Exposing the London Piano Industry Workforce (*c*1765–1914)

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Abstract

Research into the London piano industry workforce has focussed to date on high profile makers such as Backers, Beyer, Brinsmead, Broadwood, Challen, Clementi and Collard, and, more recently, lesser-known practitioners such as Southwell, Geib, Plenius, Vietor and Neubauer. Although the study of influential practitioners is crucial to understanding the development of the industry, to attribute the manufacture of the piano to a handful of men is to misrepresent the case. This study investigates large numbers of lesser-known, and formerly unknown, members of the London piano industry workforce, from the launch of the trade in the 1760s to the start of the First World War, and examines not only their extent and contribution, but reconsiders the industry in light of their discovery, and introduces them jointly and severally as subjects for further study. Drawing on six principal sources – local parish registers, the censuses of England, social history archives, London's historical directories, the national press, and the online wills of the National Archives – five resulting studies examine those identified in terms of their work, gender, succession, solvency, location, migration, nationality, inter-connection and social demographic. Findings are both general and specific in that they relate to the workforce as a whole and to specific individuals. More than seven thousand men, women and children are identified as makers, dealers, tuners and suppliers to the trade; it is demonstrated that women held a sustained role in the industry prior to the labour shortage of the First World War; that bankruptcy and insolvency were not endemic in the trade; that the perception of the industry as one shackled to tradition is appreciably flawed; and that further research is required to understand the complex inter-connections that existed in the trade. It is in the search for the typical, as well as the famous and exceptional, that a balanced interpretation of the workforce is to be found.

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Conventions

Abbreviations are restricted to the footnotes and appendices (LACC excepted), and to the names of institutions and publications most frequently repeated.

CBA	Charles Booth Archives
DN	*The Daily News* (London)
LACC	Liquidation by Agreement or Composition with Creditors
LG	*The London Gazette*
LL	London Lives website
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives
POLD	*Post Office London Directory*
MC	*The Morning Chronicle* (London)
MP	*The Morning Post* (London)
NA	The National Archives, Kew
NGA	National Gallery Archives
NPC	National Probate Calendar
OB	Proceedings of the Old Bailey Online
SHC	Surrey History Centre, Woking
WAC	City of Westminster Archives Centre

The study period predates the introduction of decimal currency in Britain in 1971, so monetary figures quoted from primary sources relate to the old system of currency; namely pounds (£ or *l* in some documents); shillings (s.), of which there were 20 to the pound, or 21 to the guinea; and pence (d.), of which there were 12 to the shilling, and 240 to the pound. The old shilling equates to 5 pence post-1971, and the old penny equates to 0.41667 pence post-1971.

Historical currency conversions (to an approximate value in 2005) are made using the National Archives Currency Converter at http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/currency, taking calculations for the decades preceding and succeeding the year of the figure in question, and adjusting them proportionately to equate to the year in question.

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Chapter 1:
Introduction

Scope

This thesis investigates members of the piano industry to have worked in London from the early years of the trade (*c*1765) to the beginning of the twentieth century (1914). The timeframe is shaped by two parameters: by the activity of the trade itself, which began in earnest in the Princes Street workshop of Johann Christoph Zumpe with the invention of the first prototypes of his celebrated square piano; and by the selected source material, to the dislocation of the workforce at the start of the First World War. These two dates demarcate the development of the London workforce from its genesis in the small pioneering workshops of the instrument's first practitioners to its apotheosis as one of the largest employers in the capital. Excluding the well-known makers of recognised brands, whose contribution has been documented elsewhere (for example, Beyer, Broadwood, Brinsmead, Challen, Clementi, Collard and Southwell), this study focuses on the lesser known men and women who comprised the majority of the London workforce; unidentified (perhaps unknown) makers whose instruments have not survived, the employees of famed and failed concerns, apprentices, contract workers, factory workers, dealers, and general suppliers to the trade – all those whose labour supported the industry but whose individual and collective status has been little researched to date. Who were these people? What was their background? How and why did they join the industry? What jobs did they perform? And what was their ultimate fate? These are the questions addressed in this thesis.

Not addressed in this thesis are the objects made by the workforce, or the structure of their workplace or its *modus operandi*, although these are subjects deserving of further study and some aspects have necessarily been considered. The primary purpose of this thesis is to expose the nature and composition of the workforce through means other than its product, since, for the great majority of workers, no ascribable product survives. Also excluded from the study are those principally

involved with the instrument subsequent to its sale (i.e. pianists, composers and teachers) except where they abut or coincide with the manufacturing workforce through family or trade connections. Piano tuners, whose work was essential to the manufacture and maintenance of the instrument, are included, although it cannot always be known whether they worked with the piano before or after its sale.

Review of the literature

Since the rise of the piano's supremacy in the early nineteenth century much of its history has been documented. Studies have been made of its evolution and design, the nature of its construction, its principal makers and innovators, cultural and social significance, pianists, composers and repertoire, and the resulting literature is large. Most of it is also retrospective and the work of an 'outsider looking in'. Few accounts have been written by people working in the industry, and those that exist have been concerned with the instrument rather than the workforce. Moreover, they are not always of an academic nature. The in-house histories of Broadwood (1862) and Brinsmead (1868) have been judged self-lauding and inaccurate,[1] and the later histories of Steinway (1953), Bechstein (1986) and Schimmel (1990) are necessarily subjective.[2] That of Grover (1976) was deemed an 'infelicitous jumble'.[3] A more valuable legacy from each of these makers would have been a factual account of their business. The full history of the Broadwood company was later recorded by the independent author and journalist David Wainwright, but as the company was still operating, the result is deferential.[4] The firm's product has since been recorded by

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[1] Anon, *List of Pianofortes and of Various Samples and Models intended to Illustrate the Principles of Their Manufacture, Exhibited by John Broadwood and Sons, London, with an Historical Introduction, Explanatory Remarks and Illustrative Plates and Diagrams* (London: printed by W. S. Johnson & Company, 1862). The historical introduction to this work, though unsigned, has been attributed to Henry Fowler Broadwood. Laurence, A., 'The Evolution of the Broadwood Grand Piano: 1785–1998' (PhD thesis, University of York, 1998), pp.109–10. See also Brinsmead, E., *History of the Pianoforte* (London: Simpkin, Marshall & Co., 1889); and Laurence, A., *Five London Piano Makers* (London: Keyword Press, 2010), pp.23–24.

[2] See Steinway, T. E., *People and Pianos* (New York: Steinway & Sons, 1953); Bechstein, C., *The House of Bechstein: chronicle 1853 up to the present* (Berlin: Bechstein, *c*1986); and Schimmel, N. W., *Piano Manufacturing: An Art and a Craft: from the Stick Zither to the Piano* (Braunschweig, Germany: Wilhelm Schimmel Pianofortefabrik, 1990).

[3] Grover, D., *The Piano: its story from zither to grand* (London: Hale, 1976). Reviewed by C. Ehrlich in 'Around the Piano', *The Musical Times* 118/1611 (May 1977), pp.397–98, at p.397.

[4] Wainwright, D., *Broadwood, By Appointment: A History* (London: Quiller Press, 1982).

one of a family of piano technicians to have worked for the firm since 1787.[5] Other technicians to have added to the literature include Broadwood's head technician, A. J. Hipkins, who, in 1896, published *A description and history of the pianoforte and of the older keyboard stringed instruments.*[6] Though Hipkins was 'accepted as England's leading authority on keyboard instruments' it was generally held that his 'prejudice against technical progress' was a significant flaw in his writing.[7] In contrast, the factual accounts of working technicians W. B. White (1906), H. Woollard (1915), and former maker and designer Samuel Wolfenden (1916, 1927), form a practical record of the principles of the instrument's construction and repair, and update the early prose of the musicologist, Edward F. Rimbault (1860).[8] They are among the closest we have to a contemporary record of piano making in London in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when the instrument had evolved to its present design and become the subject of mass-production.

Development of the early designs to the mass-produced instrument has been comprehensively documented, and Rosamond Harding's (1933) record to 1851 is commonly regarded as the seminal treatise on the subject,[9] though her work has since been augmented by three significant studies: the period of study of Stewart Pollens' research (1995), which traces the instrument to 1763, pre-dates that of Harding, after which Cole (1998) undertakes a highly detailed technical examination to *c*1817.[10] Cyril Ehrlich (1990) takes up where Harding ends, and reviews the economics of the piano's manufacture and the industry's international growth and decline, tabulating

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[5] See Laurence (1998); and Laurence, A., *The Broadwood Barless Piano: A History* (Skipton, North Yorkshire: Pioneer Press Ltd, 2004).

[6] Hipkins, A. J., *A description and history of the pianoforte and of the older keyboard stringed instruments* (London: Novello Ewer, 1896; 3rd edn, Detroit: Information Coordinators, 1975).

[7] See Ehrlich, C., *The Piano: A History* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons Ltd, 1976; rev. edn, Oxford University Press, 1990; repr. 1996), p.146.

[8] See White, W. B., *Theory and practice of pianoforte building* (New York, 1906, repr. University Press of the Pacific, 2001); Woollard, H., *The making of a modern pianoforte* (London: John Bale, Sons & Danielsson, 1915); Wolfenden, S., *A treatise on the art of pianoforte construction* (Old Woking, Surrey: Unwin Brothers Ltd, 1916 and 1927; repr. 1975); and Rimbault, E. F., *The Pianoforte, Its Origin, Progress, and Construction* (London: Robert Cocks & Co., 1860, repr. London: Travis and Emery Music Bookshop, 2009).

[9] Harding, R., *The Piano-Forte: Its History Traced to the Great Exhibition of 1851*, 2nd edn (first published by the author 1933; rev. edn, Old Woking, Surrey: Unwin Brothers Ltd, 1978). As an aid to understanding the chronology of the literature, the date of Harding's original publication is cited in the bracketed text of this chapter. Footnote citations give the date of the author's revised copy (i.e. 1978).

[10] See Pollens, S., *The Early Pianoforte* (Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Cole, M., *The Pianoforte in the Classical Era* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).

manufacturing output from 1850 to the 1970s, and Wainwright (1975), too, is concerned with the vacillating fortunes of the trade from the end of the nineteenth century to the mid-1970s, his being the most thorough account of the decline of the industry.[11] Edwin Good (1982) surveys 'extant typical instruments by all the leading makers from the dawn of the piano to the present',[12] and the cultural impact of the piano is explored by Arthur Loesser (1954), leaving a large body of discrete literature to record the instrument's composers, pianists and repertoire.[13]

My own sphere of work is based in London and centres on the industry's workforce. Early piano making in eighteenth-century England was the work of a relatively small number of instrument makers (less than a dozen advertised in the London directories of 1785), but by the end of the nineteenth century England had become a leading centre of piano manufacture, with several hundred manufacturers producing many thousands of instruments a year in factories and workshops around the capital. Research into these makers has fallen traditionally into two categories: macro- and micro-historic. Their macro-history records an overview of the piano-making population, and for Harding (1933) this takes the form of an appendix noting the names, addresses and operating dates of all known makers working in London and its environs from 1760 to 1851;[14] a list later expanded to 1860 and made global by Clinkscale (1993, 1999), who adds to each entry a short biography and the location and specification of all known extant instruments.[15] Ehrlich (1990) extends their work with the names and periods of activity of makers operating worldwide from 1851 to 1976.[16] These lists were compiled with reference to numerous London directories and sundry articles in the case of Harding, and over three hundred instrument collections, one hundred informants, and eight hundred written sources in the case of Clinkscale.[17] Given the size of Clinkscale's task, it is commonly

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[11] See Ehrlich (1996); and Wainwright, D., *The Piano Makers* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1975).
[12] Good, E. M., *Giraffes, Black Dragons & Other Pianos* (California: Stanford University Press, 1982), reviewed by H. Schott in *Music & Letters* 65/2 (April 1984), pp.195–96.
[13] Loesser, A., *Men, Women and Pianos* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1954).
[14] Harding (1978), pp.402–26.
[15] See Clinkscale, M. N., *Makers of the Piano, Vol. 1: 1700–1820* (Oxford University Press, 1993); and Clinkscale, M. N., *Makers of the Piano, Vol. 2: 1820–1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999).
[16] Ehrlich (1996), pp.203–21.
[17] For Harding, see Harding (1978), p.402. For Clinkscale's *Makers of the Piano, Vol. 1: 1700–1820*, see review by J. Koster in *Notes*, Second Series 51/2 (December 1994), pp.569–73, at p.570.

accepted that her work contains some errors and inconsistencies.[18] Koster (1994) is particularly critical of this, but Clinkscale herself invites correction and parts of this thesis revise some of the anomalies in her work. The sources used by Ehrlich are not recorded. On a wider scale, an online database initiated by Lance Whitehead and Paul Banks contains 'basic biographical information about people working in all branches of the music business (composers, performers, publishers, instrument makers etc.) in London in the period 1750–1800', of which some information is derived from archival sources (apprenticeship records, insurance records and wills) and other from secondary sources. Currently, it contains more than two thousand entries, of which at least seventy are proved to relate to the piano industry.[19] My own macro-studies have been mindful not to present an extended version of these lists. Rather, they consider the workforce in terms of its origin, labour and organisation (in my studies of London silk workers in Chapter 3, and of the 1881 workforce in Chapter 6), its response to fire, prosecution and imprisonment for debt (in my study of the industry's insolvents in Chapter 5), its concern for its dependants and succession (in my study of testators in Chapter 4), and the day-to-day realities of its working life, as noted throughout the thesis. Associated lists have been confined to the appendices. Aside from the lists of Harding *et al*, above – none of which has been crafted into a history of the workforce – the macro-history of the piano making population has been more commonly assessed by its product: that is, the collective achievements of its makers in terms of the instrument's development and the quantity of pianos they produced (per Harding and Ehrlich above). Again, my thesis avoids a repetition of this exercise, which has been accomplished elsewhere. I also abstain from simulating Pat Kirkham's (1988) macro-analysis of *The London Furniture Trade, 1700–1870*,[20] which surveys the different crafts of the industry, its apprenticeship system and the consequences of its breakdown, the growth of the company, and the rise of the entrepreneur over the designer, although Kirkham's methodology – and the furniture trade itself – offers a salient working model for a comparable study of the piano trade. It has not been my intent to appropriate her design or to make a parallel study of her findings.

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[18] The database informing the first volume comprised some nine hundred makers and four thousand pianos made between 1700 and 1820. Clinkscale (1993), p.x.

[19] The database is hosted by the Royal College of Music at http://lmt.rcm.ac.uk/

[20] Kirkham, P., *The London Furniture Trade, 1700–1870* (London: Furniture History Society, 1988).

On a smaller scale, the subject's micro-history has focussed on individual makers and the peculiar characteristics of their product. Revisionists have re-examined Cristofori's early London-based successors and the legitimacy of the mythical 'twelve apostles' from Germany who, traditionally, were credited with introducing the piano to the London market during the 1760s: a thesis challenged and disproved by Warwick Cole (1986) and Michael Cole (2000).[21] That many German and Flemish migrants were pioneers of the London piano trade is not disputed and they are recognised accordingly: Johann Christoph Zumpe is credited with being the first maker of the English square piano and his earliest surviving instrument has been identified by Richard Maunder (1989).[22] Warwick Cole (1998) has revealed Americus Backers to be the founder of the English school of grand piano manufacture, and Adam Beyer and his origins have been the subject of research and debate between Cole (1995, 1997, 2005) and Eva Badura-Skoda (2004).[23] George Bozarth and Margaret Debenham have made a thorough survey of the life and work of William Southwell (2009), and Thomas Strange and Jenny Nex (2010) have brought to the fore the work and career of John Geib.[24] Nex (2004) has also made a detailed study of Thomas Culliford and his company,[25] and, most recently, Margaret Debenham and Michael Cole (2013) have investigated the careers of Roger Plenius, Frederick Neubauer and Herman Viator.[26] Many other makers of the period, however, such as John Adlam, James Ball, Frederick Beck and Charles Trute – four of forty-five noted by Harding as working in London at the end of the eighteenth

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[21] See Cole, W. H., 'The Early Piano in Britain Reconsidered', *Early Music* 14/4 (November 1986), pp.563–66; and Cole, M., 'The Twelve Apostles? An Enquiry into the Origins of the English Fortepiano', *Early Keyboard Journal* 18 (2000), pp.9–52.

[22] Maunder, R., 'The Earliest English Square Piano?', *The Galpin Society Journal* XLII (1989), pp.77–84.

[23] See Cole, W. H., 'Americus Backers: Original Forte Piano Maker', *Harpsichord and Fortepiano Magazine* 4/4 (October 1987), pp.79–86; Cole, M., 'Adam Beyer, Pianoforte Maker', *The Galpin Society Journal* XLVIII (1995), pp.94–119; Cole, M., 'More about Two Piano Makers: Adam Beyer and John Pohlman', *The Galpin Society Journal* L (1997), pp.218–20; Badura-Skoda, E., 'The Piano Maker Adam Beyer, a German by Birth', *The Galpin Society Journal* LVII (2004), pp.231–35; and Cole, M., 'Correspondence', *The Galpin Society Journal* LVIII (2005), pp.260–64.

[24] See Bozarth, G. S. and M. Debenham, 'Piano Wars: The Legal Machinations of London Pianoforte Makers, 1795–1806', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 42 (2009), pp.45–108; and Strange, T., and J. Nex, 'John Geib: Beyond the Footnote', *Eighteenth Century Music* 7 (Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp.81–103.

[25] Nex, J., 'Culliford and Company: Keyboard Instruments Makers in Georgian London', *Early Keyboard Journal* 22 (2004), pp.7–48.

[26] Debenham, M., and M. Cole, 'Pioneer Piano Makers in London, 1737–74: Newly Discovered Documentary Sources', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle* 44 (2013), pp.55–86.

century – have yet to receive the same degree of scrutiny.[27] In contrast, the high-profile makers of successful London businesses that followed have been the subjects of devoted study. The origins of Broadwood (Wainwright 1982, Laurence 1998 and Cole 2005), Brinsmead, Challen, Collard & Collard, Danemann and Welmar (Laurence 2010) have been firmly established and a thorough record made of their technical and commercial achievements. Wainwright (1975) and Cole (1998) also focus on 'landmark' makers whose inventions influenced later makers and the development of the piano in general but, again, many prominent (and smaller) London makers of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, such as Allison, Hopkinson, and Mott, have yet to attract the same attention. My own micro-research examines the career of an early maker (William Frecker, see Chapter 2) whose activity at the centre of the industry was previously unknown, and also appends the biographies of two later members of the trade: piano maker Robert Anderson Rüst (at Appendix 17), and action maker Henry Brooks (Appendix 20).

Given that existing literature about London piano makers has centred on the male proprietors of flourishing workshops operating between *c*1765 and the 1970s, what has been learned of their employees? It is known that many early makers worked with the help of family members (for example Beyer, Brinsmead and Collard all worked with a brother, and Trute was assisted by his wife and daughter),[28] and that some employees went on to become makers themselves (for example John Henry Schrader and George Rose),[29] but the identity of most employees remains anonymous unless they lodged a patent (see Appendix 11) or marked their signature on the internal parts of surviving instruments. Whitehead acknowledges the value of signatures in identifying members of the workforce, but cautions against the misattribution of workmanship to foremen, retailers and restorers by the uncritical

[27] Grove Music Online (at Oxford Music Online) includes short biographies of James Ball and Frederick Beck. See www.oxfordmusiconline.com. Cole appends information on Charles Trute at Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (Cheltenham: Tatchley Books, 2005), pp.173–76.

[28] For Beyer, see Cole, M. (1995), pp.94–119, at p.112. For Brinsmead, see Laurence (2010), p.14. For Collard, see Laurence (2010), p.51. For Trute, see Clinkscale (1993), p.301.

[29] John Henry Schrader was foreman to Gabriel Buntebart and inherited the firm at Buntebart's death in 1794. See will of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart, large piano forte maker, proved 1794 (National Archives [NA hereafter] PROB 11/1250). In 1908, George Rose left the firm of Broadwood and formed a partnership with Herbert Marshall. See Laurence (1998), p.201.

acceptance of potentially 'spurious' signatures.[30] Laurence (1998) manages to confirm several Broadwood keyboard makers in this way,[31] as does Nex (2004) in her study of the instruments of Thomas Culliford.[32] Nex augments her list with the names of employees working elsewhere in the firm, identified among trial transcripts of the Old Bailey,[33] which source she revisits with Whitehead (2005) in their study of the musical instrument makers identified in criminal proceedings between 1753 and 1809, including reference to a handful of apprentices and employees in the piano trade.[34] Nex also notes several piano makers employed by Longman & Broderip in her detailed history of the company (2011).[35] Ehrlich (1990), Wainwright (1982) and Laurence (1998) discuss the contribution of specific employees at the Broadwood factory in their chronicles of the firm (such as senior technician Hipkins, mentioned earlier, and three generations of the Rose family who worked in roles such as senior foreman and factory superintendent), and Laurence (2010) commemorates key members of staff in his history of Brinsmead, Challen, Collard & Collard, Danemann and Welmar. To date, however, the only publication to advertise the employee as the principal focus of study has been *The Piano Makers* by David Wainwright (1975), which was written as 'the first comprehensive history of the British piano makers' to record 'the craftsmen who have made and [were] still making pianos' to 1975.[36] Here, then, ostensibly, is a salient piece of literature. The first three chapters record evidence of early experimentation in piano making in England and the influence of music publishers and virtuoso pianists in bringing the instrument to popular attention. A fourth examines the affiliations between British makers and Thalberg, Mendelssohn, Liszt, Moscheles, Chopin and Rubenstein (among others) and the impact of their alliance on the piano playing population. Chapter five lists the makers and instruments included in the Great Exhibition of

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[30] Whitehead, L., 'Editorial', *The Galpin Society Journal* LXVI (2013), pp.3–6, at p.3.

[31] Laurence (1998), p.73.

[32] Nex (2004), pp.7–48, at p.19.

[33] My own study of the trial transcripts of the Old Bailey has disclosed the names of more than three hundred men and women working in the industry from 1784 to 1913, comprising 123 piano makers and their partners, 113 employees, 25 dealers, 15 tuners and a handful of suppliers to the trade. Findings planned for future publication.

[34] Nex, J., and L. Whitehead, 'Musical Instrument Making in Georgian London, 1753–1809. Evidence from the Proceedings of the Old Bailey and the Middlesex Sessions of the Peace', *Eighteenth Century Music* 2/2 (Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp.251–71, at pp.266–71.

[35] See 'Workers and working practices' in Nex, J., 'Longman & Broderip' in M. Kassler (ed.), *The Music Trade in Georgian England* (Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2011), pp.9–93, at pp.32–57.

[36] Wainwright (1975), p.11.

1851 (32 in total) and describes Victorian enthusiasm for casework ornamentation. The next deals with German competition, import and export figures, the player-piano, and the hire-purchase system, then helpfully explains the location of London makers north and south of the river. Three short but valuable micro-histories outline the origins of lesser known makers Henry Hicks, the Murdoch company and the Morley family firm, then follows 'a partial selection of the 133 manufacturers in Edwardian London, chosen by a piano maker who was young in those days and remembers these as companies that made good pianos'.[37] Other oblique allusions permeate the book. With only twenty footnotes in total, the majority of Wainwright's sources are impossible to authenticate, though, in fairness, he was a journalist and author writing principally for a lay audience. The final chapters of his book return to the pianists of the day (Wainwright himself was an amateur pianist), the struggling fortunes of the piano trade to the mid-1970s, and a confident look to the future. Writing 35 years before the last piano factory in Britain ceased manufacture in 2009, Wainwright was in an enviable position to record something of the history of the workforce.[38] He had access to key surviving manufacturers and their records (including Brasted, Broadwood, Codd, Grover, Knight, and Morley) and was presumably able to interview their staff, many of whom would have been apprenticed to the trade and had many years' experience. Here, then, was a misspent opportunity to record with academic authority the experiences of one of the last generations of piano makers in England.

Given the deceptive content of *The Piano Makers* and the absence of any further dedicated research, how might the history of the London workforce be revealed? As demonstrated by Nex and Whitehead in 2005, ostensibly non-related sources such as the trial transcripts of the Old Bailey are capable of exposing valuable, if random, details of the workforce, and my own postgraduate study of this source (2009) identified more than three hundred members of the piano industry who were the victims, perpetrators or witnesses of criminal activity between 1771 and 1913.[39] Together with their names, the identity of their employer might be revealed, along

[37] Wainwright (1975), pp.131 and 135.

[38] Kemble & Company (est. 1911) closed its factory in Bletchley, nr Milton Keynes, in October 2009.

[39] See Appendix 20 in Kent, M., 'Women behind the piano: the female workforce in the manufacture and maintenance of pianos from 1770 to the present' (MA dissertation, London Metropolitan University, 2009). Findings planned for future publication.

with helpful details of their workplace, employment and working practices. Much has been learned of the quotidien activities of the workforce from a study of these transcripts, and salient findings are integrated in this thesis. The untapped potential of this and other sources identified in my postgraduate study of women working in the piano industry inspired this doctoral research. Not only had these sources not been mined with regard to the female workforce, they contained a large amount of untapped information relating to the male workforce as well. The principal sources studied here, then, are not those that belong to the industry itself (since very few survive),[40] but those that form the annals of other disciplines; from parish and social history archives, to London directories, newspapers, wills, and national censuses. Most profitably, many record the written and spoken words of members of the workforce.

Principal primary sources

Parish registers

London parish records of baptism, marriage, death and burial are commonly used for research purposes and this thesis has made thorough use of their content in plotting individual careers and confirming familial ties. Baptismal and marriage records are especially valuable in that they record the words of the individuals involved in the ceremony, the registrar presumably asking the individual the nature of their work and recording their answer verbatim. Parish registers have been widely consulted for all chapters of this thesis excepting the last, which captures the words of the workforce through the answers they provided in the census.

Censuses of England

The British government began a decadal census of its inhabitants in 1801, and those conducted between 1841 and 1911 are accessible online.[41] The censuses of England of 1881 and 1911 allow an electronic search of the population by occupation, and this thesis makes a study of the former with regard to the piano industry population. Although the census of 1911 became accessible the year after this study began, a comparative analysis of the piano industry workforce of the two censuses was

[40] A notable exception is the Broadwood Company Archive at the Surrey History Centre [SHC hereafter] (2185/JB). The company's workbooks from 1771–1813 are held at the Bodleian Library, Oxford (Ms. Eng. misc. b107; Ms. Eng. misc. c529; and Ms. Eng. misc. e663).

[41] The censuses are available to view at www.ancestry.co.uk

discounted, as this task alone would have supported a doctoral project. Instead, an original decision was upheld to make a study of the 1881 census as a high-level overview of the industry towards the end of the study period. Other researchers to have made use of census material are Laurence (2010), who appends a small amount of census data concerning London's musical instrument trade in 1921, and Ehrlich (1990), who uses census statistics to calculate the growth in American piano manufacture between 1860 and 1909.[42] Ehrlich also uses the first Census of Production to prove the total UK output of pianos in 1907.[43] A detailed study of the 1881 census of England in terms of the piano industry workforce has not been assumed before.[44] My analysis of the records of more than six thousand members of the workforce identified in the census is reported in Chapter 6, with a summary of returns at Appendix 29. Throughout the thesis, extensive use has been made of all available censuses in charting the lives and careers of members of the workforce.

Social history archives

Two principal social studies of Victorian London were undertaken in the nineteenth century. The first, conducted by the journalist Henry Mayhew in the 1840s, surveyed *London labour and the London poor* and examined the population that was prepared to work (e.g. street sellers, artisans and labourers) and that which could but would not work (e.g. prostitutes, thieves and beggars).[45] No occupation of the piano industry features in Mayhew's study, which raises the piano industry workforce of mid-nineteenth century London above the population considered 'poor'. The second study was conducted between 1889 and 1903 by the social scientist Charles Booth, and comprised a survey of the *Life and Labour of the People in London*, which examined (among other issues) the living and working conditions of the London

[42] Laurence (2010), p.132; and Ehrlich (1996), p.129.

[43] Ehrlich (1996), p.157.

[44] A paper written by F. Carnevali and L. Newton, *Pianos for the People: From Producer to Consumer in Britain, 1851–1914* (University of Birmingham and Henley Business School, University of Reading, April 2012) notes (at p.14) an estimate of the 1881 workforce based on the census that year (methodology not explained), but the figures are not consistent with my findings. Online at: www.henley.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/international-business-and-strategy/pianos_for_the_people_April_2012_Lucy_Newton.pdf, consulted 27 February 2013.

[45] Published in book form in 1851 and 1862. Mayhew, H., *London Labour and the London Poor: Vol. 1* (London, 1851); *Vol. 2* (London: Woodfall & Son, 1851); *Vol. 3* (London: Charles Griffin and Company, 1851); and *Vol. 4* (London: Griffin, 1862).

population and the organisation of its trade and industry.[46] Whereas Ehrlich (1990) consulted this study with regard to Booth's assessment of the piano industry's 'third rate maker and his ways',[47] this thesis is concerned with the information supplied by participating piano makers, and their assertion that their men 'as a rule earn good wages and are able to maintain a comfortable home'.[48] The relative value of this statement is tested in a study of the social status of the 1881 workforce, whose residential addresses (as recorded in the census) are compared with Booth's colour-coded *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*, indicating London's poverty and prosperity, street by street, at the end of the nineteenth century. The results are discussed in Chapter 6.

London Directories

Harding (1933) was first to make use of London's historical directories to collate an alphabetical list of piano makers working in the capital from 1760 to 1851, though some of her dates have since proved imprecise as the directories themselves are not without error.[49] Some of Harding's errors are corrected in this thesis through comparison with other sources. The principal use of directories in this thesis has been to investigate the workforce on a micro and macro level: first, to identify the piano silkers engaged in the industry from 1835 to 1911 (the subject of Chapter 3), and second, to calculate the number of companies and individuals to have advertised in the early commercial directories and later *Post Office London Directory* from 1770 to 1914 (discussed in Chapter 5). Harding's alphabetical list of piano makers is also rearranged by address (at Appendix 2) to expose possible links, mergers and acquisitions among makers, through the repeated use of premises.

The National Press

The online digital archives of the British Library offer two major newspaper collections spanning three hundred years of publishing in Britain and northern

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[46] The Charles Booth Archives [CBA hereafter] are held at the London School of Economics. See also, the Charles Booth Online Archive at http://booth.lse.ac.uk/, which hosts digitised versions of Booth's *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*.

[47] Ehrlich (1996), p.149.

[48] Response of Challen and Son, 60 Arlington Road, Camden Town, to Charles Booth's questionnaire, 'Surgical, Scientific and Electrical Instruments and Musical Instruments and Toys: Interviews, Questionnaires, Statistics and Reports' (CBA: Booth A11), pp.7–8.

[49] See Harding (1978), pp.402–26. London's collection of historical directories, dating from 1677, has been preserved on microfilm by the London Guildhall Library.

Ireland: the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Burney Collection and the collection of nineteenth-century newspapers. Both contain information about the piano industry in Britain and abroad, and are widely consulted by piano historians. Interrogation of the newspapers for this study has been for the purpose of large-scale enquiry and small-scale biographical study; the first, to conduct a comprehensive survey of fires in the industry, and to assess the industry's attitude to insurance, and the impact of fire on the workforce and on future factory design (which findings are discussed in Chapter 5, with a list of fires at Appendix 15); and the second to compile the biographies of individual members of the trade, whose removal between premises was often advertised in the press, together with the sale of their workshops, tools and instruments in the case of bankruptcy, and details of their court appearances in the case of criminal activity.

A second large-scale enquiry into the industry has made use of the online digital archives of *The London Gazette* to conduct a study of members of the London workforce prosecuted and imprisoned for debt. Findings are discussed in Chapter 5. Also resulting from this latter study are a record of all announcements pertaining to partnership changes from 1778 to 1914 (at Appendix 10), and a record of patents lodged by members of the workforce from 1785 to 1878 (Appendix 11).

Wills of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury

A study of the records of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury held in the National Archives has identified 132 testators to have worked in the piano industry who died in the south of England between 1777 and 1858. Before 1858 wills in England were proved by local church courts, of which more than two hundred existed in total.[50] The Prerogative Court of Canterbury, being the most important, dealt with 'relatively wealthy individuals living mainly in the south of England', and the wills studied in this thesis are drawn from their archives.[51] After 12 January 1858 the proving of wills became the responsibility of the state, which formed for the purpose a national Court of Probate for England and Wales.[52] The Court's alphabetical index of

[50] Grannum, K., and N. Taylor, *Wills and Probate Records*, 2nd edn (The National Archives, 2009), p.17. This publication provides the authoritative background to Chapter 4.

[51] 'Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1384–1858)', National Archives website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/wills.asp, consulted 27 November 2011.

[52] Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.20.

testators became known as the National Probate Calendar,[53] and a facsimile of the calendar is available to view on microfiche.[54] The microfiche cannot be searched electronically or by occupation, however, so the identification of all those engaged in the piano industry after 12 January 1858 is currently an impractical task. In contrast, probate copies of the wills proved prior to this date, by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury, are able to be searched online, electronically, both by name and occupation. The wills consulted in this chapter are therefore drawn from the archives of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury and proved prior to 12 January 1858.

Individual wills are commonly consulted for the purposes of micro-history, but no previous study has been made of such a quantity belonging to men and women working in the piano industry. The documents build an 'industry tree' of friendships, partnerships, marriages, legacies and debts that bound the community together, and record the wealth and success, disappointment and disinheritance of their authors and beneficiaries. Some correct inaccuracies and uncertainties reported in other sources. Their findings are discussed in Chapter 4, and a list of testators (and other industry members mentioned in the wills) is presented at Appendix 3.

Historical background

The history of the invention of the piano has been noted in detail by Pollens (1995), Harding (1933) and Cole (1998), and its arrival in England has been comprehensively charted by Cole. The first reported instances of the piano in England, and its early manufacture in London, may be summarised as follows.

Currently, the earliest known reference to the existence of a piano in England relates to an instrument located in London in 1740. It was played upon by Handel in the presence of his friend, Thomas Harris, who subsequently reported that although Handel had been feeling unwell, 'he was in good spirits yesterday and played finely on the Piano-forte'.[55] Nothing more is known of this instrument, although Cole surmises that it may have been owned by Handel's friend, the librettist Charles

[53] Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.14.
[54] The National Archives hold microfiche copies of the National Probate Calendars for 1858–1943. Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.21.
[55] Cole, M. (1998), p.22.

Jennens.[56] Next mention of a piano appears in the memoirs of Dr Charles Burney (1726–1814) who wrote of an instrument he played upon between 1747 and 1749, while resident music master at the Wiltshire country home of the Member of Parliament for Monmouth, Fulke Greville. Although 'the touch was very imperfect, and the mechanism clumsy [...] it had a magnificent and new effect [...and] by trying the effects and discovering by degree the force or delicacy of touch it was capable of, [Burney] gained considerable credit in shewing it off.'[57] This instrument was perhaps less refined than the one enjoyed by Handel but more is known of its provenance. Greville acquired it from his friend, Samuel Crisp, for the sum of one hundred guineas (about double the price of a good harpsichord), and it was made in Rome by an individual named Wood.[58] Evidence exists, then, of two foreign pianos extant in England by the 1740s, four decades after Cristofori's early prototypes were made in the Medici Court of Florence.[59] A third piano recorded in England was probably the first to be made on English soil. It was a copy of Wood's piano made by the Dutch harpsichord maker, Roger Plenius (1696–1774), who had been experimenting since at least 1736 to achieve a *piano* and *forte* effect on keyboard instruments at his premises in South Audley Street, Grosvenor Square.[60] Burney assessed the results and concluded that 'the touch was better but the tone very much weaker' than that of the original.[61] If Plenius sought to improve upon his first attempt no evidence survives, and neither does his original, nor that of Wood.

Other London craftsmen were attempting to remedy the shortcomings of existing keyboard instruments in the mid-eighteenth century. The weak volume of the struck clavichord and the static volume of the plucked harpsichord gave impetus to several inventions that aimed to meld the expressive attributes of the former with the greater volume of the latter, most notably by modifying the harpsichord to effect a rapid change of register or by attaching an articulated lid that could be raised and lowered

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[56] Cole, M. (1998), p.22.
[57] Cole, M. (1998), p.43.
[58] Wainwright (1975), p.24.
[59] Pollens, S., 'Bartolomeo Cristofori in Florence', *The Galpin Society Journal* LXVI (2013), pp.7–42.
[60] Plenius advertised his 'harpsichord made and invented by him, after an entire new Manner; admits of all variety for playing Forte Piano' in *The London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 4 May 1736.
[61] Klima, S., G. Bowers, and K. Scott Grant (eds), *The Memoirs of Dr Charles Burney* (Lincoln, Nebr., USA: Bowers and Grant, 1998), p.74, f.n.12.

to create a 'swell' effect. Many of the craftsmen experimenting along these lines were already established in London making other instruments, where news of innovations on the continent would have reached them via immigrant instrument makers arriving in the capital, several of whom were to spark the manufacture of the early piano in London. First to arrive, by 1757, was Frederick Neubauer from Hamburg, whose daughter married the harpsichord maker Abraham Kirkman at St James's church, Piccadilly, that year.[62] Neubauer began to advertise his instruments from Compton Street, Soho, in 1761,[63] advising, two years later, in *Mortimer's Director*, that he was a maker of 'Piano Fortes'.[64] Effectively, his contribution to the launch of the piano in London may be considered to have ended here: he never devoted himself exclusively to the instrument, but continued to make assorted harpsichords at various premises, and died the same year as Roger Plenius, in 1774.[65] For more information about Plenius' and Neubauer's careers, see Debenham and Cole (2013).

The arrival in the capital of Johann Christian Bach in 1762 is considered to have been a significant fillip to piano making activity and the attendant curiosity of the musical public. The expressive nature of Bach's keyboard compositions attracted him to the potential of the piano and he took an interest in its development, befriending several makers and promoting their products. At this time, while 'all the harpsichord makers tried their mechanical powers at piano-fortes', Burney reports that 'their first attempts were always on the large size'.[66] Two issues impeded the launch of these large or 'grand' pianos as they later became known: first, their poor mechanical and tonal qualities, which were still at an early experimental stage, and, second, their prohibitive cost. Potential purchasers were reluctant to replace their harpsichord with an inferior instrument, more so to pay the price (remembering the cost of Wood's piano). Two men working in the capital tackled these problems independently. One, Americus Backers, persisted in improving the quality of the grand design (his work is discussed in Chapter 2); the other, Johann Zumpe, a former

[62] Debenham and Cole (2013), p.68.
[63] *Public Advertiser*, 6 May 1761, discovered by Debenham and Cole (2013), p.68.
[64] Thomas Mortimer's *Universal Director* (1763), cited by Debenham and Cole (2013), p.68.
[65] Cole, M. (1998), p.122.
[66] Burney, C., 'Harpsichord' in A. Rees (ed.), *The Cyclopaedia: or universal directory of arts, sciences, and literature*, vol. 18 (London, *c*1819), n.p.

employee of the London harpsichord maker Burkat Shudi, addressed the cost.[67] The result of Zumpe's device was a small 'square' piano which he began to produce at 7 Princes Street, Hanover Square, approximately five years after establishing his workshop there *c*1761.[68] Unlike Wood's piano with its imperfect touch and clumsy mechanism (almost certainly housed in the traditional case of a harpsichord), Zumpe's piano was lightweight, compact and set in a rectangular case measuring only 49 inches (125cm) in length. It had a small, sweet tone, a light touch and reliable mechanism, and at sixteen guineas sold for less than one fifth the sum Fulke Greville paid his friend Samuel Crisp. Almost immediately these pianos became 'the essential accessory for the polite drawing-room or music salon in both London and Paris'[69] and Zumpe could not make them fast enough.

Other instrument makers were quick to follow. Fellow German migrant Johann Pohlman (d.1794/5) 'fabricated an almost infinite number for such as Zumpe was unable to supply'.[70] His earliest surviving square dates from 1768, just two years after that of Zumpe.[71] Perhaps as a counter-offensive, Zumpe recruited help that year in the person of a German partner, Gabriel Buntebart, who was a close friend and associate of J. C. Bach. Bach subsequently promoted his friend's product and acted as a conduit for foreign sales.[72] That same year Adam Beyer (nationality yet to be proved) set up business in Compton Street, close to the former premises of Neubauer.[73] Beyer's instruments were consistently of high quality, both aesthetically and mechanically. His earliest surviving square is dated 1771.[74] German migrant Christopher Ganer also made quality instruments at his workshop in Broad Street, Golden Square, where the value of his business quadrupled within two years,[75] and, diagonally opposite, Frederick Beck (nationality also unknown) made close replicas

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[67] For full details of Zumpe's career, see Cole, M. (1998), pp.43–68.
[68] It is not known exactly when Zumpe made his first piano, but Maunder estimates the year 1766. See Maunder (1989), pp.77–84.
[69] Cole, M. (1998), p.52.
[70] Charles Burney, cited in Cole, M. (1998), p.50.
[71] Cole, M. (1998), p.70.
[72] Cole, W. H. (1986), p.563.
[73] *Rate Books*, St Anne's Parish, Westminster Archives Centre [WAC hereafter].
[74] See M. Cole's online, updated version of his 1995 article 'Adam Beyer, Pianoforte Maker' (2012) at: www.squarepianos.com/beyer2.html
[75] See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no: 434849 (London Metropolitan Archives [LMA hereafter] Ms. 11936/287) for £300 in 1780, and policy no: 463403 (LMA Ms. 11936/303) for £1,300 in 1782.

of Zumpe's work. Within ten years of Zumpe unveiling his first square piano, nearly a dozen London workshops had set up in imitation nearby.

Notwithstanding the popularity of the domestic square piano, it was not sufficiently powerful to perform in a concert setting, and the feeble volume, poor tone and uneven mechanism of the grand piano made it equally inadmissible. The man who laid the foundations for the modern grand piano established his workshop at 4 Jermyn Street, St James, in 1763, the same year that Neubauer advertised his 'Piano Forte' in *Mortimer's Director*. Nothing is known of Americus Backers prior to his arrival in Jermyn Street except that he was a harpsichord maker (and possibly Dutch),[76] but shortly after 1770 he relinquished the harpsichord in favour of advancing the piano and his instruments were well received. Burney considered them 'the best', and at £60 to £70 they were one third cheaper than Wood's piano, though still four times the cost of Zumpe's square.[77] The identity of Backers' successor at 4 Jermyn Street is the subject of Chapter 2, but, prior to his death, other London instrument makers adopted Backer's pioneering techniques. One was Robert Stodart (1748–1831), who, with fellow Scotsman, John Broadwood (1732–1812), allegedly visited Jermyn Street to follow Backers' progress.[78] Both men were destined to build on Backers' foundations, but Stodart was in a position to take the lead. In 1775 he established a workshop in Wardour Street and began the design of a combined harpsichord and pianoforte, which he patented in 1777.[79] Though not in direct competition with Backers' 'Original Piano-Forte', Stodart's design for a combination instrument incorporated Backers' piano action exactly. Two months later Backers died and Stodart found himself 'with more commissions for grand pianos than he could ever have expected had Backers lived.'[80] With so many craftsmen turning out square pianos in Zumpe's wake, Stodart enjoyed several years' near monopoly in the London market for grand pianos, save for those of the Belgian inventor, Joseph Merlin, which were 'much admired' as pieces of furniture, and those of John Crang Hancock, which had an agreeable touch but were insufficiently

[76] For a detailed study of Backers' life and work, see Cole, M. (1998), pp.114–28.
[77] Cole, M. (1998), p.126.
[78] Laurence (1998), p.12. See also, Anon. (1862), p.16.
[79] Cole, M. (1998), p.129.
[80] Cole, M. (1998), p.129.

robust.[81] Allegedly, Stodart's first serious rival was his former colleague, John Broadwood, who sold his first square piano in 1780 and his first grand piano on 12 January 1785.[82] It was the first of many thousands produced by his firm over the next century and a half.

The above is a very brief narrative of the arrival and early manufacture of the piano in London and omits nearly all aspects of the instrument's technical design, which have been articulated fully by Harding (1933) and Cole (1998). The purpose of this summary has been to introduce the chronology and location of the first generation of piano makers to be established in London, and to chart the collective industry and ingenuity that spawned the trade that created the workforce to be discussed in the following chapters.

Summary of following chapters

Chapter 2: William Frecker, grand piano maker (c1761– c1834)

The next chapter examines the career of a little-remarked practitioner operating in the early years of the trade, to show how discoveries made on a micro level affect our understanding of the wider subject. It is demonstrated how death and inheritance shaped the opportunities available to the workforce, and how connections in the trade gave rise to potential advantage.

Chapter 3: London Silk Workers (1785–1911)

A study of 72 piano silk workers reinforces the significance of connections in the trade and notes how those without links struggled to establish their career. This chapter shows how the unpaid labour of female family members led to their paid employment as suppliers to the trade, and how they worked as a small community. The history of the Cook family demonstrates the setup of a piano-silking concern, and examines how the workforce responded to the bankruptcy of the firm. The response of the wider workforce to bankruptcy and insolvency is discussed in Chapter 5.

[81] Cole, M. (1998), p.131.
[82] See 'The English Grand, 1778–1805' in Cole, M. (1998), pp.129–33.

Chapter 4: Workforce Wills (1773–1858)

This chapter examines the wills of 132 members of the workforce. It studies the role of wives and women in settling the deceased's estate, and the family members chosen to inherit the family business. It notes how attempts by testators to exert posthumous control over their successors were often unsuccessful, and how businesses rarely survived to be passed to a third generation. The nature of bequests made to family, colleagues and employees is examined (e.g. property, stock and tools), and the extent to which servants and charities benefited from the wills. Also examined are the religious inclinations of the testators, evidence of wealth and hardship, and the significance of the instruments bequeathed in the wills.

Chapter 5: Bankruptcy and Insolvency (1756–1914)

This chapter exposes 510 members of the London piano industry to have been bankrupt, insolvent or imprisoned for debt. It explains the legislation that determined their status as a debtor and the practical consequences of their prosecution. An examination is made of the frequency and timing of insolvency and bankruptcy among the workforce, and its correlation with economic forces, developments in the trade, and changes to the debt laws. Although the percentage of insolvents among the workforce is proved to have been relatively small, instances of serial debt and multiple family prosecutions are found to have been disproportionately high. Possible reasons for this are considered, as are the measures debtors took to restore their livelihood and liquidity, and the consequence of debt on their future careers.

Chapter 6: The 1881 Workforce

A study of the 1881 census of England examines the records of approximately 6,500 members of the industry, and includes those working outside the capital as a contextual frame of reference. Statistics reveal their age, gender and activity (including female as compared with male occupations) and expose the workforce in terms of its number, location, density and migration. Also considered are the unemployed, sick, retired and imprisoned, the employment of foreigners, and the extent to which whole households participated in the trade. An assessment is made of the wealth of the workforce through a study of its lodgers and domestic servants,

and the status of the residential addresses of the workforce living in London relative to Charles Booth's poverty maps of London.

Chapters are presented, as far as possible, in an order that is both chronological and expanding in terms of the lives and size of the study population: from the intensive micro-study of William Frecker in the early period of the industry, to the extensive macro-study of more than six thousand workers in 1881. This widening focus is not only consistent with the growth of the workforce – from a handful of practitioners in the 1770s to a workforce of approximately fourteen thousand by 1914 – but reflects a corresponding increase in the availability of primary source archives that allow a major search for a large body of people involved in a similar line of work. Compiling the detailed biographies of William Frecker and the London piano silk workers required reference to multiple sources, from parish registers, insurance policies, newspapers and directories, to company archives, court transcripts and census returns; and, much like the manufacture of the early piano, required a thorough study of each discipline and was highly labour intensive. In later chapters, the large numbers of bankrupts and insolvents, testators, and the 1881 workforce, were identified via a single portal – the online archives of *The London Gazette*, The National Archives, and Ancestry collections respectively – but though the basic information was acquired from a single site, it was still necessary to consult the former sources to explain the archive data. This methodology mirrors the activity of the workforce itself: distinct, disparate and labour-intensive in the early years of the trade, and, though increasingly congregated under one roof toward the end of the study period, still painstaking in producing the final product.

Chapter 2:

William Frecker, grand piano maker (*c*1761–*c*1834)

The biography of William Frecker illustrates two aspects of the history of the piano industry workforce that are central to the concerns of this thesis. First, how a lack of biographical information restricts our understanding of extant instruments and of their place in the hierarchy of the trade, and, second, how the provision of biographical information not only remedies this position, but forces a realignment of the work and contribution of the proximate workforce. Though a handful of Frecker's pianos survive, it has not been possible to fix their position in the order of the industry without knowledge of Frecker's career and associations, and, accordingly, the relative position of his peers and their instruments could not be more fully described. Applying this omission to the wider workforce – most of whom left no named instruments and whose contribution has been the more easily overlooked – the history of piano making is more effectively understood through a better investigation of its workforce.

Frecker's career may not have been typical of his contemporaries', but it encompassed a range of experiences that would have been familiar to many of those apprenticed to the trade who later became journeymen or established their own concern.[1] Harding records Frecker as a grand piano maker operating in Rathbone Place from 1802 to 1834,[2] and Clinkscale concurs (presumably drawing her information from Harding), though she clarifies his first name as William.[3] Cole does not mention him in his detailed account of the founding of the London industry,[4] but in a later publication refers to him as 'Fricker',[5] while Mould alludes to 'Fricker, who may be the Fricker referred to by Boalch as a builder.'[6] By all

[1] Excluding reference to Frecker's extant piano of 1797 (which came to light post publication), the majority of this chapter was published by the author as 'William Frecker, piano maker *c*1761–*c*1834' in *The Galpin Society Journal* LXV (2012), pp.5–22.
[2] Harding (1978), p.410.
[3] Clinkscale (1993), p.106.
[4] Cole, M. (1998).
[5] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), pp.64 and 75.
[6] Mould, C., 'The Broadwood Papers', *The English Harpsichord* 1, nos 1 & 2 (1974), n.p.

accounts, William Frecker was just one of a large number of makers seeking to emulate the success of Zumpe and Backers in the early years of the London trade (Harding notes several dozen of them) and while it is not certain how many pianos he made, evidence of only four is known to survive. Were it not for these few instruments, seemingly his legacy would be slight.

Frecker's relegation to the fringe of piano making activity may prove to be misplaced, however, as evidence exists that sets him not at the periphery of the London trade but centre stage, and operating among such influential men as Backers, Broadwood and Stodart. The nucleus of grand piano making in 1771 was Americus Backers' workshop at 4 Jermyn Street, St James's, where his newly-invented 'Original Forte Piano' was gaining a reputation as a viable alternative to the harpsichord.[7] Zumpe's small, double-strung, 'square' pianos fulfilled the demand for a domestic hammer-struck keyboard instrument with variable dynamics, but their soft, sweet tone lacked the power to replace the harpsichord in concerts. Backers' later grand pianos were designed to produce a fuller tone. They had a larger, stronger case, akin to the harpsichord's, hammers aligned to maximize the higher partials, and, from 1774, were predominantly triple strung.[8] They also had an adjustable hammer escapement mechanism,[9] a pedal-operated damper lift and *una corda* shift.[10] J. C. Bach and his protégé, Johann Samuel Schroeter, were among those who endorsed Backers' instruments,[11] and his clientele included members of the aristocracy, the Dauphiness of France, and the Empress of Germany.[12]

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[7] *Public Advertiser*, 1 March 1771, reproduced in Cole, W. H. (1987), pp.79–86, at p.79.

[8] For triple stringing in Backers' instruments see Cole, M. (1998), p.122. Although Backers' only surviving piano (dated 1772) is double strung, its string lengths are shorter than those generally found in contemporary English harpsichords, meaning that shorter (and correspondingly thicker) strings were intended to be used. These thicker strings would allow for the increased blow imparted by Backers' 'English Grand Action'. For details of Backers' action see Cole, M. (1998), p.120.

[9] By adjusting a screw under the hammer rail, each hammer could be regulated to 'escape' the action mechanism at a distance of 2 to 3mm from the strings. The hammers were then 'catapulted' the final distance to the strings which prevented them from 'jamming' on the strings if the keys were held down. See Cole, M. (1998), p.120. Well regulated hammers made the instrument's touch more expressive and the keyboard more comfortable to play.

[10] According to Cole, 'Backers' 'Original Forte Piano' exhibits the first known use of a pedal-operated sustaining stop'. See Cole, M. (1998), p.121.

[11] Cole, M. (1998), p.117.

[12] *Public Advertiser*, 1 February 1773.

Figure 1: Square piano by Zumpe, London, 1767, Russell Collection, University of Edinburgh, cat. no. 4339 (photo courtesy Darryl Martin, University of Edinburgh, copyright Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments).

Figure 2: Grand piano by Backers, London, 1772, formerly in the Russell Collection, University of Edinburgh, cat. no. 24, returned to the Duke of Wellington (photo courtesy Darryl Martin, University of Edinburgh, copyright Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments).

When Backers died, in January 1778, his innovative designs had already informed the work of two local instrument makers.[13] Joseph Merlin patented a compound harpsichord-piano in 1774, in which 'besides the jacks with quills, a set of hammers, of the nature of those used in the kind of harpsichords called *piano forte*, are introduced in such manner that either may be played separately or both together',[14]

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[13] A third maker to experiment with the grand piano, Frederick Neubauer, made a down-striking keyboard instrument called the *Pantalon* in his native Germany before arriving in London *c*1756, but this instrument owed more to the giant dulcimer of the Saxon musician Pantaleon Hebenstreit than to the piano of Cristofori. It had metal strings, uncovered hammers and no dampers. For more information about this instrument see Cole, M. (1998), pp.23–39. Neubauer may have been converted to the popular principles of the piano, with its covered hammers and effective damping system, while working in London but none of his instruments is known to survive. The posthumous auction of his stock in 1774 included 'upright and other Piano Fortes', but nothing more is known of them. *Daily Advertiser*, 25 November 1774. For more details of Neubauer's career, see Debenham and Cole (2013), pp.55–86, at pp.66–75.

[14] Patent dated 12 September 1774. Rimbault (2009), p.150. Details of Merlin's patent no. 1081 describe a set of 60 hammers clothed with leather and cloth. Harding (1978), p.48. The Patent Piano Forte Stop could also be fitted to 'any Harpsichord whatever, already constructed, however indifferent in itself the Instrument, and whoever the Author may be'. *Public Advertiser*, 18 January 1775. Merlin was not a prolific or dedicated instrument maker, however, but an 'inventor of mechanism' who made roasting ovens, money scales, invalid

and Robert Stodart, working from his Wardour Street premises in 1777, also designed and patented a combination harpsichord-piano,[15] although unlike Merlin he replicated Backers' upward-striking piano action exactly, his familiarity with Backers' action allegedly acquired during visits to Jermyn Street with his colleague, John Broadwood.[16] Notwithstanding the interest of Merlin and Stodart in Backers' grand piano action it seems that Backers, alone, was prepared to build a grand piano independent of the harpsichord.[17]

Backers' will was brief. He entrusted his estate to John Henwood, master of St Clement's Coffee House in the Strand, 'for the benefit, education and maintenance' of his two young illegitimate children,[18] and gave Henwood £5 for his trouble. With no successor named in the will, Backers' professional legacy was effectively unsettled though Broadwood family tradition records that he recommended 'the farther care of his invention to his friend John Broadwood'.[19] Broadwood's first pianos, however (made in 1778), were small square instruments,[20] and he is not thought to have made grand pianos until 1785.[21] Who, then, if anyone, perpetuated Backers' work in 1778?

For twenty months after Backers' death his Jermyn Street workshop appears to have remained untouched. An inventory was made on 5 October 1779, with Henwood's help, for the purpose of settling the estate.[22] Among the items listed were the carcasses of five grand pianos (four complete and the fifth with 'the Top not

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chairs and all manner of mechanical curiosities displayed at his museum in Princes Street, Hanover Square. *Morning Chronicle* [*MC* hereafter], 9 December 1794.

[15] Patent no. 1172 dated 21 November 1777. Harding (1978), p.318. The earliest surviving Stodart grand piano recorded by Clinkscale is dated 1784. Clinkscale (1993), p.284.

[16] Anon. (1862), p.16.

[17] Before concentrating on the perfection of the grand piano Backers had also experimented with combination instruments. A 'capital Piano Forte and Harpsichord in one Instrument, by A. Backers' was offered for sale in 1780. *London Courant and Westminster Chronicle*, 29 April 1780.

[18] Charles and Christiana Backers. Will of Americus Backers, harpsichord maker, proved 1778 (NA PROB 11/1038).

[19] Anon. (1862), p.15. Backers' will makes no mention of a newly-identified harpsichord maker named Henry Watson who shared Backers' workshop in 1766, and of whom nothing more is known. See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no.234413, 16 June 1766 (LMA, Ms 11936/168, p.285). I am grateful to Lance Whitehead for sharing this discovery.

[20] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.44.

[21] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.64.

[22] The original inventory is held at the National Archives (PROB 31/673/580) but a full transcript is annexed in Cole, M. (1998), pp.371–76.

