

WOLVERTON: A MAGNET FOR MIGRANTS 1837-1861

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The settlement at Wolverton Station was originally peopled in a rather special way; attracting people from much further away than would be normal for a town of its size in the first half of the nineteenth century. This paper, which won the 1986 Cicely Baker prize, seeks to explain the historical and economic context of Wolverton's growth, and also the nature of the population movements that established and reinforced the specialist new community. Using the census enumerators' books for 1861, Mrs French examines how the migration patterns functioned in response to the success of Wolverton Railway works and its constant need for a massive skilled workforce.

In Musson & Craven's commercial directory of the County of Buckingham and Town of Windsor, 1853, Wolverton appears as something of an anomaly. One would normally expect a settlement of similar size to show its importance as a commercial centre with entries relating to the services it provides and the significant individuals who lived there. Instead, there is a throwaway paragraph describing the new town of Wolverton Station, with its extensive factories for the maintenance and repair of locomotives, its refreshment rooms, and workers' housing, but no reference, witting or otherwise, to any role as a commercial centre. Wolverton is seen solely as a phenomenon of the railway and not as part of the service and social network of nearby towns, villages and surrounding countryside.

Reference to the Census Enumerators' Books¹ for 1851 (a couple of years before the directory was published) show that the new town was quite substantial in population terms: there are 95 CEB sheets for Wolverton Station, whereas the enumeration district of Wolverton, which probably covered an area much greater than the actual settlement, covered only 21 sheets. There is also a contrast between their trades evident in the different Census Enumerators' Books. Wolverton—that is the original village quite separate from the railway town—had the expected range of trades for a village

centre such as baker and grocer, whereas Wolverton Station had predominantly skilled metalworking and engineering trades.

A brief glance at the 1851 CEBs and the range of trades at Wolverton Station shows that a hypothesis based on the growth of Wolverton because of the engineering works is easily proved. Likewise it is obvious that the settlement grew by an influx of migrants. Some newcomers represent the natural increase of the surrounding rural population, but others must have come from further afield. Either way, migrants form a substantial part of the population increase. (See Table 1 for population figures.²)

The settlement at Wolverton Station was a consciously founded separate new town.³ The London and Birmingham Railway was authorized in 1833, and its route subsequently established on geographic, economic and some less predictable criteria (the Duke of Buckingham was a key figure here). The prevailing technology required a locomotive change midway between London and Birmingham. Wolverton was chosen because of its proximity to the main Holyhead road and to the canal, whence came equipment and supplies for construction. Engineering works, platforms, refreshment rooms and housing were then built on a site bought from the Radcliffe Estate. The

railway and the works needed labour, and because a settlement of any size did not exist prior to the railway, that labour had to come in from elsewhere. It is the relationship between the differing spatial distributions of labour, income and employment that leads to migration. As Cromar put it: 'It was not enough for the commodity of labour power merely to exist, it had to be available in adequate quantities in the places where it was most needed.'⁴ Wolverton was clearly one of those places. Table 1 shows how dramatic the population increase at Wolverton was compared with surrounding settlements.

Table 1. Population of parishes in the Wolverton area.

<i>Parish</i>	<i>1831 Census</i>	<i>1851 Census</i>	<i>Population Increase</i>
Paulersbury	1,092	1,162	70
Pottersbury	950	1,061	111
Yardley Gobion	594	673	79
Wicken	536	487	-49
Passenham	828	969	141
Calverton	425	505	80
W. Stony Stratford	1,053	1,256	203
E. Stony Stratford	566	501	-65
Cosgrove	624	641	17
Furtho	16	15	-1
Grafton Regis	241	247	6
Alderton	162	139	-23
Ashton	380	383	3
Hartwell	531	542	11
Wolverton	417	2,070	1,653

