.

uncovered by Jones in Usk.[100] A society was established in Moreton around 1850, as reported in *Berrow's Worcester Journal's* account of a meeting in December 1852, which described, 'an extensive library' and 'many of the best periodicals of the day' and a future programme of lectures where the doors would be 'open for the free admission of the public'.[101] Interspersed with the lectures was a regular offering of concerts featuring both male and female talent. Unlike Radcliffe's findings in Yorkshire, there is no suggestion that the Moreton society engaged in basic literacy teaching, but that the lectures, delivered by visiting clergymen, were of an historical or philosophical nature. In 1862 the Parish Church also arranged lectures given by the rector or the curate.[102] By 1874, accounts of a MIS concert and lectures listed the Parish churchwarden, George Gray, as one of the participants, and some lectures being delivered by the rector of St David's church, Robert Jarratt, implying that by then, the organisation had become truly ecumenical, further demonstrating the cooperation between the churches for the benefit of the whole community.[103] The MIS remained a regular feature of *Evesham Journal and Moreton Free Press* news reports into the 1880s. Hastened by the more widespread provision of formal education, the last two decades of the century witnessed the countrywide decline of these societies.[104] However, the interest in self-improvement remained in Moreton and in the 1890s, it was a venue for Oxford Extension lectures.[105] During the 1860s and 1870s, running alongside the MIS, was a regular programme of Penny Readings, which provided the townspeople with a less highbrow form of entertainment. As with the MIS, meetings encompassed some form of musical entertainment. Again, there is little historical writing about these with which to compare the experience of Moreton but from newspaper reports these were organised on a more secular basis, with a variety of chairmen drawn from the professional and trade classes.

From accounts of the MIS and the Penny Readings, music played a significant role in the Moreton community. In the 1870s, under the auspices of the British School and the Horne family, an opportunity to widen musical education was initiated with weekly Tonic Sol Fa classes.[106] Musical accompaniments for events were provided by a series of different bands: the Moreton String Band, the Moreton Quadrille Band, and the Post Office band, which was the most enduring, see figure 69. In 1884, a choral society was formed, which had over 100 members within a few months, and by the early 1900s there was a Philharmonic Society.[107] Concerts took place at regular intervals, in the Parish Church with guest soloists drawn from the local area and until 1907, there were annual performances of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas. As detailed

[100] Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 140.
[101] *BWJ*, 9 December 1852.
[102] *JOJ*, 5 April 1862.
[103] *MFP,* 24 October 1874, 28 November 1874.
[104] M. Watson, 'Mutual Improvement Societies in Nineteenth Century Lancashire', *Journal of Educational Administration and History*, (1989), p. 14.
[105] *EJ,* 14 March 1896, 7 October 1899.
[106] *MFP,* 9 March 1872.
[107] Ibid., 3 January 1885.

in his obituary, George Miles, the son of railway worker Benjamin Miles, killed in the 1870s, became a much in demand soloist at these events.[108]

Figure 69: Moreton Post Office Band 1905.[109]



Rosalind Locke's study of Banbury and Jones's in Usk demonstrate the influence of the Congregational Church and the middle classes in directing the leisure time of towns.[110] This is evident in Moreton from the input of both male and female members of the Horne family by the end of the century. From the mid-1880s, both the YMCA and the YWCA had active programmes that filled the void left by the demise of the MIS. Meetings were regularly held at 'The Steps' and included a mixture of educational lectures and concerts.[111] Reports of meetings of national organisations such as the Total Abstinence Movement, the Band of Hope, the Pleasant Sunday Afternoon Society, and the Sunday School Union are frequent and the question of closing public houses on a Sunday recurs regularly.[112] These initiatives reflect the fine line between social control and leisure which is also apparent from the establishment of other clubs: in 1899 a Working Girls' Club, open every evening until 10pm, offering sewing and cookery lessons with the object to make members 'good wives and good mothers'.[113]

The movement to establish working men's reading rooms was a countrywide phenomenon, considered to be an answer to anti-social behaviour and drunkenness. Carole King's study suggests that Gloucestershire had one of the lowest rates of reading rooms per head of population, therefore the establishment of a reading room

[108] *EJ,* 8 & 15 April 1911.
[109] David Hanks Postcard Collection.
[110] Locke, 'Middle Class Women, and the Public Life of an English Market Town; Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 123.
[111] *MFP*, 3 January 1885.
[112] *EJ,* 27 June 1874, 22 June 1878, 4 March 1905, 25 July 1908, 3 April 1877.
[113] Cunningham, *Leisure in the Industrial Revolution;* Bailey, '"A Mingled Mass"'; F.M.L. Thompson, 'Social Control in Victorian Britain'*, The Economic History Review,* 34/2 (1981); *EJ,* 7 October 1899.

in Moreton in 1872 was exceptional.[114] Like those across the country it was sponsored by the Parish Church, rather than the Congregational Church, with Lord Redesdale and Rev. Jarratt leading the subscription list. Members, who paid 1d per week, were admitted from 6pm until 10pm, supplied with newspapers, periodicals, chess, and draughts and allowed to smoke after 9pm.[115] As already noted, once it was opened it was added to the list of venues for the town's social events.

Agricultural, horticultural and root vegetable societies, traditionally associated with rural areas were evident as well as organisations that taught practical skills such as an ambulance society, at which the local GP, Dr Mark Styles, taught basic first aid.[116] Snell cited sports fixtures between neighbouring communities as opportunities for expression of local xenophobia that could become unruly and violent.[117] Moreton fielded a football team and a hockey team, playing in local leagues while billiard matches took place in the Crown Inn assembly rooms and later the reading rooms.[118] No newspaper reports have surfaced to suggest that these events descended to the levels described by Snell. Summer evenings were devoted to cricket, tennis, and bowls while later technological advancements led to the formation of a cycle club.[119] In addition to participatory sport, Moreton hosted events that drew outsiders to the town from some distance. As already noted, every spring, a steeplechase took place over fields on the southern edge of Moreton. This attracted widespread newspaper coverage, ensuing crowds and a fete-like atmosphere throughout the town.[120] Similarly, each summer Gloucestershire County Cricket club visited the town to play a county championship match generating similar pride in the town.[121]

The societies and organisations present in Moreton required the commitment of a huge amount of time and effort by a sizeable body of people, over a prolonged period. The investment provided Moreton with social connections that transcended class and wealth and helped in some small way to improve the quality of life of Moreton's inhabitants by building a sense of community. It would be naïve to assume that this was all encompassing and that no one was left behind, but it does seem to indicate that the efforts made by diverse sections of Moreton society worked towards improving the fabric of the community.

Conclusions

Snell believed that, 'community sprit remained a pervasive feature of English and Welsh local societies well into the early twentieth century', which is confirmed by this

[114] C. King, 'The Rise and Decline of Village Reading Rooms', *Rural History,* (2009), p.170.
[115] *MFP,* 28 September 1872.
[116] *EJ,* 14 January 1888.
[117] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 57.
[118] Ibid., 16 February 1884, 12 November 1904, 13 January 1912.
[119] Ibid., 13 June 1868, 2 September 1882, 20 November 1909, 29 March 1890.
[120] Ibid., 5 March 1864.
[121] Ibid., 3 May 1884.

study of Moreton.[122] Of utmost importance in keeping a sense of belonging alive was the wide range of social events that were available to the inhabitants, and these were provided in different formats. The associations made between the people of Moreton, described in this chapter, enhanced this sense of community. Alongside the Oddfellows activities described in chapter three, these occasions sustained a nexus whereby the different classes could socialise, exchange ideas and appreciate the difficulties each other faced. It is also possible that it provided a network whereby people could obtain employment or promotion. Moreton was not unique in retaining this level of community engagement and, keen to imitate larger settlements, as seen in Usk, it was replicated across many small towns in rural Britain. The absence of any contemporary local comment concerning these activities renders it impossible to judge if the intent behind them was one of social control or that it was driven by a working-class desire for self-improvement. Thompson's verdict that reformers sought, 'to ensure that it (leisure) was used in uplifting and improving ways, and that the people should learn to find happiness in orderly, healthy, rational recreations' may well have been true in Moreton but whatever the motivations, these activities enhanced life in the town.[123]

As well Sunday observance, the ability to make choices along religious lines extended into the community. Moreton's history demonstrates a fluidity in loyalty between the Parish Church and the Congregational Church that was replicated between the National and British Schools. 19th century Moreton enjoyed a degree of religious toleration that enhanced its social life. This is in direct contrast to Jones's study of Usk that shows the reality of religious intolerance in action in a small town.[124] Moreton's situation owed much to the personalities of the individuals concerned, especially the Hornes, but also the early founders of Congregationalism in the town. Urdank described a comparable situation in Nailsworth where, 'dissenters established from the outset a rapprochement with the local Establishment that far surpassed mere toleration and eventually led to widespread social and political cooperation'.[125] Although religious rivalry is a regular narrative within 19th century social history Moreton's experience demonstrates that it is possible to uncover places where this was not the case. Urdank references a climate of paternalism and deference as being conducive to such a situation and this chimes with the established social norms of Moreton that were highlighted in chapter two.[126] Of added significance it the town's static population which may have also reduced the competition for souls between the two strands of religious observance. It would be interesting to discover if this was true in other places that experienced demographic stasis.

[122] Snell, *Parish and Belonging,* p. 499.
[123] Thompson, 'Social Control in Victorian Britain', p. 201.
[124] Jones, 'Nineteenth Century Usk', p. 169.
[125] Urdank, *Religion and Society in a Cotswold Vale,* p. 85.
[126] Ibid., p. 126.

Chapter 5 Railway Development

'not one of these studies is devoted to discovering what the railway did in and for the country it traversed'.[1]

Introduction

Writing in 1986, Simmons highlighted an issue relating to historical writing concerning railways. Their advent had a momentous bearing on many aspects of life in 19th century Britain and their ubiquity cannot be questioned but again, there is a dearth of scholarship about their effect on the countryside, outside the cities and railway towns. The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the impact the railway had on Moreton in terms of its economy and population. It is proposed to assess the short-term impact of the railway's arrival on the economy of the town before looking at the long term. Unquestionably the railway had a physical impact on the town's imprint and its position governed Moreton's future development. Comparisons between Moreton's experience with that reported from other small towns during the period will also be measured. The research has been based on assessing trade directories to consider the town's economy before and after the railway's arrival; and on occupational details from CEBs to gauge the opportunity to engage in railway-based employment. Place of birth information on census returns provide an indication as to whether the railway increased migratory trends to and from the town. Additional material, providing contemporary comment has been gathered from local newspaper reports. Again, established scholarship on railway development also tends to be very black and white. The railway was instrumental in some places thriving beyond all expectation, completely changing their economic profile, and experiencing exponential population growth. Conversely, others suffered economic, and population decline in the wake of a neighbouring town being connected to the railway. Several reasons have been propounded for this: that the population was lured away by the convenience of trains or that the arrival of goods produced elsewhere decimated the local craft economy.[2] Moreton provides a case study which demonstrates that there is the possibility of a distinct experience whereby a small-town economy could be bolstered by the arrival of the railway without encountering the extremes highlighted.

Researching Railways

As long ago as 1957, Dyos issued a call to arms for historians to investigate the social cost of railways, being primarily interested in the effects of the demolition of vast swathes of housing in London and other cities to enable the building of new termini and the social dislocation this caused.[3] In 1986, Jack Simmons repeated the plea, bemoaning the fact that historians of the railways ignored the impact made on the

[1] J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country 1830-1914,* (Newton Abbot, 1986), p. 334.
[2] Turton, 'Crewe New Town in 1851', Trinder, *Victorian Banbury;* WEA, *A Town in the Making, Slough;* Davey, *Ashwell.*
[3] H. Dyos, 'Counting the Cost of Railways', *Amateur Historian,* 3/5 (1957), p. 191.

countryside and the small towns which it traversed.[4] The success of these calls for research can be judged by reference to the British Library database of academic theses (EThOs). This returns 135 'hits', since 1957, based on a search of 'railway history' but much of this research is based abroad, several concentrate on traditional railway themes such as engineering and architecture, and others touch on the subject as part of a wider historical study.[5] Among the specifically railway focused investigations of interest are: Frank Andrews' study of east Kent; Mark Allen's of Winchester; Audrey Giles in Kingston upon Thames; Rosemary Stewart-Beardsley in the Thames valley; Friedrich Newman in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire; and Adam Baxter in Marlow.[6]

The ability to research railways, especially at a local level, is limited. Parliamentary papers provide details of the lengthy debates prior to the establishment of different railway companies, however, The National Archive lists only 52 collections, for a period of almost 200 years, relating to the GWR, one of the most successful railway companies, which covered a large part of the country and more specifically Moreton.[7] Details of these collections underline that the physical changes in terms of siting of lines, construction of buildings and bridges, design of locomotives and the legal arrangements and arguments between interested parties were considered most worthy of protection for posterity. Among the collection there are some golden nuggets relating to specific, often quite small, stations: accounts, goods handled and wages for specialised roles. The historian is thwarted in attempting to understand exactly how railways changed the lives of the people who lived in the hundreds of small towns and villages that were situated either on the lines, or close to them. It is understandable that the management of local stations, and their superiors, did not see the need to keep detailed, potentially bulky records: the number of passengers on trains; the cost of journeys; days that were busier than others or any other of the data that can be mined to satisfy the present day need for key performance indicators, that would have been so useful to current historians. This dearth of material partly explains why railway historiography is slanted towards the politics of construction, biographies of the promoters, great feats of engineering both in terms of the railway lines, the rolling stock on them, the architecture of stations and the national operation of timetables.[8]

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[4] Simmons, p. 334.

[5] P. Macdonald, 'Rural Settlement Change in E Suffolk, 1850-1939', (PhD. thesis, University of East Anglia, 2017); M. Brownlee, 'The Economic and Social Development of Richmond and Twickenham in the Nineteenth Century', (PhD. thesis, University of London, 2018).

[6] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming'; Allen, 'A Railway Revolution?'; Giles, 'Railway Influence in Kingston upon Thames'; Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway'; Newman, 'The Socio-economic Effects of the Coming of the Railways'; Baxter, 'Great Marlow 1835-1891'.

[7] https://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/details/c/F187483 (3 February 2021).

[8] Boynton, *The Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway;* M. McNair, *William James (1771-1837), the Man who Discovered George Stephenson,* (Oxford, 2007); H. Campbell, *Scottish Locomotive History,* (London, 2021); O.F Green, *London's Great Railway Stations,* (London, 2021); M. Hughes, 'Interpreting Railway Working Timetables, the LNER trans-Pennine Route, *Journal of Railway and Canal Historical Society,* 187 (2004), pp. 458-66.

Apart from Giles' research in Kingston, in which she was able to use extant primary sources from the London and Southwestern Railway, the other studies do not rely heavily on any specific railway material, which underlines the issues. All the studies, including Giles, depend on non-railway material: CEBs, trade directories, parliamentary papers, estate records and local newspapers. This study of Moreton follows the same course in using similar sources to tease out changes in the composition of the town's population and economy over the course of 60 years and to understand what difference the arrival of the railway made to the town.

Background to the construction of a railway in Moreton

The construction of a railway and station in Moreton in the 1850s owed less to the contemporary desire for better communication and profit than may initially be thought. Railways were not such a novel idea for Moreton's inhabitants as the town was already linked to Stratford, via a 16-mile horse drawn tramway constructed in 1826. Consequently, when the proposals to form an additional route between the Midlands and London were mooted, Moreton was an obvious site for a station and junction. Again, primary sources relating to the tramway are sparse, but it is apparent that William James, a Warwickshire born, London based, solicitor and land agent was the main proponent of the project.[9] James's surveying work led to his involvement with coalfields and canal building, including the completion of the Stratford canal, linking the town with Birmingham and the Grand Union canal. James's vision was to create a route between the Staffordshire coalfields south to Oxford and London, and west to the River Severn. His experience in collieries enabled him to witness the benefits of tramways for transporting coal, perceived to be a difficult product to move, owing to its bulk and fragility, and he recognised that rail technology could be extended to passenger traffic. His activities linked him to other rail pioneers, such as Trevithick and Stephenson and he travelled extensively to inspect the various contemporary projects. An 1820 illustration demonstrates James's railway masterplan for the 'Central Junction Railway or Tramroad' linking London to the Midlands, connecting canals and other navigable rivers via a series of smaller branch lines.[10]

The Stratford to Moreton Tramway

While not an obvious commercial success and not stemming from the actions of local people, although supported by them, the tramway for both goods and passenger traffic placed Moreton among a handful of locations that were early adopters of new rail technology. It laid the foundations for future development and as such its history is of relevance to later events. In August 1820, a public meeting was held to discuss the proposal. Thomas Telford, one of the most illustrious civil engineers of the day, was quoted in local advertisements for the meeting, as being an interested party,

[9] M. McNair, *William James (1771-1837)*.
[10] https://www.gettyimages.fi/detail/kuvitus/railway-map-of-central-junction-railway-rojaltivapaa-kuvitus/1015545522 (11 October 2023).

however there is no evidence to suggest that he ultimately invested any time, money or expertise and that this may have been a fanciful attempt to give it greater credibility.[11] Lord Redesdale, the chief landowner, backed the plan that was sold to its potential investors as a way of reducing the distance required to bring coal to Moreton, thereby decreasing the price by 8s per ton. The cost, estimated to be £40,000, included the purchase of land. The proposal received royal assent on 28 May 1821 and included a plan for a branch line to Shipston.[12] Alongside William James was an extensive register of local gentry, clergy, politicians, farmers, and business owners. The Act of Parliament reiterated the purpose of the railway:

> 'would afford a cheaper conveyance of coal, lime, corn and other articles of merchandise, would relieve the turnpike and other roads in the neighbourhood from the damage they sustain by the conveyance of such articles and would tend to the improvement of the estates in the vicinity of the said railway or tramroad and collateral branch and in other respects be of public utility'.[13]

The construction, supervised by John Urpeth Rastrick, was not straightforward with substantial cutting works required. Additionally, the project was blighted by shareholder apathy, with poor attendance at meetings hampering decision making, shareholder defaults and costs exceeding estimates.[14] One of the early casualties was William James, who, by 1822, was imprisoned for debt and later declared bankrupt.[15] In June 1825 the scheme returned to parliament with permission granted for additional funding of £15,000 by way of a mortgage from Thomas Dudley, from Kingswinford, and detailed plans for the extension to Shipston.[16] Dudley's death later that year added further to the administration problems.[17] The tramway was finally opened on 5 September 1826, an event heralded and reported in *Jackson's Oxford Journal* on successive Saturdays, painting a very positive picture of Moreton,

> 'fewer towns possess greater accommodation; the fine open streets with good thoroughfares and the excellent roads leading into the town in every direction, all contribute to render the situation very desirable: added to which the Stratford and

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[11] Norris, *The Stratford and Moreton Tramway*, p. 11.
[12] *An Act for Making and Maintaining a Railway or Tramway from Stratford-upon-Avon in the County of Warwick to Moreton-in-Marsh in the County of Glocester, with a Branch to Shipston on Stour in the County of Worcester, (28th May 1821),* https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/result/pqpdocumentview?accountid=13042&groupid=99495&pgId=0254ae3d-faca-4345-8c50-7385cd5144fc (11 October 2023).
[13] *An Act for Making and Maintaining.*
[14] Norris, *The Stratford and Moreton Tramway*, pp. 19-20.
[15] McNair, *William James (1771-1837),* p. 74.
[16] *An Act to Amend an Act Passed in the First and Second Year of the Regin of His present Majesty, intituled An Act for Making and Maintaining a Railway or Tram Road from Stratford-upon-Avon in the County of Warwick, to Moreton-in-Marsh in the County of Gloucester, with a Branch to Shipston-upon-Stour in the County of Worcester; and for Making Further Provisions Touching the Same,* (22nd June 1825.); https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.lpa-004246?accountid=13042. (18 January 2023).
[17] *Ancestry,* Records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury*,* Series PROB 11*;* Class: PROB 11; Piece: 1707*.*

> Moreton Railroad being open for the conveyance of goods from the Staffordshire collieries, the manufacturing goods and all parts of the North, must in great degree promote the trade of this place'.[18]

The event coincided with the relaunching of the weekly livestock and corn market and was a time of great celebration,

> 'In the course of the morning the Committee, under whose superintendence the railroad has been completed, accompanied by bands of music, arrived in one of the road wagons, preceding several others laden with coal, coke, deal planks, grindstones and other articles of merchandise required in the neighbourhood. They afterwards dined together in the Unicorn Inn'.[19]

Unfortunately, the problems that had dogged its construction continued to hamper the operation of the tramway with continued expenses incurred in maintaining the cuttings and embankments. The company did not possess any of its own rolling stock, so licensed local businesses provided waggons and horses. Passengers were transported for an additional fee. While day to day business eventually showed a profit, no inroads were made into repaying the capital debt.[20] General meetings were again met with apathy and ultimately the tramway was leased, at an annual rent of £2,100, to Benjamin Baylis, who charged between 1d and 4d per ton per mile to transport goods. Baylis's identity is difficult to establish but, as early as 1828, he had reported that the line was in a poor condition due to skimping during construction, but whether such a report was made entirely without any self-interest is questionable.[21] The branch line to Shipston was finally completed in February 1836, an event that passed without any discernible comment. Contemporary directories provide the town with good publicity by highlighting its existence in the descriptive introduction and giving more specific details of the timetable in the smaller print.[22] The 1845 Act, establishing the Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton Railway, included the provision to take over the tramway and its debts, then estimated to be £48,315, with its terminus in Moreton incorporated into the proposed new railway station.[23] *Berrow's Worcester Journal* reported that the tramway was closed for an undetermined period before the amalgamation with the mainline, due to issues with the gauge causing OWWR to replace all the wagons.[24] Thirty-three years after William James' proposal, part of his grand scheme was adopted by others and plans put in place for its realisation.

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[18] *JOJ,* 2 September 1826.
[19] *JOJ,* 9 September 1826.
[20] https://www.warwickshirerailways.com/gwr/moreton_tramway.htm (11 October 2023).
[21] Norris, *The Stratford and Moreton Tramway*, p. 23.
[22] *Pigot & Co.'s Directory of Berks, Bucks ..., 1842. [Part 1: Berks to Glos*].
[23] Boynton, *The Oxford Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway*, p. 49.
[24] *BWJ,* 4 November 1852.

Oxford, Worcester, and Wolverhampton Railway

Andrews' research on the effect of railways in east Kent suggested that those settlements that actively sought a railway were more likely to thrive than those on which a railway was imposed, with the latter's economy being little different from places without a station. This dichotomy is also apparent from research into neighbouring Chipping Norton during the same period.[25] It seems certain that the inhabitants of Moreton had little say in whether the railway arrived or not in the town. The existence of the tramway together with the topography of the area around Moreton was a major factor for the siting of a station when the route of OWWR was under consideration. As described in chapter two, travel to Worcester had been reliant on horse drawn transport meaning Moreton had already established its position as a staging post prior to, or immediately after, the negotiation of the Cotswold hills and this was equally significant in the construction of a railway. As already described, Moreton is in the Evenlode valley and the railway followed the river's course to its confluence with the Thames, west of Oxford. The driving force behind the OWWR came from the industrial towns of the west Midlands and the cathedral city of Worcester, which were acutely conscious of having been bypassed by railway routes constructed in the 1830s.[26] It is a moot point as to whether the agricultural and service orientated nature of Moreton's economy would have driven its landowners, farmers, and tradesmen to actively seek a railway for the town. However, the railway's arrival based on the town's geographical position and the existing tramway is significant.

Pressure to establish the railway began in 1844 with a series of public meetings along the proposed route and the prospectus published in May, in Wolverhampton. Brunel had been engaged as the engineer and shares were priced at £50, secured with a deposit of £5; the total estimated cost being £1.5m. In 1845 the bill was presented to parliament and evidence was taken by a select committee. Much of the discussion revolved around the issue of whether the railway would adopt Brunel's favoured broad gauge and the integration with other narrower gauged routes. From the parliamentary papers, there is little evidence of representations from Moreton residents or landowners, either for or against the proposals with no comment from either side in local newspapers. On 4 August 1845, the bill was given royal assent and Moreton's destiny was to be linked to the railway.[27]

Construction began in early 1847 with an estimated workforce of 2,800 men.[28] Railway building used a mix of dedicated navvy gangs and local men, who worked as the navvy's assistants. In an agricultural area like Moreton, railway construction was a welcome source of employment for seasonal workers in an area of low agricultural

[25] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming'; I. Murphy, 'An Examination of the Responses of Moreton in Marsh and Chipping Norton to the Opportunities and Challenges of Industrialisation 1830 -1880' (Student Dissertation for Module A826, MA History part 2, The Open University, 2014).
[26] Boynton, *The Oxford Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway,* p. 7.
[27] Ibid., p. 8.
[28] Ibid., p.12.

wages.[29] The terrain immediately surrounding the town did not require the intensive numbers necessary for tunnelling or banking work. Nationally, the navvy gangs earned notoriety for their hard drinking and sometimes violent exploits but the only notable incident in the area happened in July 1851 when the navvies' physical presence was employed by both the local contractor and Brunel himself in a stand-off over payment near Chipping Campden tunnel.[30] The eight-mile distance from Moreton may have been sufficient to preclude any involvement by the workforce surrounding the town.