Compleat'), six work benches,[23] five complete sets of keys, 12 soundboards, 71 leaves of sycamore wood and five leaves of mahogany veneer, large planks of deal, walnut and mahogany, a machine for cutting ivory, two anvils, two stoves, a large array of tools including seven saws and 22 planes, sundry pieces of leather, copious screws, saucepans, glue pots, wire and strings, and a solitary stool and chair. Laurence surmises:

> that [Backers'] business, with its tools, designs and materials, was offered for sale by the executor. By far the most likely individual to have made a purchase of the whole was Robert Stodart. During the period 1778 until the mid 1780s, Stodart appeared to have been the only producer of grand pianos in England; and as such he was, in a sense, Backers's successor, being the solitary representative of continuity in grand piano manufacture. It is hard to believe that he was not utilising a large part of the manufacturing equipment and piano components which had once been at Jermyn Street.[24]

Two considerations here are key, however. Firstly, Stodart established his workshop at least three years prior to the date of the inventory (in 1776),[25] and would have amassed his own collection of tools and equipment before Backers' became available after October 1779; and, secondly, no evidence has been found of the sale of Backers' goods. Cole forbears to conjecture, noting only that 'we do not know who purchased these things. But for an aspiring piano maker just setting up, this would be a remarkable windfall'.[26] This windfall, it appears, was the good fortune of a young apprentice, with potentially less than four years' experience as a piano maker, whose name was William Frecker.

It may be calculated with reasonable confidence that William Frecker was born prior to 6 June 1761. His birthplace is not known, but the family name of Frecker co-

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[23] Clarke makes a direct correlation between the number of benches in a workshop and the number of workers. Clarke, C., 'The English Piano', *Musique Ancienne, Instruments et Imagination*, Proceedings of the Harmoniques International Congress 2/6 (Lausanne, 2004), pp.239–70, at p.248.

[24] Laurence (1998), p.20.

[25] The Paving Rate for 99 Wardour Street was first collected from Robert Stodart in June 1776 and covered the year from 25 March. As Stodart paid the same (and not a pro rata) amount as a neighbour who had been resident for several years, it is possible Stodart had been in Wardour Street since March 1776. *Paving Rate Collector's Book*, St James's parish records, WAC.

[26] Cole, M. (1998), p.126.

existed in London and on the south coast of England in the eighteenth century,[27] though a connection has yet to be made between the two. Nothing is known of Frecker's early life, but an advertisement in *The Morning Chronicle* in 1803 attested to his having served twenty-eight years in the industry,[28] dating the start of his career to 1775, when he would have been about fourteen. His indenture is not recorded in the Apprenticeship Books,[29] but three pieces of evidence not previously noted suggest he was apprenticed to Americus Backers: an insurance policy, an apprenticeship, and a marriage.

Frecker's insurance policy

The first documentary evidence to connect Frecker with Backers dates from one year after Backers' death, when Frecker may have been about eighteen or nineteen. It is an insurance policy for 4 Jermyn Street that places Frecker in the premises on 20 January 1779 (see Figure 3 below) and it reads as follows:[30]

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[27] In London, Mark Frecker, Esquire, of Westminster, died 1738 (NA PROB 11/694). His daughter, Bridget Frecker, spinster, late of London, died Dover, Kent, 1771 (NA PROB 11/968). Abraham Frecker, late of Gosport, and James Frecker, of Gosport, were both stay-makers on the south coast in 1752 (NA X/1109A/1).

[28] *MC*, 8 July 1803, and again 12 July 1803.

[29] The Apprenticeship Books are held at the National Archives in Kew, series IRI. Frecker's omission from the Apprenticeship Books may be explained, in part, by revised legislation that reduced the paperwork entailed in recording apprenticeship agreements towards the end of the eighteenth century. The original Statute of Apprentices of 1563 forbade anyone to enter a trade who had not completed an apprenticeship. Parents negotiated a premium (or consideration) for the board, lodging and clothing of their offspring during their apprenticeship in the trade or profession of a master. The master, in turn, was obliged to pay a duty for each of the children he bound. This duty was introduced in 1710 and enforced until 1814. For the years 1710 to 1811 the payment was noted in registers that form the Apprenticeship Books. 'Duty was payable by the master at the rate of 6d for every £1 under £50 which he received for taking on the apprentice, and 1s for every £1 above that sum. The deadline for payment was one year after the expiry of the indenture.' Details of the apprenticeship agreement (or indenture) between parents and master were a private arrangement and each party held a copy of the document, but the duty (paid to the Commissioners of Stamps) was noted in registers that form the Apprenticeship Books. By the end of the eighteenth century changes to the original Statute ruled to exempt trades that had not been in existence when the Statute was passed, and this development afforded the masters of the newly-formed piano trade a case against paying the duty. As a result, by the end of the eighteenth century apprenticeships to the piano trade were often undertaken without any formal indenture and their details are not recorded in the Apprenticeship Books. 'Apprenticeship Records' at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/records/research-guides/apprenticeship-records.htm, consulted 23 August 2010.

[30] *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers* (LMA Ms. 11936/272). The importance of insurance policies for our understanding of musical instrument making in London was first pointed out by Lance Whitehead and Jenny Nex, 'Keyboard Instrument Building in London and the Sun Insurance Records, 1775–87', *Early Music* 30/1 (February 2002), pp.4–25.

409377	William Frecker, No. 4 Jermyn	
8/	Street Forte Piano Maker, on his Household	
	Goods in his now Dwellg. house only Brick	
Xmas 1779	Situate as aforesaid not Exceedg. One Hund.d Pds	100
Griffin	Utensils, Stock & Goods in Trust therein only	
	Not Exceedg. Three Hundred Pounds	300
		400

Frecker describes himself in the policy as a 'Forte Piano Maker' which, unless he miscalculated the length of his career in *The Morning Chronicle*, implies a certain confidence as he was still fairly young and inexperienced at perhaps less than twenty years of age.[31] He also records 4 Jermyn Street as 'his now dwelling House' which suggests that he owned the lease; in the case of tenanted properties Sun Fire Insurance policies tended to name the landlord, as in a subsequent policy held by Frecker (see Figure 4 below). What is more, his 'utensils, stock and goods' were insured to the value of £300 which was a large figure compared with the value attributed to Backers' 'stock in trade and working tools' in the inventory taken by Henwood ten months later – just £44 10s.[32] If the 'utensils, stock and goods' Frecker insured in his policy were those in Backers' workshop, either Henwood underestimated their value,[33] or Frecker inflated their value anticipating an increase in the value of the business – another sign, perhaps, of his confident disposition.[34]

If we are to deduce from this policy that Frecker leased 4 Jermyn Street and owned all the 'utensils, stock and goods' therein, how might this situation be explained? How did a potentially unqualified teenage apprentice inherit the property of the foremost grand piano maker in London? Frecker is not mentioned in Backers' will and no previous connection between the two men has been established. If Frecker

[31] Assuming Frecker continued to work as an apprentice piano maker the year subsequent to Backers' death he would have accrued only four years' experience when he purchased this insurance policy.

[32] Cole, M. (1998), p.374.

[33] Cole also considers it 'surprising that the whole contents of the workshop [...] should be valued at only £44 [...] Similarly, the dining-room piano, together with a landscape painting and evidently some fine-quality furnishings, were valued together at a miserly £41.10.0'. Cole, M. (1998), p.126.

[34] A less likely explanation is that Frecker introduced more 'utensils, stock and goods' into the property (to an approximate value of £250) but the inventory states expressly that it is 'a true, full, plain, perfect and particular Inventory of all and singular the Goods, Chattels and Credits of Americus Backers', not Frecker.

were not apprenticed to Backers, how is his presence in Jermyn Street to be explained?

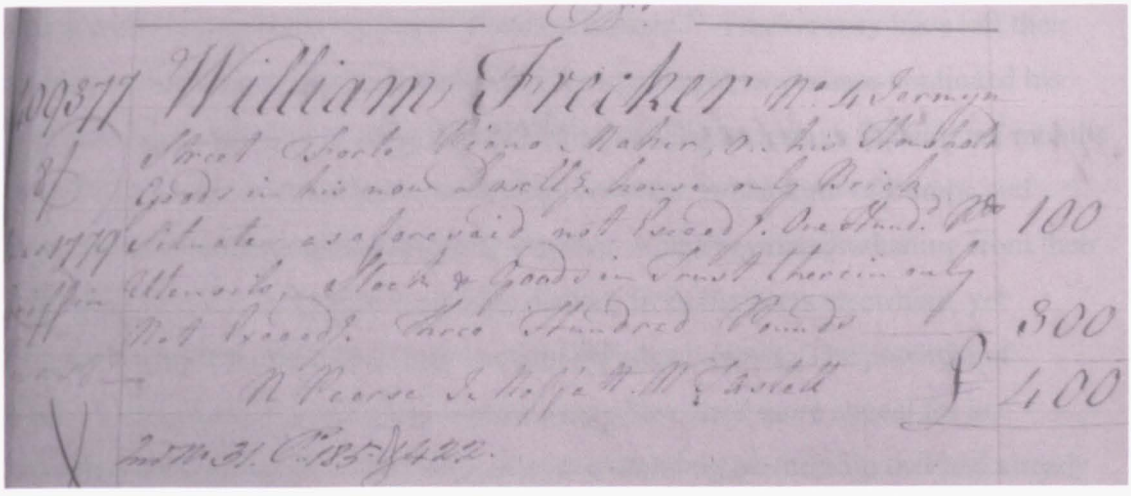

Figure 3: William Frecker's insurance policy (no. 409377) dated 20 January 1779, relating to No. 4 Jermyn Street (photo by the author).

Two possible scenarios present themselves: either Frecker's apprenticeship elsewhere ended prematurely and, with perhaps four years' experience, he arrived in Jermyn Street with sufficient funds to establish himself as a piano maker, or he was already working as an apprentice in Jermyn Street when Backers died, and in the period following Backers' death negotiated an arrangement with Henwood to continue in the premises.[35]

In examining the evidence for the former it must be considered how Frecker's apprenticeship elsewhere may have ended. Either his master may have died, or Frecker absconded from his apprenticeship or made a successful petition for its dissolution, none of which is recorded.[36] Harding notes ten piano makers operating in London during the early years of Frecker's apprenticeship: Zumpe and Buntebart, Pohlman, Merlin, Beck, Beyer, Ganer, Garbutt, Pether, and Stodart;[37] and Cole adds Fröschle.[38] It is possible that Frecker began his apprenticeship in one of their workshops but that his departure was not documented; a feasible supposition given

[35] As Backers' executor, Henwood would have been responsible for maintaining all Backers' dependants, including his apprentices. Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.79.

[36] All the piano makers recorded by Harding as operating in 1775 (when Frecker began his apprenticeship) were still in business in 1779 when Frecker bought his insurance policy; none of them had died. Harding (1978), pp.402–26.

[37] Neubauer had already died in 1774. Cole, M. (1998), p.122.

[38] Cole, M. (1998), pp.70 and 99.

that his indenture was not recorded either. Zumpe and Buntebart dissolved their partnership nine months after Backers' death (in September 1778),[39] whereupon Zumpe moved to new premises in Princes Street, Cavendish Square and Buntebart to a new workshop in Hanover Street, Hanover Square.[40] Frecker may have left their employ at this time to establish himself in Jermyn Street, or perhaps continued his apprenticeship with one or other master before moving to Jermyn Street three months later.[41] This interpretation loses credibility, however, in the light of Zumpe and Buntebart's international and financial success. A journeyman graduating from their workshop would surely enjoy a prestige distinct from his peers elsewhere, yet Frecker's apparent confidence may account for such a move. The potential of Backers' burgeoning grand piano business may have held more appeal for an aspiring young maker than the badge of a long-standing partnership that had already run its course making small domestic instruments.

If we feel justified to dismiss a continued association with Zumpe because he made no grand pianos (the evidence we have suggests that Frecker made only grand pianos),[42] we might also reject Beck, Beyer,[43] Ganer,[44] Garbutt, Pohlman and Fröschle as candidates for supervising Frecker's apprenticeship.[45] Stodart, though, as we have seen, employed Backers' grand action in his combination harpsichord-pianos, so if Frecker were schooled in Stodart's workshop he may have felt qualified

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[39] Their partnership was dissolved on 24 September 1778. *The London Gazette* [*LG* hereafter], 20 October 1778.

[40] Insurance policy of Gabriel Buntebart & Christopher Scavers [sic] at 13 Hanover Street, Hanover Square. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 403828, 13 October 1778 (LMA Ms. 11936/268).

[41] Buntebart is the more likely candidate as Frecker's continuing master as he began making grand pianos after his separation from Zumpe. Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.64.

[42] An entry in *Wakefield's Merchant and Tradesman's Directory for London* of 1790 suggests that William Freeker [sic] was a piano and harpsichord maker at 7 [sic] Berwick Street, London. Wakefield's information as to Frecker's address is incorrect, however, as Frecker had vacated 77 Berwick Street two years previously. This is the only known reference to link Frecker with the harpsichord and no evidence has been found of any harpsichords in his name.

[43] There is no conclusive proof that Beyer made grand pianos, although Warwick Cole considers the possibility. Cole, W. H. (1987), p.82.

[44] No extant grand pianos by Ganer are recorded by Clinkscale, but a nameboard on one of his square pianos dated *c*1780–85 reads 'Grand and small forte piano manufacturer', although this may refer to 'grand square' pianos. Clinkscale (1993), p.115.

[45] John Watson of the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia, points out the fact that 'It has so far escaped the literature that William Pether actually did make grand pianos, and advertised them already in 1767. The term grand piano was not yet in general use, so the advertisement calls it a "Piano forte harpsichord" to distinguish it from a normal (i.e. square) piano'. He cites an advertisement in the *Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 18 July 1767, offering Pether's 'curious piano forte harpsichord' as 'the second he has made'. I am grateful to Mr Watson for sharing this information.

to continue Backers' work. Is it likely, though, that Stodart would have allowed his junior to 'beat' him to such a prize?[46] Notwithstanding any confidence we may apportion Frecker, he would have needed a degree of arrogance to contemplate such a move. Unless we accept any of the above, the possibility of Frecker's apprenticeship to Backers must be allowed. Two questions, then, remain. Firstly, what did Frecker do in the period from Backers' death in January 1778 to his documented appearance in Jermyn Street the following January; and, secondly, how did he fund his new position?

Henwood maintained Backers' children 'till the month of June [1778] being six months [after Backers' death] having not been able to dispose of the lease of the said Deceased's dwelling house or to let the same till that time'.[47] Presumably the children remained in the house with a female servant to care for them during this period, after which they became wards of the parish.[48] Henwood further explained that he was 'not able to dispose of the said Lease or let the House until the last Quarter before the Expiration of the said Lease', which dates the expiry of the lease to Michaelmas (29 September) 1778. Unfortunately, this date foils any neat attempt to align Frecker's accession to the property with the purchase of his insurance policy on 20 January 1779, but the situation might feasibly be explained by three considerations: he may have rented the property from Henwood in June 1778, before purchasing the lease from the landlord when it expired at Michaelmas;[49] he may have lived there uninsured prior to January 1779; or he may have taken an initial policy with a company other than the Sun Fire Insurance Office whose records have not survived.

This brings us to consider Frecker's activity between Backers' death and his proven residency at 4 Jermyn Street one year later. If he were working as Backers'

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[46] Robert Stodart was born in Lanarkshire in 1748, making him Frecker's elder by possibly 13 years. Laurence (1998), p.15.

[47] The house was finally let for £11 14s post-tax. Cole, M. (1998), p.375.

[48] Henwood claimed £14 15s 9d in costs for this period and a further £5 19s from the estate for 'maintaining one of the Deceased's children from the time the late Deceased's dwelling house was let till he could find out the Child's parish' (NA PROB 31/673/580).

[49] The landlord was William Nash, possibly the same individual elected Lord Mayor of London in 1777. Henwood also incurred a cost of £1 2s for 'replevying' [retrieving] goods 'distrained' [seized] by Nash in lieu of rent due at the time of Backers' decease. He paid Nash £65 'for rent due for the same' (NA PROB 31/673/580).

apprentice it seems reasonable to surmise that he would have continued to perform his duties in the workshop when Backers fell ill. By natural consequence he may then have been called upon to deal with customers visiting the workshop after his master's death, and he would have been a helpful aide to Henwood in this regard. The October 1779 inventory gives the impression of a workshop gathering dust for the past twenty months and, indeed, Cole likens it to being 'arrested in the midst of life almost as if [Backers] had been caught under the falling ash in Pompeii';[50] but we know that Frecker had been a resident piano maker in the property for the past ten months and was presumably making use of the workshop during that time, so when Henwood and his appraisers attested to compiling a 'true, full, plain, perfect and particular Inventory of all and singular the Goods [...] of Americus Backers', is it possible that they compiled a list of the same being used by William Frecker? An advert in the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser* of 30 March 1779 (repeated twice the following month) lends weight to this theory:

> GRAND PIANO FORTES
> The Nobility and Gentry are respectfully informed that there are a few of those celebrated instruments made by the late Americus Backers to be seen any hour of the day at his late house, No. 4 in Jermyn-street, St James's, opposite to Market-lane. The several crowned heads who have been pleased to order them, the numbers of persons of the highest fashion and rank in this country, who are possessed of forms of them together with the approbation of the most eminent music masters, sufficiently shew their great excellence; to those who have not as yet heard them it may be necessary to say, that the Piano is softer, the graduations more regular, and the forte louder than any other keyed instrument (with strings) whatever; and as they want only to be heard to be approved, the nobility and gentry are humbly requested to take the first opportunity.[51]

Henwood's account of his costs to October 1779 makes no claim for these advertisements, so they must have been placed by Frecker who, alone, would have been on site to show prospective customers available instruments at 'any hour of the day'. Why, though, were these instruments offered for sale now, more than fourteen months after Backers' death? Seven months after this advertisement was published, the only instruments remaining in the house were a grand piano made by Backers (dated 1777) which stood in the first-floor dining room, presumably finished and in

[50] Cole, M. (1998), p.125.
[51] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 30 March 1779. A similar advert appeared in the same publication on 19 and 25 April 1780.

playing condition, and the wooden carcasses (presumably empty) of five grand pianos in the workshop.[52] The instruments potentially missing from this scene are those nearing completion when Backers fell ill; those with their carcass complete but their keyboard, action and trap-work only partially installed or awaiting regulation. Could these be the instruments to which the advertisement refers? Were they not advertised until March 1779 because Frecker had only then managed to complete them?[53] The counter to this argument, of course, is that any proceeds arising from the sale of these instruments would surely belong to Backers' estate, and Henwood recorded no such sales.

Returning to the question of Frecker's funding in his new position, he had completed perhaps three years of his training when Backers died; his seven-year apprenticeship not due to end until 1782 when he would have been twenty-one. The approximate cost of establishing himself in Jermyn Street (calculated from Henwood's inventory and Frecker's insurance policy) would have been as follows:

	£	*s.*	*d.*
For Backers' 'Stock in Trade and Working Tools'...	44	10	0
For the 'Lease or let' of No. 4 Jermyn Street .....[54]	11	14	0
For Sun Fire insurance of the above (from 20 January to Xmas 1779)		8	0
Total	56	12	0

This total sum of £56 12s 0d equates to approximately £3,560 today.

Frecker's policy also insures 'his household goods' for a sum not exceeding £100, almost the exact sum, coincidentally, afforded the value of Backers' household goods in Henwood's inventory. Did Frecker buy these also? If so, he would have had to pay the estate a further sum as follows:

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[52] The inventory also lists 'four small frames for little Forte Pianos' and 'two small Piano Forte Cases' (Cole, M. (1998), p.374) but the advertisement of March 1779 cannot refer to these instruments as it advertises 'celebrated instruments made by the late Americus Backers' and Backers was not famed for making square pianos.

[53] The customers who originally commissioned these instruments may have cancelled their orders when it became clear they would not be completed by Backers himself.

[54] This figure was the post-tax receipt declared by the executor so the purchaser would have paid more (NA PROB 31/673/580). Also, Cole, M. (1998), p.375.

Situation of household goods	£	*s.*	*d.*
Two Pair Stairs Forwards	4	10	0
Two Pair Stairs Backwards	8	5	0
Dining Room	41	10	0
Back Room One Pair Stairs	9	0	0
Front Parlour	9	10	0
Back Parlour	5	10	0
The Passage Continued	3	0	0
Back Kitchen Ground Floor	1	5	0
Yard	2	2	0
Kitchen	10	10	0
Back Kitchen	0	10	0
Linen	2	6	0
Wearing Apparel	1	11	6
Total	99	9	6

This second sum equates to approximately £6,260 today, so assuming Frecker acquired Backers' entire estate (stock in trade *and* household goods) he would have had to pay Henwood a sum approaching ten thousand pounds today: a considerable amount for a self-employed apprentice. This leads us to question whether Frecker may have been independently wealthy or perhaps, like Merlin, supported by a sponsor.[55] One of the Chief Clerks to the Treasury from *c*1727 to 1738 was Mark Frecker, whose annual stipend of one thousand pounds supported a house in Westminster, a second home in Fulham, a wife and three unmarried daughters.[56] When he died a widower, in 1738, his two surviving daughters inherited his estate.[57] The youngest married Thomas Basket and in 1771 their son, Mark,[58] became the sole beneficiary of his aunt's estate, comprising 'ground rents, messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments [any kind of property that can be inherited] situate and being in the City of Westminster and parts and shares of ground, messuages, lands, tenements and hereditaments elsewhere in the Kingdom of England'.[59] An association with this family might have financed Frecker's career, but evidence of

[55] Harding (1978), p.416.

[56] Mark Frecker's position in the Treasury is recorded in the *Daily Journal*, 6 December 1727; his income is recorded in the *Daily Post*, 6 December 1738; his address in Westminster is given in the *Daily Gazetteer*, 24 February 1739; and that in Fulham in the *London Daily Post and General Advertiser*, 13 February 1739. His annual income equates to approximately £86,000 today.

[57] Will of Mark Frecker, esquire, proved 1739 (NA PROB 11/694). Katherine predeceased her father in 1727 while still unmarried. She was buried at All Saints Church, Fulham on 19 November 1731. *Daily Advertiser*, 17 November 1731.

[58] Mark Basket (or Baskett) was Printer to His Majesty. *Public Advertiser*, 7 August 1762.

[59] Will of Bridget Frecker, spinster, proved 1771 (NA PROB 11/968).

kinship has yet to be proved and for the time being Frecker's financial circumstances remain unknown.

Notwithstanding his family connections, Frecker's career as a piano maker in Jermyn Street was an isolated one. The premises chosen by Backers in 1763 had been providential in their proximity to the musical patrons of the King's Theatre in Haymarket (and to J. C. Bach in particular), but Frecker must have found himself increasingly removed from the growing nucleus of piano makers established half a mile to the north, near Soho Square.[60] Professional separation and the expense of maintaining a property in Westminster may have prompted his move from Jermyn Street, and parish records show that in June 1779 rates for the property were paid by John and Richard Hallett.[61] Frecker and Richard Hallett (a bricklayer) appear to have co-habited for a while,[62] but by October 1782, Frecker had moved to rented accommodation in Berwick Street, south of Oxford Street,[63] where several other makers were congregated a short walk to the south and east: Frederick Beck had been at 4 Broad Street, Golden Square, for eight years by the time Frecker arrived,[64] and Christopher Ganer had recently expanded into two communicating properties diagonally opposite.[65] Robert Stodart worked at 99 Wardour Street in a parallel road to the east,[66] and indirectly opposite Stodart were the premises of Charles Trute.[67]

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[60] Notwithstanding the advantages of his location, Backers died in debt. He owed John Henwood £33 1s 4½d for 'cash lent and goods delivered' (NA PROB 31/673/580), and William Woodward (his vintner, who contested the will) 'fourteen pounds and upwards for cash lent and liquors had' (NA PROB 31/669/361). A further £65 was owed in rent, £2 8s 9d for new window lights installed in his workshop, and £7 in taxes (NA PROB 31/673/580); a debt amounting to nearly £7,000 today. Woodward eventually withdrew his suit and the case was dismissed on 10 December 1779 (NA PROB 29/204).

[61] London Lives [LL hereafter]: www.londonlives.org (fire_1775_1780_382_38287).

[62] Richard Hallett insured his household goods and 'utensils and stock in his open shed and yard' at Jermyn Street. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 409379, 20 January 1779 (LMA Ms. 11936/272).

[63] An entry in the *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers* for 9 October 1782 records William Frecker, Forte Piano Maker, at 77 Berwick Street. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 465385 (LMA Ms. 11936/304). This date may be significant as 1782 was potentially the year Frecker was due to complete his apprenticeship. Did Henwood agree to his staying on in the property until his apprenticeship had ended? If so, who was his new master and why does his name not appear on the Jermyn Street insurance policy instead of Frecker's?

[64] Harding (1978), p.404.

[65] Christopher Ganer, piano forte maker at 47 and 48 Broad Street, Carnaby Market. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 463403, 8 August 1782 (LMA Ms. 11936/303).

[66] Boalch, D. H., *Makers of the Harpsichord and Clavichord, 1440–1840*, 3rd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.185.

[67] Caroluss Frute [sic], piano forte maker, was insured at 26 Wardour Street in 1780 and may have been there still in 1782. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 424694, 22 February

Frecker's activities at 77 Berwick Street are not recorded, but his circumstances appear to have been much reduced. His new landlord, Edward Fidler, was a jeweller and gold worker who charged 'three and six-pence a week' for lodgings,[68] and perhaps because of the reduced size of his accommodation the goods Frecker insured in Berwick Street were half the value of those he held in Jermyn Street (see Figure 4). His insurance policy for Berwick Street, dated 9 October 1782, reads as follows:[69]

465385	William Frecker at No. 77	
4/	in Berwick Street Forte Piano Maker,	50
Mich.[s] 1783	on his Household Goods in the now Dwellg. House	
	only Brick of Fidler Jeweller Situate as aforesd.	
Griffin	not Exceedg. Fifty Pounds	
	Utensils, Stock & Goods in Trust therein only not	
	Exceedg. One Hundred & Fifty Pounds	150
		200

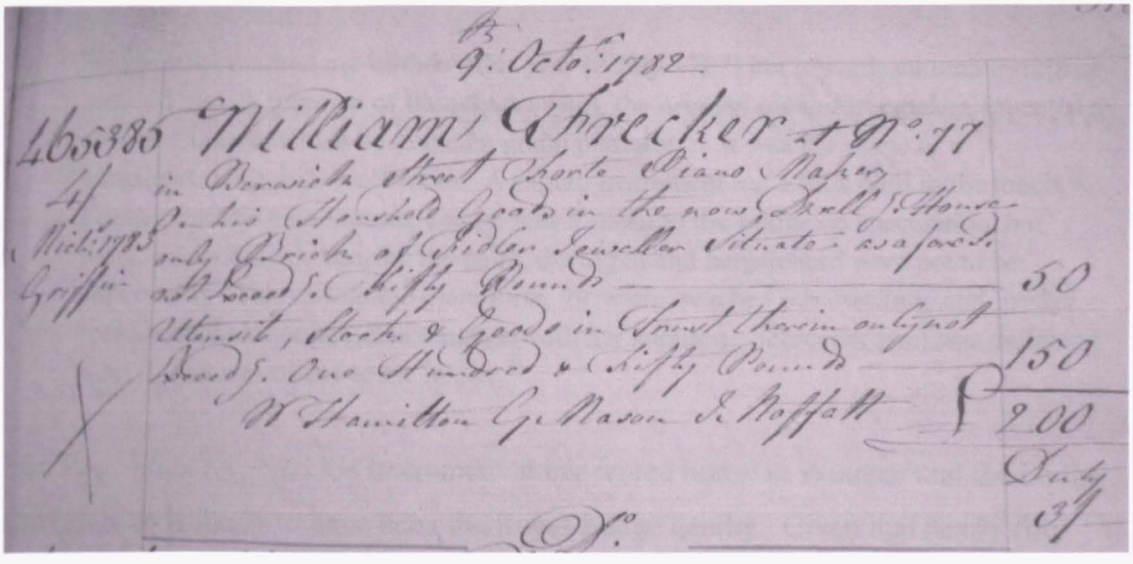

Figure 4: William Frecker's insurance policy (no. 465385) dated 9 October 1782, relating to No. 77 Berwick Street (photo by the author).

1780 (LMA Ms. 11936/281). By 1785 he had moved to 7 Broad Street, Carnaby Market. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 502759, 1 April 2785 (LMA Ms. 11936/327).

[68] Something of Frecker's environment may be learned from the following list of furnishings stolen by a tenant of the property in 1778: 'four cheque [sic] bed-curtains, value 10 s. a cheque tester cloth for a bed, value 5 s. a looking glass, value 20 s. a brass sender [sic], value 3 s. a cotton bed quilt, value 5 s. a bolster, value 5 s. two pillows, value 5 s. two linen pillow cases, value 2 s. a copper tea-kettle, value 3 s. and a brass candlestick, value 6 d.'. Proceedings of the Old Bailey [OB hereafter]: www.oldbaileyonline.org (t17780429-48).

[69] *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 465385, 9 October 1782 (LMA Ms. 11936/304).

Frecker appears not to have advertised his Berwick Street address, and as none of his known instruments dates from this period it is possible he ceased to build pianos for a time and worked instead as a specialist freelance maker of grand piano mechanisms, perhaps supplying parts to Stodart nearby, and such an activity would certainly account for his smaller stock of utensils. By January 1782, however, he had begun to supplement his income as an occasional outdoor tuner for John Broadwood, travelling as far as Cheshunt, Eastwick and Leatherhead to tune the likes of Mrs Barnes' spinet, Mr Smith's two harpsichords, and instruments belonging to Lord Lisburn [sic], the Bishop of Bath and Wells, and Lady Luisa Manners.[70] His name appears more than twenty times in Broadwood's account book in this connection; first on 9 January 1782 and last on 23 May 1785, and as Broadwood's account book ends in October 1785 he may well have continued beyond this time. By 1787 Wolff considers Frecker to have become an employee of Buntebart and Sievers in Princes Street, Hanover Square.[71] His evidence derives from the memoirs of Mrs Papendiek, lady in waiting to Queen Charlotte, who in 1836 recalled that:

> No presents marked my birthday this year [2 July 1787] but towards autumn a surprise awaited me. A foreman of Bautebart's [sic], the original piano forte maker, invented a new instrument, which he termed a grand pianoforte. It was the shape of a harpsichord but with brass tubes. A superb instrument but a little hard in the touch.[72] Frisker was the man's name, and he sent it down to the Lodge on speculation, but there, ancient music bearing the palm, the organ and harpsichord were not to be superseded. This new grand pianoforte, therefore, reached our dwelling, and Frisker took ours of Goner [sic] in exchange, with 25*l* addition. Schroeder [sic] was delighted with it, and was of use to the maker.[73]

Mrs Papendiek received the instrument at her rented house in Windsor and the Lodge she refers to is likely to have been the Royal Lodge nearby. Given that nearly fifty years had elapsed between the arrival of the piano and Mrs Papendiek's recollection of the event, the absolute accuracy of her account must be in question, but she

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[70] *Broadwood Journal 1771–1785* (Bodleian Library, Ms. Eng. Misc. b.107), pp.172, 178, 179 and 271.

[71] Wolff, K., 'Johann Samuel Schroeter', *The Musical Quarterly* 44/3 (July 1958), pp.338–59, at p.353.

[72] Being 'hard in the touch' was a common complaint against early English grand pianos. Square pianos had a lighter shallower touch compared with grand pianos which required a firmer touch to compensate for heavier hammers. For more information about touch in early pianos see Cole, M. (1998), pp.292–306.

[73] Broughton, Mrs Vernon Delves (ed.), *Court and private life in the time of Queen Charlotte*, 2 vols (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1887), vol.1, p.279.

nonetheless conveys details of interest about the maker and his instrument. Assuming Wolff to be correct in his interpretation of 'Frisker' as 'Frecker',[74] and Mrs Papendiek to be accurate in her recollection of the year, Frecker had become foreman to Buntebart by the age of about twenty-seven or twenty-eight. He was clearly an innovative employee whose work attracted the attention of potential clients and enhanced the reputation of his employer.[75] Upon first reading Mrs Papendiek's account, the term 'original piano forte maker' seems to relate to Buntebart, but is it possible she was referring to his foreman as the maker of Backers' 'original forte piano'? Buntebart did not describe himself as an 'original piano forte maker', but as 'great Piano Forte maker to her Majesty',[76] and later 'grand Piano Forte maker to her Majesty'.[77] It was Backers who used the phrase 'original forte piano' in his advertisements of 1771, but whether Mrs Papendiek knew of these advertisements or even associated the term 'original piano forte' with Backers cannot be known.[78] She may have used the words 'original' and 'piano forte maker' simply to imply that, in her view, Buntebart or Frecker (and not Zumpe or Stodart, for example) was the original maker of the piano forte.

The 'brass tubes' described by Mrs Papendiek are not easily explained. Wolff considers them to be over-wound bass strings, but early over-wound bass strings (made of a single brass string over-wound with an open copper helix) were only slightly thicker than the plain brass strings they superseded; they were certainly not the substantial, close-wound 'tubular' strings of modern pianos. Moreover, Mrs Papendiek would have been familiar with over-wound strings as they were already used in the bass of square pianos, such as the one she offered Frecker in part-exchange.[79] Had Frecker physically introduced brass tubes into the piano, perhaps as a means of stabilizing the instrument's pitch against atmospheric changes, he would

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[74] Mrs Papendiek's diary was transcribed by her relation, Mrs Broughton, who was possibly unfamiliar with the names involved and struggled to read the original manuscript. I am grateful to Michael Cole for suggesting this explanation of the name 'Frisker'.

[75] It will be remembered that Schroeter had performed on instruments made by Backers so it is possible he was already acquainted with Frecker from earlier visits to the Jermyn Street workshop.

[76] *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 10 November 1779.

[77] *Morning Chronicle and London Advertiser*, 25 January 1781.

[78] The only piano makers Mrs Papendiek alluded to in her memoirs were Buntebart, 'Frisker', Broadwood, Ganer, and Pleyel. She did not mention Backers.

[79] The lowest 12 notes of a surviving square piano by Ganer (dated *c*1780) have open-wound bass strings. Clinkscale (1993), pp.114–15.

have anticipated the invention of the compensation frame by more than thirty years.[80] Whatever his accomplishments during his employment with Buntebart & Sievers, he was not to inherit the firm, and when Buntebart died in October 1794 the business passed to John Henry Schrader who had overseen the 'management and care' of the firm in Princes Street 'for time past'.[81] Frecker, meanwhile, perhaps encouraged by the interest and approbation of clients such as Schroeter, had already begun to manufacture pianos in his own name.

Grand piano of 1792

By June 1788 Frecker had moved into a new workshop on the west side of Wardour Street, two doors north of Robert Stodart.[82] Stodart's business was expanding at this time,[83] and it is possible that he notified Frecker of the availability of 101 Wardour Street with an eye to their mutual advantage, perhaps offering Frecker supplementary work while he established his new concern. Frecker's first known directory entry as a grand piano maker, in *Andrew's London Directory* of 1789, features this address, and it was here, in 1792, that Frecker made the first of his four known instruments, although only the nameboard veneer strip survives (see Figure 5 below). This, together with its purported instrument, was advertised for sale in 2008 as follows:[84]

> A very early English grand fortepiano for restoration. In very poor repair, missing the keyboard and action, although most of the remaining internal parts were intact when I received the instrument three years ago. Since then, I have disassembled the piece, retaining every original part, organizing them for a future restoration by a competent repair person. The original soundboard is intact, with four or five longitudinal cracks; about two-thirds of the original tuning pins are present, as is the original pinblock. The veneers covering the pinblock were removed, cleaned, and ironed out. The

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[80] James Thom and William Allen patented the use of internal brass tubes (of about ¾ inch diameter) in 1820 (patent no. 4431), their object being to compensate for pitch fluctuations caused by atmospheric changes in temperature. Harding (1978), pp.202, 206 and 330. It is possible, of course, that Mrs Broughton may have misread the manuscript in this regard.

[81] Will of Gabriel Gotlieb [sic] Buntebart, large piano forte maker, proved 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250). Sievers pre-deceased Buntebart in 1793 and both men died without an heir. Schrader formed a partnership with Siever's executor, Henry Hartz, and 'Schrader & Hartz' became known as successors to Gabriel Buntebart. *Bill of Complaint*, Henry Hartz, 4 March 1803 (NA C 13/28/22).

[82] *Paving Rate Collector's Book*, St James's parish records (WAC).

[83] Previously resident at 98 Wardour Street, Stodart expanded into no. 99 in the year to 12 June 1788. *Paving Rate Collector's Book*, St James's parish records (WAC).

[84] The instrument was advertised for sale through eBay on 20 May 2008. I am grateful to John Watson, Conservator of Instruments and Mechanical Arts, and Associate Curator of Musical Instruments, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia, for bringing this to my attention.

nameboard is missing, but it does come with an inscribed piece of veneer that reads thus, "Guilelmus Freckers Fecit Londini, 1792".[85] All original pieces that were present on the piano are included. They have been put into boxes and jars and labeled [sic] according to where they were found on the instrument. It should be very possible, although laborious, to return this piece to working order.

The instrument has a five-octave compass, a mahogany-veneered carcass with stirrup handles to secure the lid, a divided bridge, and four iron gap braces – all features found in Frecker's later instruments and common to contemporary manufacturers. The purchaser subsequently discovered, however, that the casework was probably made by Stodart,[86] and it was proved that the instrument and nameboard strip had been married at a later date.

Figure 5: William Frecker nameboard cartouche reading 'Gulielmus Frecker Londini Fecit 1792 / No. 101 Wardour Street, Soho' (photo courtesy of Frank Renfrow and Louis Dolive).

Grand piano of 1797

The first of Frecker's instruments known to have survived in its entirety was also made in Wardour Street and dates from 1797 when Frecker would have been thirty-six or more. It survives in good condition in the James Mitchell Varnum House Museum in East Greenwich, Rhode Island, where it was acquired as a gift from the Aldrich family in 1939 (see Figures 6 and 7 below).[87] In decorative terms, the instrument shares similarities with surviving examples of Frecker's earlier and later work: the nameboard has the same format as that which survives from 1792 (Figure

[85] The inscription actually reads 'Gulielmus Frecker Londini Fecit 1792 / No. 101 Wardour Street, Soho'. Had a letter 's', in fact, been added to the end of Frecker's surname in this instance (to 'latinize' his name) it would have given credence to the possibility that Americus Backers' real name may have been Andrew Backer. However, John Broadwood, who knew him, referred to him as 'Backers': an entry in his sales ledger on 17 March 1777 records that 'Mr Backers hired a harp[sichor]d for Mrs Headon of Portman Square'. *Broadwood Journals 1771–1785* (Bodleian Library, Ms. Eng. Misc. b.107), p.84. Backers' nationality has been the subject of continued debate, but a 'Rosetta Stone' in the form of a list of jury members at the Old Bailey in 1777 may confirm, at least, whether he was an Englishman or an alien. Analysis of the nationality of the 'jury of half foreigners' who tried Lawrence Pettit on 15 January 1777 should provide an answer (OB t17770115-38).

[86] The purchaser was a piano technician from Kentucky.

[87] I am indebted to Richard Spicer of Newburyport, Massachusetts, for bringing this instrument to my attention, and to John W. Adams, trustee of the James Mitchell Varnum House Museum, East Greenwich, Rhode Island, for furnishing further details. The piano was gifted to the museum by Edward B. Aldrich, of nearby Warwick, on 24 August 1939.

5, above), and reads 'Gulielmus Frecker London Fecit 1797 / No. 101, Wardour Street, Soho', and the cross-banded, mahogany-veneered case with stirrup handles and a four-legged trestle stand is recognisable in his work of fifteen years later (to be discussed below). With a compass of five-and-a-half octaves (FF–c^4) this instrument could claim the 'additional keys' of a fashionable grand piano, although Frecker may also have been making instruments with a shorter compass at this time, as shall be seen.

Figure 6: Grand piano by Frecker, London, 1797, The James Mitchell Varnum House Museum, East Greenwich, Rhode Island (photo courtesy of John W. Adams, The James Mitchell Varnum House Museum).

Figure 7: Grand piano by Frecker, London, 1797. The James Mitchell Varnum House Museum, East Greenwich, Rhode Island (photo courtesy of John W. Adams, The James Mitchell Varnum House Museum).

Other instruments were made in Wardour Street,[88] some of which passed through the hands of John Broadwood who accepted them in part-exchange for the purchase of his own grand pianos 'with additional keys'. That he gave more than £40 for each of two grand pianos made by Frecker shows clearly that he considered them to be of good quality.[89] Frecker also acted as an intermediary for Broadwood, hiring a

[88] An advertisement in the *Oracle and Public Advertiser* of 31 October 1795 announced the sale, by Robins, of a 'brilliant-toned grand piano-forte, in a mahogany case, by Frecker'. The instrument was presumably second-hand.

[89] I am grateful to Michael Cole for directing me to the *Broadwood sales ledgers* at the Surrey History Centre (SHC 2185/JB/29/1/1) with regard to the value Broadwood attributed Frecker's instruments. See also Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.75. Two records were found confirming Broadwood's acceptance of Frecker grand pianos in part exchange for his own: Miss Russell received a credit of £47 5s for her Frecker grand piano on 13 May 1794, and Mrs Goodlad of 8 Wimpole Street, likewise, for £41 13s, on 18 January 1796. Broadwood also accepted instruments made by Longman, Kirkman, Ganer, Pether, Pohlman, Zumpe, Schoene, and Stodart. Of the entries examined (1794–1796), the maximum he gave for a Stodart grand piano was £36 15s on 29 March 1796. Consultant David Hunt has also suggested that since Frecker's instruments 'were valued so much by

Broadwood piano for a gentleman in Wimpole Street and paying the maker in cash.[90] With his business on an increasingly stable footing, Frecker was in a position to contemplate marriage and his choice of bride provides further indication of a possible connection with Backers' workshop.

An apprenticeship and a marriage

It is a notable fact that apprentices to the piano trade (and other musical instrument trades) were not generally sought by advertisement. Neubauer's appeal for 'an Apprentice of credible Parents' in the *Public Advertiser* of 29 April 1765 is a significant exception,[91] and Zumpe's recruitment, from St Martin's workhouse, in 1762, of a pauper apprentice named James Laurence, though characteristic of his concern for disadvantaged children (as described in Chapter 4), may not have been an orthodox means of recruitment shared by other masters.[92] The absence of advertisements for apprentices suggests that indentures were negotiated in person through connections in the trade. John Broadwood, certainly, was inclined to employ fellow Scotsmen who were likely known to each other and personally recommended to the firm.[93] Backers' means of recruitment are not recorded, but, in 1774, he bound an apprentice by the name of Andrew Martin. Confirmation of Martin's indenture is not to be found in the Apprenticeship Books, but in the parish records of St Clement Danes which state that he had 'served Four years' Apprenticeship to one Amaisus [sic] Backers, Harpischord [sic] Maker in Jermyn Street, in the Parish of Saint James in the Liberty of Westminster, when his said Master died'.[94] No like record exists for Frecker, but had he joined Martin in the workshop in 1775 the two would have been

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Broadwood' he may have been building grand pianos with parts supplied by the firm. I am grateful to Mr Hunt for this hypothesis. Private correspondence, 8 July 2012.

[90] An entry in the *Broadwood sales ledgers* reads '7 May, 1795, Bowles Oldfield, Esq, 33 Wimpole Street, hire of a grand piano to. By cash paid Frecker' (SHC 2185/JB/29/1/1).

[91] A search of the Burney Newspaper Collection for advertisements offering apprenticeships to 1800 found a number for other trades (for example drapery, millinery, upholstery, surgery, boot and shoe making, plumbing painting and glazing) but none for musical instrument making.

[92] James Laurence was aged 13 or 14 at the time of his discharge, on 15 July 1762, 'to a Harpsicord [sic] Maker in Princes St Hanover Sq[uar]e'. *St Martin's Workhouse Registers: Workhouse Admissions and Discharge Registers (31 July 1759–15 July 1762)*, WAC (LL smdswhr_366_36626). St Martin's Workhouse stood on the site of the National Portrait Gallery today. Zumpe's concern for the welfare of pauper children was reflected in his will (discussed in Chapter 4). Will of John Christopher Zumpe, gentleman, proved 1790 (NA PROB 11/1199).

[93] Laurence (1998), p.15.

[94] *Pauper Settlement, Vagrancy and Bastardy Exams*, St Clement Danes Parish, 9 January 1798 (LL WCCDEP358260239).

colleagues for three years prior to Backers' death. Martin's fate thereafter is unclear and whatever steps he took to further his career are not recorded, but in his early thirties he took a wife named Elizabeth with whom he had two children. He 'never Rented any House Tenement or Lodging of Ten Pounds a year, paid Taxes or done any Act Matter or thing whereby he might have gained a subsequent Settlement' elsewhere, and apart from a spell in 'Manchester' *c*1798 (independent of his family), he appears to have remained a resident of the parish of St James throughout his life.[95] In his mid-sixties a man of the same name appealed to the parish for pauper relief and was admitted briefly to St James's workhouse near Carnaby Market,[96] returning two years later for reasons of 'distress'.[97] No evidence has been found to connect Martin again with the piano trade, and the admission of a 'labourer' named Andrew Martin to the workhouse in 1819 (if this is the same man) may be the last known documentary evidence of his fate.[98] If Frecker and Martin were both bound to the Jermyn Street workshop as posited above, Frecker may have been Martin's junior by a year, yet it was Frecker who took possession of Backers' premises and carved a career in the industry. Martin may have lacked the luck,[99] talent or ambition to make the two men professionally compatible, but their association may not have been entirely inconsequential. On 9 June 1796, at the Church of St James in Westminster, Frecker married a 33-year-old spinster named Ann Martin – a relation, possibly, of

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[95] For details of Martin's apprenticeship, family and settlement, see *Pauper Settlement, Vagrancy and Bastardy Exams*, 9 January 1798, St Clement Danes parish records, WAC (LL WCCDEP358260239). Individual parishes used examinations conducted by one or two Justices of the Peace to determine the settlement of an individual and hence their claim to legal residence and relief in that parish. The idea of a settlement was enshrined in law with the passage of 'An Act for the better Reliefe of the Poor' in 1662, widely referred to as the 'Act of Settlement'. This Act was principally concerned with restricting migration and providing the basis for the exclusion of outsiders from parishes. See 'Settlement' at www.londonlives.org/static/Settlement.jsp, consulted 5 August 2010. In her statement to the judge (LL WCCDEP358260239), Elizabeth claimed that her husband was 'now from her at the Parish Church of Manchester in the County of Warwick'. Since Manchester is not in Warwick, Michael Cole suggests that Elizabeth was referring to 'Mancetter', near Atherstone and Nuneaton, in Warwickshire. I am grateful to Mr Cole for this insight. Private correspondence, 31 May 2012.

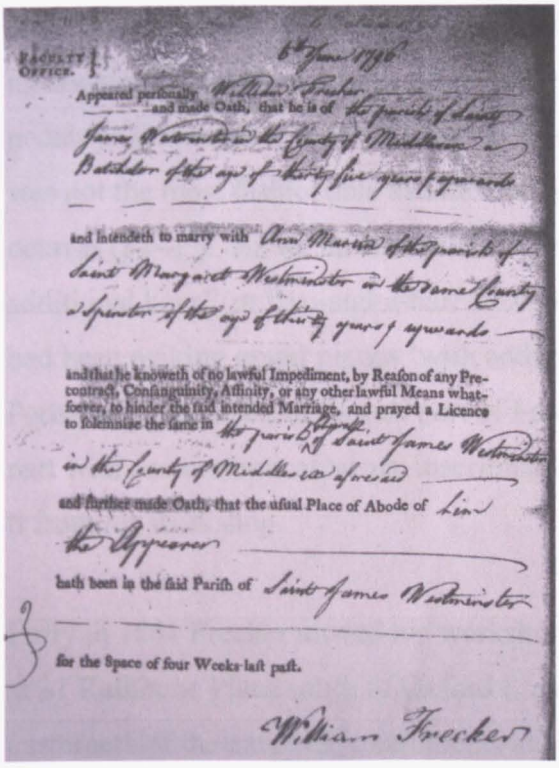
[96] The St James's workhouse admission records for 1817 do not survive, but the admission of a man named Andrew Martin is noted the following year. *Poor Law Abstracts 1742–1868*, St Sepulchre, entry no. 1882, 29 December 1818 (Guildhall Library, Ms. 9095/10), available at Origins Network: www.origins.net

[97] *St James's workhouse admission records 1819–1821* (WAC).

[98] *St James's workhouse admission records 1819–1821* (WAC).

[99] Martin's fate may have been different had Backers lived.

Backers' known apprentice.[100] As well as providing us with a sample of his handwriting, Frecker's signed oath of his intention to marry Ann Martin confirms his age as 'thirty-five years and upwards' (see Figure 8 below).



FACULTY OFFICE *6th June 1796*

Appeared personally, *William Frecker* and made Oath, that he is of *the parish of Saint James Westminster in the County of Middlesex, Batchelor of the age of thirty-five years and upwards*

and that he intendeth to marry with *Ann Martin of the parish of Saint Margaret Westminster in the same County a Spinster of the age of thirty years and upwards*

and that he knoweth of no lawful Impediment, by Reason of any Pre-contract, Consanguinity, Affinity, or any other lawful Means whatsoever, to hinder the said intended Marriage, and prayed a Licence to solemnize the same in *the parish church of Saint James Westminster in the County of Middlesex aforesaid*

and further made Oath that the usual Place of Abode of *him the Appearer*

hath been in the said Parish of *Saint James Westminster*

for the Space of four Weeks last past.

William Frecker

Figure 8: Left - William Frecker's signed oath of his intention to marry Ann Martin, dated 6 June 1796, Society of Genealogists, London, Faculty Office 1701–1850, Marriage Licence Allegations (photo by the author). Right – transcript of the same.

Grand piano of 1799

Shortly after Frecker's marriage, Stodart closed his premises in Wardour Street and retired to Edinburgh,[101] leaving the care of his business to William and Matthew Stodart at 1 Golden Square.[102] The furniture designer, Thomas Sheraton moved into

[100] *Register of Marriages,* St James's parish records (WAC). Ann and her fraternal twin, Thomas, were born to Ann and Thomas Martin on 17 February 1763. *Register of Baptisms*, St Margaret's parish records (WAC).

[101] Parish records show that both Stodart's premises in Wardour Street had been vacated by 9 June 1797. *Watch Rate Collector's Book,* St James's parish records (WAC). In 1789, Stodart bought a country estate at Kailzie, near Traquair in Peeblesshire, for £11,000. Laurence (1998), p.20. This he sold in 1794 to buy 52 Great Queen Street, Edinburgh, where it is presumed he lived after leaving Wardour Street. Website of Alasdair Broun: www.my-broun-wyld-stewart-lang-ancestry.org.uk/robert-stodart-2, consulted 29 November 2010.

[102] William Stodart first appears at 1 Golden Square in the parish records for April 1795. *Poor Rate Book*, St James's parish records (WAC).

part of Stodart's property in 1798,[103] just two doors from Frecker's workshop, and the following year Jacob Erat established his harp making concern in the vacant premises between the two.[104] The third of Frecker's surviving instruments was made in Wardour Street that year, when Frecker would have been about thirty-eight. Now in private ownership in America, this grand piano of 1799 also has a cross-banded, mahogany-veneered case with a four-legged trestle stand, and the same system of pedals as that made in 1797.[105] However, unlike the piano of 1797, this instrument was not the most fashionable available at the time, with a compass of only five octaves (FF–f^3). As we have seen, Frecker was offering grand pianos 'with additional keys' (or five-and-a-half octaves) two years previously, and Broadwood had been making grand pianos 'with additional keys' in the treble since 1790.[106] Perhaps this instrument formed part of Frecker's old stock, which he was pleased to part with on economical terms, inscribing 1799 on the nameboard before despatching it from his workshop.

Early in 1801 Frecker moved his workshop for the last time and took over the lease at 31 Rathbone Place south of Oxford Street.[107] Here, in 1803, he notified potential customers of the extended instruments available at his new address:

> GRAND FORTE PIANO, with ADDITIONAL KEYS, ON SALE.
> WILLIAM FRECKER begs leave to inform the Nobility and Gentry, that he has removed from Wardour-street, to No. 31, Rathbone Place, Oxford-street, where may be had his GRAND FORTE PIANO, with ADDITIONAL KEYS. – If excellence of tone, pleasant obedient touch, goodness of workmanship, seasoned materials, and twenty-eight years experience in manufacturing this article, afford eligibility of appeal to preference, with these acquisitions the advertiser is induced to come forward; he pledges himself for the truth of what is here advanced, and relying thereon for a

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[103] Sheraton was resident at 98 Wardour Street by 2 June 1798. *Watch Rate Collector's Book*, St James's parish records (WAC).

[104] Jacob Erat was resident at 100 Wardour Street by 10 December 1799. *Watch Rate Collector's Book*, St James's parish records (WAC).

[105] Clinkscale (1993), p.106.

[106] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.69.

[107] The premises were formerly occupied by Captain William Pringle (*Poor Rate Book*, Marylebone parish records, WAC) who died there on Thursday 16 January 1800. *Morning Post and Gazetteer*, 24 January 1800. He was buried at St Martin in the Fields, Westminster, 23 January 1800. *Register of Burials*, St Martin in the Fields (Ancestry). Frecker lived in the premises for the next 33 years. It is possible Captain Pringle was related to the piano maker named Pringle (noted by Harding (1978), p.419) operating in 1792, but a link has yet to be established. For more about the Pringle family of instrument makers, see Appendix 20, f.n.17.

continuance of the protection and support of the Nobility and Gentry, he begs leave to subscribe himself,
Their very obedient, and devoted humble servant,
Rathbone Place, June 14 W. FRECKER.
A liberal price allowed for good instruments in exchange.[108]

It was in these premises, in his early fifties, that Frecker made the fourth of his surviving instruments: a five-and-a-half-octave (FF–c^4) grand piano (see Figure 9 below).[109]

Grand piano of 1812

Frecker's grand piano of 1812 survives in good condition at the Geffrye Museum in London where it was acquired in 1947 from the instrument maker and restorer, Hugh Gough (1916–1997).[110]

Figure 9: Grand piano by Frecker, London, 1812, The Geffrye Museum, London, object no. 2/1947 (photo courtesy of The Geffrye Museum).

The instrument is triple strung throughout, with iron strings (whose windings resemble nineteenth-century work) ranging from 0.55 to 0.457mm, and bass strings (which appear to have been replaced) increasing to 0.71mm. Three pedals operate,

[108] *MC*, 8 July 1803, and again 12 July 1803.
[109] I am grateful to Bill Kibby-Johnson of the Piano History Centre for alerting me to this instrument.
[110] Information kindly supplied by Emma Hardy, Collections Manager (Care and Access), Geffrye Museum, London.

from the left: the *una corda* shift (to the right), the bass dampers (to g#) and the treble dampers (which end at $e\flat^3$). The casework exhibits very little wear and there is minimal twist across the frame in the treble cheek. No maker's signature has been found on the instrument, but the nameboard reads '1812 / William Frecker / Maker / No. 31 Rathbone Place / London' (see Figure 10 below).[111]

Figure 10: Nameboard cartouche of Frecker grand piano reading '1812 / William Frecker / Maker / No. 31 Rathbone Place / London', The Geffrye Museum, London (photo courtesy of The Geffrye Museum).

Despite the larger compass and high quality of this and other instruments made at Rathbone Place, Frecker's finances appear to have come under strain. The local parish rate book, which recorded 'Freaker' as resident at number 31 for twenty years, in 1821 recorded the hosier and haberdasher, John Wyld,[112] who had insured the property with his partner, John Bass, since August the previous year.[113] Frecker continued to advertise from the premises, however, perhaps working from smaller rooms at the rear while Wyld and Bass occupied the ground-floor shop fronting the street. Two families co-habited there in 1821, but no man of Frecker's age was

[111] The instrument was restored in the workshop of Adlam Burnett *c*1973. Work was performed on a 'failed hitch rail' and the wrestplank was repaired 'with an inserted piece in the pin area'. Replacement strings were attached by Christopher Nobbs. I am grateful to Mr Nobbs for advising me of this restoration work. Private correspondence, 17 March 2012.

[112] *Poor Rate Book,* Marylebone parish records (WAC). The name Wyld is associated with the Stodart family and it is possible Robert Stodart effected an introduction between the two men. Wyld, G., *Notes of My Life* (London: Paul Kegan & Co., 1903), p.3.

[113] *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 970512, 24 August 1820 (LMA Ms. 11936/483).

recorded in the census that year;[114] perhaps he was absent overnight. His residency is similarly difficult to prove in 1831 due to the altered nature of the census information gathered that year,[115] but proof positive exists that he lived there on 15 January 1830, as reported a few days later in *The Morning Post*:

> DESTRUCTIVE FIRE IN RATHBONE PLACE
> About half-past 12 on Friday night a destructive fire broke out in the house of Mr. Wild [sic], linen-draper, of No. 31, Rathbone-place, adjoining the Percy Hotel. The flames were first discovered at the lower part of the house, and such was the fury with which they raged, that the inmates were obliged to jump from the windows in their night-clothes, in doing which, we regret to say, that four persons (females) were so seriously injured as to render it necessary to convey them to the Middlesex Hospital. The names of these females are – Mrs. Wild, the wife of the proprietor of the house; two young ladies, sisters, named Abbott; and the servant girl of Mr. Wild. The boy was also injured, but not in so serious a manner. An elderly gentleman, named Flicker [sic], had a very narrow escape; he is aged and infirm, and was rescued with great difficulty. The Percy Hotel was at one time on fire, but the flames were extinguished. By half-past two the flames were so far subdued as to leave no fear of their extending farther. Saturday evening, Mrs. Wild was considered in a very dangerous state, and faint hopes are entertained of her recovery. Mr. Wild escaped with only a sprained ancle [sic] and a few slight bruises [...] Mr. Wild can give no account as to the origin of the fire. He was the last up in the house, and retired to his bedchamber about twelve o'clock. Half an hour afterwards he was alarmed by a policeman, and, finding there was no other means of escape, himself and Mrs. Wild jumped out of the window. The young females hastened down stairs with only their night-clothes on, but finding the passage in flames they returned up stairs and jumped out of the first floor window. If the policeman had not discovered the fire the whole of the inmates might have perished. The stock and furniture are insured in the Phoenix and British Fire Offices.[116]

Frecker was fortunate to survive; he lodged in an attic room and escaped via the staircase when the alarm was raised,[117] but one of the sisters who slept in a neighbouring room 'died in consequence of having precipitated herself from the two

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[114] The census records: males in house including children (1); number of males aged 20–30 (1); number of females aged 20–30 (3); number of females aged 50–60 (2); families in house (2); families in house chiefly employed in trade, manufacture or handcraft (1); total in house (6). Frecker's wife (b.1763) would have been 58 when the census was taken, and may have been one of the two women aged 50–60 living in the house at this time. *Census of 1821* (WAC).