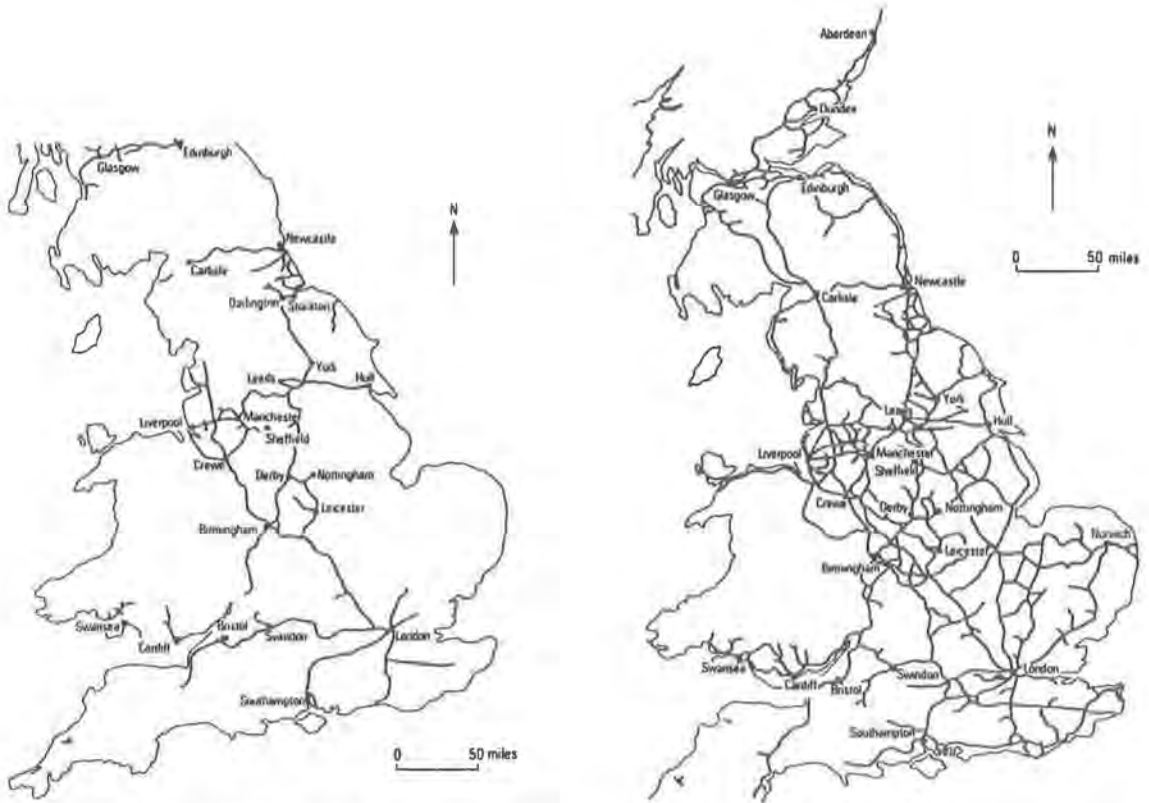
Source: Peter Richards⁵

An interesting topic, and the one to be considered here, is how the demands of an industry for specific types of labour create particular patterns of migration. To this end it would be more useful to consider the 1861 Census. Not only is it easier to read, but it also took place just before the Wolverton works ceased engineering to concentrate on carriage building, and before employment patterns changed accordingly. The information on the sheet consists of the address, name and surname, relationship to household head, marital status ('condition'), age, occupation, place of birth, and whether '... Blind, or Deaf-and-Dumb'. In studying the data from the 1861 CEBs one would be considering the origins of all those

who came to Wolverton during the engineering period and stayed; not those who had moved on again before 1861. It would not then be a study of the incidence of migration, nor of changing processes over time, but of the patterns associated with a new town. Not included in the study would be those who worked in the town, but 'lodged in the villages around',⁶ and were thus not included in the enumeration district. In 1851 there was one Wolverton worker who lodged at Thornborough, eight miles away. Women, whose migration patterns were likely to have been different, have been omitted from the study. By 1861 the new town had adopted the name 'Wolverton', causing the apparent loss of Wolverton Station as it had been known in 1851, but the settlement is easily identified by the street names. Old Wolverton as it is known by 1861 is harder to identify because of its rural nature and lack of distinct addresses.

