

DERBYSHIRE MISCELLANY



A View of Dopping Hill Warr

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**FROM KING'S MEAD PRIORY TO MUNDY STREET:
THE DEVELOPMENT AND DISINTEGRATION OF AN EX-MONASTIC
SITE AND ESTATE IN DERBY 1536-1825**

(by Richard Clark. e-mail: r.clark@open.ac.uk)

Introduction

That the built environment of towns spread considerably over time after 1700, owing to economic expansion and population growth and change, is a commonplace of urban history. Urban environments in Britain became *'built up'* as communities broke out of pre-industrial confines, and have generated and regenerated as they moved through industrial and post-industrial cycles. The features produced as a result in the urban landscape are so familiar as to be unremarkable, but the detailed historical processes that were entailed in these developments are often more elusive for lack of continuous runs of records to illustrate them over significant periods of time.

Ex-monastic sites and estates are often better recorded than most because the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1536-40) and the sale of their confiscated assets by the Crown were carefully recorded by the Court of Augmentations whose records remain in the National Archives. These lands were acquired largely by the nobility and gentry and so further traces of the estates have survived in their estate and testamentary records. King's Mead Priory and its estate in Derby illustrate these points and provide an opportunity to explore in some detail the developments whereby a religious, rural retreat on the outskirts of a medieval borough became part of the industrialised, heavily populated, somewhat notorious *'West End'* of nineteenth-century Derby.

From Nunnery to Gentleman's Estate

The priory lay approximately half a mile west of the borough to the north of Markeaton Brook. In origin it was an offshoot of Darley Abbey when probably founded in the 1150s. When the nuns were freed from the abbey's oversight and their priory became independent around c1180, a small estate in Derby was confirmed to them, consisting of King's Meadow, Donewelleflat, the church of St Werburgh, *'Sirreuisulne'* and the adjacent meadow, eighteen acres of land and another three acres, the land of Radulf Uvenath, Becroft and houses in Derby as well as estates in Mackworth and Trusley.¹ The estate in Derby included the water mill to the south of the priory, henceforth becoming Nun's Mill, the meadows and flats, later enclosed, around the priory, common land in King's Mead that later became more popularly known as Nun's Green, and strips in the common fields of the borough, as indicated in Speed's map of 1610.

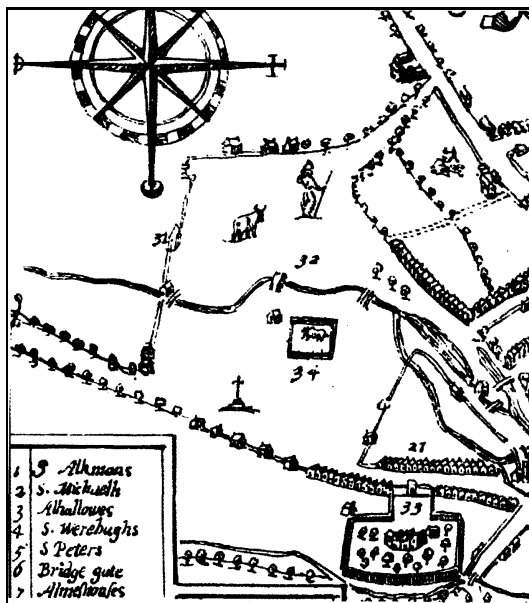


Fig 1. John Speed's Map 1610 showing 'the Nunrye' (31), 'Nunnes Green' (32), 'the Friers' (33) and the Borough Pinfold (34); south of the nunnery is Nun's Mill by Markeaton Brook

This original endowment remained the core of the priory's estates until its dissolution. In 1535 two-thirds of its revenues came from its Derby, Mackworth and Trusley estates, including the rectory of St Werburgh, St Mary Close and three crofts.² In 1518 the gross revenues of the house were calculated at 40 marks (£26 13s 4d), but in 1535 they were reported to be £21 18s 8d gross and £18 6s 2d net. From 1496 to 1524 they supported a community of six to eight nuns. Whether the nunnery had a regular layout of monastic buildings is unknown; the records of Bishop Blythe's visitations only refer to a chapter house.³ Hutton in 1791 claimed that '*Nuns Close*' was still '*full of the vestiges of that religious foundation*', but went into no further detail. In 1825 a tiled pavement of nine feet by four feet, some foundation walls and a stone coffin were discovered by workmen in '*Nun's Field*' on land sold by Mr. Mundy for building development. This was presumably near to the site of Mundy Street which was laid down near to where Speed had mapped the nunnery in 1610.⁴



Fig 2: Moore's map for Simpson's *History of Derby* (1826), showing land sold by Mundy on the north-west side of Nuns Street (1825).

The priory was closed in 1536 under the Act to dissolve the smaller monasteries, and its community was dispersed. Little is known of the fate of the nuns. Joan Curzon, elected prioress in 1531 and still in office in 1535 when the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* was drawn up, seems to have died or left before the closure of the priory. William More recalled in 1602 that Joan, his sister, was prioress at the time of the dissolution, though she was one of the sisters in the absence of the prioress, when James Billingsford alias Kettilbye, a renegade priest and fraudster, visited the nunnery and intimidated its community in January 1535. There is no record of Joan receiving a pension as head of house under the terms of the Act, perhaps because her election was so recent or unconfirmed. Roger More, her father, a Derby draper and taverner, provided an annuity of £1 6s 8d for her in his will in 1541 and Joan, her mother, bequeathed her a pair of flaxen sheets in 1560. Thereafter she disappears.⁵ In a survey of ex-monastic and ex-chantrist pensioners of the 1570s Agnes Vyse was listed under King's Mead Nunnery. She was certainly a nun there from 1518 to 1524, but no other confirmatory evidence of such a pension has been found or any reason why one should have been paid to her. She had died at Standon, Staffordshire on 14 November 1548.⁶ Of the other nuns after the dissolution there is no further evidence.

The Crown soon disposed of its monastic windfall to the English nobility and gentry in the late 1530s and 1540s. Estates, formerly firmly secured to permanent ecclesiastical corporations, now fell to the more fluid vagaries of family inheritance and fortunes. After its dissolution, King's Mead priory was leased to Thomas Sutton of Over Haddon on 20 June 1537 and included in a grant to Francis Talbot, the 5th Earl of Shrewsbury, dated 16 November 1541. The Earl was given permission to alienate the site of the priory to Thomas Sutton and Agnes,

his wife. On 29 November 1544 Thomas Sutton purchased the priory's demesne lands he already leased for £94 9s 10d.⁷ These were listed as twenty acres of meadow in the King's Meadow, five acres of pasture in Nun's Close, six acres of pasture in St Mary's Close and three acres in New Close. Although he held a lease for 126 acres of the priory's arable lands in the common fields of Derby, he was unable to purchase them until 1553.⁸

In 1532-3 Joan Curzon, the prioress, had leased a tenement in Friar Gate and a cottage in the Market Head to Oliver and Robert Thacker for 51 years, the lease being eventually consigned to William Bainbridge. Robert Bainbridge, his son, renewed the lease in 1584-5 for forty years, having allowed it to lapse for a short period, but in the meantime John Bullock of the Inner Temple and Darley Abbey procured an interest in the properties. He claimed that Bainbridge had gained his lease upon false pretenses and was fraudulently depriving the Crown of the true rent for the two properties, so enabling him to petition the Court of Exchequer early in 1591. Bullock also alleged that Bainbridge had recovered possession of the old lease to cover up his deception, though Bainbridge countered by declaring that because there was likely to be a dispute about a close of pasture contained in the lease to the '*hurt of a poor infant*', the nephew of Thomas Sutton and his heir, he regained the old lease '*to give it to the mother of the infant to defend his right when occasion should serve*'. The ensuing investigation about the Crown's reserved rent in the property revealed neither more about the claims of the Suttons nor how successfully Bainbridge upheld his rights. By the time he drew up his will in 1613 he had sold his Derby estates and these disputed properties cease to be traceable.⁹

Thomas Sutton of Over Haddon, the first lay occupier of the priory, was a rising lawyer and servant of the Earls of Shrewsbury, thus explaining the 5th Earl's help in procuring the site of King's Mead Priory for him. He was the Recorder of Derby by 1545 and was possibly already in that office when he first leased the priory in 1537. He was a Member of Parliament for Derby in 1542, 1545, 1547 and 1553 for Mary I's first Parliament, a Derbyshire Justice of the Peace from 1541 and deputy steward of the Honor of Tutbury under the Earl of Shrewsbury among other offices.¹⁰ The priory obviously provided a suitable base from which he could direct his various professional interests and the Earl of Shrewsbury, through him, was able to maintain his own influence in the town.