[115] The census records: number of families occupying house (2); families employed in trade, manufacture or handcraft (1); males including children but excluding soldiers and sailors (6); males upwards of 20 years old (4); females including children (6); total in house (12); males employed in retail trade, or in handicraft as masters or workmen (3); males in previous category who are wholesale merchants, bankers, professional persons and other educated men (1); females inc. household servants (3). *Census of 1831* (WAC).

[116] *MC*, 18 January 1830.

[117] *The Standard*, 21 January 1830.

pair' and Mrs Wyld, who jumped from a second floor window at the rear of the property, also died later of her injuries.[118] Frecker's whereabouts in the immediate aftermath of the fire are not known, but the property was rebuilt and re-inhabited by 1832. It seems unlikely that Frecker would have rebuilt his workshop as before, being then aged approximately seventy and 'infirm', and presumably winding down his affairs. The disruption to Wyld's business must have been severe, however, and probably contributed both to his bankruptcy in October 1834,[119] and to his eventual surrender of the property by 1836.[120] The last record of Frecker as 'grand piano maker' at 31 Rathbone Place appears in the *Post Office London Directory* of 1834 when he would have been about seventy-three. He died intestate and no record has been found of this death.[121]

One final theory to be examined with regard to Frecker's career is the possibility that he was the son of a man named 'Fricker' whose signature appears in several keyboard instruments made in London towards the end of the eighteenth century. Several modern sources consider Fricker and Frecker to have been the same person, possibly encouraged by the fluid nature of spelling in the eighteenth century and the fact that both names are connected with the manufacture of keyboard instruments.[122] Fricker was a generation older than Frecker, however, his signature being found in two spinets dated 1750 and 1764,[123] when Frecker would have been an infant. On the one hand their blood relationship would explicate the younger man's career, endorsing his choice of occupation and, assuming he was taught by his father, the fact that his name does not appear in the Apprenticeship Books.[124] It might also explain how Frecker had the confidence to launch his career in Jermyn Street at such a young age, since he would have studied for several years already (perhaps eight or

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[118] *MC*, 26 January 1830.
[119] *MC*, 1 November 1834.
[120] Wyld last advertised as a hosier at 31 Rathbone Place in the *Post Office London Directory* [*POLD* hereafter] of 1835.
[121] Michael Cole suggests that Frecker's death may have been that recorded for William Fricker (82) from the Infirmary, in the St Marylebone burial registers for 1832. This would make Frecker's year of birth *c*1749/50. Private correspondence, 31 May 2012.
[122] When seeking details of Frecker I was often sent information pertaining to Fricker.
[123] The first signature appears in a large ottavino spinet (dated 1750) by Henry Hill. The words 'H Hill 1750' and 'Fricker 27' are inscribed on the top and bottom keys. Boalch (1995), p.90. Formerly on loan to the Geffrye Museum, this instrument was returned to the Victoria & Albert Museum. The second signature (see Figure 11) appears on the key rail of a spinet made by William Harris in 1764 (Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia).
[124] This omission may also be explained by other factors. See earlier note regarding the Apprenticeship Books.

ten) in his father's workshop. The appeal of this theory is heightened by the discovery of a child named William Fricker, born to William and Elizabeth on 17 June 1757.[125] If this child were William Frecker, his age upon insuring his goods in Jermyn Street would have been about twenty-two; old enough, certainly, to have graduated as a journeyman instrument maker under his father's tuition and to be establishing his own career. It might also explain why he insured his 'utensils, stock and goods' at Jermyn Street for £300, and not £44, had he only been in possession of Backers' goods, and not his own as well. Unfortunately, this theory is undermined on three fronts. Firstly, three men named William Fricker are known to have lived in London at this time and the baptismal record of June 1757 may apply to any one of them: the first, a poulterer and dealer in rabbit skins, was of Frecker's generation,[126] and so too, possibly, were a glazier and musician of the same name.[127] Indeed, their claim to be the son of William and Elizabeth Fricker must surely take precedence over someone who signed his name as Frecker, even allowing for vagaries of spelling in the baptism register. Secondly, a man named John Frecker of the parish of St Clement Danes married one Elizabeth Dupré at St Margaret's Church, Westminster, in August 1761.[128] Despite the date of the ceremony being two months after Frecker's earliest implied date of birth, the possibility that John and Elizabeth Frecker were William Frecker's parents cannot be discounted as Frecker may have been illegitimate. No record has been found of their issue, however, and since their children could have been born in any of London's parishes, finding a record of Frecker's birth may yet result from chance rather than application. Finally, as clearly illustrated by their respective signatures at Figures 11 and 12 (below), Fricker and Frecker did not consider themselves to share the same name.

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[125] *Register of Baptisms,* St James's parish records (WAC). An extensive search of the baptismal records of the parish of St James, Westminster, from 1755–1763 inclusive (and other local parish registers), failed to find a record of William Frecker's birth.

[126] William Fricker of All Hallows, Lombard Street, London, died a widower in 1810. If born on 17 June 1757 he would have been 53 years of age when he died. His wife's name is not known, but his daughter, Elizabeth, may have been named after her mother. Will of William Fricker, salesman, proved 1810 (NA PROB 11/1510).

[127] William Fricker was a glazier at Grosvenor Row, Hanover Square, in 1784 (LL pollbook_297-29715). William Fricker was a musician of St Botolph's parish in Bishopgate in 1811 (LL t18110220-34).

[128] *Register of Marriages,* St Margaret's parish records (WAC).

Figure 11: Signature of Fricker (first name unknown) dated 1764, inscribed on the key rail of a William Harris spinet at the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia (photo courtesy John Watson, The Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, Virginia).

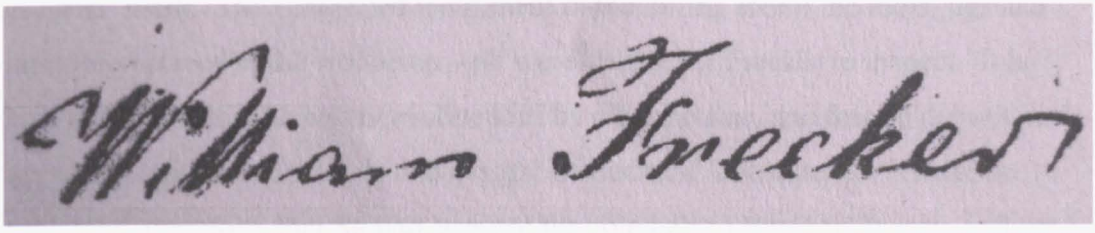

Figure 12: Signature of William Frecker as it appeared on his marriage oath dated 1796 (see Figure 8) (photo by the author).

Overview

Although Frecker's apprenticeship to Backers is unconfirmed, there is no doubt he was resident as a 'forte piano maker' at 4 Jermyn Street one year after Backers' death. While it is not certain that Frecker worked there while Backers lived, the precise date of his departure is unknown, and attempts to prove an affiliation with Backers' apprentice through marriage to Ann Martin are also inconclusive, the case for his candidacy as successor to Backers' 'utensils, stock and goods' is strong: he was unlikely to have accumulated his own tools and utensils by the age of eighteen, making the purchase of Backers' tools a necessity for conducting his own business in Jermyn Street; he was conveniently on site to acquire the goods; and, perhaps most significantly, Henwood is unlikely to have troubled himself to sell and disperse the contents of Backers' workshop to make room for an incoming tenant who required the same facilities.

Cole considers that 'following Backers' death several London makers began producing grand pianos including Fricker [sic], Merlin, and Buntebart, but the only one who continued in the Backers style and design was Robert Stodart'.[129] It might be hoped that a study of the surviving instruments of Backers and Frecker would reveal some unique aspect of design or manufacture that irrefutably roots the two

[129] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.64.

makers in the same workshop, but as Backers' only extant grand piano (dated 1772) predates Frecker's earliest complete instrument (dated 1797) by twenty-five years, any direct influence of Backers on Frecker's work can only be inferential: none of Backers' innovations was patented and all had passed into common usage long before 1797. Whatever the truth of Frecker's apprenticeship there can be no doubt that his tenancy in Jermyn Street placed him in a unique position to learn from Backers' work. The completed instrument in the dining room; the tools, jigs and assembled pieces in the workshop – all were on site for Frecker to inspect. It is highly unlikely that he was not influenced by what he saw, and that he did not, in some way, continue the 'style and design' of Backers' instruments. It must be construed, therefore, that Stodart was not the sole heir to Backers' legacy, and we may hope that the discovery of an early Frecker instrument will allow this theory to be tested.

Cole goes on to say that Stodart was 'the only one to achieve lasting success in this field'.[130] Certainly, Stodart's success was lasting in terms of his fortune,[131] the longevity of his family business,[132] and the historical regard afforded his career; but in the same way that Backers' pivotal role in the design of the early grand piano has only recently been elucidated,[133] the full extent of Frecker's success may still be undisclosed. Whether Frecker worked alone as a piano maker or enlisted the help of others is not yet known, but evidence to date suggests that he did not produce a large number of instruments. In terms of output, then, he cannot be said to have advanced the early piano trade to the same extent as Zumpe, Broadwood or Stodart, but the instruments he did construct were of a high quality, consistent with the standards of the best of his competitors. His 1812 piano in the Geffrye Museum, whose style shows a marked similarity to that of Broadwood, attests to the quality of his workmanship, and contemporary opinion affirms his repute: his pianos were 'of such

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[130] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.64.

[131] Laurence notes that 'the measure of Stodart's business success may be judged from the fact that he permanently retired from work after thirteen years' activity. In 1789, at the age of about forty-one, he was able to purchase a country sporting estate in Peeblesshire and return to his native land. The estate, at Kailzie near Traquair, cost Stodart just over eleven thousand pounds'. Laurence (1998), p.20.

[132] Stodart was succeeded by William and Matthew Stodart, and William's son, Malcolm to 1861. Clinkscale (1993), pp.284–85.

[133] Cole, W. H. (1987), pp.79–86.

quality that Broadwood [...] was able to sell them on quite promptly';[134] his work attracted the interest of prominent pianists such as Schroeter, who was 'delighted with it'; and Mrs Papendiek praised her new piano as 'a superb instrument'. Without further information about the 'brass tubes' in Mrs Papendiek's piano it cannot be proved that Frecker was an innovative maker, but his work was certainly consistent with contemporary design and well received. We can also be assured of his professional standing. He held a responsible position as foreman to the prominent firm of Buntebart & Sievers, promoted their instruments among royalty, and dealt directly with the company's wealthy clients. Furthermore, with nearly sixty years' experience, he was still advertising as a piano maker at the age of seventy-three.

Frecker's career may not have been typical of his peers' – that of Andrew Martin was possibly in marked contrast – but it illustrates a number of pitfalls and opportunities that were open to the workforce in the late eighteenth century. The death of a master would have obliged an apprentice to complete his instruction elsewhere, and, in the early years of the industry, opportunities would have been restricted by the small number of piano workshops then operating, and competition from skilled migrants arriving from Germany and the Low Countries seeking similar employment. Martin was potentially disadvantaged in this way, while Frecker appears to have turned the situation to advantage by acquiring the use of Backers' workshop, and most likely his tools and jigs as well. His association with the premises introduced him to key figures in the industry, and that he had future connections with two known visitors – Broadwood and Stodart – shows the material advantage of being 'connected' in the trade. That Frecker received further encouragement in his career is evidenced by the alleged 'brass tubes' he was permitted to install while working as foreman to Buntebart and Sievers, and it was a licence extended to employees elsewhere as well. Two employees of William Stodart patented an invention for a metal compensation frame in 1820,[135] and the following year the Broadwood firm introduced a fixed metal string-plate into their square pianos as invented by one of their workmen.[136] Initiative was still sanctioned by employers in the mid-nineteenth century as evidenced by a case maker working for Nutting, Addison and Company who

[134] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.75.
[135] The employees were James Thom and William Allen, whose interest was immediately purchased by Stodart. Harding (1933), p.202.
[136] The worker was Samuel Herve. Wainwright (1982), p.127.

patented an improvement to the framework of upright pianos in 1854,[137] and an employee (and subsequent partner) of Messrs Erard who lodged an improvement to pianofortes in 1862.[138] That employee ingenuity became less valued (and possibly even suppressed) by future employers was reported by former Broadwood employee George Rose, after travelling to America in 1906, where he observed that employees were:

> encouraged by their employers to think for themselves and to take an active and personal interest in their labours; they are not merely human machines. If any one of them has an idea which might improve the working of a department or benefit in any way the manufacture of an article, he is invited to put his views before his principals, not merely before his immediate foreman. If the idea is favourably received, he can always count upon suitable promotion or reward. Hence, a good workman need never know what unemployment is, and it must be admitted that the relations between master and man are more intimate and friendly in the States than in this country.[139]

A century earlier, Frecker was fortunate to work in an era when enterprise and collaboration were not in opposition, and the inventions of newcomers and employees could be favourably received – and even adopted – by fellow members of the trade. The interest held by practitioners and the public in the possibilities of the new instrument diluted the need for aggressive competition, and those with competence and ambition, like Frecker, were free to peddle their product within the parameters of a tolerant and potentially supportive industry. The extent to which ingenuity, autonomy and connections in the trade were enjoyed by future generations of the workforce is further explored in the next chapter.

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[137] See George Thomas at Appendix 11.

[138] See Edwin George Bruzaud at Appendix 11. His later partnership in the firm is confirmed by his son's City Admission Papers. See Charles Jonathan Bruzaud, *Freedom of the City Admission Papers*, 14 April 1908 (Ancestry).

[139] Wainwright (1982), p.273.

Chapter 3:
London Piano Silkers (1785–1911)

There follows a study of 72 members of the workforce whose work, like that of William Frecker, was integral to the industry of its time, but whose contribution has since been overlooked due to a paucity of archival material.[1] Few primary sources survive concerning piano silk-work beyond extant examples of the silk-work itself, and very little has been documented of its form or function – even less of the people who performed it.[2] As a decorative feature, it has escaped analysis among the technical advances of the instrument, and as a subject of acoustical consideration, it has been eclipsed by more showy innovations, such as the interactive mechanism of the Nag's Head and Venetian swells. Yet for more than a century – from the late 1700s to the early 1900s – piano silk-work was a practical and fashionable feature of pianos made in London, and the recognized skill of a specialist group of workers. This chapter examines evidence of piano silk-work in London, and of the men and women who performed it. Principal sources include the censuses of England, London directories and newspapers, and the identified workforce is listed at Appendix 1.[3]

Place and function of silk-work

The earliest known written reference to piano silk is from 1785 and relates to the Holborn premises of an instrument maker supplying square pianos to the retailers Longman & Broderip of Cheapside. From the late 1770s or early 1780s, John Geib (1744–1819) was a contractor of the firm,[4] and in April 1785 employed a journeyman named Edward Johnson (a former employee of the Flight family of

[1] The majority of this chapter was published by the author as 'Piano Silkers in Eighteenth- and Nineteenth-Century London (1784–1911): a Genealogical Survey' in *The Galpin Society Journal* LXVI (2013), pp.71–98.

[2] The late Pauline Holden presented a paper at the Galpin Society Conference held in Edinburgh in 1999 on the subject of 'Silkers in the London Piano Trade *c*1840–1860' which discussed 'the choice of silk as opposed to other textiles and restoration of their work and its present-day problems'. Unfortunately, this author was not in attendance and the paper was not published.

[3] Included among the biographies are two piano silkers who worked outside London: in Lancashire (Esther Ashcroft) and Yorkshire (Elizabeth Coates).

[4] Strange and Nex (2010), pp.81–103, at p.86.

organ builders) who he lodged above his shop in the Old Bailey. It was from this shop that Johnson stole 'fifty nine yards and a half of green silk, called Persian', for which he was brought to trial, where Geib gave evidence in court:[5]

> [...] I use green silk in my business [said Geib], in the inside of my instruments, for my Piano fortes.
>
> Do you keep an open shop? [he was asked] – No, I work for Mr. Longman and Co. [of] Cheapside.
>
> Then you do not sell green silk? – No, Sir.
>
> Then you never sell green silk in your shop, or any thing of that sort? – I sell none at all.
>
> How did you lose it? – I do not know, it was stole away privately from me, on the 29th of April, I had fifty-nine yards and a half.

Johnson was sentenced to transportation 'for seven years to such place as his Majesty shall appoint' whereafter nothing more is known of him.[6] Geib's silk was valued at fifty shillings, and the remnant of a 'stick of silk' measuring 121 yards in length supplied by the silk manufacturer Christopher Drake of Friday Street, near Cheapside market.[7] Geib did not miss his silk initially and told a witness 'he had not lost any silk', adding, 'I will shew you our's', but 'on looking round he could not find his silk', so the stolen stick of silk was the only one he held in his shop at that time.[8] That Geib stocked so much silk for his pianos (when ostensibly so little was used in each instrument, as shall be shown), suggests something of the quantity of pianos he was making for Longman & Broderip. 121 yards of silk (of a probable width of 30 inches in 1785)[9] would have covered approximately seventy dust covers of the size shown in Figure 13 below.[10] The precise number of instruments Geib undertook to

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[5] Persian refers to the blue-green colour of the silk. Trial of Edward Johnson, 11 May 1785, (OB t17850511-14). The transcript of this trial is also discussed in Strange and Nex (2010), p.88.

[6] *Old Bailey Proceedings: Accounts of Criminal Trials*, 11 May 1785 (Harvard University Library, via LL s17850511-1).

[7] *City of London Sessions: Sessions Papers – Justices' Working Documents*, 30 April 1785 (LL LMSLPS150960073).

[8] Trial of Edward Johnson, 11 May 1785 (OB t17850511-14).

[9] Probable width of silk in 1785 advised by Ron Thorn, Honorary Librarian, Macclesfield Silk Museums. Private correspondence, 25 September 2012.

[10] That is approximately 156cm x 50cm (or 61.5inches x 20inches). These dimensions are an estimate of the size of the dust cover shown in Geib's square piano (1785) in the colour

build for Longman & Broderip is not known as his contract has not survived, but Strange and Nex report that in 1786 the rival London firm of Culliford & Co. was contracted by Longman & Broderip 'to build instruments for a guaranteed rate of £5,000 per year', which, they calculate, amounted to 'some 300 square pianofortes per year'.[11] That John Goldsworth, a partner in the Culliford firm, ceded his partnership in 1787 to form an alliance with Geib, leads Strange and Nex to observe that Geib's enterprise 'held enough attraction for him to make the switch.' Certainly, within five years, 'Geib's level of business had eclipsed even that of Culliford', so his output in 1785 was probably brisk already, and the stick of silk described at the trial not the only one supplied to his workshop by Longman & Broderip that year.

Figure 13: Square piano by John Geib, London, 1785 (photo courtesy of Thomas Strange).

Figure 13 shows a square piano made by Geib for Longman & Broderip in 1785 – the same year as the trial at the Old Bailey – restored in 2008 by the American square piano technician and restorative conservator, Thomas Strange.[12] The reconstructed 'dust cover', placed across the action and soundboard (the original to the instrument had been lost), is sheathed in dark green silk, and shows how Geib would have

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section, taken from the overall dimensions of the instrument recorded in the Clinkscale Online database: www.earlypianos.org (instrument ref: EP 6542).

[11] Strange and Nex (2010), p.94.

[12] See 'Restoration of a Longman & Broderip Square Piano' by Thomas Strange: www.squarepianotech.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/02/Restoration-of-a-Longman-Broderip-1785-B1.pdf, consulted 25 May 2012.

employed his roll of silk in 1785. No primary source has been found to explain Geib's methods for applying his silk, but Strange suggests the following:

> The silk was [...] glued to the rear of the wood [...] A thin layer of hide glue is brushed on, and allowed to gel, almost to the point of drying. The silk is laid in place, then with a rather warm but not very hot iron [...] the silk is ironed onto the wood, where the glue softens again under heat and captures the silk. If the right amount of glue is laid down, the creep into the silk is minimal. Where a stronger hold might be desired, burnt shellac is daubed on and again the work heated to activate it. This makes removal quite easy. In this way, large areas like the dust cover can be covered in silk and the silk held securely.[13]

The name 'dust cover', as these boards are often referred to in England, is potentially a misnomer,[14] as primary literature records their role as a noise and sound moderator, or 'baffle', to reduce the sound of the action and the attack of the higher partials while the instrument was being played (as in the German *Schalldeckel*, or 'sound cover'),[15] or to 'modifier la qualité du son et d'en augmenter un peu le volume' (as in the French *fausse table d'harmonie*, or 'false soundboard').[16] That the shape of the cover in a Stodart square piano dated 1807 (see Figure 14 below) leaves much of the soundboard exposed suggests that, for Stodart, the board was intended chiefly to shield the action, without impeding the flow of vibrations from the soundboard. If his cover were designed to protect the instrument from dust it would have been only partially effective.[17] The firm of Broadwood called their version 'cover boards' and, in 1828, paid £0 1s 9d to have them painted.[18] Clementi boards were also more

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[13] Private correspondence, Thomas Strange, 11 March 2012.

[14] See 'The Removable Cover in Square Pianos' by Thomas Strange: www.squarepianotech.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/The-Removable-Cover-in-Square-Pianos-1.1.pdf, consulted 5 September 2012.

[15] Edward Swenson, in his translation of 'Historische Beschreibung der aufrechtstehenden Forte-Pianos, von der Erfindung Wachtl und Bleyers in Wien', *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* 13 (Intelligenz-Blatt, November 1811), pp.73–77, notes that 'some pianists have rightly remarked that the tone of our upright fortepianos seems too strident [*grell*] to the ear. This fault has been remedied when we started using a sound-cover [*Schalldeckel*] (an English invention)'. See Swenson's translation at 'Historical Description of the Vertical Fortepiano Invented by Wachtl and Bleyer in Vienna 1811)' at: www.mozartpiano.com/articles/vertical_viennese.php, consulted 30 May 2012.

[16] Montal, C., *L'art d'accorder soi-meme son piano* (Paris: J. Meissonnier, 1836), p.14; diagram at fig.7, p.253. I am grateful to Christopher Nobbs for informing me of this source.

[17] The instrument is owned by Finchcocks Musical Museum, Goudhurst, Kent.

[18] 'Cost of making a Plain Square 6 Octave Piano Forte, as at 25 March 1828', Broadwood papers (SHC 2185/JB/15/90). The verso of another costing sheet entitled 'Cost of S[quare] P[iano] F[orte] & Frame', dated 5 August [year not stated], in a file marked 1805–07 (SHC 2185JB/15/13), notes the cost to the company of a cover board as £0 2s 6d. I am grateful to

likely to have been painted than silked, especially after *c*1801.[19] Early evidence of these boards in square pianos (without a silk covering and showing the bare spruce or mahogany) dates to 1778 and an extant instrument made in London by Adam Beyer which exhibits a one-piece board,[20] and another made by Beyer the following year[21] in which support brackets and a two-piece board survive,[22] so cover boards were being used in square pianos for at least seven years before Geib made one for this instrument.

Figure 14: Square piano with silk-covered 'dust cover', William Stodart, London, 1807, Finchcocks Musical Museum, Goudhurst, Kent (photo by the author).

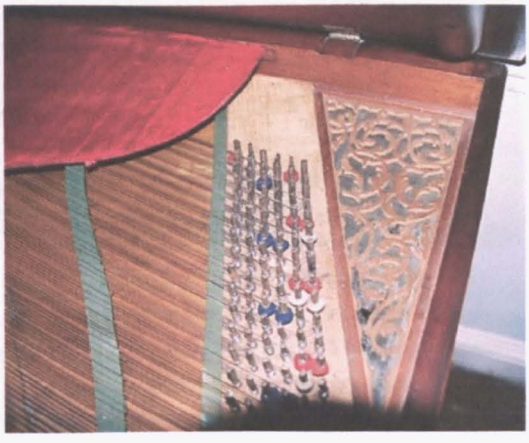

Figure 15: Ditto showing detail of the soundboard fretwork (photo by the author).

When it was recognized that most square pianos were played with the lid closed,[23] further silk was added to the instrument behind decorative openings in the nameboard to allow a greater volume from the instrument. William Southwell featured open fretwork, backed with coloured silk, at either end of the nameboard (see Figure 17) and in the soundboard of his patent dated 1794,[24] and it is possible he

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Alastair Laurence for alerting me to this reference. Laurence suggests that the cover board was used to shield the instrument's strings from direct sunlight to keep it in tune.

[19] Private correspondence, Thomas Strange, 8 March 2012.

[20] Owned by the collector and restorer, Graham Walker.

[21] Preserved in the Bate Collection, University of Oxford (inventory no: OXFBC92).

[22] For images of both Beyer instruments, see 'The Removable Cover in Square Pianos' by Thomas Strange.

[23] For a discussion of the playing position of the piano lid in the first half of the nineteenth century, see Gétreau, F., 'Ouvert ou fermé : images du piano romantique (1815–1848)', Jean-Jacques Eigeldinger (dir.), *Interpréter Chopin (*Paris: Cité de la Musique, Les cahiers du musée de la musique, 2006), pp.71–79. Online at http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00009577/fr/ I am grateful to Dr Gétreau for alerting me to this article.

[24] For Southwell's invention of nameboard frets, see Bozarth and Debenham (2009), pp.45–108, at pp.51 and 55. For Southwell's introduction of soundboard frets, see his 1794 Patent Diagram, ditto, at p.60.

was introduced to this innovation in the Dublin workshop of Ferdinand Weber, to whom he may have been apprenticed, as Nex and Whitehead note a Weber upright harpsichord, dated possibly as early as 1764, in which the upper, gilded fretwork doors protecting the soundboard exhibit a material backing that may, originally, have been silk.[25]

Figure 16: Nameboard detail of square piano by William Southwell, London, marked 1784 [the veracity of this as a date of manufacture is questioned],[26] National Trust, Croft Castle, near Leominster, Herefordshire (photo: Early Piano website at http://earlypiano.co.uk/silk/, consulted 26 March 2012).

Figure 17: Detail of nameboard fretwork and silk, square piano by William Southwell, marked 1784, National Trust, Croft Castle, near Leominster, Herefordshire (photo courtesy of Ian Grafton, Croft Castle).

The earliest piano silkers, then, were men like Southwell, Geib and Stodart – or possibly their female relations, whose participation in the early industry has been demonstrated by Jenny Nex in her study of women in the Georgian music trade[27] – working in London workshops, attaching flat pieces of silk to dust covers and fretwork as part of their routine activities. The progression from manageable pieces of flat silk attached in this manner, to large, elaborate panels of pleated silk, would have been inspired by developments in piano design, as nowhere in the early square piano was there room for 'sunburst' silk panels, as shown at Figure 18. Figure 18 shows an upright grand piano 'in the form of a bookcase', of the style invented by

[25] I am grateful to Lance Whitehead for informing me of this finding which has yet to be published. For more information about the instruments of Ferdinand Weber and Southwell's possible apprenticeship, see Nex J., and L. Whitehead, 'The Stringed Keyboard Instruments of Ferdinand Weber', in J. Koster (ed.), *Aspects of Harpsichord Making in the British Isles, The Historical Harpsichord No.5* (Hillsdale, NY: Pendragon Press, 2010), pp.117–53.

[26] Consensus is growing that this 'date' is, in fact, a serial number, as another Southwell instrument in private ownership exhibits 1617 on the central cartouche of the nameboard. Private correspondence, Christopher Nobbs, 31 March 2013.

[27] Nex, J., 'Women in the Music Trade in Georgian London', in R. Illiano and L. Sala (eds), *Instrumental Music and the Industrial Revolution* (BologNA Ut Orpheus Edizioni, 2010), pp.329–59.

William Stodart in 1795.[28] For an instrument so dangerously top-heavy, the use of silk panels in place of solid wooden or glass doors was a practical arrangement. Silk reduced the weight of the top-half of the instrument, allowed the sound from the strings to flow into the room, and did not rattle when the instrument was played. It was also decorative. These large 'cupboard' doors demanded an expanse of fabric too great for a stretch of plain material, and the greater employment of women is likely to have coincided with the vogue for elaborate, pleated panels such as these, which were complicated to assemble and time-consuming to attach to the wooden battens and frames that held them in place. The small workforce of early piano workshops probably lacked the time and experience of working with fabric to accomplish such an endeavour.

Figure 18: Upright grand by Clementi & Co., London, *c*1804, Finchcocks Musical Museum, Goudhurst, Kent (photo courtesy of Finchcocks Musical Museum).

Figure 19: Detail of upright grand by Clementi & Co., London, *c*1804, Finchcocks Musical Museum, showing the rear of a door holding a sunburst silk panel (photo by the author).

No primary source material has been found to confirm the original techniques employed in creating a 'sunburst' silk panel for a piano, but surviving panels have been copied, and the process documented, by Kenneth and Mary Mobbs, whose facsimiles involved many hours of painstakingly accurate ironing, and the production

[28] Harding (1978), p.60.

of several complicated templates, based on trigonometry, to calculate the number of pleats required to an inch, according to the dimensions of the aperture involved.[29]

Figure 20: Silk-work tassel in the centre of a sunburst silk panel, upright grand by Clementi & Co., London, *c*1804, Finchcocks Musical Museum (photo by the author).

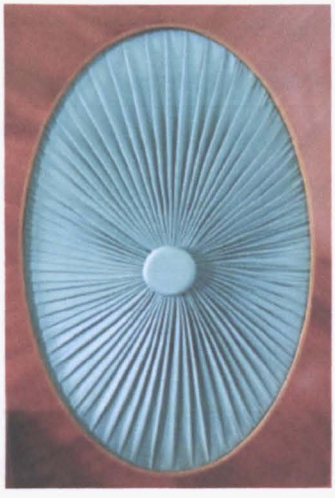

Figure 21: Reconstructed silk sunburst with covered button, upright square piano by William Southwell, London, *c*1800, Finchcocks Musical Museum (photo by the author).

According to the silk mercers Harding & Smith of Pall Mall, who supplied silk to the piano makers Broadwood, the silk used for pianos was a double sarsenet:[30] a fine, close-woven silk, often used as a lining for millinery.[31] It was 'considerably wider than silk is usually made' and in the case of Harding & Smith was 'made expressly for Broadwood's' by the silk manufacturers Brocklehurst's of Macclesfield, whose Cheshire mill was the largest silk-weaving mill in England. One bolt (roll, or stick) of fabric took six to eight weeks to manufacture and, in 1834, cost three shillings a

[29] A frame fitting the back of the aperture is first covered in a light cloth. The partially worked sunburst is placed on top – ready pleated and ironed as one long strip, but drawn into a 'wheel' by gathering up the pleats along one side and securing them firmly to form the centre of the sunburst. The outer edges of the sunburst are then spread evenly around the frame and tacked to the edges in accordance with the template, working little by little, on opposite sides of the sunburst, to keep the tension equal. Once all the tacks are in place, the edges of the silk are glued to the frame, which, when dry, is slotted into the aperture from the rear. Finally, a rose made from the same silk (or a covered button or brass decoration, see Figures 20 and 21), is placed over the centre gathering of the sunburst and tied, through the rear of the hole, to the centre cross-beam of the frame. If two sunbursts are required on the same instrument, the pleats of the second panel are laid in the opposite direction, to create a symmetrical effect. Summary of description published by Kenneth and Mary Mobbs, 'Making a silk 'sunburst' for a cabinet piano', *FoMRHI Quarterly* 84 (July 1996), pp.56–67.

[30] Trial of Edward Willard, 15 May 1834 (OB t18340515-3).

[31] According to Ron Thorn, Honorary Librarian at the Macclesfield Silk Museums, the term 'double sarsenet' 'would usually indicate that the silk was woven in two layers so that it had the same appearance both sides, and not that it was double width. The two sides were held together by occasional passes of the weft.' Private correspondence, 14 March 2012.

yard.[32] Recalling that Geib's 59½ yards of green silk cost fifty shillings in 1785 – equating to ten pence per yard (or just under a shilling) – the price of Broadwood's silk, fifty years later, appears to have been nearly treble that of Geib's. As observed by Strange, however, while the silk used for dust covers was of single weight and cut from a bolt of conventional width, that used by Broadwood was of double weight and 'considerably wider' (perhaps upwards of sixty inches wide), comprising, effectively, three-and-a-half times more silk in total and providing a feasible explanation for the price difference.[33]

Other silk panels were cheaper and easier to make, such as the straight pleated panels shown at Figure 22, and the plain (or pleated) silk attached behind elaborate fretwork panels in the top and bottom doors of upright pianos (Figure 23), descendants of the small fretwork panels seen earlier in square pianos.

Figure 22: 'Cottage' cabinet piano by Clementi & Co., London, *c*1825, Finchcocks Musical Museum (photo: Burnett, R., *Company of Pianos* (Finchcocks Press, 2004), p.85).

Figure 23: Upright piano by Brinsmead, London *c*1855, showing fretwork backed by plain silk, Finchcocks Musical Museum (photo courtesy of Finchcocks Musical Museum).

[32] Trial of Edward Willard, 15 May 1834 (OB t18340515-3).

[33] Fluctuations in the price of silk and the complex economics of the silk trade lie beyond the scope of this study, but were affected directly by the unforeseen repercussions of the 'Spitalfields Acts' of 1773, 1792 and 1811, which were introduced to resolve bitter disputes between journeymen and master weavers on the subject of wages, but did much to paralyse the trade. Despite being repealed in 1824, when combined with competing fashions in the cotton trade, many London silk weavers were forced out of work. See Cockburn, J. S. , H. P. F. King, and K. G. T. McDonell (eds), 'Industries: Silk-weaving', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 2: General; Ashford, East Bedfont with Hatton, Feltham, Hampton with Hampton Wick, Hanworth, Laleham, Littleton* (published for the Institute of Historical Research by Oxford University Press, 1911), pp.132–37. British History Online: www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22161, consulted 29 May 2012.

Some manufacturers introduced 'embroidered curtain fronts',[34] or an 'embroidered device in the central panel';[35] and by the early 1880s, a trend had developed in America whereby 'the pretty fashion of taking out the meaningless fretwork in the fronts of upright pianos and putting in a piece of embroidery' had become 'so general that the following hints on the subject will be read with interest. The piano front [...] should be in fine materials, fine linen, silk or satin; velvet is too heavy, and would deaden the sound, and for the same reason embroidery of a light character is better for the purpose than applied work.'[36] The publication understood the fundamental requirements of the silk-work's properties and their suggested design is shown at Figure 24.

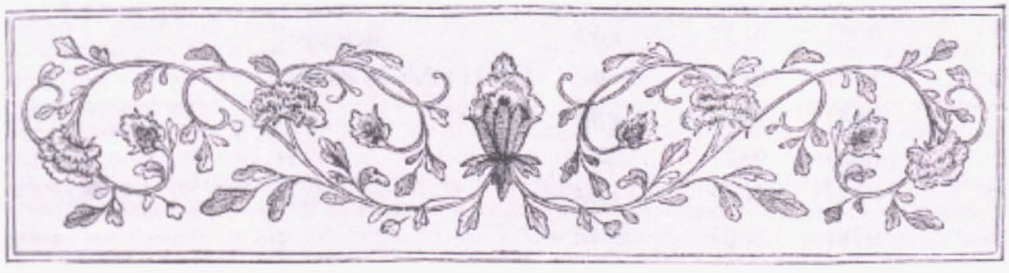

Figure 24: Suggested design for an embroidered silk panel in an upright piano. Source: *The Art Amateur,* vol. 3, no. 2, (July 1880), p.39.

Some of the men and women supplying silk-work in London for new pianos (or perhaps repairing or replacing damaged silk in older instruments) are represented below at Table 1, which shows the 41 piano silkers (eight men, 32 women, and three partnerships or companies)[37] to have advertised in the *Post Office London Directory* between 1835 and 1911, when the last of the silkers ceased to advertise and the classification ended (or, possibly, when the classification ended and the last of the silkers were prevented from advertising).

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[34] The manufacturer was George H. Aggio of Colchester, Essex. Mactaggart, P., and A. Mactaggart (eds), *Musical Instruments in the 1851 Exhibition: A Transcription of the Entries of Musical Interest from the Official Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition of the Art and Industry of all Nations, with Additional Material from Contemporary Sources* (Welwyn: Mac & Me Ltd, 1986), p.19.

[35] The manufacturer was John Brinsmead, 15 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, London. Mactaggart (1986), p.21.

[36] *The Art Amateur* 3/2 (New York: Montague Marks, July 1880), pp.38–39 (via JSTOR).

[37] The sum of these figures appears incorrect but takes into account members of the Cook family who advertised singularly and jointly, and Mrs Alice Tharme who also advertised in her maiden name.

Surname/Company	Name	Title	From	To	Years
Johnston	Alex	Mr	1835	1843	9
Wareham	Laurence	Mr	1841	1847	7
Sellman	Ann	Mrs	1847	1881	35
Harris	Ann	Mrs	1848	1855	8
Hayes	Ann	Mrs	1848	1868	21
Wareham	Jane	Mrs	1848	1855	8
Tilling	E.	Miss	1850	1857	8
Chapman	Emma	Mrs	1854	1855	2
Cook & Stiebler			1854		1
Albury	George	Mr	1855		1
Cook	Hannah	Mrs	1855	1911	57
Hubbard	Louisa	Mrs	1855	1857	3
Ward	Elizabeth	Mrs	1856	1890	35
Cook	Charles (& Mrs H. E.)	Mr	1858	1911	48
Lamb	M.	Mrs	1858	1864	7
Halliday	M.	Miss	1859	1860	2
Dauthemare	Ann	Mrs	1861	1889	29
Perkins	E.	Miss	1862	1879	18
Jones	Mary	Mrs	1863	1889	27
Harris		Mrs	1864		1
Jones	J.	Mrs	1864		1
Matthews	Ellen	Mrs	1864	1879	16
Hubbard	James	Mr	1867	1870	4
Amos	Mary	Miss	1868		1
Davis	Jane F	Mrs	1870	1886	17
Chettleburgh	Mary Ann	Mrs	1871	1897	27
Cummings	Mary	Mrs	1872		1
Matthews	Elizabeth	Mrs	1872	1886	15
Wicks	Emma	Mrs	1873	1885	13
Bloe	Alice	Miss	1875	1902	28
Harling	Fanny Charlotte	Mrs	1876	1877	2
Skelton	Eliza	Miss	1879	1881	3
Lawrence	Sarah	Mrs	1880	1888	9
Cook	Alfred	Mr	1881	1892	12
Poulton	Eliza	Miss	1882	1887	6
Garner	John	Mr	1885	1900	16
Tharme (née Bloe)	Alice	Mrs	1887	1899	13
Ward	Emily	Mrs	1886		1
Terrill	Stephen	Mr	1887	1891	5
Harris	Mary	Mrs	1890	1905	16
Taylor	Maria	Mrs	1899	1902	4
Fletcher & Co.	Henry James	Mr	1901	1906	7

Table 1: Piano silkers in the *Post Office London Directory* (1835–1911). Total: 41.

Early piano silkers to the trade

The first piano silker to advertise in the *Post Office London Directory* was a 50-year-old man named Alex Johnston who from 1835 gave his address as 8 Cambridge Street, Golden Square. No evidence has been found that Johnston made pianos *per se*, and in the 1841 census he described his occupation as a 'piana silk liner' [sic],[38] so he appears to have been fully engaged in this line of work. Certainly, his advertisement coincided with a growing number of individuals providing specialist services to the industry in the early years of the nineteenth century, and he is likely to have been the former employee of a piano firm who set up business on his own. He may have worked for William Stodart, whose workshop was located at 1 Golden Square,[39] or for another of the many piano houses established in the area. A firm of silk hatters trading as O'Donnoghue & Groves also operated from 8 Cambridge Street during Johnston's tenure, and it is possible he had dealings with them in some way: perhaps they patronised the same silk mercer, the hatters using a soft silk weave known as 'hatters' plush' to finish their product.[40] Johnston advertised from Cambridge Street for nine years, and the last year probably marks his death. The second silker to advertise, in 1841, was Laurence Wareham of 18 Upper Rathbone Place, half a mile to the north of Golden Square, who began his career as a lathe 'turner in general', but by 1832 had expanded his business to become a 'dealer in furniture and piano-fortes, and a silker of piano-fortes and furniture in general'.[41] Wareham's documented silk-work career therefore pre-dates that of Johnston, and is noteworthy in that he offered silk-work to both the piano and the furniture trade, survived insolvency and imprisonment in 1832,[42] and considered his experience as a wood turner and piano dealer sufficient to establish himself as a piano maker

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[38] See Allech Jenston [sic] (56), born *c*1785, birth place not recorded, piana silk liner [sic], living in Marshall Street (1841 census).

[39] William Stodart first appears in the parish records at 1 Golden Square in April 1795. *Poor Rate Book*, St James's parish records (WAC). William Stodart & Son were still operating at the premises in 1838. Harding (1978), p.423.

[40] For 8 Cambridge Street, see *LG*, 21 December 1841, p.3306. For 'O'Donnoghue & Groves', see *LG*, 18 January 1842, p.149. For hatters' plush, see 'A Day at a Hat-Factory' in Dodd, G., *Days at the Factories; or, The Manufacturing Industry of Great Britain Described*, Series 1: London (London: Charles Knight, 1843, first edn; repr. New York: A.M. Kelly, 1967), pp.137–58, at p.156.

[41] *LG*, 14 December 1832, p.2744.

[42] *LG*, 14 December 1832, p.2744.

'proper' by 1840.[43] Wareham was one of several hundred members of the workforce to suffer insolvency and recover in the trade and their experiences are discussed in Chapter 5.

Female silkers

Twelve years after Alex Johnston first advertised in the directory, the first female silker was listed, in 1847. Mrs Ann Sellman, of 2 Amelia Street, Walworth Road, South East London, was married to a wood turner, and, again, the furniture trade appears to have intersected with the piano trade as Mrs Sellman recorded her occupation as 'upholstress' in the 1851 census.[44] A decade later, however, she had secured sufficient work in the piano trade to describe herself as a pianoforte silker.[45] Three more female silkers joined her the following year: Mrs Ann Harris, who may have worked for the harp and musical instrument maker, Thomas Martin, of 22 London Street, Fitzroy Square, as she lodged at the same address;[46] Mrs Ann Hayes of 55 Ernest Street, Regent's Park, who was raising two children alone;[47] and Mrs Jane Wareham, a relation of Laurence Wareham, whose first advertisement in the directory immediately followed his last. She may have been a silker for several years already but only advertised in her own name once Laurence Wareham had died.

From this date in the chart (1848) women dominated the advertised workforce to the end of the directory classification more than sixty years later. Nearly all had a male relation working in the piano trade, and several worked with a female relation or apprentice who was similarly employed,[48] suggesting the operation of a small piano-silking concern, and perhaps the need for several hands to be engaged in some challenging aspects of the work. The few women to advertise with no apparent

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[43] Harding notes Wareham as a piano maker at 18 Upper Rathbone Place, from 1840–47. Harding (1978), p.424.

[44] See Ann Sellman (42), born *c*1809, St George the Martyr, Surrey (1851 census).

[45] See Ann Sellman (50), born *c*1811, Southwark, Surrey (1861 census).

[46] See Thomas Martin (55), born *c*1786, harp maker, living in London Street, St Pancras (1841 census); also, Thomas Martin (66), born *c*1785, Chevening, Kent, musical instrument maker, living at 22 London Street (1851 census).

[47] See Ann Hayes, widow (42), born *c*1809, Bodmin, Cornwall, pianoforte silker (1851 census).

[48] See Ann Danthman [sic] (49), born *c*1822, Egham, Surrey, and her apprentice, Mary A. Hunt (15), born *c*1856, Hackney, Middlesex, both living at 33 Rathbone Place (1871 census). Also, Ann Harris (57), born *c*1794, Marylebone, Middlesex, and her assistant Martha S. Kift (20), born *c*1831, Reading, Berks, both living at 22 London Street (1851 census).

connection to the trade were former bonnet makers[49] or dressmakers[50] (who may have been attracted to the sutural nature of the work), and one a widowed painter employing three men.[51] Several ceased to work when they married, or while their children were young, while others appear to have engaged in silk-work at this time, perhaps newly married into the trade or funding the expense of a young family. Others were widowed and raising children alone, or unmarried and caring for an elderly parent. Piano silk-work provided an acceptable career, then, for a variety of married and single women, and enabled them to engage help, support their children, and fund their independence.

Of the eight men listed in the directory, most were connected to the trade as piano makers, dealers or tuners, but one began his career as an architect,[52] another as a photographer,[53] and a third as a labourer.[54] In general, those unconnected with the trade (who may have been only 'dabbling' in the specialism), appear not to have advertised for long, suggesting either that they were unsuccessful in securing work, or that they found another line of work more profitable. Certainly, George Albury, who was a labourer when he married, advertised only briefly as a piano silker (once, in 1855) before assuming his wife's career as an artificial florist and eventually dealing in materials for artificial flowers.[55] He died with little money at the age of fifty-nine.[56]

Despite evidence of several silkers living (and presumably working) together, only three partnerships feature in the directories: first, the enterprise of Cook & Stiebler in 1854; second, its successor C. & H. E. Cook (of whom more later), and third, a young Henry James Fletcher, advertising towards the end of the classification as Fletcher & Co., a firm which survives today as Fletcher & Newman, suppliers to the

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[49] See Ann Hayes, Appendix 1.
[50] See Elizabeth Coates (*née* Leach), Appendix 1.
[51] See Elizabeth Ward, Appendix 1.
[52] See Alfred Cook, son of Charles and Hannah Cook, Appendix 1.
[53] See Stephen Terrill, Appendix 1.
[54] See marriage of George Albury (labourer) and Esther Tawer [Tamer] Alston, at Holy Trinity, Newington, Surrey, 17 February 1852 (via Ancestry). For confirmation of Albury's address at 4 Obelisk Buildings, Lambeth, as advertised in the *POLD*, see George Albury (41), born *c*1820, Sudbury, Suffolk (1861 census).
[55] See George Albury (41), born *c*1820, Sudbury, Suffolk (1861 census).
[56] See National Probate Calendar [NPC hereafter], George Albury, date of probate 8 May 1879 (Ancestry).

trade.[57] All other entries relate to individuals. At no time, therefore, during seventy-six years of advertising, did structured competition form to threaten the individuals working in the silk-work community, who continued to compete – both men and women – on seemingly equal terms. This lack of consolidation helped to preserve piano silk-work as a cottage industry, comprising mainly a female workforce stitching and working alone, which, according to Davidoff and Hall, was a condition that suited them well. Women were, they considered:

> hampered by the growth in scale of manufacturing enterprises [...] They faced the increased problem of maintaining authority over a larger workforce [...and] the need to take a more active part in the formal market [...][58]

It seems women were better suited – and may have preferred – to work in circumstances that resembled a cottage industry, and perhaps it was precisely because silk-work was principally a female activity that this passive ethos persisted for so long, allowing many women among those studied to enjoy a lengthy career. According to the directories, the average career of the female silker was twelve years (and the longest thirty-five), but in reality it was often longer, as the census shows that many women advertised only periodically during their career, or only when they were widowed.

The Cook Enterprise

The first partnership listed in the directories – that of Cook & Stiebler in 1854 – and its successor, C. & H. E. Cook, has a history perhaps not atypical of many small businesses in the piano trade at that time. Charles Cook was born in Chelmsford, Essex, *c*1823 or 1824,[59] the illegitimate son of a wealthy Jewish pawnbroker and cabinet maker, who bequeathed, in his will, £1,000 to each of his children, providing for the possibility of their amounting to twelve.[60] It is not known whether he

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[57] H. J. Fletcher & Newman Ltd, 5 Bourne Enterprise Centre, Wrotham Road, Borough Green, Kent.

[58] Davidoff, L., and C. Hall, 'The "Hidden investment": women and the enterprise' in P. Sharpe (ed.), *Women's Work: The English Experience 1650–1914* (London: Arnold, 1998), p.274.

[59] The 1851 census records Charles's birth as *c*1823, but those of 1861, 1871 and 1881 record his birth as *c*1824.

[60] Charles's father is identified as Woolfe [sic] Myers in the Westminster parish record of his marriage to Hannah Elizabeth Stiebler at St James's Church, Westminster, 8 July 1848 (Ancestry). See also will of Wolf Myers, pawn broker and cabinet maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1988).

recognised Charles among his progeny or offered him any support, but by the age of 34 the young man had moved to London and established himself as a piano-forte finisher at 18 Tavistock Place, St Pancras.[61] At the age of 24 Charles married Hannah Elizabeth Stiebler,[62] whose several family members were also involved in the London piano trade. Her father was a joiner and cabinet maker[63] who, in 1830, was a witness to the will of the piano maker Joseph Kirkman (and was probably employed by the Kirkman firm),[64] and her paternal grandfather was a 'leatherer of pianoforte hammers' who may have supplied the same establishment, having abandoned his career as a 'peruke maker, perfumer and toy maker' sometime prior to 1812.[65] Her two brothers were pianoforte makers,[66] and, given the nature of the family trade, it is likely that her aunt was a pianoforte silker, as she recorded her occupation in the 1851 census as 'silkworker'.[67] Since Hannah was also a 'pianoforte silker',[68] the partnership of Cook & Stiebler at Tavistock Place was probably that of Hannah and her spinster aunt, then aged in her fifties.[69] It was to be a short-lived alliance, however (perhaps ending with the death of her aunt), and the

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[61] See Charles Cook (28), born *c*1823, Chelmsford, pianoforte finisher, living at 18 Tavistock Place, St Pancras (1851 census).

[62] See marriage of Charles Cook and Hannah Elizabeth Stiebler at St James, Westminster, 8 July 1848 (Ancestry).

[63] The baptism record of Hannah's sister, Elizabeth Stiebler (10 October 1819), at Heston, Hounslow, notes the occupation of their father, Christian John Stiebler of Marshall Street, as 'joiner' (Ancestry). The baptism of her brother, Alfred Stiebler (13 December 1821), at St James, Piccadilly, notes the occupation of their father, John Stiebler of Marshall Street, as 'cabinet maker' (Ancestry).

[64] Will of Joseph Kirkman, piano forte maker, proved 1830 (NA PROB 11/1770).

[65] See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers* re. Christian Gotthelf Sliebler [sic] of 5 Marshall Street, Carnaby Market, 'peruke maker, perfumer and toy maker', 13 June 1792 (LMA Ms. 11936/389/601255); and 'leatherer of pianoforte hammers', 9 September 1812 (LMA Ms. 11936/459/873583). Available via LMA website at http://search.lma.gov.uk/scripts/mwimain.dll/144/LMA?LOGONFORM

[66] See Frederick Stiebler (pianoforte maker, deceased) in the parish marriage record of Emma Stiebler and Thomas Charles Abbott, at Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road, 17 April 1878 (Ancestry). Also Alfred Stiebler (pianoforte maker) in the parish marriage record of Charles Stiebler and Stella Cross, at St Marylebone, Westminster, 27 June 1885 (Ancestry). Alfred Stiebler was certainly Hannah's brother (see baptism of Alfred Stiebler (13 December 1821) at St James, Piccadilly; parents John and Sarah Stiebler of Marshall Street, via Ancestry) and since Frederick Stiebler was a piano maker of the same generation it is feasible that he was Hannah's brother also.

[67] See Louisa C. Steibler [sic] (53), born *c*1798, St James, Middlesex, silkworker, living at 5 Carlisle Street, St Anne, Westminster (1851 census).

[68] See Hannah Elizth Cook (27), born *c*1824, Middlesex, pianoforte silker, living at 18 Tavistock Place (1851 census).

[69] When Cook & Stiebler advertised as pianoforte silkers in 1854, Charles Cook was working as a pianoforte maker, and not as a silker. See baptism of Fanny Louisa Cook (23 April 1854) at St Pancras, Camden; parents Charles (pianoforte maker) and Hannah Elizabeth Cook of Tavistock Place (Ancestry).

following year Hannah advertised alone before Charles joined her in her work, and the pair began to advertise as 'Cook, Charles & Mrs H. E.' in 1858.[70]

Business appears to have been steady. Charles employed the help of two young girls from his home town in Essex – one his cousin (Sarah Osborne) and the other a shoemaker's daughter (Mary Rolfe), both of whom he lodged in the house[71] – and 18 Tavistock Place became workshop and home to four piano silkers, six young children and two domestic servants. In 1863 the household repaired to 17 Keppel Street,[72] just off Russell Square, where two more children were born and business continued. Within a decade, however, the workforce was reduced to three,[73] and this economy may signal the start of the Cooks' decline. At a family marriage in August 1878, Charles recorded his occupation as 'pianoforte maker',[74] suggesting that he was no longer fully occupied as a piano silker, but had re-engaged with his former career as a pianoforte finisher, or some similar employment in the manufacture of the instrument. The cause of the Cooks' eventual insolvency has not been discerned. Piano silk-work was still in vogue in the 1870s and the number of piano silkers advertising in the *Post Office London Directory* was still rising,[75] suggesting that although competition within the silking community was increasing, the market for piano silk-work was not yet saturated. In their favour, the Cooks were long-established in the trade and would have been well known; their overheads would

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[70] *POLD* 1858. Charles continued to note his occupation as pianoforte maker until at least 11 April 1858. See baptism records of George Frederick Cook (13 January 1856) and Emily Annie Cook (11 April 1858), both at St Pancras, Camden (Ancestry). In 1861 Charles described himself as a 'pianoforte silker' and in 1863 as a 'silker'. See baptism records of Amy Lizzie Cook (20 October 1861) and Walter Frank Cook (29 November 1863), both at St Pancras, Camden (Ancestry).

[71] See Charles Cook (37), born *c*1824, Chelmsford, pianoforte silker (master employing three women), living at 18 Tavistock Place (1861 census). Also listed at the same address, Sarah A. Osborne, cousin (20), born *c*1841, Moulsham, Essex, pianoforte silker; and Mary Rolfe, boarder (20), born *c*1841, Chelmsford, pianoforte silker. Mary was the daughter of Thomas Rolfe, a shoemaker, and his wife, Ann, of New Street, Chelmsford (1851 census). No evidence has been found to connect Mary Rolfe or her father Thomas Rolfe with the Rolfe family of piano makers.

[72] *POLD* 1863. Charles described himself as a silker in this year, see baptism of Walter Frank Cook (29 November 1863) at St George, Bloomsbury; parents Charles (silker) and Hannah Elizabeth Cook of Keppel Street (Ancestry).

[73] The 1871 census records Charles Cook (47), born *c*1824, Chelmsford, pianoforte silker (employing two females), one of whom was no doubt his cousin, Sarah A. Osborne (30), born *c*1841, Chelmsford, pianoforte silker, who was living in the same house. Hannah recorded no occupation, but was probably the second employee, as their erstwhile employee, Mary Rolfe, was no longer resident.

[74] See marriage of Alfred Cook (27) and Emily Jane Roffey (20) at St Marks, Tollington Park, 21 August 1878; groom's father Charles Cook, pianoforte maker (Ancestry).

[75] The greatest number (14), advertised in 1886, after which their number slowly declined.

have been reasonably low as their work was performed at home and required no expensive machinery, and companies requiring their services are likely to have supplied them with their most expensive outlay – namely silk – as in the arrangement between Longman & Broderip and Geib in 1785. To their disadvantage, their family overheads may have been high. Only one of their eight children was employed (Alfred, 19, an architect),[76] and two of their eldest were students of music.[77] It is possible that the Cooks lost a lucrative contract as their insolvency followed a 'short-lived but damaging business depression', culminating in 'five [individual] bankruptcies, four sequestrations [forcible confiscations] and sixty-four [company] liquidations' in the trade in 1879.[78] Charles may have been obliged to return to his work as a pianoforte maker when his silk-work business began to fail.