Four linked elements of change are fundamental to the geographical and temporal context of the study. First, and most important, are the implications of the nationwide structural shift away from an agricultural economic base towards an industrial and service one. In addition to this change is the growth in the scale of industrial operations. Any study of an industrially based town in the mid nineteenth century must take into account the acceleration in the rate of economic growth in the British Isles. Dodgshon and Butlin quote growth of 2% per annum from 1800 to 1850 rising to 3% from 1850.⁷ Thirdly, because of the capital-intensive nature of the expanding industries, towns began to grow not only as trading centres but also as great concentrations of industry. This meant a massive growth in urbanization throughout the nineteenth century, and instead of a country with an economic base spread evenly over its length and breadth, urban concentrations began to mean heights of wealth and opportunity. Finally, a social structure and way of life based on the seasons and the traditional land-based social order was giving way to an industrially based occupational hierarchy, and the rhythms of the machine age.

The growth of Wolverton thus took place in



Maps 1 and 2. The UK rail network: left, in 1842; right, in 1852. After J. Simmons (ed.), *The Stockton & Darlington Railway* (1975). By permission of the Open University.

the context of a phase of industrialization involving capital industries and investment, and the transport revolution of the railways. The success of the Stockton and Darlington Railway created an enthusiasm for further investment in the new technology. Between 1830 (when there were about 100 miles of track) and 1850, 6,000 miles of railway were opened in Britain. This large-scale organization, major capital investment, and the laissez faire attitude left Britain with an unrivalled railway system; by 1861 it covered about 10,000 miles (see Maps 1 and 2).¹¹ This growth of the railways is well documented and the experience of the London and Birmingham Railway, the London and North Western Railway and Wolverton in particular have been well considered by Bill West, Peter Richards and Moira Courtman. They have all written extensively on the foundation and growth of the settlement of Wolverton Station.

The input of wealth associated with the growth of the railways became a magnet for labour, with the railways themselves becoming a focus for feelings of heroism and pride in technological achievement. Dodgshon and Butlin⁷ describe a situation where the demand for labour, particularly in specialist industries such as railways and heavy industry, exceeded supply. As a result wages were higher, making industry more attractive and probably encouraging people to travel further than they would otherwise have done. This would make the pull of industry greater than the power of inertia of the status quo—agriculture—for those who had the aptitude to benefit. According to Markham, in 1851 Engine Drivers on the London and North Western Railway earned 42s. per week. Fitters at Wolverton earned 38s. per week, and firemen 24s.6d. per week, while the agricultural wage was 11s. In this light it is

ERRATUM

Vol 28, p. 141. The second paragraph in the left-hand column should read as follows:

Workers came to Wolverton from all over the country, most noticeably from along a London–Lancashire axis. Peter Richards² notes that the railway itself could carry news of opportunity out and migrants back, but although information might travel easily this way, Stowell-Brown describes the travellers walking to their new home.⁶ Counties such as Oxfordshire (4 migrants up to 1861) and Bedfordshire (12 migrants) had no railway links with Wolverton to act as an information artery. Lancashire and Warwickshire already had a large amount of heavy industry, engineering and metal working, and it would be reasonable to expect skilled labour from these industries to take advantage of growth at Wolverton, but Northamptonshire and Bedfordshire had no substantial engineering, and so presumably few men with the right skills. This essay is intended to show that in New Wolverton in 1861, alongside the long distance moves of the skilled, there was a second less extensive migration field that still operated within the pre-industrial tradition. These were likely to have been short distance rural–urban moves, symptomatic of the declining importance and relative poverty of agriculture combined with the attraction of the mythology of urban opportunity.

not surprising that skilled men and young men seeking good apprenticeships were prepared to travel a long way to take advantage of the scarcity of skill.⁹

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Wolverton's case was special in that it exerted an attraction disproportionate to its size (this is true of all new towns to some extent) but it does relate to migration theory. According to Deirdre Mageean '... where migration has been stimulated by economic growth and technological problems it will attract the better educated and skilled'.¹⁰ Whereas an unskilled worker on the move is likely to find a suitable opportunity anywhere, opportunities for the skilled tend to be more limited and may require a longer move. (The part played by circumstances in the sending community do not form part of this study.) Thus we can expect two migration fields to have been functioning at Wolverton between 1837 and 1861 according to the level of skill attracted.