Local land agents began using the imminent arrival of the railway and its convenient links to London to enhance the merits of various properties they were charged with selling. Socially, Moreton benefited from the largesse of one of the railway contractors, Henry Bird, who gave a ball that was glowingly reported in the press.[31] However, in September 1849, the OWWR experienced serious financial difficulties leading to construction work being abruptly halted. Adverts appeared for the disposal of horses and wood no longer needed for construction.[32] Unsurprisingly the situation attracted the attention of Lord Redesdale, who, in a strongly worded letter to *Jackson's Oxford Journal,* demanded steps be taken to enforce completion by, if necessary, invoking the clause in the Act compelling the GWR to take over the project. His proposal was to raise a petition to the Railway Commissioners to prevail upon the GWR to follow this course of action, and, having already garnered the support of other local landowners, he provided them with a suitable template to write community petitions. He continued to describe the situation faced in the locality complaining,

> 'The nuisance which, in its present state, it is to the properties through which it runs is excessive, and also the public inconvenience arising from the incomplete communications by bridges and others, many of which are of a rude and temporary character and some not even safe to stand through the winter'.[33]

Apart from the obvious immediate intention of Redesdale's letter to expedite the impasse, it is a very public expression of concern and entreaty on behalf of residents that underlines the paternalistic relationship described in chapter two. A reply from 'JH', on behalf of OWWR, published the following week, acknowledged the situation to be unsatisfactory but decried the idea of a petition in favour of direct correspondence with the directors. No further debate was apparent in the local press, but the cessation continued into 1850, with directives being made to GWR to complete the work that were ignored. It was not until 1851, when OWWR raised additional capital from Morton Peto, a contemporary entrepreneur and civil engineer, with an interest in railways, that work recommenced. Advertisements placed by Bird, in March 1851 for the sale of plant 'in consequence of having finished his contract on the Oxford Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway', imply that the work in the area, had been completed, but

[29] J. Simmons & G. Riddle, *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History,* (Oxford, 1997), p. 343.
[30] *Glasgow Herald,* 25 July 1851.
[31] *JOJ,* 26 August 1848.
[32] *JOJ,* 8 September 1849.
[33] *JOJ,* 26 August 1848.

there was still a lengthy period before the entire railway was finished.[34] The track between Evesham and Wolvercote Junction, west of Oxford, was finally completed in the summer of 1853, and the line became operational on 4 June, when Moreton station opened.

The Social Consequences of Railway Construction

Aside from the long-term consequences of the construction of the railway, it is also worth considering its immediate impact on the town. Again there is dearth of studies on this aspect of railway history, which may enhance the idea that railway construction workers lived an itinerant lifestyle in dedicated temporary camps. Moreton's experience provides the historian with an example from which comparisons can be made with the experience elsewhere.

It is fortuitous that the railway building was still in progress by the early 1850s as the census, which took place on 30 March 1851, provides details of interest to the social historian.[35] It occurred at the time OWWR injected additional funds into resuming construction. Had the project been completed to its original timescale, the presence in Moreton of railway construction workers would have been missed. In total there were 30 men in Moreton on census night whose occupation included the term 'rail', interestingly the term 'navvy' was not used supporting the idea that these gangs were not required for construction in the immediate vicinity. It is likely that the rail contingent was greater than this, as men who described themselves as carpenters or blacksmiths may also have been working for the OWWR but chose to describe themselves by their trade rather than the sector in which they were employed. The actual timing of the OWWR resumption is difficult to place but it had already taken place before census night. This raises the question as to whether these men were a recent influx or if they had remained in Moreton waiting for work to restart and if so, what did they do in the meantime?

Twenty-five men referred to themselves as 'labourers'; four of the remainder described themselves as 'contractors' suggesting a more managerial position and one was a 'rail contractors' clerk'. Only seven were Moreton natives or from within three miles; two had come from Cornwall, one from Lancashire and the others from miscellaneous towns in the Midlands and the south of England. The majority were under 30 years old and only 10 were married. Six of the married men were household heads who had their own family living with them. Of the single men, six lived with family, four of whom were native to Moreton; the other two had been born elsewhere but may have lived in the town prior to the railway building. The remaining single men lived as lodgers or boarders, the majority with other families.[36] The proximity of navvy gangs is supported by the account of the stand-off at Chipping Campden tunnel, and

[34] *JOJ*, 15 March 1851.
[35] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: HO107, Piece:2076, Folio: 330, p. 33.
[36] Ibid., (John Ingram, Tom Draper), Folio: 328, p. 29, (James Cook); Folio:290, p. 2, (John Smith); Folio: 326, p. 25 (Thomas Denley); Folio:331, p. 34, (William Johnson, James Mallin, William Taylor).

it is conceivable that some came into the town to socialise and spend their wages. Although there are no direct sources from Moreton to support this behaviour, Davey's local diary source for his research in Ashwell, in Hertfordshire, described the railway workers arriving in the village for this purpose.[37] The contributions of the lodgers made a substantial, if temporary, difference to the household budgets of their host families. The wages of all railway construction workers improved the local economy in general with not only their own spending but providing the townspeople with extra disposable income.

It is interesting to speculate about the social contribution that this body of men, linked through their mutual employment, but with remarkably diverse backgrounds, made to the everyday life and leisure time of Moreton. The town had little previous involvement with large scale industry or engineering projects and this encroachment on its agrarian culture undoubtedly made an impact. Similarly, encountering different accents, customs and sharing varied life experiences would have a profound effect on locals. It would raise some interesting prospects for those younger unmarried women in the town, who were provided with an additional dimension in considering husbands. Likewise, the young men of Moreton had more competition when attempting to attract the attention of young women.

The 1851 census reveals that there had already been one instance of integration between the incomers and the local population as Berkshire-born George Kimbrey, a rail labourer, married Elizabeth Robinson in 1849.[38] It cannot be certain that Kimbrey arrived in Moreton with the first phase of railway building but it was still in progress in April when the marriage took place. Elizabeth was pregnant on the day of the wedding and their son, Thomas, was baptised in June but died less than a month later.[39] In 1851 George and Elizabeth were living with her extended family, both being described as 'lodgers' without any further children. Tragedy continued as a few weeks before the railway was opened both the parish registers and a report in *Berrow's Worcester Journal* record the death of a 'George Kimber' following an accident on the railway. *Berrow's* report of the inquest described his fall from a moving wagon and his legs being crushed, leading to his death a few hours later, leaving a wife and child to 'lament his sad fate'.[40] The discrepancy with his name continued in the burial records but the age corresponds with both marriage and census details. His death is further confirmed by the 1861 census, by which time Elizabeth had remarried James Fox, a near neighbour in 1851. Living with them and two of their own children was Eliza *Kimbrey*, described as James's stepdaughter. Being an agricultural area, gruesome agricultural accidents that brought tragedy to the community were a common occurrence, with newspaper reports attesting to these into the next century.[41] Without evidence to the

[37] Davey, *Ashwell,* p. 34.
[38] GRO, P221IN/1/7.
[39] Ibid., P221IN/1/4 & 1/15.
[40] *BWJ,* 10 March 1853.
[41] *JOJ,* 31 March 1860; *EJ,* 15 July 1876; *MFP,* 14 August 1886.

contrary, Kimbrey's death was the first to be attributed to the new railway and provided one family, and the townspeople, with a sudden reminder of new danger in their midst, brought about by technology that was believed to improve the local community.

Opposition to the Railway

Ralph Harrington's 1998 thesis explores in detail the fear and anxiety generated by both the idea, and actuality of rail travel and the contemporary discourse devoted to this. Basing his research on a broad range of national newspapers, medical journals, specific railway publications and contemporary novels, he described how railways were charged with potentially killing people, farm animals and crops. He asserted that railways were deemed a threat to social order, by permitting the working classes to travel, thereby loosening their ties to the local community, and thus weakening their moral standards.[42] The thoughts of rural workers may have been of less interest to local reporters than the erudite articles available to national newspapers but the railway's arrival in Moreton did not appear to engender a comparable response. A local newspaper report in February 1853, expressed the delight of the townspeople when a railway engine passed through on a trial run, describing it as, 'a precursor of a "good time coming"' suggesting that Moreton residents' approach to 'the puffing billy' was one of excitement rather than fear.[43]

In other parts of England, opposition to railway building was generated for more tangible reasons than those explored by Harrington. Andrews' research in east Kent and Stewart-Beardsley's in the Thames Valley area recorded evidence of concerted opposition from vested interests in other forms of transport. Both detailed opposition from local turnpike trusts and from Thames barge traffic, albeit geographically and operationally different in the study areas.[44] As already explained, Moreton was the point at which stagecoach horse teams were changed before or after negotiating the Cotswold escarpment. *Pigot's Directory* of 1844 detailed five coaches that stopped daily in the town, except Sunday, at two inns, but no independent local coach companies. Coach traffic meant a lucrative seam of the town's commercial life was devoted to accommodation and sustenance for travellers, with seven inns listed by *Pigot's*.[45] In certain areas, railways were perceived as a substantial threat to these extensive and ubiquitous stagecoach networks, as evidenced in contemporary national newspapers, and underlined by the early experience of the Liverpool and Manchester railway, when coach traffic between the two cities ceased with weeks of the railway's coming.[46] There is no local evidence that such concerns troubled Moreton townspeople in the years prior to the railway's arrival.

[42] R. Harrington, 'The Neuroses of the Railway: Trains, Travel and Trauma in Britain, c.1850-c.1900', (DPhil. thesis, University of Oxford, 1998).
[43] *JOJ,* 5 February 1853.
[44] Andrews, 'The Effects of the Coming', p. 98, p. 104. Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway', p. 59.
[45] *Pigot & Co.'s Directory of Berks, Bucks ..., 1844. [Part 1: Berks to Glos*].
[46] *Berkshire Chronicle* (Reading, England), 10 August 1833, p. 2; R. Thomas, *The Liverpool and Manchester Railway,* (London,1980), p. 186.

For contemporaries, the railways were equally deemed potential destroyers of the countless inconspicuous, yet vital, carrier routes that crisscrossed the country. The crucial role played by carriers in linking town and countryside in 19th century Leicestershire was highlighted by Everitt with further studies carried out in Lancaster and Banbury by James Bowen and Trinder.[47] Evidence from these localities suggest that a market town's importance was reflected in an established extensive carrier network between it, and the surrounding villages. The carriers used light vehicles that made return journeys each day, of between 15 and 20 miles, conveying goods and passengers between farm and market, village, and railhead, and acting as unofficial shopping agents for rural dwellers unable to access markets regularly. Often this activity was an additional occupation to their main source of income. Everitt believed that the arrival of the railways did not adversely affect their business in the way that it did for their long-distance counterparts and by working in tandem with railways their business thrived with their numbers increasing to 20 – 25,000 by 1881.[48]

Despite being an important stopping off on the stagecoach route between London and Worcester, examination of the Gloucestershire directories, for Moreton, and the larger centres of Gloucester, Cheltenham and Cirencester and the Warwickshire directories for Stratford and Shipston, revealed a dearth of carrier routes that either started in Moreton or passed through it. Warwickshire directories were particularly disappointing as there is no evidence of any routes specifically from Stratford to Moreton, other than one to Cirencester which could be assumed to travel down the Fosseway and through the town, but no information suggested that it stopped. Comparisons with neighbouring small towns, such as Stow, Bourton on the Water, Northleach and Winchcombe, all closer to Gloucester and Cheltenham, is startling as these places support the existing research with multiple entries listing routes to various places. ***Pigot's*** directory listed ten carriers that left Moreton on different days from the Black Bear to miscellaneous neighbouring towns, some of which later acquired stations.[49] Despite these local tradesmen being placed in a precarious position by the railway, there was no evidence of local dissent relating to its arrival. This is further evidence of the local apathy and complete trust in the decisions of people with status in the locality that was part of the paternalism/deference contract highlighted in chapter two.

Opposition to a railway could take a more active and less narrative format as Davey discovered in Ashwell. Here, affray incidents involving the construction workers, disputes over the rateable value of railway buildings, episodes of potential danger to life and limb and finally acres of crops being destroyed due to a spark from an engine engendered a negative attitude amongst the local population. The farmers and craftsmen refused to embrace rail as a means of transport or of finding new markets.

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[47] A. Everitt, *Landscape and Community in England,* (London, 1985); J. Bowen, 'The Carriers of Lancaster 1824-1912', *The Local Historian,* 40/3 (2010), pp. 178-190; Trinder, 'County Carriers Revisited'.
[48] Everitt, *Landscape and Community,* p. 286.
[49] *Pigot,* 1844.

Most journeys to larger local centres continued by carrier, on foot or by carriage and no moves were made to change farming practices to meat and dairy to exploit the needs of burgeoning urban markets. Davey argued that this boycotting stance ultimately served to bring goods made elsewhere into the town, supplanting those made by local craftsmen.[50] A similar picture emerges from Foster's study of Poulton-le-Fylde in Lancashire in which he believed local markets and regional self-sufficiency was undermined by the arrival of goods manufactured elsewhere.[51] The fact that Moreton was primarily a service centre rather than a manufacturing centre may explain the difference in attitude.

The absence of local hostility in Moreton can best be explained through the responses of the local gentry. Andrews and Stewart-Beardsley recounted the important part played by local landowners in either promoting or opposing the railway and the long-term effects this had on a project's economic success.[52] Apart from Lord Redesdale's letter to the press concerning the hiatus in construction, there is no evidence to suggest that he was anything other than supportive of the project. Redesdale's father, the first Baron, had been one of the promoters of, and an investor in, the tramway so his family's commitment to rail travel had been long established. His reputation for extreme conservativism and pedantism, as demonstrated in the template petitioning the GWR about delays, made him an obvious candidate to lead vocal local opposition. Most of the land near Moreton, through which the railway passed, belonged to him, so would have provided him with opportunities to thwart its development had he wished. The other major landowner, Captain Charles Rushout, did not oppose the line either and both he and Redesdale later became chairmen of the OWWR. The positive stance of local landowners in what remained a paternalistic community would have had a profound effect on the local population's views of the railway, who also embraced it as a positive step forward.

The Immediate Economic Effect of the Railway

The economic benefit to railway towns relied in part on the success of the lines that served them. Like the Stratford to Moreton tramway, the OWWR was beset by financial issues during its inception, and, after completion, it struggled to compete with other railway companies in terms of rolling stock, maintenance, train services and passenger numbers, earning itself the contemporary moniker of 'Old Worse and Worse Railway'.[53] The agrarian economy through much of its route, its Midland destination sharing termini with other more direct routes to London and the journey times from the capital all contributed to the lethargic complexion of its operation in the north Cotswolds. In the 1850s successive company chairmen were local men: firstly, Captain Rushout and then Lord Redesdale; but there seems little evidence that they

[50] Davey, *Ashwell,* p. 37.
[51] D. Foster, 'Poulton-le-Fylde: A Nineteenth-Century Market Town', *Historic Society of Lancashire and Cheshire,* 127 (1978), pp. 91-108.
[52] Andrews. 'The Effect of the Coming' p. 23, p. 82; Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway', pp. 35-56.
[53] Boynton, *The Oxford Worcester and Wolverhampton Railway*, p. 30.

had any influence over running the railway for the benefit of the town. Their influential positions imply the railway's abandonment by Midland industrial interest and money. Stewart-Beardsley's research on the villages near Reading, detailed the introduction of dedicated rolling stock, in the form of luxury coaches and wagons designed to carry horses and carriages, which facilitated passenger travel to local country estates that was speedier, more comfortable, and cheaper than the previous stagecoach routes.[54] Moreton had many such estates and as already noted, their proximity to the line was used to attract buyers or tenants, but there is no evidence to suggest that OWWR took an equally proactive position or introduced any similar initiatives to encourage comparable passenger traffic.

Contemporary evidence demonstrates that the railway's arrival was welcomed by Moreton people and efforts were made to embrace any benefits it could bring to improve the economy of the town. Physical changes to the town included the new station building at its northeast extremity, a new road, and bridges to traverse the line. The years immediately after the station opened witnessed the establishment of two new companies, Moreton in Marsh Mill Company, whose buildings altered the townscape, and the Moreton in Marsh Building Company, both advertising shareholder prospectuses in local papers.[55] Plans were made to plant trees on each side of the High Street, 'to give our flourishing little town a very imposing effect'.[56] This impression concurs with some of the other close studies such as Trinder's work on Banbury. More recently Keith Geary's examination of Bidford on Avon, which although not having its own station took advantage of the nearby railway at Broom to transport the town's market garden produce to Birmingham.[57] In months following the railway's opening, a palpable sense of anticipation can be detected that its advent would be the catalyst for a remarkable turnaround in the town's fortunes. In October 1853, another newspaper report highlighted the measures taken to make the markets more appealing to traders: starting the weekly corn markets earlier in the day, waiving tolls and instituting a twice yearly statute fair for hiring servants.[58] The promotion of the market to a wider audience had some effect as Trinder recounts disquiet among the traders of Banbury, reported in the *Banbury Guardian,* that their town would be supplanted by Moreton in the lucrative cattle trade carried out by dealers from the English/Welsh border.[59]

Baxter's research on Great Marlow described the rapid demise of the town's well-established long-distance coach operator following the arrival of the GWR in the 1830s.[60] In 1859, *Slater's Directory of Gloucestershire*, when compared with *Pigot's*

[54] Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway', p. 82.
[55] *BWJ,* 12 January 1846; *JOJ*, 14 March 1857.
[56] *JOJ*, 7 March 1857.
[57] B. Trinder, 'The Social and Economic History of Banbury 1830-1880', (PhD. thesis, University of Leicester, 1980); K. Geary, 'Population Movements in a Warwickshire Village 1841-1891 – Bidford on Avon', *Local Population Studies,* 98 (2017).
[58] *JOJ*, 15 October 1853.
[59] Trinder, 'The Social and Economic History of Banbury 1830-1880', and *Victorian Banbury,* p. 81.
[60] Baxter, 'Great Marlow 1835-1891', p. 14.

earlier directory, provides insight into the impact of the railway on Moreton's economy. By that time, no coaches were listed, and the number of carriers had decreased to two: to Banbury and Chipping Norton, major centres not connected to OWWR. The demise of the routes to places not on the railway such as Bourton on the Water, Stow and Broadway implies that these smaller towns were served by stations along the line that were closer, such as Adlestrop and Chipping Campden and that, unlike Ashwell, the railway was the main means of transport. Of interest is that none of these destinations were replaced by a service to the other large villages of Moreton's hinterland: Aston Magna, Draycott, Evenlode, Great Wolford, Longborough, Stretton on Fosse or Todenham, all within three miles of Moreton and an obvious market for goods arriving at the station.[61] It is possible that the motivation for a carrier emanated in the smaller villages themselves. Research into directory entries for these villages reveals that while some of the larger directory publishers ignored them or treated them as appendages to the bigger settlements, a few covered some of them. However, carriers did not appear in any of the local village directories until much later. From 1884 - 1920s, a carrier was regularly listed for both Stretton on Fosse and Todenham.[62] It is difficult to decide whether this is a product of the directory editorial or reflects the local position. If the latter is the case, these findings contradict Everitt's statement that the railways enhanced the status of the lowly carriers by providing them with a new lease of life, in transporting goods to and from towns that were not part of the railway network, as there is no evidence of this happening in Moreton until 30 years after the railway's arrival.[63]

Accommodation and sustenance for passing travellers was an important economic activity in Moreton prior to the railway. In 1844 *Pigot's* listed seven inns and public houses in the town, and in 1852 *Slater* listed six. The first directory after the railway's opening, the *Post Office* published in 1856, counted seven inns, reinstating The Crown which had been missed by *Slater* in 1852.[64] At the end of the decade, both *Slater* and the *Post Office* agreed on seven.[65] This demonstrates unequivocally that the advent of the railway did not have an adverse effect on this section of the town's economy. Equally it did not enhance it, unlike in Great Marlow, where the Railway Hotel was opened due to the advent of the railway.[66] Business from rail passengers may have filled the vacuum created by the absence of coach customers but it is possible that the regular markets and the traffic created by the town's position as a local service centre were most important to this trade.

Contemporary comment emphasised the impact the railways would have on the finances of the turnpike roads with multiple witnesses attesting to this at a

[61] Slater, *Directory of Gloucestershire etc....., 1859,* p. 211.
[62] Kelly's*, Directory of Gloucestershire,* 1897, p. 337; *Directory of Warwickshire,* 1912, p. 272.
[63] Everitt, 'The Village Carrier', p. 279.
[64] *Post Office Directory, 1856,* p. 329.
[65] Ibid., Slater*, Directory of Gloucestershire etc...1859.*
[66] Baxter, 'Great Marlow 1835-1891', p. 32.

parliamentary enquiry in 1839.[67] Stewart-Beardsley was able to gather local evidence to support this for her study of the Goring Gap villages and demonstrated the dramatic reduction in toll income once the railway line opened, and ongoing decline for four decades afterwards. There are no extant records available for the turnpike near Moreton and scrutiny of local papers does not reveal any comment either in the form of news reports or the publication of annual accounts. Lack of evidence does not mean that this was not a problem for the local turnpikes, but it does seem to be one that was accepted without much comment.

The railway's arrival in Moreton had a short-term negative impact on the local carrier network but there seems little other evidence that it was detrimental to other aspects of the economy, and it was certainly viewed as a positive development for the town.

The Longer-Term Economic Effect of the Railway

What the directories reveal about the impact of the railway on Moreton

The challenges of using trade directories were discussed in the introduction, but these are the basis of research into the impact of the railway on Moreton's commercial position between 1850 and 1914. The trade directories provide a means of evaluating the number and type of different businesses in the town before and after the railway's arrival. In all, 39 directories were examined: 26 for Gloucestershire and 13 for Warwickshire. Most of the directories examined were nationally produced, as local ones, *The Cheltenham Annuaire* and *Bretherton's Almanack and Gloucester Directory* restricted themselves to their named towns. The smaller centres of Stroud and Cirencester produced a limited number of local directories towards the end of the 19th century but again, were restricted to their immediate areas. It is telling that the index for *British Directories* has separate entries for Gloucestershire – east, mid, and west – the south fell into the orbit of Bristol; north Gloucestershire was unknown territory, reinforcing the 'otherness' discussed in chapter two.

Of the 26 Gloucestershire directories that were examined some deserve more comment than others. The first one in which Moreton features is *Robson's Directory of Gloucestershire* in 1839 and the next is *Pigot's* in 1842, which formed part of Pigot's general survey carried out between 1841 and 1847.[68] The general description of Moreton refers to a linen manufactory 'in which some poorer classes are employed'; the market being of little consequence and the fairs poorly attended. Mention is made of the tramway to Stratford as are the times of coaches to London, Worcester, and Farringdon (for onward connection, by train, to London and Bath). In *Slater's 1852*

[67] *Select Committee on Effect of Formation of Railroads on Turnpike Roads and Trusts. Report, Minutes of Evidence, Appendix, Index* https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1839-018233?accountid=13042 (7 February 2023).
[68] Norton, *Guide to the National and Provincial Directories,* p. 53.

Directory, Moreton's description is different but includes the dubious honour of being described as 'a market town of little consideration in terms of business, population and size'.[69] The monopoly of directory production achieved by Festus Kelly by the end of the 1850s, either under his own authorship or that of the Post Office, led to more objective and uncontroversial descriptions of the towns. From that date, the descriptions became factual with details concerning crops grown, schools, religion, rateable values, new public buildings, social activities, and the progress made compared with the rest of the country with relation to railways, health, and utilities. Moreton does elicit some praise on two occasions: in 1863, 'the town has considerably improved in the last few years, the monthly cattle fairs being well attended' and again, in 1870, 'the town has been considerably improved in the last few years: it chiefly consists of a very wide street about half a mile in length, admirably adapted for its fairs'.[70]

The different businesses in the town were counted and the results from the Gloucestershire directories were entered into a spreadsheet, enabling the data to be interpreted by means of tables and graphs. The total numbers of entries in each directory rose over the period, falling back to their original level in 1919, as in figure 70. The peak in the middle of the 1870s is attributed to just one directory, *Morris & Co* in 1876, whose research methods may have been different from the others. Similarly, the sudden decline in 1919 may be attributed to the immediate post-war situation rather than a specific downturn in business activity. The average directory total for the period for Moreton was 96 entries. To overcome the anomalies produced by the less mainstream directories and the effects of the 1914-1918 war, these directories were removed to provide a more realistic set of data, figure 71. From this it is possible to see that based on directory entries, the number of businesses appearing in Moreton directories increased by 25% between 1852 and 1859 and these numbers, more than 100 traders, remained static until the start of the 20th century. It could be argued that this period was also the time at which trade directories were at their most popular amongst tradesmen, which may also account for the increase. However, as the data does not show a net decline, it suggests that the advent of the railway had a positive impact on the independent traders of the town, that businesses were prepared to pay and could afford to advertise, and the directories provided the town with a wider national audience than in the past.

[69] Slater*, 1852,* p. 145.
[70] *PO Directory*,*1863*; *PO Directory for Shropshire Herefordshire and Gloucestershire with City of Bristol, 1870*.