A contentious inheritance 1570-1638

The likelihood is that Thomas Sutton for the remainder of his life attempted to develop this new estate and adapt the priory buildings for his own domestic needs, but the precise details are lacking, not for want of information but as a result of conflicting detail. He soon tried to exploit his new interests. His attempts to enclose Nun's Meadow with the permission of Derby Corporation resulted in disorder amongst townsmen, led by John Sharpe, in 1545 and an attempt to displace him as Recorder. To restore peace he conceded that he would '*throw his enclosures down*'. He drew up his will in 1570 as being of '*Kinges Meade nigh Darby*' and bequeathed his house '*called the Nunnes*' to his eldest son, Alan, indicating that he had converted the priory into a residence.¹¹ On the other hand the family feud that he unleashed as a consequence of his will caused disputed claims and conflicting evidence about what happened to the priory estate and buildings during his and his sons' lifetimes.

Thomas Sutton had married twice, first to Agnes Barnard of London '*a poor maid well and virtuously brought up*' and, secondly, to Frances Bagshawe of the Abney family '*my now wife who brought with her great substance*'. Each had produced children: four surviving sons, Alan, Thomas, Bartholomew and Rowland from the first match and two sons, Nicholas and George, and a daughter, Frances, by the second. Because of the humbler origins of his first wife, he decided to debar their family from inheriting his patrimonial estate and other lands, except for the priory estate in Derby, which went to Alan Sutton. Even then Frances was provided with a life interest in New Close, St Mary Close and Nun's Close from the priory's lands and the arable ground within the common fields of Derby but was encumbered with payments of up to £80 for Alan's three full brothers. Thomas confessed that he believed the provision of £40 for Bartholomew, his third son by his first wife, to be inadequate, confessing '*I would have better advanced [him] if my power had been*'. The plea seems a bit rich as he provided George, his second son by his second marriage, with £50 when he came of age, a further £20 and the remainder of the term of an annuity of £3 from Sir John Zouche. William More deposed in 1602 that he believed that the lands Thomas bequeathed to his second family were worth either £300 or £400 a year and those left to Alan Sutton in Derby 100 marks a year.¹²

More added that Thomas had divided his estate in this way not '*for any offence or mislike*' of his first family, even though Thomas in his will described Rowland, the fourth son by his first wife as '*that unthrifty child who*

has been much to my costs and discomfort'. More was insistent that the inequitable partition was done *'by the persuasion of his second wife'*. Alice Beaumont, More's sister, recalled that Sutton on his deathbed wished his children by his first wife were with him, but said *'they may not come at me for my wife will not suffer yt (weeping then full tenderly)'*, though one has to remember both More and his sister were giving evidence in 1602 to commissioners appointed by the Court of Exchequer on behalf of Thomas Sutton junior, the second son of the first marriage, with the consequent tendency to depict Frances Sutton as the eponymous wicked stepmother.¹³

The outcome of the will was, unsurprisingly, a long family feud, despite Thomas Sutton's attempts in his will to prevent this by exhorting his family *'to be content withal if they shall have any fear of God and consider my beginning and travailsome life in this world'* and by warning Alan that if he were to interfere with the provisions of the will made for Frances, his wife, and Nicholas, her elder son, he would only receive a third of the bequest made to him with the remainder to go to Nicholas. Alan was also told that, if he failed to pay the legacies given to his brothers, he would lose control of the arable lands in Derby to his elder half-brother. This was to no avail; Alan Sutton, according to the interrogatories on behalf of George Sutton in the 1602 Court of Exchequer case, went to law against his stepmother. Thomas Sutton, for all of the old man's wish that the admonition would remove *'thereby all discord, suit in law and variance'* among those *'whom every good man would most wish after his death to live and continue in love, peace and unity'*, lacked the acumen and understanding of human nature one might have expected in such an experienced lawyer.¹⁴ The provisions of his will marked the beginnings of the decline of the King's Mead estate in Derby and its piecemeal dispersal and the eventual transformation of the priory's site from an extra-urban gentry retreat to an industrialized, working class suburb of the nineteenth century borough.

Alan Sutton did not long survive his father. In 1602 both Thomas Hallowes of Derby and John Lord of Boulton deposed that Thomas Sutton, junior, Alan's brother and heir, upon his marriage conveyed to Bartholomew, his brother, all the lands belonging to the Priory, reserving to himself only a life interest in the estate. The latter claimed he had seen the Chancery record, dated 11 May 1572. By 1602 Bartholomew was presumably dead and George Sutton, the younger son of Thomas senior's second marriage, brought a case in the Court of the Exchequer against his half-brother upon the pretext that Thomas had sold or granted away portions of the estates which he had no right to do as only a life tenant, thereby potentially harming the remaining interests of the Crown in the estate.

Quite what was the spark that caused George to take action is not clear. He was Thomas's heir; his half-brother's marriage was childless and Thomas was now in his seventies. Perhaps he feared that he could not wait for his brother's demise if he were to preserve something from the estate for himself or his heirs. On the other hand, perhaps Thomas had been the initial aggressor against his brother. The interrogatories in his Exchequer action on George's behalf mention Thomas Sutton's forcible entry on George's estate at Over Haddon and his speeches stating his claims there, but do not date these actions. George was prompted, perhaps, by exasperation. Another interrogatory mentions an attempt to come to a compromise around 1599 whereby the King's Mead estate would have been transferred to him. This was followed by another unsuccessful attempt at a negotiated settlement in October 1601 after George had started the Exchequer action.¹⁵

George Sutton had been aided in gathering a case together by Philip Aram who had been the younger Thomas Sutton's solicitor. Deponents on behalf of Thomas Sutton were at pains to undermine Aram's character. By their account he had entered Sutton's service around 1595 and had soon earned his special trust, enjoying both bed and board at his employer's house and access to the deeds of the property. William Terrin recalled Sutton *'would seldom be without his company at dinner or supper'* and Thomas Hallowes claimed that for his services Sutton leased Nun's Mill to him under the market rate. Aram was also joined by Richard Dale, another lawyer, and both were denigrated by those providing evidence on behalf of Thomas Sutton as *'very busy...and intermeddlers in other men's suits and causes'*. Richard Dale, according to them, was not averse to violent means. William More recalled that some of Dale's servants had beaten *'divers of his neighbours which he thinks was done by the procurement of Richard Dale'*. John Maddock gave witness to his beating at the hands of Dale's brother and another servant upon his orders over an enclosure dispute. Matthew Bradshaw, deposing in the aftermath of the Earl of Essex's rebellion, hinted at Dale's disloyalty as a subject. He remembered Dale saying when Essex went to Ireland as Lord Deputy that *'it was never a good world since a woeman did begin to rule nor never would be...'* He added that Dale was charged under the militia for a musket and had said cryptically *'he knew not which way it might happen to go'*, although he dared not reveal these words before for fear Dale should have killed him.¹⁶

As for Thomas Sutton's sales of part of his King's Mead estate, John Langley named nine purchasers, all prominent Derby townsmen. Of these Robert Brookhouse claimed that in about 1592 he had bought three acres of arable in Whitecross and Cundith Fields and William More said that he had purchased another three acres of arable around 1590, one acre each in Park Field, Whitecross Field and Stockbrook Field. Edward Smith reported that Thomas Sutton had also felled ash trees on the estate. As a result George Sutton petitioned the Lord Treasurer and upon receipt of the latter's order called a meeting early in 1601 to survey the lands at variance. Thomas Sutton refused to comply. George Sutton consequently sent his and Richard Dale's servants with Philip Aram to survey Nun's Flats and leased some of the lands in dispute to Edward Smith, then senior bailiff, Edmund Sleigh and Thomas Hallowes whose servants came with ploughs to till and sow the land. Philip Aram delivered possession of Nun's Mill, as its tenant, to George Sutton.

According to another interrogatory on his behalf in his case before the Court of the Exchequer, George Sutton changed tack in October 1601 when he tried negotiating by meeting his half-brother and Philip Aram at Kirk Ireton, resulting, it is implied, in an agreement that Thomas Sutton should have an annuity for his own and his wife's lives in return for surrendering his right to the disputed lands. Thomas was pleased with the agreement, it was reported, and hoped that his wife and her friends would *'like well of yt'*. *Aram urged him not to let her meddle as she had done heretofore*.¹⁷ Thomas Sutton had second thoughts, and whatever was the full outcome of the disputes with his half-brother, he retained the King's Mead estate until his death in 1616, leaving it in the control of Constance Sutton, his widow, until her death in 1638.