In order to analyse these fields it is necessary to categorize the occupations of those who

moved to Wolverton in the period, so that occupations can be linked to origins and any patterns established. In the absence of detailed data on wage levels the occupations have been categorized on a more subjective basis. Mr Bill West of British Rail Engineering Ltd at Wolverton explained something of the attitudes and hierarchy of the railway workers in the nineteenth century, and Table 2 was established on this basis.⁸

Table 2. Categories of railway workers.

Group I

A. *Railway unskilled*

Ticket clerk, engine stoker, railway clerk, ticket collector, railway policeman, blacksmith's striker, steam hammer driver, engine cleaner, labourer, porter, pointsman, guard, furnaceman.

B. *Non-engineering railway skilled*

Carpenter, coach painter, signalman, joiner, painter, wheelwright.

C. *All non-railway*

Group II

D. *Railway skilled*

Locomotive boilermaker, engine turner, engine fitter, engine pattern maker, blacksmith, engine wheel turner, coppersmith, carriage inspector, gas fitter, engine tube maker, machinist, carriage examiner, engine moulder, brass turner, iron turner, engine mechanic, engine smith, brass finisher, springmaker, brazier & tinsmith, forgerman, carriage wheel inspector, millwright.

E. *Engineers*

F. *Drivers*

G. *Staff and managerial*

Mechanical engineer, goods clerk, railway accountant, engineer's draughtsman, superintendent railway solicitor, manager of refreshment rooms, inspector of railway police, foreman of railway porters, foreman of carpenters, mechanical draughtsman.

The seven occupational categories are broadly split into two groups as shown; group I being occupations which were attracted by urban growth and opportunity in general, and group II, the engineering skills which would have been attracted to Wolverton in particular because of its specialization. Those in the unskilled category (A) were doing jobs which

required relatively little skill or knowledge. The pointsman is there because his duty was to heave over points levers under the direction of someone else; it is likely that the title 'railway policeman' was the way some pointsmen described themselves to the enumerator so they have been included in (A). The non-engineering skilled (B) were not a very large group; their skills were ubiquitous and not tied to the railways or metalworking, nor were they tied to any town or region by their trade even though they were practising those skills in Wolverton. It is hard to be certain with such a small sample but category B showed the most rapid distance decay, possibly because their skills were in demand in the potential sending communities. The non-railway category includes tailors, bakers, grocers, teachers, the clergyman and Mr Ballard the County Policeman.

Of the four categories in group II, the railway specific category (D) is self explanatory. The engineers have been kept separate for some tests because of the problem of definition. Strictly the engineers (E) would have been staff or managerial who planned and directed the work of the men. This again is a problem of definition, with skilled men describing themselves to the enumerator as engineers, when from our twentieth-century standpoint they would be mechanics or fitters. The drivers were also hard to categorize (F) because although not skilled in the engineering sense, they were a railway elite that existed within an industrial rather than a rural tradition. The same problem and same conclusions apply to the staff and managerial (G). All apprentices have been included with their superiors because they had been subject to the same attractions and also because they were hard to identify. Many individuals not described as apprentices were unlikely to be skilled, for example John Cottrell, aged 12, Boiler Maker!

The enumeration district 17 was part of the Potterspury district and included 'All that part of the parish of Wolverton which comprises the chapelry district of St Georges, being the Railway Station, Stonebridge House, Staceyhill and Mead Mills.' In 1861 the enumerator was John

Bates. Because the district covered various outlying settlements, it was decided to use only those buildings erected by the London and Birmingham Railway Company (from 1846 the London and North West Railway) at Wolverton Station. Map 3 shows the area covered by the study, which includes the canalside villas (for clerks' staff, etc.), Young Street, Glyn Square, Ledsam Street, the Parsonage, Creed Street, the remains of Gas Street, and Bury Street, Church Street and the model lodging house built in 1860 on the corner of Church Street and Glyn Square. Old Wolverton, New Bradwell and the outlying settlements are not included. The study area is a discrete community centred on the railway and because it was all railway housing it is unlikely to contain skilled men from other works such as the Deanshanger Iron Works.