Figure 70: All Trade Directory Entries Relating to Moreton.[71]

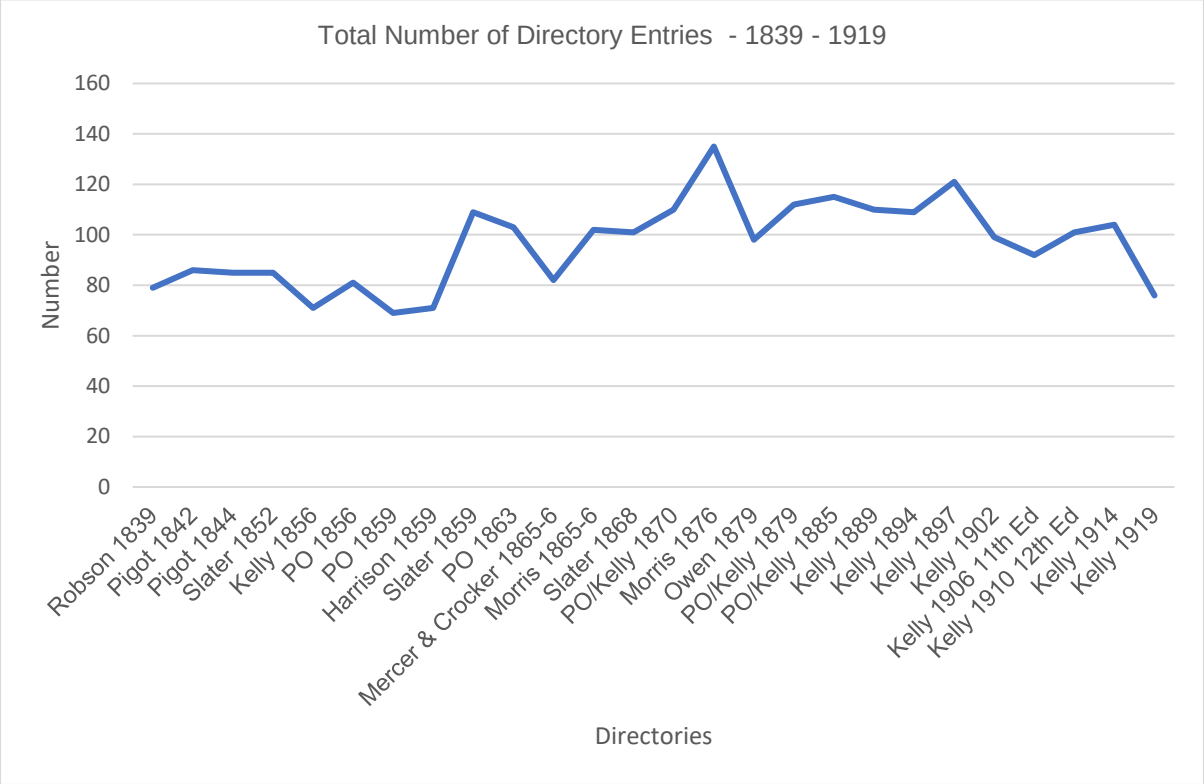
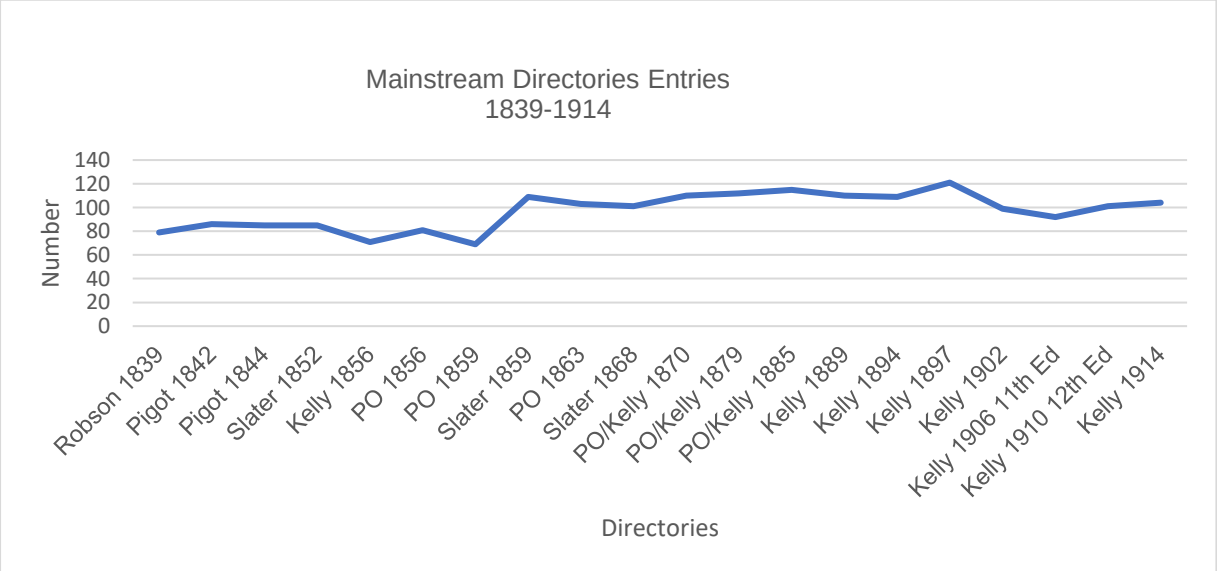


Figure 71: Mainstream Directory Entries Relating Moreton.[72]



Trades that appeared in at least 24 directories, were deemed to be consistent. The 80-year period revealed changes in types of occupation that took place during

[71] All Trade Directories that could be sourced in which Moreton was listed.
[72] Ibid.

that time with some trades lessening in importance, others increasing and a core remaining constant. Also apparent are changes in description of occupations and the increasing specialisation amongst the traders from dual to single occupations. Braziers, cattle dealers, gig proprietors, livery stable owners, straw bonnet makers were occupations in decline, coinciding with the wane in stagecoach travel; chimney sweeps, engineers, cycle agents, dentists and vets were in the ascendancy. Chalklin's findings affirmed the role played by market towns in providing professional legal and medical services and more agriculturally related services such as a mill, malthouse, tanyard, slaughterhouse and foundry to the rural hinterland.[73] Bakers, boot and shoemakers, blacksmiths, butchers, coopers, drapers, grocers, ironmongers, saddle and harness makers, tailors and watchmakers maintained a constant presence in Moreton life, underlining its role as a service centre for its agricultural hinterland rather than a trade centre.

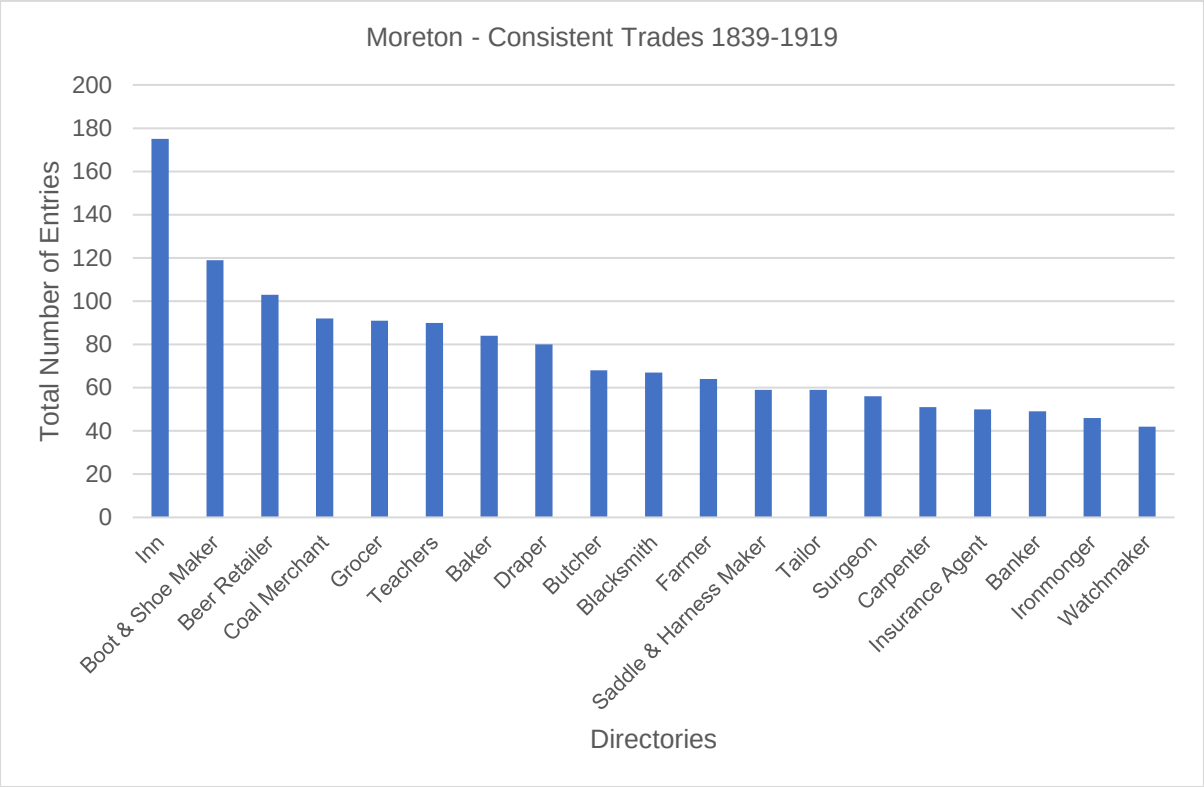
The presence of the railway and its effect on the local economy can be understood by the position coal merchants in figure 72. Appearing in fourth place, ahead of grocers, can be directly attributed to the railway. Despite false hopes being raised, often in local papers, of imminent discoveries, the north Cotswolds had minimal natural mineral resources, as evidenced by transportation of coal being the driving force behind the construction of the tramway in 1826. This was subsequently taken over by the railway, so the position of these merchants underlines the benefit the railway brought to the town. It attracted people from the outlying villages to purchase fuel and patronise other traders and establishments at the same time.

One poorly recorded aspect of Moreton's commercial life is the weekly market dating back to the charter granted by Henry III in 1226.[74] The importance of markets to the life of country towns is underlined by Chalklin but, apart from references in descriptive sections of trade directories and oblique references in local newspapers about livestock prices, it is impossible to quantify the numbers of temporary traders present each week and the nature of the goods for sale.[75] It was not until 1870 that a greengrocer was listed in a directory for Moreton, whereas one appeared in nearby Stow in 1839, suggesting that, in Moreton, this produce was traded at the weekly market. Everitt's research on carriers details their crucial role in transporting goods and people from farm to market which suggests that perishable goods and customers made the journey to Moreton each week.[76] As figure 72 shows, based on trades which appeared in 24 out of 26 directories, Moreton's most popular trade reflected its traditional role connected with travel, in providing accommodation and sustenance for people passing through or visiting on market day. The persistent and multiple presence of beer retailers speaks about the social lives of the townspeople and is representative of small towns across the country. Enduring trades were the ones that

[73] Chalklin, 'Country Towns', p. 282.
[74] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[75] Chalklin, 'Country Towns', p. 280.
[76] Everitt, 'The Village Carrier', p. 279.

sustained the life supplying food (grocers, bakers, and butchers); clothing (boot and shoemakers, drapers, tailors); and shelter (coal merchants, carpenters, glaziers, ironmongers). Additionally, professions that assisted the population's wellbeing and provided a service: surgeons, chemists, bankers, and solicitors, maintained a presence for the entire period, often in the same family. Most of the remainder were testament to the town's agricultural and transport orientated heritage (blacksmiths, saddle, and harness makers).

Figure 72: Moreton Most Consistent Trades 1839-1919.[77]



Mark Casson's study of the effects of the railway on small towns in Oxfordshire suggested the railway destroyed jobs in Charlbury, Lower Heyford and Deddington by reducing the range of artisans, merchants, and shopkeepers over the course of the 19th century.[78] Richard Lawton claimed that railways brought greater mobility and brought the larger towns in reach of rural populations leading them to bypass their local markets, a view dismissed by Armstrong as 'naïve'.[79] Davey's examination of Ashwell implied that local reluctance to support the railway in finding new markets for local produce ultimately resulted in products arriving that supplanted those produced there.[80] As primarily a service centre, Moreton's position was different from the

[77] All Trade Directories that could be sourced in which Moreton was listed.
[78] Casson, 'The Determinants of Local Population Growth', p. 40.
[79] R. Lawton, 'Population Changes in England and Wales in the Later Nineteenth Century: An Analysis of Trends by Registration Districts', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 44 (1968), p. 57; W. Armstrong, 'The Flight from the Land' in in G. Mingay (ed.), *The Victorian Countryside*, *Vol. 1*, (London,1981), p. 125.
[80] Davey, *Ashwell,* p. 37.

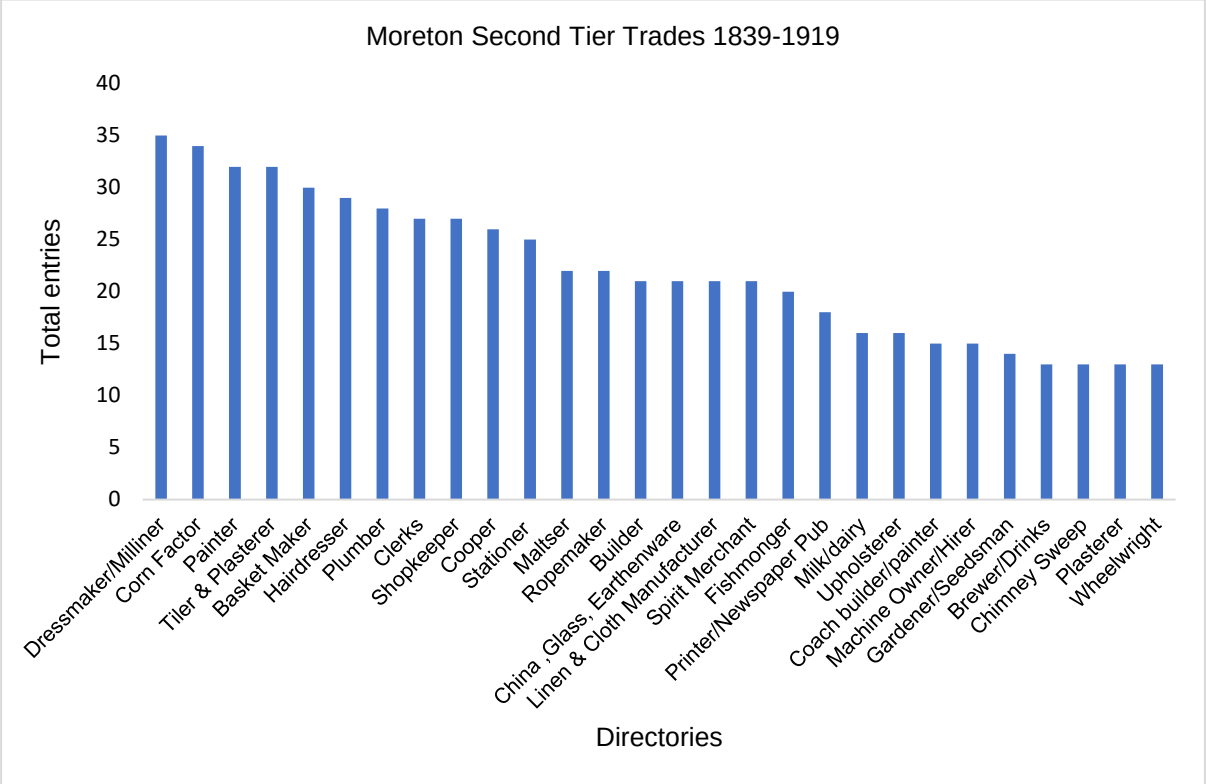
Oxfordshire towns and Ashwell, meaning that local traders welcomed the railway's ability to bring new fashions and products to their shops that generated interest and increased profits. Andrews' study of east Kent explores a different aspect of railway related commerce in detailing the rise of branches of large national shops such as Freeman Hardy and Willis, Boots, Timothy Whites, Home and Colonial and Liptons.[81] These companies encroached on the trade of many different independent local businesses which Andrews suggested was related to both the proximity of London and the rise of tourism to the coastal towns, brought about by the railway. Examination of the later trade directories for Moreton does not reveal the presence of any national chain stores suggesting that Andrews' findings did not extend across the country. In Moreton, the trade directories point to local trade remaining buoyant throughout the period and the railway enhancing rather than hindering it.

Moreton's hinterland comprised villages which had their own small shops and craftsmen providing for the immediate needs of their inhabitants. However, there were significant gaps in these which made regular trips into Moreton part of the weekly routine. The missing services were banks, coal merchants, saddle and harness makers and ironmongers. Whether commercial banks were out of the orbit of village inhabitants is difficult to judge but beside these, as chapter three highlighted, Moreton operated a penny bank.[82] The presence of the weekly market made it the destination of choice for the inhabitants of surrounding villages in preference to other similar towns.

Consideration was made of the less essential trades in Moreton. The basis of selecting these was the middle third of the total entries, trades that appeared in at least half of the directories, figure 73. It is debatable whether any meaningful conclusions can be drawn from the remaining third of the entries, other than they concerned evolving tastes and business patterns, changing descriptions or one-off entrepreneurial disasters. One aspect of interest from these isolated entries, is the directories signalling the nascent tourist driven economy with entries relating to eating-houses and apartments. [83]

[81] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming', p. 234.
[82] *JOJ,* 2 April 1859.
[83] *Kelly Directory*, 1894, 1911, 1914.

Figure 73: Moreton – Second Tier Trades 1839-1919.[84]



From examination of the trade directories, it is evident that the railway's arrival served to bolster the economy of Moreton and the declines identified by Casson and Davey are not evident. It was not the catalyst for huge economic growth as seen in other English towns and villages, nor did it deliver the anticipated bounty that was the hope of the inhabitants in the early 1850s.[85] However, it provided the livestock markets which greater transportation options, brought in coal for essential domestic use, provided the local retailers with a supply of fashionable goods and both of the latter brought local people into the town. The regular influx of hinterland villagers served to strengthen the local hospitality trade, a feature of its pre-railway role, which meant that this important sector of the town's economy did not suffer as had been anticipated. This positive effect on small towns was similarly identified by Robert Schwartz in his research comparing the agrarian economies of some French regions with Dorset. He emphasised that the railways accelerated regional specialisation and reduced the advantages previously enjoyed by farmers closer to London, stating that 'lines turned fortunate small towns with stations into thriving market centres and farmers in the area enjoyed opportunities to sell their products in larger urban markets'.[86]

The full benefit of the railway may only be fully understood by reference to other towns, of a comparable size and profile as Moreton, which were bypassed by railway

[84] All Trade Directories that could be sourced in which Moreton was listed.
[85] e.g., Turton, 'Crewe New Town in 1851'; *JOJ,* 5 Feb 1853.
[86] R. Schwartz, 'Rail Transport Agrarian Crisis, and the Restructuring of Agriculture: France and Great Britain Confront Globalization, 1860-1900', *Social Science History,* 34/2 (2010), pp. 229-255.

development. Until research is completed into such locations the advantages gained by Moreton may not be fully appreciated.

The British Business Census of Entrepreneurs: *Atlas of Entrepreneurship*

One way of assessing the fortunes of Moreton comparatively is through the analysis of neighbouring towns. Since completing research on trade directories, *The Atlas of Entrepreneurship*, a new resource from The British Business Census of Entrepreneurship has become available, using coded census data from registration districts to generate information about businesses across the UK, during the Victorian and Edwardian periods.[87] It provides the historian with the ability to make comparisons between time and place across a wide range of economic sectors as well as providing information on the gender of the business owners. As far as this study is concerned, it is helpful in gauging change over the period but the scope of the area in which the data is captured is not specific enough as it includes outlying villages such as Lower Lemington, Great and Little Wolford and Todenham. All these villages are primarily agricultural, which alters the complexion of the data from that of the Moreton itself. With this proviso, the site reinforces the conclusions drawn from the research into the directories by returning an increase in the total number of entrepreneurs in Moreton from 341 in 1851 to 397 in 1861, with no figures available for 1871.[88] However, after this the reliance on registration districts skews the data as, due to administrative changes in local government, by 1891 Moreton became part of the Shipston registration district and the data for the two towns is amalgamated.

The Atlas of Entrepreneurship goes some way to answering the need for a facility to compare different towns and until 1891 provides useful data to support the benefit gained by Moreton through having a major railway line. Although from 1836, Shipston was linked to Moreton via the tramway, it was notoriously slow and steam locomotives were not permitted.[89] A full railway branch was not established until 1889, with four trains running daily in each direction, meaning that Moreton gained almost 40 years of 'railway' benefit over its neighbour. In 1851, the *Atlas* attributed 376 entrepreneurs to Shipston and its surrounding villages but by 1861 the figure had dropped to 306 and by 1881 it had reduced even further to 292.[90] Shipston's position as the centre of a PLU did not appear to generate many commercial benefits for the town. These figures amply demonstrate the commercial benefit achieved by Moreton from having a railway station.

[87] R. J Bennett, C. van Lieshout, H. Smith, P. Montebruno & M. Lucas-Smith, 2020, *BBCE: Atlas of Entrepreneurship,* www.bbce.uk/atlas (14th November 2020).
[88] Ibid.
[89] GRO, D13668/9/2/2, Reminiscences of Moreton, The Stratford-upon-Avon and Moreton-in-Marsh/Shipston-on-Stour Tramway, by Mrs Taylor.
[90] Ibid.

Census Returns 1851-1911

Close analysis of the decennial census returns regarding occupations given reveals the changing employment profile of the town over the 60-year period and reinforces the conclusions drawn from the trade directories that local shops were not put out of business by opportunities provided by the railway. Overall, a broad comparison of occupation details over seven censuses, as a percentage of the total working population, demonstrates the decline of agriculture and the sustained rise of 'dealing', suggesting that Moreton's entrepreneurs used the railway to sustain the local economy.

Attempting to classify occupations is problematic. Over time perceptions change as new occupations emerge and others acquire distinct characteristics and economic importance. Classification is also subject to a large degree of descriptive subjectivity from both the enumerators and householders that provide historians with problems in attempting to discover and explain trends over time.[91] Occupations are also a primary tool in delineating social stratification and social mobility, but the following conclusions relate only to the economic identity of Moreton. Michael Katz's own attempts at setting classification criteria in his study of Hamilton, Ontario, and his critique of other efforts at defining such structures, warns against attempting to apply modern standards to this task and suggests that contemporary classifications are more valid.[92] Two such 19th century studies were carried out: by Henry Mayhew in the 1860s and by Charles Booth in 1886. Both have limitations for application to a rural market town as both were London-centric. Mayhew's primarily related to the poor and Booth's categories encompassed a full range of occupations, with many subdivisions, many of which were unknown in a primarily agricultural environment and others, of importance to Moreton, were missing.[93] Nonetheless, Booth's categories form the basis of the analysis which has been applied to the occupations listed in Moreton from 1851-1911, as shown in figure 74.[94] As already acknowledged, there are issues in utilising Booth's categorisations as despite its many subdivisions it fails to address nuances present at the time and how a rural economy developed, and jobs changed. A prime example of this is how food production is treated: baking is firmly placed in 'manufacture' as is food preparation which would encompass butchery. However, both occupations involved retailing their finished products to the local population, via an appropriate shop, which would then place them within the 'dealing' category.

[91] M. Drake, 'The Census 1801-1891', in M. Drake & R. Finnegan (eds.), *Sources and Methods: A Handbook,* (Cambridge, 1994), p. 86; C. Crompton, 'Nineteenth Century Craftsmen and Tradesmen in Hertfordshire: a Spatial, Economic and Social Study of Self-Sufficiency', (PhD. thesis, The Open University, 1995), p. 41, p. 58, p. 164; Higgs, *Making Sense of the Census Revisited,* (London, 2005), pp. 92-115.
[92] M. Katz, 'Occupational Classification in History', *The Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 3/1 (1972), pp. 63-88.
[93] H. Mayhew, *London Labour and the London Poor*, (London, 1862); C. Booth, 'On Occupations of the People of the United Kingdom, I808-8I,' *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 49 (I886).
[94] Drake, 'The Census, 1801-1891', p. 50.

Figure 74: Key to Occupational Categories.[95]

Agriculture	AG
Building	B
Dealing	D
Domestic Service	DS
Manufacture	MF
Mining	M
Industrial Service	IS
Public Service	PP
Residual Population	RP
Transport	T

Figure 75 demonstrates the changes in Moreton's economic life over a period of 60 years. This situation altered dramatically with the decline of agriculture apparent by 1861 and by 1901 it had been relegated to fourth place, in terms of the percentage of the population earning their living from it. During the 1880s and 1890s there was an element of equilibrium in the types of employment offered but by the start of the 20th century Moreton had developed into somewhere reliant on commercial dealing rather than the production of food or goods. Interestingly, although the railway was instrumental in changing the nature of the town's economy, the numbers employed by it never exceeded 8% of the working population.

Figure 75: Percentages of working population in different occupations 1851-1911.[96]

	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901	1911
AG	27%	23%	15%	12%	16%	11%	11%
B	5%	8%	17%	12%	10%	11%	11%
D	17%	16%	18%	19%	19%	24%	23%
DS	13%	13%	12%	15%	15%	16%	11%
IS	0	0	0	1%	2%	2%	4%
MF	25%	28%	21%	19%	20%	17%	21%
PP	5%	6%	8%	8%	7%	7%	10%
RP	1%	1%	4%	5%	5%	6%	1%
T	7%	4%	5%	6%	6%	6%	8%
Percentage of total population working	48%	48%	41%	41%	46%	45%	43%

In 1851 and 1861, manufacturing had a prominent position in Moreton's economy and although it dipped during the early 20th century, it regained its position by 1911. It reflected the thriving linen factory initially owned by Henry Busby, also a farmer, at

[95] Booth, 'On Occupations of the People'.
[96] *Ancestry,* England Census 1851-1911, Moreton.

the rear of his substantial property near the Parish Church. The 1851 census entry described Busby as employing 18 labourers on his farm and over a 100 people in the factory, producing cheesecloths for the dairy industry. As the total employees cannot be reconciled exactly to the other census entries, it must be concluded that people travelled in from neighbouring villages. The remaining occupations classified as manufacturing related to services provided to both the resident population: shoemaking, dressmaking, and tailoring, baking; and those related to a service centre for agriculture: blacksmiths, wheelwrights, coopers and rope and saddle makers. While linen weavers were present in all censuses, the later ones lack references to the machinery operatives present in the earlier ones, indicating that weavers became smaller scale piece workers, in their own homes or workshops. It is difficult to trace the exact history of the linen factory and it must be accepted that it was subject to the same intense market forces affecting cotton and linen manufacture across the country. By 1861, Henry Busby, although still living adjacent to the factory, had severed his connection with linen manufacture, describing himself only as a landowner, while George Gray and son, Reuben, living in London Road, were described as linen manufacturers, with the former noted as an employer of eight people.[97] In February 1872, *Berrow's Worcester Journal* carried advertisements for a clearance sale of 'Moreton in Marsh linen' but did not specify the provenance of the linen or that it was the result of the factory closing. By 1881 Edward Epps described himself as a linen manufacturer but there is no confirmation that the factory was still in operation.[98]

The growth in manufacturing related to small rises in sole traders across the whole spectrum of occupations. Traders servicing agriculture, such as harness makers increased and there were rises in personal services such as dressmakers and milliners, pointing to widespread trends in disseminating fashionable styles. Dealing was ranked third in 1851 and encompassed those connected with the agricultural tradition such as corn dealers and those embarking upon transactions in more innovative commodities such as coal, which assumed greater importance following the arrival of the railway. It is possible to identify small traders in retail premises who fulfil the conventional idea of a dealer but other than butchers and grocers, little distinction is made between types of shop. Of the 114 dealers, 35 were those providing washing and cleaning services on their own account, all but one of whom were in-migrants. More notably, dealing began to demonstrate greater diversity and specificity with the arrival of a photographer and more unusually, for somewhere so far away from the coast, a marine store dealer.[99] As with manufacturing, dealers revealed the influence of fashion and the beginnings of trends in accumulating household possessions and demonstrating pride, or even competition in domestic surroundings.