The Exchequer depositions of 1602 provide some insight into what had happened to the priory buildings since the nunnery's dissolution, though, because of their nature, the evidence provided is not firm; both sides contested the details to support their respective cases. According to William More and Thomas Alsop, Thomas Sutton senior had built anew a water powered corn mill within the priory site, though he had incorporated a small portion of Nun's Green in order to do so. They claimed that they had no memory of a mill being there before. This should not necessarily be taken at face value. The tale was possibly a ruse to undermine George Sutton's plea through the Court of Exchequer on the basis of harm to the Crown's financial interests. Interrogatories, drawn up on his behalf, asked whether Nun's Mill had been part of the Burton Abbey estate and whether a mill had existed there at the dissolution in order to establish the Crown's interest as successor to Burton Abbey. There is reason to believe this was the case whatever Sutton's building activities there. Robert, Abbot of Burton, had leased Scirreausmuln in Derby to Darley Abbey in 1151 and this was later assigned to the nuns. At the end of the twelfth century they were paying the abbot of Burton a reserved rent for it. This mill was probably the predecessor of Nun's Mill and William More did admit he had heard some rent had been paid to Burton Abbey.¹⁸

The evidence about the fate of the priory is confused for similar reasons. Thomas Hallowes, in a deposition made on George Sutton's behalf in his Court of Exchequer case, claimed that, when Thomas Sutton senior died, there was a fair mansion house that Thomas Sutton junior had pulled down with the materials sold and that £300 would be needed to rebuild it, a story confirmed by John Hall and Edward Smith, the latter adding that most of the materials had been bought by Mr Bainbridge. William More claimed that Thomas Sutton junior had sold building materials to Edward Beaumont, Bainbridge, Bentley and Campion and had done so at the *'earnest request'* of his stepmother. On the other hand Thomas Alsop claimed that Thomas Sutton senior had demolished a barn of seven or eight bays, an ox house and a stable and part of the dwelling house, the materials being sold to Messrs Bainbridge, Bentley, Campion and Allestrey, but confirmed that the demolition had been at the entreaty of Sutton's second wife. Robert Neale seconded this story, adding that the stone lay in such abundance on Nun's Green that the townsmen complained of it before it was sold to William Bainbridge, Mr Babington and Mr Haughton. Sutton then demolished further buildings from which thirty loads of plaster were carried to Over Haddon and much of the stone sold to Mr Curzon.¹⁹

The exact details will probably never be determined, though Thomas Sutton senior in his will described his house as *'the nunnes'*, odd if he had demolished it. His son and his wife in their wills said they were of *'Kingsmeade neare Derby'*. John Speed's map (1610) shows only the Nunnery and Nun's mill, suggesting that Thomas and Constance Sutton remained in whatever was left of or had replaced the priory buildings. The surviving early brick building in Nuns Street with a re-used masonry doorway and other stonework, now the lodge for the Nunnery Court hall of residence of the University of Derby, has in modern times become associated with the priory, but this association seems only to date from 1806 when Brayley marked it as *'remains of a nunnery'* on his map of Derby.²⁰

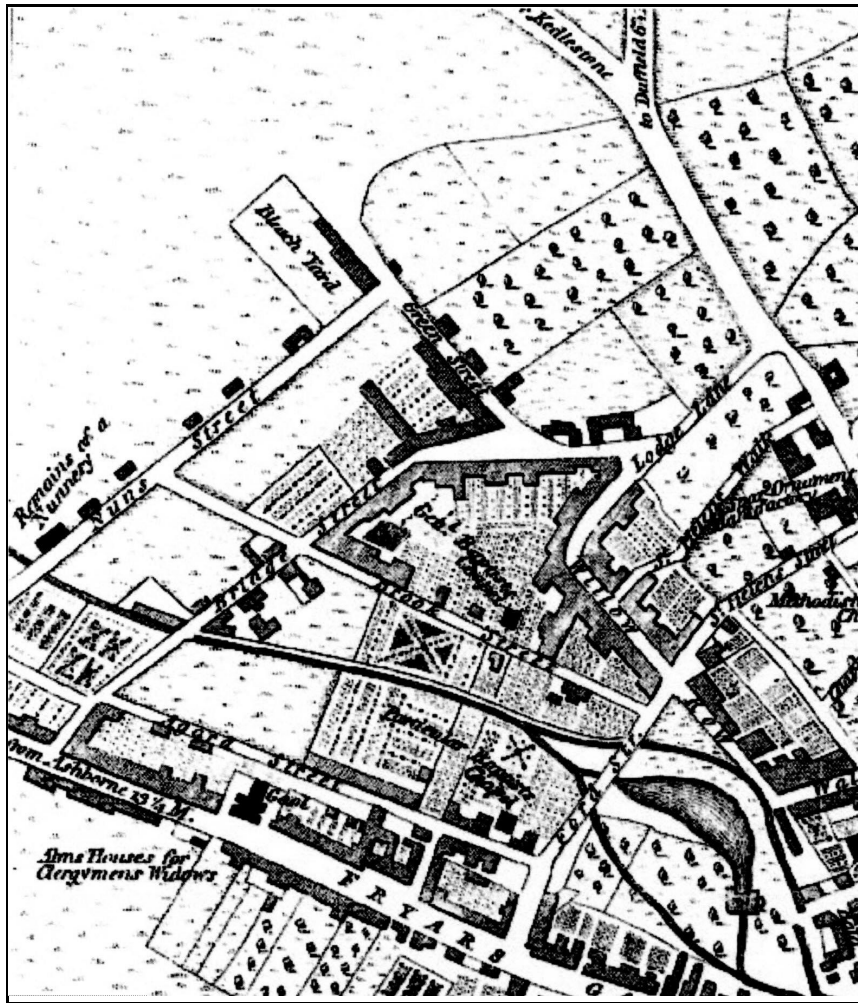


Fig 3. Brayley's map of 1806 showing the Nunnery in a different position to Speed's: the buildings shown in the maps of 1762-67 and 1791 (see Figs 5-6) on the present Nun's Street still appear along with a new bleach yard.

The Price of Discord: the end of the Suttons 1616-38

The probate inventories of Thomas and Constance Sutton, drawn up in 1616 and 1638 respectively, reveal a sizeable, though not significantly large, house with a typical layout of rooms and service buildings. In 1616 the service buildings were listed as a kitchen, buttery, brewhouse, dairy, coalhouse and coach house but in 1638 as a kitchen, brewhouse and dairies. The dwelling spaces in 1616 were a hall, parlour, another parlour and study, two garden chambers, Mr Sutton's chamber, a next chamber and a maid's chamber and in 1638 a hall, parlour, nether parlour, back chambers, an outer chamber, Mr. Flacket's chamber and Mrs Sutton's lodging and closet.²¹

Thomas Sutton's will (10 May 1612) indicates that the impact of his legal disputes on his disposable wealth had been profound. He confessed that his gift to Mr Exuperius Bradshaughe (Bradshaw) and his wife would have been larger, *'if my abilitie would have served, I would have bestowed a farre greater gifte'*. In his legacy to George, his half-brother, he had written,

'I doe hartely desire of god to forgive the wrongs of tenne yeares sute done unto me without right or cause, And doe earnestly desire of god to forgive us both and to make us both his faithfull servants, And if those troublesome unnatural sutes had not indebted me to divers my good friends which are unsatisfied, I should have bene better able to have dealte with my friends then nowe I can doe.'

He made Adrian Farnham and Francis Mundy his overseers and gave them gold rings because *'to them in my greatest sutes and troubles I was most beholden unto'*.²²

The probate inventory, attached to the will, reveals a personal estate more limited in value and extent than one might expect from someone of his social status. In total his appraisers valued his goods at just over £185 of which nearly £104 were represented by crops in the barns and stables, livestock and carts and other *'implementes of husbandrie'*. In comparison during the same decade, townsmen and women, from Derby, technically of lower social status, left more valuable estates. Marjery Morwyn, widow of a rector of Norbury, left a personal estate valued at over £246, Thomas Dyas, a tanner and maltster one of over £318 and Robert Brookhouse, a tanner, of over £1,000. The goods in his house were not carefully itemised, though some evidence of his status emerges. He owned plate worth £11, but it was not an exceptional collection for Derby. Marjery Morwyn's silver was valued at £21 and Robert Brookhouse's at £27. Sutton had a coach house with £13 6s 8d worth of goods therein. The value of goods in the hall and the parlour were small. Within all the rooms, excluding the coach house and his plate, they amounted to a modest £39 6s 4d.²³

The impression is one of faded gentility. Even so, according to the town chronicle, Thomas Sutton was buried *'soldier-like'*, that is given a funeral appropriate to his social status. An alabaster monument to him and his wife of two kneeling figures was erected in All Saints Church, though it did not survive the rebuilding of the church in the 1720s. The same fate befell the western gallery he had erected there in 1614, though its memorial plaque survives.²⁴

The probate inventory of Constance Sutton (died 1638) also indicates the family's fallen fortunes.²⁵ Her personal estate was valued at £70 because, unlike her husband, she no longer ran a home farm. By 1638 the value of the plate had fallen to £8 and the household goods to just over £33. A coach, the only one recorded in a probate inventory from Derby in the seventeenth century, and its harness were valued at £2. Funds were so short that, when she drew up her will in 1634, she raised some of the money to pay her legacies by selling her estates at a nominal sum of £100 to Thomas Brudenell, her nephew. The rest of the capital, *'knowing my personall estate to be too shorte to pay my debts, discharg my funeral expences and to satisfy my legacies'* was to be raised from the profits of the estate due at her decease and for one year afterwards to be collected by her executors.