Map 3. Sketch plan of Wolverton Station 1861, showing the part of Wolverton Enumeration District used for this study.

The CEB information can show many things about the nature of the migrant population, as

for example how many were young and unattached. In fact 50% were single and under 30, and more were married but living singly. There are limitations on the way data derived from one enumeration district at one date can be used. It is only possible to conduct an idiographic study; it can tell little of other places or times. It rules out consideration of outward migration, and, except in a few cases recording the different birthplaces of successive children, step migration. Because of the data on birthplace, the study covers the whole period 1837–1861, even though it cannot count people who had left again or died. All those born in Wolverton itself were excluded as they were not migrants (they were usually children of migrants). Because of potential distortion resulting from the offspring of migrants lodged elsewhere in Buckinghamshire (mostly skilled apprentices), the possibility of excluding all those born either after 1837 (foundation of the works) or in places such as New Bradwell, Stony Stratford or Newport Pagnell was considered and rejected on the grounds that however near they had been born they had actually moved into the study area. However, in interpreting the data it is important to remember that the majority of Buckinghamshire-born skilled were under the age of 23, and represent the more settled pattern of an established industrial centre, which balances the extraordinary circumstances of a new industrial settlement.

A summary of the data is shown in Table 3. Points to note are the expected high representation of Buckinghamshire, Middlesex and Northants. The contiguous counties of Berkshire, Bedfordshire and Oxfordshire send fewer, but their proximity to Wolverton in north-east Bucks is not as great. The other noticeable sending counties of Derbyshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire, Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Scotland all had functioning industries with suitable mills and rival attracting power. In Lancashire, Nottinghamshire, Yorkshire and Scotland there is evidence of two different migration fields. Lancashire sent 5 unskilled and 38 skilled, Nottinghamshire 0 and 28, Yorkshire 5 and 18, and Scotland 3 and 83. (I found no evidence of

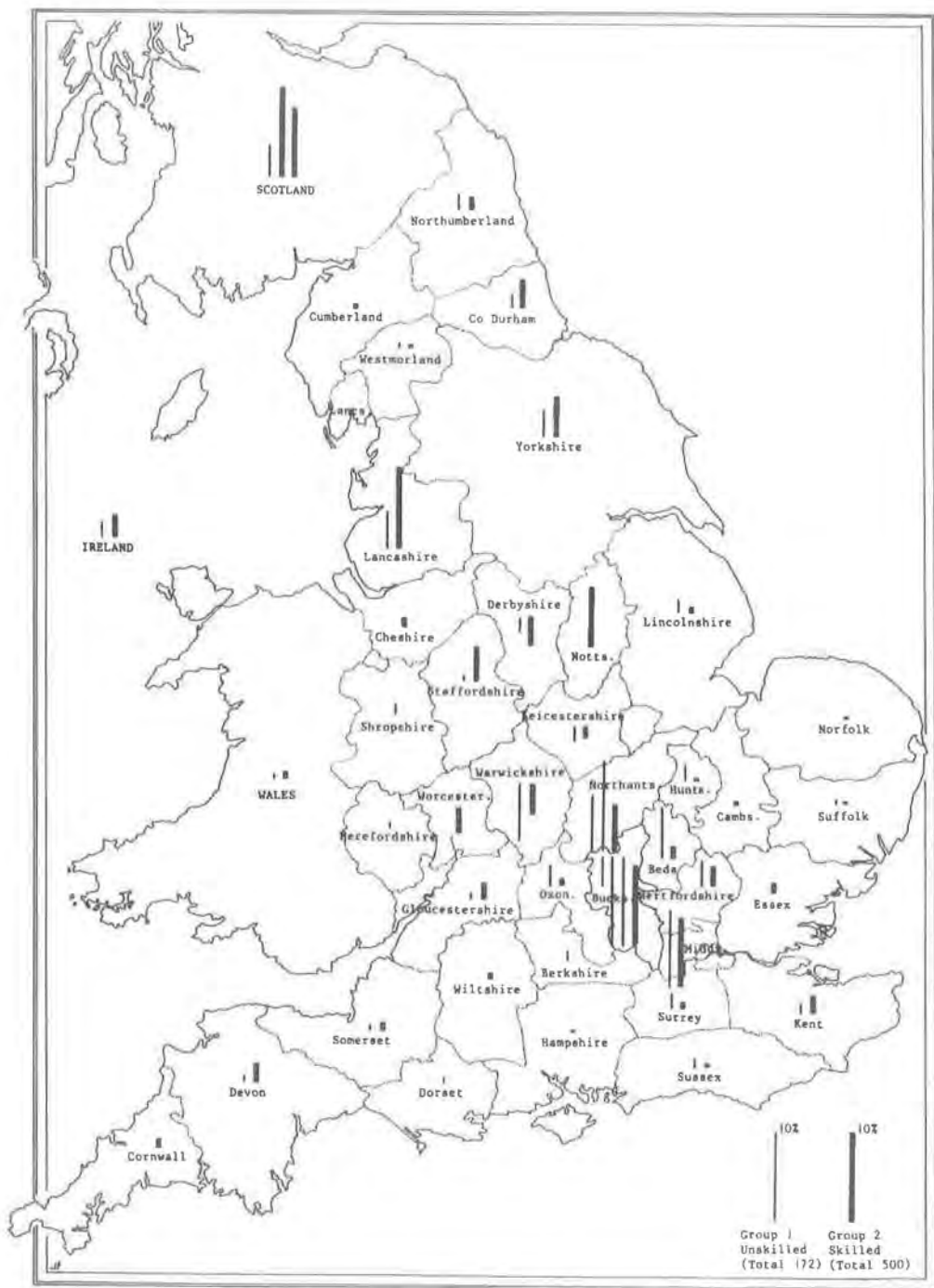
any formal recruitment drive which could account for any distortion in the natural patterns of migration in any way; however, the arrival of Scotsman James McConnell in 1847 as Chief Resident Engineer might have some bearing on the large number of skilled men from Scotland.¹²)