[97] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 107, p. 8 & Folio*:* 118, p. 29*.*
[98] *BWJ,* 17 February 1872; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 3111, Folio: 108, p. 15.
[99] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Class: RG9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 126, p. 6.

Chalklin suggested that the percentage rate of growth of shopkeepers during the second half of the 19th century was greater than that of the population as a whole, being fuelled by the rise in factory produced goods that could be efficiently distributed by train.[100] The steady transition of Moreton from an agricultural economy to one reliant on trade or dealing is closely connected to the Horne family who, as already discussed, played an important part in all aspects of the town's life and whose influence was apparent until the early 21st century. It is a moot point whether the town would have taken a similar trajectory without the Horne family. Their network of grocery stores in both Moreton and the surrounding area was ideally placed to capitalise on goods produced elsewhere that were brought to the town via the railway. A measure of the loyalty towards the Horne shops can be detected in the unexpected absence of a Cooperative Society in Moreton, which would have fitted with the culture of the Oddfellows and Penny Bank and existed in neighbouring towns. [101]

1881 was the first census where Booth's industrial service category made any significant impression, with the arrival of career accountants and insurance agents, occupations that had previously been treated as side-lines of other professions. Manufacturing and dealing achieved parity in the 1880s with an increasing range of dealers including a timber merchant, a furniture shop, and a mineral water seller, underlining the increasing influence of fashion on a small market town. Dealing continued to progress, reaching its zenith by 1901 when two specialist tobacconists appeared, and a commercial steam laundry had opened. Manufacturing lost its position even though people, previously involved in agriculture, may have transferred to the newly opened dairy. The numbers involved in rope and linen making contracted, but seven people involved in the manufacture of windows appeared in the census, together with a foundry manager reflecting the existence of new entrepreneurial ventures within Moreton.

The railway had a substantial effect on the economy of the town in helping to fill the vacuum that was created by the decline of agriculture in the second half of the 19th century. Goods brought into Moreton by the railway supplemented its market function and facilitated an alternative economic profile based around dealing.

The Social Effects of the Railway

Population

For many places, the arrival of the railway fuelled dramatic population growth, Places identified as nodal points in the rail network and potential centres for railway engineering works experienced exponential increases in population. Brian Turton's account of Crewe in 1851 recounts the population explosion of one parish, Monk's

[100] Chalklin, 'Country Towns'.
[101] M. Bee, 'Pro Bono Publico: The Chipping Norton Cooperative Society, 1866-1968, *Family and Community History,* 4/2 (2001), pp. 111-123.

Coppenhall, from 203 people in 1841 to 4,571 in 1851.[102] Similarly, the railway drove population growth in places where the acquisition of a station enhanced the settlement's economic appeal by improved travelling times, attracting new businesses with attendant workers wishing to live there and commuters wanting to travel to a nearby metropolis. The research carried out on Slough in 1851 demonstrated this phenomenon illustrating how the town, in 1841 a small part of the larger parish of Upton cum Chalvey, experienced a 55% growth in population in the 1840s. Slough was not a significant point in the rail network, merely a new station that improved local communication. Evidence showed most in-migrants arriving from within a radius of 20 miles with a preponderance from London. There was no specific industry to attract people and those that came were essentially 'workers' as opposed to 'employers' from a diverse range of occupations, primarily providing services to others. A similar rise in entries and exposure in trade directories mirrored the growth in the population. Notes made by the 1851 census enumerator specifically referred to the effect of the GWR station on the popularity of the town with the research concluding that the town's success relied on its central position in the communication network.[103] As mentioned, Schwartz pointed to the presence of a railhead improving the economic life of small agricultural towns and suggested some areas with a higher concentration of railways had a lower incidence of out-migration, although he did not believe this could be applied countrywide.[104]

Opposing hypotheses point to railways being instrumental in the decline of rural populations. Casson's Oxfordshire research suggests that the railways were a catalyst for rural population decline by improved transport communication causing a 'shake out' in the hierarchy of provincial towns, with major centres expanding at the expense of smaller ones.[105] Railways can be seen as agents for alerting the rural population to wider horizons by bringing people into the area whose life experiences may be perceived as more fulfilling and economically superior, while at the same time providing the local population with the means and an obvious route to a better way of life. This correlates with Lawton's statement that railways brought greater mobility and the larger towns in reach of rural populations.[106] However, Andrews research in Kent pointed to population decline in villages without stations and questioned whether rail fares were within the economic reach of the working population. Both he and Stewart-Beardsley believed that even skilled workers, who commanded higher wages, were priced out of the market for everyday rail tickets and that even the subsidised excursion prices, that became popular at the end of the century, were an annual treat for a farm

[102] Turton, 'Crewe New Town in 1851'.
[103] WEA, *A Town in the Making, Slough 1851.*
[104] Schwartz, 'Rail Transport Agrarian Crisis, and the Restructuring of Agriculture' p. 241.
[105] Casson, 'The Determinants of Local Population Growth', p. 40.
[106] Lawton, 'Population Changes', p. 57.

worker rather than a regular purchase.[107] Despite the railways, walking remained the mode of transport of choice for most rural inhabitants throughout the century.[108]

Moreton's population between 1841 and 1911

As shown in chapter one, and for ease repeated in figures 76 and 78, from 1841 to 1911 the census population of England and Wales increased by almost 127%, from c.15.9m to c.36m.[109] the same period, the census population of Moreton rose from 1345 in 1841 to 1406 in 1911, an increase of 4.5%. In the decade between 1841 and 1851, like Crewe and Slough, Moreton experienced a rise in its residents but in comparison was a very modest 12%. From the high point of 1851 the overall trend was downward, a decrease of 7%.

Figure 76: Moreton and England and Wales Census 1841-1911.[110]

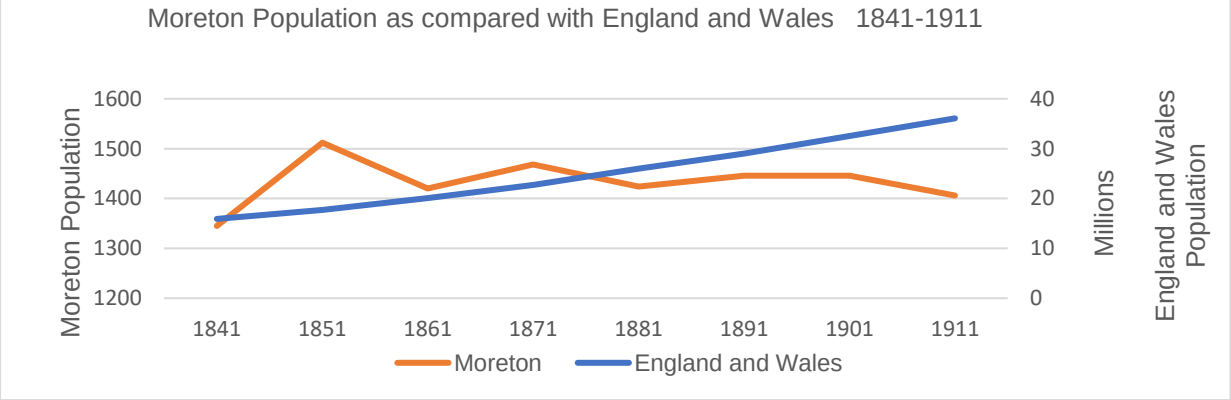
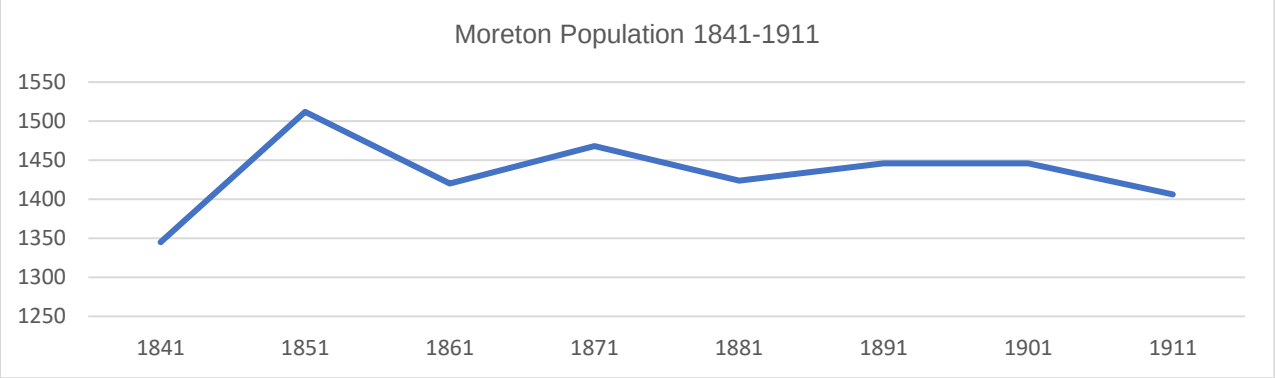


Figure 77: Moreton Census 1841-1911.[111]

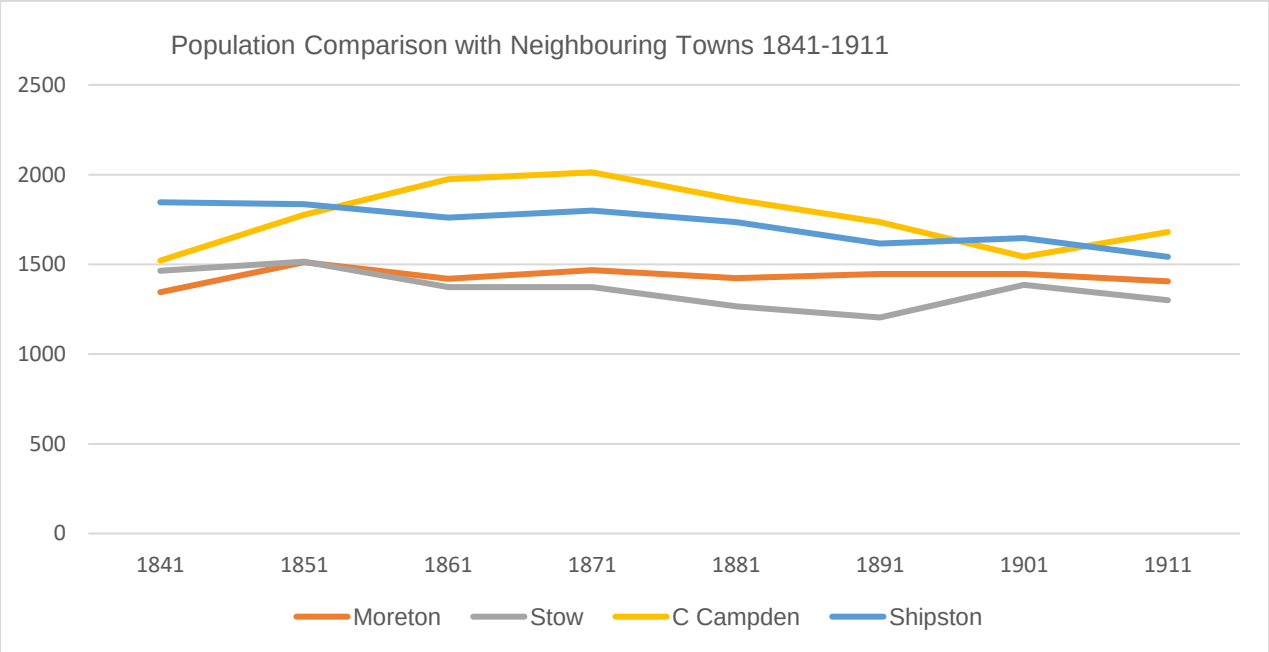


Again, to reiterate statistics from chapter one, Moreton's population change is comparable with those of the other small market towns in the locality: Stow, Chipping Campden, and Shipston, see figure 78, but the changes in Moreton are less marked

[107] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming', p. 280.
[108] Perry, 'Working-Class Isolation and Mobility in Rural Dorset, p. 133.
[109] 1851 & 1911 Censuses of England and Wales, *Preliminary Reports* www.visionofbritain.org.uk (6 November 2022).
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

than its neighbours. Of interest is the continual decline in Shipston's population as, unlike the other towns, its access to a railway was delayed for 40 years. This suggests that the presence of the railway served to support Moreton's population levels and may have mitigated against any drastic decline, implying that Casson's argument cannot be automatically extended to other regions. Local factors play an enormous role in population change and, as in Slough and Kent, Moreton proves that local circumstances are more pertinent than wide ranging theories.

Figure 78: Census Populations of Moreton, Stow, Chipping Campden and Shipston.[112]

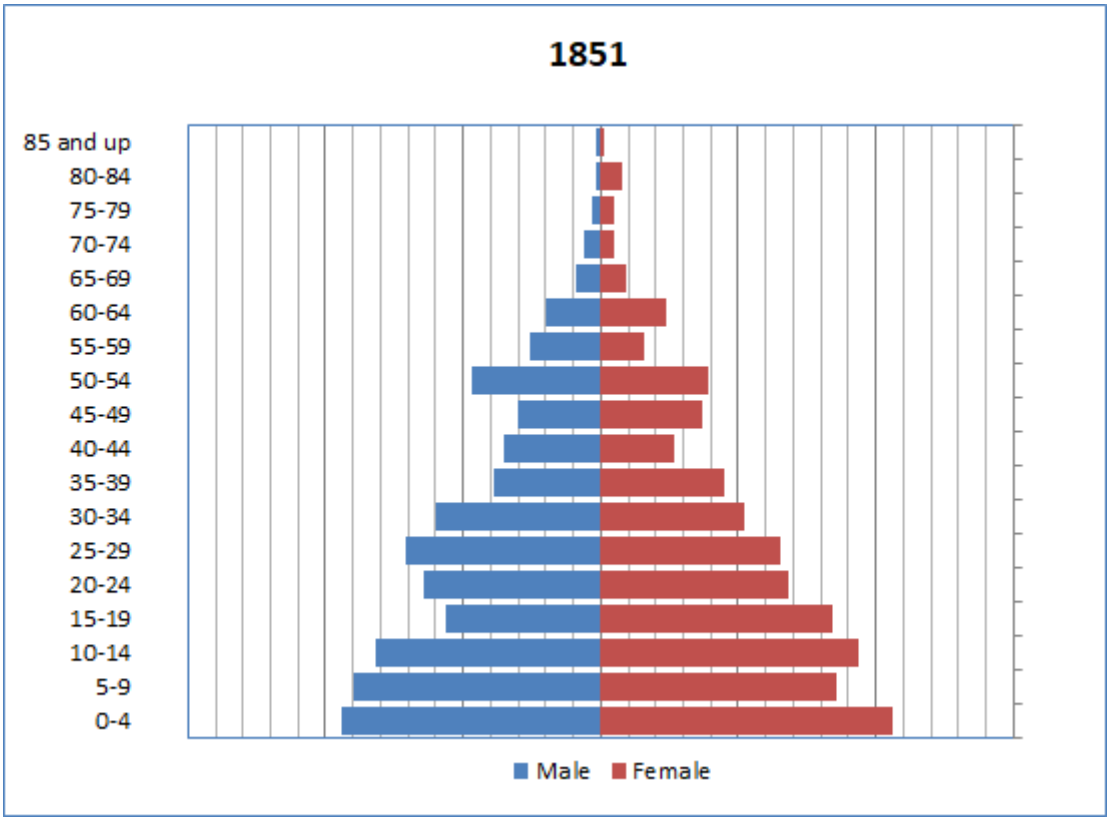


Railway construction workers

As outlined in chapter one, in 1851 the age and gender profile of Moreton's residents revealed a bulge of men in their late twenties and early thirties, see figure 79. This coincided with the construction of the railway and correlates to the additional males, born elsewhere, lodging in the town at the time and having some occupational connection with the railway. The bulge was maintained over subsequent age pyramids, suggesting that these men may have stayed behind after construction ceased and follow the example of George Kimbrey by marrying a local girl. Research via *Ancestry* disproved this conjecture, with only two of the 1851 rail labourers in Moreton in 1861, neither working for the railway, and only one in 1871, who had been born close to Moreton, making his presence less remarkable.

[112] Ibid.

Figure 79: Moreton Age Profile 1851.[113]



Attempting to trace the railway workers shows not only the very transient nature of their existence, but also the inadequacies of the early census process. Few of the cohort in Moreton were householders so the record of their presence may not have been completed very accurately, with misunderstandings of accents, names, and unknown localities, making onward tracing difficult. It also suggests that such work was an ideal opportunity for anonymity and reinventing one's identity if needed. Of the 23 non-native railway workers present in Moreton in 1851, only four could be traced to future censuses: the two who were still in the town in 1861: Reuben Miles, aged 20 and William Gardner, aged 44; and both contractor's agents: Thomas Vokins, aged 31 and Matthew Curry, aged 25. By 1861 both the rail labourers had reverted to the default occupation in the area, agricultural labouring but by 1871, Reuben Miles had left Moreton and was working as a general labourer in West Bromwich. William Gardner was a gardener in Moreton in 1871 but untraceable after that.[114]

After their sojourn in Moreton both contractors' agents had interesting, yet different lives, demonstrating the pitfalls and opportunities that the railways created. By 1861, Vokins had returned to London and had severed his connection with railways, however the birthplaces of some of his children, Doncaster and Worcester,

[113] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851, Moreton, Reg Districts 4a & 4b.
[114] Ibid.,1861, Class: RG9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 111, p. 16, & Folio: 105, p. 3; 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 97, p. 13, & Piece: 2978, Folio: 9, p. 12.

hint at a peripatetic career with the railway in the intervening period. In 1861 he was widowed, with six children, working and employing three men, as a 'carver and gilder', which from his marriage certificate appears to have been a family tradition. This implies that he had been tempted by the allure of the railways to turn his back on a craft, for which he had been trained. Possibly because of his wife's death he returned to his less itinerant original trade, which continued until his death in 1882, when his estate was valued at £701.5s.[115] It is unclear when Curry ceased to work with the railways but his time in Moreton evolved into a future career in civil engineering. His whereabouts in 1861 is not determined, but his wife, Fanny, by then living in Coningsby Lincolnshire, was described as 'a civil engineer's wife'. In subsequent censuses he was in London and Surrey, always described as a civil engineer, until his death in 1903, in Sutton, when his estate was valued at £149,237 17s 4d.[116]

Moreton's experience of railway construction demonstrates that once the work was completed, there was little incentive for the workers to remain in the neighbourhood and one can conjecture that the majority followed the work to the next area of rail construction. The Moreton construction workers did not fit the traditional description of 'navvies'; they were not living separately in camps but were part of the community, staying alongside the town's residents in their homes. Apart from George Kimbrey, there is no evidence of anyone else finding a spouse amongst the local female population. The problem in tracing these men points to a degree of 'otherness' and separation rather than integration. It suggests that their life stories were not explained in any detail to the people with whom they lodged and who were responsible for supplying details to the census enumerator. Consequently, their places of birth, ages and even names were not accurately recorded. Comparisons with cohorts of railway construction workers elsewhere may be useful in judging whether Moreton's transient, anonymous workers were an aberration or whether this was common. The building of the railway in Moreton made a permanent physical change to the town but there is no evidence to suggest that those involved in its construction made any significant difference to its social mix.

Employment opportunities

It has been established that the railway did not increase population levels but its role, in the subsequent decades, in changing the employment opportunities for the town's inhabitants and the culture of the population cannot be underestimated. Andrews' survey of railway employment in east Kent from 1841-1914, which encompassed a large railway works in Ashford, again found a paucity of documentation. He calculated that the census returns provided conservative estimates of rail workers, only listing rail related jobs as ones that could not be done elsewhere, such as shunters and platelayers. During construction, carpenters and blacksmiths

[115] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 188, Folio: 10, p.13; England & Wales, National Probate Calendar 1858-1995, (1883).
[116] Ibid., 1851 Class: RG 9, Piece: 2371, Folio: 30, p. 20; 1861, Class*:* RG 9, Piece*:* 2371, Folio: 30, p. 20; England & Wales, National Probate Calendar, 1858-1995, (1903).

crossed over between the railway and the general economy, with Andrews describing them as 'hidden' railway employees.[117] In addition, unless the census enumerator was specific, jobs such as engine drivers and engineers could also be non-railway.

In estimating the numbers of railway and potential railway employees in Moreton, carpenters, and blacksmiths with established businesses in the town, listed in contemporary directories, were disregarded. Figure 80 shows the numbers of direct and potentially 'hidden' rail employees in Moreton. This illustrates the exodus of construction workers after 1853, the substantial increase in the 1860s and the more gradual rise to the 1890s, after which numbers fell back and levelled off. Sir Arthur Bowley calculated that the average weekly agricultural wage in the area in 1850 ranged from 7s to 9s and by 1892 had increased to between 10s.6d and 12s.[118] Bowley's later range is confirmed by a local written account of rural life in rural south Warwickshire at the turn of the century.[119] Andrews' research revealed that rail wages in the Ashford, in the 1870s, ranged from 15s per week. for unskilled workers, rising to 36s per week, for highly skilled smiths.[120] This demonstrates the attractiveness of rail work, which additionally was unseasonal, thereby guaranteeing a regular income. Alison Light's *Common People* recounts the instances of members of her family going 'over the fence' from agricultural work to railway work and this was replicated in Moreton.[121] The benefits of railway work were diminished by elements of danger inherent in it and George Kimbrey was not the only example of a fatal rail accident with William Gillett meeting a similar fate a few years later with reports of non-fatal injuries to others appearing in local newspapers.[122] These local incidents, in a relatively remote rural setting, bear out the subsequent Royal Commission Report in 1900 that showed that working on a railway was more dangerous than working in a coalmine.[123]

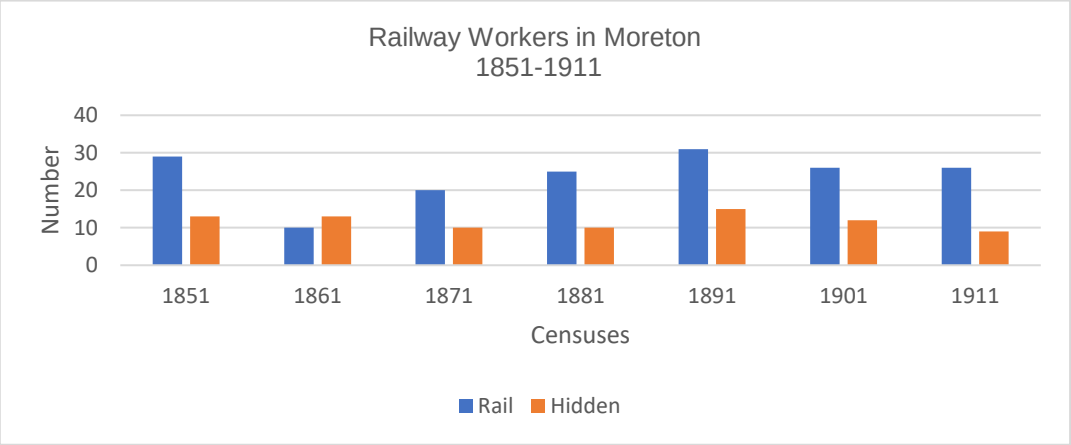
Andrews also identified the trend for railway work to run in families and again this is evident in Moreton. Amongst the railway construction workers in 1851 were uncle and nephew, both called George Miles; in 1861 the Rock family were new arrivals in Moreton, of Irish descent, whose previous locations were 'railway towns' with both father and adult son working respectively as a railway storekeeper and a timekeeper. In 1881, John Wiggins worked as a railway porter while his younger brother, Walter,

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[117] F. Andrews, 'Employment on the Railways in East Kent, 1841-1914, *Journal of Transport History,* 21, (2000), pp. 54-72.
[118] A. Bowley, 'The Statistics of Wages in the United Kingdom in the Last Hundred Years (Part 1), *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 61 (1898), pp. 702-722. The lower figures relate to Gloucestershire; the higher to Oxfordshire – Moreton's position would have been influenced by both counties.
[119] 'Little Wolford Memories by Catherine Shepard (nee Cox) 1899-1997', *The Link Magazine,* (South Warwickshire Community Magazine, May-June 2021).
[120] Andrews, 'Employment on the Railways'.
[121] A. Light, *Common People, The History of an English Family*, (London, 2014), pp. 34-7.
[122] *JOJ,* 25 September 1858.
[123] *Royal Commission on Accidents to Railway Servants. Report of the Royal Commission Appointed to Enquire into the Causes of the Accidents, Fatal and Non-Fatal to Servants of Railway Companies and of Truck Owners.* Part 1 Report, Appendix S42 https://parlipapers.proquest.com/parlipapers/docview/t70.d75.1900-078232?accountid=130 (22 February 2019).

lodging with him, worked as an engine cleaner. From 1891 to 1911 the trend became noticeable as the original railway workers' families entered the employment market. Multiple families, either linked by household or surname, provided a railway related occupation, an example being the Saunders family: Thomas Saunders, aged 31, worked as a platelayer in 1881 and both sons, at that time aged six and three, later took up the same occupation.[124]

Figure 80: Railway Workers 1851-1911.[125]



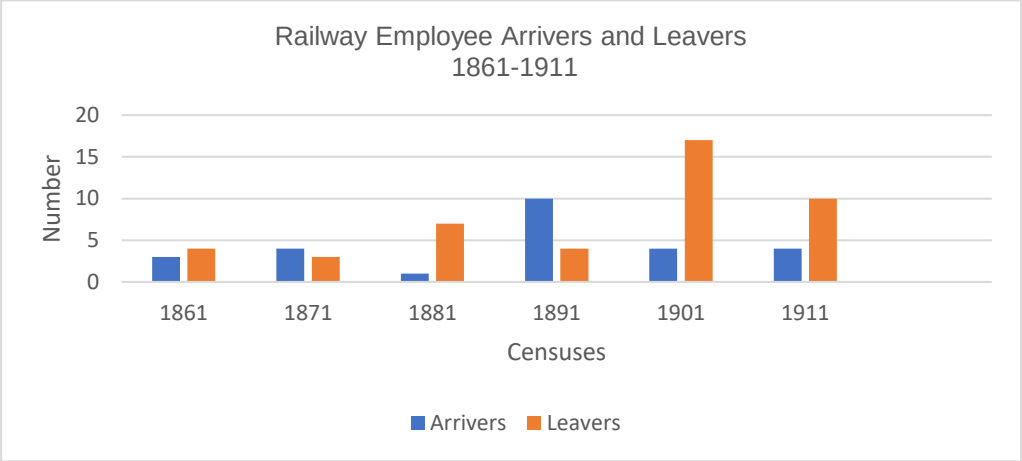
However, the best employment opportunities provided by the railway were for those who were prepared to move away to places with bigger stations or railway works and this is most evident in the later period. In 1901 and 1911 the railway provided employment for Moreton born people from Dorset to Nottinghamshire, London, and South Wales. The appearance of Wiltshire as one of the destinations of multiple migrants from Moreton relates to the growth of Swindon as a centre for the GWR. Employment in the railway also provided some flexibility and may have been instrumental in allowing people to return to Moreton after a period away. The Saunders family provide another example as James Saunders, Thomas's younger son was living in Claverdon, near Warwick in 1901, working as a platelayer but by 1911 he had returned to Moreton and was working as a packer, a career progression, as by then, his father was doing the same work. However also of note is Frederick Saunders, older son of Thomas and brother of James, who jumped back 'over the fence' from being a platelayer at Long Marston in 1901 to an agricultural labourer in Honeybourne in 1911. Some of the migrant railway workers stayed close to Moreton and, in 1911, there was a notable increase in the number of Moreton migrants in Worcestershire and Gloucestershire that may be attributed to railway opportunities in railway centres such as Worcester, Kidderminster and Gloucester.