Constance celebrated her longevity, her piety and the ending of the house of Sutton in Derby in an unusual will. After making conventional gifts to the poor of the five Derby parishes together with the townships of Markeaton, Mackworth and Allestree and providing for poor prisoners in Derby gaol and poor stragglers who came to her burial, she bequeathed memorial rings of gold and bibles of various values to the horde of her surviving relatives. To make her point that George Sutton had not succeeded in his quest decades before, these relatives for the most part were from her family rather than her husband's. George was left a bible and a ring and so was Bernard Sutton, her nephew and his son. Constance, Bernard's daughter and her goddaughter, received twenty shillings. Otherwise the legacies went to the Burnell family of Winkburn, Nottinghamshire, the descendants of her brother, the Wombwell descendants of her niece Olive Burnell; Norris Cave, Mrs Mountney, the Brudenells of Stonton Wyville, Leicestershire, the Flackets of Hanson Grange, the Charltons of Sandiacre and Hurts of Casterne, Staffordshire, descended from her niece Elizabeth Burnell; to William Strelley of Beauchief, son of her niece Dorothy Burnell, and to the Mundys of Markeaton and Allestree, the Poles of Radbourne, the Lewes of Marr, Yorkshire and the Farnhams of Quarndon, all descended from her long dead sister, Jane. There were rings and bibles for nephews and nieces, great nephews and great nieces and rings for several of her friends. Each ring was to have a death's head engraved on it and each Bible the words *'Constance Suttons giuff'*.

Money legacies were left to friends, servants and the younger members of her family and provision made for the apprenticeship of Philip Mundy, a junior scion of the Markeaton family. Particularly favoured relatives received legacies of personal goods, sometimes with strings attached. Constance Farnham was bequeathed a silver bowl and cover and the coach with furniture for four horses, being urged *'not to parte with yt to any but to keepe yt to her owne use'*. Agnes Flacket was left a ring with a stone that Constance had usually worn on her thumb with the proviso it was to be handed on to her daughter and then grandson. Constance was determined to be remembered.

She also provided for an elaborate wake for 360 persons at the town's three leading inns, the Talbot, the George and the White Hart, each providing for 120 guests according to their status. Each inn was to provide 40 dinners at 12d each, 40 at 8d and 40 at 6d, *'hoping yt may be thus performed with lesse troble and better avoiding of Confusion which might otherwise happen'*. The House of Sutton took its exit from Derby with a very socially stratified party, still asserting its connections and status after a trail of misfortune and self-destruction worthy of inclusion in Spelman's accounts of the fates of the sacrilegious purchasers of monastic lands.²⁶

The Dispersal of the King's Mead Estate 1590-1825

The degree to which Thomas Sutton depleted his estate through sales becomes apparent from a later Exchequer case of 1675-6 about the liability to tithes of lands formerly belonging to the nunnery. Thomas Walker then deposed that Mrs. Sutton had held 60 acres of arable in the fields of Derby, under half of the estate's original arable acreage.²⁷ The case provides evidence not only of what happened to the land passed on by Constance Sutton to Thomas Brudenell in 1638 but also of what occurred to some of the properties sold off before.

Samuel Ward in his deposition in the 1675-6 Exchequer case mentioned some of the lands sold by Thomas Sutton. He referred to the acre in Whitecross Field and the acre in Park Field held by Nathaniel Hallowes, possibly two of the three acres of arable land Nathaniel's father, Thomas, had purchased in the 1590s. Nathaniel sold the acre in Whitecross Field to William Taborer the Younger. Ward also mentioned Thomas Sutton's sales in the 1590s to William Wood, referring to one close towards Litchurch and one acre of arable in Whitecross Field. Thomas Hallowes in 1602 identified this close as Nun's Close. These lands descended to John Brookhouse through Elizabeth, William's daughter, who had married Robert Brookhouse. Brookhouse in turn sold the close to Henry Noton and the arable land in 1652 to William Taborer senior.²⁸ William Taborer in his will dated 9 February 1653 bequeathed one acre in Whitecross Field to William his son and another five in the same field to Nathaniel, another son, with Anne his wife enjoying a life interest in half of the latter acres. When Nathaniel drew up his will on 23 January 1660, his land in Whitecross Field was given to Anne, his mother, and William left seven acres in the same field to Ralph Brough, his brother-in-law. The Taborers in both generations had risen in prosperity as maltsters.²⁹

On 28 January 1695 Ralph Brough left lands in Whitecross Field, amongst others in Derby which were formerly the estate of Anne Taborer, to his wife for life and then to Ralph, one of his sons. Ralph Brough was described as a gentleman in his will and had gained some notoriety as being intruded into the mayoralty by James II as a more malleable agent for his policies.³⁰ Which of, or whether, these acres were formerly part of the Sutton estate was not specified in these wills.

From 1638 the Sutton estate in Derby fell into the hands of owners whose interests were centered elsewhere and who no longer resided on it. They had less reason and attachment to it to maintain its integrity. On 14 October 1641 Thomas Brudenell of Stonton Wyville, Leicestershire, Constance's nephew, conveyed '*Nun's Mills*', a corn mill, Long Close on its south side and three acres in Whitecross Field to Francis Mundy of Markeaton for £260. Samuel Ward, Brudenell's former tenant, deposed in 1676 that Mundy had purchased with the mill a little piece of enclosed land attached to it and three or four acres in Whitecross Field.³¹ Whatever the exact details, Nun's Mill remained part of the Mundys' estate, as noted by Woolley c.1715 and was used to provide part of the portion for Anne, wife of Wrightson Mundy, in 1742/3 and was tenanted by Messrs Fox and Pickford in 1786.³² It was, perhaps, after Mundy's purchase in 1641 that the house adjoining the mill, now the lodge of Nunnery Court, the University of Derby, on Nun's Street was constructed, if it was not in existence before.³³

Edward Large had purchased a close of five acres in Stockbrook Field and Gawen Broughton four or five acres, but where Ward did not specify in his deposition in 1676. Lack of evidence prevents tracing Large's and Broughton's purchases further, but, like those buying the land Thomas Sutton sold in the 1590s, Edward Large was a prominent townsman, a dyer by trade, a bailiff in 1628, one of the borough's first aldermen in 1638 and thrice mayor.³⁴ 'Gawine Broughton was described in Thomas Sutton's will in 1612 as '*my true and honest servant*' and he hoped that '*he will continue serving my wife after my decease*', a desire fulfilled, as Constance in her will in 1638 referred to him as '*my late servant*', 'Gawyn' Broughton. She provided bequests for his children and widow. When Thomas, Broughton's son, died in 1675 he was a maltster and prosperous husbandman.³⁵

Thomas Brudenell, now knighted, but still of Leicestershire, remained in possession of properties in Derby in June 1657 when the Corporation of Derby petitioned Chancery to subpoena him and other Derby freeholders for having encouraged the breaking down of enclosures made under license from the borough and for denying the Corporation's right to make such grants '*in severalty*'. He died in 1663 and Thomas, his son and heir, then of Whittington, Staffordshire, in his will dated 21 March 1670, permitted his son and heir to sell outlying portions of the Brudenell estates in order to raise portions for his two daughters.³⁶ This probably explains Samuel Ward's deposition in 1676, that Henry Mellor, grandson of Henry Mellor, the first mayor of Derby, had '*lately purchased*' the remainder of '*Brudenell's farm ... , the other part having been sold to several other persons*', Ward then being Mellor's tenant. William Shallcross then deposed that what was called Brudenell's farm had

been part of Sutton's farm or King's Mead, perhaps suggesting that the Suttons' house was still standing, but thereafter the trail of its evidence goes cold.³⁷

Mellor overextended himself and he died indebted in 1683. When Robert, his brother and heir, drew up his will in 1687 he assigned the interests of his estates, with the exception of his house and a backside close, to three trustees with instructions to sell off as much as necessary to settle his and his brother's mortgages and debts.³⁸ Winding up of the estate was not completed until 1703, after the death of Elizabeth, Robert's widow, when the remaining portion was purchased by Isaac Borrow, then building up his Castlefield estate in the south of the borough. The former Sutton or Brudenell property, however, was sold to Simon Degge around this time; in 1705 he purchased the severalty of Nun's Flat from the Corporation of Derby and William Woolley noted him as its owner c1715.³⁹

Simon Degge was the grandson of Sir Simon Degge (?1612-1703), Recorder of Derby from 1661. The elder Degge took a dim view of the purchase of former ecclesiastical lands, and had written in 1670 an account of the Staffordshire gentry whose fortunes had diminished after purchasing ex-monastic estates, later published with Erdeswick's county history. In it he opined,

*'I wish no better success to the Sacrilegious Purchasers of this age, and sure the same God that has been thus just in his own Cause, neither slumbereth nor sleepeth, but will send the same Vengeance after it, for Lands once given Deo et Sanctae Ecclesiae, I know no human Power that can justly alien.'*⁴⁰

Simon Degge did not share his grandfather's attitudes and purchased the lands in Derby and Mapleton with the marriage portion of Selina Williams, his first wife, whom he married in the mid-1690s.