The low contribution of the agricultural counties is shown, with the exception of Kent (where there was mining and the railway works at Ashford), and the West Country (mining tradition). Few skilled men were attracted from counties such as Norfolk, Essex, Somerset, Wiltshire and Cheshire, and there was little incentive for unskilled men from these counties to move to Wolverton in particular. The contiguous counties sent a higher proportion of unskilled labour; for them the opportunities at Wolverton were near enough to be worth seeking. Few came from Berkshire and Oxfordshire and Peter Richards⁵ suggests that this is because the news of opportunity and the migrants themselves travelled via the railway, thus less easily away from the railway. Hugh Stowell-Brown⁶ claims that '... working people could not afford second class fares so they went on foot. Our workmen at Wolverton came and went on tramp from Lancashire and from London . . .', by Watling Street presumably. Brown was writing of the 1840s when the Birmingham–Wolverton fare was 13s.6d. and the agricultural wage was 11s. per week.

The data cannot show the sending communities in terms of size (Scotland was the largest area and also lost the largest number) or population density. Another shortcoming is that Wolverton by its very nature attracted more skilled than unskilled, 500 and 172 respectively, making comparison misleading. Table 4 shows the numbers by county for the two occupational groups as a percentage of the total for that group. This makes the two groups directly comparable. The data from this table is shown graphically in Map 4. Group I represents all occupations that were not directly influenced by the industrial nature of the railway works, i.e. those still, in 1861, associated with the more stable agricultural systems, traditions and social structure. That two

Table 3. Origins by County of the Wolverton resident workmen with percentages per County (in italics).