Figure 81 illustrates the turnover of people, showing that in total the people who left, outnumbered the arrivals by 173% and that the numbers increased dramatically at the start of the 20th century. In addition, there are instances of people moving away

[124] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 76, p. 21.
[125] Ibid., 1851-1911, Moreton.

and finding work with the railway elsewhere, at a later point in their lives, which must be coincidences rather than linked to the presence of a railway station in Moreton. The figures of people moving away through work on the railway appear to underpin the argument that the railway was the prime facilitator in taking people away from the countryside. However, the emphasis is different in that it was the opportunities available that created the movement rather than the transport itself.

Figure 81: Railway Employee Arrivals and Departures 1851-1911.[126]



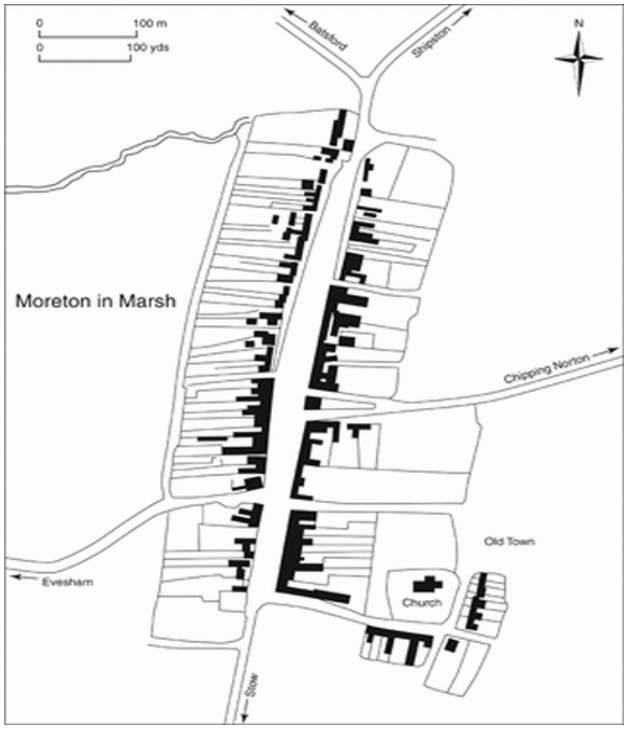
The railway brought a regular supply of new people into Moreton, some of whom became permanent residents while others moved on. Undoubtedly, the new arrivals served to extend the horizons of the local population and provided new perspectives on attitudes and working practices. The station seems to have been a training ground for junior employees to hone their skills before being given greater responsibility elsewhere. A stellar example of this is Walter Wiggins, born in Great Wolford, three miles from Moreton, who in 1881, as already mentioned, was working as an engine cleaner. By 1891 he had progressed to be a stoker based in Kingham, about six miles from Moreton and by 1901 he had moved to Swansea where he was working as an engine driver. In 1911, he had moved again to Cardiff, a bigger railway centre, with the likelihood of greater responsibility, still working as a driver. Wiggins' life story amply demonstrates the potential economic and status progression and benefits available to railway employees.[127] The railway was also instrumental in providing people with a sound basis for work outside the railway, an example being John Rock, an early in-migrant with his railway family, who originally worked as a timekeeper in Moreton but moved away to Worcestershire with the railway and then to Staffordshire where he ultimately established in his own accountancy practice.[128]

[126] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[127] Ibid., 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 3111, Folio: 108, p. 15; 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 1178, Folio: 185, p. 21; 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 5073, Folio: 156, p. 22; 1911, Class: RG14, Piece: 32151, Schedule Number: 147.
[128] Ibid., 1871, Class: RG10. Piece: 3017, Folio: 139, p. 40; 1891, Class: RG11, Piece: 2861, Folio: 124. p. 39; 1901, RG13, Piece: 2733, Folio: 112, p.19.

The Physical Changes brought about by the Railway.

The physical change to Moreton resulting from the building of a station and railway line had an immediate impact on the town's environment and everyday lives of its inhabitants. Moreton was originally part of 13th century urban expansion whereby existing settlements were granted valuable economic market charter rights. This influenced the building plan of the town, to the west of the medieval settlement surrounding the church, by setting down a classic ribbon development with a wider market square with streets leading from it, as can be seen from figure 82, which was the extent of the town in the 1840s.[129] The railway line was constructed to the east across flat agricultural land, whose value may not have been that high as it was, and remains, an area with a high water table. The station was constructed at the north-eastern end of the High St, near the road junction, joining the terminus of the tramway. The OWWR line continued north westwards between the two roads out of the town, while the tramway to Stratford followed a course to the east of the Shipston road. Bridges were built to elevate the roads to Chipping Norton and Shipston.

Figure 82: Moreton Town Plan.[130]

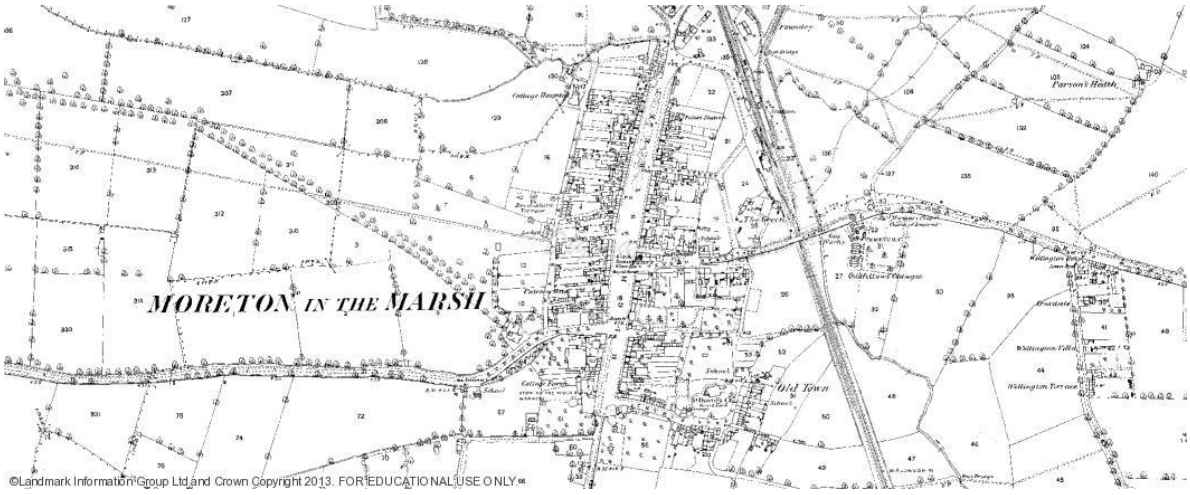


Once the railway line and station had been built its presence shaped the development of the town. The station was behind the High Street, and it was initially accessed via a footpath in existence since the establishment of the tramway terminus and still visible today. The vestry minutes of 1855 record the unanimous acceptance of Lord

[129] Elrington, 'Parishes: Moreton in Marsh'.
[130] R. Leech, *Historic Towns in Gloucestershire,* (Committee for Rescue Archaeology in Avon, Gloucestershire, Somerset and Bristol, 1981), pp. 55-7.

Redesdale's proposal to construct a road from the station to the High Street.[131] This involved the demolition of some houses and was slow to be realised with the road not completed for another eight years.[132] The ongoing effect of the railway was the gradual infill development of the town on its eastern side and then on the land beyond the railway line. This was the site of the Oddfellow housing, highlighted in chapter three, as well as the later laundry, dairy, and casement window factory, growing in a very piecemeal fashion. Small parcels of land were released by the Batsford Estate, as and when required, either as gifts to the town, for example for the new cemeteries, or when direct requests were made to purchase small plots. Newspapers made regular reports of the need for houses to be built but there were no large-scale initiatives from the local landowners. This easterly focus was also convenient for the Redesdales and Rushouts, whose estates were to the west of the High St. Evidence of building work in this direction is apparent in newspaper reports and advertisements from the 1850s to the 1870s from the 1880 map of the town, figure 83.[133]

Figure 83: Moreton c.1880.[134]



Discovering the reasons for the non-development of land for either housing or industry, or whether this was even a considered option, has not been possible, with estate papers unavailable either through destruction or family reluctance. Lord Redesdale was an early supporter of the tramway and the railway, and no doubt hoped both projects would be of financial benefit, with the OWWR also facilitating easy access between London and his country residence. The family were not natural entrepreneurs and that must be accepted; they occupied an estate with an agricultural tradition, and as already shown they undertook their roles within the locality in the time honoured and paternalistic manner that was expected of them. However, Lord

131 GRO, P221/VE/2/1, 6 December 1855.
132 *BWJ*, 10 January 1863.
133 *JOJ,* 1 & 22 August 1857; *EJ,* 17 April 1909.
134 GRO, OS/1/6/1/SW.

Redesdale's support of the railway facilitated a local economy that was able to support the population at a time when the traditional means of making a living was in decline.

Conclusions

The conclusions drawn from other studies of railways in rural areas is varied. Except for the development of Ashford, Andrews concluded that,

> 'All in all, the answer to Simmons' question "Did the railway make any real difference to the place" is in quantifiable terms "Not nearly as much as you might expect".[135]

Stewart-Beardsley pointed to population decline in all the villages studied, irrespective of whether a railway station was present, whereas Andrews only identified this in villages without stations. They had equally different results of the railway's effect on the pre-existing transport sector with fatal damage to the river Thames but increased business for the cross-channel operators. Stewart-Beardsley argued that the railway only facilitated change if local conditions were ripe for it and pointed to significant change only occurring when major landowners, in some of the villages, sold land that was used to develop large properties suitable for weekend retreats for wealthy Londoners.[136] Newman suggests that in Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire the railways were 'one factor amongst many' in the development of the counties' economies.[137]

In relation to Moreton the question that re-occurs is what would have happened if the town had been bypassed by the railway? This is counter-factual but is worth consideration. In comparison with 'railwayless' Shipston, Moreton's population, and those of the other railway connected local towns, maintained its position, and did not return a net decline over the period from 1841. From the trade directories there is no evidence that businesses disappeared from the town, which is supported by the figures provided by *The Atlas of Entrepreneurship* and the census returns. Moreton's traders embraced the goods brought into the town via the railway rather than seeing them as a threat. By 1871, dealing had overtaken agriculture in terms of the percentage of people employed and by the end of the century it was the most popular sector in the town. Albeit small, Moreton was a significant market and trade centre for the local area. It is difficult to imagine this position being sustained if it was not for the railway.

The railway provided Moreton with a regular source of well-paid valuable employment opportunities with evidence that extended families were able to follow in their elders' footsteps. From a social perspective, the research concedes that the railway was responsible for facilitating the departure of its own employees from the

[135] Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming' p. 517.
[136] Stewart-Beardsley, 'After the Railway', p. 257.
[137] Newman, 'The Socio-economic Effects of the Coming of the Railways', p. 1.

town. The majority of these achieved higher status and wages by taking advantage of the career progression that the railway offered. None appeared to leave on a speculative train journey in search of better prospects as was implied by Lawton. However, the loss of the railway workers was mitigated by migrants coming to Moreton to work in shops and manufacturing, both of which thrived in the period following the railway's arrival.

Both Stewart-Beardsley and Newman point to the importance of local factors in determining the success or failure of an area and that the railway acted as a facilitator in supporting local decisions. In Moreton's case there do not appear to have been any major economic initiatives to which the railway may have added or detracted; however, it served to reinforce and enhance the town's position as a market centre. It is possible that had the railway bypassed the town, the market would have become obsolete leading to greater population loss, economic decline, and potential contraction. To return to Andrews and Simmons' question: in Moreton's case, the railway did not bring any major changes, but it enabled the town to survive. The survey, highlighted in the introduction, of towns and parishes in 1851, with a comparable population to Moreton, demonstrated the varied fate that befell them in the subsequent 60 years. In total there were 209 places with populations between 1400 and 1600 people. Of these, 38% saw a population increase, some in meteoric terms; 11% maintained their position and 50% suffered substantial population decline, some going from 1500 to less than 200 people in that time. These statistics show that the railway was a key factor in ensuring that Moreton was not reduced to the size of a small village and that the conclusions drawn by both Casson, and Lawton do not apply.

Chapter 6 Migration

'Population migration, one of the most significant of demographic phenomena is among the most difficult to measure'.[1]

Introduction

As Lawton and Pooley stated, the movement of people within the country, or to a lesser extent overseas, has been regarded as a dominant population trend by both demographic historians and contemporary 19th century observers and its measurement remains as elusive as ever.[2] Saville calculated that in 1851, a quarter of the males, aged 20 and over, in England and Wales were involved in agriculture, but that by 1901 that figure had declined to less than 10%, while Welton and Cairncross estimated that the rural population declined by 4.5 million during the years 1841 – 1911.[3] More recently Campop has embarked on wide ranging research into occupational change.[4] Contemporary theories were encapsulated in the seminal work of Ravenstein in 1885 but a more nuanced approach is now evident with the reasons for migration regarded as complex.[5] A more fluid picture has emerged of a demographic maelstrom, embracing movement between rural settlements, and reverse movement from town to country. The burgeoning of urban areas can be attributed as much to natural growth as rural arrivals.[6] Moreton and its hinterland have been identified as being in the centre of an area of overall population decrease, where net out-migration exceeded natural growth.[7] White and others have called for a longitudinal approach to migration research and this study attempts to address this in relation to Moreton.[8]

Chapter five considered the impact of the railway in terms of the career opportunities it provided for people to leave Moreton and in bringing others into the town. The purpose of this chapter will be to determine trends among the entire population. Despite the overall reduction in the population, people did move into the town, arriving because of significant life events and employment opportunities. Analysis will be made of the proportion of native born in comparison to in-migrants and

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[1] R. Lawton and C. Pooley, *Britain 1740-1850 An Historical Geography,* (London, 1992), p. 127.
[2] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', pp. 167-235.
[3] J. Saville, *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales, 1851-1951,* (London, 1957), p. 1; D. Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy,* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 216.
[4] www.campop. geog.cam.ac.uk/research/occupations (23 February 2023).
[5] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration'; C. Smith, 'The Movement of Population in England and Wales in 1851 and 1861', *The Geographical Journal*, 117/2 (1951), p. 202; C. Pooley & J. Turnbull, 'Leaving Home: The Experience of Migration from The Parental Home in Britain Since c.1770', *Journal of Family History* (1997), p. 406.
[6] Lawton & Pooley, *Britain 1740-1850* p. 127.
[7] Ibid., p. 126.
[8] M. White, 'Aspects of Migration in Victorian Lincolnshire', (PhD. thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1985).

whether, this changed over time. Similarly, an assessment will be made of the distances travelled from places of origin and whether this altered over the period. Life histories will be examined to determine whether Moreton was part of a staged migratory pattern or the final destination.

There were some instances of overseas migration but most people who left Moreton went to other areas of the United Kingdom. As has been found by research in other places, some of those who left returned at a later stage in their lives.[9] Using census returns, a sample of those who left Moreton between 1851 and 1911, was identified and where possible longitudinal histories created that could be compared with migration studies elsewhere.

Location

Moreton's location is important to the migration experience of the town. It lies within 50 miles of Birmingham, 35 miles of Coventry, 30 miles of Oxford and 15 miles of Evesham, areas that experienced growth for differing reasons. The expansion of Birmingham's metalworking industry is well documented with one of its leading pioneers, Matthew Boulton, claiming to 'have trained up many and am training up more, plain country lads into good workmen'.[10] Lawton, looking at the period from 1841 to 1861 calculated that just under half of the migrants from Gloucestershire went to Birmingham and its environs; he estimated that Coventry and east Warwickshire were less popular.[11] Oxford developed as a service and retail centre; Malcolm Graham's research into the growth of its suburbs revealed that in 1871 almost 17% of household heads came from counties adjacent to Oxfordshire of which Gloucestershire is one.[12] Evesham and its surrounding area owed its prosperity to the demand for its produce from Birmingham and the Black Country. The relative ease of access to this area facilitated the transportation of goods. Brian Short suggests that between 1851 and 1901 the populations of parishes in the Vale of Evesham rose by 33%.[13] Guy Robinson's research on the Vale described the diversification to livestock and market gardening, increasing the number of holdings by 1000 between 1875 and 1914, with the movement of produce facilitated by the advance in rail transport. The labour-intensive nature of these enterprises attracted workers from outside the Vale.[14] By

[9] J. Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline, a Population Study of Burford, Oxon, 1851-1901'. (DPhil, thesis, University of Oxford, 2006), p. 14.
[10] R. Lawton, 'Population Movements in the West Midlands 1841-1861', *Geography*, 43/3 (1958), p. 168.
[11] Ibid., p. 173.
[12] M. Graham, 'The Suburbs of Victorian Oxford: Growth in a pre-Industrial City', (PhD, thesis. University of Leicester,1985).
[13] B. Short, 'Rural demography 1850-1914' in E.J.T. Collins (ed.), *The Agrarian History of England and Wales*, Vol. 7 (London, 2003), p. 1285.
[14] G. Robinson, 'A Statistical Analysis of Agriculture in the Vale of Evesham During the "Great Agricultural Depression"', *Journal of Historical Geography*, 7/1 (1981), pp. 37-52.

tracing the longitudinal life stories of Moreton natives, it has been possible to establish whether they moved to these four areas.

Research on migratory trends in 19th century Britain emphasises the perennial lure of London, which was of equal interest to contemporary commentators. It has been estimated that by 1851, 38% of the city's population were migrants.[15] Cheryl Bailey examined migration to London in the mid-19th century from Sussex, Norfolk, and Devon and discovered different outcomes in the experiences of those from Sussex in comparison with those from further afield. She found that the arrivals from Sussex were more familiar with the capital and thus open to taking advantage of its varied opportunities, whereas those from Norfolk and Devon were more likely to transfer existing skills to the new location.[16] The distance from Moreton to London is approximately 80 miles, not dissimilar from parts of Sussex, and the presence of servants at the local landed estates, with experience of London culture, may have increased its appeal. Therefore, comparisons will be made to this research to determine similarities.

Janet Few, James Nash and Schürer identified the importance of kin contacts in the destinations of migrants. Family provided practical assistance, social introductions, temporary housing, and employment opportunities.[17] Bailey established that almost 65% of the migrants to London already had an older sibling in the capital. Nash in his study of Burford pointed to concrete links with Wednesbury in the West Midlands.[18] Determining whether choosing destinations based on earlier settlement by relations has also been an important strand in this research. Given close family connections identified in areas of Moreton, it is of interest to discover whether such links had a bearing on locations to which the town's inhabitants moved.

Dearth of Migration Studies in Gloucestershire

19th century migration studies relating to this area are sparse. Friedlander and Roshier refer to migration from Gloucestershire to Glamorgan during the periods 1861-1871 and 1891-1901 but are unspecific about areas.[19] Horn's paper recounting the disastrous and tragic activities in Gloucestershire of William Yeates, paid emigration agent of the Brazilian government, gives an insight into some of the unscrupulous

[15] C. Bailey, 'I'd Heard it was Such a Grand Place: Mid 19thC Internal Migration to London', *Family & Community History,* 14/2 (2011), pp. 121-140.
[16] Ibid.
[17] J. Few, 'Faith, Fish, Food, Family? The Impact of Kinship Links and Communities on Migration Choices and Residential Persistence in North Devon 1841-1901', (PhD. thesis, University of Exeter, 2009); Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline', p. 138; Schürer, 'The Role of The Family in The Process of Migration' in C.G Pooley, & I.D Whyte, (ed.) *Migrants Emigrants and Immigrants*, *A Social History of Migration*, (London, 1991), pp. 106-142.
[18] Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline', p. 138.
[19] D Friedlander & R. Roshier, 'A Study of Internal Migration in England and Wales: Part 1', *Population Studies,* 19/3 (1966), pp. 239-279.

tactics used to encourage migration but there is no evidence to suggest that anyone from Moreton was drawn into the scheme.[20]

One study that is comparable with this research is Geary's paper on migratory trends to and from Bidford on Avon, in Warwickshire, between 1841 and 1901.[21] The two settlements, approximately 16 miles apart, exhibit similar characteristics of size and population decline. Its geographical position on the river Avon between Stratford and Tewkesbury differs from that of Moreton and meant that Bidford had prospered in an earlier period, a fact recognised by contemporary comment that it was 'formerly considerable but now much reduced'.[22] Through the period Bidford had a slightly larger population than Moreton but it was subject to greater fluctuations, especially towards the end of the century. Geary's conclusions relating to Bidford will provide a comparison for the situation uncovered in Moreton.

Methodology

Since this research was begun, datasets are now available from Campop via *Populations Past* that enables historians to access detailed and comparative demographic information across time and place.[23] Information related to migration is included, specifically the percentages in a town, who were born within specified distances from it, but it is based on registration district and not parish level and is also entirely quantitative. Also, it does not track the destinations of people who left, which is one of this study's aims.

Tracing migrants via the census

The transcription of the CEBs for Moreton from 1841 to 1911 onto Excel spreadsheets resulted in a dataset of 11,467 individuals. To examine the life histories of all these individuals would be a time-consuming task. Drawing a line anywhere presents pitfalls as people will be missed. However, to make the sample manageable it was necessary to select a suitable cohort and follow these across consecutive censuses. Schürer stated that migration peaks at age 20, which also seemed the instinctive point in an individual's life when future decisions are being made in relation to career and relationships.[24] This correlates with Pooley and Turnbull's research into the age at which people moved out of the parental home and the age used by Bailey.[25] Consequently, the decision was made to trace only individuals aged 11-20 in each census from 1851 to 1901, and discover if they were resident in Moreton, aged 21-30,

[20] P. Horn, 'Gloucestershire and the Brazilian Emigration Movement – 1872-3', *Transactions of The Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society,* 89 (1970), pp. 167-74.
[21] Geary, 'Population Movements'.
[22] Ibid., p. 74.
[23] Reid, Arulanantham, Day, Garrett, Jaadla, Lucas-Smith, *Atlas of Victorian and Edwardian Population*, (31 March 2022).
[24] Schürer, 'The Role of the Family', p. 115.
[25] Pooley & Turnbull, 'Leaving Home', p. 397; Bailey, 'I'd heard', p. 122.

in the subsequent census. The 1841 census was discounted because ages were stated to the nearest five years and it only included the county of birth, a decision which caused some inaccuracies in determining later returners, but many of these could be identified.

To locate remainers, arrivals and leavers between each set of census data, a process was used which utilised some basic Microsoft Excel functions. The census data included surname, christian name, gender, occupation, age, approximate year of birth and place of birth. The christian name and surname were combined with a space in between using the Excel *&* function. This combined data was prepared for each census dataset and the Excel *COUNTIF* function was used to see if the lists contained the combined christian name and surname in the corresponding comparator list. By using *VLOOKUP*, an approximate date of birth could be located to see if this were identical on both sets of census data. This acted as confirming evidence that it was likely that the same individual had been identified.

Coincidence can create a few false positives such as individuals of the same name, born in the same year and following the same occupation. If there was doubt about the individual's confirming data not being compatible, they were not considered for further investigation. One source of error was spelling anomalies as Excel does not have the wildcard search facility for a database. From the data this disclosed, it was possible to have a second dataset for each census providing the following information:

- Individuals who had remained in Moreton (appearing in both data sets)
- Individuals who had arrived in Moreton (only appearing in the second data set).
- Individuals who had left Moreton (only appearing in the first data set)

The results from processing the first cohort revealed a gender imbalance, with far more missing females than males. Multiple reasons can be considered for this, but the prime one was change of name at marriage. As well as being the ideal age for leaving home it was also the optimum marriage age. Many females were likely to have married, changed their names but remained in Moreton but as marriage was also a primary reason for migration, it is equally possible that a number had also moved away.[26] However, unless they married in the Parish Church to someone with Moreton connections, establishing longitudinal life histories was extremely difficult. Finding missing females in other locations is hampered by the patriarchal nature of census return completion, which may have resulted in the details of less well known or less significant family members, or domestic servants, not being entered so assiduously as established family members, making nominal linkage problematic. Marriage also rendered females liable to the decisions made by their spouses and was likely to have removed them, at least temporarily, from any traceable economic activity. Therefore,

[26] Pooley & Turnbull, 'Leaving Home', p. 406.

it was decided to concentrate primarily on the male cohort but if female migrants became apparent, as much research as possible was done on their life histories.