After his death this estate was contested between Simon, the eldest son of his first marriage and Jane, his second wife. The ill-feeling the suit engendered resulted in the younger Simon, then of Blyth Bridge, Staffordshire, when he drew up his will on 15 November 1727, insisting that this estate, if he and his two brothers died without heirs, should not descend *'to the posterity of the aforementioned widow'*. When he was visiting Paris in May 1737, Simon Degge lapsed into insanity and was declared a lunatic in law in 1739, resulting in his properties falling under Crown protection. He died without recovering on 8 February 1767 and without being able to alter his will. By this time his only surviving relative was Dorothy Wilmot, his half sister, and the claims on his estates were sufficiently problematic as to warrant an action in the Court of Chancery between his surviving trustees and the various claimants. Staunton Degge, who drew up his will in 1758 and died in 1765, made no mention of his insane half-brother in it, let alone made any legacy to him: perhaps reflective of remaining bitterness in the family.

The estate Simon's father purchased in Derby formed Lot 1 in the auction of those assets which lacked a legal claimant. It was purchased in 1773 on behalf of Francis Noel Clarke Mundy of Markeaton for £7,200⁴¹ and consisted of just over 63 acres, including Nun's Close of 13 acres. By March 1786 this purchase had been reduced to 44 acres, following the exchange of Clover Close and Rye Flat with Mr Gisborne for other lands in Markeaton. Lysons confirmed in 1817 that the site of the nunnery was in the hands of Francis Mundy of Markeaton, but by 1825 he had sold off some of this land for building development, as noted above and commemorated in Mundy Street.⁴²

Mundy was then responding to the profound economic and demographic shifts transforming the borough into an expanding, modern industrial town and, above all, to the disappearance of the neighbouring Nun's Green as common ground. The forty-eight acres of Nun's Green might conjure up an idyllic scene, but the seventeenth-century and eighteenth-century reality was less wholesome. This was as much a working open space as one for leisure. Seventeenth-century probate records confirm the picture of the Green provided by Woolley c.1715, dotted with the barns and yards of townsmen to store gorse for fuel and working materials and with sites for the extraction of clay for bricks and their firing. It was also home to the Borough's pinfold and kennels, and in 1674 Robert Bennet maintained a bowling green there.⁴³ Some of these features appear on Burdett's plan of the borough of 1767 (see Fig 5).

By this time the town's population had more than doubled from around 4,000 in c1715 to over 8,000 in 1788, increasing pressure on available space in the borough. To ease this the county gaol transferred to a new site and

building on Nun's Green in 1756 and in 1768 the Corporation sponsored a private Act of Parliament to enable it to sell off part of the Green as building land along Friar Gate 'for real want of more dwelling houses', using the profits to improve the rest by the removal of 'nuisances and incroachments', defined as 'small buildings' and 'digging gravel'.⁴⁴ By 1789 a campaign began to sell the rest of Nun's Green for building land to raise funds to pay for paving and lighting within the town. There was vigorous opposition, along party lines, headed by Daniel Parker Coke and F.N.C Mundy of Markeaton, two prominent local Tories, but to no avail. A second act to sell off the land passed through Parliament in 1792 and the development of Agard Street, Bridge Street, Brook Street and part of Nun's Street, a mixture of housing, chapels and factories, followed (see Fig 2 and 3).⁴⁵



Fig 4. Nun's Green in Burdett's Survey 1762-7 showing the gaol (L) of 1756, before the first enclosure of Nun's Green in 1768 for building plots along Friar Gate.



Fig 5. Moneypenny's revision of Burdett's map (1791) for Hutton's *History of Derby* shows development along Friar Gate just before the complete enclosure of Nun's Green in 1792.

By 1825 Francis Mundy, who had succeeded to the Markeaton estate in 1815 on his father's death, had decided to sell off some of the land his father had acquired in 1773 to enable building development on the west side of Nun's Street, including Nun's silk mill, now the Nunnery Court site (Fig 6).⁴⁶ The rest remained part of the Markeaton estate with an open space running up the brook valley towards Markeaton Hall and Park, still a valuable green 'lung' in the city. These building developments have since been swept away in the post-war clearances, and replaced by newer housing and, more recently, by student accommodation for the University of Derby.

By 1825 space for housing was pressing as the town's population reached 21,439 in 1821 and 27,190 in 1831. Mundy was not the only one to take advantage of the need for building land. In the same edition of the *Derby Mercury* (2 March 1825) which reported the discovery of the site of King's Mead priory, noted above, a notice announced the imminence of the auction of forty-three acres of the Castlefields estate in the south of the borough. Terraced housing and factories soon covered it.

Conclusions

In the case of King's Mead Priory and its holdings in Derby, the dissolution of the monasteries replaced a permanent ecclesiastical corporation and its 'dead hand' over its estate with a less stable form of ownership by a rising member of the gentry, bringing the more variable vicissitudes of inheritable property to bear on its future.

In this particular case the impact of these rights resulted in the piecemeal disintegration of this ex-monastic estate through sale over the next two and a half centuries.



Fig 6. Board of Health Map, 1852, showing the building development after the sale of the remainder of Nun's Green from 1792 and to the north-west of Nun's Street.

Thomas Sutton probably acquired the priory in the 1530s because of his Borough recordership and Francis Mundy in 1641 perhaps purchased Nun's Mill to supply Derby's bakers. Otherwise the proximity of the town seems to have had little impact on the developments recorded above until the last decade of the eighteenth century and first quarter of the nineteenth. Only then did Derby impinge significantly through its rapid demographic and economic growth. Before then, the estate was more affected by the vagaries of human nature and health and their outcomes rather than by the influences of a nearby urban environment. These attached to any heritable property, wherever sited and whether ex-monastic or not. The misfortunes of the estate's owners may be ascribed to their own failings and feelings rather than to the outcome of divine retribution for sacrilege.

Appendix

The core of the priory's estate cannot be mapped with precision. Apart from its arable lands scattered in Derby's open fields, the lands surrounding the nunnery lay in the parishes of St Werburgh and St Alkmund and Nun's Green in the parishes of St Werburgh and All Saints. In favourable circumstances they should have shown up as tithe free in nineteenth-century maps, but the tithes of All Saints Derby had already been commuted, so no map was needed or produced, and the only tithable lands in St Alkmund's parish lay east of the Derwent, the only portion of the parish mapped. As a result only the portion of the estate in St Werburgh's parish may be identified with much certainty by comparing the parish boundaries with the tithe map of 1844 to deduce where the tithe free lands were and to identify those that were part of Nun's Green and those that belonged to the nunnery and to the Dominican Friary south of Friar Gate. At least this provides evidence to show that the attempt to impose tithe payments on *'Sutton's Farm'* that resulted in a case in the Court of the Exchequer in the 1670s had been unsuccessful.⁴⁷



Fig 7: Tithe free lands identified from the tithe map for St Werburgh's parish which were likely to have been part of the King's Mead Priory estate

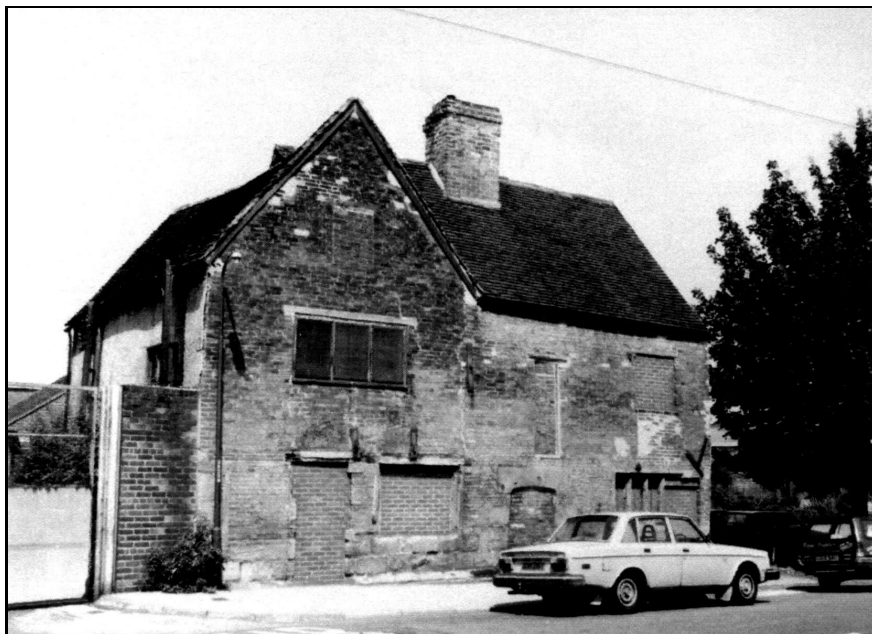


Fig 8: The then derelict house associated with Nun's Mill before its conversion to the lodge of Nunnery Court by the University of Derby

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INFANT MORTALITY IN DERBY AND NOTTINGHAM 1890-1911

(by Denise Amos. e-mail: deniseboobyer@gmail.com)

The great value of a study of child mortality is as an index as to the state of the environmental conditions, both public and private, social facilities and health in a particular area.¹ It is only when all of these factors are examined that we can truly understand why the rates of infant mortality were stubbornly high throughout the late nineteenth century, even though the general health of the population had improved through developments in science and preventative medicine. Many studies of infant mortality have focused on single causes: for example poverty and wealth, working class mothers and their employment, breast feeding, illegitimacy and the socio-economic conditions of a particular area.