Whatever the nature of his circumstances, in the summer of 1880 Charles initiated proceedings at the London Court of Bankruptcy for the liquidation of the silk-working partnership he had run with his wife for a quarter of a century.[79] On 9 September that year a general meeting of the creditors was held to decide whether 'the Trustee be at liberty to sell the whole of the estate to Messrs. J. and J. Goddard, of 68, Tottenham Court-road, London [...] for such sum as will be sufficient to pay to the creditors 4s. 6d. in the pound', or whether 'the Trustee be at liberty to sell to the debtor the whole of his estate for such sum as will be sufficient to pay all the creditors 4s. 8d. in the pound' (two pence more).[80]

Messrs Goddard of Tottenham Court Road were longstanding suppliers to the trade, specialising in ironmongery, wound bass strings, cloth and felt,[81] who may have been interested to purchase the Cooks' estate as a means of expanding their services. They were willing to pay 'a sum not exceeding £2,762 4s. 10d. [...] upon the creditors' proofs',[82] which gives us a broad indication of the Cooks' worth, but the fact that Goddard's bid met with competition suggests their valuation was low, as the

[76] See Alfred Cook (19), born *c*1852, Middlesex, architect, living at 17 Keppel Street, St George Bloomsbury (1871 census).
[77] See Charles T. Cook (21), born *c*1850, Middlesex, and Fanny L. Cook (17), born *c*1854, Middlesex (1871 census).
[78] Ehrlich (1996), p.150.
[79] *LG*, 1 June 1880, p.3296.
[80] *LG*, 27 August 1880, p.4713.
[81] Laurence (2010), p.116, n.8.
[82] *LG*, 27 August 1880, p.4713. £2,762 4s 10d equates, very approximately, to £133,500 today.

'first and final dividend' paid to the creditors in December 1880 was for '9s. in the pound',[83] or double the predicted amount. Evidently, the eventual purchaser considered the estate – and perhaps the goodwill of the firm – to be worth considerably more.

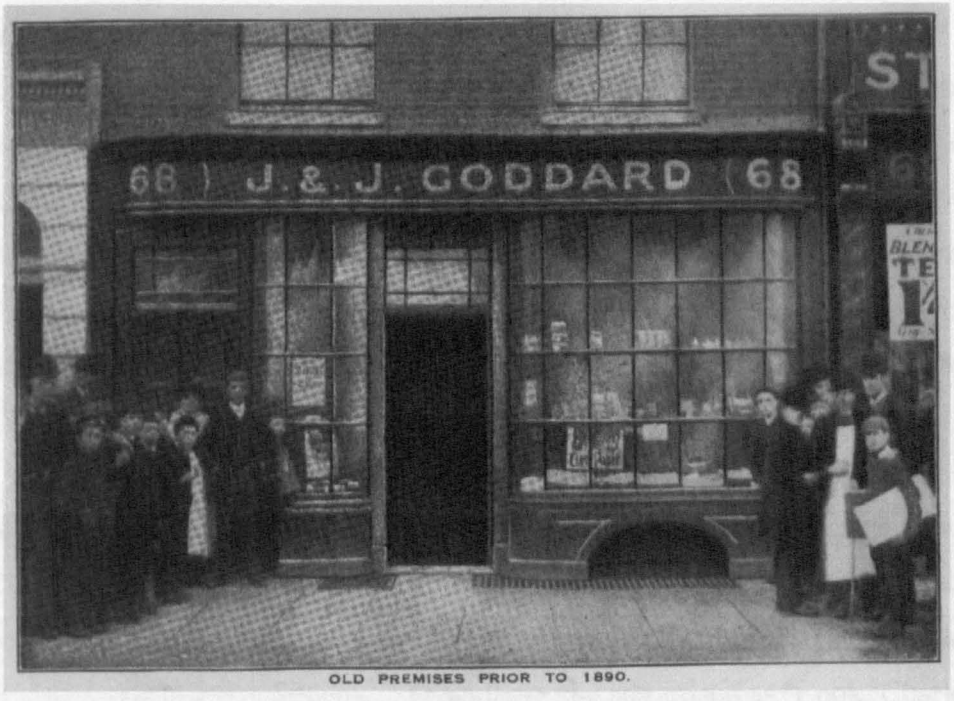

Figure 25: Premises of J. & J. Goddard, 68 Tottenham Court Road, prior to 1890 (photo courtesy of Robert Allan: http://tardis.dl.ac.uk/FreeReed/organ_book/node26.html, consulted 9 October 2012).

Charles and Hannah Cook were approaching sixty when they filed for liquidation, and it is questionable whether they were still involved in the business when it re-surfaced in the directory at 8 Charlotte Street, in 1886, six years after the business was sold.[84] Charles chose a new career, becoming licensed victualler of the 'Neville Cross' public house at 40 Denmark Road, Kilburn, where he died on 12 April 1888,

[83] *LG*, 3 December 1880, p.6581.

[84] The firm did not appear in the *POLD* that year, but in the *Business Directory of London*, vol. 2 (Bishopsgate Library, London). The occupation of Charles and Hannah Cook immediately after their insolvency is unclear. In the 1881 census they are recorded as pianoforte makers, but this may be a transcription error. The original entry for Charles Cook was written incorrectly by the enumerator as 'Music Professor' (the occupation of his son, Charles) then struck through, with the words 'pianoforte silker' added, together with two illegible words and the word 'maker'. The Ancestry transcriber has deduced that the entry reads 'pianoforte maker'. See Charles Cook (57), born *c*1824, Chelmsford, Essex, pianoforte maker; and Hannah E. Cook (57), born *c*1824, St James, Middlesex, pianoforte maker, living at 17 Keppel Street (1881 census).

aged 64 or 65, leaving a remarkable personal estate of £10,301 11s 6d.[85] To have accrued such a sum within eight years of bankruptcy would have required him to save nearly £1,300 a year (the price of a seven-bedroom country house in Twickenham).[86] By way of comparison, the gentleman author and poet Edward Lear, who died in January the same year as Cook, left £2,820 14s 2d,[87] and Francis Wedgwood, grandson of the founding potter, who died in October, left £65,534 13s 9d (approximately six times that of Cook).[88] Unless Cook inherited a legacy, the bulk of his wealth must have been realised by the sale of his silk-work enterprise – and perhaps 17 Keppel Street – and the acquisition of the public house was probably intended to provide accommodation and occupation in his 'retirement'.[89] Hannah survived him by fourteen years, 'living on [her] own means' in Hampstead with an unmarried daughter,[90] until she died, aged 78, in 1902.[91] Her personal effects were valued at £926 3s 7d.[92]

The likely supervisor of the new silk-works in Charlotte Street was Charles' cousin, Sarah Osborne, who had left the Cooks' household prior to 1881 (most likely around the time of their liquidation proceedings) and taken lodgings as a pianoforte silker at 8 Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square.[93] From there she advertised as 'Cook, Charles and Mrs H. E.' in 1886 (perhaps maintaining the name of the firm to suggest continuity, as was commonly the case), then from the neighbouring property at No. 6 the following year (unless this was a change to the street numbering), now married

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[85] NPC, Charles Cook, date of probate 28 May 1888 (Ancestry). £10,301 11s 6d equates, very approximately, to £600,000 today.

[86] *The Standard*, 12 March 1888.

[87] NPC, Edward Lear, date of probate 20 February 1888 (Ancestry).

[88] NPC, Francis Wedgwood, date of probate 28 January 1889 (Ancestry).

[89] A random survey of a dozen licensed victuallers to have died in London in the same year as Charles Cook showed an average probate estate of £2,822; the lowest being £123 and the highest £13,117. Charles Cook was not unique in leaving such a large sum as a licensed victualler, therefore, but the victualler to have left £13,117 (Henry Farnham of the 'Alexandra Park Tavern', Green Lanes, Wood Green, Tottenham, died 26 May 1882, see NPC, date of probate 3 July 1882, via Ancestry) is not known to have been a bankrupt, and owned the lease of a second public house and wine vaults known as the 'Bishop Blaize', 44 and 46, New Inn Yard, Shoreditch. *LG*, 8 June 1883, p.3008.

[90] See Hannah E. Cook (77), born *c*1824, St James, London, living on own means; and Amy Cook (39), born *c*1862, St Pancras, secretary, living at 139 Alexander Road, Hampstead (1901 census).

[91] See *Hampstead parish death register*, fourth quarter, 1902, Hannah Elizabeth Cook (78), born *c*1824 (Ancestry).

[92] NPC, Hannah Cook, date of probate 24 November 1902 (Ancestry).

[93] See Sarah A. Osborne (36), born *c*1845, Chelmsford, Essex, pianoforte silker, lodging at 8 Charlotte Street, St Pancras (1881 census).

and living with her husband who worked as a clerk on the railways.[94] As the daughter of a gardener-turned-florist,[95] and unmarried when the business was sold in 1880, Sarah is unlikely to have been the purchaser of the firm, but her continued association is confirmed by the fact that her address and that of 'Cook, Charles and Mrs H. E.' coincide until the end of the directory classification in 1911.[96]

Perhaps working alongside Sarah, and labouring under his parents' name, was the Cooks' second son, Alfred, now working as a piano silker, having abandoned his career as an architect in a bid, perhaps, to rescue his parents' firm.[97] Alfred was the only male silker identified in the 1881 census, living in North London, on the edge of the capital's piano-manufacturing hub, with his wife and two small children. Whether or not he was associated with the resurgence of 'Cook, Charles & Mrs H. E.' in Charlotte Street, he found work as a pianoforte silker, and by 1892, at the age of 38, was employed as a Broadwood contractor at their premises in Great Pulteney Street, east of Golden Square. He earned, on average, £2 10s per week, which was a modest wage in the hierarchy of the firm as the company's outdoor tuners might earn double that amount, and regulators up to £3 per week. Only Broadwood's junior indoor tuners, porters, packers, cleaners and stablemen earned less than Alfred Cook, so piano silk-work was not highly paid by the Broadwood firm in 1892.[98] Fifty years earlier, a silk-work employee making 'cabinet curtains' for the firm in 1840, earned £2 11s 6d a week:[99] an almost identical amount, remembering that Alfred's wage of £2 10s was a weekly average.[100] In fifty years, then, the value to the firm of the piano silker's labour had not materially changed, and neither, possibly, had their

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[94] Sarah may have returned to live with the Cooks prior to her marriage in 1887 as she noted in the marriage register her address (and that of her fiancé) as 17 Keppel Street. See marriage of Sarah Ann Osborne (41) and John William Farrant (39), at St George, Bloomsbury, 2 March 1887 (Ancestry).

[95] See John Osborne (40), born *c*1811, Chelmsford, Essex, gardener, living at 98 Moulsham Street (1851 census). For John Osborne's occupation as a florist, see marriage of Sarah Ann Osborne (above).

[96] See Sarah Ann Farrant (45), born *c*1841, Chelmsford, Essex, piano silker, living at 6 Charlotte Street, St Pancras (1891 census) and the *POLD* 1893–1905 (exc. 1902). From 1903–05 inclusive the *POLD* places the firm at 16 Charlotte Street, which is probably a misprint. From 1906–08 the firm advertised from 40 Windmill Street (an address advertised by John Brinsmead in 1839, see *Pigot's Commercial Directory*).

[97] Alfred had been practising as a piano silker since at least 1881. See Alfred Cook (29), born *c*1852, St Pancras, piano forte silker, living at 38 Russell Road, North London (1881 census).

[98] Broadwood papers (SHC 2185/JB/74/9).

[99] His name was Laird or Caird. Broadwood papers (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[100] £2 10s equates, very approximately, to £150 today.

method of applying silk. A Broadwood employee described his understanding of the work in 1834:

> I believe they take the size of the front of the piano-forte and mark it out, and cut the silk out to the size – I have seen men at work there on the silk – one man I believe in particular was employed to put the silk into the fronts.[101]

He further remarked that Broadwood required 'a vast deal of silk'; he had seen maybe 'forty or fifty pieces of silk there... [of] different colours' and 'several pieces in the counting-house containing a good many yards'. No doubt other companies, like Broadwood, employed only men in their silk-work department, leaving female silkers to find work in the wider community.

The later industry

The wider community in 1881 is described in the census that year, which identifies 36 piano silkers working in London.[102] Nearly all were female (Alfred Cook was the only male) and the majority still worked and advertised from a residential address, confirming that piano silk-work remained chiefly a cottage industry in the late nineteenth century. Evidence suggests that some women may have commuted to work, rather than work from home – Sarah Lawrence, for example, who from 1880 to 1888 advertised from 161 Whitfield Street, west of Tottenham Court Road,[103] yet lived with her family more than two miles north, in Islington[104] – but it is more likely they were allied to a piano concern at their advertised address (where enquiries were received to the benefit of both parties) and performed their silk-work at home. This was probably the case for Sarah Lawrence, who had two young children living at home, and a daughter also employed as a piano silker. The two women probably worked together in Islington, while other members of their immediate family (who noted their occupations in the census as piano makers),[105] may have commuted to

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[101] Trial of Edward Willard, 15 May 1834 (OB t18340515-3).

[102] Of whom eight advertised in the *POLD* that year. Two others worked in Lancashire and Yorkshire.

[103] In 1881, the premises at 161 Whitfield Street, St Pancras, may have been those of a small piano-making concern as they accommodated two piano makers: Thomas Bryan (29), born *c*1852, Bloomsbury; and John Powell (23), born *c*1858, Marylebone (1881 census).

[104] See Sarah Lawrence (50), born *c*1831, Reading, Berks, m[usical] inst[rument] silker, living at 223 Junction Road, Islington (1881 census).

[105] See Thomas Lawrence (18), born *c*1853, St Pancras, pianoforte maker (1871 census); Henry Lawrence (37), born *c*1844, St Pancras, piano maker; Robert Lawrence (23), born *c*1858, St

work at the Whitfield Street premises, and possibly acted as couriers for materials and finished silk-work.

Immediately prior to Sarah's association with 161 Whitfield Street there lived another piano silker at this address. Mary Ann Chettleburgh was a piano maker's widow who advertised at 161 Whitfield Street from 1871 to 1879 while raising her children alone.[106] She eventually remarried[107] and moved on to advertise from a new address.[108] Her situation was not unique. Several London addresses were used by a succession of piano silkers whose tenures succeeded one another but did not overlap, suggesting continuous links within the community, and perhaps communication between fellow workers with regard to opportunities for employment and accommodation. Other premises associated with successive piano silkers include 39 Upper Rathbone Place, Oxford Street, which accommodated three piano silkers over nineteen years (during the period 1841–60);[109] 6 George Street, Portman Square, which housed two piano silkers over a continuous period of nine years (1879–87);[110] and 33 Rathbone Place, Oxford Street (the address of music-sellers, Harris & Co., from at least 1866 to 1909)[111] which was the advertised address of two piano silkers over a period of thirty-five years (1865–99).[112] With the exception of Harris & Co., the attraction of these properties is uncertain. Whether they were recognized as desirable locations for silk-work among the silk-work community, or whether they were simply residential properties inhabited by colleagues moving within the trade,

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Pancras, m[usical] inst[rument] maker; and Caroline Lawrence (21), born *c*1860, St Luke, m[usical] inst[rument] silker (1881 census). In 1881, Sarah's widowed mother lodged at 161 Whitfield Street. See Jane Kift (68), born *c*1813, Gosport, Hampshire, annuitant (1881 census).

[106] See Mary Ann Chettleburgh, widow (28), born *c*1843, Edgware, pianofort [sic] silker (1871 census).

[107] See marriage of Mary Ann Chettleburgh and Frederick John Silvester (carman), both of 73 Euston Street, at St Pancras Parish Chapel, 28 May 1871 (Ancestry).

[108] See Mary Silvester (38), born *c*1843, Edgware, no occupation, living at 73 Warren Street, St Pancras (1881 census) but advertising as Mary Ann Chettleburgh at 73 Warren Street (1883–84), *POLD*.

[109] Laurence Wareham (1841–47), Mrs Jane Wareham (1848–55) and Elizabeth Ward (1856–60), *POLD*. Frequent changes to street numbering in the first half of the nineteenth century may explain why Laurence Wareham advertised at 18 Upper Rathbone Place from 1841–45, then no. 38 from 1846–47, and Mrs Jane Wareham advertised from no. 38 in 1848, then no. 39 for the rest of her tenure. These three addresses probably relate to the one property that became, eventually, 39 Upper Rathbone Place.

[110] Miss Eliza Skelton (1879–1881), then Miss Eliza Poulton (1882–87), *POLD*.

[111] *POLD*.

[112] Mrs Ann Dauthemare advertised as a pianoforte silker from Rathbone Place for 25 years (1865–89), and Mrs Mary Harris for ten years (1890–99), *POLD*.

is not known.[113] A similar pattern of successive (or joint) occupation of premises is demonstrated among the piano making community, examples of which are shown at Appendix 2.

Such links in the trade would have been invaluable to women who were tied to the home combining professional work with domestic duties. Contacts generated by family members working in the trade would have been equally valuable, as would the reputation of a family name with long-standing connections to the industry: all would have gained women a measure of publicity outside the home. The significance of the family name is demonstrated by two examples in this study; firstly, that of Mary Ann Chettleburgh, who for nearly thirty years advertised under the name of her late husband, the piano maker Thomas Chettleburgh,[114] though she remarried outside the trade only months after his death; and, secondly, Miss Alice Bloe, who advertised in both her maiden and married name, perhaps reluctant to exchange the reputation of her late father (a music seller) and brothers (piano tuners)[115] for that of her husband (a horse dealer).[116]

Decline of the industry

The decline of piano silk-work and the loss of the piano silker's livelihood are likely to have been shaped by the same forces that generated their demand. In the same way that the piano's design prompted the use of silk – on dust covers to muffle the sound of an action that was inherently noisy; behind fretwork placed to increase the instrument's volume; and in doors that were dangerously top-heavy – design changes gradually made them redundant. The player piano, launched in 1898 and later marketed as the 'Pianola',[117] no longer displayed panels of pleated or gathered silk in

[113] In either event, it is possible each outgoing silker trained her successor, as was the case with Ann Dauthemare and her apprentice, Mary Hannah Hunt (later Harris), both of whom worked for the Harris family of music sellers and piano dealers at 33 Rathbone Place.

[114] See marriage of Mary Ann Reeve of 45 Upper Seymour Street, and Thomas Chettleburge [sic] (pianoforte maker) of 24 Tottenham Street, at St Marylebone, Westminster, 28 November 1863 (Ancestry).

[115] See baptism of Alice Maria Bloe (5 February 1854) at Holy Trinity, Marylebone Road; father Charles Bloe, music seller (Ancestry). Also, Charles Bloe (30), born *c*1841, Marylebone, and Alfred Bloe (19), born *c*1852, Marylebone, both piano tuners (1871 census).

[116] See marriage of Alice Bloe and James Tharme (horse dealer), both of 50 Bolsover Street, at St Marylebone, Westminster, 4 December 1881; bride's father Charles Bloe (deceased), music publisher (Ancestry).

[117] The Aeolian Company produced their first 'pianola' in 1898 and by 1904 there were more than 40 different kinds of automatic piano on the American market. Ehrlich (1996), p.134.

its upper and lower doors, but the drum of a perforated music roll and the pedals of its pneumatic mechanism. Its fashionable possibilities exhausted, the Victorian demand for silk-work declined, and in 1901 the number of silkers to advertise in the directory was only a third of its peak in 1886.[118] By 1911, only 'Cook, Charles & Mrs H. E.' remained, and the lone silk-worker identified in the census that year was the 50-year-old daughter of a late piano-silker, unmarried and living with lodgers in Hackney.[119] She died in 1928.[120]

These findings identify 126 years of piano silk-work in London, from 1785 to 1911, though in its final decline activity extended beyond 1911. The restoration of old instruments using authentic materials prompted a brief revival in the production of piano silk in the early twenty-first century. A small supply, 'made in an early 19th century English silk mill using traditional weaving looms [so that] the quality, colour and appearance [were] similar to the original', was made commercially available,[121] but the product was subsequently withdrawn due to insufficient demand, and the loom reconfigured for a more dependable contract.[122] Being an inert component of the piano, and less critical to the working of the instrument than its action cloths and baizes, it is doubtful whether demand for authentic piano silk will ever be sufficient to revive its manufacture.

Overview

Outside the employment of large firms such as Broadwood, most of the 72 silk workers identified in this study worked in residential premises in fairly solitary conditions, though often they were known to each other by professional reputation, kinship or connections in the trade. Most were linked to the industry by birth or marriage (or both), and some were the direct descendants of piano silkers. Their work was semi-skilled and paid accordingly, but sufficiently versatile to employ both men and women, married and single. Perhaps because silk-work was able to be

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[118] Four piano silkers advertised in the *POLD* of 1901, as opposed to 12 in 1886.

[119] See Harriett M. Taylor (50), born *c*1861, London, pianoforte silker, living at 76 Middleton Road, Hackney (1911 census); daughter of Maria Taylor, widow (70), born *c*1821, Islington, pianoforte silker (1891 census) who last advertised in the *POLD* of 1902.

[120] *Hackney parish death register*, first quarter, 1928, Harriett M. A. Taylor (74), born *c*1854 (Ancestry).

[121] The silk was commissioned by Graham Walker of The Early Piano website at http://earlypiano.co.uk/silk/

[122] Conversation with Graham Walker, 12 May 2012.

performed at home it was an occupation entertained by women with dependants, but, by the same token, that women with dependants sought occupation in the trade may have promoted its practice in the home. Again, the industry appears not to have advertised for apprentices, though the identification of an apprentice in the 1871 census confirms that some form of apprenticeship was assumed.[123] That the apprenticeship may have been fairly informal is suggested by the high incidence of family relations working together, a fact which also attests to the sanction of nepotism as a common form of recruitment among silk-workers.

Because piano silk-work did not excite great wealth, it did not attract the ambitious or entrepreneurial and was of limited interest to men, whose collective indifference allowed it to become the ultimate province of women. It is questionable whether Charles Cook (or his son) would have become involved in piano silk-work were it not for his wife (or mother), and it is notable that the silk-work activities of Fletcher & Co. (and potentially Messrs. J. & J. Goddard) formed only an adjunct to their core business in the supply of piano fittings. Piano silk-work was not considered the basis for a large, stand-alone business (three or four workers being the maximum noted working together), but was of potential value as a sideline to existing firms like Fletcher & Co. and Goddard's in terms of its cheap outlay, inexpensive labour and steady financial return.

The 'embroidered curtain fronts' and 'embroidered device in the central panel' of pianos made in the mid-nineteenth century are likely to have been designed by the female workforce that manufactured them, and in this respect silk workers were afforded a similar licence to ingenuity as that enjoyed by Frecker. That they were also able to work from their own premises afforded them a similar autonomy. Connections in the trade were possibly more important to the silk-working community than they had been to Frecker and his peers, in that silk-workers did not sell a finished article to the public (unless, perhaps, they were making repairs), but were dependent upon makers and dealers to bring their product to the market.

[123] Mary A. Hunt (15), born *c*1856, Hackney, Middlesex, apprentice to pianoforte silker (1871 census).

That only two silk workers were found to have been prosecuted for debt (Wareham and Cook) suggests not only that demand for their services was generally steady, but that the nature of the workforce was predominantly prudent and sober. It may be no coincidence that the workforce was also predominantly female. As shall be demonstrated, few women in the workforce were prosecuted for debt, and those who did suffer prosecution were mostly struggling to continue the business of a deceased relation, and not failing in a profession of their choice. A study of the members of the London piano industry to have been bankrupt, insolvent and imprisoned for debt is discussed in Chapter 5. There follows first an investigation of the workforce to have died and left a will.

Chapter 4:
Workforce Wills (1773–1857)

This chapter examines the wills and probate records of 132 men and women connected with the piano industry during the first 85 years of piano making in the capital. The documents were those of 'relatively wealthy individuals living mainly in the south of England',[1] and were proved at the Prerogative Court of Canterbury between 1773 and 1857.[2] They record the name, address and occupation of the testator, and often those of family members and friends; they record sums of money, stocks and shares, properties and their tenants; and they describe personal and domestic items that evoke the lives and homes of early members of the trade. Some describe piano workshops with their stock, tools and working practices, and give the names of colleagues and employees who were appointed as witnesses, executors and beneficiaries. Together they expose some of the personal and professional interactions of the workforce in the late-eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century, and the issues that occupied those who were concerned to make a will.

Methodology and study population

Drafting a will has never been compulsory and in 1858 they were prepared by only one person in ten.[3] The wills studied for this chapter represent only a portion of the contemporary workforce, therefore, which is further underrepresented by the probability that not all available wills have been located. Testators who described their occupation with the word 'piano' or 'pianoforte' (98 in total) have been readily identified by an electronic search of the wills held at the National Archives, but those who omitted to record their profession, or who described themselves simply as 'gentleman', such as Zumpe, were not to be found unless, like Zumpe, their names are well known, or feature in lists of recognised piano makers. The wills of thirty members of the workforce were located in this way, and several more identified

[1] 'Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1384–1858)', National Archives website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documentsonline/wills.asp

[2] The wills are held at the National Archives in Kew. Probate copies are available to download via the National Archives website: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

[3] The figure prior to this date is not known. Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.15.

through mention in the wills themselves. All other members of the workforce who made a will, but who omitted to record their profession, remain, for the present, anonymous.

The wills studied for this chapter belonged to 130 men and two women and spanned three quarters of a century and several generations. They include the will of a 'bellyman and joiner';[4] four cabinet makers, two harp makers, two organ makers, and a coal merchant who also made pianos; two harpsichord makers whose workshops later made pianos; an 'inventor of mechanisms'; six music sellers; two piano key makers; four piano tuners; two piano teachers;[5] a piano dealer; and 103 piano makers who coined themselves variously piano maker (77) manufacturer (8), square piano maker (1), musical instrument maker (10), musical wind instrument maker (1), gentleman or esquire (7). The majority of the testators lived in London, but one lived in Kingston upon Hull, and one each in Worcester, Salisbury, Chichester and Worthing. A list of testators is attached at Appendix 3 (followed by a list of other members of the musical profession mentioned in the wills). A chronological version of the same is attached at Appendix 4.

Makers and the making of wills

'Relatively wealthy individuals' were not the only members of the workforce to draft a will though, certainly, Zumpe, Broadwood and Clementi are among those studied here. Wainwright notes that John Broadwood left a personal fortune of £106,364 (separate from his business) when he died in 1812, and in modern terms he was a multi-millionaire,[6] but in 1778 Americus Backers' posthumous debt was the equivalent of nearly £7,000 today.[7] The distribution of riches appears not, then, to have been the sole inducement to drafting a will and, certainly, many of the testators studied did not bequeath stocks and shares, or funds in the Bank of England, but

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[4] A bellyman assembled the piano's soundboard and ribs.

[5] Although their work is not strictly the subject of this thesis, two piano teachers have been included.

[6] He was also owed £20,000 in outstanding loans and bonds. Wainwright (1982), p.110.

[7] Backers owed his executor, John Henwood, £33 1s 4$^1/_2$d for 'cash lent and goods delivered' (NA PROB 31/673/580), and William Woodward (his vintner) 'fourteen pounds and upwards for cash lent and liquors had' (NA PROB 31/669/361). A further £65 was owed in rent, £2 8s 9d for new window lights installed in his workshop and £7 in taxes (NA PROB 31/673/580), totalling £121 10s 1$^1/_2$d. His assets were valued at £168 6s 9d (Cole, M (1998), p.375), equating to approximately £9,600 today.

small items of personal value such as 'coats waistcoats breeches stockings and hatts [sic]',[8] treasured books and bibles. In the case of Backers he asked only that his 'worldly estate' be sold to settle his debts and maintain his two young children.[9]

The wills of other well-known piano makers in the study include those of Adam Beyer, Gabriel Buntebart, Thomas Culliford, Joseph Merlin, Christopher Sievers and Robert Wornum. Less prominent makers include Benjamin Dobson, Augustus Leukfeld, Charles Wheatstone and Herman Wrede. Makers such as these, who are noted by Harding and Clinkscale etc., account for nearly half the testators studied. The remainder, whose names are less familiar, probably worked as employees or subcontractors. It is certain not all were masters of their own business: Lorence Beyer worked for his brother Adam, and Alexander Finlayson and Robert Stewart were 'in the employ of Messieurs Broadwood'. Other Broadwood employees feature in the wills and are discussed again below. The remaining wills are those of piano tuners, teachers and key makers whose careers are possibly unrecorded elsewhere.

The length of the wills varies from four short lines, and a single sheet 'don [sic] in great haste', to more than fifteen sheets containing a great deal of legal repetition.[10] Generally, long wills pertain to a wealthy testator whose solicitor perhaps strove to justify a large fee, or to protect his rights and indemnities as an executor of the will. Wills drafted by solicitors share a common formula and dry vocabulary, but those written by testators use less formal prose and often divulge emotion: Alexander Gow disinherited his son by codicil 'in consequence of his unkind treatment and neglect of me during my affliction' and Charles Lukey directed that his siblings 'shall not receive more than one shilling from my property'.[11] Personal holographs such as

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[8] Will of Charles Lukey, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/1031), and will of John Heatly, pianoforte maker, proved 1846 (NA PROB 11/2034).

[9] Will of Americus Backers, harpsichord maker, proved 1778 (NA PROB 11/1038). Backers had three known children but only two are mentioned in his will: Charles Americus Backers (born 23 February 1770) and Christina Backers (born 7 May 1771). A third child, Amelia (born 18 November 1772), appears to have died young, and also their mother, Philadelphia. For birth dates and parentage, see *Parish registers*, St Dunstan in the West (Ancestry).

[10] Will of Henry Bell, piano forte maker, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2220); will of Robert Perkins, pianoforte maker, proved 1849 (NA PROB 11/1899); and will of Robert Stodart, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1784).

[11] Will of Alexander Gow, piano forte maker, proved 1846 (NA PROB 11/2046), and will of Charles Lukey, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/1031).

these were sometimes dictated from a hospital or sick bed. James Longman penned his will in the Fleet prison.[12]

Executors to the wills were commonly wives, family members, solicitors, friends and colleagues, though piano maker Stephen Moore appointed 'the man most intimately acquainted with all my engagements and affairs' who was also his 'greatest creditor' – George Gilbert of Hackney.[13] Gilbert's profession is not recorded,[14] but Moore's choice of words suggests that the two men may have been friends.[15] Americus Backers also appointed a friend and creditor executor to his will and perhaps both testators sought to mitigate their debt by offering their friend a seemingly secure means of reimbursement, albeit inconveniencing them in the process.[16] The charge of executing a will was an imposition not all executors chose to accept. Many had a business of their own to attend to and settling an estate could take many years: Backers' executor was still defending a challenge to the will two years after Backers' death.[17] Executors could face many months of work selling real estate, equipment, stocks and shares and distributing legacies to beneficiaries in England and abroad. They could also be required to oversee the ongoing payment of annuities to widows and family members, and even the education and maintenance of children until they were married or 21. It is perhaps not surprising that some chose to renounce the position. One executor to the will of Muzio Clementi forbore to be sworn,[18] and two to the wills of Samuel Chappell,[19] Herman Wrede,[20] and the piano tuner John

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[12] Will of James Longman, music seller, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1405).

[13] Will of Stephen Moore, piano forte maker, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1400).

[14] Gilbert may have been a schoolmaster living in Well Street, Hackney. A partnership between one George Gilbert and Paul de la Pierre, Schoolmasters of Well Street, Hackney, was dissolved by mutual consent in June 1800. *LG*, 26 July 1800, p.863.

[15] Gilbert is unlikely to have recovered his money as Moore was admitted to the Fleet prison in 1801. *LG*, 7 July 1801, p.795. Gilbert followed a few weeks later. *LG*, 8 August 1801, p.984. He was still paying off his debts after Moore had died. *LG*, 26 June 1804, p.804.

[16] Will of Americus Backers, harpsichord maker, proved 1778 (NA PROB 11/1038).

[17] The vintner, William Woodward, was owed 'fourteen pounds and upwards for cash lent and liquors had' by Backers and contested Backers' will (NA PROB 31/669/361). He eventually withdrew his suit and the case was dismissed on 10 December 1779 (NA PROB 29/204).

[18] Frederick Fielding, gentleman of Newman Street, Marylebone, renounced his position as executor to the will of Muzio Clementi, esquire, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1798).

[19] Simon Rogers, silk mercer of 15 Sackville Street, Piccadilly, and John Freckleton Burrowes, composer and organist, 13 Nottingham Place, New Road, both renounced their role as executor to the will of Samuel Chappell, music seller, proved 1835 (NA PROB 11/1841).

[20] John Miller, carpenter of Bread Street, and Robert Miller, carpenter of New Castle Court, College Hill, both renounced their role as executor to the will of Herman Wrede, musical wind instrument maker, proved 1841 (NA PROB 11/1943).

Marshall.[21] George Astor revoked the appointment of his original executors for reasons not stated,[22] and another testator later relieved his friend of the task, deciding 'from altered circumstances I do not wish him to be troubled with the burden thereof'.[23]

Witnesses to the wills were frequently solicitors and junior clerks (if the document was signed in a solicitor's office), servants, neighbours and friends, but also members of staff and colleagues. A footman to James Shudi Broadwood was pressed into service on three occasions to witness a codicil,[24] and John Broadwood enjoined the help of two employees in witnessing his will which was probably signed on the premises.[25] Members of the Broadwood staff appear to have been particularly active in the making of wills, with two dozen identified among the documents, as shown at Table 2 (below). Unconfirmed (but almost certain) employees are marked with an asterisk.

Name	Status
Black, John*	Executor to the will of colleague David Middleton and probable grand regulator[26]
Broadwood, James Shudi	Partner, testator and executor to the will of John Broadwood
Broadwood, John	Founder and testator
Brockly, Thomas	Testator and foreman[27]

[21] Samuel Bellin, artist, and James Forsyth, piano forte maker, both renounced their position as trustee and executor to the will of John Marshall, piano forte tuner, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2165). See *Disclaimer of bequests*, 24 January 1853 (LMA BRA/747/086).

[22] The appointment of Benjamin Banks (partner to George Astor) and Thomas Dobson (pawnbroker) as executors to Astor's will was revoked in a codicil signed one month before Astor's death, and piano maker William Dettmer appointed in their place. Banks was probably relieved of the role as he had moved to Liverpool. Will of George Astor, musical instrument maker, proved 1813 (NA PROB 11/1550).

[23] Will of William Nagle, piano forte maker, proved 1848 (NA PROB 11/2078).

[24] Will of James Shudi Broadwood, esquire, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2138).

[25] James Paine and Daniel Giles Rose witnessed the will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).

[26] John Black lived at Romney Terrace [Horseferry Road] Westminster. Will of David Middleton, piano forte maker, proved 1845 (NA PROB 11/2016). A John Black worked as a grand regulator in the Bridle Lane factory in 1834 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1). Many members of the Black family worked for Broadwood, including James Black who (around 1803) was contracted by Broadwoods to make upright grands at his factory in Percy Street. Wainwright (1982), p.105.

[27] Lance Whitehead identifies Thomas Brockley [sic] among the Broadwood foremen noted in the baptism records of the Wells Street Scottish Secession Church. Whitehead, L., 'Wells Street Scottish Secession Church: A Congregation of Piano Makers', paper presented at a joint conference of The Galpin Society and the Historic Brass Society (Edinburgh University

Butcher, T[homas]	Broadwood employee and debtor in the will of Robert Southgate[28]
Churchill, William*	Witness to the will of colleague Robert Stewart and probable grand bracing worker[29]
Chisholme, James	Witness to the will of Robert McDuff and probable employee[30]
Finlayson, Alexander	Piano forte maker, tuner and testator[31]
Forsyth, Charles (jnr)*	Piano maker and executor to the will of James Forsyth (snr)[32]
Forsyth, James (jnr)*	Piano maker and executor to the will of James Forsyth (snr)[33]
Forsyth, James (snr)	Testator and foreman and beneficiary in the will of John Broadwood
McDuff, Robert	Testator and employee[34]
McIsaac, Duncan*	Employee and piano maker. Daughter Ann McIsaac witness to the will of Alexander Finlayson[35]
Middleton, David*	Testator and probable grand finisher[36]
Montice, Henry Alfred*	Witness to the will of colleague Robert Stewart and probable key maker[37]
Paine, John*	Witness to the will of John Broadwood and probable foreman[38]

Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 10 July 2009). I am grateful to Dr Whitehead for sharing with me his unpublished research.

[28] Piano maker T[homas] Butcher advertised at 41 Great Titchfield Street as 'from Messrs Broadwoods'. *MP*, 27 April 1815. See also the will of Robert Southgate, pianoforte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).

[29] Will of Robert Stewart, Broadwood employee, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2178). A man named Churchill worked as a grand bracer in the Horseferry Road factory in 1834 and 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[30] A James Chisholme lived in Pulteney Street in 1818. *Property Value of Westminster Electors* (LL ratebook_485-48508). Two men named Chisholm [sic] worked at Horseferry Road in 1834, one as a cabinet and cottage finisher and Chisholm (senior) as a square nameboard maker. In 1841 the latter worked as a grand finisher (SHC 2185/JB/74/1). Harding notes James Chisholme or Chissholme at 15 Great Pulteney Street from 1841–1847. Harding (1978), p.406.

[31] See marriage of Alexander Finlayson to Julia McIsaac, daughter of Duncan and Ann McIsaac of 19 Bridle Lane, Golden Square, at St Marylebone, Westminster, 6 July 1839 (Ancestry). Both Finlayson and McIsaac noted their occupation in the register as 'piano forte maker' (Ancestry). Laurence notes that Finlayson was a Broadwood tuner. Laurence (1998), p.166.

[32] A man named Forsyth worked for Broadwood as a cottage, cabinet and square hammer maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1834 and 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1). Since James Forsyth (snr) was the company's foreman at this time it is likely the hammer maker was one of his sons, James or Charles, both piano makers according to the 1851 census.

[33] As f.n.32 above.

[34] Mentioned as a Broadwood employee in correspondence dated 4 September 1809 (Wainwright 1982, p.108).

[35] Duncan McIsaac, pianoforte maker, lived at 19 Bridle Lane in 1824 and 1833. See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 4 February 1824 (LMA Ms. 11936/499/1012668); and 30 January 1833 (LMA Ms. 11936/538/1150324). A man named McIsaac (occupation not recorded) worked at Bridle Lane in 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1). Duncan McIsaac's daughter, Jane, married Alexander Finlayson in 1839. See f.n.31.

[36] A David Middleton worked as a grand finisher at the Bridle Lane factory in 1834 and 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[37] A man named Montice worked as a key maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1834 and 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

Radford, George*	Testator and probable grand bellyman[39]
Richardson, John*	Executor to the will of colleague Robert Stewart and possible square case maker then key maker[40]
Rose, Daniel Giles	Testator, junior clerk and witness to the will of John Broadwood[41]
Rose, Frederick	Broadwood partner & factory manager,[42] son and executor to the will of Daniel Giles Rose[43]
Rose, George Thomas	Broadwood partner & accountant],[44] son and executor to the will of Daniel Giles Rose
Russell, Alexander	Factory foreman, son-in-law and executor to the will of James Forsyth[45]
Seymour, Roger*	Piano key maker, executor and witness to the will of colleague George Radford[46]
Stewart, Robert	Testator 'in the employ of Messieurs Broadwood' and probable square bridge maker[47]
Trail, Charles	Piano maker,[48] witness to the will of Henry Bell, piano maker of 11 Pulford Street, Hanover Square[49]
Wilkie, [James?]*	Witness to the will of Daniel Giles Rose and probable grand hammer regulator[50]
Williams, Joseph	Testator and possible square case maker[51]

Table 2: Proven (and highly probable) Broadwood employees identified in the wills. Various sources.

[38] Laurence notes that a man named Pain [sic] worked as foreman to the firm in 1807. Laurence (1998), p.264. John Paine of 33 Great Pulteney Street was a witness to the will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (PROB 11/1538).

[39] Will of George Radford, grand pianoforte bellyman and joiner, proved 1840 (NA PROB 11/1931). A man named Radford worked as a grand belly maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1834 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[40] A man named Richardson worked in the Horseferry Road factory as a square case maker in 1834 and a key maker in 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[41] Daniel Rose was working for the firm as a junior clerk on 4 February 1807. Laurence (1998), p.68.

[42] Laurence (1998), p.182. Frederick Rose and his brother George were appointed Broadwood partners in March 1857 'in acknowledgement of their past services and as an inducement to increase their interest in the success of the said trade or business'. Wainwright (1982), p.178.

[43] Will of Daniel Giles Rose, gentleman, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2109).

[44] Laurence (1998), p.182.

[45] Laurence notes that Alexander Russell was a Broadwood factory foreman earning £356 p.a. between 1846 and 1849. Laurence (1998), p.87.

[46] R. Seymour worked for Broadwood as piano key maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[47] A man named Stewart worked as a square bridge maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1834 and 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[48] Charles Trail worked for Broadwood and introduced his cousin, Robert Moir, in 1845. Wainwright (1982), p.158.

[49] Will of Henry Bell, pianoforte maker, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2220).

[50] A man named James Wilkie was a 'dealer in pianofortes and pianoforte string spinner' at 57 Warren Street, Fitzroy Square, in 1831. See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 2 November 1831 (LMA Ms. 11936/533/1130357). A man named Wilkie worked as a grand hammer regulator in the Bridle Lane factory in 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[51] It is likely Joseph Williams was a Broadwood employee as he lived at 7 Romney Terrace, Horseferry Road, when he signed his will in 1849, and a man named Williams worked as a square case maker in the Horseferry Road factory in 1840 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

Some of the testators listed above may have been prompted to make a will by colleagues engaged in writing their own. Middleton, Black and Wilkie worked together in the grand finishing department at Bridle Lane, and Richardson, Seymour, Stewart, Williams, Montice, Radford, Churchill and Chisholme were all colleagues at Horseferry Road. If the full names of all Broadwood employees were known it might be possible to identify more of their wills,[52] but even without further evidence it is clear that making a will was not an alien concept to members of the Broadwood workforce. Several feature repeatedly in the wills and were clearly well respected by their peers. Scotsman Alexander Russell, who rose to become one of Broadwood's senior foremen, appears three times; first as a witness for a fellow employee,[53] then as executor to the will of his father-in-law (another Broadwood employee),[54] and finally as administrator to the estate of a piano key maker whose executrix died before settling her late husband's affairs.[55] The execution of these three offices spanned more than a decade and would have given Russell a broad grasp of the legal processes involved in administering an estate. He was clearly a sober individual well suited to the task, and his employers recognised his worth and paid him well.[56]

Other witnesses, executors and beneficiaries point to connections in the wider musical profession. Burkat Shudi counted fellow Swiss migrant and organ builder John Snetzler and English organist John Keble among his friends,[57] appointing Snetzler an executor, and bequeathing Keble ten guineas.[58] A combination harpsichord and organ conceived by Shudi and Snetzler was sold by John Broadwood from the workshop as a 'clavierorgana',[59] and it is likely Keble was also involved in the project, assessing various prototypes. English organist and composer John Freckleton Burrowes was appointed executor to the will of the music seller Samuel Chappell, though he and his fellow executor renounced their position after

[52] Broadwood records of 1834 and 1840 only record the full name of an employee to differentiate between men with the same surname (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).
[53] Will of Joseph Williams, pianoforte maker, proved 1849 (NA PROB 11/2097).
[54] Will of James Forsyth, piano forte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1976).
[55] Will of David Black, piano forte and organ key maker, proved 1839 (NA PROB 11/1806).
[56] In the 1840s Russell was paid £356 p.a., compared with between £100 and £250 p.a. paid to other foremen in the company. Wainwright (1982), pp.153–54.
[57] John Keble was organist of St George's, Hanover Square. Wainwright (1982), pp.50–51.
[58] Will of Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/991).
[59] Wainwright (1982), p.56.

Chappell died, leaving Chappell's widow to administer the estate alone.[60] In contrast, the German composer and pianist John Samuel Charles Possin fulfilled his duties as executor when Gabriel Buntebart died in 1794.[61] In a curiously circular arrangement that demonstrates the complexity of ties in the trade, Possin was also connected to the Ball family of piano makers and to George Augustus Kollmann. With regard to the former, he bequeathed two pianos (perhaps made by Ball) and a sum of money to Gabriel Ball and his two sons, Frederick and Charles.[62] James and Edward Ball (relationship to Gabriel, Frederick and Charles not proved) manufactured pianos at 27 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square,[63] which premises were later used for the sale of the 'new patent piano fortes' of composer and piano maker George Augustus Kollman,[64] who was an executor of Possin's will. Other connections are not explained. Piano maker Adam Appelman did not clarify his relationship with the owners of the Kirkman firm of harpsichord and piano makers in his will, but was able to prevail upon Joseph and Abraham Kirkman to act as executor and witness so he is likely to have been a senior employee.[65] In turn, the will of Joseph Kirkman was witnessed by another likely employee – a joiner named Christian John Stiebler of 5 Marshall Street, Golden Square, whose family is discussed in Chapter 3. Steibler's father was a former 'peruke maker perfumer and toy seller' turned 'leatherer of pianoforte hammers' who may have also been employed by the Kirkman factory.[66] Stiebler's seemingly unusual segue into the piano supply industry would not have been exceptional as toy sellers often dealt in

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[60] Burrowes' fellow executor was Simon Rogers, a silk mercer and fancy warehouseman of Sackville Street, Piccadilly. Will of Samuel Chappel, music seller, proved 1835 (NA PROB 11/1841).

[61] Will of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart, large pianoforte maker, proved 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250).

[62] Possin gave piano maker Gabriel Ball of Jewry Street, Hampstead Road, the sum of £250, and to each of his sons, Frederick and Charles, £60. Will of John Samuel Charles Possin, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1650).

[63] Will of James Ball, musical instrument maker, proved 1882 (NA PROB 11/1654).

[64] *MP*, 4 June 1840.

[65] Will of Adam Appelman, pianoforte maker, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1411).

[66] For Christian John Stiebler's occupation as a joiner, see the baptism record of his daughter, Elizabeth Stiebler, on 10 October 1819, at Heston, Hounslow (Ancestry). For the occupations of Christian Gotthelf Sliebler [sic] see *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 9 September 1812 (LMA Ms. 11936/459/873583); and 13 June 1792 (LMA Ms. 11936/389/601255). Christian Gotthelf Stiebler was the father of Christian John Stiebler (see baptism of Christian John Stiebler on 28 June 1797, Westminster parish baptism records via Ancestry). Christian John Stiebler's daughter, Hannah Elizabeth Cook (nee Stiebler), became a pianoforte silker (*POLD* 1855–59). She and her husband, Charles Cook, traded as C. and H. E. Cook until the liquidation of their business in 1880 (*LG*, 1 June 1880, p.3296). For the marriage of Hannah Elizabeth Stiebler and Charles Cook see Westminster parish marriage records, 8 July 1848 (Ancestry). Piano silk-work and the Cook family of silkers are discussed in Chapter 3.

musical instruments at this time. Another toy manufacturer cited in the wills, John [Francis] Bell, also turned to making pianos, having shared his premises at 4 Little Russell Street, Covent Garden, with the piano maker Lewis Baragiola for at least two years prior to the latter's death in 1835.[67] As executor and major beneficiary of Baragiola's will, Bell insured himself in the same property the following year as a 'toy and pianoforte maker', continuing in his friend's trade.[68] Another miscellaneous career was that of Bernardus Serves, a German musical instrument maker who also dealt in 'coals, corn, hay and straw' in Berwick Street, Soho between at least 1806 and 1835.[69] He was a witness to the will of the piano maker John Indermaur[70] and had a long association with the piano maker Thomas Tomkison of 77 Dean Street.[71]

Other friendships are confirmed in the wills. The piano maker William Dettmer of Marylebone Street was a friend of the musical instrument maker George Astor,[72] who appointed Dettmer an executor, revoking, as he did, the appointment of two former executors, one of whom was his former business partner, Benjamin Banks, who had relocated to Liverpool.[73] Zumpe's co-successor, George Friederick Schoene, was a friend of the Strand print seller and publisher, Rudolph Ackermann,[74] and also the tool and lathe maker, John Jacob Holtzapffel,[75] both of whom were

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[67] On 24 July 1833, Lewis Baragiola, piano forte maker, was insured at 4 Little Russell Street, Covent Garden. Other property or occupiers: Bell toyman. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 24 July 1833 (LMA Ms. 11936/539/1157372). A toyman was 'formerly, one who sold requisites for sports, trinkets and fancy goods'. *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. XI (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; repr.1961), p.210. On 6 January 1836 John Francis Bell, toymaker, was insured at 4 Little Russell Street, Covent Garden, executor of Lewis Baragiola, late of same place, piano forte maker, deceased. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 6 January 1836 (LMA Ms. 11936/550/1208891).

[68] Will of Lewis Baragiola, piano maker, proved 1835 (NA PROB 11/1854). On 4 May 1836, John Bell, toy and piano forte maker, was insured at 4 Little Russell Street, Covent Garden. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 4 May 1836 (LMA Ms. 11936/550/1208891).

[69] See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 25 March 1806 (LMA Ms. 11936/437/787382); 12 March 1823 (MS 11936/498/1001906); 27 March 1823 (LMA MS 11936/498/1001930); and 6 May 1835 (LMA MS 11936/545/1196901). Serges died in 1851. See will of Bernardus Serges, gentleman, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2131).

[70] Will of John Indermaur, piano forte maker, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1797).

[71] The musical instrument maker Tomkison, of 77 Dean Street, appears on all Serges' Sun Fire Insurance policies under 'other property or occupiers'. See f.n.67 above.

[72] Will of George Astor, musical instrument maker, proved 1813 (NA PROB 11/1550).

[73] A partnership between George Astor, George Horwood and Benjamin Banks of Cornhill, musical instrument manufacturers, was dissolved on 23 March 1809. *LG*, 8 April 1809, p.472.

[74] Rudolph Ackermann (1764–1834), born Saxony, established in the Strand 1795. Thorne, J. (ed.), *Chambers Biographical Dictionary* (Edinburgh: Chambers Harrap Publishers Limited, 1984), p.6.

[75] John Jacob Holtzapffel (1768–1835), born Strasburg, moved to London in 1792. Holtzapfell website: http://holtzapffel.org/biographies.html, consulted 31 January 2012.

appointed executor to his will. Ackermann also received all Schoene's workshop tools.[76] The friendship of this trio may have been initiated by the purchase of a piano, or by professional association (Schoene purchased a lathe from Holtzapffel in 1809),[77] but was no doubt strengthened by their common German heritage.

These are just some of the musical connections identified in the wills. A table showing all the music trade connections established by the wills is attached at Appendix 5. Not only do they confirm the breadth of interaction between the capital's instrument makers, music publishers and performing artists of the time, but also the strength of that interaction, in that professional introductions led to friendships and even to legacies in their wills. These were men who enjoyed the wider context of their work, and the activities and deliberations of their peers. The careers of men like Christian Gotthelf Stiebler and Bernardus Serves show the diversity of commerce that abutted, and eventually joined, the trade (from perukes and perfume to corn and hay) and also the astuteness of tradesmen working outside the industry in recognising the needs of the piano industry and adapting their activity to join its ranks. The fact that they were able to do so shows that the piano trade was not an introspective clique closed to the contribution of non-members, but a liberal alliance with a colourful and changing workforce.

Witnesses and testators who were not connected with the trade came from a variety of backgrounds. They were members of the textile industry (hatters and hosiers; clothiers, silk mercers and linen drapers); members of the publishing trade (stationers, book binders and compositors); the licensing trade (wine and brandy merchants; publicans and victuallers); labourers (builders and bricklayers); craftsmen (shoemakers; chair makers; cabinet makers, carpenters and lathe turners); and also bankers and merchants; apothecaries and schoolmasters; bakers and tea porters; surveyors; furriers and curriers; watchmakers; locksmiths, coal merchants and artists – a wide array of London trades people and genteel merchants who counted among the friends, neighbours, relations – and likely customers – of the study population.

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[76] Will of George Friederick Schoene, gentleman, proved 1825 (NA PROB 11/1694).

[77] *Holtzapffel's Register of Lathes* (LMA CLC/B/121 MS09475) records the sale of a 4 inch common lathe (no. 865) to Mr Schoene on 21 October 1809. Price £10. I am grateful to Mike Baldwin for alerting me to this information.

On average, testators survived approximately two-and-a-half years after signing their will. Just over 10% died within a month and more than half within a year, suggesting that ill-health was a catalyst for settling their affairs. Adam Beyer was minded to draft his will on the anniversary of his brother's death.[78] The shortest time between the execution and proving of a will (which was usually fairly promptly after death, but could be several months) was just ten days in the case of Gabriel Buntebart.[79] Robert Wornum signed his will and lived another 28 years.[80]

Bequests to wives and mistresses

At the end of the eighteenth century, bequests to a spouse, child, parent or grandparent were exempt from the payment of death duty. In 1805 this exemption was restricted to spouse and parents, and from 1815 applied only to a spouse, which made it increasingly favourable for wives to be named the major beneficiary in a will.[81] Half the married study population settled their estate in this way, leaving all their possessions to their wives for use in their own lifetime (or continued widowhood) and for the maintenance and support of any children, and trusting them to deal with the assets appropriately. More than half also appointed them executrix.

Notwithstanding a desire to avoid tax, these arrangements demonstrate a confidence in the administrative capabilities of wives which, for some, extended to the future management of their business. With the home and workshop commonly occupying the same premises, the line between domestic chores and business activities was less firmly drawn than it became when the two spheres separated, and the help of wives and women was often enlisted in sundry business activities such as hiring and selling showroom instruments (the showroom then commonly being at the front of the

[78] Adam's brother, Lorence, died 25 December 1789, aged 56. Cole, M. (1995), pp.94–119, at p.111. Adam Beyer signed his will on 26 December 1803. Will of Adam Beyer, gentleman, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1403).

[79] Will of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart, large piano forte maker, proved 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250).

[80] Will of Robert Wornum, piano forte maker, proved 1852 (NA PROB 11/2164). A timber merchant to the trade considered Robert Warnum 'one of the fine old type of English gentleman – a well-built man, with a long, greyish beard which inspired paternal respect. He was the acme of courtesy, and even if he could not give you an order, that innate courtesy which he extended to you made one forget about business and to realise that social friendship is something worth winning and keeping.' Bamberger, L., 'Memories of the Past', *The Pianomaker* (September 1928), p.423.

[81] See Grannum and Taylor (2009), pp.83–85.

house),[82] accounting, action-making, over-winding piano bass strings,[83] and performing piano silk-work (as described in Chapter 3). Several of the wives studied here are likely to have helped in this way; those of Thomas Allison[84] and Josiah Levesque being two examples.[85] For some testators, then, the ongoing management of the business was assigned to their wife with the help of existing staff. Elsewhere, women were prescribed the care of a business for a short term only, perhaps bridging the gap until a son grew old enough to take control of the firm. Unusually, John Rathmacher bade his mistress continue his business making square pianos until his son turned 21, then sell the whole for their mutual advantage.[86] But requests of this nature were not always fully executed, as wives might die or remarry before fulfilling their obligations. Table 3 (below) lists the wives and mistresses to have received a legacy relating to their husband's business. They account for 15% of the widows studied and those known positively to have made use of their bequest are marked with an asterisk.

Of the women listed at Table 3 (below), only four are proved to have made use of their piano-related inheritance. Elizabeth Astor took control of her husband's firm with the help of George Horwood (her late husband's former business partner,[87] and a witness to his will,[88] who she later reinstated as a partner), and throughout a sequence of changing partnerships remained involved in the firm until she retired.[89]

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[82] For example, Elizabeth Marchant, wife of the piano forte maker, William Marchant, assisted in her husband's shop at Prospect House, Kingsland, in 1849. Trial of John Wright, Mary Wright and Charlotte Richards, 20 August 1849 (OB t18490820-1615).

[83] Nex (2009), pp.333–34.

[84] Will of Thomas Allison, piano forte manufacturer, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2204).

[85] Will of Josiah Levesque, proved 1839 (NA PROB 11/1917).

[86] Will of John George Rathmacher, square piano forte maker, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1785). In his will John Rathmacher described Mary Spicer as 'spinster now and for some time residing with me'. Three years earlier, on 23 October 1828, Rathmacher gave evidence in court regarding the theft of one of his pianos and referred in his evidence to his 'wife', who was also present and gave evidence as Mary Rathmacher. In her evidence Mary referred to her 'husband' ([John] George Rathmacher) and 'son' (George [Charles] Rathmacher), who also gave evidence. Trial of Sophia Sanders and William Barrett, 23 October 1828 (OB t18281023-225). Since no record has been found of the marriage of John and Mary (or the death of Mary Rathmacher) it seems probable that Mary Rathmacher and Mary Spicer were one and the same. If so, Mary Spicer continued to call herself Mary Rathmacher after her 'husband's' death (1841 and 1861 census) until her own death in 1883. See *Pancras parish death register*, fourth quarter, 1883, Mary Rathmacher (97), born *c*1786 (Ancestry).

[87] *LG*, 8 April 1809, p.472.

[88] Will of George Astor, musical instrument manufacturer, proved 1813 (NA PROB 11/1550).

[89] Clinkscale (1999), p.10.

Beneficiary	Bequest
Astor, Elizabeth* *Wife of George Astor (1813)*	At liberty to continue her husband's business
Ball, Mary *Wife of James Ball (1822)*	All leasehold estates stock in trade books debts monies[90]
Dobson, Caroline *Wife of Benjamin Dobson (1824)*	All stock in trade whether manufactured or otherwise
Fairn, Priscilla *Wife of Robert Fairn (1843)*	All working implements
Franklin, Ann *Wife of Richard Franklin (1853)*	All stock in trade
Gow, Elizabeth *Wife of Alexander Taylor Gow (1846)*	Chest of working tools
Levesque, Elizabeth* *Wife of Josiah Levesque (1839)*	All stock in trade
Lukey, Mary *Wife of Charles Lukey (1777)*	Two reels or machines for silvering piano strings
Mowbray, Eliza *Wife of William Mowbray (1839)*	All stock in trade, instruments and manufactured materials
Parker, Mary *Wife of Thomas Parker (1830)*	All working tools for ever
Rolfe, Mary Ann* *Wife of James Longman Rolfe (1857)*	At liberty to dispose of his stock of musical instruments
Spicer, Mary* *Wife/Mistress of John George Rathmacher (1831)*	To continue the business until son aged 21, then to sell for their mutual advantage
Wornum, Catherine *Wife of Robert Wornum (1852)*	All stock in trade

Table 3: Wives and mistresses who received piano-related bequests. Source: Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1773–1857).