Tracing people who left Moreton

Discounting the already discussed vagaries of *Ancestry*, people may be missing from a place in successive censuses for reasons other than migration. They may be untraceable because they have died; are in prison; visiting relatives; in boarding school; or led the type of lifestyle that meant they were under the radar of officialdom. Using decennial censuses to detect population trends is problematic in that the figures do not provide any nuanced perspective on whether the numbers leaving were distributed evenly over each period or whether there were peaks and troughs within each decade. Also, no account can be taken of people who may move away, return, stay, or move again.[27] It must be noted some teenagers, had already moved to Moreton as part of their professional training with the subsequent move being part of this career progression.[28] Figure 84 provides the numerical data for the research and underlines the difficulties in attempting to identify leavers as the difference between the numbers of teenagers in the first census cannot merely be subtracted from the number of early twenties in the second. The latter figure, as well as containing remainers, is supplemented by in-migrants of the same age, making the number of native leavers higher than the difference between the two age groups.

Figure 84: Numbers of males aged 11-20, who left Moreton 1851-1911.[29]

1st Census	11-20 Males (a)	2nd Census	21-30 Males (b)	Difference (a-b)	Remainers	In-Migrants (c)	Actual leavers (a-b+c) (d)	% Left (d/a*100)
1851	137	1861	101	36	25	76	112	82
1861	141	1871	99	42	47	52	94	67
1871	141	1881	78	63	30	48	111	79
1881	133	1891	87	46	29	58	104	78
1891	166	1901	116	50	56	60	110	66
1901	144	1911	119	25	68	51	76	52

Nominal linkage, confirmed by details of year and place of birth, was the primary method used for tracking individuals. If this failed, searches were made for death, burial, or probate information and if these were unsuccessful, the person was deemed untraceable. There were repeated instances in each census of people disappearing for one or more census and reappearing later. This means the actual number of people traced in each census was different. Instances also occurred of missing males from the same cohort being found by chance in new areas. Figure 85 details the total

[27] *Ancestry,* England Census,1881, Class: RG11, Piece 3111, Folio: 137, p. 11; 1911, Enumeration District 22.
[28] Ibid., 1871, Class: RG10, Piece 3215, Folio: 119, p. 11; 1911, Enumeration District 08.
[29] Ibid., 1851-1911, Moreton.

number of men traced and percentage for each census. The gradual improvement in the percentages traced reflects the successful advancements in central government administration which made it increasingly difficult for people to avoid its net.

Figure 85: Percentages of males, aged 11-20, who were traced, by Census.

Census	Revealed	Traced	%
1861	112	49	44
1871	96	38	40
1881	112	57	52
1891	111	57	51
1901	115	59	51
1911	88	54	61

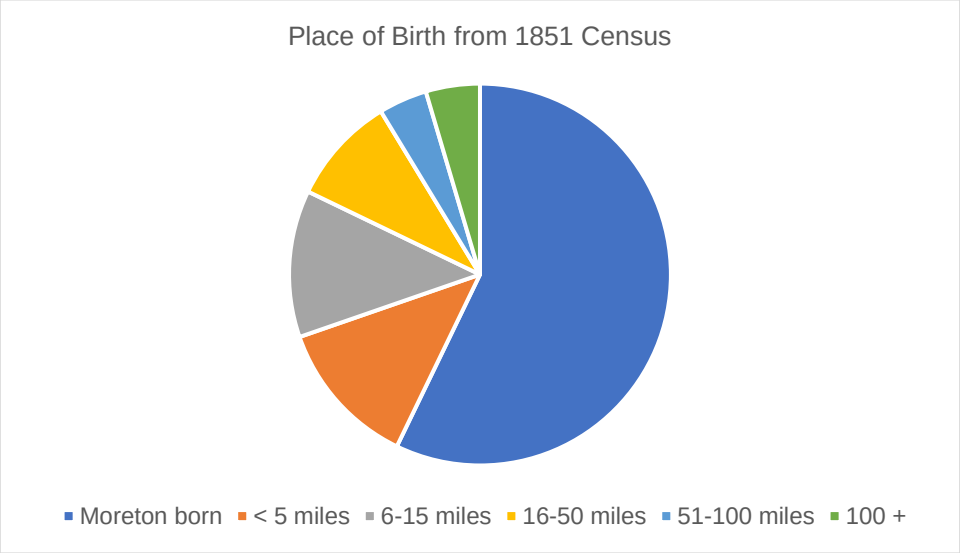
Over the 50 years of tracing the Moreton migrants, most of the cohort from 1851 were subject to scrutiny for their whole lifetime but the numbers traced dwindled. In the following analyses, distances travelled were measured by *Google Maps* using major non-motorway routes which were the closest to those routes that would have been used in the period. In most cases traditional counties have been used to identify places of birth and final locations. The term West Midlands included the major towns of Birmingham and the Black Country, as identified by Lawton and Geary.[30] London covered the metropolitan region but not places identified by the census as in its neighbouring counties, i.e., Kent, Surrey, Middlesex, Hertfordshire, and Essex. Bristol was included as Gloucestershire and other places include all the locations to which only one migrant was traced.

Resident Natives in Moreton

Before examining in-migrants and out-migrants, it is instructive to establish the relationship between those born in the town and those born elsewhere both at the start and the end of the period. The 1851 census was used to establish the population's diversity in terms of place of birth. This was the period of railway building which may have slightly increased the numbers from outside the town. This information is set out in figure 86 and shows that at this point 849 individuals, 57.17% of the inhabitants, had been born in Moreton. Of the remaining, 507 (34.14%) came from within 50 miles of the town and only 129 (8.68%) from further afield. These figures suggest an inward-looking society with shared experiences involving agriculture, with little exposure to urban or industrial life that is reflective of the examination of endogamous marriage in chapter one.

[30] Lawton, 'Population Movements', p. 164; Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 80.

Figure 86: Moreton's Population based on place of birth in 1851.[31]



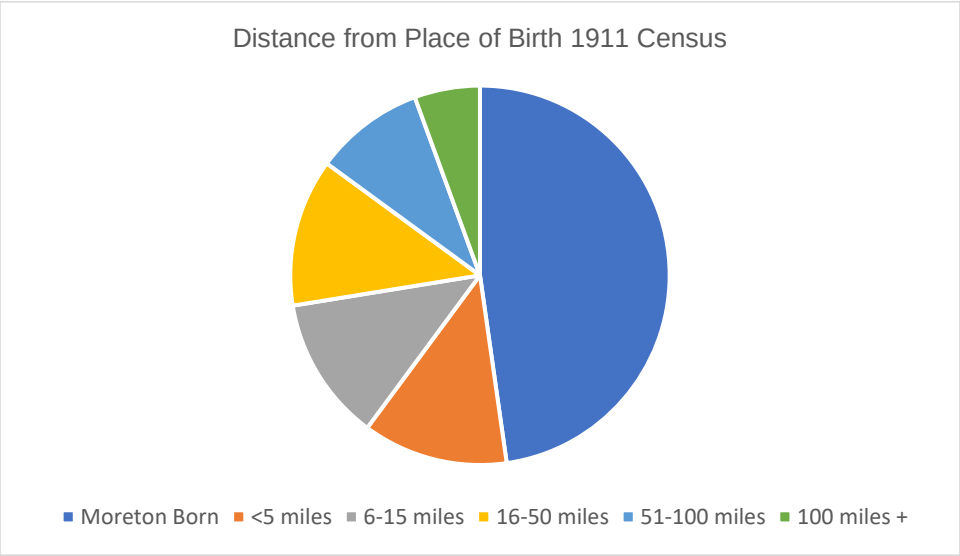
Geary's research in Bidford provides information on the numbers of people born there. Comparisons were made between the in-migrants and native-born in Bidford across the entire population, based on census returns for 1861 and 1891. Geary implied that his figures should be treated with an element of caution due to his belief that people were keen to emphasize their local credentials, either through ignorance or the historic fear of Poor Law repatriation regulations, but there is no evidence to believe this was applicable to Moreton.[32] To discover parallels between the two towns, similar analysis was completed for Moreton for the same two censuses. In 1861 the native-born percentage of Moreton's population had fallen to 54.7%, comparable with Bidford's 56.5%, demonstrating that both towns were subject to similar underlying demographic pressures, associated with the economic attractions away from the countryside.[33] By 1891, the native-born percentage in Moreton had recovered marginally to 55.2% whereas Bidford's had fallen further to 53.3%.[34] The changes in the towns are not sufficiently great to indicate any significant differences between the trends at play and suggest a continuity of experience.

Figure 87 shows the breakdown, based on place of birth in 1911, which shows that for the first time there were more in-migrants than natives. The figures comprised 667 natives (48.44%) and 710 (51.56%) in-migrants demonstrating the demographic maelstrom during the latter half of the 19th century. As in 1851, most of the in-migrants, 501 in total, came from within 50 miles of Moreton. By that time, the economic change in the town, into which the native population had already been absorbed, provided a more diverse picture than 60 years earlier. That many arrivals came from within 50 miles implies that Moreton was familiar to people in that area. It is likely that those that

[31] *Ancestry,* England Census, Moreton.
[32] Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 80.
[33] Ibid., p. 77.
[34] Ibid., p. 78.

arrived had already established a social or economic reason to make the move rather than moving speculatively.

Figure 87: Moreton's Population based on place of birth in 1911.[35]



In-migrants

As already highlighted, one of the difficulties in attempting to measure migration is demonstrated by the Excel process identifying people, of the same age profile as the leavers, who had arrived in Moreton between successive censuses.[36] Similarly, people identifiable in Moreton in one census were not always traceable anywhere in the country in subsequent ones. In-migrants are of interest in building an overall picture of the town. Whether they remained in Moreton, where they had come from, both in relation to their place of birth and their residence in the previous census, their occupations, and their marital status are all of interest.

Geary's research in Bidford provides opportunities for direct comparisons with Moreton. Geary's distance metrics differed slightly from those already used in this research therefore to make a direct comparison, figures were adjusted to reflect this. As already established the percentage of native-born residents in Bidford was comparable to Moreton. Of greater significance is the comparison between the in-migrants. For Bidford in 1861, 56% of the in-migrants had travelled less than ten miles and 89% had travelled less than 30 miles with only two residents having been born more than 150 miles from the town.[37] These percentages decreased to 47% and 77% by 1891 but still firmly validated Ravenstein's assertions that most migrants only

[35] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911 Moreton.
[36] Lawton & Pooley, *Britain 1740-1850.*
[37] Geary, 'Population Movements' p. 79.

moved a short distance and that the inhabitants of the countryside surrounding a town tended to flock into it.[38]

In 1861, the in-migrants to Moreton did not conform as easily with Ravenstein's statements about migrants' short distance travel and flocking to the nearest town. 46% of in-migrants arrived from within ten miles; 70.5 % from within 30 miles, and 29% from more than 50 miles distance, with more born over 150 miles away. This may be explained by the early arrival of the railway to Moreton and is likely to be the reason why the changes by 1891 (40% and 63.5%) were considerably less dramatic than Bidford, where there were no rail links until 1868.[39] Figure 88 also demonstrates that, like Bidford, Moreton had a higher number of female in-migrants than male confirming Ravenstein's statement that the 'woman is a greater migrant than man'.[40] The ability to make comparisons with Bidford is extremely useful and highlights how different settlements in relative proximity had discrete experiences of migration based on their particular circumstances. It also validates close studies of areas to ascertain the forces at work that had bearings on the economic and social decisions made.

Figure 88: Moreton In-Migrants 1861 and 1891 as a comparison with Geary's study of Bidford.[41]

Miles	1861			1891		
	M	F	%	M	F	%
0-9	131	166	46	106	153	40
10-29	79	79	24	80	71	23
30-49	28	23	8	28	40	11
50-99	47	44	14	51	55	16
100-149	8	17	4	15	17	5
150 +	12	11	4	14	15	5
	305	340		294	351	

Following the comparisons with Bidford, a more detailed study was made of Moreton from 1861-1911. This examined both male and female arrivals between the ages of 21 and 30, the distances from their places of birth and, if appropriate, their residence during the census immediately preceding their arrival in Moreton. Their persistence in remaining in the town was studied together with the onward destinations of some of the men who left. From a social perspective their marital status was considered and whether marriage to a Moreton native was a factor in their decision to move to the town. In-migrants' occupations were assessed to determine whether their arrival was a factor in the changing economic character of Moreton, discussed in chapter five. Based on the social class attributed to occupations, as set out in chapter two, the influence of the in-migrants on this aspect of the town was also tested.

[38] Ibid., Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 198.
[39] Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 75.
[40] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 197.
[41] c.f Geary, 'Population Movements', Table 2 p. 79.

Analysis was made by both forward and backward tracing those aged 21-30, identified as newcomers to Moreton in each census. Figure 89 indicates that in all, but one census most young male in-migrants were born further than 16 miles from Moreton. The numbers born in Moreton's hinterland declined dramatically after 1861 and stayed low for the rest of the period. The railway in Moreton, therefore, acted not only as an agency for bringing people into the town, as discussed above in comparison with Bidford, but also one for facilitating the onward transmission of people from the hinterland to more distant places, thereby also confirming Lawton's theory.[42]

Figure 89: Distances travelled by male in-migrants, aged 21-30, from place of birth 1861-1911.[43]

Census	Total	< 5	%	6 to 15	%	16 to 50	%	51 to 100	%	100+	%
	traced	miles		miles		miles		miles		miles	
1861	58	13	22	9	16	15	26	15	26	6	10
1871	44	8	18	13	30	10	23	6	14	7	16
1881	38	8	21	5	13	11	29	5	13	9	24
1891	47	8	17	7	15	14	30	10	21	8	17
1901	51	3	6	15	29	16	31	8	16	9	18
1911	46	6	13	10	22	12	26	10	22	8	17

Tracing the movement of single females was difficult but research did reveal an acceptable number from which to make comparisons. The number of female arrivals in Moreton, figure 90, again confirms Ravenstein's assertion that females migrated more than males as the arrivals in the selected age band were consistently higher than that for males.[44] Figures 89 and 90, show that although there were more females traced than men, the distances they travelled from their places of birth were consistently shorter. In every census, more females arrived in Moreton from within 15 miles of their birthplace, suggesting they wanted to remain closer of their families than their male counterparts. This correlates with Geary's findings in Bidford.[45]

[42] Lawton, 'Population Changes', p. 57.
[43] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[44] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 197.
[45] Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 79.

Figure 90: Distances travelled by female in-migrants, aged 21-30, from place of birth 1861-1911.

Census	Total	< 5	%	6 to 15	%	16 to 50	%	51 to 100	%	100+	%
	traced	miles		miles		miles		miles		miles	
1861	70	18	26	23	33	14	20	9	13	6	9
1871	59	11	19	25	42	10	17	8	14	5	8
1881	63	16	25	19	30	13	21	7	11	8	13
1891	71	19	27	23	32	12	17	11	15	6	8
1901	62	13	21	18	29	12	19	10	16	9	15
1911	62	15	24	10	16	16	26	10	16	11	18

Some people came directly to Moreton from their birthplace, but figures 91 and 92 indicate where some traceable in-migrants were in the censuses before their arrival in Moreton. This relies on backward longitudinal tracing, again problematic for females, but from it, one can see that the trend of figure 90 is reversed.

Figure 91: Distances travelled by male in-migrants, aged 21-30, from residence in previous census 1861-1911.

Census	Total	< 5	%	6 to 15	%	16 to 50	%	51 to 100	%	100+	%
	traced	miles		miles		miles		miles		miles	
1861	15	6	40	1	7	1	7	5	33	0	0
1871	24	5	21	8	33	0	0	4	17	2	8
1881	19	5	26	0	0	6	32	5	26	3	16
1891	25	3	12	5	20	9	36	5	20	3	12
1901	25	5	20	9	36	4	16	5	20	2	8
1911	35	5	14	12	34	8	23	5	14	5	14

Figure 92: Distances travelled by female in-migrants, aged 21-30, from residence in previous census 1861-1911.

Census	Total	< 5	%	6 to 15	%	16 to 50	%	51 to 100	%	100+	%
	traced	miles		miles		miles		miles		miles	
1861	14	5	36	3	21	4	29	1	7	1	7
1871	24	2	8	8	33	6	25	6	25	2	8
1881	33	6	18	7	21	13	39	3	9	4	12
1891	30	7	23	4	13	14	47	3	10	2	7
1901	32	3	9	11	34	9	28	6	19	3	9
1911	35	11	31	5	14	8	23	6	17	5	14

Tables 89-92 provide interesting comparisons and, when considered together, illustrate Ravenstein's theory of 'step migration'.[46] It suggests that Moreton may have been part of a network of steps in an onward migration process or that people were

[46] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 199.

attracted to the general area. To determine whether Moreton was part of a step process requires a high degree of success in forward longitudinal tracing. The failure rate for females was such that it was not considered representative, and numbers are not given. However, figure 93 provides some limited results in attempting to measure the most popular onward destination for male arrivals in Moreton, which shows that non-persistent in-migrants remained within the county of Gloucestershire. The prevalence of the Four Shires area, discussed in chapter two implies that the general area, rather than Moreton may have been the attraction. Likewise, the small number of onward journeys to the West Midlands suggests that the industries there were not the main attraction.

Figure 93: Most popular onward destinations for non-persistent male in-migrants to Moreton 1861-1901.

Census	Gloucs.	Warwks.	Worcs.	Oxon.	London	West Midlands
1861	4	0	0	2	0	2
1871	7	8	1	2	0	1
1881	2	0	3	2	0	1
1891	6	3	4	4	3	1
1901	9	2	3	0	3	0
	28	13	11	10	6	5

The percentage of males located increased during the study period, but again longitudinal female tracking was difficult. Figures 94 and 95 attempt to calculate the percentage of the in-migrants who were still in Moreton at the census after the one when they first arrived. The unavailability of the 1921 census, at the time of research, meant that the persistence of those who arrived in 1911 was not measured.

Figures 94 and 95 show the numbers identified as new and how many of each cohort was traceable in subsequent censuses. The significant missing metric is that of female returners in the studied age bracket. This can be partly attributed to name changes rendering them anonymous but may also suggest a degree of commitment to their new locations. Death accounted for some of the declining persistence from the earlier censuses, but traceability improved as the century progressed. Some in-migrants stayed in Moreton for the rest of their lives, and can be described as ‘persistent’, however the rate cannot be described as high. It is interesting that female persistence overtook male by the end of the century. Some of the young newcomers went on to become respected members of the community, the most notable being Edward Webb, from Newent in 1861, setting up a printing business, founding the *Moreton Free Press* and serving in various local government positions and being foreman of the jury at the inquest of baby Frank Evans.[47] Of the later arrivals, two of

[47] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 93, p. 5; P221/VE/2/1, 22 March 1860, 15 April 1871, 25 March 1881.

the 1911 contingent, Arthur Brown, and Oscar Sharpe, achieved permanent recognition in the town by being part of the 1914-1918 war casualties recorded on the war memorial.[48]

Figure 94: Persistence in Moreton of male in-migrants aged 21-30 1861-1911.

Census	Total	Returners	Newcomers	Moreton in 1871	Moreton in 1881	Moreton in 1891	Moreton in 1901	Moreton in 1911
1861	76	18 (24%)	58	18 (24%)	13	9	6	2
1871	52	8 (15%)	44		18 (35%)	14	12	8
1881	48	10 (21%)	38			13 (27%)	9	9
1891	58	12(20%)	47				14 (24%)	11
1901	60	9 (16%)	51					14 (23%)

Figure 95: Persistence in Moreton of female in-migrants aged 21-30 1861-1911.

Census	Total	Traceable	Moreton in 1871	Moreton in 1881	Moreton in 1891	Moreton in 1901	Moreton in 1911
1861	70	37	4 (10.8%)	5	4	3	1
1871	61	55		15 (27.3%)	11	6	3
1881	63	61			14 (23%)	11	8
1891	67	62				22(35.5%)	13
1901	67	58					19 (32.75%)

Apart from the Horne family, who attracted members of their extended family into the town to work in their expanding business, there are few other detectable kinship connections between the cohorts of in-migrants and the existing population. This implies that the driving force for the migration was economic. Geary stated that 'one of the motives for in-migration into nineteenth century Bidford was undoubtedly social', calculating that almost 120 in his 50-year study period came to marry.[49] As evidenced in figures 96 and 97, marriage to a Moreton native did play some part but this trend was not as strong with only 97 traced over a 60-year period.

Figures 96 and 97 demonstrate that more single than married people arrived in Moreton but, apart from 1861, the difference between males and females was not that remarkable. For women, marital status was closely related to occupation and in some cases, single status was a requirement for the position held. Figure 97 shows the greatest difference was in 1861 when only seven of the 36 female arrivals, were married and none had a Moreton born spouse. Also of note, in 1911, 20% of the arrivals came as part of a whole family move to the area, which was not visible in such numbers before.[50]

[48] www.warmemorialsonline.org.uk/memorial/103044 (20 March 2017).
[49] Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 80.
[50] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911, Reg Dist. 396.

Figure 96: Marital status of male in-migrants aged 21-30 1861-1911.

Census	Single	Married	Moreton-born wife	%
1861	40	36	15	42
1871	27	25	11	44
1881	28	20	2	10
1891	36	23	7	30
1901	36	21	7	33
1911	33	18	4	22
	200	143	46	

Figure 97: Marital status of female in-migrants aged 21-30 1861-1911.

Census	Single	Married	Moreton-born husband	%
1861	29	7	0	0
1871	28	26	11	42
1881	29	31	8	26
1891	34	29	12	41
1901	30	24	12	50
1911	32	30	8	27
	182	147	51	

Pooley & Turnbull identified that except for the military, professional people moved furthest.[51] Apart from some retired personnel and soldiers on furlough, the military played no role in Moreton life and, for an extended period, Moreton's medical professionals in the town came from home grown dynasties which means these theories cannot be tested. Using the classification based on Booth in chapter five, figures 98 and 99 analyse the occupations of both the male and female in- migrants.

Figure 98 shows that the male migrants who arrived in the town were more important to the manufacturing sector, exceeding those involved in dealing in four of the six censuses. These figures suggest a lack of expertise in this field among the existing population and demonstrate the importance of the in-migrants to the economy. It must be recognised that over that time the nature of manufacture changed. In the mid-century, this related to small operations, often connected to agriculture such as ropemakers or to servicing the population, such as shoemakers.[52] By 1911 it concerned a larger scale operation in the form of the nascent light engineering factory, making steel windows, which remained for some decades into the 20th century. It was a noticeable presence in the stated occupations of the 1911 census, with just over a

[51] C. Pooley, & J. Turnbull, 'Migration and Mobility in Britain from the Eighteenth to the Twentieth Centuries', *Local Population Studies,* 57 (1996), p. 65.
[52] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 125, p. 3 & RG 9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 128, p. 9.

quarter of those listed either lodging or living with extended family.[53] Like the railway workers, half a century before, the lodgers added to the town's economy by providing households with additional income in the form of rent. Of note were the Sparkes family, two of whom, Charles and son Alfred, were lodging in 1901, with the Dawkes family and working in the factory. By 1911, Charles's wife and the remaining family had arrived in Moreton, from London, being part of whole family moves mentioned earlier, suggesting that housing provision had caught up with the jobs available.[54] It is significant that the Sparkes family considered they had greater opportunities and economic security in Gloucestershire than in the capital, bucking trends and illustrating Ravenstein's idea of a counter current.[55]

Figure 98: Occupational breakdown of male in-migrants to Moreton 1861-1911*.[56]

Census	Occupation stated	AG	%	B	%	D	%	DS	%	IS	%	MF	%	PP	%	RP	%	T	%
1861	76	18	24	4	5	11	14	1	1	0	0	25	33	9	12	0	0	8	11
1871	52	3	6	9	17	7	13	6	12	0	0	13	25	6	12	4	8	4	8
1881	48	3	6	5	10	14	29	3	6	1	2	12	25	6	13	1	2	3	6
1891	59	4	7	6	10	12	20	2	3	4	7	9	15	6	10	4	7	12	20
1901	57	5	9	7	12	11	19	2	4	4	7	15	26	6	11	0	0	7	12
1911	51	7	14	8	16	7	14	3	6	4	8	10	20	4	8	0	0	8	16
	343	40	12	39	11	62	18	17	5	13	4	84	24	37	11	9	3	42	12

*Key: AG-agriculture; B-building; D-dealing; DS-domestic service; IS-industrial service; MF-Manufacturing; PP-public service; RP-residual population; T-transport.

Chapter five underlined how Moreton's economy changed from one based on agriculture to one primarily relying on dealing and the number of male newcomers involved in this sector correlates to this. Incomers involved in dealing increased in 1881, when they exceeded those involved in manufacturing. Following a widespread agricultural depression, this suggests less skilled workers were looking for alternative sources of employment.[57]

The previous chapter also highlighted the role of the railway in bringing men to Moreton and facilitating movements away for career progression of both the native population and newcomers. The influence of the railway is most evident in 1891 in the occupations of men arriving in the town. Working at, or from, Moreton station provided a step on the career ladder and there is also evidence that incomers took the

[53] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911, Dist. 396, Sub Dist. 2 Enumeration District 06.
[54] Ibid., 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 2946, Folio: 90, p. 28; 1911, Reg Dist. 396, Sub Dist. 2 Enumeration District 06.
[55] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration' p. 199.
[56] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911, Moreton.
[57] R. Perren, *Agriculture in Depression, 1870-1940*, (Cambridge, 1995).

opportunity to change to a railway centric career after arrival. This is detectable in the life histories of arrivals: Charles Adams (1861), John Wiggins (1871) William Grafton (1891), and Andrew Dyer and William Driver (1901).[58] On occasions, the interaction between railway and community was responsible for family moves. Charles Tinkham, born in Rowley Regis, who first appeared in the census in Moreton in 1891 as a signalman, is an interesting example. In 1893 he married Ada Coppage, the daughter of the licensee of the White Lion Inn. By 1901 they had moved to Kempsey in Worcestershire, where he was station master, an apparent promotion, however by 1911 the family were in Moreton, and he had returned to the role of signalman suggesting that other factors were involved such as homesickness or to provide support for elderly family members.[59]

As demonstrated by figure 99, most female in-migrants were not in employment, many arriving as married women. Single women with no stated occupation tended to be living with either their birth or extended families.[60] Figure 99 shows that most of the women in-migrants were in domestic service although the town's increasing dealing function is reflected in this being the second highest employment source. Growth in comparable occupations is apparent that reflect a change in both the town's dynamics as well as more widespread societal changes with the occupations of barmaid, waitress and companion listed. The first two reflect a change of terminology for traditional roles that may in the past have been carried out by family members, rather than employees. That in-migrants were filling these positions suggests a more buoyant employment market. Moreton's traditional role in servicing travellers was discussed in chapter five but these developments also herald its future role as a tourist destination. Similarly, the position of companion is not only indicative of contemporary genteel trends but also of the area's attraction as a retirement destination. The growth and success of Moreton Cottage Hospital is demonstrated by three nurses, all from some distance, being among the female arrivals. Finally, the establishment of the Moreton Steam laundry provided an opportunity to attract female migrants to the town. More importantly the laundry offered women management opportunities as evidenced by Edith Evans, an in-comer from Birmingham, being described as a laundry manager.[61]

[58] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911 Moreton.
[59] Ibid., 1891*,* Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 79, p. 28; 1901*,* Class: RG13, Piece: 2793, Folio: 10, p. 12; 1911, Reg Dist. 396 Sub Dist. 2 Enumeration District 06; GRO, P221IN1/17.
[60] Ibid., 1861*,* Class: RG9, Piece: 2238, Folio: 108, p. 10 & Folio: 114, p. 21; 1891*,* Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 79, p. 27 & 1881*,* Class: RG11, Piece: 3111, Folio: 112, p. 24.
[61] Ibid., 1911, Reg Dist. 396 Sub Dist. 2 Enumeration District 06, p.156, p. 24.