This article is based on my thesis and one by G. M. Nolan.² It takes a comparative view looking at Nottingham and Derby at the end of the nineteenth century. In 1897 Nottingham received city status and had twice the population of Derby in the census returns of 1891, 1901 and 1911.

Table 1. Population and acreage figures for 1891, 1901 and 1911 for Nottingham and Derby

Year	Nottingham		Derby	
1891	213,877		94,148	
1901	239,743	10935 ac.	105,912	3449 ac
1911	259,904	10935 ac.	123,410	3449 ac

Source: Census Returns for 1891, 1901 and 1911

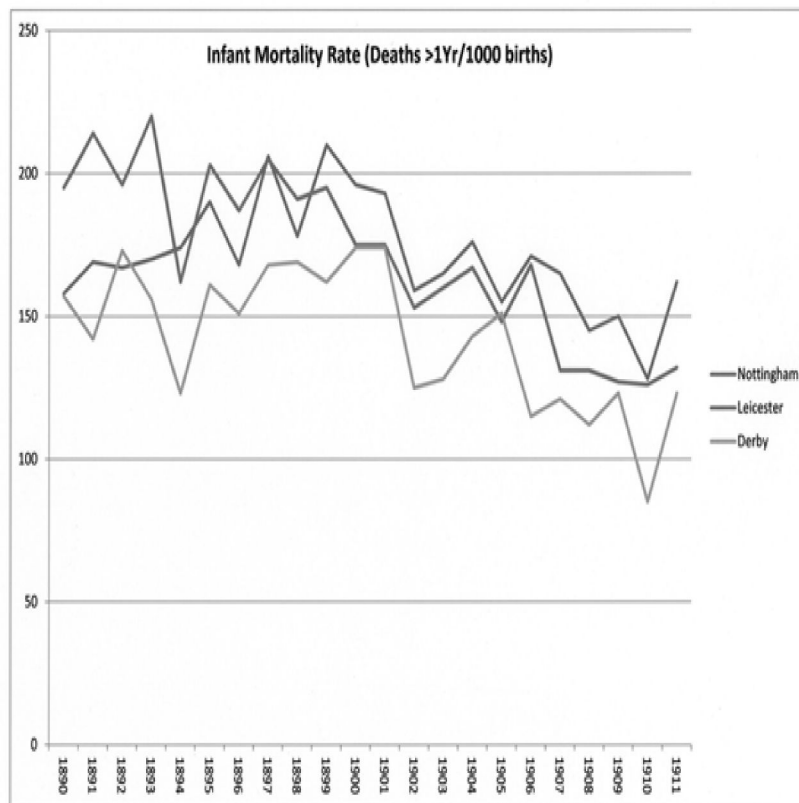
Nottingham was also a greater employer of women in the hosiery trade, whereas Derby's industry was based around the railway; it not only underlined the town's importance as a route centre and junction but also as a centre for engineering in the railway workshops. It also supported a large printing company, Bemrose and Sons, appointed printer to the Midland Railway. Much of this work would have been undertaken by men.³ However, despite the growing importance of its industrial development, Derby in the nineteenth century continued to play its established role as a regional centre, especially for farming.⁴ The proportion of married or widowed women in employment in Derby was relatively low. Hosiery work in the town was on the decline.⁵

However, both Nottingham and Derby had high rates of infant mortality which corresponded to those in urban England and Wales. Of the three East Midlands towns, Nottingham, Leicester and Derby, the latter had the lowest rate and it is in Derby that the death rate began earlier to show a positive decline, falling from 173 per 1000 live births in 1900 to 130 per 1000 live births in 1911. Whereas Nottingham was slower: in 1900 the death rate was 196 per 1000 live births and in 1910 it had fallen to 128 per 1000 live births but the decline proper did not occur until after 1915 when it had risen once again to 130 per 1000 live births.⁶

Infant mortality was a relatively neglected area of research and while a number of notable studies had been carried out⁷ there was still no consensus as to what measures were likely to have brought about the decline, with most individuals believing that this would occur as a natural consequence of sanitary improvements.⁸ Most early investigations placed emphasis on the mother's behaviour rather than sanitation or poverty as central to the problem; she was blamed for going out to work, for leaving the child with unsuitable baby-minders, for failing to provide a home life suitable for a young child, for not suckling her baby and for not providing decent living conditions for the child to grow up in. The only factor over which she had little control was excrement removal.⁹

In her examination of Derby, G M Nolan says that the two Chief Medical Officers of Health at the time, Newman and Newsholme both considered the mother as a key factor in infant mortality. However, Newman saw the ignorance of mothers as the primary factor, whereas Newsholme believed that the physical environment was more important than the quality of maternal care.¹⁰ So was the mother the main contributor to infant deaths? In the 1901 and 1911 census returns in Nottingham show that approximately 15% of the population of the town were women of child bearing age and were engaged in occupations, mainly in the textile trade; whereas in Derby the figure was around 10% for both years. This suggests that although some mothers were employed it certainly

Graph 1. Infant mortality rates in Nottingham, Leicester and Derby. 1890-1911



Source: Annual reports of the Medical Officers of Health, Nottingham, Leicester and Derby

was not the majority. The main criticism levelled against them was that women did not breast feed their children. For many this may not have been an option. Because of work they had to rely on baby-minders, who often used opiates to quieten their charges. The other problem was their own poor health rendered them unable to produce adequate breast milk. Many medical men were keen to promote breast feeding because it was considered to be the most natural and best way to feed an infant. Modern research has shown that human milk given to infants reduces the chances of gastro-intestinal infections.¹¹ Philip Boobbyer, Medical Officer of Health for Nottingham, conducted a survey in 1908 into how prevalent breast feeding was in the city. Over half of the women interviewed promised or professed to breast feed their infants.¹² The figures are speculative but even the shortest period of breast-feeding would ensure some immunity to diseases.¹³ As a result of this survey Nottingham set up the Mothers and Babies Welcomes in 1908.¹⁴ Its object was to reduce the excessive infant mortality in the Town of Nottingham, and to improve the general health and stamina of the mothers.¹⁵

Dr W. Iliffe, the first Medical Officer of Health for Derby, drew attention to the evils of high infant mortality and stressed the need for sanitary improvements in the town but was a lone figure in the struggle to reduce infant deaths.¹⁶ Even when his successor, Dr William Howarth, took over in 1898 there did not appear to be a turning point until 1900 when he recommended the appointment of two female sanitary inspectors who were to instruct mothers in their homes on the proper methods of feeding and rearing their babies.¹⁷ The greatest cause for concern for the health authorities in both Derby and Nottingham, were the methods of feeding but despite the criticism that too many women did not breast feed their infants, for many women breast feeding was the preferred method because it was free and easy. It was noted that at least half of the infants visited during the period 1900-1907 were breast fed. The alternative was to hand feed with cow's milk or milk substitutes but this was fraught with dangers. Cow's milk was one of the most adulterated foods and the feeding vessels were frequently unhygienic.¹⁸ In Derby cow's milk was often kept under conditions where it was virtually impossible to prevent it from becoming contaminated and it was not until the 1930s that there was any significant improvement in milk sold in Derby.¹⁹ In Nottingham the condition of town cowsheds caused concern as did the milk brought in from the country side, where it was believed that this was the seat of bovine tuberculosis.²⁰

Perhaps it was fortunate that the milk was not viewed with any relish until later in the twentieth century, when its production and its relative benefits were then being recognised and promoted. At the beginning of the twentieth century although the number of artificially fed infants in Derby was still quite high, only a proportion were fed on cow's milk. Under the guidance of the Medical Officer of Health, the health authorities embarked on policies of welfare aimed at protecting infant life, including promoting breast feeding through the visits of the female sanitary inspectors, despite the overwhelming amount of work they faced. Their success can be measured by the fact that the number of breast fed children rose from 54% in 1902 to 83% in 1913, coupled with a reduction in infant mortality. Although there is no clear evidence to suggest that the visits of female sanitary inspectors had a dramatic effect on infant mortality, the death rate of breast fed infants was seen to be lower and would certainly have helped to focus public attention to the question of infant health.²¹ Reports of the female inspectors indicate that in the five years leading up to 1914 their advice and the message of breast feeding was getting across.²²

Other even less indigestible foods were often given but the most widely used substitute for fresh milk was condensed milk, usually sweetened and skimmed, which was cheap and palatable to the poor. It was dangerous for infants depriving them of essential nutrients, fat and Vitamins A and D which would lead to malnutrition (emaciation or atrophy), rickets and scurvy. Despite the legislation of 1899 insisting that the tins should be clearly labelled, this would have proved futile because of illiteracy. This type of milk was twice as harmful to infants. Firstly because it had little nutritional value and infants fed on it were likely to slowly starve to death and secondly it usually came packaged in tins and contained sugar in excessive proportions. Since tin openers were not universally owned, the tin would be opened by the shopkeeper and left in the tin after use, open to the elements where all types of bacteria could attack it. Health authorities may have advised mothers not to use opened tins of condensed milk but budgetary constraints dictated otherwise. The problem was exacerbated by inadequate storage facilities in many of the houses rented by the poor combined with the inadequate waste facilities.²³ Miss McCleverty, the second of Derby's sanitary inspectors, said that condensed milk was totally unsuitable for infants. Dr Barwise, the third Medical Officer of Health in Derby was critical of the foods some parents fed their infants. For example a two month old infant in Derby was fed on bread, chips, bloaters and condensed milk!²⁴

Closely linked to breast-feeding was the high mortality rate of illegitimate children. According to the Medical Officers, mothers of illegitimate babies were often guilty of neglecting their offspring. Mothers of such children were always going to have to work to keep themselves and their babies. In 1909 it was claimed that the average death rate among illegitimate children was twice that of children born in wedlock. Figures from an earlier period, 1862, (Table 2) showed that Nottingham had a higher proportion of illegitimacy per 1000 births than towns like Coventry and Wolverhampton. However, it does indicate the problem in Nottingham. Research from Derby shows that only a small proportion of deaths of infants could be attributed to illegitimacy, between 2 and 4%. The high death rate amongst illegitimate babies was not a significant factor in the overall infant mortality rate because of the relatively low proportion of illegitimate births to total births. Nevertheless, it was a factor which needed monitoring and after the end of hostilities in 1918 action was taken to look after unmarried mothers and their children.