<i>County</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>D</i>	<i>E</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>G</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>Unskilled</i>	<i>Non-engsk</i>	<i>Non-rail</i>	<i>Skilled</i>	<i>Engineers</i>	<i>Drivers</i>	<i>Staff/Mn</i>	
Bucks	34(40.5)		6(7.1)	35(41.7)	5(5.9)	3(3.6)	1(1.2)	84
Bedfordshire	9(52.9)		1(5.9)	2(11.8)	3(17.6)	2(11.8)		17
Berkshire	1		1					2
Hertfordshire	2(12.5)	2(12.5)	1(6.3)	8(50.0)	1(6.3)	2(12.5)		16
Middx/Lond.	8(15.0)	3(5.6)	4(7.5)	31(58.5)	5(9.4)		2(3.8)	53
Northants	16(29.6)		6(11.1)	18(33.3)	3(5.5)	4(7.4)	1(1.9)	54
Oxfordshire	4			3				7
Berwickshire				1				1
Cambs				1				2
Cheshire				5				5
Cornwall				4				4
Cumberland				3				2
Derbyshire	3(15.8)			14(73.7)	2(10.5)			19
Devon	1(9.8)			7(63.6)	3(27.3)			11
Dorset	1							1
Co. Durham	3(15.8)			9(47.4)	1(5.3)	5(26.3)	1(5.2)	19
Essex	1(10.0)			3	1	1	1	6
Gloucestershire				8(80.0)			1(10.0)	10
Hampshire				1				1
Herefordshire	1							1
Hunts	2		1	1				4
Kent	1(8.3)		1(8.3)	8(66.7)	1(8.3)	1(8.3)		12
Lancashire	5(9.6)	1(1.9)	1(1.9)	38(73.1)	4(7.7)	2(3.8)	1(1.9)	52
Leicestershire			3	6				9
Lincolnshire	2		1	3				6
Norfolk				1				1
Northumbs	2(20.0)	1(10.0)		4(40.0)	1(10.0)	2(20.0)		10
Notts				28(84.8)	4(12.1)		1(3.0)	33
Shropshire	2							2
Somerset	1			4				5
Staffordshire	1(5.0)			14(70.0)	4(20.0)	1(5.0)		20
Suffolk		1		1				2
Surrey	1	1	1	2	1			6
Sussex	1	1		2	1			5
Warwickshire	10(35.7)		1(3.6)	15(53.6)		1(3.6)		28
Westmorland	1			1				2
Wiltshire				3				3
Worcestershire				13(92.9)	1(7.1)			14
Yorkshire	5(18.5)			18(66.7)	3(11.1)		1(3.7)	27
Ireland	2(13.3)		1	7(46.7)	2(13.3)	1(6.7)	2(13.2)	15
Scotland	4(3.2)		3(3.1)	83(87.4)	4(4.2)	1(1.1)	1(1.1)	95
Wales	1			3	1			5
France				1				1
America					1			1
Class Totals	124	16	32	409	52	26	13	672
Unrepresented Counties	13	34	27	4	21	30	31	



Map 4. Percentage of skilled and unskilled immigrant workers at Wolverton by county of origin in 1861.

Table 4. Workers enumerated at Wolverton 1861 by county of origin (percentage in italics).

<i>County of origin</i>	<i>Group I Unskilled etc.</i>	<i>Group II Skilled etc.</i>
Buckinghamshire	46(23.3)	44(8.8)
Bedfordshire	10(5.8)	7(1.4)
Berkshire	2(1.2)	
Hertfordshire	5(2.9)	11(2.2)
Middx & London	15(8.7)	38(7.6)
Northamptonshire	28(16.3)	26(5.2)
Oxfordshire	4(2.3)	3(0.6)
Berwickshire		1(0.2)
Cambridgeshire		2(0.4)
Cheshire		5(1.0)
Cornwall		4(0.8)
Cumberland		2(0.4)
Derbyshire	3(1.7)	16(3.2)
Devon	1(0.6)	10(2.0)
Dorset	1(0.6)	
Durham	3(1.7)	16(3.2)
Essex		6(1.2)
Gloucestershire	1(0.6)	8(1.8)
Hampshire		1(0.2)
Herefordshire	1(0.6)	
Huntingdonshire	3(1.7)	1(0.2)
Kent	2(1.2)	10(2.0)
Lancashire	7(4.1)	45(9.0)
Leicestershire	3(1.7)	6(1.2)
Lincolnshire	3(1.7)	3(0.6)
Norfolk		1(0.2)
Northumberland	3(1.7)	7(1.4)
Nottinghamshire		33(6.6)
Shropshire	2(1.2)	
Somerset	1(0.6)	4(0.8)
Staffordshire	1(0.6)	19(3.8)
Suffolk	1(0.6)	1(0.2)
Surrey	3(1.7)	3(0.6)
Sussex	2(1.2)	2(0.4)
Warwickshire	11(6.4)	17(3.4)
Westmorland	1(0.6)	1(0.2)
Wiltshire		3(0.6)
Worcestershire		14(2.8)
Yorkshire	5(2.9)	22(4.4)
Ireland	3(1.7)	12(2.4)
Scotland	6(3.5)	89(17.8)
Wales	1(0.6)	4(0.8)
Abroad		2(0.4)
<i>Totals</i>	<i>172</i>	<i>500</i>