Figure 99: Occupational breakdown of female in-migrants to Moreton 1861-1911*.[62]

Census	Total	Total Employed	%	AG	B	D	DS	IS	MF	PP	RP	T
1861	70	30	43	1	0	1	18	1	4	4	1	0
1871	61	26	43	0	0	2	14	2	3	5	0	0
1881	63	27	43	0	0	4	16	0	3	4	0	0
1891	67	34	51	0	0	3	16	2	4	5	4	0
1901	67	27	40	0	0	6	12	3	3	2	1	0
1911	63	32	51	0	0	8	15	4	2	2	1	0
				1	0	24	91	12	19	22	7	0

*Key: AG-agriculture; B-building; D-dealing; DS-domestic service; IS-industrial service; MF-Manufacturing; PP-public service; RP-residual population; T-transport.

Referencing Armstrong's classifications (figure 7), chapter one concluded that the social structure of Moreton was heavily weighted in favour of skilled and partly skilled workers (figure 8). Using the same metrics, figures 100 and 101 demonstrate the arrivals did little to alter this with the skilled and semi-skilled exceeding the totals of all the other classes. For the female arrivals, the table is based on those with declared employment and reflects the classification of domestic servants. Given the occupational opportunities available, this conclusion is not a surprise.

Figure 100: Social class of male in-migrants aged 21-30, 1861-1911.[63]

Census	Stated occupation	1	%	2	%	3	%	4	%	5	%
1861	76	0	0	6	8	36	47	31	41	3	4
1871	52	2	4	1	2	29	56	11	21	9	17
1881	48	1	2	4	8	32	67	10	21	1	2
1891	59	2	3	2	3	33	56	15	25	7	12
1901	57	0	0	2	4	33	58	15	26	7	12
1911	51	0	0	5	10	22	43	18	35	6	12
	343	5	1	20	6	185	54	100	29	33	10

[62] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1851-1911 Moreton.
[63] Ibid.

Figure 101: Social class of female in-migrants aged 21-30, 1861-1911.

Census	1	2	3	4	5
1861	0	4	5	20	1
1871	0	5	7	14	0
1881	0	4	7	16	0
1891	1	5	9	16	2
1901	0	2	12	12	1
1911	0	2	14	15	1
	1	22	54	93	5

This analysis has concentrated on one section of the migrants coming to Moreton. Over the study period, older people also arrived in the town who made significant contributions to its social, economic, and political life. The extent of this can be understood by reference to the places of birth of local government officials.

Conclusions

Examination of the arrivals in Moreton demonstrates that movements into the town fitted observations elsewhere. Many arrivals came from nearby and those that came from a greater distance were likely to be more skilled. For some, Moreton was a stepping-stone for career progression or provided them with the confidence to move on to larger urban areas. Most male arrivals were engaged in manufacturing or dealing that fitted Moreton's role as a service centre for its hinterland. The importance of the railway in facilitating movement to the town is evident particularly from the 1870s onwards. Kinship also played an important part in governing the movements of people either through marriage to locals, moving as whole families or returning to the town in later life.

Out-migration

Whether to a different part of the country or overseas, motivations for leaving were intensely personal and cannot be generalised. A valuable original source from 1850 provides an insight into one person's reasons for emigrating from Moreton and his personal comparison of life away from the town with the situation left behind, are enlightening. Its date makes it less relevant to life in Moreton during the study period, but it is nonetheless an indication of the number of agricultural workers and the benefits they may have acquired by moving away. The picture it paints of Moreton life emphasizes the mixed economy of makeshift encompassing poaching at Batsford and gathering wood for fuel. The rambling letter, with some very original spelling and grammar, was written on 4th December 1850 and sent from Lansing, Michigan, by David Ellis to his mother in Moreton, some two months after his arrival there. The letter records that the family travelled via Liverpool to Lansing to join David's wife's sister,

confirming the importance of kin to migration decisions. The journey was arduous, being at sea for five weeks and having to travel by crowded steamers, railways, and wagon before arriving at their destination. Despite this, the letter ends with the request to tell his wife's friends that, 'she was never so happier in her whole life as she is since we came to America' exhorting his brother to come to them with the promise to meet him in New York.[64] It has not been possible to trace either David or Eliza in subsequent censuses to determine whether their emigration was a success. Equally, there is no evidence that they returned to England, and it seems likely that the family maintained their avowal that, 'all the boys send love to their uncles and aunt, but they don't want to come to Moreton again'.[65]

Ravenstein stated that the desire to find more lucrative work was the prime motivation for migration.[66] Ellis's letter confirms this in saying, 'I can get a better living here …. I can get 5 shillings of your money a day'. [67] It was the equivalent of 30s each week, far exceeding the average of 8s 1d per week, in the Moreton area.[68] Ellis's letter implies experience of past hunger when he states that, 'they all have plenty to eat in this country…. we have everything to eat as we want'.[69] When compared with the daily wages, the cost of food, 'good mutton, 2 pence a pound and pork, 2 pence a pound, and beef 2 pence a pound and potatoes, 1 shilling a bushel and as much firing as we can burn for nothing' indicates a healthy surplus of disposable income emphasized in his comment, 'there is no poor in this place'.[70] As well as satisfying present wants and needs, migration also provided people with hope for improved opportunities for their children, which Ellis highlighted in saying that, 'the boys don't have to work until they are 15 years old and 6 foot high' suggesting that they would be able to attend school.[71] The improved lifestyle had reaped immediate benefits with his statement that, 'all my boys and my Mrs. and self ha never had a day sick since we left you at Moreton'.[72] Although the Ellis letter deals with emigration, the motivation to obtain an improved lifestyle would have been similar for people moving within the United Kingdom.

Figure 102 shows that the numbers of young males that left were highest in the 1850s, 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s, with slight difference in the total numbers. The completion of the railway and the disappearance of young men involved in its building may seem an obvious explanation for the 1850s leavers. However, this seems unlikely in that the need for construction workers to be physically strong would exclude the younger age group being tracked. More probable is that the figure reflected a

[64] GRO, 1850 Ellis Letter.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration' p. 181.
[67] GRO,1850 Ellis Letter.
[68] Bowley, 'The Statistics of Wages' p. 704.
[69] GRO, 1850 Ellis Letter.
[70] Ibid.
[71] Ibid.
[72] Ibid.

disillusionment that the anticipated economic improvements, expected to follow the railway's arrival, had not materialised. Nash's research in Burford also revealed a similar hike in out-migration in the 1850s and 1860s, suggesting less localised factors.[73] The higher numbers in the 1870s and 1880s point to the effects of the agricultural depression, identified across England at this time and confirm Ravenstein's findings that the 1870s was the decade when the lure of the towns was at its height.[74] No obvious cause can be attributed to the numbers who left during the 1890s and equally one must speculate that the 1860s and 1900s provided sufficient employment opportunities to reduce the numbers leaving.

Figure 102: Numbers of male leavers detected at each census.

Census	Located elsewhere in next census
1861	112
1871	94
1881	111
1891	104
1901	110
1911	76

As noted, Ravenstein stated that females migrated more than men, within their own country, and Dudley Baines reinforced this by stating that by the early 19th century they outnumbered men migrants in London.[75] Women left agrarian-centric areas, like Moreton, due to declining opportunities for fieldwork caused by mechanisation and changes in the tools used. Moving away removed financial pressure from family budgets and often parents arranged such moves.[76] Predominantly, moving meant domestic service, offering immediate board and lodgings, a degree of safety, and reduced expenses. Additionally, it enabled a proportion of their wages to be saved for the future or sent money back home to contribute to the family budget. Female migrants did not only head for London but also sought employment in nearby urban centres, with Wendy Gordon calculating that in Preston, 75% of the female migrants came from nearby rural areas.[77]

Ravenstein's and Baines' assertions make the already discussed problems of locating migrating women in the census especially frustrating. The process for identifying male leavers from Moreton revealed missing females of the same age. Some were traceable in other locations because they had married members of the male cohort. During the research, others became known, by chance or as late leavers,

[73] Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline', p. 23.
[74] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 199.
[75] Ibid., p, 197; Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy,* p. 216.
[76] B. Hill, 'Rural-Urban Migration of Women and their Employment in Towns', *Rural History*, 5 (1994), p. 191; W. Gordon, '" What, I Pray You, Shall I Do with the Ballance?'' Single Women's Economy of Migration', *International Institute of Social History,* 50 (2005), pp. 53–70.
[77] Gordon, "'What, I Pray You'", p. 58.

and it has been possible to build up longitudinal life histories for 93 Moreton females. Such a small sample group means that caution must be exercised in observing trends from it, however close study has revealed the vicissitudes of fortune faced by the female migrants. Most women married in the decade that they moved. For the majority, their spouses were not Moreton natives, and it is unclear whether a connection was made due to the women having moved, as singletons, to a new area, prior to marriage or conversely whether their husbands had been temporarily present in the town.

International Emigrants

Baines suggested that reports of prosperous lifestyles overseas reached their height in the 1880s and that the decade saw higher rates of emigration from counties where previously it had been less popular.[78] This is supported by regular adverts appearing in local papers listing ships offering passage to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, often free for farm labourers and domestic servants.[79] At the start of the 20th century adverts appearing in *Evesham Journal* became more sophisticated with drawings of housing, suggesting a degree of competition to attract settlers and that the flow of migrants was lessening.[80] Reports of local meetings at which emigration was promoted and unattributed articles providing information about the cost of living in prospective emigrant destinations were also evident.[81] One account of life in Sydney attempted to provide an unbiased critique of conditions, explaining that housing was more expensive, other living costs similar but that the warm climate reduced expenditure and higher wages enabled migrants to save sums that would be unobtainable in this country.[82]

Newspapers also reveal migrant stories in less direct form. In May 1883, the *Evesham Journal* recounts the presentation made to John Baddeley, a member of the extended Horne family, on his imminent departure to the USA, paying tribute to his contribution to the Penny Bank, YMCA, and the Congregational Church. His personal and permanent decision to move would have impacted the lives of Moreton people and may have encouraged others to consider this option.[83] Other instances where emigrants featured in local papers relate to acts of charity. *Moreton Free Press* contained regular reports of monetary gifts, sent to Moreton including a donation to the hospital, by the unidentified 'Mrs. Keating' initially living in New Zealand and later in California. These underline both the apparent success of emigrants and the continued affection evoked by their native town.[84] Later, obituary notices appeared in local papers recounting the deaths of earlier emigrants: Joseph Cambray who left in

[78] Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy,* p. 179.
[79] *EJ,* 23 February 1878, 17 January 1880, 27 February 1904, 13 May 1911, 9 December 1911.
[80] Ibid., 9 December 1917.
[81] Ibid., 4 January 1908, 1 February 1908.
[82] Ibid., 'The Cost of Life in New South Wales', 16 February 1884.
[83] Ibid., 5 May 1883; *Ancestry,* USA Census, 1930 Place: Pittsburgh, Allegheny, Pennsylvania, p. 6a; Enumeration District: 0199; FHL microfilm, 2341710.
[84] *MFP,* 16 January 1886, 15 January 1887, 7 March 1891.

1870 with his wife, Harriet and sons Fred and Tom, died in Lincoln, Ontario in 1904.[85] Other less obvious indications of emigration are found in the school logbooks, where the imminent departure of the Cambray family is noted in the mistress's account of the boys wishing 'all the children goodbye as they are going to America'. Similarly, Minnie Hyatt, the infant's school pupil teacher was given leave of absence in 1882 to spend time with her sister who was also emigrating to America.[86]

Baines' theory is supported by the highest number of emigrants occurring in the 1880s, but the totals were low, with only 17 people located overseas in the 60-year period. This may be due to several reasons: the initial costs being too high; the distances considered too great; ties to kin too strong to countenance the prospect of permanent separation; or that conservative natures did not allow them to imagine life elsewhere. The destinations of the international migrants are of interest with those who left going exclusively to present or past British Colonies. This suggests that they were attempting to improve their standard of living in circumstances familiar to them rather than from any pioneering motive. Alice Horne, who was a long-term Christian missionary in China, whose activities were reported in local newspapers when she returned on furlough and gave lectures to local organisations, was the only person identified who lived for any length of time outside a British dependency.[87] Similarly, no Moreton natives participated in Yeates's Brazilian scheme.[88]

Also apparent are incidences of people found in the census, born overseas but returned to Moreton, either with locally born parents or to grandparents. In 1871, John Lumley and Frederick Lutes, both having been born in Jamaica were living with their widowed mother, Anne, suggesting that she was a returned emigree. In the same census Oliver Perkins, 14, was living with his widowed grandfather, having been born in Australia.[89] The explanations for these are indeterminate but suggest some form of family crisis, precipitating a return.

Locations of out-migrants

Young people from Moreton were traced to 38 different English counties, Wales, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Figure 103 indicates the ten most popular destinations and provides some clues about the enduring or more transient popularity of some locations. Wiltshire did not reach the top ten destinations but its appearance in the tables is testament to the GWR's development of extensive operations in Swindon, in the later decades of the century. The higher numbers to Hampshire in the 1900s indicate naval or seafaring career choices, whereas Surrey's

[85] *EJ,* 3 September 1904.
[86] GRO, S221/3/1, 21 October 1870, 16 June 1882.
[87] *Cheltenham Chronicle and Gloucester Graphic,* 11 September 1909.
[88] Horn, 'Gloucestershire and the Brazilian Emigration Movement'.
[89] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 106, p. 32, Class: RG110, Piece: 3215 Folio: 114, p. 4.

later popularity may be related to suburban growth in the capital. Out-migrants in 1911 reached the most widespread destinations with the figures demonstrating the shifting economic situation in the country and the wider horizons and confidence of the population. Over the 50 years of the study, opportunities had developed in many different areas of the country and migrants were more prepared to travel to areas with which they were unfamiliar.

Figure 103: Top 10 Locations of Out-migrants aged 11-20, 1861-1911.

	W. Midlands	London	Gloucs.	Worcs.	Warwks.	Oxon.	Wales	Hants.	Surrey	Overseas
1861	11	4	12	3	8	5	0	0	0	0
1871	24	2	10	14	7	12	1	2	5	3
1881	35	22	12	15	13	15	7	1	3	2
1891	33	29	22	15	17	17	4	4	5	6
1901	31	34	33	20	22	17	13	5	4	2
1911	20	34	26	28	19	14	11	11	6	4
Totals	154	125	115	95	86	80	36	23	23	17

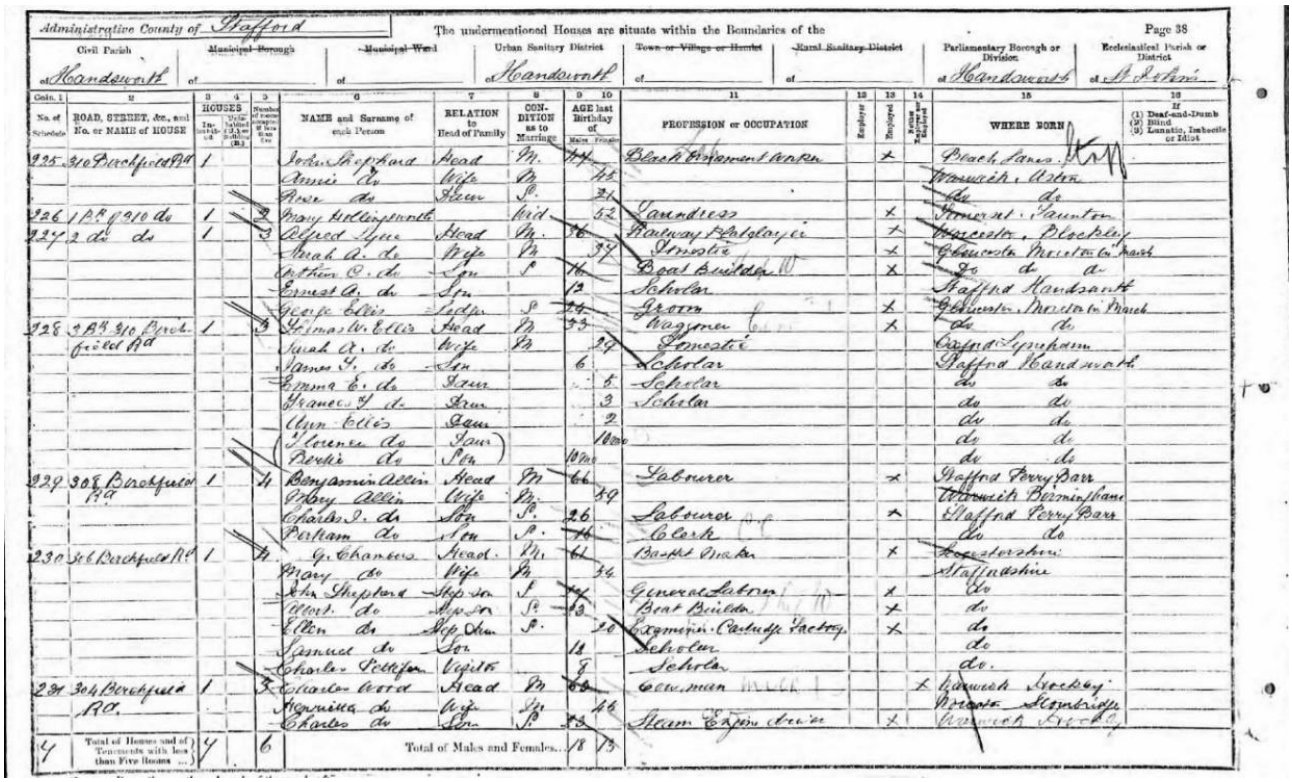
The popularity of the West Midlands is unsurprising and bears out both Matthew Boulton's claim and Lawton's figures for the earlier period, however it contradicts Nash's findings in Burford, where, apart from the cohort who went to Wednesbury, the majority gravitated to London.[90] Its relative proximity and the conglomeration of small industries there may have suited rural dwellers better than the bigger enterprises further north. White suggests that the transfer of skills between agriculture and heavy industry was easy, thus explaining the attraction of Scunthorpe to the agricultural labourers of Lincolnshire.[91] Moreton's lack of any natives in the large industrial areas of the north suggests that the proximity of Scunthorpe may have been more significant than transferable skills. West Midlands accents and ways of speaking were familiar and other new arrivals may have come from similar areas with shared life experiences. Additionally, it was within 50 miles of Moreton so it was easier to return to kin should things go wrong. Movement to the area is symptomatic of Ravenstein's second observation that, 'the inhabitants of the country surrounding a town of rapid growth, flock to it'.[92]

Tracing the young males revealed that some were part of whole family migration to the Birmingham area, meaning that the total numbers from Moreton were greater than just the numbers of young men. George Edge's father, Thomas, moved from railway labourer in Moreton to general labourer, with this son, in Aston. Tom Ellis's father died in the 1860s, leaving him as the main breadwinner giving the family little alternative other than to move to Handsworth with him.[93] Joseph Pinfield provides

[90] Lawton, 'Population Movements in the West Midlands', pp. 168-173; Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline', p. 138.
[91] White, 'Aspects of Migration in Victorian Lincolnshire', p. 147.
[92] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 199.
[93] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 3045, Folio: 24, p. 2; Class: RG11, Piece: 2836, Folio: 14, p. 22; Bailey, 'I'd Heard it', p. 133.

an example of someone moving to join family, in the manner suggested by Bailey, as he was living and working with his older brother, Henry who had established himself in the centre of Birmingham and married someone from the area.[94] Also apparent from the 1891 data is that the leavers were going to similar areas within the West Midlands, specifically Aston, Handsworth and the centre of Birmingham with evidence of the Ellis and Lyne families, from Moreton and Blockley living on the same street in Handsworth as shown in figure 104. The properties are 'back-to-back' courts which were not affluent conditions, implying either that the move had not improved lifestyle or that the conditions left behind in Moreton were worse.

Figure 104: Census return for Birchfield Rd, Handsworth 1891.[95]



In comparison with the West Midlands, there is little evidence that large numbers of migrants to the London area followed the same pattern, with wide dispersion across the capital. The growing numbers in London at the end of the century is testament to the contemporary economic situation there. It also suggests that by then Moreton migrants were prepared to travel further, and that the rail links with the capital had boosted local knowledge and confidence.

The position of Gloucestershire, Worcestershire, Warwickshire, and Oxfordshire as the next most recorded destinations of the out-migrants correlates with the most popular onward destinations of the non-persistent in-migrants. The total

[94] Ibid., Class: RG11, Piece: 2982, Folio: 85, p. 4.
[95] Ibid., 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2263, Folio: 85, p. 38.

numbers going to these counties exceed those going to the West Midlands and London. That Moreton was part of Gloucestershire but within five miles of each of the other counties supports Ravenstein's theory that 'the great body of our migrants only proceed a short distance'.[96] Finding opportunities within Gloucestershire especially Bristol and the larger towns of Cheltenham and Gloucester, supports Friedlander and Roshier's belief that the county initially lost people in the 19th century but then recovered its position by the next century.[97] The numbers in Worcestershire appear to support the increased population in the Vale of Evesham, identified by Short.[98] However further investigation reveals only one, Francis Gillett, at Harvington, was involved in market gardening.[99] Of the others Henry White, worked as a compositor, David Brown, a railway worker and James Walker, an auctioneer's clerk.[100] Later in the century others migrated towards the more industrialised area to the west.

Chipping Norton's popularity and proximity boosted numbers in Oxfordshire. It reflects the prosperity and good social conditions in the town developed earlier in the century by William Bliss.[101] Bliss's mill was the main source of employment in the town, but it has not been possible to find any of the Moreton migrants employed there, with the majority involved in dealing, building or industrial service functions. By 1881 William and John Gray, twin brothers from Moreton, satisfied Graham's research into Oxford suburbs. Both participated in house construction so profited from the buoyant building industry described by Graham.[102]

Wales first appeared in 1871, but there was not evidence of migration to the Welsh coalfields until 1881, when Alfred Hyatt, accompanied by his older brother, Job, was lodging in Broad Street, Griffithstown. Notably they were both there as railway guards, skills acquired through the GWR in Moreton. However, they were not the only people with Moreton connections as nearby were seven members of the Hine family, spread between two properties. The male Hines did not have any connections with the railway but were working as bricklayers and appeared to have arrived in the area as part of a whole family move during the 1870s.[103] Alfred Hyatt was traceable in the area until 1901, having married his landlord's daughter, Harriet Roberts, in 1882.[104]

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[96] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 198.
[97] Friedlander & Roshier, 'A Study of Internal Migration ', p. 262.
[98] Short, *'Rural demography'*, p. 1285.
[99] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1861, Class: RG 9, Piece: 2101, Folio: 58, p. 1.
[100] Ibid., 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 3059, Folio 34; p. 22, Class: RG10, Piece: 3060, Folio: 31, p. 4, Class: RG10, Piece: 3058, Folio: 68, p. 19.
[101] Hurrell, *The Bliss Mill.*
[102] Graham, 'The Suburbs of Victorian Oxford'; *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 1504, Folio: 85, p. 20, Class: RG11, Piece: 1498, Folio: 77, p. 32.
[103] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 5255, Folio: 33, p. 34, Folio: 30, p. 28; Folio: 39, p. 45.
[104] Ibid., Monmouthshire Baptisms Marriages and Burials, 1551-1984; Welsh Census, 1901, Class: RG13, Piece:4950, Folio: 31, p. 53.

In-migrants to Moreton still in the town at the census following the one in which their arrival was noted were recorded in figures 94 and 95. Figure 105 quantifies the results of a similar exercise to determine whether the male out-migrants remained at the places where they were first recorded after leaving Moreton. The remarkably similar persistence rates are not high, underlining Ravenstein's, 'universal shifting or displacement of the population'.[105] The need to move on implies not only that the wants/needs of the initial move were not immediately met but also that the initial move generated the confidence to move again. Onward movement was likely to continue until the initial economic objective was achieved or social pressures prevented further moves.

Figure 105: Persistence of male out-migrants in new locations, 1861-1911.

Census	Traced	Same location in next census	%
1861	49	18	37
1871	38	16	42
1881	57	16	28
1891	57	24	42
1901	59	25	42

As with the incomers, marriage played a role in determining destinations. Equally initial migration locations played a role in shaping the course of future lives. Figure 106 quantifies this from the young males studied. It is apparent from figure 107 that women migrants from Moreton were most likely to move to their husbands' location or to marry someone from the location, to which they had relocated.

Figure 106: Marital analysis of male out-migrants aged 21-30, 1861-1911.

		Single	Married	Wife from Moreton	%	Wife from initial migration place	%
1861	49	24	25	5	20%	6	24%
1871	38	24	14	3	21%	3	21%
1881	57	32	25	5	20%	5	20%
1891	57	33	24	3	13%	2	8%
1901	59	37	22	0	0%	3	14%
1911	54	36	18	4	22%	8	44%

[105] Ravenstein, 'The Laws of Migration', p. 198.

Figure 107: Marital analysis of female out-migrants aged 21-30, 1861-1911.