So what of the other factors which impacted on the lives of the young of these towns? General living conditions were important issues. Researchers have shown that overcrowding, especially housing density, (the number of people per room), was a significant factor in the inequalities of infant mortality because its effects were far and away the most serious at pre-school ages.

Earliest reports on infant mortality in Nottingham show a link between poor housing and infant mortality rates, both in terms of provision and density (see Table 1). The main areas of high infantile deaths were in the districts of north-west Nottingham, north-east Nottingham and south-east Nottingham, all three districts having an excess of population over acreage. The north and south-east districts were the poorest areas and low lying with damp and porous sub-soil. The south-east district encompassed the Red Lion Street area which was recorded as having a population of 510 persons per acre compared to the overall Nottingham record of 24. These areas showed the highest rates of diarrhoea cases.²⁵ Similarly in Derby overcrowding was regarded as a significant factor in determining rates of infant mortality. Although a start was made in dealing with some of the worst slums, progress was very slow. The Town Council were complacent when it came to tackling the problems of slum housing and in 1896 less than ten houses were actually demolished. Dr Iliffe explained that although there were hundreds of houses in Derby unfit for habitation, to demolish them all would create greater difficulties since the people turned out of these homes could not afford to move further out to the suburbs.²⁶ In comparison to

Nottingham, Derby did not suffer as much overcrowding, as expressed by the number of persons per room but certain areas such as Kings Mead, Bridge and Castle wards were overcrowded and their respective infant mortality rates were 211, 165 and 152, the highest amongst all the wards in 1902.²⁷ Overcrowding tends to facilitate the spread of infectious disease especially diarrhoea which was high in the three named wards.²⁸ However, Nolan was unable to ascertain whether the declining infant deaths after 1900 were influenced by a reduction in overcrowding due to decentralization of the population but these could have been counter-balanced by the demolition of slums and the further overcrowding in other areas.²⁹

Table 2. Number of illegitimate births in proportion to every 1000 births in various towns

Name of District	Total no of births	Number of illegitimate births	Proportion of illegitimate births in each 1000 births
Nottingham	22612	2272	10.04
Basford, Nottingham	26413	2396	9.07
Radford, Nottingham	10936	893	7.98
Coventry	15225	1073	7.04
Blackburn	41307	2539	6.13
Wolverhampton	49061	2776	5.65
Birmingham	76893	3887	5.05
Abergavenny	24385	1168	4.79
Methyr Tydfil	38393	1709	4.45
Aston, Birmingham	31621	1242	3.92

Source: Sanitary Committee Annual Report, Nottingham, 1862

Another factor which had a significant link to infant deaths was the problem of excrement removal. Nottingham had an abysmal record in this respect, retaining the pail-system until forced into changing to water closets in 1920, some nine years after infant mortality rates began to show a decline. Derby on the other hand had reluctantly begun to improve its waste management by the turn of the twentieth century. There had been a lot of discussion but little action since the 1890s about a new sewage disposal system and until a decision had been taken to build such a system, there was little incentive to undertake other sanitary improvements such as the conversion of privies to WC's.³⁰ Management of sewage removal is further exacerbated by seasonal and climatic conditions. Seasonal effects operated two-fold; firstly on the areas lacking sanitary facilities and secondly on the most vulnerable to diarrhoeal disease, infants. Climatic conditions show that during periods of hot dry weather the diarrhoeal rates were more prevalent.³¹

This brief examination of the situation in Derby and Nottingham reveals how specific factors had a bearing on infant mortality rates in different towns. For example Derby introduced some improvements in the physical environment from 1900; female sanitary inspectors were employed from 1900 and then in 1910 the town's first Mothers' and Babies' Welfare was opened in St Helen's Street and there was a start to implement regulations aimed at improving the quality of the milk supply. Together these all helped to begin the process of reducing infant mortality. Nolan believes that the reduction in infant mortality in Derby was indicative of change as represented by the role and function of the health visiting service and to a lesser extent improvements in living conditions.³²

Nottingham, on the other hand, was slower to get to grips with the excrement removal. The removal of pail closets only began in 1920 after the government forced the hand of the city council over the borough extension, despite it being highlighted as probably the cause of so much infantile death, year after year by the Medical Officer of Health, Philip Boobyer. Health visitors were not employed until after the introduction in 1908 of Mothers' and Babies' Welcome in the city but even then it was somewhat piecemeal. Improvements in housing had begun in the mid-1890s with some slum clearance but as Nolan and Watterson suggest this does not always work in favour of the poor.³³ However, by 1910 Nottingham's infant mortality rate was beginning to show a decline. Unlike Nolan who can pinpoint certain factors in Derby for the fall in infantile death rates, in Nottingham it is more difficult. Nevertheless, certain factors were beginning to improve and change after 1910 such as child welfare; slum clearance and improvements in weather conditions which can have a dramatic impact on the spread of childhood diseases. Nevertheless the limited public health improvements had little to do with the improvements of infant deaths. However, it was the improvements, both in feeding and the availability of cheaper and better food for the poorer classes, slight though they were, that attributed to the decline in Nottingham. One factor which did not have an impact was the removal of excrement.

By the end of the nineteenth century, contemporaries began to recognise the problem of infant mortality but their understanding of the anomaly was skewed. The belief was that the role of the mother was paramount. However, this distinction between factors relating to the physical environment and those involving the mother was arbitrary, as both sets of influences had some bearing on the problem. One factor, such as poverty, could have an overriding effect, influencing both environmental conditions and the quality of maternal care. The growth of social intervention – in terms of better sanitary conditions, improved milk supply, legislation such as Notification of Births Act (1906) and Midwives Act (1902) and the introduction of health departments – all assisted the Medical Officer of Health to better understand the causes and suggest solutions for improving the lives of infants.

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10. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, pp27-29. Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health to the Local Government Board, Forty-second Report, PP.1913, Cd6909 (XXXII), Second report on infant and child mortality.
11. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, pp198-199 on length of time that infants were breast fed in Derby.
12. Amos, *Diet and health*, p276; *The Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health*, Nottingham, (ARMOH) 1908.
13. A S Wohl, *Endangered Lives. Public health in Victorian Britain*, 1983, p21.
14. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p62. ARMOH, 1908. The Notification of Births Act had been adopted in 1908 and had been invaluable to the Medical Officer of Health who had arranged a home visit by a member of staff. *The Nottingham Guardian*, 1 August 1908, p9, reported that The Medical Congress considered the Notification of Births was instrumental in reducing infant mortality.
15. ARMOH, 1908, Appendix, Part II. Extract from report on 'Mothers and Babies Welcome'.
16. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p180.

17. *Ibid*, p184, 189. In fact only one female sanitary inspector was employed, Anna Isabella Smith in 1900. For some years only one sanitary inspector was employed and there was a high turnover because they could earn more money elsewhere doing the same job. In 1903 two nurses began part-time duties as health visitors.
18. *Ibid*, p160. Amos, *Diet and health*, pp278-283.
19. *Ibid*, p201.
20. ARMOH, 1907 and 1911, *Nottingham Evening Post*, 4 July 1907. P.J. Atkins, 'Country cows, urban disease: risk and regulation of bovine tuberculosis in Britain, 1850-1950', paper given at Annual conference of the Society for the Social History of Medicine, Liverpool, September, 1997.
21. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p201.
22. *Ibid*, p200..
23. Amos, *Diet and health*, Chapter 7.
24. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p187.
25. Amos, *Diet and health*, pp263-274.
26. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p126.
27. *Ibid*, p121.
28. *Ibid*, p141.
29. *Ibid*, p142.
30. *Ibid*, pp109-119. The adoption of the Public Health Act, 1900, part III allowed for improvements in drainage; 1901 saw the Council given new powers for the conversion of privies to water closets; 1904 saw the introduction of new galvanized dustbins provided by the Corporation.
31. Naomi Williams, 'Death in its season: class, environment and the mortality of infants in nineteenth century Sheffield', *Social History of Medicine*, 5, 1, 1992, pp71-94.
32. Nolan, *Infant mortality*, p218.
33. Patricia A Watterson, 'Role of the environment in the decline of infant mortality: an analysis of the 1911 census of England and Wales', *Journal of Biosocial Science*, 18, 1986, pp457-468. Nolan, p344, suggests that reduction in overcrowding in one area can increase overcrowding in others.