Elizabeth Levesque also continued her late husband's business before taking her new husband into partnership with her son, Josiah, at which point the firm became known as Edmeades Levesque & Co., employing 14 men.[91] And Mary Ann Rolfe was still dealing in pianos at 75, while her son worked as a tuner.[92] These three women may be considered to have fulfilled their husband's wishes to preserve his business, but

[90] The will was signed on 13 April 1810. A codicil signed on 12 November 1821, four months before he died, bequeathed the business to his son, Edward. Will of James Ball, musical instrument maker, proved 1822 (NA PROB 11/1564).

[91] See Elizabeth Levesque, born *c*1811, Middlesex, pianoforte maker (1841 census) and William Edmeades, born *c*1813, Rochester, Kent, pianoforte maker (1851 census).

[92] See Mary A[nn] Rolfe (75), born *c*1786, Faversham, Kent, pianoforte seller, and William Keeling Rolfe (47), born *c*1814, Islington, pianoforte tuner (1861 census).

Mary Spicer more so, since she failed to sell John Rathmacher's business when his son turned 21, and George Rathmacher was still making pianos at the age of 30.[93] He desisted some years later (possibly with the decline of the square piano from the 1840s),[94] and died a piano tuner.[95] Of the other widows, two more may have put their inheritance to practical use. Mary Parker, whose husband was concerned that her income was 'small', received all his working tools 'for ever',[96] and Mary Lukey was given her husband's 'two reels or machines for silvering strings',[97] most probably because she was already adept in their use and they would secure her future income. A daughter of Thomas Culliford (who was a near contemporary of Mary Lukey), was also a 'silverer of pianoforte strings' who would have been familiar with such equipment.[98] Whether the other women to inherit their husband's working tools made practical use of them, or whether they acted merely as custodians pending their future sale or redistribution, the fate of a dead man's working tools was clearly a matter that could be entrusted to his wife. In Florence, in 1729, Bartolomeo Cristofori bequeathed his working tools to his assistant 'in appreciation for his help, and in compensation for the good and loyal service', but changing his will the following year he left them to the daughters of the late Giovanni del Mela 'in recognition of the assistance they had provided during his illness'. Stewart Pollens surmises 'either that they assisted him in the workshop during his protracted illness or that they had a relative who could put the materials to good use.'[99]

The remaining women in Table 3 appear not to have drawn upon their inheritance although Mary Ann Dettmer is likely to have made use of her piano. Her husband's occupation two years before he died was 'professor of music' so the tools she inherited may have been those for tuning and maintaining the instrument.[100] His

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[93] See George Rathmaker [sic] (30), born *c*1811, Middlesex, pianoforte maker (1841 census).
[94] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.103.
[95] See George Rathnacher [sic] (48), born *c*1813, London, pianoforte tuner (1861 census).
[96] Will of Thomas Parker, pianoforte maker, proved 1830 (NA PROB 11/1775).
[97] Will of Charles Lukey, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/1031). Early square pianos had bass strings made of a brass core over-wound with tin-coated copper which possibly gave the appearance of a silver finish. Clinkscale (1993), p.ix.
[98] The *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers* show that Elizabeth Charlton [nee Culliford] was working as a 'silverer of pianoforte strings' at 16 Silver Street, Golden Square, in 1812. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 23 June 1812 (LMA Ms. 11936/459/871442). I am grateful to Jenny Nex for alerting me to this fact.
[99] Pollens, S., 'Bartolomeo Cristofori in Florence', *The Galpin Society Journal* LXVI (2013), pp.7–42, at p.10.
[100] See George Dethner [sic] (50), born *c*1791, Middlesex, professor of music (1841 census).

extended Dettmer family (and possibly Mary Ann's as well, as her maiden name was Wales)[101] was heavily involved in making pianos so the remainder of George Dettmer's tools are likely to have been divided among them: his widow's fate is not recorded. Neither is that of Caroline Dobson, whose husband ran a firm of piano and organ builders in Swan Street in the Minories.[102] According to Harding the company was still operating three years after Dobson's death,[103] but the likely manager was the organ builder John Bunting of the same address, who gave a home to Dobson's bereaved daughter, also named Caroline.[104] In view of the fact that Dobson's widow did not co-habit with them, she is unlikely to have been involved in the management of the firm. Priscilla Fairn became a lodging house keeper in her widowhood,[105] and her husband's working tools were probably donated to the three piano makers (and possible colleagues) who were witnesses to his will.[106] In the case of Eliza Mowbray, who was granted the whole of her husband's stock in trade:

> consisting of pianofortes which at present or at the time of my decease may be in my warehouse or shop [...] as well as those which now are or at the time of my decease may be out on hire to any individual or individuals in the way of my business or otherwise, a finger organ and all manufactured materials

no evidence has been found that she pursued his career.[107] Since none of these last four widows (Dettmer, Dobson, Fairn or Mowbray) appears to have made use of their piano-related inheritance it is possible it was bestowed to avoid the payment of death duty and passed on in a manner prearranged before their husband's death.[108] The same may be true of the goods bequeathed to Ann Franklin and Catherine Wornum since both had adult sons working in the trade when their husband died. With regard to the former, Ann Franklin recorded no occupation as a widow, so her

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[101] Mary Ann's maiden name is noted in her husband's will, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980). Harding records two London piano makers named Wales at this time. Harding (1978), p.424.

[102] Will of Benjamin Dobson, organ builder, proved 1824 (NA PROB 11/1680). See also Benjamin Dobson, piano forte maker, in Harding (1978), p.409.

[103] Harding (1978), p.409.

[104] See Caroline Dobson (22), born *c*1819, Middlesex, teacher of music (1841 census).

[105] See Priscilla Fairn, born *c*1794, Wiltshire (1861 census).

[106] The three piano makers were Herman Indermaur, James Kendall and Walter Brunton. Will of Robert Fairn, piano forte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1982).

[107] Will of William Mowbray, piano forte maker, proved 1839 (NA PROB 11/1918). Harding notes the firm until 1840 only. Harding (1978), p.418.

[108] With the exception of £40 shared between the daughters of George Thomas Dettmer, piano forte maker, will proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980), all these widows were sole beneficiaries of estates proved after 1815.

son, Thomas, a piano maker, is likely to have received the materials, equipment and merchandise of his late father's business,[109] and Catherine was nearly seventy when her husband died,[110] so her son, Alfred Nicholson Wornum, would have acquired the running of his late father's business with its fifty hands at the age of 37.[111]

Aside from matters connected to the business, most widows were provided with a home and domestic chattels, savings and an annuity, and often proceeds from the sale or rent of real estate (and, one, the ruins of a burned house in Devon).[112] These proceeds were typically reduced if she chose to remarry, but most husbands appear to have been concerned for the future comfort and security of their spouse. One granted her 'absolutely all my diamonds pearls jewels trinkets and other ornaments of her person whatsoever' together with 'one carriage and such two horses of mine as she shall collect with the harness and accoutrements to such horses belonging',[113] and several left her all their liquors, wines and spirits.[114]

Prior to 1882, women were not entitled to make a will without their husband's consent,[115] but in 1822 piano maker Elizabeth Tomkins drafted a will[116] while married to her second husband, the piano maker James Tomkins.[117] Her independent savings amounted to more than £50,000 today, and she owned a large quantity of household silver which she bequeathed, in part, to her then husband, which suggests that they were riches she had acquired independent of their marriage. The only other female testator in the study was the 'piano forte manufacturer and dealer in musical

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[109] See Ann Franklin (61), born *c*1800, Worcestershire, no occupation, living at 9 Ashby Terrace, Shoreditch (1861 census). See also, Thomas Franklin (26), son, born *c*1825, Shoreditch, Middlesex, pianoforte maker (1851 census); and Thomas W. Franklin (35), born *c*1826, St Lukes, living at 9 Ashby Terrace, Shoreditch, pianoforte maker (1861 census).

[110] See Catherine Wornum, born *c*1784, Durham (1851 census).

[111] See Alfred Nicholson Wornum (36), born *c*1815, London, Middlesex, pianoforte maker, living with his brother, Ralph Nicholson Wornum, at 1 Bedford Place (1851 census). Also, Alfred Nicholson Wornum (46), born *c*1815, Marylebone, pianoforte manufacturer employing 50 persons, living at 14 St John Wood Road (1861 census). In the 1871 census he is recorded as a pianoforte manufacturer employing 20 men, and a decade later 27.

[112] Will of William Winget, pianoforte maker, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2108).

[113] Will of James Shudi Broadwood, esquire, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2138).

[114] Will of James Rendell, musical instrument maker, proved 1844 (NA PROB 11/2005); will of Daniel Giles Rose, gentleman, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2109); and will of Thomas Tomkison, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2183).

[115] The *Married Women's Property Act* of 1882. Hill, Bridget, *Women, Work and Sexual Politics in Eighteenth-century England* (London: Blackwell, 1989), p.196.

[116] Will of Elizabeth Tomkins, pianoforte maker, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1667).

[117] For occupation of James Tomkins, pianoforte maker, Poland Street, see *Westminster Pollbooks* dated 1818 (LL pollbook_692-69293); and 1819 (LL pollbook_764-76426).

instruments', Mary Alison of 75 Dean Street, Soho, whose late husband, the piano maker Thomas Allison, had been dead eighteen months when she signed her will in July 1856. She died shortly after leaving 'all my stock in trade and the good will of my business' to her seven children equally, but the eldest being only 15 the business appears to have ceased trading.[118]

Women played a variety of roles among the characters studied, both as wives and widows. They provided versatile labour in the workshop while married and consented to witness and execute their husband's will; they settled his affairs once widowed and administered his estate; they accepted his posthumous stock in trade and working tools and saw to their deployment; and they assumed the temporary and permanent management of his business. Some acted as piano makers and testators in their own right. Many more, however, seem not to have been involved directly in the trade, but to have been supported by the profits of the trade as a wife, and granted independence by its profits as a widow.

Bequests to children

The existence of children was not always recorded in a will and even those to be acknowledged were not always identified by name. Often they were referred to obliquely as 'my children born or hereafter to be born' or 'my children who shall be living at my decease' and, since not all offspring survived to maturity, it may have been easier to refer to them in this way, rather than to add a codicil to the will after every birth or death.

Children still living at the time of their parents' decease commonly received a share in the value of the estate in the form of stocks, dividends, property, cash and annuities, and items of a personal or domestic nature. Thirteen testators bequeathed piano-related articles to their spouse, but eleven gave them to their children, including tools, stock and equipment, and, for some, the ongoing management of the firm (see Table 4 below). For the most part bequests took the form of an outright gift provided for the child's sole use and benefit, for the term of their natural life and, in the case of a daughter, 'into her own hands independent of the debts control or

[118] See baptism of Thomas Robertson Allison (19 January 1842) at Old St Pancras, Camden; parents Thomas (piano forte maker) and Mary Allison of Torrington Square (Ancestry).

management' of any current or future husband. Occasionally – and notably when bequeathing a business – they were granted with qualifications which sought to prescribe the recipient's career.

Testator	Summary of bequest
Mary Allison (1856) *Pianoforte manufacturer* 75 Dean Street, Soho	All stock in trade and the good will of her business as a manufacturer of and dealer in musical instruments to her seven children equally
James Ball (1822) *Musical instrument maker* 27 Duke Street, Grosvenor Sq	All trade and business to his son Edward Ball
Benjamin Banks (1795) *Musical instrument maker* City of New Sarum [Salisbury]	Sons James and Henry Banks to jointly take to the business carried on by him and his sons in case his son Benjamin Banks shall be then settled in some other business
John Bond (1848) *Piano forte maker* 19 Frederick Place, Hampstead Rd	The good will of his business as piano forte maker, all his stock in trade and implements and utensils of trade of every description unto and equally between his daughter Elizabeth and younger son William Bond
William Edwards (1828) *Musical instrument maker* [17] Bridge Rd, Lambeth	To his son, William Henry, the whole right property interest and benefit in and to his trade and business and all his stock in trade as well manufactured as unmanufactured [sic] musical instruments and music books implements tools and utensils of trade
Stodart, William (1841) *Pianoforte manufacturer* 3 Avenue Road, Regents Park	The business of pianoforte manufacturing be carried on by my son Matthew Stodart for the benefit of himself and his sister

Table 4: Testators who bequeathed their business to their offspring. Dates in brackets signify when the will was proved. Occupations are those declared in the wills. Source: Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1773–1857).

The eldest son of the music seller Samuel Chappell was 'required to devote the whole of his time and attention to the [family] business' or forfeit his annuity, but as an inducement to obedience his annuity was set to treble if he were still adhering to his father's terms at the age of 28.[119] The device was effective in the short term, as William was still working as a partner in the family firm beyond the age of 28 (and collecting his increased annuity), but eventually he chose an independent career with a rival firm.[120] In a similar arrangement, Burkat Shudi's son was awarded a £40

[119] Will of Samuel Chappell, music seller, proved 1834 (NA PROB 11/1841).

[120] In the 1840s William Chappell entered into partnership with the Beale family in the firm of Cramer Beale and Chappell, musical instrument manufacturers, music publishers and music sellers. Gregory, E. D., *Victorian Songhunters: 1820–1883* (Scarecrow Press, 2006), p.80.

annuity 'so long as he shall not exercise or follow the trade or business of an harpsichord maker either alone or in partnership or conjunction with any other person or persons or work for any harpsichord maker save the said John Broadwood'.[121] This stipulation may have arisen from the earlier defection of Burkat's nephew, Joshua Shudi, who, in 1766, left his uncle's tutelage to establish a rival business,[122] and caused his uncle much vexation by claiming authorship of instruments constructed in his uncle's workshop.[123] Although Joshua's malpractice was widely publicised, his cousin's work is not recorded, though it is unlikely Burkat Shudi junior sought employment outside the firm when his father died.[124] In 1841 Matthew Stodart was bequeathed his father's 'business of pianoforte manufacturing' at 1 Golden Square, St James, and afforded 'twelve per cent upon the entire profits [...] as a remuneration for his trouble for conducting the business'.[125] Another testator offered his nephew a £10 annuity 'provided he shall continue in the service and employment of my said son but not otherwise'.[126] The outcome is not recorded. With the workforce depleted by the death of the testator, these children were effectively shoehorned into an ongoing (and sometimes subordinate) role in the family firm, in a bid to preserve continuity. The fact that testators felt the need to bribe the next generation to remain at their post speaks as much to their fears for the survival of their empire as to the commitment of their successors to secure it.

Some children preferred not to work at all. Robert Stodart lamented that he had:

> expended more money on my son James than on any of his brother or sisters and as he seems to want capacity or inclination to pursue any business whereby to gain a living and to secure against his ever coming to want I hereby direct my said trustees to purchase [...] for my said son James upon his life from any assurance office of credit an annuity of one hundred and seventy pounds sterling payable to himself and which provision I hereby declare to be in full satisfaction to him of all he can [...] claim by

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[121] Will of Burkat Schudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1773 (NA PROB 11/991).
[122] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.7.
[123] See three advertisements in the *St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 1, 13 and 17 January 1767.
[124] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.14.
[125] Will of William Stodart, pianoforte manufacturer, proved 1841 (NA PROB 11/1951). Forty-five years earlier, the music sellers, James Longman and Francis Fane Broderip were each paid '£300 per year, or one sixteenth of the annual profits, whichever was the greater'. Nex in Kassler (2011), p.79. In other words, Longman & Broderip each received at least 6.25% of the annual profits. For the full history of Longman & Broderip, see Nex in Kassler (2011), pp.3–93.
[126] Will of William Edwards, musical instrument maker, proved 1828 (NA PROB 11/1737).

> and through my decease and that he shall have no interest or share in the general distribution of my Real and Personal estate.[127]

With an annuity to support him (albeit smaller than he might have hoped), James Stodart fared better than those who were disinherited. The son and namesake of George Astor, who was disinherited one month before his father died 'as though he had never been born',[128] was bankrupt ten years later.[129] The prospect of inheriting the family firm was perhaps more of a yoke than an inducement for some young men at the start of their career, especially if posthumous parental control extended to the future running of the business. In a codicil to his will, James Ball stipulated the following with respect to his son's inheritance:[130]

> I give and bequeath unto my son Edward Ball absolutely to and for his own use and benefit all my trade and business as carried on by me at No. 27 Duke Street, Grosvenor Square together with all my work benches tools belonging thereunto. I also give unto my said son Edward Ball all my manufactured stock in trade and caravans and my horse and all my unfinished work in hand excepting organs. I also give unto my said son Edward Ball *so many of my pianofortes as are out on hire as shall not exceed forty in number*. And I direct that he shall have his choice of them excepting that *he shall not take more than twenty cabinet pianofortes* the sums receivable for hire to commence to him from the day of my decease. It is my desire also that my executrix shall let unto my said son Edward Ball at a moderate rent as shall be agreed between them all the ground floor of my house No. 27 Duke Street Grosvenor Square with all ware rooms and buildings erected at the back part thereof and also the stable and workshops on the ground floor belonging to the said house for such terms of years not exceeding my whole term therein as my said son Edward Ball shall desire [italics my own].

Why James restricted to forty the number of instruments his son could retain from the hire stock (and of those not more than twenty cabinet pianos) is unclear, but he may have anticipated the declining popularity of the cabinet piano and sought to impose a policy change he had neglected to attend to himself. Alternatively, the money to be raised by the sale of the remaining instruments may have been intended to support his second son and widow: it is a point not clarified in his will. The fate of any unfinished organs is also unexplained, although they may have been the responsibility of specialist organ builders working on the premises: Harding notes

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[127] Will of Robert Stodart, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1784).
[128] Will of George Astor, musical instrument maker, proved 1813 (NA PROB 11/1550).
[129] See George Astor, the younger, late of Cornhill, merchant, in *LG*, 9 February 1813, p.321.
[130] Will of James Ball, musical instrument maker, proved 1822 (NA PROB 11/1654).

that the company was still producing organs two years after the will was proved.[131] Despite his father's attempts to manage the liquidity of the firm, over the next six years Edward Ball came to owe his mother 'one thousand pounds on mortgage with all arrear of interest thereon': a principal sum approaching £50,000 today.[132]

The enterprises listed at Table 4 (above) do not include large firms such as Astor, Broadwood, Clementi or Kirkman who settled their succession by other means. On average, the businesses listed survived twenty years after the death of the testator, and one as long as thirty-six.[133] Their survival is in marked contrast to other businesses in the wills which were ordered to be sold when the testator died. Eleven businesses were assigned this fate, and it is a curious fact that, for nearly half of them, there was a son then alive to inherit.[134]

Such cases undermine the traditional premise of a trade passed traditionally from father to son and demonstrate how not all male offspring were obliged (or even encouraged) to join their father's trade. John Broadwood granted his youngest son £20,000 during his minority and 'for placing him out to any business or profession he may be inclined to enter into as [his executors] shall think likely to be to his advantage'.[135] History records that he became a 'man-about-town, courtier and

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[131] Harding (1978), p.403.

[132] Will of Mary Ball, widow, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1800).

[133] James Ball's business survived 14 years until Edward's death. James Banks was the last to die (in Liverpool, 1831) of the three brothers mentioned. Morris, W. M., *British Violin Makers*, 3rd edn (Pelican Publishing, 2006), p.103. Elizabeth and William Bond traded until 1850, after which the firm traded as John Bond & Co. until 1856. Harding (1978), p.404. John Bond relocated to Liverpool where he was imprisoned for debt as a pianoforte manufacturer in 1861. *LG*, 25 January 1861, p.342. William Edwards' son continued another 22 years. Harding (1978), p.409. Matthew Stodart continued another 21 years. Harding (1978), p.423.

[134] The following instructed the posthumous sale of their business: John Green, musical instrument maker, will proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2137); Rice Jones, coal merchant and pianoforte maker, will proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523); James Kennay, piano forte maker, will proved 1856 (NA PROB 11/2234); John Kohler, musical instrument maker, will proved 1801 (NA PROB 11/1356); Leudevig August Leukfeld, musical instrument maker, will proved 1810 (NA PROB 11/1517); Joseph Merlin, inventor of mechanism, will proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1394); Robert Perkins, pianoforte maker, will proved 1838 (NA PROB 11/1899); John George Rathmacher, square piano maker, will proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1785); Thomas Tomkison [piano maker], will proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2183); John Waite, pianoforte maker, will proved 1829 (NA PROB 11/1757); and Herman Wrede, musical wind instrument [and piano] maker, will proved 1841 (NA PROB 11/1943). Despite the instructions of the founder member to sell the firm, the Köhler family continued to make brass instruments until *c*1907. See Whitehead, L., and A. Myers, 'The Köhler Family of Brasswind Instrument Makers', *Historic Brass Society Journal* 16 (2004), pp.89–123.

[135] Will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).

politician'[136] who 'had no part in the firm, though his extravagant life-style was a source of perpetual anxiety to his brothers'.[137] Perhaps with the future of his empire safely entailed to his eldest sons John Broadwood could afford to be liberal, but it was his elder sons who paid the price. Nonetheless, Broadwood's eldest son, James Shudi, was also a liberal parent, allowing his first son to follow a career as a scholar but advising his second that while 'I might possibly find some other line in trade for you [...I] am extremely doubtfull [sic] if I could find you one half so profitable or so certain', adding that 'with attention you will be certain to become independent in circumstances & after a few years be entirely your own Master – but attention & a conciliating demeanour will be imperatively necessary at first'.[138] The commitment of his young son was not to be tested, however, as he died of consumption at 19.[139]

Other parents were more prescriptive. The ten-year-old son of Rice Jones, piano maker to the Prince of Wales, was denied a future as a piano maker and bequeathed, instead, his father's business as a coal merchant. It may be that the sale of coal was deemed more profitable than that of pianos, or that his young son preferred the idea of the former career and was unsuited to the latter, but the piano business was to be 'disposed of as soon as conveniently may be' after the testator's decease and his son to receive instead his father's horizontal gold watch, book case, iron chest and coal merchant business:[140] he was still selling coal at the age of 52.[141] In the event, Jones' piano business was acquired by John Price, who had 'consented to conduct or superintend' the dismantling of the firm upon the testator's decease,[142] and who traded from Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, as 'Late Jones and Co., Upright, Cabinet and Square Piano Forte Maker to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent'.[143] As for William Frecker before him, Price's career was advanced by the death of a prominent maker.

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[136] Wainwright (1982), p.139.
[137] Henry Broadwood (1793–1878) became Member of Parliament for Bridgwater 1837–1852. Wainwright (1982), p.124.
[138] Wainwright (1982), p.121.
[139] Wainwright (1982), p.122.
[140] Will of Rice Jones, coal merchant and pianoforte maker, proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523).
[141] See Theophilus R[ice] Jones (52), born *c*1799, coal merchant (1851 census).
[142] Will of Rice Jones, coal merchant and pianoforte maker, proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523).
[143] Harding (1978), p.419.

Not all offspring inherited a going concern and a choice of finished instruments, however; often it was only the tools that came their way, and those in varying quantities. Of the five sons to receive their father's working tools,[144] one received 'as many as is useful to him in his business' and another received both his father's 'working tools and chest for the same and all such things as belong to trade', plus those of a colleague two years later.[145] Considering the sentimental and material value of a workman's tools – as much as a year's wages in the case of a senior workman[146] – first made during an apprenticeship and amassed over a lengthy career, the frequency with which they are mentioned in the wills is perhaps not surprising: eighteen times in total, and in the case of Lorence Beyer they were the only personal possession to receive specific mention.[147]

Only one daughter (that of John Bond) received a piano-related inheritance.[148] More commonly daughters were gifted money, annuities, property and domestic items. Piano maker Elizabeth Tomkins took pains to divide her many household items between five daughters, perhaps hoping to avoid any future dispute.[149] Other testators took specific action to curtail disagreement by revoking all legacies in the event of a challenge. One warned his daughter that to do so would render her 'as if she were actually dead',[150] and another ordered the immediate sale of his effects if his children could not divide them amicably.[151] One merely trusted 'that they will avoid all squabbles and disputes in the division of the same',[152] but such matters are not unique to this study.

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[144] The following bequeathed their tools to their son: Thomas Brockly, piano forte maker, will proved 1844 (NA PROB 11/1941); William Darnton, piano maker, will proved 1839 (NA PROB 11/1917); Alexander Taylor Gow, piano forte maker, will proved 1846 (NA PROB 11/2046); George Kendall, pianoforte maker, will proved 1840 (NA PROB 11/1924); and Jeremiah Matthews, pianoforte maker, will proved 1842 (NA PROB 11/1965).

[145] The son of George Kendall, piano maker, will proved 1840 (NA PROB 11/1924) received as many tools as were useful to him. Jeremiah Samuel Matthews received both his father's tools (will of Jeremiah Matthews, pianoforte maker, proved 1842 (NA PROB 11/1965)) and those of George Donnison, cabinet maker and piano forte maker, will proved 1844 (NA PROB 11/1996).

[146] Wainwright (1982), p.172.

[147] Will of Lorence Beyer, pianoforte maker, proved 1790 (NA PROB 11/1187).

[148] Will of John Bond, piano forte maker, proved 1848 (NA PROB 11/2077).

[149] Will of Elizabeth Tomkins, piano forte maker, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1667).

[150] Will of John Bruce, pianoforte maker, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2128).

[151] Will of Samuel Seymour, pianoforte maker, proved 1856 (NA PROB 11/2231).

[152] Will of John Heatly, piano maker, proved 1846 (NA PROB 11/2034).

Makers Thomas Tomkison,[153] Americus Backers, Joseph Kirkman, James Longman and Samuel Barber all acknowledged natural (illegitimate) children in their wills and made provision for their care.[154] George Buttery fathered a child with a maid from the local coffee house but whether he made provision for the child is not known.[155] No will has been found in his name, and it is possible he never made one since, in 1803, Muzio Clementi feared 'he is out of his mind – I hope not'.[156] Piano maker John Rathmacher provided for his son 'or reputed son', despite his uncertain paternity.[157]

As with wives and mistresses, children were prescribed a variety of roles in the wills. Some were enjoined to continue the family business in a manner (and at a remuneration) dictated in their father's will, the outcome of which could be varied. Others appear to have followed their father willingly into the trade, while some were channelled into careers that may not have been of their choosing. They were encouraged into the trade, denied entry, and allowed the freedom to choose their own career. Some propelled the family firm several decades into the future or sold it when their father died, both in keeping with, and contrary to, his wishes. They perpetuated their father's name and disappointed him to the point of disinheritance. Many others, however, while not personally involved in the trade, enjoyed the legacy of a parent who was.

Bequests to fellow workers and employees

In 1832, Muzio Clementi left his two friends, Frederick and William Collard, £20 each for the purchase of a mourning ring in his memory.[158] Burkat Shudi made

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[153] Tomkison left his natural daughter, Caroline, £10 in his will. She was born four years prior to his marriage to Mary Dolling at St Anne's, Soho, on 28 June 1800. *Westminster parish records* (Ancestry). See also Caroline Jones (born *c*1796), living in Leadenhall Street with her husband, W[illia]m, a boarding house keeper (1841 census).

[154] Wills of Americus Backers, harpsichord maker, proved 1778 (NA PROB 11/1038); Joseph Kirkman, pianoforte maker, proved 1830 (NA PROB 11/1770); James Longman, music seller, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1405); and Samuel Barber, piano forte maker, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2140).

[155] The child's mother, Ann Simpson, was a servant at the New Inn Coffee House in Wych Street. *Pauper Settlement, Vagrancy and Bastardy Exams*, St Clement Danes Parish records, 13 November 1789 (LL WCCDEP358280252).

[156] Rowland, D. (ed.), *The Correspondence of Muzio Clementi* (Bologna; Ut Orpeus Edizioni, 2010), p.105.

[157] Will of John George Rathmacher, square piano forte maker, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1785).

[158] Will of Muzio Clementi, esquire, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1798).

provision for fourteen plain gold rings to be distributed among his friends,[159] Rice Jones made provision for ten,[160] and Charles Lukey gave a one guinea ring to each of five friends at Cheapside, including James Longman and Francis Broderip.[161] Mourning rings were fashionable in the Victorian era and earlier, and many feature in the wills studied. Given the number that could be accumulated over a lifetime the receipt of a cash legacy must have been welcome. Samuel Barber bequeathed his fellow piano maker, John Thomas, £10 when he died in 1851 'for the trouble he will have in executing the trusts of this my will', the equivalent of approximately £600 today.

Sentimental and pecuniary gifts demonstrate not only the wealth of the testator, but the esteem in which they held their fellow members of the trade. In 1803 Joseph Merlin left his assistant 'Sylvanus Jenkins who has for many years been and is at present my assistant' the sum of £500. He also entrusted him with the sale of 'all my curious and valuable instruments the making of which has closely employed me for thirty years last past'.[162] Jenkins duly organised their sale, including 'a profusion of unfinished machines', in the museum in which they were housed, in June 1804.[163] Eight years later John Broadwood gave the same sum to his foreman, James Forsyth, 'as an acknowledgement of his diligent attention to business'.[164] These figures equate to approximately £16,000 and £17,000 today and, in modern parlance, they may have been 'life changing'. It is not known how much John Forsyth earned at the time of Broadwood's death, but the sum of £17,000 would have bought him six grand pianos from the company showroom.[165] His continued loyalty to the firm into his eighties was rewarded with a free house and 'an honorarium of £20 a year'.[166]

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[159] Will of Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1773 (NA PROB 11/991).
[160] Will of Rice Jones, coal merchant and piano forte maker, proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523).
[161] Will of Charles Lukey, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/1031).
[162] Another assistant and a porter received £100 each (approximately £3,200 in modern terms). Will of Joseph Merlin, inventor of mechanism, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1394).
[163] The museum was at 11 Princes Street, Hanover Square. *MC,* 5 June 1804. The sale was held over four days, from Monday 11 to Thursday 14 June, 1804 (British Library RB.23 a.32860).
[164] Will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).
[165] The income of a skilled workman in the first decade of the nineteenth century was approximately £100 per year and the price of the finest Broadwood grand piano was £84, or about four-fifths of a skilled man's income. Wainwright (1982), p.103.
[166] Wainwright (1982), p.153.

James Shudi Broadwood described him as 'thoroughly a zealous, honest well judging friend and servant'.[167]

Other employee legacies came with qualifications. A married shop woman working for Joseph Dale received 'twenty pounds a year for life [approximately £800 per year today] provided she does not carry on the business of a music seller or be concerned or assist in carrying on the said business without leave had and obtained in writing from my executrix and trustees'.[168] The outcome is not recorded, but Clinkscale notes that the Dale music business continued another decade under the management of Elspeth Dale, who was neither wife nor daughter of the owner.[169] Other provisos were more conducive to trade. In 1794, with no wife or issue alive to inherit, Buntebart offered his business to his employee, John Henry Schrader, upon the following terms:

> And I do also hereby give devise and bequeath to John Henry Schrader who had the management and care of my business carried on at my house in Princess [sic] Street, Hanover Square for the good services and true attention to me in my business for time past the lease of the same house and premises situate in Princess Street aforesaid. And also all my business in every respect whatsoever and wheresoever and what nature soever and the whole and sole profit and benefit arising therefrom entirely to himself. And likewise all my outstanding book debts with the securities for debts that may be due and owing to me at the time of my decease and to and for the use and benefit of him the said John Henry Scrader his heirs and assigns for ever without the interruption of any person or persons whomsoever hereafter. And I do hereby will order and direct that my stock in trade may be fairly and justly valued and appraised by a competent judge and that the said John Henry Schrader shall after my decease take the same at such fair and just appraisement and the amount of such stock to be paid by instalments [into the Bank of England for the benefit of Buntebart's nephews and nieces] as may best suit him the said John Henry Schrader.[170]

The continued production of pianos in Zumpe's old premises was ensured by these measures, and on 12 February 1795 Schrader ended his partnership with a timber merchant in Tottenham Court Road to concentrate on running the firm.[171] His subsequent career is discussed in Chapter 5.

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[167] Wainwright (1982), p.131.
[168] Will of Joseph Dale, music seller, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1649).
[169] Clinkscale (1993), p.82.
[170] Will of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart, large piano forte maker, proved 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250).
[171] The timber merchant was Joseph Parker. *LG*, 17 February 1795, p.173.

These half dozen bequests are rare examples of employer generosity in wills that record no widespread munificence towards the workforce. All were made in the early years of the industry (the last being to Joseph Dale's shop woman in November 1821), at a time when employers and employees worked in close daily contact, and, supposedly, mutual respect and close friendships might more readily be formed. As companies expanded into satellite premises and the workforce was divided geographically, the establishment of a new management tier shifted the onus for employee welfare from the proprietor to the executive as a whole, and firms (not their founders) assumed responsibility for awarding annuities (not bequests) to long-serving employees. Four Broadwood individuals received an annuity in 1840,[172] and other companies made similar arrangements, including Chappell.[173] Senior foremen at Broadwood's also received an annual bonus known as a 'present' which was awarded at the partners' discretion. It could be 'a substantial amount, and for special services could be more than a year's salary'.[174] Outside the workplace, the provision of financial and social services by friendly societies from the 1830s further absolved the employer from the care of his employee's welfare (beyond paying him a weekly wage) and introduced the workforce to a greater degree of financial security.[175] By the late nineteenth century, Broadwood employees paid between 3% and 5% of their wages into a 'shop or other clubs for sick benefit or insurance' and the majority of the Challen staff did likewise.[176] One such society, typical of many, was The Music Trades Benevolent Society, established in 1902 with Broadwood employee George Rose presiding.[177] The society granted annuities to elderly and indigent members of the trade to help them in their retirement.[178] Alexander Gow, whose son, it will be remembered, was disinherited 'in consequence of his unkind treatment and neglect of

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[172] The annuitants were Black, Coulston,Yule, and Seidler's widow (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[173] Of eight Chappell employees (representing 440 years of service) four were in receipt of pensions in 1929. 'Long Service' in *The Pianomaker*, August 1929, p.318.

[174] Wainwright (1982), pp.153–54.

[175] Friendly societies grew from a dissatisfaction with the *Poor Law (Amendment) Act* of 1834. Belchem, J. and R. Price (eds), *Dictionary of Nineteenth-Century History* (Penguin, 1994), p.239.

[176] *Surgical, Scientific and Electrical Instruments and Musical Instruments and Toys: Interviews, Questionnaires, Statistics and Reports* (CBA Booth A11), pp.5–8.

[177] In 1906, George Rose retired as President (since its inception in 1902) of the Music Trades Benevolent Society. Wainwright (1982), p.274. A timber merchant to the trade observed that 'there was anloofness [about George Rose] which was not understood until you had gained his confidence, and then one felt there was a great deal of kindness hidden under an outward icy feeling.' Bamberger (April 1928), p.1301.

[178] The society was still awarding annuities in the 1920s, to wit George Percival, 'for many years a stoker at J. & J. Hopkinson'. 'Here and There' in *The Pianomaker*, February 1921, p.869.

me during my affliction', was the oldest member of the Friendly Musical Society and 'being from old age and affliction unable to follow his employment' was the object of a trade fund-raising raffle for his benefit.[179] His story illustrates the motivation for such societies and the camaraderie they facilitated in the piano making fraternity.

Bequests to servants

Perhaps more revealing than a lack of bequests to employees is the greater number given to their domestic equivalent: the servant. Nearly a dozen servants received a legacy during the study period (compared with only seven employees), and their terms could be just as valuable. The maid servant to Christopher Sievers inherited all her master's household goods and the interest, during her lifetime, from £1,000 invested in 3% consolidated bank annuities.[180] Similarly, George Friederick Schoene, who was unmarried and childless when he died,[181] bequeathed all his household effects to his maid, plus £200 and a further £30 to her daughters.[182] Servants continued to receive legacies throughout the study period, the last being a companion to the wife of James Longman Rolfe who, in 1857, received a life annuity of £300 'for her faithful services [...] for a long series of years'.[183] Perhaps, given that the domestic workforce remained far smaller than its factory equivalent (usually comprising no more than a handful per household),[184] it continued to compare with the workforce of the early piano workshop, and attracted legacies in a similar way. That a modern employer, with increasing leisure, had an appreciation for the services of his butler and servants, may be evidenced by the wills of John Broadwood and his son, James Shudi, which are neatly juxtaposed: John Broadwood made provision for his foreman but no servants, and his son (forty years later) rewarded his servants but no employee.[185]

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[179] Wainwright (1982), pp.157–58.

[180] The latter only passed to Sievers' mother (if still living) upon the maid's decease, and if not then living to his five sisters in equal parts. Will of Christopher Sievers, pianoforte maker, proved 1793 (NA PROB 11/1234).

[181] His brother and sister-in-law being dead then 30 years. The will of George Friederick's brother, Christian, piano forte maker, was proved in 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250) and that of Christian's wife, Elizabeth Ann Schoene, in 1796 (NA PROB 11/1270).

[182] Will of George Friederick Schoene, gentleman, proved 1825 (NA PROB 11/1694).

[183] Will of James Longman Rolfe, piano forte seller, proved 1857 (NA PROB 11/2262).

[184] A study of the members of the piano industry in the 1881 census shows that more than 80% of those households to employ a servant recruited only one, and only 15% employed two. See Chapter 6.

[185] James Shudi gave his daughter's companion £500 (the equivalent of nearly £30,000 today), £200 to a steward, £100 to his butler, and a year's wage to each of his servants to have served

Other household staff to benefit from their master's death included domestic servants and nurses. 'Over and above all wages which may be due to her' Joseph Merlin gave his nurse £10, and to 'each and every other women servants in my employ at my decease the sum of five guineas each'.[186] Piano maker Elizabeth Tomkins left £30 to pay for the mourning of her apprentices and servants, while fellow maker William Winget gave £100 to a female servant, and Buntebart gave the same to his maid, together with all his wearing apparel 'both linen and woollen'.[187] John Köhler, meanwhile, scratched a legacy from his will following 'a most violent quarrel' with his cook, after which he had 'done with her for ever'.[188] Close domestic relationships had their disadvantages.

Religion

As an opening phrase common to wills of the period, 'In the name of God Amen', is not, of its own, significant of particular religious reverence. Most of the study wills commence in this way, though some emphasize a sincere deference for God in acknowledging the 'worldly estate wherewith it has pleased God to bless me in this life',[189] and offering their soul 'with all humility' to the hands of their 'benevolent merciful and almighty father'.[190] Robert Southgate (*d*1843) and Thomas Tomkison (*d*1853) were two such Christian devotees, buried in the same churchyard in St Giles in the Fields, Finsbury.[191]

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him 12 months when he died. Will of James Shudi Broadwood, esquire, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2138).

[186] Will of Joseph Merlin, inventor of mechanism, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1394).

[187] Will of Elizabeth Tomkins, piano forte maker, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1667); will of William Winget, pianoforte maker, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2108); and will of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart, large piano forte maker, proved 1794 (NA PROB 11/1250).

[188] Will of John Köhler, musical instrument maker, proved 1801 (NA PROB 11/1356). John Köhler was a brass instrument maker and executor to the will of Christopher Sievers; he was not, himself, a piano maker, and reference to his will is for illustration only. For details of his relationship with his cook (who was also his mistress) see Whitehead and Myers (2004), pp.89–123.

[189] Will of Robert Southgate, piano forte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980). Southgate died at the age of 43, leaving a young widow and three children under the age of twelve. See Frances Southgate, born *c*1806; Robert and Sussana Southgate, born *c*1831; and Fanny Southgate, born *c*1836, living at 2 Eve Terrace, St Giles in the Fields, Finsbury (1841 census).

[190] Will of Thomas Tomkison, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2183).

[191] See Robert Southgate (43), of Eve Terrace, born *c*1800, buried 25 April 1843, St Giles in the Fields, Camden (Ancestry); and Thomas Tomkison (91), of Portland Road, born *c*1762, buried 18 November 1853, St Giles in the Fields, Camden (Ancestry). Tomkison's ceremony was performed by Robert James [Todd] Dolling, Rector of Wormshill in Kent, a relation of

Not all testators were adherents of the Church of England. Though the wills, themselves, do not record their author's religious denomination, clues may be found in their choice of burial ground. Robert Wornum (*d*1852) was buried in the garden cemetery of All Souls, Kensal Green, which, though mostly consecrated by the Church of England, reserved an eastern spur for dissenters and others to practise their own rites.[192] Wornum was a member of The New Church (or Swedenborgianism), founded in England in 1787 and developed from the writings of the Swedish scientist and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg.[193] Though originally intended for the church himself,[194] by 1810 Wornum had followed his father into the music selling business as foreman to Wilkinson & Company of 3 Great Windmill Street and 13 Haymarket.[195] A short-lived partnership with the owner, George Wilkinson (trading as Wilkinson & Wornum, making pianos at 315 Oxford Street), led him to an independent career as a piano maker when the partnership ended in 1813,[196] after which Wornum established himself at 42 Wigmore Street.[197] From 1815 until his death he subscribed to The Swedenborg Society, which was established in London to print Swedenborg's early works, and from 1818 to 1822 Wornum served on their committee.[198]

Swedenborg predicted that God would replace the traditional Christian Church with a 'New Church' that would worship God in one person (Jesus Christ) and believed that the 'African race' was 'in greater enlightenment than others on this earth, since they

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Tomkison's wife. Both Dolling and Tomkison's widow were executors to Tomkison's will, but neither fulfilled their charge and in 1886 – more than 30 years after Tomkison's death – administration was granted to Mary Josephine Von Schuster of Torquay in Devon 'one of the Residuary Legatees substituted as to a Moiety'. By this time Tomkison's estate was valued at £20. NPC, Thomas Tomkison, date of probate 4 May 1886 (Ancestry).

[192] 6 October, burial of Robert Wornum (71) of 2 Camden Street, St Pancras, at All Souls, Kensal Green, Kensington & Chelsea (Ancestry).

[193] The first meeting of 'The Society for Promoting the Heavenly Doctrines of the New Jerusalem Church' was held on 7 May 1787. Pfau, T., *Lessons of Romanticism: a critical companion* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1998), p.175.

[194] Hipkins, A. J., 'Robert Wornum' in *A Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, vol. 4 (London; Macmillan & Co., 1890), p.489.

[195] Kassler (2011), p.122.

[196] *LG*, 6 March 1813, p.489.

[197] Ord-Hume, A. W. J., 'Robert Wornum' in *Encyclopedia of the Piano* (London; Taylor & Francis, 2006), p.427.

[198] Letter from the Honorary Librarian of The Swedenborg Society, London (dated 1998) to the archivist of the National Gallery, London. Private correspondence of the National Gallery Archives [NGA hereafter].

are such that they think more interiorly, and so receive truths and acknowledge them'.[199] The increasing momentum of the anti-slavery campaign would have made this concept highly political in England at the time, and Wornum and his fellow Swedenborgians would have been considered exceedingly radical.[200] Wornum's wife and sons were also followers of Swedenborg,[201] and the family's commitment led them to consider establishing a New Church settlement in Pennsylvania. Wornum's youngest son, Alfred, made a tour of British North America from 1834 to 1845 to explore their prospects, but was disinclined to settle in America as he felt the people had 'a love for show', and were capable, in business, of doing 'the meanest actions under [...] the smoothest words'.[202] His preference was for Canada, from where he wrote to his father in March 1835: 'I should not object to Canada, if you could accumulate sufficient to make us more comfortable here than we should be at home [...] for it certainly would be madness to give up Store Street[203] for a log house in Canada'.[204] He further proposed that:

> First then [...] two or three New Church families [are] to settle together, to buy up a few thousand acres of land, and to form a N.C. settlement called Newchurchtown. I think we might live comfortably enough, having chosen a good location, quite away by ourselves on some fine lake or large river, so that we should not be annoyed, with any old church folks – the thing would be for one or two others and self to come out here a year or two before, to clear the way, so as to enable us to raise our own provisions'.[205]

Despite Alfred's observations that bird's eye maple, black walnut, cherry and oak grew well in Canada, and that 'the best of the walnut, has the colour of plain rosewood and looks very like it, and the cherry when stained looks like

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[199] Swedenborg, E., *True Christian Religion* (1771), vol. 2, trans. J. C. Agar (West Chester, Pennsylvania: Swedenborg Foundation, 2009), n.835–40, at pp.1055–59.

[200] The *Slave Trade Act* of 1807 had only abolished the British transatlantic slave trade, not slavery itself.

[201] Letter (dated 6 October 1852) from Juliana Fawcett of 9 Westbourne Park Road, Paddington, to Mrs Wornum on the death of Robert Wornum: 'I am happy to know, that in your case, there is light in the darkness, and that the blessed Truths of the New Church will enable you to look beyond the grave' (NGA 2/7/7/1-3).

[202] Letter from Alfred Nicholson Wornum to his father, Robert Wornum, from Stickworth, Upper Canada, 25 March 1835 (NGA 02/1/9).

[203] The site of the family's piano factory since 1830. See 'The Wendover Estate: Counterpart leases and associated correspondence relating to 15 and 17, Store Street, a piano manufactory and premises'. Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (D 146/95, 1830–1837).

[204] Letter from Alfred Nicholson Wornum to his father, Robert Wornum, from Stickworth, Upper Canada, 25 March 1835 (NGA 02/1/9).

[205] Letter from Alfred Nicholson Wornum to his father, Robert Wornum, from Fredericton, New Brunswick, 23 January 1835 (NGA 02/1/9).

mahogany',[206] the family did not intend to pursue a future making pianos. A new life in farming was planned with the help of Alfred's future father-in-law, William Nicholson, an established farmer in England.[207] Whether Robert Wornum's 'great dislike to upper Canada, on account of its being so inland', or Alfred's desire to return to the 'velvet grass' of England influenced their decision making,[208] Alfred decided, in his final letter before returning home, that 'the Wornums had better hold on to Store St[reet] than farm in the back woods of America whether Pennsylvania or elsewhere', and the family continued to manufacture pianos at Store Street until 1900.[209] Their connection with the New Church did not end with their decision to remain in England, however. Wornums' Music Hall at 16 Store Street, with its capacity to seat between 800 and 1000 persons,[210] hosted several Swedenborg lectures between 1853 and 1860.[211]

The religious affiliations of several other members of the piano trade have been identified by Lance Whitehead in his unpublished paper 'Wells Street Scottish Secession Church: a congregation of piano makers'.[212] In considering their motives for attending the Presbyterian Church in the late eighteenth century, Whitehead cites the attendance of John Broadwood, whose presence may have 'attracted fellow Scots seeking employment in a thriving piano making business'. He identifies many of Broadwood's employees among the congregation including six of his foremen,[213] and suggests that the popularity of the incumbent minister may have been a

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[206] Letter from Alfred Nicholson Wornum to his father, Robert Wornum, from Stickworth, Upper Canada, 25 March 1835 (NGA 02/1/9).

[207] See marriage of Alfred Nicholson Wornum (widower), pianoforte manufacturer of [residence illegible], to Elizabeth Frances Nicholson (spinster), of 20 Belsize Square, daughter of William Nicholson (farmer), deceased, at St Mary, Willesden, 30 August 1833 (Ancestry).

[208] Letter from Alfred Nicholson Wornum to his father, Robert Wornum, from Stickworth, Upper Canada, 25 March 1835 (NGA 02/1/9).

[209] Harding (1978), p.425.

[210] *The Musical World*, 13 May 1836.

[211] Clergyman Robert William Dibdin delivered a lecture on Swedenborgianism at the Music Hall, Store Street, on 8 November 1853, and another on 6 December 1853. Lewis, S. (ed.), *The letters of Elizabeth Barrett Browning to her sister Arabella*, 2 vols (Waco, Texas; Wedgestone Press, 2002), vol.2, p.65, n.9. The Rev. D. R. Bailey of Accrington delivered a series of Three Lectures on Swedenborgianism at the Hall on 4, 9 and 10 January 1854 (British Library 1568/5557); and The Rev. T. L. Harris delivered a sermon on 4 January 1860 (British Library 1568/8081).

[212] I am grateful to Dr Whitehead for sharing his unpublished paper, presented at a joint conference of The Galpin Society and the Historic Brass Society (Edinburgh University Collection of Historic Musical Instruments, 10 July 2009).

[213] James Forsyth the elder (documented 1790–1843); Thomas Brockley the elder (*c*1769–1844); John Black (1796–1873); John Murray the younger (1797–1857); Alexander Russell (1823–1861); and Robert Darling (1818–51).

contributing factor in their joining the congregation. Certainly, Dr Alexander Waugh was a popular man, and Broadwood left his 'trusty and well beloved friend' £200 in his will.[214] Nothing was left to the church, however, though Whitehead notes that Broadwood paid to insure the building 'on at least one occasion'.[215] In fact, none of the study population bequeathed money to their parish church and only three made charitable donations (to be discussed below). This casts doubt on the strength of their religious conviction and lends weight to Whitehead's observation that (in the instance of the Wells Street Scottish Secession Church at least) the piano making congregation may have been attracted by 'the recognition of social ties and networks' as much as for the practical purposes of baptising their children. One young member of the congregation remembered the church as follows:

> I cannot say that my respect for Wells Street [Scottish Chapel] and its institution increases – to me, especially as concerned with learning by heart the shorter Catechism first, and then the longer, at home, on Sundays, it was a scene of confinement and punishment – well calculated, if for any thing, to make religion hateful [...] But for all this, I do most highly respect the feeling which prompted a few Scotchmen, in an inferior station of life, take them all together, to combine their scanty means, and build a chapel for the sake of hearing the Gospel preached conformably to the faith of their fathers – it was a noble effort – and succeeded surprisingly. Have you the least recollection of old Hall, the original minister, whose widow your father long contributed to support?[216]

The last sentence in the above quotation points to John Broadwood's charitable works outside those mentioned in his will. He was 'a sincerely religious man of the most upright moral character' as the following extract from his will would attest.[217] The document also describes his feelings towards his work:

> I recommend my soul into the hands of the Lord God of Truth who hath redeemed me and been the guide of my youth my body I desire may be decently interred in the burying ground of Tottenham Court Chapel (where the remains of many of my family

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[214] Will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).

[215] Broadwood insured the brick chapel of the 'Dissenting Congregation in Wells Street' for £700 in January 1781. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, policy no. 437865, 15 January 1781 (LMA Ms. 11936/289). Full transcription in L. Whitehead and J. Nex, 'The Sun Fire Office: Insurance Policies of Keyboard Instrument Builders active in London, 1775–1787 Part I' in Olleson, P., and M. Humphreys (eds), *A Handbook for Studies in 18th-Century English Music* 12 (Oxford: Burden and Cholij, 2002), p.25.

[216] The writer was F. Dods, a childhood friend of James Shudi Broadwood. Wainwright (1982), p.69.

[217] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.5.

> and friends have been deposited) in the comfortable hope of a glorious resurrection to eternal life at Christ's second coming and God having blessed me with a family of children for whose benefit and interest I have employed myself in business for many years with the utmost pleasure and with such success as calls upon me to make grateful mention of his merciful kindness and it being my desire to distribute my worldly estate for their benefit with equity and faithful steward do give and dispose thereof in manner following [...][218]

The names of Broadwood's foremen and their families appear in the Wells Street register into the 1830s.[219] Broadwood's sister-in-law, Margaret Shudi, was also a regular member of the congregation and lent the church £1,000 of her patrimony.[220] Several of Broadwood's family members became involved in the church. John Broadwood's eldest grandson became a reverend,[221] and two of his grand-daughters married members of the clergy.[222] Other clergymen appear in the wills as friends and executors to the testators; one a friend of the piano maker Thomas Hall Rolfe and two as executors to Burkat Shudi and Muzio Clementi.[223] Clementi noted two bibles among the books in his library. The only other religious references in the wills are to a 'History of the Old Testament' and a 'Universal Bible' which Alexander Gow bequeathed to his faithless son, but these, like his chest of tools, were ultimately redirected to his wife.[224]

Charity

Seemingly, the early piano making fraternity was generous to the charity that began at home, since many provided for relations living at home and abroad, and for the extended family of their spouse. As noted previously, some also left legacies to their servants, employees and friends. Only three made a charitable donation via their

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[218] Will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).

[219] Wainwright (1982), p.70.

[220] Wainwright (1982), p.57. This figure exceeds £60,000 today.

[221] Reverend John Broadwood (1798–1864), eldest son of James Shudi Broadwood, was a noted collector of folk songs. Wainwright (1982), p.120.

[222] James Shudi Broadwood's daughter, Mary Drummond, was married to the Reverend Arthur Lyall, and her younger sister, Elizabeth, to the Reverend James Cecil Wynter. Will of James Shudi Broadwood, esquire, proved 1851 (NA PROB 11/2138).

[223] Wills of Thomas Hall Rolfe, piano forte maker, proved 1847 (NA PROB 11/2056); Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1773 (NA PROB 11/991); and Muzio Clementi, esquire, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1798).

[224] Will of Alexander Taylor Gow, piano forte maker, proved 1846 (NA PROB 11/2046). Henry Gow continued to work as a piano maker after his father's death and died a piano finisher at the age of 59. See Henry Gow (52), piano forte finisher, born *c*1809, St Martin in the Fields (1861 census). Also, *Shoreditch parish death register*, fourth quarter, 1868, Henry Gow (59), born *c*1809 (Ancestry).

will, however, helping just six organisations in the provision of educational, medical and spiritual care. In 1790, Zumpe left the equivalent of approximately £11,200 today to a Marylebone charity for 'maintaining, clothing and educating poor children',[225] and the equivalent of £5,600 to a charity school near Nuremburg.[226] As noted by Cole, 'This latter bequest provided purchase money for a plot of land near Fürth, giving the school sufficient income from rent to buy shoes or boots for destitute pupils for the next hundred years'.[227] Further proof of Zumpe's concern for disadvantaged children is related in Chapter 2. John Broadwood chose to support The Scottish Hospital in Fleet Street and The Society for Propagating Christian Knowledge, which, in 1812, benefited from a combined legacy of approximately £3,400 today.[228] The piano dealer James Longman Rolfe left the London City Missionary Society and the British & Foreign Bible Society £19 19s apiece in 1857; approximately £860 each today.[229] These are small amounts when it is remembered that the estimated value of Zumpe's personal estate (excluding his real estate) was 'some £8,000' (approximately half a million pounds today),[230] and that of John Broadwood £106,364 (or more than £3.5 million today).[231] Broadwood's eldest son, James Shudi, was worth £319,180 when he died (equating to approximately £18.5 million today),[232] yet he recorded no charitable bequests in his will. Seemingly, the generosity of the workforce was not to be proved at their death. Members of the Broadwood family are known to have made charitable donations extraneous to their wills and no doubt other members of the workforce did so also. Certainly, they assisted one another during their lifetime, contributing to fundraising efforts on behalf of indigent members (as evidenced by the Friendly Musical Society and Alexander Gow) and donating money and tools to colleagues who had lost their possessions in factory fires (discussed in Chapter 5). Whether they supported charities unconnected with their trade is not known, but certainly the opportunities

[225] The St Marylebone Charity for Needy Children. Cole, M. (1998), p.67.
[226] Will of John Christopher Zumpe, gentleman, proved 1790 (NA PROB 11/1199).
[227] See 'Johannes Zumpe' by M. Cole: www.squarepianos.com/zumpe.html, consulted 6 February 2012.
[228] Will of John Broadwood, musical instrument maker, proved 1812 (NA PROB 11/1538).
[229] Will of James Longman Rolfe, pianoforte seller, proved 1857 (NA PROB 11/2262).
[230] Wainwright (1982), p.50.
[231] A further £20,000 was due to him in outstanding loans. Wainwright (1982), p.110.
[232] Wainwright (1982), p.169.

for organised philanthropy increased from the late eighteenth century.[233] Some testators may have considered they had fulfilled their moral and charitable obligations during their lifetime, while others, perhaps less prosperous, were disinclined to make posthumous donations to charities at the expense of surviving family dependants.

Evidence of wealth

The figures quoted above with regard to the personal wealth of Zumpe and John and James Shudi Broadwood are not drawn from their wills but estimated by Wainwright (in the case of Zumpe) and drawn from family probate records (in the case of the Broadwoods). The absolute wealth of a testator is not to be gauged from his will. Some wills do mention specific investments, such as £350 in the 'Navy five per cent annuities'[234] or '£2,100 in the four per cents in the Bank of England',[235] but many use generic terms such as 'all my worldly estate' or 'money in the stocks or funds', making it impossible to estimate the total value of the testator's assets, and while it is possible to consult death duty registers for a valuation of the deceased's estate, these documents do not exist before 1796 (eliminating eight of the testators studied) and prior to 1805 they exist only for one quarter of all estates (potentially eliminating many more). Moreover, death duties were not always collected for estates valued at less than £1,500 so, again, the assets of many of the testators are unlikely to have been recorded.[236] Their wealth must be assessed by other means.

Then, as now, property was a significant meter of prosperity. More than one third of testators claimed to own freehold, copyhold[237] or leasehold premises or messuages (a dwelling house with outbuildings and land assigned to its use). Another 13% alluded

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[233] In the late seventeenth century 'the philanthropic association rose to supplement, and in part to supplant, the efforts of the individual doer of good works [...] Rich men continued, of course, to carry on their own benevolences, but charity became a less person-to-person affair [...] and more of a collective effort'. Owen, D., *English Philanthropy 1660–1960* (Harvard University Press, 1964), p.11.