distinct migration fields existed is clearly shown. In Buckinghamshire and its neighbouring counties of Oxfordshire, Northants, Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, as well as Surrey, Berkshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire and Huntingdonshire the importance of the unskilled migrant group is shown. In the distant counties, apart from Northumberland and those with no industrial tradition the reverse is true, with the skilled group dominating. The long moves of the skilled workers were as expected, but as the rural county contribution shows, the migration field for the unskilled workforce was still to some extent in the short distance, rural-urban pre-industrial tradition. To emphasize this point, 59 of the working men in Glyn Square were taken and divided into four groups as shown below; all those who were hard to categorize were ignored and the clearly described jobs were included:

	Labourers/porters	Engineering skilled
Within 10 m	5	1
Over 10 m	6	47

The sample may be small, but the correlation between skill and distance is clear. The fact that some unskilled labour came from many miles away does not contradict this finding. Many of these individuals may have arrived in Wolverton with skilled family, or as the culmination of a series of short moves. It is significant to the basis of the hypothesis that whereas only 13.8% of group I had urban/industrial origins, 43% of group II, the skilled, came from other towns.

The study has confirmed that like a magnet attracting iron and leaving other metals unaffected, the concentration of railway works at Wolverton acted most powerfully on those with appropriate skills. Different forces acted upon the unskilled, for whom one labouring job was very much like another, and who were more likely to find suitable employment within ten miles.

A study of a small specific area such as Wolverton to consider general issues ignores one of the greatest values of a source such as the CEBs. No account has been taken of personal factors influencing people to move,

and how far. As we know from our own lives, the factors of chance, family relationships and communications (i.e. knowledge of opportunity) influence the process of migration, yet these have not been considered. For example, there are a number of cases of households where a son was skilled yet the father had come too and taken unskilled employment, such as Will Compton at 1, Young Street, who was a railway labourer. The elder son, James, was an engineer born like his father at Morton on Ouse in Yorkshire, and the unskilled younger son aged 13 had been born in Rugby (railways again). It seems unlikely that the father and younger son would have chosen Wolverton without the special skills of the elder son. It was also common for men to lodge with householders who came from their own home area, for example Spencer Mart in Glyn Square came from Deptford in Kent, and two of his lodgers were brothers John and Joseph Ross, also from Deptford. Quinton Thompson, also of Glyn Square, had several lodgers, seemingly unrelated, who had, like him, come down from Scotland. In these cases it is likely that letters home spread news of opportunity, and it was natural for those who followed in the path of

the pioneer migrants to seek out friends or friends of friends on their arrival (typical chain migration). Similarly, the bald statements can tell nothing of what awaited the new arrivals, how they lived or whether they married and whom they chose. Neither can this source tell of any of the tragedies that did occur in the works and on the railway line, and to which the epitaphs in the churchyard are witness.

Any one of the individuals considered would probably hotly argue that their move to Wolverton did not represent part of a general nationwide trend towards urbanization, and would no doubt be able to demonstrate that their own move was the result of purely personal or chance factors. This may well be so, but the sum of all these feelings, motivations and aspirations is a microcosm of the aspirations and changes of the Victorian age. This study has afforded a glimpse of one tiny corner of a nationwide picture of the shifting population responding to the promise of the machine age, and how the unchanging certainties of tradition had not given way totally to the dynamics of the new.

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