DIARY OF A SHIPLEY FARMER 1867: Part 5: September 10-14 November

(by Malcolm Burrows, 2 Millers Court, Edward Street, Derby, DE1 3BN)

Introduction

In the late 1960s and early 1970s I was tracing and interviewing former servants and gardeners who had been employed at Shipley Hall. On a number of occasions I was referred to people who had worked on the estate. One such occasion involved a visit to Sutton on Sea where I met John Fletcher who, together with several generations of his family, had been a tenant farmer on the Shipley estate. He it was who loaned me the original diary of his grandfather (another John Fletcher). NB: The original spelling and punctuation has been retained.

THE DIARY

Tuesday 10th September

Shooting Gentlemen came today had lunch left an Hare and a lease of birds
My own men cutting Wheat sown at Spring a very good crop.

Wednesday 11th

Let T.Thornesley and Simon Potts 2 Acres of the duty close Wheat at 13d and Ale to mow 'tis a very good crop.

Thursday 12th

Cutting Wheat and making ready for leading

Friday 13th

Carried the 2 Acres Wheat and Bradley close a very light crop with a deal of rubbish.

Saturday 14th

Carried the Beans 2 Waggon loads nearly all corn put them on the little frame
Paid T.Thornesley and Simon Potts £1 6s 0d and ale for mowing 2 Acres of Wheat.

Monday 16th

Mrs J. Mavey East Bridgford Notts.

Leading Duty close Wheat a very good crop put 10 loads in a stack 1 load and rakings in Barn to thrash for seed.

Tuesday 17th

Mowing and taking up a bit of Barley that I sowed in Bradley close.

Wednesday 18th

Derby Agricultural Show I and Bessy have been a very fine day came back by Stanton had Tea with Mr and Mrs Cresswell.

Thursday 19th

Finished Harvest cart with a bit of Barley out of Bradley close 2 loads put on a frame end of Wheat stack.

Friday 20th

Been to try to get a Thrashing Machine engaged one in the neighbourhood

Fetches a load of coals ready for Monday.

Saturday 21st

Getting up a few Potatoes set with the spade to try if good

Removing Machine from Tomlinson to my house.

Monday 23rd

Have had a Thrashing Machine from Hucknall today some Peas stack of Oats and a little seed Wheat rather showery day Paid £1 10s 0d for Machine 8 men at 2s 6d each £1 0s 0d besides my own men

W. Else fetched 5 Fat sheep

Tuesday 24th

Set Neddy Harriman getting Potatoes by the bargain for 16d and a little ale.

Cart load a day coming out very clean and good not many diseased.

Wednesday 25th

Drawing Thatch and covering up the weather fine.

Thursday 26th

Taking Kelly some straw for Mattress making sold at 3d per cwt.

Sold Sherwin 2 sacks of Potatoes at 9d per sack 18d.

Friday 27th

Began Ploughing Bean stubble for Wheat

Sold J Bentley some Oats 10 qrs at 29d per qr.

Monday 30th

Been to Stanton a Sale of rare furniture Miss Carters.

Taken possession of the Heworths from Mr Robert Ward recd the half years rent and paid for Ploughing and heap of soil £2 0s 0d.

Let the Heworths to Mr Cresswell for £17 per Year.

Tuesday October 1st

He promising to cut the fences putting things in Tenable order.

Wednesday 2nd

Taken Cheese to Goose fair retailed some in small quantities the last part sold to Goodliffe Twas a very poor dragging fair Cheese very much lower had 18 cwt and 20 lbs averaged about 60d these being a deal sold very much lower.

Thursday 3rd

Began sowing wheat today in the fallow Harrowing in with a big fallow

4 Horses double sowing some mixt red and white Wheat grown on the Bower Hill

Friday 4th

Sowing today myself Rhuben toping fence down the Grass side.

Saturday 5th

Sowing.

Monday 7th

Finished sowing the near Broad Meadow Summers fallow sown 15 strike of seed gone in well water furrowed griped bottom addlands well the Ditch done out.

Tuesday 8th

Piling a load of Potatoes fencing and cleaning stack Yard Bringing Potato tops into the yard.

Wednesday 9th

Been to West Hallam show and Ploughing match called at Fathers George Shepperson and a Mr. Potter these suiters to Ladys

Ploughing Bean stubble and pea stubble for Wheat.

Friday 11th

Sown some Wheat on Shipley wood 12 lands of Summers fallow gone in well

Harrowed in 3 Horses abreast in big Harrows.

Saturday 12th

Some rain but water furrowed in the Morning then Drove to Nottingham

Paid some Bills.

Monday 14th

Ploughing Potato ground on Shipley Wood with 2 teams.

Went to look at some Lands

Attens Awsworth.

Tuesday 15th

Sown and Harrowed in the Potato ground removed all the tools into Pea stubble gone in well 8 lands.

Wednesday 16th

Have been down to Mapperley sown some Wheat for Father 9 Lands for Kilbourn close.

Thursday 17th

Heavy rain in the night and whet morning fetched 2 loads of Coals from Shipley pits price 14d shall stand till Christmas for coal Ilkeston feast went up to dine at Isaac A.

Bought 12 lambs of I Attenborough at 22d each.

Friday 18th

Topping the fence between Firey Close and Broad Meadow setting the lands out for Ploughing

Clover roots cut some Mangol off in garden.

Saturday 19th

Sowing Pea and Bean stubble about half of the Big Broad Meadow

Seed 14 Strike and a peck.

Monday 21st

Sown up to Dumble fence today 2 men cutting Turnips off to give them 17d for the lot

I have belted all the Lambs today 22 the lot to keep the winter Hope they may be lucky.

Tuesday 22nd

Ploughing Addlands and sowing up carting White Turnips have 4 cart loads put at the Barn end.

Wednesday 23rd

Carting Swede Turnips I and the 2 Boys making a place and storing them at the end of Haystack 7 cart loads of Bottoms very sound and dry, good sized but a thin crop.

Thursday 24th

1 Team Ploughing and pressing in Clover roots

Rhuben griping and thatching Mangol down Turnips.

Friday 25th

2 Teams Ploughing Father has sent one from Mapperley.

Saturday 26th

2 Teams Ploughing Clover roots sown 10 lands next the footpath Harrowed rather tough but done well.

Monday 28th

Finished the side of Firey close both addlands as far as the road. Seed 10½ strike red Wheat.

Tuesday 29th

Been a deal of rain in the night fetched some thorns for fencing against Nutbrook had Jan and Flower shod taken a Batch to the Mill.

Wednesday 30th

Ploughing with 2 Teams on Shipley wood the Turnip ground for Wheat
11 lands and addlands to sow shall let drain a day or two.

Thursday 31st

Ilkeston statutes I and Bessy have been
Hired two servant Girls and one Boy
S Bentley paid me for 10 qrs Oats today

Friday November 1st

Have had Revill Vet to a Cow
2 Horses shod jobing about the Yard
Father been up settled for Lambs seed Wheat

Saturday 2nd

Bought 2 Pigs Gilts of I Barker Bridge Inn to keep at 22d each.
Bought Manure of F Fletcher Butcher.

Monday 4th

Sale of surplus T Hancocks Boa Grange been to Stanton a lot of friends at Cresswells.

Tuesday 5th

Been to stock sale the late I C Grammer
Greasley castle did not buy anything
Bought and paid for 3 st of Wheat for seed T. Bentley Mill 9/3 per st £1 7s 9d.
Manure 4 Loads Butchers.

Wednesday 6th

Sown Turnip ground 11 lands with Wheat 5 lands and addlands some
Bought seed I Bentleys gone in well the bottom whet
2 loads of Manure Butchers
P. Potter Esq. died this morning.

Thursday 7th

Finished sowing taken the Harrows away put them up for this season.

Friday 8th

Ploughing top end of Big Broad Meadow think of trying for Barley at Spring

Saturday 9th

Cleaning up the front of the house straightening about the Yard ready for the wakes. Team ploughing.

Monday 11th

Team common working on Shipley roads I have been to Lenton Fair.
The Markets and Fairs are now open.

Tuesday 12th

Team common working today
Had some Friends to the feast Mr. and Mrs. C Mr. and Mrs Roscoe. Father and Elizabeth for Tea and supper

Wednesday 13th

Ploughing on the top of Broad Meadow 2 Horses single making one noon
Sold milk. Jack and C Turton a Fat pig for £6 0s 0d to go next Tuesday.

Thursday 14th

Have had some Fowls and 2 Guinea fowls stolen out of the Holly bushes going into the stack Yard
Fetched the 5 Yearling calves into the back yard and croft for the Winter.