[234] Will of Alexander Fraser, cabinet maker and pianoforte maker, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1643).

[235] Will of Adam Beyer, gentleman, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1187).

[236] Grannum and Taylor (2009), p.82.

[237] Copyhold is a tenure of lands in England of ancient origin, being parcel of a manor 'at the will of the Lord according to the custom of the manor', by copy of the manorial court roll. Copyhold land does not appear often in the wills as its inheritance was pre-determined and therefore it could not be given or devised in a will to any other person. *Oxford English Dictionary*, vol. II (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1933; repr.1961), p.979.

to 'all my real estate', or 'real property which I shall leave at the day of my decease', implying possible ownership, or a hope to acquire some property before they died. Therefore, approximately half the testators owned – or hoped to own – real estate at their death.[238] Most were musical instrument makers, but one was a piano dealer,[239] one a piano teacher,[240] and one a bellyman and joiner.[241] The latter was a Broadwood employee earning £1 10s per week in 1834, who, despite being among the lowest paid of the workforce,[242] owned the lease to 15 and 16 William Street, Regents Park, where he lived with his family at number 15.[243] Two dozen other testators owned multiple properties. Augustus Leukfeld, for example, owned a 'good family house and about ten acres of meadow land' near the Adam and Eve pub at Mill Hill, a nearby cottage facing the King's Head pub, and the lease of a house and factory in Tottenham Street, London,[244] all of which he bequeathed to his wife.[245] Daniel Giles Rose owned two copyhold estates in Harrow and increased the value of one by erecting several cottages within its boundaries.[246] George Astor owned land in America,[247] Burkat Shudi owned a freehold property in Schwander, in the Swiss Canton of Glarus,[248] and Johann Stumpff held an interest in a saw mill in the

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[238] It is to be assumed that all testators who owned property were British by birth or naturalisation as migrants were not legally entitled to buy or inherit land. Cole, M. (1995), pp.94–119, at p.113.

[239] Will of James Longman Rolfe, piano forte seller, proved 1857 (NA PROB 11/2262).

[240] Will of Thomas William Sumpter, former shoemaker, now teacher of the pianoforte, proved 1841 (NA PROBA 11/1785).

[241] Will of George Radford, grand pianoforte bellyman and joiner, proved 1840 (NA PROB 11/1931).

[242] Broadwood papers (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[243] Will of George Radford, grand pianoforte bellyman and joiner, proved 1840 (NA PROB 11/1931). The neighbouring property was inhabited by piano maker William Parry in 1830. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 21 April 1830 (LMA Ms. 11936/527/1105940). Also, Edwin Bird prior to his death in 1844. Will of Edwin Bird, piano forte maker, proved 1844 (NA PROB 11/1994). Parry was also witness to the will of Rice Jones in 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523) but was living in Temple at that time. Parry and Bird were acquainted as the former was a witness to the latter's will.

[244] The property at (no.27) Tottenham Street was apparently acquired by the music seller, George Astor, to make pianos for his own firm and for Broderip & Wilkinson. About 1798 Broderip engaged Astor and Leukfeld to make his pianos, but *c*1801 Leukfeld became the sole proprietor of the premises. Kassler (2011), pp.103–04.

[245] Will of Leudevig August Leukfeld, musical instrument maker, proved 1810 (NA PROB 11/1517). His wife remarried two months after his death. *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 19 January 1811. At her death, the Crown preferred a claim to Leukfeld's property. *MP*, 20 May 1834.

[246] Will of Daniel Giles Rose, gentleman, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2109).

[247] Will of George Astor, musical instrument maker, proved 1813 (NA PROB 11/1550).

[248] He bequeathed the property to his sister, who was already in residence. Will of Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1773 (NA PROB 11/991).

Dukedom of Saxe Coburg Gotha.[249] Most of the properties, however, were local to the testator, and either owner-occupied or rented to tenants, some of whom are named in the wills.

In terms of ready money, nearly half the wills describe cash legacies and some of these are large amounts – for example £5,000 given by Robert Stodart to each of two daughters in 1831[250] – but others are small tokens of friendship or esteem amounting to only a few pounds. Piano maker Thomas Turnham settled on the following:

> Now my old friend Mr Burton I am at a loss to know what little acknowledgement to make him. I know baubles are of no use to him so I hope he will except [sic] of five pounds.[251]

Table 5 (below) lists some of the testators to have specified pecuniary legacies in their will, the total sum of those legacies, and their broad equivalent in cash terms today. The testators listed are those who quoted the greatest and the smallest amounts: a full list is attached at Appendix 6. The given totals do not reflect the total worth of the testator, who would have had other assets (perhaps both real and personal) which were not quantified in their will.

The figures at Table 5 vary widely, from the equivalent of a few hundred pounds today, to several million. That James Shudi Broadwood was able to give away nearly seven times the amount bequeathed by his father, while owning less than half the company, is indicative of the enormous growth of the Broadwood firm in the first half of the nineteenth century, even accounting for the profitability of the firm when Broadwood inherited it.[252]

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[249] Will of Johann Andreas Stumpff, harp and piano forte maker, proved 1847 (NA PROB 11/2053).

[250] Will of Robert Stodart, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1784). £5,000 in 1831 equates to approximately one-quarter of a million pounds in modern terms.

[251] Will of Thomas Turnham, pianoforte maker, proved 1815 (NA PROB 11/1571).

[252] At his death, James Shudi Broadwood owned 7/20 of the company. When his young son, Walter Stewart, was admitted to the partnership, in 1843, shares were divided into twenty: James Shudi and his brother Thomas retained seven each, James Shudi's eldest son, Henry Fowler, received four, and Walter Stewart and his cousin Thomas received one apiece. Wainwright (1982), p.147.

Surname	First names	Trade	Will Proved	Total stated	Today (approx.)
Broadwood	James Shudi	Esquire	1851	£205,800	*£11.7 million
Broadwood	John	Musical instrument maker	1812	£47,577	£1.7 million
Stodart	Robert	[Piano maker]	1831	£15,470	£757,270
Shudi	Burkat	Harpsichord maker	1773	£5,895	£373,970
Marshall	John	Piano forte tuner	1853	£3,000	£170,980
Cox	Brooks	Gentleman & pianoforte maker	1847	£2,500	£135,500
Beyer	Adam	Gentleman	1804	£4,060	£133,520
Clementi	Muzio	Esquire	1832	£2,245	£108,680
McDuff	Robert	[Broadwood employee]	1827	£1,903	£89,860
Russell	Richard	Piano forte maker	1843	£1,500	£72,640
Zumpe	John C	Gentleman	1790	£1,240	£69,480
Sievers	Christopher J L	Piano forte maker	1793	£1,220	£59,620
Tomkins	Elizabeth	Piano forte maker	1823	£1,290	£57,000
Wrede	Herman	Musical wind instrument maker	1841	£1,200	£54,650
Merlin	Joseph	Inventor of mechanism	1803	£1,130	£36,960
.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Rathmacher	John George	Square pianoforte maker	1831	£19	£930
Middleton	David	Piano forte maker	1845	£16	£820
Dodd	Thomas	Musical instrument maker	1837	£15	£680
Boyett	William	Organ builder & pianoforte maker	1851	£10	£570
Tomkison	Thomas	[Piano maker]	1853	£10	£540
Ormond	James Cowle	Pianoforte maker	1841	£10	£450
Banks	Benjamin	Musical instrument maker	1795	£10	£440
Backers	Americus	Harpsichord maker	1778	£5	£310

Table 5: Testators who noted legacies in their will (and the value of those legacies). In decreasing order, centre section missing – see Appendix 21 for full list. Source: Prerogative Court of Canterbury wills (1773–1857).

NB: Total figures do not represent the total value of testator's personal estate. Cash equivalents 'today' (i.e. 2005) calculated via NA Currency Converter. *This total was increased via three codicils made to the will.

Cole estimates that Shudi's harpsichord business had brought him a personal worth of £10,000 by the time he died (more than £600,000 today),[253] so John Broadwood was well placed to build on his predecessor's example. The figures quoted by Shudi, John Broadwood and his son may be of no surprise, and the same may be said of Robert Stodart, whose fortune is documented elsewhere.[254] Others at the top of Table 5 are more revealing.

The comparatively large sum bequeathed by the piano tuner John Marshall incites investigation, since no other piano tuner recorded a like amount and Marshall appears to have enjoyed the prosperity of an instrument manufacturer. Marshall did not declare any property in his will but alluded to 'all real estates (if any) which shall at my decease be vested in me'.[255] He lived at 22 High Street, Camden Town, and left each of his three sons (one also a piano tuner) one thousand pounds, about £58,500 apiece today. It cannot be known, of course, whether Marshall's wealth – or that of any of the testators – was created wholly by his own labour, or whether he received a legacy in his turn, so the findings in this section of the study must be judged accordingly. Even so, the legacies bequeathed by Marshall are in marked contrast to the two other piano tuners studied for this chapter who were both his contemporaries: one noting only £14,600 in cash terms today,[256] and the other who noted none.[257] Evidence suggests that Marshall's wealth may not have derived entirely from his work as a tuner. In 1807, a man named Marshall (first name unknown), was employed as supervisor to the grand action making department at Broadwoods,[258] and although it has not been possible to establish a positive link between the two men, it is possible that the testator, John Marshall, was his son.[259] The younger man was born *c*1790,[260] and worked as a piano maker from at least

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[253] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.153.
[254] Laurence (1998), p.20.
[255] Will of John Marshall, piano forte tuner, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2165).
[256] Will of William Atkinson, pianoforte tuner, proved 1847 (NA PROB 11/2065)
[257] Will of William Jones, piano forte tuner, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2222).
[258] Laurence (1998), p.68.
[259] Although the parish registers of St Leonard Shoreditch record the baptism of one John Marshall, son of John and Elizabeth Marshall of Holywell Street, on 13 September 1792, which could, feasibly, relate to the two men (Ancestry).
[260] See John Marshall (50), born *c*1791, Middlesex, Professor of Music (1841 census) and John Marshall (62), born *c*1789, St Pancras, pianoforte selector and tunist [sic] (1851 census).

1827 to 1829 (possibly at Broadwood's),[261] but by 1833 he had taken work as a traveller, presumably (given his former and subsequent careers) engaged in selling pianos.[262] He may have acted as a Broadwood agent. By the age of 50 he was a music professor and a decade later (two years before he died) a 'pianoforte selector & tunist' [sic].[263] The fact that he named James Forsyth (junior) of Horseferry Road trustee and executor to his will suggests a strong connection with the firm,[264] as does his apparent prosperity.

Cox Brooks was the father of the piano action and tool maker, Henry Brooks, of Cumberland Market, and a piano maker-turned-gentleman by the time he died in 1847.[265] As founder of the family firm making pianoforte hammer rails, his wealth was acquired as a supplier to the trade.[266] A biography of the family is attached at Appendix 20.

John Broadwood's contemporary, Adam Beyer, was among the most successful of the London piano makers in the late eighteenth century, and his reputation for quality, like that of Broadwood, apparently negated a need to advertise: he sold 'at premium prices to discerning clients'.[267] The extent of his wealth is not fully understood, but his will states that he owned the copyhold of his home in Pond Street, Hampstead, and had savings in the Bank of England amounting to £4,060.[268] Zumpe, whose fortune is more widely understood, owned six properties and gave

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[261] The baptism records of two of his sons, George (11 June 1827) and William Alfred (24 August 1829), at Old St Pancras, Camden, record their father's profession as piano forte maker (Ancestry).

[262] The baptism record of his daughter, Alice Elizabeth (24 June 1833), at St Pancras, Camden, notes her father's profession as traveller (Ancestry).

[263] See John Marshall, born *c* 1791, professor music, living at High Street, St Pancras (1841 census); and John Marshall, born *c*1789, pianoforte selector and tunist [sic], living at 22 High Street, St Pancras (1851 census).

[264] In the event, Forsyth 'wholly declined to act therein' and, together with a fellow executor, Samuel Bellin (one of Marshall's neighbours), renounced the position, leaving Marshall's son, William Alfred, as sole executor of his father's will. See *Disclaimer of bequests*, 24 January 1853 (LMA BRA/747/086). Given the affiliation, an attempt was made to establish a link between the testator and the Leicestershire piano dealer, Herbert Marshall, who formed a partnership with Broadwood employee George Rose in 1907, known as 'Marshall & Rose' (Wainwright 1982, p.274), but none was found.

[265] Will of Cox Brooks, gentleman and pianoforte maker, proved 13 April 1847 (NA PROB 11/ 2053/363). See biography of Henry Brooks, Appendix 20.

[266] See Cox Brooks & Sons, 37 Little Albany Street North (*POLD*, 1844).

[267] See 'Adam Beyer' by M. Cole: http://www.squarepianos.com/adam_beyer.html, consulted 21 January 2012.

[268] Will of Adam Beyer, gentleman, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1403). This sum equates to approximately £133,520 today, as shown at Table 5.

bequests totalling £1,240. He did not declare his savings in his will, but mentioned only 'all my government annuities stock and securities for money'.[269] These details alone do not permit a precise comparison of the two men's wealth, but they do allow a cautious appraisal of Beyer's prosperity compared with that of Zumpe. Both men operated from a relatively small workshop restricted to one site (Zumpe in Princes Street, Hanover Square, then, briefly, Princes Street, Cavendish Square,[270] and Beyer in Old Compton Street, Soho)[271] where they would have had room to accommodate a similar number of workmen. Both men came to specialise in the manufacture of the square piano, Zumpe building a dependable but affordable version retailing at '£18 or thereabouts',[272] and Beyer building a finely crafted version that sold for considerably more. Cole estimates that between 1766 and 1779 (when he relocated to Cavendish Square) Zumpe 'may have been turning out more than fifty instruments per year'.[273] That being so, over his 16-year career as a piano maker (from *c*1766 to 1782), Zumpe's workshop would have made well over 800 instruments. Beyer, meanwhile, working for twice as long (from 1774, he died in 1803), produced 'in excess of 900' instruments – an almost equal amount.[274] Both men died at the age of 74,[275] Zumpe having enjoyed eight years of retirement.[276] In terms of effort versus reward, then, the manufacture of consistently well-built, quality square pianos such as those made by Beyer, while no doubt of great satisfaction to their author and purchaser alike, appears to have been a less successful business model than that of producing a similar number of less polished instruments in half the period of time. Nevertheless, Beyer may have been entirely satisfied with the level of wealth he achieved without prejudicing his professional standards: his instruments are still

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[269] Will of John Christopher Zumpe, gentleman, proved 1790 (NA PROB 11/1199).

[270] For Princes Street, Hanover Square, see Harding (1978), p.426. Zumpe's move to Cavendish Square is recorded in the *Morning Post and Daily Advertiser*, 10 February 1780. However, he was insured at 21 Princes Street, Cavendish Square in the summer of 1779. *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 28 June 1779 (LMA Ms. 11936/274 415360). In 1782 he assigned the property and business to brothers Friederick and Christian Schoene (from his home town of Fürth near Nuremberg) who continued to make square pianos as 'Schoene & Company, Successors to Johannes Zumpe'. See 'Johannes Zumpe' by M. Cole: www.squarepianos.com/zumpe.html, consulted 6 February 2012.

[271] Harding (1978), p.404.

[272] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.25. This sum equates (very approximately) to £1,000 today.

[273] Cole, M. (1998), p.66.

[274] Cole, M. (1995), pp.94–119, at p.110.

[275] Zumpe was born 14 June 1776 and buried 5 December 1790. Cole, M. (1998), pp.51 and 67. Beyer's tombstone records that he died 2 January 1804, aged 74. Cole, M. (1995), pp.94–119, at p.112.

[276] Friederick Schoene took over Zumpe's business in 1782. Cole, M. (1998), p.78.

admired today. Zumpe's personal standards of craftsmanship may have been no less exacting, but he was to be overwhelmed by demand for his product, and as an innovative instrument maker experienced in constructing a range of keyboard and plucked string instruments,[277] he may, ultimately, have been frustrated by a career that was consumed by a single, static instrument. It could be argued, then, that Zumpe's fortune was earned at the expense of professional satisfaction and that, in this regard, Beyer was the richer man. Certainly, Beyer did not die a poor man, and as a thoroughly modern instrument maker (as he would have been regarded in his time) he was an eminently successful practitioner.

Another Broadwood employee to appear in the upper section of Table 5 is Robert McDuff, who worked for the firm in 1809.[278] Duff was a friend of James Chisholme (his executor) whose family name also appears in the Broadwood employee files.[279] The appearance of so many Broadwood employees in the list – and indeed elsewhere in this study – to the apparent exclusion of employees working elsewhere in the trade, may be credited to the greater documentation of their names (making their wills more easily found) rather than to their ability to bequeath larger sums of money than their peers. Nevertheless, many Broadwood employees do appear to have enjoyed a comfortable standard of living.

Excluded from the abbreviated list above (and the complete version of the same at Appendix 6) are the 64 testators who mentioned no pecuniary legacies in their will, though many noted unspecified sums of money saved in various banks and investment schemes. Government stocks and bonds were popular with the workforce, many of whom invested in consolidated annuities (a form of British government bond dating from the eighteenth century) earning between 3% and 3.5% in the Bank of England; those purchased prior to 1757 earning the higher amount.[280] A good rate was also to be had from Navy Bank Annuities which offered a 5% return

[277] Zumpe trained as a harpsichord maker under Burkat Shudi prior to 1761. Cole, M. (2000), pp.9–52, at p.26. During his first years of independence in Princes Street, Hanover Square, he produced metal-strung citterns or 'English guittars', and large tenor or bass mandolins known as mandoras. Cole, M. (1998), p.52.

[278] Wainwright (1982), p.108.

[279] Broadwood staff records dated 1834 (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

[280] Those earning 3.5% were purchased between 1752 and 1757, after which interest was reduced to 3%. See 'Console (Bond)' at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Consolidated_annuity, consulted 19 January 2012.

(reduced to 4% in 1822).[281] This latter stock was issued to raise money for the war against Napoleonic France (1803–15). Muzio Clementi bought stock in The East India Company which earned him 3.5%.[282]

Investment in aforementioned friendly or benefit societies was also popular among the testators.[283] These societies often met in public houses such as the 'Hope Tavern' in Pollard Row, Bethnal Green (in the case of The Albert House Property Society),[284] and the 'Fountains Abbey' public house in Praed Street, Bayswater (in the case of the Marylebone Mutual Society),[285] both of which counted members of the piano trade among their associates. One function of these societies was to guarantee their members a decent burial and to spare them the indignity of a pauper's grave, and in 1821 piano maker John Parnell confirmed that 'I do wish my sister Elizabeth to receive what money may be coming from my Benefit Club at my decease and to see me decently buried and discharge the undertaker's bill'.[286]

Other financial institutions patronised by the testators (as mentioned in their wills) were The London Provident Institution Saving Bank in Bloomfield Street (also known as the Bishopsgate Bank),[287] and The Finsbury Savings Bank[288] in Sekforde Street, Clerkenwell (see Figure 26 below).

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[281] See 'Milward v. Milward' in Mylne, J. W. and B. Keen, *Reports of cases argued and determined in the High court of chancery: during the time of Lord chancellor Brougham and Sir John Leach, master of the rolls*, vol. III (London, 1887), p.312. Testators Alexander Fraser, cabinet maker and pianoforte maker, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1643) and Elizabeth Tomkins, piano forte maker, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1667) invested in this stock.

[282] Will of Muzio Clementi, esquire, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1798). The East India Company was an English joint stock company formed in the sixteenth century for pursuing trade with the East Indies, but which came to trade mainly with the Indian subcontinent.

[283] It is estimated that by 1872 the total number of friendly societies in the country exceeded 32,000, with some 4 million members. By 1888 around 80% of adult British males belonged to a society, compared approximately 10% who were trade unionists. Belchem and Price (1994), p.239.

[284] Will of George Copley, pianoforte manufacturer, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2220).

[285] For Marylebone Mutual Society, see Elrington, C. R. (ed.), T. F. T. Baker, D. K. Bolton and P. E. C. Croot, 'Paddington: Social and Cultural Activities', *A History of the County of Middlesex: Volume 9: Hampstead, Paddington* (1989), pp.221–226. Available at: http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=22669, consulted 20 January 2012. The piano maker Robert David Byer was a member. Will of Robert David Byer, pianoforte maker, proved 1845 (NA PROB 11/2022).

[286] Will of John Parnell, cabinet maker and pianoforte maker, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1649).

[287] Will of George Donnison, cabinet maker and piano forte maker, proved 1844 (NA PROB 11/1996). See also, Compton, C., *The Savings Bank Assistant* (London, 1829), p.46.

[288] Will of Martin Fullalove, pianoforte maker, proved 1845 (NA PROB 11/2010); and will of Jeremiah Matthews, piano forte maker, proved 1842 (NA PROB 11/1965).

Figure 26: Finsbury Savings Bank, Sekforde Street, Clerkenwell.

An alternative to investing in banks and friendly societies was provided by government enterprises for public works. Piano maker William Edwards bought 'five several shares in the Waterloo Bridge lately erected over the River Thames and also of three several bonds charged upon the rents or tolls and other profits of and belonging to the said bridge'.[289]

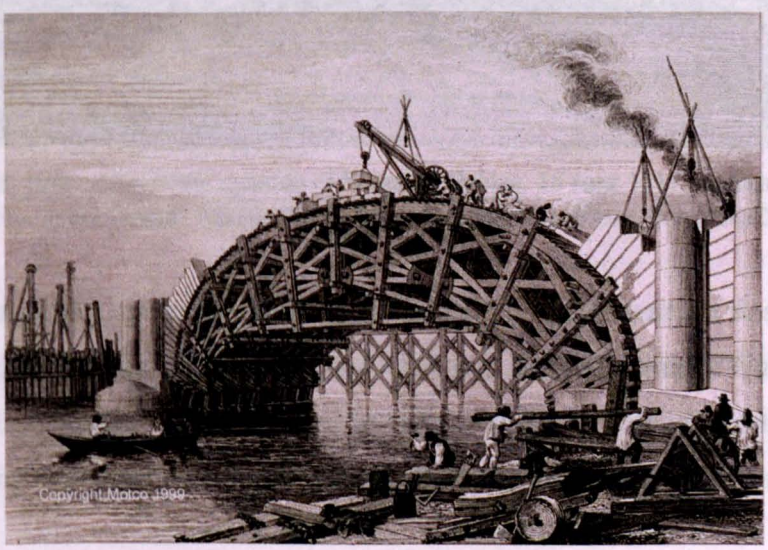

Figure 27: Illustration of the works of the Strand Bridge (1815).
Source: http://thames.me.uk/s00110.htm, consulted 20 January 2012.

Construction work on the bridge started on 11 October 1811 and Edwards would have been in a good position to watch its progress as he lived just south of the river

[289] Will of William Edwards, musical instrument maker, proved 1828 (NA PROB 11/1737).

in Bridge Road, Lambeth (later renamed Westminster Bridge Road). The works took six years to complete,[290] and, assuming all shares were fully paid up, Edwards' maximum exposure in shares alone would have amounted to approximately £17,000 today. Ultimately, Edwards' investment may have been ill-advised: 'as a commercial speculation the bridge was so far from successful that in January 1872 two shares, of £100 each, were sold by auction for £10.'[291] By this time Edwards had been dead 45 years, however, so the value of his shares may have been higher when they passed to his wife in 1828.

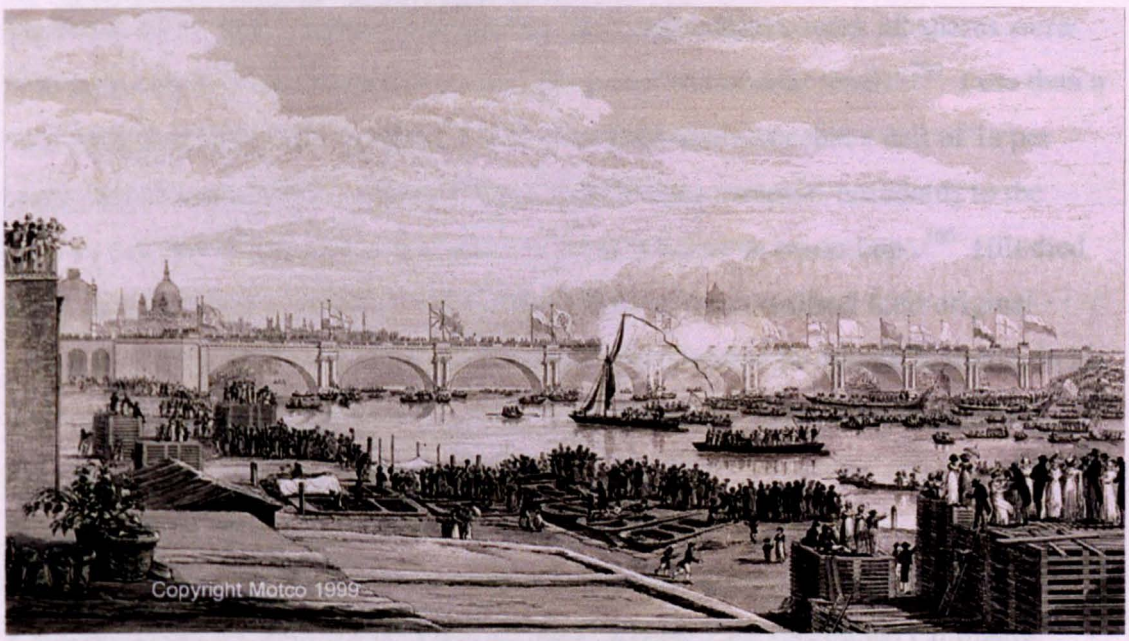

Figure 28: Illustration of the opening of Waterloo Bridge, 18 June 1817, as seen from the corner of Cecil Street in the Strand. Source: http://thames.me.uk/s00110.htm, consulted 20 January 2012.

Another public company offering an investment opportunity at this time was The Gas Light and Coke Company (also known as the Westminster Gas Light and Coke Company) which was established in 1812 to light the City of Westminster. The company was deemed a 'highly improvable and respectable concern' promising 'a

[290] The works were undertaken by The Strand Bridge Company which was authorised to issue capital to the amount of £500,000 in shares of £100 each. A further sum of £300,000 pounds was authorised if necessary (which it was), and in July 1813 the company obtained another act by which they were authorised to raise an additional £200,000. By a fresh act obtained in 1816 the name of the bridge was changed from 'Strand Bridge' to 'Waterloo' and it opened as a toll bridge on the second anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. See 'Waterloo' in Herring, J. H., *Thames Bridges from London to Hampton Court, with Topographical Descriptions from Best Known Authorities* (London: H. R. Pinder, 1884), n.p.

[291] Wheatley, H. B., *London Past and Present: its History, Associations, and Traditions*, vol. 3, first edn (London, 1891; digital reprint Cambridge University Press, 2011), p.453.

permanent source of benefit'[292] and its offices were established opposite the Broadwood factory in Horseferry Road.[293] Original capital was £1 million in 80,000 shares, and piano maker Thomas Parker (a possible Broadwood employee) bought three shares at £50 each, committing himself to approximately £5,000 today.[294] He is likely to have made a safe return as an offshoot of the company survives today.[295] Conversely, The Chartered Australian Land Mining Importing and Refining Company was to prove a poor investment. The company sought capital of £500,000 in £5 shares (with a minimum allotment of 10 shares) to import, smelt and refine 'a vast magnitude' of gold to be mined in Western Australia.[296] Piano maker Robert Frederick Hill bought shares in December 1852 and within a week all shares were fully subscribed,[297] the directors predicting 'a most successful result'.[298] Less than a year later, however, they 'deemed it indispensably necessary that a call of 1s per share should forthwith be made',[299] and the following summer 'accede[d] to the opinion that the affairs of the company ought at once to be wound up'.[300] Hill died the following summer and his shares are unlikely to have realised their original value.[301] Piano maker Herman Wrede senior also invested in Australia, noting in his will that his son had 'exerted himself so much for my advantage in the landed property of Port Philip', Melbourne.[302]

Other investments recorded in the wills included life insurance. George Dettmer insured his life for £100 in the office of the Britannia Life Assurance Company,[303] and Daniel Giles Rose insured that of his wife for £400 with the Amicable and

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[292] *MC*, 18 January 1817.
[293] See 'Chartered Gas Light and Coke Company', LMA: www.aim25.ac.uk/cats/118/13740.htm, consulted 25 January 2012.
[294] Will of Thomas Parker, pianoforte maker, proved 1830 (NA PROB 11/1775).
[295] It is identified as one of the companies from which British Gas plc is descended. Everard, S., *The History of the Gas, Light and Coke Company, 1812–1949* (London: Ernest Benn Ltd, 1949), pp.381–82.
[296] *MP*, 24 December 1852.
[297] *MP*, 4 January 1853.
[298] *MC*, 20 December 1852 and *MP*, 20 December 1852.
[299] A move that they postponed pending further consideration. *The Standard*, 26 April 1854.
[300] *DN*, 26 July 1854. In May 1857 the company was reportedly 'in abeyance'. *The Solicitor's Journal and Reporter*, vol. 1 (London; The Law Newspaper Company Limited, 1857), p.414.
[301] Will of Robert Frederick Hill, piano forte maker, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2214).
[302] Will of Herman Wrede, musical wind instrument [and piano] maker, proved, 1841 (NA PROB 11/1943). Port Phillip, Melbourne, experienced a boom of speculative land purchases between January 1839 and June 1841. Shaw, A. G. L., *A History of Port Phillip District: Victoria Before Separation* (Melbourne University Publishing, 2003), p.153.
[303] Will of George Dettmer, piano forte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).

Provident Life Insurance Office'.[304] Andrew Brockley bought shares in the Eagle Life Insurance Savings Bank.[305] Institutions noted by testators for which little has been discovered include the Russian Bonds Saving Bank,[306] the Savings Bank in Southampton Row, Bloomsbury, the Benefit Club Savings Bank,[307] and the Liberal Benefit Society.[308]

In addition to the money made, saved and squandered in the ventures described above, that spent on non-essential domestic items also reflects the testators' wealth. Family portraits were especially prized, being expensive to commission and sentimental besides, and Burkat Shudi, being wealthy, owned six. Most famous is the group portrait of himself and his first wife, Catherine, with their two sons Joshua and Burkat, but five other portraits were noted in his will; namely, one of his daughter Margaret by the same marriage; a single portrait of himself; two portraits of his second wife, Elizabeth; and one of their daughter of the same name.[309] The painting of the large family group (by Carl Marcus Tuscher) was originally installed in the panelling above the fireplace in Shudi's front parlour in Great Pulteney Street,[310] and now hangs in the National Portrait Gallery.[311] Other testators also noted paintings in their will. The music seller Charles Wheatstone had a portrait of himself 'hung over my drawing room chimney piece',[312] and Thomas Tomkison commissioned two portraits of himself and his wife, painted by George Henry Harlow'.[313] George Thomas Dettmer had his likeness painted too.[314] Less costly than an original painting, but of sufficient note to be bequeathed in William Darnton's will, were a print of the 'Golden Chain of Salvation' and two pictures

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[304] Will of Daniel Giles Rose, gentleman, proved 1850 (NA PROB 11/2109).
[305] Will of Andrew Brockly, pianoforte maker, proved 1856 (NA PROB 11/1856).
[306] Will of David Middleton, pianoforte maker, proved 1845 (NA PROB 11/2016).
[307] Will of Thomas William Sumpter, former shoemaker, now teacher of the pianoforte, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1785).
[308] These last two institutions are mentioned in the will of Robert Southgate, piano forte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).
[309] Will of Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1773 (NA PROB 11/991).
[310] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), pp.1–2.
[311] The portrait was acquired by the National Portrait Gallery in 1985 (NPG 5776), with the help of the National Heritage Memorial Fund. Private correspondence, NPG, 23 May 2013.
[312] Will of Charles Wheatstone, music seller, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1678).
[313] George Henry Harlow (1787–1819) was a pupil of Sir Thomas Lawrence. I am grateful to Norman MacSween for alerting me to the identity of this artist. Tomkison also commissioned a portrait of his daughter, Mary Dolling Fauche (aged 12) by the same artist. Will of Thomas Tomkison, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2183).
[314] Will of George Thomas Dettmer, pianoforte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).

entitled 'A Cloud of Witnesses' which he left to his wife and son.[315] Other items of sentimental value were gold watches (noted by Charles Wheatstone, Rice Jones, George Gange and James Longman Rolfe, the latter bequeathing an eye glass too),[316] and silverware, including teapots, caddies, cutlery, candlesticks, sugar tongs and similar domestic articles. Elizabeth Tomkins bequeathed her 'buff and green bed hangings lined with yellow' and all the pillows, bolsters and blankets 'belonging to the said bed'.[317]

These findings attest to the prosperity of the testators as assessed by several means. Their ability to furnish their homes with luxury goods and bequeath sums of money to family and friends indicates a level of wealth beyond that required for daily subsistence, and confirms that they were able to spend (and save) material sums of money. Their investment in stocks and bonds demonstrates a confidence to lock money away over a period of time yet still maintain a comfortable living; and their investment in entrepreneurial ventures (where the sum of their investment was equal to their potential loss) shows their sense of financial security. They were able to purchase real estate (and in some cases multiple properties) and to fund its ongoing maintenance and insurance, perhaps aided by rental income, and the profits generated by their business could be sufficient to fund a separate home 'in the country'. All these factors demonstrate the level of wealth that could be attained by members of the workforce, but the situation was not uniformly so, and even those who managed to achieve wealth did not always manage to retain it, as the following cases attest.

Evidence of debt

Although the wills proved by the Prerogative Court of Canterbury were reportedly those of 'relatively wealthy individuals', it has been shown that the levels of wealth recorded by the workforce varied considerably. It is likely some testators never achieved great wealth, while others were brought low by circumstance and mismanagement, a germane example being the formerly successful music seller and instrument dealer James Longman, who penned a will in the Fleet prison in which his

[315] Will of William Darnton, pianoforte maker, proved 1839 (NA PROB 11/1917).

[316] Wills of Charles Wheatstone, music seller, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1678); Rice Jones, coal merchant and piano forte maker, proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523); George Gange, piano forte maker, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2179); and James Longman Rolfe, piano forte seller, proved 1857 (NA PROB 11/2262).

[317] Will of Elizabeth Tomkins, pianoforte maker, proved 1823 (NA PROB 11/1667).

chief concerns were reduced to the care of his children and not to the distribution of his riches, such as they remained.[318] The wills of other testators who died in reduced circumstances are all recognisable by their brevity. They include that of the piano maker Stephen Moore,[319] 'broke deep in debt which he will never be able to pay',[320] and the instrument maker Thomas Culliford,[321] who died in 1821 leaving an estate valued at 'under £200'.[322] The subject of bankruptcy and insolvency among the workforce is discussed in Chapter 5, but, as evidenced by Americus Backers in 1778, not every unpaid debt resulted in prosecution. Credit between family members and friends was possibly more elastic than that extended by tradesmen squeezed by creditors of their own, and while the lender could sustain the debt, litigation might be avoided. The only workforce debt recorded in the wills was that of the piano maker Thomas Butcher.

Butcher was a former Broadwood employee who,[323] in 1809, worked as a musical instrument maker at 41 Great Titchfield Street, near Portland Place,[324] where he operated as an independent piano maker until 1847.[325] Between 1815 and 1827 he advertised regularly in the London press, first selling 'cabinet harmonica and square piano-fortes' of his own construction,[326] and soon expanding his stock to include second-hand cabinet pianos in good repair.[327] Over the years he introduced horizontal grand pianos with six octaves and three pedals, and 'likewise Cabinet, Circular and square Piano-fortes, both plain and elegant'.[328] He went on to deal in second-hand instruments by makers such as Broadwood, Tomkison, Clementi and Schoene,[329] and in 1830 advertised an Erard harp for sale.[330] Perhaps struggling to sell his own instruments, he accepted a loan from fellow piano maker Robert Southgate, who noted in his will 'fifty pounds more or less indebted to me by Mr

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[318] Will of James Longman, music seller, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1405).
[319] Will of Stephen Moore, piano forte maker, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1400).
[320] Nex in Kassler (2011), p.35.
[321] Nex (2004), p.32.
[322] Nex (2004), p.34.
[323] *MP*, 27 April 1815.
[324] See *Sun Fire Insurance Policy Registers*, 9 October 1809 (LMA Ms. 11936/448/834936).
[325] Harding (1978), p.405.
[326] *MP*, 27 April 1815.
[327] *MP*, 21 March 1817.
[328] *MC*, 30 June 1819.
[329] *MP*, 14 December 1821.
[330] *MP*, 4 November 1830.

T[homas] Butcher 41 Great Titchfield [Street] in the parish of Marylebone'.[331] It will be remembered that Robert Southgate was a religious man, and though his family would have been entitled to petition for Butcher's bankruptcy when Southgate died in 1843, it appears that they did not, though their loss would have been equal to one third the total savings Southgate left them in his will. Whether the debt was settled is not recorded.[332] Butcher's was the only trade debt recorded in the wills, the most common debt being that due for the witnessing and execution of wills rather than to the practical exchange of money. It is possible other loans were effected among the workforce, but repaid prior to the testator's death. That Southgate recorded the debt in his will may have been a precondition of Butcher accepting the money.

The bequest and sale of instruments

For a study of 132 testators working in the music industry, surprisingly few instruments are mentioned in the wills: only thirteen specific instruments are identified, belonging to seven individuals. At Merlin's Mechanical Museum in Princes Street, Hanover Square, were 'an organised piano-forte by Merlin and Grey'; 'a patent piano-forte harpsichord with trumpets and kettle drums'; 'a patent piano-forte harpsichord by Merlin'; and two 'grand piano-forte[s]', one of which was also made by Merlin;[333] all to be sold for 'the most money and best price and prices' the executors could procure.[334] And in Clementi's house in Evesham were an unspecified number of 'musical instruments and manuscripts and printed music' which the deceased bequeathed to his wife.[335]

Two harpsichords belonged to Burkat Shudi, whose home in 'Queen Charlotte Row by the New Road in the parish of Saint Mary Le Bone' potentially housed a number of instruments. To each of his daughters Shudi bequeathed 'one of my double keyed

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[331] Will of Robert Southgate, piano forte maker, proved May 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).

[332] From 1838, William Challen and Company joined Butcher at his premises in Great Titchfield Street. See Harding (1978), p.406. Challen may have helped to share his costs. By 1841 Challen's family were sole residents on the site. See William Challen (50), born *c*1791, pianoforte maker, Great Titchfield Street (1841 census). Butcher's whereabouts in 1841 are unknown but Harding associates him with the premises until 1847, and it is possible repaid his debt within this time. Harding (1978), p.405.

[333] See 1804 catalogue of the posthumous sale of Merlin's Mechanical Museum (British Library RB.23 a.32860).

[334] Will of Joseph Merlin, inventor of mechanism, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1394).

[335] Will of Muzio Clementi, esquire, proved 1832 (NA PROB 11/1798).

harpsichord[s] of my own making',[336] which suggests that Margaret and Elizabeth had a choice. Either there were a number of harpsichords in the house from which the girls might choose – including, possibly, at least one by another maker – or Shudi intended that his daughters should select their instruments from his former workshop in Great Pulteney Street, now owned by his son-in-law for the past two years.[337] A proviso of the indenture which handed the business to John Broadwood allowed Shudi to keep 'a few, already-finished harpsichords in Great Pulteney Street until such time as they were sold',[338] so it is possible the girls made their choice from this selection. In either scenario, it is curious that the girls – who were 27 and 13 when their father died – had not been offered an instrument while their father lived, given the ready availability of harpsichords in and around the family home.[339] Perhaps Shudi had been waiting for his daughters to marry before bestowing such a gift, and such a policy might explain the harp bequeathed to Joseph Dale's daughter in 1809. Like Margaret Shudi, Anne Dale was also 27 and unmarried when her father died and left her 'the harp she plays upon No.1087 or any other she may choose'.[340] The instrument was made by Erard and would have been acquired by her father for sale or hire at his showroom at 19 Cornhill or 151 New Bond Street.[341] The phrasing of Dale's will implies that his daughter had only the loan of a salesroom instrument before her father died, and not a dedicated harp of her own.

The other specified instruments in the wills were all pianos. One was 'an Upright Rosewood Truss Pianoforte' bequeathed by Robert Frederick Hill to a female friend in 1855, which was probably one of his own construction at his workshop on the Old Kent Road.[342] George Thomas Dettmer left his 'pianoforte and working tools' to his wife in 1843, which, again, is likely to have been an instrument he had built;[343] and George Eadon bequeathed his 'piano fort' [sic] to his sister-in-law in 1831: again, no

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[336] Will of Burkat Shudi, harpsichord maker, proved 1777 (NA PROB 11/991).

[337] Shudi signed his will on 5 July 1773, having signed over his business to John Broadwood in March 1771. See Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.11.

[338] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.11.

[339] For the genealogy of the Shudi family, see Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.161.

[340] See Ann [sic] Dale (born 19 June) baptised 13 July 1794 at St Marylebone, Westminster; parents Joseph and Caroline Dale. *Westminster Parish Register* (Ancestry). Also, will of Joseph Dale, music seller, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1649).

[341] On 15 September 1808, Dale paid Erard £80 17s (or 77 guineas) for harp no.1087, and the same amount for a second harp, no. 1086. *Erard ledgers*, Royal College of Music.

[342] Will of Robert Frederick Hill, pianoforte maker, proved 1855 (NA PROB 11/2214). A truss on an upright piano is a leg that extends from the underside of the keyboard to the piano's 'toes'.

[343] Will of George Thomas Dettmer, pianoforte maker, proved 1843 (NA PROB 11/1980).

doubt one of his own construction.[344] The composer and pianist John Possin left 'Gabriel Ball of Jewry Street Hampstead Road pianoforte maker my two piano fortes', which were possibly instruments originally made by Ball.[345]

All these were finished instruments, but the fate of unfinished instruments was also a matter that testators sought to address in their wills. Some were to be finished before they were sold, and others not. In 1811, piano maker Rice Jones directed that 'all such instruments as shall be in an unfinished state at the time of my decease [...] shall be completed or finished as soon as conveniently may be after my decease and that all such materials may be purchased for completing or finishing the same if any required as may be necessary'.[346] Herman Wrede senior gave the same instruction, stipulating that 'all such goods as are now in progress [are] to be completed and thereby to sell to advantage'.[347] Other testators did not make this distinction. James Kennay was happy to sanction the sale of 'all my stock in trade consisting of piano fortes both finished and unfinished instruments on hire tools and instruments of every description horses carts vans benches and all materials whatsoever used in my said business of piano forte maker'.[348] Even those who were alive when their estate was sold were not always troubled to complete their work. John Crang Hancock advertised 'parts of different Kinds of Instruments unfinished' when he retired from the business in 1794,[349] whereas Neubauer only advertised finished articles when 'leaving off business' in 1770: his 'unfinished instruments, and many Articles and Materials in that Branch of Business' were only sold (by the order of his administrators) after his decease.[350]

The sale of an estate by public auction or private contract appears to have been an emotive issue. Some testators were in favour of a sale by public auction, while others found the prospect abhorrent. Leudevig Augustus Leukfeld specifically instructed that his executors 'dispose of by public auction all my stock in trade

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[344] Will of George William Eadon, piano forte maker, proved 1831 (NA PROB 11/1786).
[345] Will of John Samuel Charles Possin, gentleman, proved 1821 (NA PROB 11/1650).
[346] Will of Rice Jones, coal merchant and pianoforte maker, proved 1811 (NA PROB 11/1523).
[347] Will of Herman Wrede, musical wind instrument [and piano] maker, proved 1841 (NA PROB 11/1943).
[348] Will of James Kennay, piano forte maker, proved 1856 (NA PROB 11/2234).
[349] *St. James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post*, 27 November 1794.
[350] *Daily Advertiser*, 25 November 1774.

timber and materials',[351] but Adam Beyer insisted that his 'estate shall not in any case whatsoever be sold by public auction'.[352] Thomas Tomkison was ambivalent, leaving it for his executors to decide whether his estate should be sold 'entirely and altogether or in parcels by public auction or by private contract',[353] and John Waite and Joseph Merlin decreed the same.[354] It is fortunate that some estates were put to auction, however, as their particulars were often described in the press. The following advertisement, published one year after Merlin's death, alludes to his unfinished work:[355]

> Merlin's Mechanical Museum and Leasehold House, Princes-street, Hanover-square – By Mr WILLOCK,
> On the Premises, on Wednesday, the 9th of May, in one Lot, by Order of the Executors,
>
> THE singularly ingenious, curious, and entertaining Museum of that celebrated Mechanic, Mr Joseph Merlin, deceased, at his late House and Exhibition Rooms, No.11, Princes-street, Hanover-square; containing, among a great variety of uncommon and ingenious Inventions, sundry costly mechanical Bands of Music and single Instruments, Cabinets, Cavalead s [sic], Groups, and astonishingly curious Automaton Figures, Hydraulic Machines, the Phantasmagoria, Escarpolettes, Balances, Time Pieces, Mirrors, Air Guns, Air Pumps, &c. &c. together with the Lease of the House, of which five years are unexpired. – To scientific men of property, who have leisure to complete some unfinished pieces of most curious Mechanisms, to the admirers of works of wonderful ingenuity and taste, as well as to those who would make a fortune by their Exhibition, this sale affords a most gratifying opportunity. Descriptive Catalogues of the several articles are preparing, which, with particulars of the House, may be had on the premises, and of Mr. Willock, at No.25, in Golden-square, fourteen days preceding the sale, at half-a-crown each; and in the mean time the Exhibition continues open as usual, from Ten till Three, and from Seven till Ten in the evening.

His estate was sold over four days in the summer of 1804, the auctioneers working through the house, room by room.[356] Leukfeld's estate was divided into two separate

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[351] Will of Leudevig Augustus Leukfeld, musical instrument maker, proved 1810 (NA PROB 11/1517).
[352] Will of Adam Beyer, gentleman, proved 1804 (NA PROB 11/1403).
[353] Will of Thomas Tomkison, proved 1853 (NA PROB 11/2183).
[354] Wills of John Waite, piano forte maker, proved 1829 (NA PROB 11/1757); and Joseph Merlin, inventor of mechanism, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1394).
[355] *MC*, 21 April 1804.
[356] Monday 11 June to Thursday 14 June inclusive. 1804 catalogue of the posthumous sale of Merlin's Mechanical Museum (British Library RB.23 a.32860).

consignments for sale to the public and trade.[357] First, the finished instruments on 16 January 1811, as advertised in *The Morning Chronicle*:

> To Ladies, Gentlemen, Pianoforte-makers, and others – By
> Mr. POUNDS, on the Premises, No. 27, Tottenham-street,
> Tottenham-court-road, THIS DAY, at twelve,
> A Great Variety of elegant Upright, Horizontal, Grand Oval Sideboard and Square PIANOFORTES, &c. finished in a superior manner, the late property of Mr Augustus Leukfeld, deceased, well known as one of the most eminent pianoforte-makers, which will be sold without the least reserve, by order of the trustee and executrix [...]'

Then, with a separate appeal to the trade, his working effects were sold the following week:[358]

> To Piano Forte Makers, Cabinet Makers, Carpenters, Mangle Makers and others – Extensive Stock of fine seasoned Timber, &c. – By Mr. POUNDS, on the Premises, No.27 Tottenham-street, Tottenham-court-road, THIS DAY, at eleven precisely, by
> Order of the Trustee and Executrix of the late
> Mr. Augustus Leukfeld, Piano Forte Maker, dec.
> A Great quantity of dry seasoned MAHOGANY DEALS, BEACH [sic], PINE, ELM, and CLAPBOARDS of various dimensions, a great quantity of dry seasoned satin Wood, sundry useful building materials and various other property, being part of the choice stock of the late Mr. Augustus Leukfeld, deceased, and will be found well worth the attention of any persons in the above business. May be viewed two days preceding the Sale; and catalogues had on the Premises; at the Adam and Eve, Tottenham-court-road; and of Mr. Pounds, Snow-hill.

The ongoing sale of Leukfeld's stock advertised 'elephant's teeth, ebony work, benches, packing-cases',[359] and finally 'excellent Berlin wire [...] glue pots, brass and iron monger, and numerous other effects'.[360] In all, the sale took two months to complete – from 16 January to 14 March 1804 – and indicates well the significant amount of work that could be involved in administering an estate.

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[357] The first sale took place two months after Leukfeld had 'sustained such severe injuries by being thrown out of his chaise that he died soon after'. *MP*, 20 May 1834.
[358] *MC*, 25 January 1811.
[359] *MC*, 14 February 1811.
[360] *MC*, 13 March 1811.

Overview

For a collection of legal documents, the wills provide a lively insight into the private and professional lives of members of the workforce prior to 1858. Although not all the testators were leaders in their field, but a mixture of employees and entrepreneurs, all were concerned for the future security of their family, for the ambitions of their children, and for the posthumous management of their estate. The value of the wills to this thesis owes much to the fact that their contents reveal more than their purpose intended. A study of the characters mentioned in the wills has reconstructed a portion of the community in which the testators worked. These individuals, whose independent failings and endeavours shaped the testators' own careers, also shaped their society. Their occupations define the testators' social spheres and point to areas of interest beyond their own profession. They also give an indication of the support and responsibility under which the testators laboured.

Because the wills span several generations, the fate of several family firms has been charted from father to son or from uncle to nephew. Few survived as a family business beyond two generations, and the longevity of firms like Broadwood was not typical.[361] For the most part the endeavours of a family firm ended with the death of the founder or his son, and even those firms to survive through the efforts of widows and children were unlikely to be passed to a third generation.[362] In part, these transient firms may be explained by the exigencies of business in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, when market conditions were subverted by war and depression – the London furniture-making trade records a similar pattern of short-lived family firms during the same period[363] – but the extent to which the success of a firm was dependent upon the personalities involved should not be understated. Practical talent and commercial sense are not necessarily concomitant, and it was a rare family that could draw on both aptitudes over successive generations. Herman Wrede and James Ball, for example, were both practical men with acumen, but it would appear that their sons were not. Testamentary evidence of the failure of such businesses corroborates the pattern of activity in Harding's list of makers which

[361] For the full story of the firm, see Wainwright (1982).

[362] This pattern continued in the late nineteenth century, when, according to a contemporary observer, 'Firms come and go like mushrooms, others grow up into well-established trees until the old wood stops any further growth, and then some name once revered and honoured is but a memory of the past.' Bamberger (September 1928), p.423.

[363] Kirkham (1988), p.6.

suggests that the majority of firms survived only a matter of years.[364] Very few achieved the growth or continuity of firms like Brinsmead, Broadwood, Clementi/Collard or Hopkinson, for example, which survived to the following century. And workshops appropriated by former employees or rival practitioners potentially fared no better. John Henry Schrader, George Friederick Schoene and John Price all closed the door on their predecessor's enterprise. As acknowledged by Cole, good fortune alone saved the Broadwood firm from the same fate:[365] that John Broadwood had sons and grandsons with the necessary practical and administrative skills to perpetuate the firm was central to its success, and the recruitment of employees such as James Forsyth and Alexander Russell – and even Broadwood himself – was instrumental in the survival of the firm. Practitioners with no sons to continue their work (e.g. Zumpe, Sievers, the Schoene brothers, Merlin, Leukfeld, Beyer, Buntebart and Baragiola) were vulnerable, but those with a son hardly less so. The skills required to create a successful business were also required to drive it ahead. Unless the son recognised – and recruited – the talents that he lacked, the firm would be at risk. That many testators doubted their son's abilities is evident from the wills, in that several businesses were instructed to be sold.

The wills also indicate the material success that could be achieved by the workforce. Celebrated practitioners who died bequeathing an established business, money in the funds, real estate and luxury goods are in marked contrast to those who died leaving nothing. Yet both cemented the structure of the industry. It was not their posthumous wealth but their working life that propelled the industry forward. Backers' posthumous debt did not negate his contribution to the design of the grand piano, nor Longman and Broderips' bankruptcy reverse their contribution to the growth of the musical community. Indeed, as reasoned by Nex, their repeated prosecution shaped the reform of the music publishing laws.[366] The failure – and even the demise – of members of the workforce was of equal encouragement to those who remained as the success of men like Zumpe and Broadwood. John Francis Bell did not enter the piano trade until he inherited the workshop of Lewis Baragiola, and the death of Gabriel Buntebart was a fillip to the career of John Henry Schrader.

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[364] Harding (1978), pp.402–26.

[365] Cole observes that 'Shudi's posterity hung by the slenderest thread' in that James Shudi Broadwood was his only living grandson. Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.68.

[366] Nex in Kassler (2011), p.92.

Death and bankruptcy forced the sale of many workshops whose contents enabled the careers of others: Schoene, Schrader and Price all labelled themselves 'successor to' men who had died.[367] It may have been easier to step into the shoes of a dead man than to emulate – or topple – the success of another who lived.

The documents studied are only a sample of the relevant wills that may be available, and they are not uniform in the information they present. They do not allow a precise calculation of the testators' worth, and they reveal only limited aspects of the testators' lives and careers. But they do demonstrate the variety of workers to have appreciated the significance of making a will, and the difficulties many of them faced in preserving the future of their business. They reveal the trust they placed in their wives and family, the measures they took to manage their successors, and the recognition they afforded their illegitimate children. They indicate their choice and range of financial speculation, their religious and charitable inclinations, and the esteem and respect they held for fellow members of the trade. They also demonstrate some of the diverse fortunes that befell the workforce during the study period, and the testamentary measures they put in place to manage them. Even the shortest of the wills, which fulfil only the basic requirements of the document and reveal apparently nothing of a personal nature, suggest something of the testator's character, if only a perfunctory interest in the pursuit of making a will.

[367] In their case John Zumpe, Gabriel Buntebart and Rice Jones.

Chapter 5:
Bankruptcy and Insolvency (1756–1914)

This chapter examines the members of the London piano industry to have been bankrupt, insolvent and imprisoned for debt, from the origins of the trade in the 1760s, to the dislocation of the industry at the start of the First World War. Evidence derives from a study of 510 bankrupts and insolvents in the piano industry reported in *The London Gazette* to the end of 1914. Appendix 7 lists all those studied. Three aspects of their circumstances are discussed here. First, the legislation that determined their status as a bankrupt or insolvent debtor and how debt and imprisonment affected their lives and careers while under the jurisdiction of the law. Second, by means of tables and charts, the levels of bankruptcy, insolvency and imprisonment for debt among members of the piano industry: how their instance and fluctuation might be explained. Third, the impact of bankruptcy and insolvency on individual members of the trade: the measures they took to restore their livelihood and liquidity, and the consequence of debt on their future careers.

Section One

The practical consequences of bankruptcy and insolvency

On the day that snuffman and piano maker Henry Hartz died intestate on 15 August 1802, his business partner of seven years received a visit from the dead man's brother.[1] George Lewis Hartz, 'accompanied by some person',[2] entered 7 Princes Street, Hanover Square, and demanded of John Henry Schrader to see the partnership accounts, believing 'a considerable sum of money was due or coming from the said John Henry Schrader to the said Henry Hartz'.[3] He then 'proceeded to open and did open the iron chest wherein the said copartnership monies were deposited and took thereout the sum of £125 in bank notes and the sum of three pounds and 17 shillings

[1] Henry Hartz was an executor to the will of piano maker Christopher Sievers, partner of Gabriel Gotlieb Buntebart. See will of Christopher Sievers, pianoforte maker, proved 1793 (NA PROB 11/1234). I am grateful to Lance Whitehead for first alerting me to the partnership of Schrader & Hartz. Writing in 1929, a timber merchant to the trade recalled that 'snuff-taking was a common practice in piano factories in the old days'. Bamberger (February 1929), n.p.

[2] *Defendant's Answer*, John Henry Schrader, 14 July 1803 (NA C13/28/22).

[3] *Bill of complaint*, George Lewis Hartz, 4 March 1803 (NA C13/28/22).

in cash', which money he took with him when he left. He returned the next day, in Schrader's absence, to enquire whether any post had been delivered, and 'a letter having on the same morning been received from Rotterdam inclosing [sic] a bill for £20 12s 6d the same was incautiously delivered' to Hartz, who, 'under the pretence that he would get the bill accepted and return it', endorsed it with his own name and received the full amount.[4] In two visits to the workshop Hartz had appropriated £149 9s 6d in cash (or more than £4,800 in modern terms), although he still considered he was owed another £81 2s 9d (or approximately £2,600 today), plus interest.[5] The catalyst to this scene and its outcome are recorded elsewhere,[6] but this brief incident neatly illustrates two points with regard to debt and debt collection at the turn of the nineteenth century. First, the fallible nature of Schrader's liquidity and his potential for sudden insolvency; and, second, the preference for direct, unsanctioned intervention on the part of George Hartz, rather than waiting for Schrader to pay what he owed, or petitioning for Schrader's bankruptcy and awaiting judicial process.