		Single	Married	Husband from Moreton	Husband from initial migration place	%
1861	13	1	12	0	4	33%
1871	22	12	10	0	0	0%
1881	9	1	8	0	5	63%
1891	15	0	9	0	5	33%
1901	11	0	11	0	2	18%
1911	0	0	0	0	0	0%

Marriage was not the only reason for women to leave Moreton. Of the single migrant women identified in 1871, seven were part of whole family moves for instance Maria and Mary Chase, daughters of the curate of St. David's Church, Henry Chase, who had moved to Twyning, near Tewkesbury, following their father's induction in that parish.[106] The move made by Alice Ward who, in 1861, was a visitor at the Hornes' house demonstrates that some were forced by unexpected circumstances to move long distances and completely change their lifestyle. In 1851, Alice was living with her family on their 950-acre farm in Sezincote.[107] By 1871, her father had died and she, her widowed mother, grandmother, and younger sister lived in Darlington, where her mother was running a Berlin wool shop with Alice as her assistant.[108] She remained in northern urban areas, in Darlington and York, and maintained her connections with commerce for the rest of her life, eventually marrying a wine merchant.[109]

Siblings were important to migration decisions. Thirteen of the young male leavers identified in 1881, comprised five pairs of brothers and three from another family. All went to either the same destination or the same general area, as in the case of Henry, James and Stephen Gillett who were in Sheffield, Rotherham, and Barnsley, respectively.[110] They all appeared to have been successful in their new destinations but not every sibling-influenced departure ended favourably. Harriet and Susan Perkins, two of the five daughters of Thomas Perkins, Moreton's chemist, had also left Moreton by the 1881 census. Susan, the younger moved to Winslow following her

[106] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, RG10, Piece: 2680, Folio: 34, p. 12.
[107] Ibid., 1851, Class: HO107, Piece: 1970, Folio: 365, p. 13.
[108] Ibid., 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 4885, Folio: 33, p. 59.
[109] Ibid., 1881, Class: RG11, Piece: 4887, Folio: 102, p. 9; 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 3895, Folio: 17, p. 27; 1901, Class: RG13, Piece: 4436, Folio: 134, p. 10.
[110] Ibid., Class: RG11, Piece: 4623, Folio: 83, p. 46; Class: RG11, Piece: 4683, Folio: 46, p. 48; Class: RG11, Piece: 4593, Folio: 32, p. 7.

marriage to grocer, James Hawley, in 1877.[111] As a result, it must be assumed that Harriet met Winslow jeweller, Joseph Loeffler, whose shop was a short distance from her sister's home. In 1881, she too had married and moved to the town. As with the Ward family, circumstances dictated that Harriet was unexpectedly thrust into a commercial role following, Joseph's death, in 1890, when she was left to run his business.[112] This proved unsuccessful and despite inheriting almost £2,700, by 1897, she had been admitted to Powick Asylum, suffering from melancholia, the cause of which was attributed to losing her money, and where she subsequently died within weeks of her arrival.[113]

Long suggested the sons of partly skilled rural labourers were more likely to improve their socio-economic position by moving to an urban setting than if they remained in the countryside.[114] While Moreton cannot be compared with a small rural hamlet, it was the centre of an agricultural area and moving to diverse areas created opportunities to transfer into different industries and learn new skills. The case histories of the town's out-migrants, although some are interesting, do not have a narrative of stellar success. Others found that life in a different area brought about a downturn in their circumstances. The perennial unknown is what would have happened had they remained in Moreton. Besides industrial growth, with increasing government and local administration, health, education and transport networks, the variety of jobs available increased across the whole country. Chapter five demonstrated the change in the occupational and social structure of the town (figure 73) due to the railway creating new opportunities. These countrywide socio-economic changes must be considered when attempting to measure any added value gained by a move from Moreton.

Bailey was primarily concerned with assessing changes in occupations between fathers in the census prior to their sons' migration with the sons' occupations in London.[115] An attempt has been made to extend this by making comparisons between the Moreton cohort's fathers' occupations in the census prior to their departure, the cohorts' occupations in their new location and their occupation in the census 20 years later. Not all fathers could be traced, some of the leavers were missing from the later censuses and it was only possible to do this for the leavers between 1861 and 1891, as the later censuses were unavailable. The results, shown in full in the Appendix, underline the wider opportunities available and the general decline in agriculture, which is equally apparent among the parents of the later cohorts as among the migrants. The most popular occupational category across all the surveyed censuses was manufacture, followed in equal measure by dealing, transport

[111] Ibid., Class: RG11, Piece: 1476, Folio: 29, p. 10.
[112] Ibid., 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 1148, Folio: 11, p. 16.
[113] Ibid., England & Wales, National Probate Calendar, 1858-1995, (1897); England & Wales, Civil Registration Death Index, 1837-1915, https://medicalmuseum.org.uk/powick-patients; (20 March 2022).
[114] Long, 'Urban Migration and Socioeconomic Mobility in Victorian Britain', p. 28.
[115] Bailey, 'I'd heard it' pp. 128-131.

and building. In each cohort there are instances of sons keeping their fathers' trade or occupation at their new location but no trend like that found by Bailey could be detected.

Occupation can be a means of assessing class and consequent social transitions, but it must be acknowledged that the concept of class is difficult to define and prone to subjectivity. Referencing Armstrong's classification (figure 7), the occupational information, translated into categories, indicates whether Long's assertion can be applied to the Moreton out-migrants, as shown in figure 108. These metrics give a varied picture of success and cannot conclusively confirm Long's optimism. Movement from semi-skilled to skilled labour is universally evident but is more pronounced in the short term with the longer-term picture suggesting a reversal in fortunes.

Figure 108: Comparison of class between parents and male out-migrants 1861-1891.

1861 Leavers				1871 leavers				1881 leavers				1891 leavers		
Parents 1851	No	%		Parents 1861	No	%		Parents 1871	No	%		Parents 1881	No	%
1	0	0		1	0	0		1	0	0		1	0	0
2	3	7		2	3	10		2	2	4		2	6	13
3	16	36		3	14	45		3	17	34		3	21	46
4	23	52		4	12	39		4	24	48		4	14	30
5	2	5		5	2	6		5	7	14		5	5	11
	44	100			31	100			50	100			46	100
Sons 1861	No	%		Sons 1871	No	%		Sons 1881	No	%		Sons 1891	No	%
1	1	2		1	0	0		1	0	0		1	0	0
2	1	2		2	0	0		2	3	5		2	1	2
3	25	51		3	24	65		3	28	49		3	29	54
4	19	39		4	6	16		4	15	26		4	19	35
5	3	6		5	7	19		5	11	19		5	5	9
	49	100			37	100			57	100			54	100
Sons 1881	No	%		Sons 1891	No	%		Sons 1901	No	%		Sons 1911	No	%
1	1	3		1	0	0		1	0	0		1	0	0
2	1	3		2	2	8		2	6	14		2	3	7
3	14	39		3	14	56		3	19	43		3	22	54
4	11	31		4	6	24		4	15	34		4	13	32
5	9	25		5	3	12		5	4	9		5	3	7
	36	100			25	100			44	100			41	100

Like the motivations for moving to Moreton, most women who left the town did so to enter domestic service: Caroline Hodgetts, a cook in Marylebone; Charlotte Carter, a lady's maid in Derby; Jane Betts, a servant in Paddington; Mary Fisher, a

servant in Stratford and Sarah Pinfield, a servant in King's Norton.[116] Caroline Hodgetts, Charlotte Carter and Sarah Pinfield also followed the same pattern of marrying in their thirties, away from Moreton, appearing to have acquired the financial autonomy to do so.[117] Eliza Edge took advantage of new career opportunities open to women by training as a nurse, being listed as such at Birmingham General Hospital, in 1881 and maintaining that profession for the rest of her life.[118] She eventually returned to Moreton in 1903, when she remarried widower, William Davenport, an intermittent resident since 1871, suggesting that although she had lived in Birmingham for most of her life, she had maintained contact with the town.[119] Chapter five examined the impact of the circulation of railway personnel on Moreton's population. Given the small sample of women uncovered, its effect on female migration from the town was significant. Six of the females located moved because of either their husband's or father's connection with the GWR with Ann Hitchman and Elizabeth White moving multiple times, following their departure from Moreton.

It can be seen therefore that the motivations for migration from Moreton were many and varied. The belief that the lifestyle at the destination would be enhanced was paramount but that improvement was not necessarily economic, it could also be for less tangible reasons, such as romance or proximity to kin. In some cases, the moves were successful but that was not the universal outcome. For some it became necessary to return to Moreton.

Returners

From the male arrivals, it is possible to identify people who had only left for a brief period and were in fact returners. Some had identifiable reasons for being away from Moreton for prolonged periods: education, for Percival Price a boarder in Sibford School, in 1901; professional study for Robert Yelf, the local doctor's son, before returning to join his father's practice; and to learn a trade, James Gray, in 1871, when he was a 'shopman' in Witney. Lessons learnt there served Gray well as he established a successful business back in Moreton and, by 1901, was employing people himself.[120] A less successful story is that of Alexander Payne, born in Moreton in 1829 and enumerated in 1841 but missing in 1851. In the 1861 census he is described as a 'professor of music', a fanciful description that skews the social structure of the town. Further investigation in 1851 revealed that he was in London's Marylebone district where he was learning a trade as a 'pianoforte maker' and lodging

[116] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1871, Class: RG10, Piece: 164, Folio: 5, p. 4. Class: RG10, Piece: 3639, Folio: 5, p. 1; Class: RG10, Piece: 18, Folio: 60, p. 5; Class: RG10, Piece: 3205, Folio: 73, p. 12; Class*:* RG10, Piece: 3078, Folio: 128, p. 40.
[117] Hill, 'Rural Urban Migration' p. 190; *Ancestry,* P87/MTW/A/02/002; Anglican Parish Records Birmingham, DRO 3*;* Archive Roll*:* 585.
[118] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1881*,* Class*:* RG11, Piece: 3002, Folio: 110, p. 2*.*
[119] Ibid.*,* 1911, Dist. 396, Piece:18861*.*
[120] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1901*,* Class*:* RG13, Piece: 1402, Folio: 42, p. 21; Class*:* RG13, Piece: 2946, Folio: 99, p. 8.

with others similarly engaged. In the censuses from 1871 onwards, his trade is more prosaically described as a 'piano tuner'. He remained in Moreton with his parents or extended family but died in 1897, in Gloucester asylum.[121]

Schürer stated that people often returned to their birthplace or nearby in later life, a trend Geary identified in Bidford.[122] This is also evident in Moreton as William Alexander, an 1861 leaver, and Charles Phipps, Charles Rolph and Frederick Lutes, 1881 absentees, returned to Moreton and remained for the rest of their lives.[123] Others displayed intermittent relationships with the town, which may be attributed to opportunistic attempts to find work and social pressures. Joseph Reason, a tailor, born near Brailes had moved to Moreton by 1871 when he married a local widow. In 1881 and 1891 they were living in Birmingham with her existing children and their own daughter but by 1896 she had died, and he remarried Mary Johnson, from Birmingham. In 1901, the family were in Aston with their children, but by 1911 he was boarding in Moreton, while she remained with their family in Yardley, the youngest of whom was born in Walsall, suggesting further intercensal movement. William Davenport's story is similar: born in Walsall in 1848, he was a clerk with a local business in Moreton by 1871. In 1879, the *Post Office Directory* listed him in Moreton as a commercial traveller but by 1881 he had returned to Colwich, stating his occupation as a coal merchant. He was back in Moreton for the rest of the period, marrying Eliza Edge, described initially as a milk seller and in 1911 as a dairy farmer.[124]

Returning may have been a male privilege with women lacking the economic independence to make such choices. Mary Cambray, who had left by 1871, was one of only two females traced who was able to fulfil Schürer's return theory. Her life story provides an insight into the wider familial implications of emigration and events providing catalysts for moving. Mary was the youngest sister of Joseph Cambray, whose departure to America has been narrated. Their father, owner of the White Lion Inn, had died soon after Mary's birth and their mother had subsequently run the business for over 30 years. It is impossible to grasp the family dynamics, but it could be assumed that Joseph, as the only son, was destined to inherit the business on their mother's death in 1886.[125] From his later obituary, it is apparent that by this time he had successfully established himself in St Catharine's, Ontario.[126] In 1881, Mary was living with her carpenter husband, Owen Coppage, and their eight children in his home village, Wootton Wawen, but by 1891 the majority of the family had relocated to

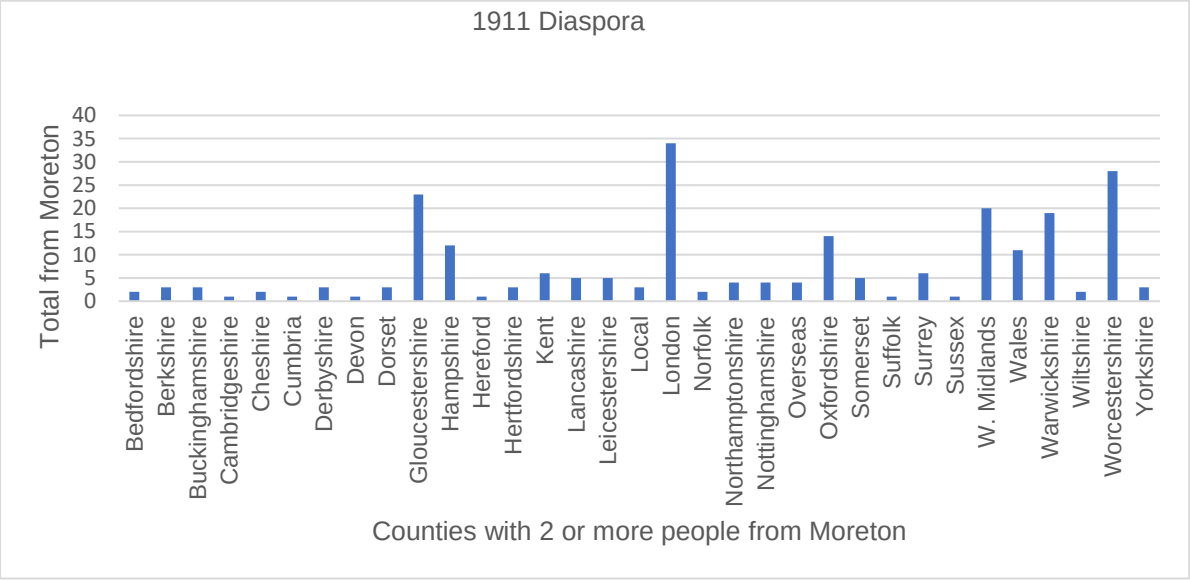
[121] Ibid., Class*:* RG10, Piece: 1402, Folio: 42, p. 21, Class*:* RG13, Piece: 2946, Folio: 99, p. 8.
[122] Schürer, 'The Role of the Family' p. 115; Geary, 'Population Movements', p. 86.
[123] *Ancestry,* English Census, 1891*:* RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 84, p. 1.
[124] Ibid., 1871, Class*:* RG10, Piece: 3215, Folio: 99, p. 17; 1881, Class*:* RG11, Piece: 2691, Folio: 4, p. 3; 1891, Class*:* RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 74, p. 18; *Post Office Directory of Gloucestershire, Bath and Bristol, 1879.*
[125] *Ancestry,* GRO, P221IN1/15.
[126] *EJ,* 3 September 1904.

Moreton, to take over the White Lion.[127] Mary's return to Moreton suggests that such decisions relied on the agreement of the male head of the family, who in this case, may have been encouraged by the inheritance of a successful business. Mary Coppage again confirms Schürer's theory that life events were an important trigger in migratory decisions.[128] Another instance was, John Gillett who left in the late 1880s but, following the death of his West Bromwich-born first wife, may have been forced by his circumstances to return to Moreton with his children to capitalise on kin support and where later he remarried.[129]

The Moreton Diaspora

Beside the age cohort studied, men and women left Moreton at later stages in their lives. Many of these were identified during the research, tracked to the end of the period, and added to the overall database of out-migrants. While it cannot be deemed to have caught all leavers, it provides the best opportunity to measure the wide range of places that were home to Moreton natives in 1911 and is shown in figure 109. In comparison with figure 103, the positions of London and the West Midlands are interchanged, which suggests that older migrants may have gone directly to London and that the capital became a destination for migrants who initially went elsewhere. In view of the general economic and industrial map of the country at the time, the lack of any real numbers in northern England is notable and comparable with Nash's findings in Burford. Similarly, the southwest and eastern counties were not popular destinations.

Figure 109: Most Recorded Locations for Moreton Natives in 1911.



[127] *Ancestry,* England Census,1881*,* Class: RG11, Piece: 3104, Folio*:* 93, p. 11; 1891, Class: RG12, Piece: 2485, Folio: 78, p. 26.
[128] Schürer, 'The Role of the Family', p. 115.
[129] *Ancestry,* England Census, 1911, Reg Dist. 331.

Conclusions

The study of these sample groups demonstrates that the migration experience of Moreton people was not unique. Motivations to move both into and out of the town were primarily driven by the need to improve living standards, but for some, kin dictated moves, either through marriage or wider family needs. Similarly, the importance of siblings in migratory decisions was significant. The locations demonstrate the growing confidence of the migrants with the number of areas in which Moreton people settled growing over the 50-year period. As discovered by other researchers, Moreton leavers regularly went to places where there were already people from the town, and some initially lodged with kin. There was a strong Moreton presence in the adjoining parishes of Aston, Handsworth, and St Martin's in Birmingham. However, unlike Nash's findings relating to the link between Burford and Wednesbury there is no suggestion that movement was exclusively to these parishes or that people from the parishes moved to Moreton.[130] Of note is that the non-persistent in-migrants did not share the natives' partiality for the West Midlands, as the majority stayed within the Four Shires area. As the century progressed, London became more popular with the young Moreton migrants with evidence to suggest that this was the first choice for older migrants. Confirming Lawton's assertions, there is little evidence of movement towards the industrial areas around Coventry and the East Midlands. The migration experience of the cohorts who left Moreton did not lead to outstanding economic or social success. In contrast, many in-migrants had a lasting influence on the town, especially in local administration. The numbers who went overseas were low and were exclusively to areas of established British settlement, which may prove to be unusual if compared to other small market towns but may also be reflective of limited sources from other places.

[130] Nash, 'Aspects of a Town in Decline', p. 138.

Conclusions

This thesis set out to discover more about Moreton and, in so doing, answer Crosby's call to improve the literature on small towns in the 19th century. It also addressed the question of the railway's importance in the town's survival and its effect upon the local economy. Information has been uncovered that has not been subject to academic scrutiny: the housebuilding activities of the Oddfellows; cottage hospitals; Penny Banks; mutual improvement initiatives; the quest for sanitation and the Redesdale family. The thesis adds to the literature on these aspects of 19th century history. Additionally it highlights the significance of population stasis in stunting social and cultural progress and maintaining traditional and relatively harmonious community relationships into the 20th century. It is to be hoped that more archival material, on these topics, can be uncovered elsewhere, so that valid comparisons may be made. The thesis provides examples that support and challenge research carried out elsewhere by, among others, Snell, Reay, Robins and Andrews.

It has been established that between 1851 and 1914 many towns of comparable size to Moreton were subject to such severe population losses that their status waned, effectively becoming rural villages. That Moreton survived is worthy of investigation. The demographic analysis was an important part of this research, but the results showed little that was new or unexpected. Statistics relating to Moreton's demographic trends and social structure point to stasis and continuity. Its population decline was not as severe as some neighbouring towns but wealth and associated power remained in the hands of a small number of people. While the base of the social structure pyramid had narrowed by 1914, little progress was made in increasing the numbers in the upper economic and social echelons. National education reforms meant that people were able to engage in skilled work but there is scant evidence of any meteoric success stories from either those who remained in the town, or those who left.

While little evidence was uncovered to suggest the town exhibited a strong sense of belonging, in the ways described by Snell, attachment to the wider area, or *pays,* through the concept of the Four Shires was apparent. Moreton's significant dislocation from recognised county centres was also manifest and seems connected either to local topography or to the allocation of PLUs in 1834. It would be interesting to discover if other places, arbitrarily linked to adjacent counties following the PLAA, displayed similar traits of cultural separateness from their geographical county towns.

As with other towns, migration for economic and social reasons, formed an important part of Moreton's demographic story. From 1851 to 1911 it is apparent that in line with research elsewhere, the distance moved from Moreton gradually became greater, with destinations in the West Midlands declining in favour of London and the southeast. While detectable, overseas emigration was not a major aspect of Moreton's migration history. Population stasis at a time of improving mortality implies that more people left than arrived. In-migrants to Moreton were important as many assumed

roles in local government but it is apparent that there were insufficient incomers to drive any dynamic social or religious change. This continuity had significant implications for the cultural life of the town and it may be a useful to evaluate other places with similar metrics to discover whether outcomes were comparable.

Investigating local administration in Moreton also underlines continuity in governance. Evidence suggests that there were few opportunities for working class people to rise to positions of influence in local government. Deference to the ruling elite was as apparent in 1914 as it was in 1850, connected to landowner-tenant and employer-employee relationships, and lacking a critical mass of incomers to effect change. The only people who made any inroads into this sector were the later generations of the Horne family who, by the early 20th century, had achieved success and longevity as shopkeepers that enabled them to interact on an equal footing with the local gentry.

The quest for clean water and effective sanitation was a persistent issue across England and one that permeated the entire study period in Moreton. The problem was focused in the town centre so affected all sections of society. Contemporary comment raised the possibility that Moreton's insanitary environment detracted from investment and settlement in the town. This was widely refuted, but it cannot be ignored and must be seen as an additional obstacle to the town's economic development. Difficulties were compounded by arbitrary thresholds, imposed by central government, for both making improvements mandatory and permitting the necessary funds to be raised. Similarly, no connection was made to contemporary local infant mortality figures, that may have hastened the process. Again, it would be interesting to investigate infant mortality statistics in other small towns that struggled for effective sanitation.

The PLAA in 1834 meant a workhouse was not built in Moreton, which seems the catalyst for independent action in welfare provision. The uptake of indoor relief chimes with Snell's general findings for the south Midlands area but Moreton's figures were exceptionally low and a significant finding from this research. This was remarkable in view of the small number of formal charities present in Moreton and demonstrates the importance of local initiatives. Again, further research on small towns would assist comparison and confirm or deny the exceptionality of Moreton.

The returns made for the 1851 Religious Census provide evidence of fluidity in religious observance, an indication that both Anglicans and Nonconformists coexisted without rancour. This is further demonstrated in the crossover between the schools and the cooperation manifest throughout in the social activities that evolved around self-improvement. This cohesion assisted the delivery of charity and welfare but was also important to Moreton's social life. Again, this situation appears to be a by-product of demographic stasis and the lack of an influx of people bringing new ideas into the town.

The arrival of the railway in 1853 was the most significant single event in preventing Moreton's decline into economic and demographic oblivion. Railways are seen as catalysts for exponential growth; however, this study of Moreton provides an extra dimension for this narrative. The railway changed the economic profile of the town but also ensured its survival and, when compared to both Stow and Shipston, via *The Atlas of Entrepreneurship,* shows that having a railway was more significant than being a local administrative centre. The railway facilitated the growth of a coal market that brought people into the town from the hinterland and assisted in transportation for the agricultural market. The railway also provided the townspeople with a source of higher paid employment in comparison with agriculture, which increased their spending power within the local economy. Unlike Andrew's conclusion about the effects of the railway in east Kent, answering Simmons question, 'did the railway make any real difference to Moreton?' the answer would be, 'unquestionably, yes!'. The railway ensured that Moreton survived into the 20th century in a form that would be recognisable to its 19th century inhabitants. Moreover, the lack of industrial development meant it was in an ideal position to take advantage of heritage tourism and its attendant economic benefits.

Appendix Occupational Comparison between Parents and Out-Migrant Sons 1861-1891

1861 leavers

Parents 1851	No	%
AG	25	57
B	4	9
D	5	11
MF	9	20
PP	1	2
	44	100

Sons 1861	No	%
AG	12	24
B	4	8
D	5	10
DS	1	2
I	1	2
M	2	4
MF	13	27
PP	4	8
T	7	14
	49	100

Sons 1881	No	%
AG	3	8
B	12	33
D	4	11
DS	3	8
I	2	6
M	0	0
MF	6	17
PP	3	8
T	3	8
	36	100

Key	
AG	Agriculture
B	Building
D	Dealing
DS	Domestic Service
I	Industry
IS	Industrial Service
M	Mining
MF	Manufacture
PP	Public service
T	Transport

1871 leavers

Parents 1861	No	%
AG	14	45
B	2	6
D	5	16
MF	9	29
T	1	3
	31	100

Sons 1871	No	%
AG	4	10
B	8	21
D	10	26
DS	0	0
I	1	3
IS	5	13
M	0	0
MF	7	18
PP	1	3
T	3	8
	39	100

Sons 1891	No	%
AG	1	5
B	3	15
D	4	20
DS	0	0
I	1	5
IS	4	20
M	1	5
MF	1	5
PP	2	10
T	3	15
	20	100

1881 leavers

Parents 1871	No	%
AG	19	38
B	12	24
D	7	14
DS	2	4
IS	2	4
MF	5	10
PP	1	2
T	2	4
	50	100

Sons 1881	No	%
AG	9	16
B	12	21
D	6	11
DS	2	4
I	1	2
IS	4	7
M	0	0
MF	8	14
PP	6	11
T	9	16
	57	100

Sons 1901	No	%
AG	11	25
B	4	9
D	8	18
DS	1	2
I	1	2
IS	2	5
M	0	0
MF	2	5
PP	4	9
T	11	25
	44	100

1891 leavers

Parents 1881	No	%
AG	15	33
B	4	9
D	11	24
DS	1	2
IS	2	4
MF	5	11
PP	3	7
T	5	11
	46	100

Sons 1891	No	%
AG	8	15
B	7	13
D	7	13
DS	2	4
I	0	0
IS	8	15
M	0	0
MF	12	22
PP	5	9
T	5	9
	54	100

Sons 1911	No	%
AG	7	17
B	5	12
D	3	7
DS	0	0
I	0	0
IS	7	17
M	1	2
MF	8	20
PP	2	5
T	8	20
	41	100

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