Hartz's heavy-handed tactics were no doubt justified (in his own mind) by concern for the money he was due. Believing that Schrader was 'now in insolvent or embarrassed circumstances' and intended 'to sell and convert into money the whole of the unsold part of the said stock in trade and effects which belonged to the said partnership', Hartz considered the money due to his brother's estate was 'in great danger of being intirely [sic] lost'.[7] He would have been aware also that bankrupt estates, at this time, were collected so inefficiently, and the system so widely abused, that the dividends paid to creditors (if any) were notoriously small and extremely slowly paid.[8] On 26 March 1803, Hartz took out an injunction to restrain Schrader from disposing of the stock,[9] and awaited Schrader's answer to a bill of complaint he had executed three weeks earlier. Schrader's reply, four months later, attaching a

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[4] *Defendant's Answer*, John Henry Schrader, 14 July 1803 (NA C13/28/22).
[5] The 'partnership stock property and effects' were valued at £459 12s 3d soon after Henry died, and George Lewis Hartz considered his brother's estate was due the moiety, plus interest. *Bill of complaint*, George Lewis Hartz, 4 March 1803 (NA C13/28/22).
[6] Kent, M., 'Hartz v. Schrader: an end to piano making at 7 Princes Street, Hanover Square' (forthcoming).
[7] *Bill of complaint*, George Lewis Hartz, 4 March 1803 (NA C13/28/22).
[8] Duffy, I. P, H., *Bankruptcy and Insolvency in London during the Industrial Revolution* (New York; London: Garland Publishing Inc., 1985), p.28.
[9] *Entry Books of Decrees and Orders*, Hilary Term, 26 March 1803 (NA C33/520, p.313).

schedule of his debts and assets, was delayed by his being already 'imprisoned in his Majesty's Gaol of Newgate for a separate debt due';[10] a misfortune he attributed to Hartz's having taken and applied 'to his own private use' cash and notes belonging to the partnership.[11] Schrader's financial difficulties were escalating and they were not new. In 1802, he had been imprisoned in the King's Bench for a debt owing to one Frederick Schrader (relationship unknown),[12] and later, in 1806, he was gaoled in the Marshalsea and the King's Bench for a debt 'in a sum not greater than £1,500'.[13] Ergo, he had experience of three of London's debtor prisons: Newgate, on the current site of the Old Bailey, and the Marshalsea and the King's Bench on neighbouring sites in Southwark. The other debtors' prisons operating in London during the study period were the Fleet and Whitecross Street in the City (the latter built in 1815 to supplant Newgate), and Horsemonger Lane Gaol, in Southwark.

The experiences of both Schrader and Hartz would not have been remarkable. Bankruptcy, insolvency and imprisonment for debt were attendant realities of business life in the early years of the London piano industry, and large numbers of the capital's prison population were incarcerated for debt. Debtors fell mainly into two categories. Both consisted of insolvent debtors, unable to repay the debts they owed to creditors, but only one category was eligible to become bankrupt: the large trader who owed more than £100 to one creditor (or £150 to two, or £200 to more than two),[14] for whom a special bankruptcy system had evolved at the Bankruptcy Court at Guildhall.[15] The status of this debtor was acknowledged by the court, which set in place various legal processes to resolve his debt, and he could only be imprisoned once his case had been tried, if found guilty of fraud or he refused but was able to pay. The second category of debtor comprised the small trader (owing less than £100 to one creditor) and the non-trader (who earned his livelihood by 'manual or mental labour, which involved neither buying and selling nor the use of extensive credit').[16] This class of debtor – who remained insolvent debtors with no

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[10] *Entry Books of Decrees and Orders*, Hilary Term, 26 March 1803 (NA C33/520, p.313).
[11] *Defendant's Answer*, John Henry Schrader, 14 July 1803 (NA C13/28/22).
[12] *Records of the King's Bench, Fleet, and Marshalsea prisons* (NA PRIS 5/13). He was discharged on 1 March 1802.
[13] *LG*, 22 July 1806, p.927; *LG*, 26 July 1806, p.945; and *LG*, 5 August 1806, p.1036.
[14] Duffy (1985), p.11.
[15] Duffy (1985), p.15.
[16] Duffy (1985), p.23.

judicial help – was frequently imprisoned at the start of proceedings, and could remain in gaol for an indefinite period if unable to satisfy their creditors.[17] The difference between bankruptcy and insolvency was therefore of signal concern to debtors in London at the end of the eighteenth century: it behove the insolvent debtor to frame his debt within the dictates of the bankruptcy laws if he wished to escape gaol.

That Schrader was imprisoned by another of his creditors before Hartz delivered his bill of complaint suggests that Schrader had been unable (or refused) to pay the separate debt due and was waiting to prove his status as a bankrupt to the court. For an insolvent debtor to qualify as a bankrupt and reduce his risk of long-term imprisonment it was necessary for him to prove two positives: that he owed £100 or more to one creditor (or £150 to two, or £200 to more than two), and that he earned his living as a trader. Non-traders (including artisans) had been excluded from the bankruptcy process since 1571, when an *Act Touching Orders for Bankrupts* restricted the process to merchants and traders.[18] According to Sir William Blackstone, writing in 1766, this was because 'the laws of England were "cautious of encouraging prodigality and extravagance by this indulgence to debtors" and because "that set of men (traders) are, generally speaking, the only persons liable to accidental losses, and to an inability of paying their debts, without any fault of their own".'[19] Insolvent debtors were therefore keen to identify themselves as traders, and would describe their occupation as 'dealer and chapman' (a chapman being a pedlar) to persuade the court of their buying and selling of goods. The first piano maker noted as a bankrupt in *The London Gazette* – Joanna Anderson of Dean Street, Soho, in 1808 – emphasized her activities in such a way.[20] Despite this terminology, traders who were insufficiently steeped in debt did not qualify to become bankrupt, and remained, instead, subject to the provisions of the insolvency laws.[21]

In his detailed report on *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* of 1777, John Howard concluded that debtors were some of 'the most pitiable objects in our gaols;'

[17] Duffy (1985), pp.61–65.
[18] Duffy (1985), p.8.
[19] Duffy (1985), p.18.
[20] *LG*, 3 May 1808, p.637. Other London piano makers were bankrupt before Joanna Anderson, but described their occupations differently.
[21] Duffy (1985), p.22.

not only for their want of basic necessities and food, but also for the extortion they endured at the hands of their gaolers.[22] Exaction began at the bailiff's lock-up house, or sponging house, as it was known, where debtors might be taken upon arrest, and where they might make arrangements to pay their debt, or organise bail, and avoid the shame of being imprisoned. The sister of the piano maker George Augustus Kollmann, Joanna Sophie Kollmann, who worked as an occasional piano dealer, is the only member of the study population known positively to have been admitted to a sponging house, but there are likely to have been others.[23] In 1807, there were more than a dozen sponging houses in London to which a debtor could be taken on arrest, and it was in the option of the debtor to go to the one he preferred.[24] Once delivered:

> it was there imparted to him that he had better send for two things – first of all for money, which was by far the more desirable of the two; and secondly, for bail, which even if forthcoming was represented as being at best but a dubious advantage.[25]

The disadvantage of posting bail was that it allowed the creditor who triggered the arrest to seize the debtor's property.[26] (See Appendix 13 for more details of the sponging house.) As soon as the prisoner conceded that he was unable, or unwilling, to settle his debt, he was transferred to gaol where he was charged to be admitted.[27] The cost and quality of his accommodation was dependent upon his means (unless he were destitute, in which case it was free), and his nourishment was similarly relative to his means. If he endeavoured to free himself he incurred further court costs, unless he appealed to the court *in forma pauperis* (in the manner of a pauper) to have his court fees waived, which was the case for seven members of the study population during the financial crisis of the late 1860s, discussed below in section two.[28] Further payment was demanded upon discharge.[29] Imprisonment for debt did not preclude a worker from returning to his former job upon release. Edward Graddon,

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[22] Howard, J., *The State of the Prisons in England and Wales* (London, 1777), pp.10–11.
[23] *LG*, 11 September 1846, p.3284.
[24] Phillips, Sir Richard, *A letter to the Livery of London: Relative to the Views of the Writer in Executing the Office of Sheriff* (London, 1808), p.179.
[25] Trollope, A., *The Three Clerks*, new edn (London: Richard Bentley, 1860), p.333.
[26] Robinson, M., *An Insolvent Debtor's Guide* (London: Collins & Co., 1817), cited in Lester (1995), pp.91–92.
[27] Howard (1777), p.154.
[28] Piano makers Henry Squire; George Richmond; William Trehane; Robert Henry Rodwell; and George David Faulkner; packing case maker-turned tuner William Matthew Statham; and key maker William Lowe.
[29] Howard (1777), p.154.

'Piano Forte-Maker, and Warehouseman to Messrs. Clementi [of] Cheapside', was imprisoned for debt in 1827, and returned to his former position until he was imprisoned for debt again, three years later.[30]

Periodic *Acts for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors* extended an amnesty to all those imprisoned for more than six months owing debts of less than a specified amount,[31] and such was the law when the man credited with making the first piano in England – Roger Plenius – was detained in the Fleet Prison, in March 1761, at the suit of one Susanah Steffkins,[32] having already been 'charged in Execution' (imprisoned for a separate debt) and having sold his 'Work Benches, Engines, Tools and Utensils' to resolve his bankruptcy in 1756.[33] Eight months later, in November 1761, Plenius was still in prison under Steffkins' suit (though now in the Marshalsea), where, as a prisoner of more than six months' detention, he became eligible for release under an *Act for the Relief of Insolvent Debtors*.[34] It is likely he took advantage of the act to recommence business at his son's house in Catherine Street, in the Strand.[35] Such intermittent acts as the one enjoyed by Plenius alleviated overcrowding in the gaols and relieved many long-term inmates.

Though commonly spared a lengthy period in gaol, the bankrupt's routine was disturbed in other ways. Advised via *The London Gazette* that an action had been brought against him, he could expect a man sent to secure his property while his

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[30] *LG*, 18 December 1827, p.2599; and *LG*, 23 April 1830, p.824.

[31] Duffy (1985), p.76. Debtors owing large amounts were not eligible. 'The maximum limit was raised to £1,000 in 1761, and £2,000 in 1774, returning to £1,000 after 1774 and rising to £1,200 in 1797. Debtors owing more than the limit could be released only with the creditors' consent.' Duffy (1985), p.77, f.n.62.

[32] *LG*, 24 March 1761, pp.4 and 6.

[33] *LG*, 24 July 1756, p.3. Plenius's relationship to Steffkins is not confirmed, but she was possibly a relation of Christian Steffkins, court musician and violist 'in the King's private music', and son of the celebrated viol player, Theodore Steffkins. Highfill, P. H., *A biographical dictionary of actors, actresses, musicians, dancers, manager & other stage personnel in London*, vol. 14 (Southern Illinois University Press, 1991), p.257. One Susanna Stefkin [sic] was buried in Twickenham on 18 August 1771 (Ancestry).

[34] *Public Ledger*, 19 November 1761.

[35] In 1763, Plenius (first name not stated), harpsichord maker of Catherine Street, Strand, appears in *Mortimer's Universal Director*, though this may have been Joseph Plenius (a son?), who was a harpsichord maker working at 89 High Holborn in 1785 (*Bailey's British Directory*) and 1790 (*Wakefield's Merchant and Tradesman's General Directory for London*). Rutgerus Plenius, 'by birth a German', died 'at his son's house in Catherine Street in the Strand' on Tuesday, 4 January 1774. *General Evening Post*, 6 January 1774. For further details of Plenius' career, see Debenham and Cole (2013), pp.56–66.

creditors chose their assignees. This man, though well paid,[36] was often 'of the lowest degree' and regularly thwarted in his task:

> The man goes with the warrant of seizure, and he becomes one of the family directly: he is placed, according to his station in life, in the kitchen with the servants, and what is going on upstairs he knows no more than I do, who am standing here, and [...] that I believe to be the time when the greatest peculation [embezzlement] prevails. All the relations and friends of the insolvent come to condole with him, and I believe most of them take away something with them.[37]

The temptation to secrete goods away must have been strong, as the bankrupt was entitled to retain only 'the tools (if any) of his trade, and the necessary wearing apparel and bedding of himself, his wife and children, to a value, inclusive of tools and apparel and bedding, not exceeding twenty pounds in the whole'.[38] This stipulation was potentially negotiable, however, as in 1823 the bankrupt musical instrument maker William Henry Astor (son of George Astor) requested permission to use his 'household furniture, fixtures, plate, linen and effects' until such time as his assignees were able to sell them.[39]

The bankrupt then made 'a full discovery and disclosure of his estate and effects', such as Schrader had been required to do, and surrendered himself to the Bankruptcy Court at Guildhall on the date advised in *The London Gazette*. Several meetings ensued, not all of which involved the bankrupt, who, unless by arrangement with his creditors, was officially detached from his business, which was now run by an official assignee. In 1810, Thomas Loud, 'Piano-Forte-Maker, Dealer and Chapman' of Devonshire Street, Queen's Square, asked his creditors and assignees to consider employing him 'to complete the several unfinished Articles in the Way of his Trade, and making him a reasonable Allowance for so doing.'[40] Also, 'to their empowering [him], or such other Person as they shall think fit, to collect the Debts due to the said Estate, and to pay them for so doing.' Schrader also requested permission to 'get in' his own debts, since 'it may be difficult to procure a receiver who is acquainted with

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[36] Paid a fee rather than a salary, in the years 1858–9 these London messengers averaged £1,175 per year in net receipts, approximately £53,000 p.a. today. Lester (1995), p.83.
[37] Evidence of a solicitor, *Report to the 1818 Committee into Bankruptcy*. Duffy (1985), p.27.
[38] *The Bankruptcy Act 1869* (London, 1870), p.13. This sum equates, very approximately, to £914 today.
[39] *LG*, 5 August 1823, pp.1288–89.
[40] *LG*, 9 October 1810, p.1611.

the Russian, German and Dutch languages to demand such debts from their several correspondents abroad.'[41] These men were reluctant to surrender control of their business, and, in the case of Loud, hopeful of remuneration. Others appear not to have been active in the ongoing running of their firm. In 1812, the creditors of the piano maker James Black of Percy Street, St Pancras, were asked by the assignees to consider how best 'to complete and make fit for sale the unfinished stock of instruments [...] and, for that purpose to employ workmen and others, and to pay and allow such workmen or persons so to be employed such wages or remuneration as they shall think necessary.'[42] These workmen were probably Black's existing employees, as the creditors were also asked to 'authorise the Assignees to pay the wages or accounts due to the workmen and servants of the said Bankrupt.' Once work was completed, the premises could then be sold by public auction or private contract, and in the case of Thomas Loud, his several leasehold houses and workshops were sold by public auction within three months of the date of his commission.[43]

Brokers appointed by the court to sell a bankrupt's estate charged a commission of one shilling in the pound (in 1827), and 'often sold the goods for less than a third of their value',[44] presumably for the reason that bankrupt estates were plentiful and sales could be effected more rapidly if the asking price were low, although the creditors' dividends were much reduced in consequence, and the bankrupt received a lesser return with which to start again.[45] It was reported that the 'sacrifice' of the property of Allison & Allison was 'frightful' after the bankruptcy of the firm in 1848, 'notwithstanding the bankrupts had done all in their power to assist the assignees'.[46] Similarly, only £20 was raised by the sale of Edward Burnand's piano and furniture dealership in the Mile End Road in 1875, and since no further property could be realized for the benefit of the creditors, his bankruptcy was closed;[47] also, that of spinster Hannah Dawe, Islington pianoforte manufacturer in 1883, as she had

[41] *Defendant's Answer*, John Henry Schrader, 14 July 1803 (NA C13/28/22).
[42] *LG*, 5 December 1812, p.2461.
[43] For those at 19 Suffolk Street, near Middlesex Hospital, see *MC*, 6 October 1810, and for those in Devonshire Street, Queen Square, see *LG*, 18 December 1810, p.2029.
[44] Brown (1996), p.147.
[45] Bankrupts who displayed honesty and co-operation during proceedings were rewarded with a percentage of the proceeds raised from their estate. Duffy (1985), p.12, f.n.17.
[46] 'In re. Allison & Allison', *MP*, 2 August 1849.
[47] *LG*, 7 December 1875, p.6349.

'no property that could be realized for the benefit of the bankrupt's creditors.'[48] Bankruptcies were also closed or superseded (as in the case of the piano manufacturer Christopher Ganer of Broad Street, Carnaby Market, in 1811),[49] if a fiat (or court order) were issued improperly, or if it appeared to the court that all the creditors had been paid in full (as in the case of a piano tuner in 1894),[50] or if the bankruptcy were superseded by a deed of arrangement.

Deeds of arrangement were an alternative procedure open to bankrupts that allowed them to negotiate a private solution with their creditors and many were employed by bankrupt members of the piano trade, as shown in section two. Deeds took one of three forms: the negotiation of a partial payment in satisfaction of the total debt (a deed of composition); the transfer of the debtor's estate to a trustee who settled the debts by instalment out of the debtor's future effects (a deed of assignment); and the debtor's autonomous winding up of his own estate, and payment of his debts, under the supervision of inspectors chosen by the creditors (a deed of inspectorship).[51] In 1882, the firm of the piano action manufacturer Henry Brooks became the subject of a deed of inspectorship, as 'the trustee certified that, in his opinion, to leave the estate in the hands of the debtor and allow him to continue the business under inspectorship would be more beneficial to the general body of creditors than the realization of the estate by forced sale.'[52] See Appendix 20 for more details of the insolvencies of Henry Brooks and Company. Similarly, under a deed of composition the debtor was free to carry out his business, subject only to paying his creditors the amount agreed.[53]

If the bankrupt's affairs were uncomplicated, discharge might be completed in less than six weeks,[54] and even three months in more complicated cases if assignees were able,[55] at which point the bankrupt could return to the adjusted routine of his former

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[48] *LG*, 20 July 1883, p.3698.
[49] *LG*, 2 March 1813, p.471.
[50] See Percy Felix Foster, piano tuner. *LG*, 20 March 1894, p.1726.
[51] Duffy (1985), p.336.
[52] *The Times*, 8 February 1883.
[53] Lester, V. Markham, *Victorian Insolvency, Bankruptcy, Imprisonment for Debt, and Company Winding-up in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.36.
[54] See William Benjamin Adams, piano tuner. *LG*, 20 May 1864, p.2712; and *LG*, 19 July 1864, p.3660.
[55] See Charles Mackay, piano maker. *LG*, 8 April 1862, p.1894.

life and work. Complicated bankruptcies might take longer to conclude. Where the dates of discharge are recorded among the study data, the longest period between bankruptcy and discharge was seventeen years in the case of the piano agent Max Simon of Kilburn (including a two-year suspension of his certificate).[56] While waiting to be discharged, bankrupts were often obliged to find work, and during the five years and three months that music publisher and pianoforte dealer Walter Shepherd waited for his certificate, he found work as a traveller for the piano agent Max Edward Schlesinger.[57]

In the normal course of proceedings, creditors would meet six weeks after the bankruptcy was commissioned to decide whether to grant the bankrupt a discharge. Discharge was an act of generosity on the part of the creditors, who accepted the surrender of the bankrupt's property as settlement of his debts – whether or not the sale of the property would raise sufficient capital to cover their loss completely – and allowed the bankrupt to resume work with a clean slate. The issue or refusal of discharge was therefore of appreciable concern to the bankrupt in terms of beginning anew. After 1842, the power of discharge was transferred to the court,[58] where certificates might be suspended for months (or years) as a form of punishment for those deemed culpable for their debt. Examples of misconduct – all of which were recorded by the piano industry workforce – included the following. The bankrupt's assets were not equal in value to ten shillings in the pound of his unsecured liabilities, and he was unable to show that he was not justly responsible (e.g. piano maker Giovanni Battista Rissone, in 1906);[59] he had not kept proper books (piano frame manufacturer, Samuel Lewis, 1890);[60] he had continued to trade after knowledge of his insolvency (partners Richard Franklin and Robert Hannant, 1899);[61] or had contracted debts without reasonable probability of payment (Giovanni Battista Rissone, 1906);[62] or failed to account for his deficiency (piano dealer Robert Sharp, 1900);[63] or contributed to his bankruptcy by rash speculation

[56] See *LG*, 19 August 1892, p.4769; and *LG*, 21 June 1907, p.4332.
[57] For his work, see 'Alleged Fraud by a Nottingham Bankrupt', *Nottinghamshire Guardian*, 11 April 1884. For his discharge, see *LG*, 5 March 1886, p.1107.
[58] Under *Lord Campbell's Bankruptcy Law Amendment Act 1842*. Duffy (1985), p.53.
[59] *LG*, 30 November 1906, p.8512.
[60] *LG*, 11 March 1890, p.1399.
[61] *LG*, 2 January 1900, p.61.
[62] *LG*, 30 November 1906, p.8512.
[63] *LG*, 22 June 1900, p.3955.

(piano dealer David Elkan, 1903),[64] gambling (piano maker Hardy Simon, 1909),[65] culpable neglect (ditto), or by unjustifiable expenses (piano maker and music seller Herman Wrede junior, 1850);[66] or within three months preceding the receiving order had given an undue preference to a creditor (importer and dealer Friederich Georg Steeger, 1900);[67] or had previously been bankrupt or made an arrangement with his creditors (piano maker Alfred Squire, 1891).[68] Some members of the workforce were guilty of only one offence, others several more.

The length of suspension was arbitrary to the extent that the same offences attracted penalties of differing severity.[69] In this, the court was concerned to distinguish between bankrupts on the grounds of their moral behaviour, which, after 1849, manifested itself in the issue of discharge certificates described as 'first-', 'second-' or 'third-class': a first-class certificate being awarded where no blame was attached, a second-class certificate where the bankrupt had traded carelessly or recklessly (but not dishonestly), and a third-class certificate where dishonesty was the cause of the bankruptcy.[70] Of the nine individuals among the study population whose class of certificate was recorded in *The London Gazette*, only one member received a certificate of the first-class (the manufacturer and dealer William Darnton, in 1858); the remaining eight individuals shared an equal number of second- and third-class certificates.[71]

Penalties for those who received a suspended discharge ranged from three weeks to four years. Piano maker Alfred Squire received the shortest penalty, in 1891, as he had 'on a previous occasion made a Composition with his creditors',[72] and failed, in

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[64] *LG*, 8 December 1903, p.8181.
[65] *LG*, 4 May 1909, p.3462.
[66] *MP*, 23 March 1850.
[67] *LG*, 27 July 1900, p.4703.
[68] *LG*, 10 April 1891, p.2052.
[69] This is reminiscent of insolvent debtors whose length of imprisonment bore no relation to the sum of their debt. Brown (1996), p.165.
[70] Weule, B., W. Warburton, and R. Brading, *The Bankruptcy Handbook*, 2nd edn (Annandale, NSW; Federation Press, 2007), p.4.
[71] Second-class recipients: Edwin Dunkin Lyon (1859); James Thomas Murray (1856); Thomas Rolfe (1854); and John Watson (1857). Third-class recipients: John Cooper (1861); John Down Gordon (1858); Charles Kelly (1856); and Robert Anderson Rüst (1859).
[72] *LG*, 10 April 1891, p.2052. Alfred Squire was born in 1839/40. See Alfred Squire (2), born *c*1839, Middlesex (1841 census); and Alfred Squire (11), born *c*1840, Pancras (1851 census). At the time of his prosecution in 1891 he would have been 51 or 52. 'At one time [Alfred Squire] was almost indispensible to many piano firms in the production of scales. In his later

effect, to manage his latter business any better than his former. Maker Charles Tallent was discharged nine months after his vesting order for giving a fraudulent preference to his son-in-law.[73] Piano frame maker Samuel Lewis received a six-month suspension, in 1890, as he had 'omitted to keep such books of account as are usual and proper in the business carried on by him and as sufficiently disclose his business transactions and financial position within the three years immediately preceding his bankruptcy'.[74] Poor book-keeping was a common failing among debtors (especially the illiterate) and as late as 1840 it was estimated that 'about half of all traders, even in London, never took stock'.[75] Piano maker Daniel Chandler Hewitt was among them, admitting, in 1843, 'I am not in the habit of taking minute notice of what I have – I [have] no means of keeping a correct account of the wood'.[76] Mandatory accounting was introduced in the Companies Act of 1900, but there were those who were slow to comply.[77] A witness connected to the piano industry in 1905 informed the court 'I do not keep any books, because I do not owe *nothing* to anybody.'[78] Such administrative dereliction could be an advantage to a bankrupt, who was sure to pass his final examination if he could give no better account of his affairs. For others, a lack of accurate paperwork – or the manufacture of spurious paperwork – was a deliberate foil to criminal activity. Partners Robert Allen and William James Taylor of Seven Sisters' Road falsified receipts in a bid to sell inferior second-hand pianos at inflated prices, and were imprisoned for two months in April 1887.[79] When bankrupt three months later, Allen's conviction

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days he was afflicted with deafness and other infirmities, but in the hey-day of his strength "Taff" derived a good income from the trade.' Bamberger (October 1928), n.p. Apparently, he 'flourished in the 'eighties' as representative of the Bonnybridge Iron Foundry, [and] was a close friend of the late Mr & Mrs John Brinsmead. 'Here and There' in *The Pianomaker* (September 1925), p.541.

[73] *MP*, 25 April 1843.

[74] *LG*, 11 March 1890, p.1399.

[75] Duffy (1985), pp.39–40.

[76] Trial of Reuben Lidstone, 27 February 1843 (OB t18430227-1043).

[77] Since 1857 it had been a criminal offence 'to falsify the company's books and accounts with intent to defraud'. Day, R. G., *UK Accounting Regulation: An Historical Perspective* (School of Finance and Law, Bournemouth University, 2000), p.8.

[78] Trial of Thomas Coop, 6 March 1905 (OB t19050306-267).

[79] Trial of Urban Godtz, Robert Allen, William James Taylor, 28 March 1887 (OB t18870328-488). A neighbouring printer and stationer engaged to manage the business in their absence may have been responsible for the forged labels (for Erard, and other brands) subsequently discovered on their premises, for which the owners were tried again upon their release. Both were acquitted: Allen's defence being that he was 'away from the shop' (i.e. in prison) at the time of the alleged offence. Trial of Robert Allen, William James Taylor, 27 June 1887 (OB t18870627-719).

would have been taken into account when suspending his discharge for twelve months for failing to keep proper accounts.[80]

The former sentence of the piano importer and dealer Friederich Georg Steeger would have factored also in the suspension of his discharge for giving undue preference to one of his creditors.[81] He had been tried (and found guilty) a few years earlier of intimidating a pawnbroker when attempting to recover one of his hired pianos, in a scene reminiscent of Schrader and Hartz.[82] His discharge, when awarded in 1900, was suspended for two years. Similarly, the four misdemeanours proven against Farini Arthur Barker (owner of the Singer Pianoforte Company) during his bankruptcy in 1901,[83] would have weighed heavily with the court, as he had been bankrupt ten years earlier, and so, in the view of the court, should have been aware of his accountabilities during bankruptcy proceedings.[84]

One of the longest penalties – that of three years and six months – was handed to the Elman brothers, merchants and drapers on the Chatsworth Road, Clapton, who, in 1913, were found guilty of misconduct in that they 'pledged and disposed of otherwise than in the ordinary course of trade pianos which they had obtained upon credit'.[85] The instruments were probably pawned for cash, as it was a common ploy for traders in financial difficulties to purchase large quantities of goods on credit and immediately sell them at a loss to raise money.[86] Gambling was another potential means of restoring liquidity, as was engaging in 'rash and hazardous speculations'. The longest suspension of the study attached to this behaviour. German-born 'builder and pianoforte agent' Max Edward Schlesinger attracted a four-year penalty in 1888, having 'brought on his bankruptcy by rash and hazardous speculations'.[87] The court was highly critical of profligacy and its condemnation of individual cases might be reported in the press. In 1850, the commissioner denounced the bankruptcy

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[80] *LG*, 17 January 1899, p.370.
[81] *LG*, 27 July 1900, p.4703.
[82] See 'Thomson v. Steeger and Another' in *MP*, 23 March 1895. He was mugged some time later by 'five or six fellows' and robbed of his purse. Trial of James Pearce, 7 September 1909 (OB t19090907-85).
[83] *LG*, 2 July 1901, p.4463.
[84] *LG*, 27 February 1891, p.1156.
[85] *LG*, 25 November 1913, p.8769.
[86] Duffy (1985), p.38.
[87] *LG*, 13 March 1888, p.1615.

of musical instrument maker Herman Wrede junior as a 'disastrous affair',[88] and details of his excessive expenditure were exposed in *The Morning Post* the same year.[89] That his discharge was suspended for only one year illustrates the arbitrary nature of the court's code of punishment.

Creditors were also subjected to a long wait if assignees were slow to realise the bankrupt's estate. Those of piano maker Henry William Hardy waited seven years to receive six shillings in the pound in 1857 – or half what they were owed – and it was not a poor return.[90] In 1867, of nearly 9,000 cases of bankruptcy among the wider population, almost 6,000 returned no dividend whatsoever, and in half the remaining cases the dividend did not reach 2s 6d in the pound.[91] Creditors in the piano industry fared better. Among the study population that year, all recorded dividends returned 2s 6d in the pound or more, so piano industry insolvents were not society's most profligate. For the overall study period, of the 101 members of the study population for whom a dividend was recorded, the largest return was 15 shillings in the pound (or 75%) agreed in a deed of composition by piano-making partners Charles Jackson and Nathaniel Paine of Store Street, in 1866.[92] Only 20% returned less than a shilling.

The personal consequences of bankruptcy and insolvency

The social and emotional implications of financial failure are less easy to quantify, but were viewed differently, at the time, from a national and individual perspective. The nation was concerned with the volume of debtors incarcerated in its prisons, the ease with which they were placed there, the difficulty (and ease) with which they gained their release, and the need to discriminate between 'innocent' and fraudulent debtors, as recently described. Of added concern was the cost to the consumer of bad debts passed on by traders forced to raise their prices to cover their losses. These sentiments were expressed in the literature of the period, and in government reports and newspapers. On an individual level, for which there are fewer sources, the rationale would have been more complex. The tolerance extended to an individual

[88] *MC*, 11 February 1850.
[89] *MP*, 23 March 1850.
[90] *LG*, 5 May 1857, p.1614. Meanwhile, Hardy resumed his work. See Henry Wm Hardy (35), born *c*1816, Marylebone, pianoforte maker (1851 census).
[91] *The Bankruptcy Act 1869*, Introduction, p.v.
[92] *LG*, 4 December 1866, p.6792.

debtor would have been commensurate with his critic's experience of debt and bad debt, and the intimacy of their relationship. The empathy of a fellow insolvent may have been greater than the sympathy of a frustrated creditor, but most people would have had an appreciation of both perspectives given that all levels of society operated by credit and debt to a greater or lesser degree. That there was sympathy for the failed entrepreneur is indicated by the statement of a fraud victim in 1869, who explained that he 'knew the prisoner had been a bankrupt, but if a tradesman fails and then goes as foreman, it has a very honest look.'[93] As to the debtor himself, the extent of his shame or vexation would have been dependent upon his character and the severity of his financial distress. An example of brazen debt has been exposed by Bozarth and Debenham in their account of James Longman, who embroiled both friends and colleagues in his liabilities until they, too, were brought to financial collapse.[94] That Longman's contempt for his creditors was not exceptional was confirmed by a court official in 1818:

> I have, in almost every commission in which I have been named, found that the Bankrupt had acted with great injustice towards his creditors, generally with dishonesty and fraud, and always with imprudence and carelessness of the wreck of his substance, which in fact was not his own, but their's [...][95]

The fact that a bankrupt did not need not to commit an injustice to escape prison (which act was more likely to land him in prison) demonstrates that Longman, and other bankrupts like him, did not employ dishonest tactics to protect their freedom but to promote their personal interests.

For an honest debtor in modest circumstances, brought low by personal misfortune or the financial ruin of an associate, the ignominy of incarceration and the injury to his reputation might have been acute, to wit the shame concealed by Charles Dickens when his father was detained in the Marshalsea.[96] The debtor's injury might also extend to his potential for future credit. The extent to which credit was withdrawn from bankrupts and insolvents during the study period was not prescribed, but did not prevent members of the study population from starting their business again –

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[93] Trial of James Shelley, 1 March 1869 (OB t18690301-352).
[94] Bozarth and Debenham (2009), pp.45–108.
[95] Duffy (1985), p.155.
[96] In 1824. Tomalin, C., *Charles Dickens: A Life* (Viking, 2011), p.23.

even those who succumbed to persistent debt. The plasticity of London credit in the mid-nineteenth century may be illustrated by John Down Gordon, 'Piano Manufacturer, Importer of Foreign Clocks, Dealer and Chapman', whose third-class certificate was suspended for six months in 1857 as a penalty for dishonest trading.[97] He returned to his work as a piano maker, but, in 1864, fell into debt again, whereupon he entered into a deed of composition with his creditors, who agreed to accept just six pence in the pound, or 2.5% of what they were owed.[98] A year later he negotiated another deed, when his creditors were offered two shillings in the pound, or 16% of what they were owed.[99] The following year they were offered the same amount under a third deed of composition,[100] whereafter his creditors finally lost faith and interned him in the Debtors' Prison for London and Middlesex, where he was adjudged bankrupt a second time.[101] Although the issue of a third-class certificate signifies that Gordon was a fraudulent (or perhaps desperate) character, his tenacity was such that he returned to his business three times within a decade. Equally tenacious were his creditors in repeatedly extending him credit. It may be argued that this method of transacting business was so long-established and widely-accepted in London that the conduct of neither party was considered untoward. Gordon and his creditors were practical tradesmen who recognised that business 'operated that way', and such an understanding allowed them to root their insolvency in the exigencies of commerce rather than the personal mismanagement of their affairs. For Gordon, the 'shame' attached to bankruptcy and insolvency may have been felt less keenly than that by Dickens, whose father was a white-collar employee of the Royal Navy ostensibly living beyond his means. Furthermore, any shame felt by Gordon and fellow members of the piano industry would have been diluted by the fact that so many of their respected colleagues experienced the same fate. Of the 489 'Pianoforte makers in London and its environs from 1760 to 1851' listed by Harding,[102] 91 (or almost 20%) are identified as bankrupts or insolvent debtors at some time in their career. Christopher Ganer (1811); Daniel Child (1827); James Kennay (1832); George Kollmann (1840); Isaac Mott (1840); William Edmeades (1841); William Dettmer (1845); Robert Middleton (1848); Thomas and Robert

[97] *LG*, 4 December 1857, p.4317.
[98] *LG*, 25 March 1864, p.1791.
[99] *LG*, 6 October 1865, p.4756.
[100] *LG*, 2 October 1866, p.5309.
[101] *LG*, 28 December 1866, p.7199.
[102] Harding (1978), pp.402–26.

Allison (1848); James Ballingall (1851); Joseph Cadby (1880); James Arthur Allison (1880); Walter Monington and John Weston (1903); members of the Squire family; the warehouseman James Rolfe (1879); and respected supplier to the trade Henry Brooks (who failed, in 1882, with 'liabilities to the amount of 65,000*l*.')[103] – were all declared bankrupt or insolvent once in their career – some twice (Brooks, Childs, Cadby, Edmeades) and Ballingall's company four times. The fact that they survived to trade again would have diminished not only the stigma, but also the dread, of insolvency. This is not to understate the harsh reality of bankruptcy or imprisonment for those who experienced it, but to suggest that the fear of insolvency was not an appreciable deterrent to ambition in the trade.

Section Two

This section examines the statistics generated by the study data and shows, with the aid of tables and charts, the numbers to have been involved in bankruptcy, insolvency and deeds of arrangement. The figures generated by *The London Gazette* are not wholly accurate as there are lacunae in the judicial proceedings reported at the time, and the character recognition software used to search the *Gazette* has struggled to identify search words where the print quality in the original document is poor. A small number of records may have escaped capture, but a favourably accurate account of the total number of bankrupts and insolvents is produced where none has been offered before.

Study data were captured in two major online searches: the first using the word 'piano' (which yielded 1361 results), and the second using the word 'pianoforte' (yielding 3506). A third, using the words 'musical instrument', identified known piano makers who described themselves as musical instrument makers at the time of their debt. Not all the search results related to bankruptcy and insolvency: more than 200 announced partnership changes, and a similar number the filing of patents (see Appendices 9 and 10). Discounting these, and allowing for multiple announcements concerning individual cases, the total number of cases relating to the capital was 616. Of these, 256 (or 41%) related to bankruptcy; 213 (or 35%) to insolvency; 145 (or 24%) to deeds of arrangement; and one to a company winding up. Making further

[103] *The Daily News* [*DN*, hereafter], 8 November 1882.

allowance for 76 individuals who were prosecuted on more than one occasion, the total number of insolvent individuals identified in the London piano industry was 510. Appendix 7 lists them alphabetically, Appendix 8 chronologically, and Appendix 9 by occupation. There follows a two-part examination of the data. First, a review of the occupations involved, and why some occupations may have been more prone to insolvency than others. Second, an examination of the frequency and timing of debt and imprisonment, and its coincidence (if any) with incidents in the piano industry, wider economic forces, and changes to the debt laws.

Bankruptcy and insolvency by occupation

The different occupations recorded by the study population are listed at Appendix 9. They range from manufacturing activities (e.g. 'action maker', 'hammer coverer', 'frame manufacturer'), to sales activities (e.g. 'dealer', 'agent', 'importer') to the general administration of the trade (e.g. 'book-keeper', 'car man', 'clerk'). If grouped into the four broad categories of making, dealing, tuning, and 'other' (to include clerks, errand boys, accountants, packers, repairers and removers, etc.), the total cases of insolvency recorded in each of the four categories result at Figure 29.

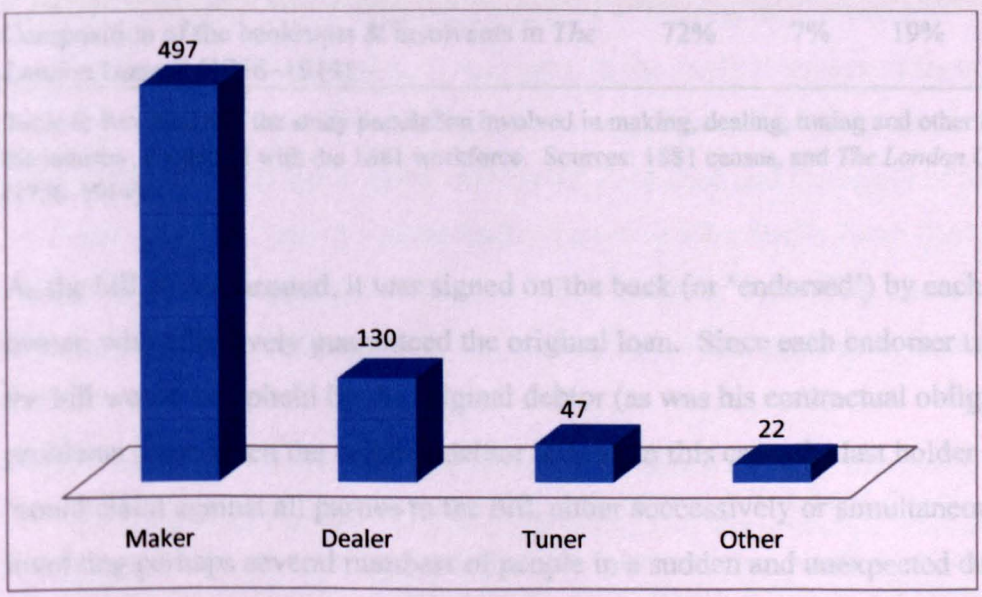

Figure 29: Total cases of debt identified in each category of the industry. Source: *The London Gazette* (1756–1914).

Figure 29 confirms that the members of the workforce most frequently prosecuted for debt were those involved in the instrument's manufacture. Their rate of prosecution was 2.5 times higher than for the other sectors of the industry combined.

The reasons for this may be two-fold. First, the percentage of the workforce involved in manufacturing was traditionally higher than that involved in other categories of the industry (confirmed, in relation to 1881, at Table 6 below), so, proportionately, the opportunities for insolvency in the manufacturing sector were increased.

Second, the purchase of raw materials for the manufacture of the piano and its component parts was routinely negotiated by long-term credit and settled with a bill of exchange, which, when it failed, triggered financial repercussions that redistributed the solvency of many of those involved. The bill of exchange was used widely during the study period as an instrument by which a creditor accepted payment at a future date. Once the debtor 'accepted' the bill, the creditor could await payment when the bill matured, discount it at a bank (i.e. exchange it for a cash sum less than the sum of the bill), or pass it to one of his own creditors in exchange for goods (or in settlement of his own debts), as a form of paper cash.[104]

	Maker	**Dealer**	**Tuner**	**Other**
Composition of the workforce in the 1881 census	64%	5%	27%	4%
Composition of the bankrupts & insolvents in *The London Gazette* (1756–1914)	72%	7%	19%	3%

Table 6: Percentage of the study population involved in making, dealing, tuning and other aspects of the industry, compared with the 1881 workforce. Sources: 1881 census, and *The London Gazette* (1756–1914).

As the bill passed around, it was signed on the back (or 'endorsed') by each new owner, who effectively guaranteed the original loan. Since each endorser understood the bill would be upheld by the original debtor (as was his contractual obligation), problems arose when the original debtor failed. In this case, the last holder of the bill 'could claim against all parties to the bill, either successively or simultaneously,'[105] involving perhaps several numbers of people in a sudden and unexpected demand for cash. The cumulative collapse of a significant number of bills circulating within the industry was of specific concern to the manufacturer.

[104] Duffy (1985), p.229.
[105] Duffy (1985), p.234.

The solvency of the dealer was also affected by the bill of exchange. His vulnerability is demonstrated in Table 7 (below), which compares the number of the workforce to have been involved in each category of occupation in 1881, and the number in each category to have been prosecuted for debt.

	Maker	Dealer	Tuner	Other
1881 workforce	4231	316	1779	239
Bankrupts and insolvents (1756–1914)	496	129	46	22
Bankrupts and insolvents as a % of the census workforce	11%	41%	2.5%	9%

Table 7: Number of the study population involved in each category of the industry, as a percentage of the 1881 workforce. Sources: 1881 census, and *The London Gazette* (1756–1914).

A percentage calculation shows that the category to have suffered the greatest number of prosecutions *pro rata* was the dealer, who, though numbering only 7% of the manufacturers, suffered nearly four times their prosecutions for debt. The potential outcome for the dealer is recorded in the study findings. Piano manufacturers Avill & Smart, of Tabernacle Street, Finsbury (1891),[106] Bansall & Sons of Hackney (1902),[107] and John Broadwood & Sons (1911)[108] were among manufacturers who filed for the bankruptcy of a faltering dealer, though manufacturers were vulnerable, in their turn, to the credit tolerance of their suppliers. In 1904, R. F. Williams of South Tottenham was presented with a petition by the 'pianoforte materials and veneers merchants' Zachariah and Company of Stoke Newington Road,[109] and the piano hammer coverer John Smith Tozer filed a petition against the piano manufacturer Thomas Silsby in 1908.[110] In 1898, piano makers Chudleigh and Co., of Camden Town, were served with a bankruptcy notice by a

[106] *LG*, 8 March 1892, p.1434. According to a timber merchant to the trade, 'The Grovers operated on a large scale, and [...] purchased the business of Avill & Smart, then in Tabernacle Street, Finsbury. Avill and Smart were in a big way of business. The concern was old-established, originally Avill's, and if I remember arightly, he took Smart, his foreman, into partnership.' Grover & Grover also acquired T. D'Almaine of Finsbury Pavement. 'At that time Grover & Grover had an office in Finsbury Square. They had many successes, but the purchase of a large tract of land in the Tottenham district proved a disastrous undertaking. Subsequently, Walter Grover started on his own, at the back of his dwelling-house in Tollington Park, as the Empire Pianoforte Company, subsequently acquired by J. Humphrey & Co., Ltd.'. Bamberger (October 1928), n.p.

[107] *LG*, 21 February 1902, p.1145.

[108] *LG*, 19 September 1911, p.6918.

[109] *LG*, 25 March 1904, p.1978.

[110] *LG*, 11 September 1908, p.6634.

German bank.[111] That these examples date from the late nineteenth century is due to the greater level of detail reported by *The London Gazette* from that period.

The insolvency of the tuner is unlikely to have resulted from a failed bill of exchange relating to the large-scale purchase of goods. His solvency was linked to that of his employer (if he worked for a factory or dealer), or his own productivity (if he worked for himself). Both states could be affected by excessive personal expenditure, but no tuners were reported by the commissioners for gambling or rash and hazardous speculation. A lack of data prevents a better understanding of the tuner's causes of insolvency, but clues may be found in the study. Imprisoned for debt in 1828, piano tuner James Sharp recorded his former occupations as a milliner, dressmaker, haberdasher and foreman to a boot-maker,[112] and, in 1869, bankrupt tuner Thomas Humphrey Williams, noted his former careers as a lithographic printer and pork butcher.[113] Neither man is likely to have been among the better class of tuner.[114] Conversely, Joseph Challenger was a 'Music Tuner to Messrs. Broadwood' when he was imprisoned for debt in 1837.[115] His income would have been reliable, if not large, and if he were the same Challenger to have worked for the firm in 1834, he earned £2 8s per week.[116] At that time, the average weekly wage of a Broadwood indoor tuner was £1 10s, so Challenger was among the better paid indoor tuners and his insolvency must have stemmed from causes other than a lack of steady work.

The 'other', or fourth category of worker, was also largely dependent upon the solvency of his employer. As with the tuner, however, employees of reputable firms still managed to work themselves into debt: to wit a warehouseman to Messrs. Clementi and Co. in 1830, an assistant to piano maker William Wiggett in 1863, and a book-keeper in the employ of J. B. Cramer & Co. Ltd, in 1900.[117]

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[111] J. Wichelhaus P. Sohn of Elberfeld, Germany. *LG*, 20 September 1898, p.5598.
[112] *LG*, 29 February 1828, p.429.
[113] *LG*, 1 February 1859, p.449; and *LG*, 27 July 1869, p.4237.
[114] Though James Sharp did go on to be a piano maker. See James Sharp (56), born *c*1795, Kensington, Middlesex, living at 4 Silver Street (1851 census).
[115] *LG*, 3 October 1837, p.2552.
[116] Broadwood papers (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).
[117] Respectively: Edward Graddon (insolvent, 1830); William Grieves (bankrupt, 1863); and William Dell Sommers (bankrupt, 1900).

A detailed biography of all 510 debtors in the study population is beyond the scope of this survey, but section three presents a sample of the problems they encountered. There follows, first, an examination of the frequency and timing of insolvency and imprisonment among the workforce.

Frequency and timing

Table 8 (eighteenth century), and Figures 30 (nineteenth century) and 31 (twentieth century) below, chart the industry's prosecutions for debt from 1756 to 1914. As shall be shown, patterns of insolvency in the piano industry were not ineluctably tied to the national trend. Table 8 shows the small number of prosecutions to have been suffered by the piano industry in the last half of the eighteenth century.

Name	Occupation	Status	Year
Roger Plenius	Harpsichord Maker, Dealer and Chapman	Bankrupt	1756
" "	Harpsichord Maker	Insolvent	1761*
George Garcka	Musical Instrument Maker, Dealer & Chapman	Bankrupt	1787
Charles Clagget	" " "	Bankrupt	1793
James Longman	" " "	Bankrupt	1795*
Francis Fane Broderip	" " "	Bankrupt	1795*
James Henry Houston	" " "	Bankrupt	1796 & 1799
Henry Lawson	" " "	Bankrupt	1796
Thomas Culliford	" " "	Bankrupt	1799*
Charles Barrow	" " "	Bankrupt	1799*

Table 8: Known individuals in the London piano industry to have been prosecuted for debt (18th century). Asterisk denotes imprisonment. Source: *The London Gazette* (1756–1799).

Only eleven cases were identified between 1756 and 1800, despite national statistics reporting 'violent increases in bankruptcies' as a result of widespread speculative activity.[118] That the industry escaped this violence suggests three considerations: that its members did not engage in widespread speculative activity (at that time); that the industry was not then large enough to return a significant number of cases; and (or) that demand for the new product was sufficiently buoyant to protect its practitioners from insolvency. All three considerations are likely to have protected

[118] Duffy (1985), p.168.

members of the workforce, but Margrit Schulte Beerbühl invites a fourth interpretation, that an added protection from insolvency may have been one's nationality. In her research into the risk of failure attached to German merchants working in Britain during wars with France from 1793 to 1815,[119] Beerbühl notes that German merchants came from well-established merchant families in their home country, with 'far-reaching trade and family relations stretching across the continent'. She maintains that 'sufficient starting capital, as well as being embedded in a widespread network of kin and family, probably contributed to the[ir] lower level of failures'. Therefore, while the outbreak of war with France in 1793 shook the business community in Britain, the number of failures among German immigrants 'did not follow the general trend' but, in fact, recorded fewer failures than the previous year.[120] It is certain that the piano industry shared this low level of failure (only the Irish-born piano maker Charles Clagget succumbed to insolvency in 1793),[121] but how far the resistance of the industry may be attributed to the nationality of its members is open to conjecture. While many German piano makers did avoid insolvency during hostilities with France (for example, Gabriel Buntebart, John Geib and James Ball), others, such as Christopher Ganer and potentially George Garcka, did not.[122] Allowing for exceptions to the rule, however, it is material to note that the piano industry was not alone in avoiding the trend for 'violent increases in bankruptcies' during this period.

Harding notes approximately sixty piano making establishments operating in the capital before 1800, though it is possible there were more.[123] Taking these sixty workshops as a minimum, the insolvents noted at Table 8 (being nine individuals associated with seven workshops) represent, as a maximum, 12% of the known London establishments operating in this period. To understand how this rate of insolvency compares with the overall London musical instrument-making industry, it

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[119] Beerbühl, M. Schulte, 'The Napoleonic Wars and the risk of Failure: German merchant houses in Britain (1793–1815)', paper presented at the Seventh European Social Science History conference (Lisbon, 2008).

[120] Beerbühl (Lisbon, 2008), p.3.

[121] For his nationality, see review by D. De Val, 'Makers of the Piano 1700–1820', *Music and Letters* 76/2 (Oxford University Press, May 1995), pp.289–291, at p.291. For his bankruptcy, see *LG*, 25 May 1793, p.440.

[122] George Garcka's nationality has yet to be proved. He has long been associated with the mythological 'Twelve Apostles' from Germany, whose authenticity has been disproved by Michael Cole. See Cole, M. (2000), pp.9–52, at p.40.

[123] Harding (1978), pp.402–26.

is appropriate to make only a broad speculation based on the few sources available. Strange and Nex note from 'a preliminary search' of *The London Gazette* that 48 musical instrument makers succumbed to debt during the second half of the eighteenth century, including, presumably, the nine members of the piano industry identified here.[124] A comprehensive study has yet to be completed of the total London population engaged in musical instrument-making in the second half of the eighteenth century, but an online database initiated by Lance Whitehead and Paul Banks has collated, to date, details of more than five hundred.[125] Accepting that this total may be incomplete, but using it as a basic minimum, the rate of prosecuted debt among individuals (not workshops) in the musical instrument-making community in the second half of the eighteenth century was no more than 9.6%.[126] Working with this current approximation – 12% for piano industry workshops and 9.6% for musical instrument-makers – it would appear that the pressures that triggered insolvency in the wider instrument-making community obtained across the piano trade. Neither the piano making industry, nor its wider instrument-making discipline, were subject to 'violent' rates of insolvency in the last decades of the eighteenth-century, ergo those listed at Table 8 were not representative of the trade.

Low levels of insolvency experienced by the industry in the late eighteenth century continued into the nineteenth century (see Figure 30 below), with only nine individuals prosecuted for debt prior to 1820. The musical instrument-making community fared equally well, reporting only ten.[127]

By 1820, Harding records another dozen or so piano workshops operating in the capital, but despite this increase the approximate level of insolvency within the piano industry remained at 12% (equivalent figure for the musical instrument-making industry not known).

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[124] Strange and Nex (2010), pp.81–103, at p.96.

[125] The database is entitled 'London Music Trades 1750 to 1800': http://lmt.rcm.ac.uk/

[126] If the total number of workers proves to be double that currently established by Whitehead and Banks, the rate of insolvency among musical instrument-makers will be halved, and the corresponding ratio among the piano-making community proportionately increased.

[127] Data for musical instrument makers also acquired from a study of *The London Gazette.*

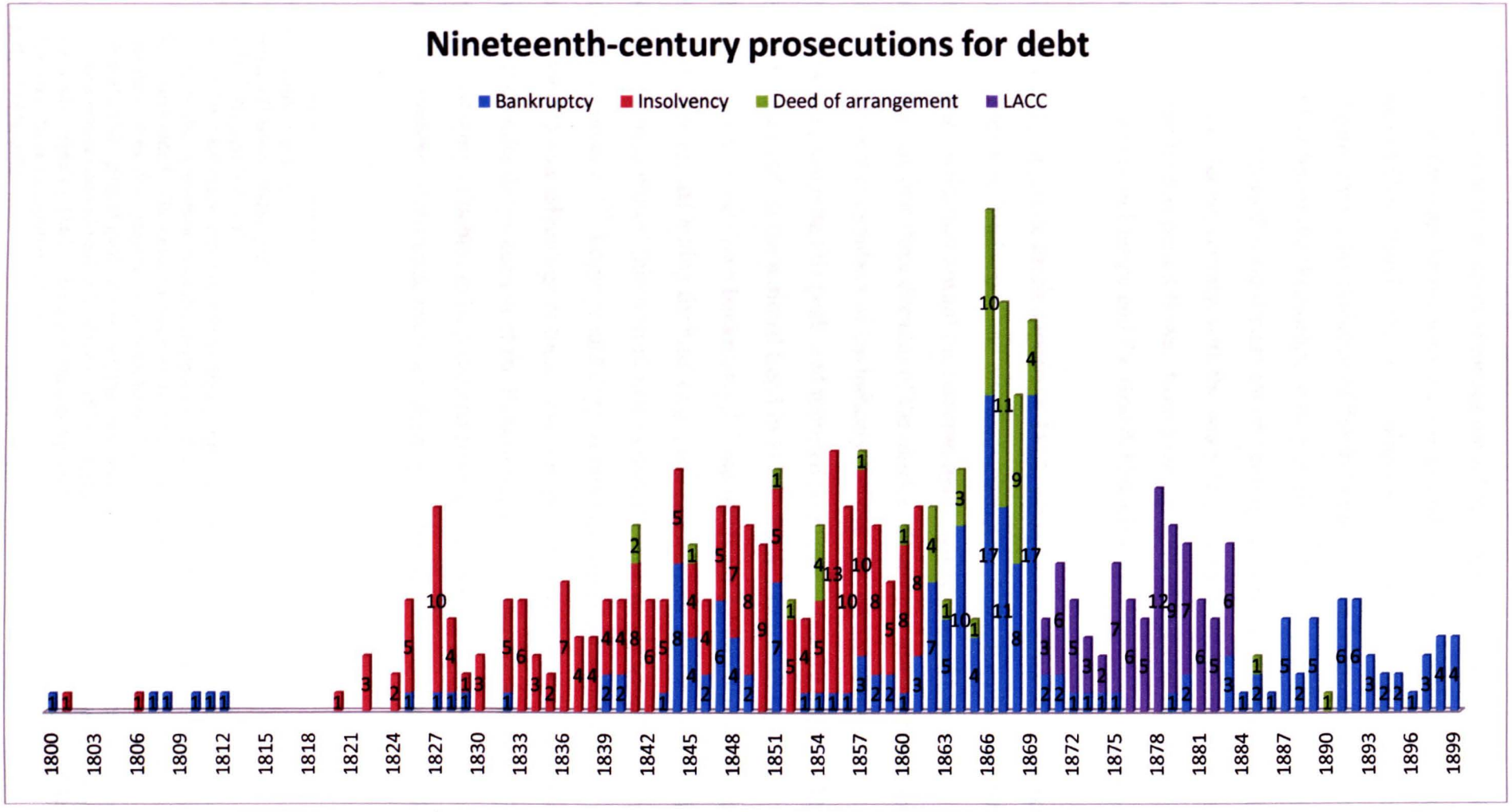

Figure 30: Number and nature of prosecutions for debt in the London piano industry (19th century). Source: *The London Gazette* (1800–1899).

In contrast, national bankruptcy statistics record that 'dramatic increases in failures initiated during the Napoleonic wars were large and continued for three or four years' between 1810–12 and 1815–17,[128] with the year 1810 recording a peak of 2,112.[129] Again, we see no evidence of this at Figure 30. Only one prosecution is noted in 1810 (that of the 'Pianoforte maker, dealer and chapman' Thomas Loud) and, in fact, this period is significant for presenting the least number of prosecuted cases in the nineteenth century, with the years 1813 to 1819 recording exactly none. Resilience during this period flowed from a strong domestic market and viable markets elsewhere in Europe and the British Colonies.

The first spike in prosecutions appears in 1827, when ten members of the workforce were prosecuted for insolvency and one for bankruptcy. Here, the piano industry shows its first inclination toward the national trend, where 'record levels' of bankruptcy in the first three decades of the nineteenth century reached their peak in 1826.[130] Given that members of the industry resisted the 'record levels' of insolvency approaching this peak, and reported no prosecutions for debt in 1826, why did it succumb to the national trend in 1827? From 1825, bankrupts were allowed to declare their own bankruptcy,[131] and insolvent debtors who made their living 'by buying and letting for hire' (e.g. piano dealers), or 'by the workmanship of goods and commodities' (hired workmen excluded), were newly admitted to the bankruptcy process.[132] Logic would suggest that insolvent debtors would be encouraged to take advantage of these new concessions to resolve their financial difficulties under the protection of the Bankruptcy Court, since bankrupts were still the only category of debtor to be protected from a likely prison sentence. However, only one member of the trade made a voluntary declaration of bankruptcy in 1827

[128] Duffy (1985), p.173.
[129] Beerbühl (Lisbon, 2008), p.2.
[130] Duffy (1985), pp.168–169.
[131] Prior to this, bankrupts were not able to file a petition for their own bankruptcy (Duffy (1985), p.25), so the onus rested with the creditor to satisfy the court that an act of bankruptcy had been committed. The most common of the 17 acts of bankruptcy were staying indoors for an unusually long time, staying away from home for a similarly long time (perhaps fleeing abroad), and 'lying in gaol for two months after being imprisoned for debt'. The period of imprisonment was reduced to 21 days in 1825. Duffy (1985), p.24. Acts of bankruptcy were reduced to eight by 1883. These are listed at Appendix 22, together with the names of those known to have committed each act.
[132] Duffy (1985), p.22.

(piano maker Daniel Child),[133] while eight others were prosecuted as insolvent debtors, still unable to claim bankruptcy as a trader or by 'buying and letting for hire' (see Appendix 8). Changes to the debt law were not, therefore, the catalyst for increased prosecutions in 1827. Looking to the piano industry for a possible cause, piano maker James Bateman of 18 Dean Street was the first to succumb to insolvency that year, but it would be a facile argument to presuppose that the nine insolvents who followed were all his employees, thrown out of work and unavoidably into debt. As shall be shown, even employees who lost their livelihood in the wake of a fire were not inexorably reduced to insolvency. Almost certainly, the spike in piano industry prosecutions in 1827 was a consequence of the economic downturn that brought a peak in national bankruptcies the year before.

There followed a series of recessions over the next forty years as the Bank of England sought to stabilize its monetary policy. Downturns recurred in 1837, 1847, 1857 and 1866,[134] and with the notable exception of 1866 (when ramifications are clearly reflected in the study data) the piano industry appears to have weathered these recessions to a resilient degree. Those most prosecuted for debt during this period were insolvent debtors (shown in red at Figure 30). Between 1827 and 1 January 1862, when insolvent debtors were finally absorbed into the bankruptcy system,[135] insolvent debtors accounted for 75% of the industry's prosecutions. Therefore, the majority of those who 'failed' in the piano industry during this period were traders owing debts of less than £100 etc. (perhaps small suppliers to the trade, or 'garret' makers, making one or two instruments a week), or workers who did not trade, but earned their livelihood by 'manual or mental labour, which involved neither buying and selling nor the use of extensive credit' (i.e. employees).[136]

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[133] *LG*, 10 August 1827, p.1729.

[134] Bordo, M. D., 'The Financial Crisis of 1825 and the Restructuring of the British Financial System', *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis Review* 80/3 (May/June 1998), pp.77–82, at p.80.

[135] Discrimination between bankrupts and insolvent debtors (and traders and non-traders) was finally abolished in 1861 when the Insolvent Debtors Court was closed and its duties devolved upon the London Court of Bankruptcy. Duffy (1985), p.104.

[136] This supposition is supported by the occupations noted by the insolvent debtors prosecuted during this period. Nearly a third in the category 'maker' were journeymen working as action makers, case makers, key makers, etc., and a similar number reported occupations that suggest they were employed (e.g. regulator, French polisher). Another 10% were the makers of component parts. Among the prosecuted dealers (who comprised 15% of the total insolvents), 60% were only occasional dealers, who combined piano sales with other occupations in the trade. These, then, were the common casualties of the period: small to

Changes to the debt laws after 1860 are clearly reflected in the chart. An end to the colour red, in 1861, marks the absorption of the insolvent debtor into the bankruptcy process. An increase in the popularity of the deed of assignment (coloured green) reflects provisions in the *Bankruptcy Act* of 1861 intended to facilitate its use, whereby the debtor was no longer required to surrender all his property (as in bankruptcy) in order to make the arrangement legally binding.[137] The result was a sharp increase in fraudulent arrangements as debtors sought to collude with amenable creditors to defraud the body of others, and for nearly a decade deeds were elevated to 'the commonest form of settlement' until the situation was addressed in 1869.[138] This was a national trend to which the piano industry appears to have fully subscribed.

Heightened prosecutions from 1866 to 1869 stemmed, once again, from economic instability, generated on this occasion by the collapse of the London wholesale bank Overend, Gurney and Company, which failed in May 1866 owing approximately eleven million pounds. When payments were suspended on 10 May more than two hundred banks and businesses failed.[139] The 22 members of the piano industry prosecuted after 10 May that year – whose insolvency may or may not have been caused directly by the crisis, but whose situation certainly would not have been helped – are listed at Appendix 14. They include the owners of established concerns (e.g. Middleton & Copley of 17 Castle Street, Finsbury),[140] and suppliers, dealers and employees. Again, those involved in manufacture suffered the greatest number of prosecutions (95%), though all were administered by the bankruptcy system and many managed to negotiate a deed of arrangement with creditors eager to secure a guaranteed return on at least part of their loss during the recession that was to follow.

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medium cogs in the industry, many of whom returned to their work, and some to become insolvent again.

[137] The 1991 Classic Encyclopedia: www.1911encyclopedia.org/Bankruptcy, consulted 5 May 2013.

[138] Duffy (1985), p.340.

[139] The history of the company and its downfall is described by M. Collins at 'Overend Gurney crisis, 1866' in Newman, P.K., M. Milgate and J. Eatwell (eds.) *The New Palgrave Dictionary of Money and Finance* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1992), p.101.

[140] 'Middleton was quite in a large way of business for those days. Later on, he took his son-in-law into partnership and the name was changed to Middleton and Copley. When that firm failed, Copley went to Henry Ward as a tuner.' Bamberger (February 1928), p.1083.

After the *Bankruptcy Act* of 1869 there followed a near uniform preference for settling insolvency by deed of arrangement. The deed was given a new name – Liquidation by Agreement or Composition with Creditors (or LACC, coloured purple at Figure 30) – and set 'upon an entirely new footing' to eradicate previous misuse.[141] However, its major failing was in releasing trustees from the supervision of the court. The result was an invitation to fraud, and whether or not the deed was universally abused, it is notable that the piano industry ceased to make use of the LACC as soon as its flaws were corrected in 1883. The interpretation here is that members of the piano industry were alive to the weaknesses of the LACC and repelled by the measures introduced to correct them.

The British economy suffered two more downturns before the end of the nineteenth century,[142] but neither that of 1886 nor 1893 is reflected in the study data. Even the sale of the Kirkman factory, in 1897 (with the potential loss of more than 200 jobs) failed to cause a rise in prosecutions.[143] The purchaser, John Clementi Collard, may have retained a portion of the staff, while any workers to have been released were able to find employment elsewhere. Even the liquidation of large firms such as Charles Cadby & Co., in 1880;[144] Arthur Allison & Co., in the same year;[145] and the action and key manufacturer Henry Brooks, two years later, did not result in a spike in prosecutions.[146]

The last two recessions of the study period, in 1904 and 1908-09, are more readily perceived in the data at Figure 31 (below),[147] but not markedly so, and during that decade the industry returned prosecutions only commensurate with the national average: that is, less than ten annually for most trades and occupations.[148] The English piano industry itself was not in regression during this latter period. Between 1900 and 1910 the country's annual output reached 70,000 to 100,000 instruments, nearly four times more than forty years earlier.[149] Such steady growth in

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[141] *The Bankruptcy Act 1869*, Introduction, p.ix.
[142] Lester (1995), pp.264–65.
[143] This figure is based on a calculation at Chapter 6, p.217.
[144] *LG*, 26 March 1880, p.2285.
[145] *LG*, 13 July 1880, p.3952.
[146] *LG*, 3 October 1882, p.4486.
[147] Lester (1995), pp.264–65.
[148] Reported by the Board of Trade. Lester (1995), p.251.
[149] Ehrlich (1996), p.157.

productivity protected the industry from mass unemployment and allowed it to shadow the national trend for declining prosecutions from the passage of the *Bankruptcy Act* of 1883 to the start of the First World War.[150]

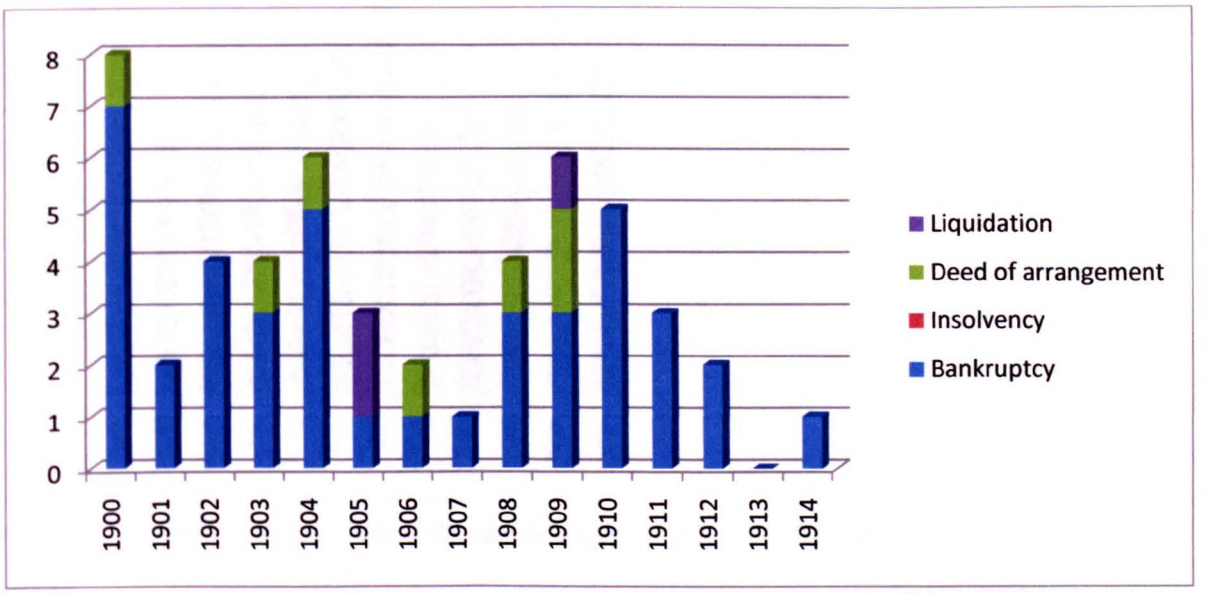

Figure 31: Number and nature of prosecutions for debt in the London piano industry (20th century). Source: *The London Gazette* (1900–1914).

Patterns of insolvency

Figure 32 (below) shows the study prosecutions collated by the month in which they were lodged to examine any possibility of a cyclical pattern. The monthly ratio of each class of prosecution (insolvency, bankruptcy, deed of arrangement) remains fairly even across the year and demonstrates the pervasive nature of debt across all ranks of the trade. Monthly totals show more variation, and exhibit a distinct peak in July. This mid-summer peak reflects the cyclical nature of the piano industry, where productivity was partially suspended during the summer months, then escalated in the autumn in preparation for the Christmas market and nuptial orders for the spring. Seasonal activity was a long-standing tradition in the trade and described in the 1920s as follows:

> At Easter the average manufacturer sacked at least half his employees, keeping the others just making parts. This was because he could not store the pianos. Most factories were very small, and when a week's stock was made it had to be sold or the firm was finished. During the summer the workmen went down to the seaside, and

[150] Lester (1995), p.300.

became waiters and did other jobs. Then after August Bank Holiday they all came back and worked flat out.[151]

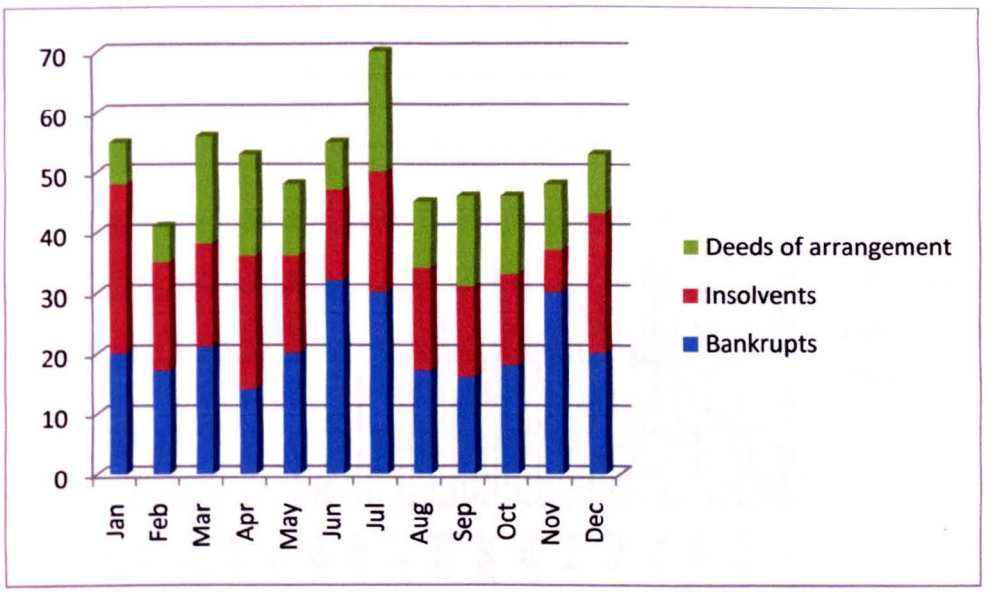

Figure 32: Distribution of prosecutions (by month lodged). Source: *The London Gazette* (1756–1914).

Employees unable to find work during the summer months, and small employers with insufficient capital to withstand the summer downturn, are likely to have contributed to increased prosecutions in July.

Prisoners

Figure 33 (below) shows the proportion of the study population to have been in prison when details of their prosecution went to press. Missing from the chart are members of the industry gaoled in the eighteenth century (noted instead at Table 8) and those found to have been in prison after the abolition of imprisonment for debt in 1869, who were admitted for criminal offences.[152] In total, 138 industry debtors (or 27%) are known to have been imprisoned (see those underlined at Appendix 7).

[151] Wainwright (1975), p.150.

[152] In 1876, piano maker Josiah Nightingale served nine months in the House of Correction, Cold Bath Fields, Clerkenwell for 'larceny and receiving'. See Josiah Nightingale, *England and Wales, Criminal Registers*, 23 October 1876 (Ancestry). Piano maker Arthur Madell was admitted to Holloway prison for an unknown crime in 1883. See *LG*, 17 July 1883, p.3615. Both were negotiating a LACC with their creditors at the time, and both returned to their work in the trade.

The first casualty of the nineteenth century was the musical instrument maker Stephen Moore, imprisoned in the Fleet as an insolvent debtor in 1801 and dead shortly after.[153]

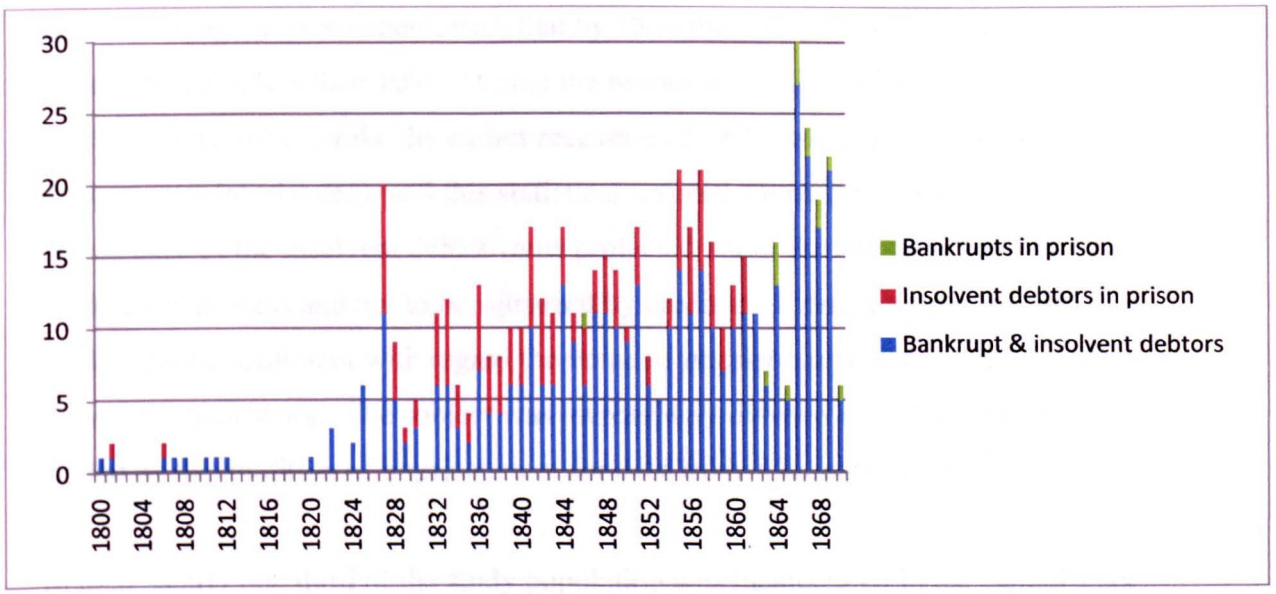

Figure 33: Levels of imprisonment of for debt in the 19th century (to its abolition in 1869). Source: *The London Gazette* (1756–1869).

Five years later, John Henry Schrader was imprisoned in the Marshalsea,[154] whereafter there followed a period of twenty years when none of the eleven insolvent debtors noted in the study population was found to have been imprisoned. This dynamic is likely to have stemmed from the commercial optimism of the years before the financial crash of 1826, when creditors could afford to be sanguine in the light of other earnings, and hopeful of recovering any loss. Loss of hope exhibits swiftly after the crash of 1827, when more than 80% of insolvent debtors were imprisoned in a bid to make them pay. That year marks the highest number of the piano industry workforce to have been imprisoned in one year: nine in total. The nervous disposition of the creditor remains evident to 1838 (when his powers of arrest were revoked),[155] imprisoning, on average, 85% of all debtors between 1827

[153] See will of Stephen Moore, piano forte maker, proved 1803 (NA PROB 11/1400).

[154] Schrader survived to be working still in 1818. See baptism of Elizabeth Schrader (5 April 1818) at St George Hanover Square: parents John Henry (cabinet maker) and Isabella Schrader of Marylebone (Ancestry).

[155] Arrest was abolished under *Lord Cottenham's Act* of 1838, unless the creditor could prove to the judge of a superior court that the debtor was about to flee the country. Duffy (1985), p.100.

and 1838.[156] The effects of Lord Brougham's Acts of 1842 and 1844 (which enabled insolvent debtors and non-traders to escape prison by declaring their own insolvency), are reflected in the chart by an increasing divergence between rates of prosecution and imprisonment, such that by 1850 the numbers committed to gaol were reduced to less than 10%. During the recession of 1866–69 those to be gaoled averaged only 10% (unlike the earlier recession of 1827, when more than 80% of debtors were imprisoned), and this statistical reversal stems from two considerations: the absence of the insolvent debtor (now protected under the administration of the bankruptcy process and not to be squeezed by creditors during a recession); and a shift in public sentiment with regard the value of imprisoning debtors and separating them from their work. The subject was increasingly debated in parliament and settled by the abolition of imprisonment for debt from 1 January 1870.[157]

In total, nearly one third of the study population was incarcerated in the capital's six debtors' prisons, and sixteen on more than one occasion. Those most frequently admitted to gaol were the dealer Thomas Hayward and maker John Spademan, who were each imprisoned on three occasions.[158] The last to be imprisoned was the piano manufacturer and bigamist Robert Henry Rodwell, who, on 4 January 1870, was awaiting release from Whitecross Street prison, having been adjudged bankrupt on New Year's Eve 1869, the day before imprisonment for debt was formally abolished.[159]

Two of the study's female debtors were also imprisoned (see Table 9 below). The widow of the piano maker Robert Wales continued his business in Charles Street, St Pancras, for four years before succumbing to insolvency and imprisonment in

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[156] After this date, insolvent debtors laying in gaol were not imprisoned by their creditors, but seeking to qualify as bankrupts, or unable (or unwilling) to pay their debts and gaoled in execution.

[157] Duffy (1985), p.104.

[158] On his first visit to prison, John Spademan caused his son to join him in the Marshalsea (*LG*, 11 March 1842, p.715), as he had styled his business 'Spademan and Son', though his son was only a journeyman to his father, and not a partner. *LG*, 27 May 1842, p.1450. Despite his experience, Henry Overton Spademan persisted as a piano maker, noting his occupation as pianoforte maker at the baptism of three of his children: Clara (3 October 1857), Elizabeth Overton and Henry Hastings (4 October 1857), all at St Pancras, Camden (Ancestry). He witnessed his father's return to gaol for debt in 1846, and again in 1856 (then aged nearly 80). *LG*, 12 May 1846, p.1780; and *LG*, 8 January 1856, p.99. See also, John Spademan (63), born *c*1788, Stanford, Lincs, pianoforte maker (1851 census); and then Henry Spademan (47), born *c*1814, City, photographic artist (1861 census).

[159] *LG*, 4 January 1870, p.81. For details of his bigamy, see *MP*, 11 November 1835.

1838,[160] and, as noted earlier, Joanna Kollmann was held in a sponging house before being removed to the Queen's Prison and then Whitecross Street prison.[161] Her endeavours to avoid insolvency are discussed again below.

Name	Occupation	Address	Status	Date
Joanna Anderson (T/A Anderson & Co)	Piano forte maker dealer and chapwoman	Dean Street, Soho	Bankrupt	3 May 1808
Sarah Wales (widow)	Pianoforte manufacturer	33, Charles Street, Hampstead Road	Insolvent*	9 Jan 1838
Ann Tregear (partner Thomas Crump Lewis)	Pianoforte, print & music sellers, dealers & chapmen	96, Cheapside	Bankrupt	31 Jul 1844
Joanna Sophia Kollmann (spinster)	Occasionally buying & selling pianofortes	German Chapel Royal, St James's	Insolvent*	11 Sep 1846
Hannah Dawe (spinster)	Pianoforte manufacturer	57, Park Street, Islington	Bankrupt	19 Jul 1875
Emily Ballingall (widow) (T/A James Ballingall & Son)	Pianoforte manufacturer & steam sawyer	38 & 40, Great College Street, Camden Town	Bankrupt	1 Dec 1887
Charlotte Tolkien (widow) (T/A Henry Tolkien)	Pianoforte manufacturer	111, Oxford Street	Bankrupt	14 Jun 1889
Helena Sophia Hartzborne (spinster) (T/A Farini Barker & Co)	Pianoforte dealer with Farini Arthur Barker	799, Fulham Road	Bankrupt	16 Mar 1892
Caroline & Jessie Mary Chudleigh (T/A Chudleigh & Co)	Pianoforte manufacturers	14 & 15, Little Camden Street, Camden Town	Bankrupt	13 Oct 1898
Jane Emma Thomas (widow) (T/A W G Thomas)	Pianoforte manufacturer	Gospel Oak Grove, Kentish Town	Bankrupt	17 Sep 1904

Table 9: Prosecutions among the female workforce. Source: *The London Gazette* (1808–1904).
* denotes imprisonment.

Fire and insolvency

Figure 34 (below) shows the same data seen earlier (at Figure 30) overlaid with 45 known incidences of fire in the capital's piano industry during the study period, to expose the effect of fire, if any, on insolvency rates among the workforce.

[160] For the imprisonment of Sarah Wales, see *LG,* 9 January 1838, p.92. See also, will of Robert Wales, piano forte maker, proved 1834 (NA PROB 11/1836). In later years Sarah found work as a school mistress. See Sarah Wales (55), born *c*1786, living in Charles Street, St Pancras (1841 census).

[161] For the imprisonment of Joanna Sophia [sic] Kollmann, see *LG,* 11 September 1846, p.3284. For the death of George Augustus Kollmann, see *MP,* 24 March 1845.

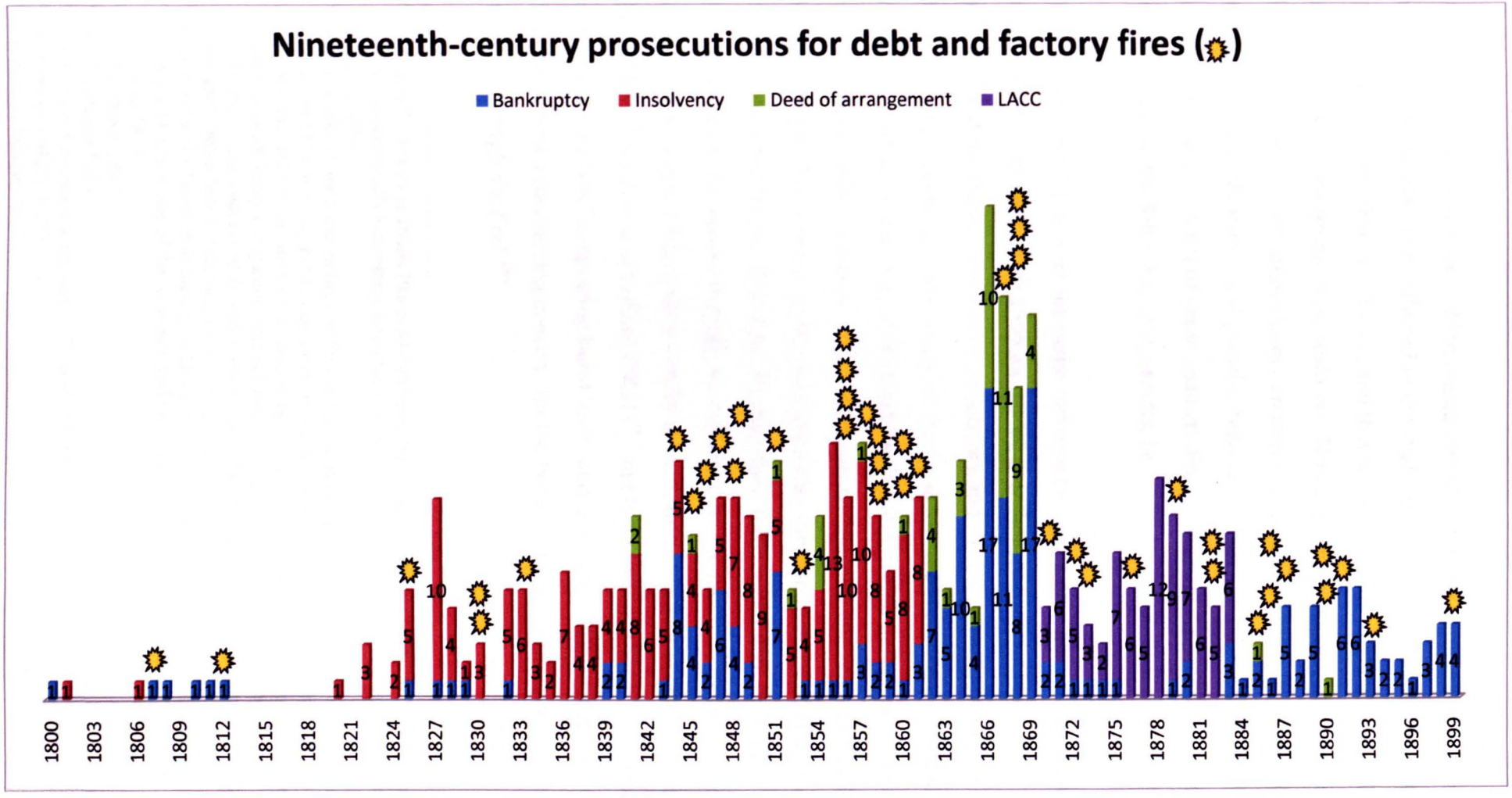

Figure 34: Number and nature of prosecutions for debt in the London piano industry (19th century), overlaid with 45 known London piano factory fires.
Sources: *The London Gazette* (1800–1899), the national press, and secondary sources.

It might be expected that the sudden unemployment of large numbers of workmen in the wake of a fire would be reflected in the study data, given that men who lost their tools effectively lost their livelihood, and that several months might elapse before production and employment were restored. However, a direct correlation between fire and insolvency is not immediately apparent in the chart – even in years that experienced multiple fires – and possible reasons for this are to be found in the contemporary press. A list of piano industry fires appears at Appendix 15, and further details of the following at Appendix 16.

As seen at Figure 34, fires in the piano industry became a near annual occurrence in the period 1845 to 1861, with 1856 recording four factory fires, including the destruction of the Hopkinson factory in January and the Broadwood factory in August.[162] Yet, as late as 1868, many of the firms to have burnt were inadequately insured.[163] The same was true of the workmen's tools, which though rarely insured were almost inevitably burnt as they were heavy to transport and remained in the factory at night. Since much of the workforce was sub-contracted and effectively self-employed, the responsibility for insuring their tools rested with the men.[164] That they neglected to provide cover may be explained by the fact that, as late as 1869, the public was willing to replace their loss by subscription. Clementi (1807),[165] James Ball (1833),[166] Collard and Collard (1851)[167] and Broadwood (1856)[168] all appealed to the public for help in replacing burnt tools, and as late as 1869 George Henry Brockbank held a fundraising concert 'for the benefit of the workmen who have been sufferers through the fire'.[169]

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[162] Hopkinson's factory at Diana Place, Marylebone, burnt on 12 January 1856. *MP*, 14 January 1856. Broadwood's Horseferry Road factory burnt on 12 August 1856. *Glasgow Herald*, 15 August 1856.

[163] See Appendix 15 for a chronology of fires in the capital and details of insurance reported in the press. In 1812, the duty paid to government on insurance policies was three shillings per cent per annum, and the premium on insurance 10s 6d per cent per annum, which may have been a deterrent for many companies. Broadhurst Wilkinson, H., *Souvenir of the Broadhurst Wilkinsons: descendants of Joseph Edmondson* (Manchester, 1902), p.25. I am grateful to Margaret Debenham for alerting me to this source.

[164] After a fire at the James Ball factory in Duke Street, Westminster, 1833, the management lamented that not one of the workmen had taken the precaution to insure their tools. *MP*, 7 October 1833.

[165] *MC*, 31 March 1807.

[166] *MP*, 7 October 1833.

[167] *North Wales Chronicle*, 1 January 1852; and *DN*, 16 January 1852.

[168] Wainwright (1982), p.173.

[169] *The Era*, 31 January 1869.

The first suggestion that tools were insured by the management appears in 1853, when it was noted that the 'stock of pianofortes, tools, &c.' destroyed in the Kirkman factory were 'all insured in the Imperial and Westminster Offices'.[170]
That Brockbank's was the last-noted fundraising appeal suggests that the means of replacing the workers' tools was then shifting away from the public domain. This system of public, then corporate, insurance was sufficient to protect the workers from an excessive loss of earnings, and to dampen the effect of fire on rates of prosecution.

Company losses were not to be recovered by public philanthropy, though large firms such as Clementi and Co. (who were insured 'but to a comparatively small amount' when their premises burnt in 1807),[171] and Stodart (who were completely uninsured when their factory burnt in 1825, and again in 1830),[172] might fall on private wealth to bridge an insurance shortfall. Smaller firms were unlikely to have held such reserves, yet many continued to trade, including Oetzmann & Plumb, who were uninsured when their premises burnt in 1844.[173] For sound firms such as theirs, a lack of insurance might be counteracted by a ready supply of credit. That only two manufacturers were prosecuted after a fire suggests that creditors were generally sympathetic to those who had suffered a loss. James Moses Bridgland of Wardour Street was bankrupt three months after his premises were 'almost entirely consumed' in November 1847,[174] and George Henry Brockbank was bankrupt three weeks after his 'very extensive modern premises' in Great College Street were destroyed in 1868.[175] Yet both men recovered to begin again elsewhere;[176] Bridgland with reparation from the Sun insurance office (for his stock), and the Westminster office (for his building), and Brockbank by unspecified means, since it was thought that 'no

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[170] *DN*, 11 August 1853.
[171] *MC*, 21 March 1807.
[172] *Jackson's Oxford Journal*, 25 June 1825; and *The Bristol Mercury*, 15 May 1830.
[173] Oetzmann & Plumb were allegedly 'uninsured'. For details of their fire, see Oetzmane [sic] and Plumb, *MP*, 2 April 1844. For their future trade, see Harding (1978), p.418.
[174] For Bridgland's bankruptcy, see *LG*, 4 February 1848, p.396. For details of the fire, see *MC*, Thursday, 18 November 1847; and *The Examiner*, 20 November 1847.
[175] For Brockbank's bankruptcy, see *LG*, 12 January 1869, p.198. For details of the fire, see *The York Herald*, 24 December 1868.
[176] Bridgland in Phoenix Street and Denmark Street, Soho (*LG*, 24 January 1851, p.196), and Brockbank in Acton Green. *LG*, 24 March 1874, p.1855.

part of the contents of the buildings occupied by Mr Brockbank was insured'.[177] That both men were bankrupt again (Bridgland in 1851, and Brockbank in 1874) suggests that, insurance aside, recovery could be slow.[178] Piano maker, Henry Squire, was covered by the Phoenix when his 'extensive premises' at 25 Hollingsworth Street, Liverpool Road, Holloway, 'burnt out' on 6 August 1858,[179] yet within three years he was imprisoned for debt on his own petition,[180] and again six years later, *in forma pauperis*.[181] That more cases of insolvency did not present themselves after a fire may be attributed to the charitable disposition of the public and a capacity for financial clemency among the trade. At a meeting of the creditors of Wilkinson and Wornum, held six weeks after their business was destroyed by fire, 'much sympathy was expressed with the firm for their unmerited misfortunes'.[182]

Section Three

So far, this chapter has dealt with the laws concerning the industry's bankrupts and insolvents, the practical consequences of their prosecution, and the statistics emanating from the study. This final section examines the study population more closely. It considers the specific circumstances of individual debtors, the measures they took to restore their liquidity, and the consequence of debt on their future careers. It examines the nature of serial debt and family debt, potential links between patents and insolvency, and the identity of trustees appointed from the trade.

While the court came to recognise three broad classifications of debtor – the innocent, the reckless, and the dishonest – the circumstances serving individual cases were more complex. Family circumstances, past experience, character and fortune shaped a debtor's response to financial difficulties, and the court's appraisal was not absolute. A candidate for the first category of debtor was the manufacturer Henry Steinmetz, whose creditors met in 1884 to consider whether his bankruptcy and failure to pay a dividend of ten shillings in the pound had 'arisen from circumstances for which, in the creditors' opinion, the bankrupt [could not] justly be held

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[177] *The York Herald*, 24 December 1868.
[178] For Brockbank, see *LG*, 24 March 1874, p.1855.
[179] *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 8 August 1858.
[180] *LG*, 10 September 1861, p.3793.
[181] *LG*, 5 April 1867, p.2161.
[182] The meeting was held on 23rd November, 1812, at the Crown and Anchor in the Strand. Broadhurst Wilkinson (1902), p.25.

responsible'.[183] The outcome is not recorded, but the court's assessment of Steinmetz as a businessman whose problems emanated externally is potentially overturned by his court appearance, in December 1889, as witness for one of his sons who was charged with assaulting another: both sons worked for the firm.[184] That Steinmetz told the court the death of his eldest son 'would not be much loss' suggests a long-standing friction between the two men that may have been influential in the bankruptcy of the firm four years earlier. Family tensions were disruptive to small businesses, and several cases of disinheritance are recorded in Chapter 4.

The court's appraisal of Robert Anderson Rüst, in 1859, as a bankrupt of the third class was apposite and validated by his subsequent career.[185] Rüst was a music publisher and composer, maker and dealer, medal winner at The International Exhibition of 1862, frequent patentee, serial bankrupt and fraudster. Bankrupt four times in twenty-five years, five times an insolvent debtor, twice imprisoned, and indicted for fraud as an elderly man, his biography is recorded at Appendix 17. Repeated insolvency may have corrupted Rüst, as his early strategies for improving his liquidity involved the lodging of patents and entering into a potentially advantageous marriage, but his later career shares similarities with the music publisher and dealer James Longman, who was also enterprising, energetic and ambitious, alternately successful and insolvent, several times imprisoned, and impoverished at his death. The social and commercial culture that enabled Longman's business methods in the late eighteenth century continued to support those of Rüst fifty years later. Bankruptcy and insolvency did not preclude them

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[183] *LG*, 4 April 1884, pp.1588–89.

[184] ALLEGED ASSAULT – William Arthur Steinmetz, 22 a pianoforte maker, of Arbon-road, Highbury, was charged with violently assaulting his brother Henry Steinmetz. The complainant and defendant both work at a pianoforte factory owned by their father at Charles-street, Islington. On Friday afternoon, whilst the complainant was engaged in a dispute with his father, the defendant interfered. A fight ensued between the two brothers, and, according to the evidence of the complainant, he was struck on the back of the head with a piece of iron by the defendant. Henry Steinmetz, who is the elder brother, appeared in the witness box with his head bandaged up, and said the piece of iron used by his brother had inflicted a severe cut. Defendant denied the charge, and said his brother's head was cut through his falling against the corner of a piano. The young men's father gave evidence in support of the defendant, and said that his son Henry had behaved badly to him, and had abused him, using very bad language. Mr Horace Smith said the defendant, if he struck his brother with the piece of iron, might have killed him. Mr Steinmetz (the father): it would not be much loss. Mr Horace Smith rebuked the witness for using such language, and said it was very sad to see such a state of things in a family as this case involved [...]. *Reynolds's Newspaper*, 1 December 1889.

[185] *LG*, 19 August 1859, p.3173.

from work, marriage, forming new partnerships or establishing new companies, and this culture of liberal enterprise was both a fillip to ambition and an aid to financial recovery, as demonstrated below.

Serial debtors

Rüst was one of 76 members of the study population (or 15%) to have been prosecuted more than once. Rüst was the most prolific, but makers James Challenger and John Down Gordon were prosecuted on five occasions, John Warren and Daniel Wesson on four occasions, and sixteen others (all makers, excepting one dealer) on three occasions. The majority of multiple debtors (identified with an asterisk at Appendix 7) were prosecuted only twice.

Most serial debtors were small 'piano makers' or 'piano manufacturers', though some described themselves as string maker, key maker, small work maker or maker of fittings, and several operated a small- to medium-size concern. Of the makers, James Ballingall employed approximately thirteen men and five boys and was prosecuted on three occasions.[186] Alfred Bateman employed four men and a boy and was prosecuted twice;[187] Edward Wallace Bishop employed 13 men and two boys and was prosecuted on three occasions;[188] George Henry Brockbank employed at one time five men and eight boys and was prosecuted twice;[189] William Edmeades (also prosecuted twice) employed approximately fourteen men;[190] and John Frood employed seven men and three boys and was prosecuted twice.[191] A similar scenario existed among the suppliers to the trade. 'Oilman and pianoforte key maker' John

[186] See James Ballingall (61), born *c*1820, Marylebone (1881 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 27 June 1851, p.1691; *LG,* 11 June 1869, p.3362; and *LG,* 13 May 1879, p.3346. A timber merchant to the trade recalled that, 'James Ballingall & Sons [...] was founded by James Ballingall, in Diana Place, Euston Road. I remember him removing his factory to premises built and occupied by G. H. Brockbank, also a piano maker [...] Ballingall afterwards took his two sons into partnership, and they manufactured a fair number of pianos. One of the sons, Charles, unfortunately died while comparatively young, and the other son, Jim, subsequently acted as traveller for pianofortes.' Bamberger (November 1928), p.692.

[187] See Alfred Bateman (44), born *c*1817, Bloomsbury (1861 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 29 May 1855, p.2096; and *LG,* 11 April 1865, p.2019.

[188] See Edward Bishop (38), born *c*1843, St Pancras (1881 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 28 May 1867, p.3083–84; *LG,* 18 April 1879, p.2924; and *LG,* 31 December 1872, p.6531.

[189] See George H. Brockbank (39), born *c*1822, Newcastle upon Tyne (1861 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 12 January 1869, p.198; and *LG,* 24 March 1874, p.1855.

[190] See William Edmeades (38), born *c*1813, Rochester, Kent (1851 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 24 December 1841, p.3335; and *LG,* 23 October 1874, p.4922.

[191] See John Frood, married (39), born *c*1822, St Clement, Middlesex (1861 census).

Black employed nine men and a boy.[192] His wife and daughters ran the oil shop, and his sons helped making piano keys, so the income of the whole family would have been affected by the double bankruptcy of the firm. Action maker William Hall employed a workforce of six men and four boys and was bankrupt twice.[193] He was trustee to the bankrupt piano key maker Mark Antony Habell, who was also prosecuted twice.[194] The extent to which these men recovered from insolvency was broadly commensurate with the length of their remaining career, although low earning capacity prior to insolvency (which was probably a causal factor in it) was rarely improved by prosecution and imprisonment, and the resumption of former working practices post-prosecution. Edmeades survived only two years after his final bankruptcy and left less than £100.[195] Rüst survived a year longer and left a personal estate of £133 14s 2d.[196] George William Puckett, who was twice insolvent as a maker of fittings, lived three years after his final prosecution and left £252 9s 6d.[197] During the six years following his final bankruptcy, Ballingall recovered to leave a personal estate of £2,851 4s 3d;[198] and Edward Wallace Bishop, who lived 32 years after his last prosecution left £9,104 2s 2d.[199] James Chissholme, who was bankrupt as a maker with his brothers in 1871, made a good recovery as a tuner and 36 years later left a personal estate of nearly £4,500.[200] However, the key maker Mark Anthony Habell, who gradually reduced his workforce from five men and a boy, to one man and a boy,[201] died 21 years after his last prosecution leaving only £243 17s 7d;[202] Henry Steinmetz, died 24 years after his second prosecution leaving

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[192] See John Black (56), born *c*1825, Scotland (1881 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 23 August 1878, p.4844; and *LG,* 5 February 1886, p.585.

[193] See William Hall (61), born *c*1800, Islington (1861 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 16 July 1869, p.4039; and *LG,* 5 April 1870, p.2086.

[194] For Hall as trustee, see *LG,* 11 December 1868, p.6627. For the prosecutions of Mark Antony Habell, see *LG,* 11 December 1868, p.6627; and *LG,* 20 July 1869, p.4098.

[195] NPC, William Edmeades, date of probate 21 March 1876 (Ancestry).

[196] NPC, Robert Anderson Rüst, date of probate 2 December 1886 (Ancestry).

[197] NPC, George William Puckett, date of probate 14 November 1883 (Ancestry).

[198] NPC, James Ballingall, date of probate 5 June 1885 (Ancestry). For Ballingall's continuation as a piano maker after his final bankruptcy, see James Ballingall (61), born *c*1820, Marylebone (1881 census).

[199] NPC, Edward Wallace Bishop, date of probate 7 November 1904 (Ancestry).

[200] For the bankruptcy of the Chissholme brothers, see *LG,* 1 September 1871, p.3854. For James' work as a piano tuner, see James Chissholme (43), born *c*1838, St George West, Middlesex, visiting Derby (1881 census). For his death in Derby and personal effects, see NPC, James Chissholme, date of probate 21 September 1907 (Ancestry).

[201] See Mark O. [sic] Habell (35), born *c*1836, London (1871 census); and Mark Habel (45), born *c*1836, Westminster (1881 census).

[202] NPC, Mark Anthony Habell, date of probate 16 January 1891 (Ancestry).

less than £200;[203] and John Brockbank survived 22 years leaving only £25,[204] so the recovery of wealth over a period of time was not guaranteed. That aside, most insolvent debtors persisted in the career in which they had been prosecuted (or some former branch of their specialism), though a number were forced to reduce their workforce or to work as employees themselves. Bateman and Brockbank found work as a carpenter, and a finisher, then tuner, respectively.[205] Their final wealth is not recorded, and neither is that of John Frood, who continued as a piano maker after his first bankruptcy (employing seven men and three boys), but after the second became a commercial traveller.[206] Maker William Wiggett, who was twice insolvent, returned to his original trade as a carpenter;[207] and Joseph Harwar, who employed four workmen at the time of his insolvency in 1851,[208] ended his career as a repairman.[209] Dealer James Thomas Cooper, though prosecuted twice, continued as a dealer for at least sixteen years before ending his career as a self-employed tuner in Bristol,[210] and William Job Liddington also ended his career as a tuner, having twice been prosecuted as a dealer and tuner.[211] Although the final wealth of these debtors has not been ascertained, the industry continued to support them for the remainder of their career.[212]

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[203] NPC, Henry Steinmetz, date of probate 19 November 1906 (Ancestry).

[204] *LG,* 12 June 1855, p.2285.

[205] See Alfred Bateman (52), born *c*1819, Newington, Surrey (1871 census). Also, George A. [sic] Brockbank (59), born *c*1822, Newcastle upon Tyne (1881 census); and George H. Brockbank (69), born *c*1822, Newcastle (1891 census).

[206] For bankruptcies, see *LG,* 27 January 1852, p.236; and *LG,* 3 August 1866, p.4387. For employment, see John Frood (39), born *c*1822, St Clement, Middlesex (1861 census); and John Flood [sic] (51), born *c*1820, St Clements, Middlesex (1871 census).

[207] See William Wiggett (30), born *c*1821, Swanton, Norfolk (1851 census); and William Wigett (61), born *c*1820, Swanston, Norfolk (1881 census).

[208] See Joseph Hanvar [sic] (49), born *c*1802, Aldermanbury, City (1851 census).

[209] See Joseph Harwar (70), born *c*1801, Aldermanbury in the City of London (1871 census).

[210] See James T. Cooper (35), born *c*1846, Paddington (1881 census); James T. Cooper (43), born *c*1848, Paddington (1891 census); and James Thomas Cooper (65), born *c*1846, Paddington (1911 census). For prosecutions, see *LG,* 23 April 1872, p.2044; and *LG,* 23 July 1875, p.3746.

[211] For prosecutions, see *LG,* 3 November 1843, p.3592; and *LG,* 21 October 1851, p.2771. For last-noted career, see William J. Liddington (66), born *c*1795, Strood [sic], Gloucester (1861 census).

[212] A comparison may be drawn with the independent Viennese piano maker Joseph Franz Ries (1792–*c*1862), who, though known to Beethoven as a tuner and repairer, and who worked for a time for Johann Baptist Streicher, wanted to 'stop making pianos' in 1826, as the five he had he could not sell. He continued, however, and in 1831 he had '11 pianos, but no bread in the house'. That same year he had to 'mortgage all of his possessions, including his apartment, the pianos, and even his clothes' to raise funds, yet despite the fact that 'his money matters cannot be helped', that 'his children will eat him up', and that there were 'too many piano makers in Vienna', he was still making pianos in 1862. Klaus, S. K., 'Life is a

Piano tuning seems to have offered an acceptable fallback career for piano makers suffering hardship or old age. At 64, bankrupt piano maker William Darnton junior took work as a piano tuner;[213] Stephen Moore turned to tuning and repair work during a period of exile in Scotland, brought about by his 'unfortunate situation in life';[214] and after five days in the Fleet prison in November 1798, Thomas Culliford repaired to the south coast of England where he is thought to have tuned and maintained musical instruments until his death sixteen years later.[215]

Multiple family prosecutions

The discovery of more than thirty families to have been prosecuted more than once makes serial family debt a prominent feature of this study. Their details are provided at Appendix 18. The nature of family debt appears to have taken two forms. The first might be termed 'successive' in that it involved the prosecution of different family members over a period of years and often several generations. The second was 'concurrent' in that it involved two or more family members working together who were prosecuted jointly. The most prevalent form of family debt was successive, involving fathers, children, uncles, nephews, widows, cousins and siblings, prosecuted either in swift succession (which may have been coincidental but is more likely to have been related to the financial health of the family as a whole), or several years apart (for reasons to be discussed). That successive family debt could be directly consequential is evidenced by the siblings Joanna Sophie Kollmann (noted earlier as a prisoner for debt), and her elder brother, the maker and dealer George Augustus Kollmann. Prior to George's bankruptcy in 1840, Joanna advanced her brother sufficient funds to consider herself 'chief creditor' at the time of his prosecution, but her claim was refuted and her loss compounded by the fact that she was left 'to pay responsibilities on the [bankruptcy] estate, which [...] inflicted a grievous hardship on me, and further rob'd me of my income'.[216] Her subsequent

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Hard Struggle: The Viennese Piano Maker Joseph Franz Ries (1792–c1862), Life, Patents and Instruments', *Early Keyboard Journal* 21 (2003), pp.7–44.

[213] See William Darnton, born c1794, St Botolph Aldersgate, Middlesex, piano forte tuner (1871 census).

[214] See Nex in Kassler (2011), pp.35–36.

[215] Details of his bankruptcy are recorded in full at Nex (2004), pp.33–34.

[216] For Joanna's funding of the business, see Kassler, M., and A. F. C. Kollmann, *A. F. C Kollmann's Quarterly musical register (1812): an annotated edition with an introduction to his life and works* (Aldershot, England; Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, 2008),

insolvency and imprisonment, six years later,[217] was a direct consequence of her brother's bankruptcy, and his death, the year prior to her own prosecution, 'after much suffering, from an accident which befell him some time ago', was a further impediment to her recovery.[218] The measures taken by the siblings to evade, and recover from, prosecution are discussed below.

Successive family insolvency was not always linked so directly, or the relative causes (if any) so well documented, but its frequency is clear. Maker Thomas Statham was insolvent and imprisoned in 1857, and his son, William Matthew Statham imprisoned *in forma pauperis* eight years later as a packing case maker and tuner.[219] The negative experience of the father would have reinforced that of the son who relocated to San Francisco and established a piano factory there.[220] He was not the only debtor to migrate, as shall be noted later. Auctioneer and dealer, Charles Kelly, of Kensington and the Baker Street Bazaar, was bankrupt in 1854, and his son prosecuted as a manufacturer and auctioneer forty years later.[221] The insolvency of Kelly senior is unlikely to have had a direct bearing on the insolvency of his son as he left almost £9,000 in his will,[222] but the blueprint for financial mismanagement had been set. George Henry Brockbank and his father suffered prosecutions fourteen years apart, though the insolvency of the younger man is likely to have resulted from the fire on his premises noted earlier.[223] Dealer, tuner and repairer William Moutrie was insolvent and imprisoned in 1857 and his nephew bankrupt as a maker twenty

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pp.160–61. George's solicitors argued that Joanna was a partner in the business, and therefore responsible for her brother's debts. With no money to defend a lawsuit, she relinquished her claim. For George's bankruptcy, see *LG*, 28 February 1840, p.463.

[217] See *LG*, 11 September 1846, p.3284.

[218] For details of George's death, see *MP*, 24 March 1845.

[219] For Thomas Statham, see *LG*, 3 November 1857, p.3681. For his son, William Matthew Statham, see *LG*, 28 July 1865, p.3757.

[220] A William Matthew Statham, born *c*1838 or 1839, appears in the *California Voter Registers, 1866–1898* (Ancestry). Also, an immigrant named William M. Statham, born 1840, is listed in the US States Federal Census of 1930 (Ancestry). *Langley's San Francisco Directory* for 1889 lists a William M. Statham, piano manufacturer operating as Statham & Co., factory at 765 Mission, and sales rooms at 1322 Market. Online at: www.sfgenealogy.com/sanfranciscodirectory/1889/1889_1244.pdf, consulted 2 May 2013.

[221] For Charles Kelly, see *LG*, 5 December 1854, p.3973. For his son, Reginald Wansbrough Kelly, see *LG*, 13 March 1894, p.1553.

[222] NPC, Charles Kelly, date of probate 2 May 1873 (Ancestry).

[223] For George Henry Brockbank, see *LG*, 12 January 1869, p.198. For his father, John, see *LG*, 12 June 1855, p.2285.

years later.[224] Key making partners Frederick Cons the elder and his son and namesake were declared bankrupt within a month of each other in 1863.[225] The Cons had dealings with the Hopkinson firm in Diana Place certainly after their bankruptcy (and possibly before), since one was honorary secretary to the firm the year after his prosecution.[226] If the Cons were long-term suppliers to the firm their post-bankruptcy connection might be explained, but not their bankruptcy itself, since a regular contract with Messrs. Hopkinson would have ensured a steady income. Their association with the firm suggests that influences other than a lack of steady employment contributed to their insolvency. Potentially, six members of the Challenger family were prosecuted for debt on twelve occasions and two of them imprisoned. Their family was large, and prone to recycling family names, making it difficult to distinguish between them, but it is reasonably certain that the father, Joseph Challenger (musician, and tuner to Messrs Broadwood), and four of his sons – all piano makers – were insolvent between 1837 and 1880.[227] Elsewhere, piano maker James Hulbert, employer of 20 men and five boys in Lambeth, was bankrupt in 1885, and his son prosecuted as a dealer six years later.[228] Three members of the Simon family suffered bankruptcy in turn, and their attempts to avoid prosecution are

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[224] For William Moutrie, see *LG*, 26 May 1857, p.1879; and *LG*, 12 June 1857, p.2085. For his nephew, George Moutrie, see *LG*, 6 March 1877, p.1937. Other members of the Moutrie family avoided insolvency. William Frederick Collard Moutrie left £2,000 at his death. NPC, Frederick Collard Moutrie, date of probate 16 January 1882 (Ancestry).

[225] For the bankruptcy of Frederick Cons the younger, 'foreman to a key maker', see *LG*, 2 June 1863, p.2891. For his father, see *LG*, 19 June 1863, p.3165.

[226] *The Standard*, 23 May 1864.

[227] Joseph Challenger was insolvent and imprisoned in 1837. *LG*, 3 October 1837, p.2552. He and his wife, Emma, had five sons: George Augustus (born *c*1825), William Dunnington (born *c*1827), Joseph Henry (born *c*1862), Arthur Clement (born *c*1841) and Alfred Walsly Wroyalsley (born *c*1842). The four eldest were prosecuted for debt in 1867 & 1880; 1860; 1862, 1867 & 1875; and 1867 respectively. See George Challenger (*LG*, 25 January 1867, p.471, and 26 March 1880, p.2285 with Joseph Cadby); William Challenger (*LG*, 6 January 1860, p.71); Joseph Henry (*LG*, 4 February 1862, p.621; 27 July 1867, p.4140; and 21 May 1875, p.2759); and Arthur Clement (*LG*, 8 November 1867, p.5964). A possible brother of Joseph, James Challenger was also prosecuted on four occasions. See *LG*, 7 December 1822, p.2020; 22 March 1825, p.489; 26 March 1833, p.612; and 20 December 1836, p.2618. A younger James Challenger (also a piano maker) was imprisoned for two years for 'forging and uttering an order [...] with intent to defraud', as noted earlier. See trial of James Challenger, 6 June 1870 (OB t18700606-482).

[228] See James Hulbert (50), born *c*1831, Hackney, pin[a]fore [sic] maker employ 20 men 5 boys (1881 census). For his bankruptcy, see *LG*, 10 April 1885, p.1650. For that of his son, Frederick Hulbert, see *LG*, 21 February 1902, p.1145. A contemporary noted that 'James Hulbert, of Wyvil Street, South Lambeth [...] was quite successful in his hey-day, but unfortunately success did not stay with him. He was of the old type, and every bargain had to be clinched with a glass. Often he and I adjourned to the corner house. I can still remember his favourite expression. "My boy, I had a good kippered herring for my breakfast." Then, smacking his chest, "I can feel it now".' Bamberger (December 1928), p.827.

discussed below.[229] The Norminton family suffered three prosecutions;[230] two members of the Rolfe family were prosecuted;[231] four members of the Squire family (two of whom were imprisoned);[232] two members of the Tarry family (both imprisoned);[233] and two members of the Warwick family (one imprisoned).[234] Though possibly incomplete in that further cases of multiple family insolvency are likely to exist among other members of the study population to have shared the same name, this list is sufficiently long to support the principle of 'hereditary insolvency', whereby financial difficulties percolated from one generation to the next, perpetuated by received poor business practices or a tradition of family profligacy. This hypothesis is reinforced by the statistics shown later, at Figure 36 (page 205). That so many multiple family insolvencies appear among such a small study population strongly suggests that the potential for insolvency was inherent.

The history of two families working in London in the mid-nineteenth century illustrates this point, and the fact that the gene for 'hereditary insolvency' might be selective. Vincent Henry Hallpike was a piano maker working off the Gray's Inn Road when he was bankrupt prior to 1848,[235] and a 'pianoforte rail and small work maker' when he succumbed to debt again seven years later.[236] After a spell in debtors' prison he returned to his work as a piano maker aided by his two eldest sons, Henry and Vincent,[237] though Henry, perhaps dissuaded from the trade by his

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[229] For Max Simon, see *LG*, 19 August 1892, p.4769. For his wife, Ida Simon, and their son, Hardy Simon, see *LG*, 8 December 1908, p.9430.

[230] See William Norminton (*LG*, 21 July 1868, p.4101); and William Robert Norminton and William Alexander Norminton (*LG*, 11 October 1878, p.5535).

[231] For bankruptcy of maker and dealer Thomas Rolfe, see *LG*, 15 June 1858, p.2940. For liquidation of James Rolfe, warehouseman trading as Wm Rolfe & Sons, see *LG*, 8 April 1879, p.2727.

[232] For William Squire, see *LG*, 1 July 1851, p.1731. For his son, William Henry Squire, see *LG*, 21 January 1859, p.257. For Henry Squire, see *LG*, 10 September 1861, p.3793; and *LG*, 5 April 1867, p.2161. For Alfred Squire, see *LG*, 14 May 1878, p.3075; and *LG*, 21 May 1889, p.2778.

[233] For William Tarry, see *LG*, 23 August 1833, p.1586; and for William Tarry (the younger), see *LG*, 19 July 1839, p.1459.

[234] For Joseph Warwick, trading as Warwick and Son, see *LG*, 4 January 1881, p.30. For his possible cousin, Frederick Parker Easton Warwick, see *LG*, 29 December 1857, p.4621. For the likelihood of their being related, see Joseph W. Warwick (30), born *c*1821, Canada, pianoforte maker (1851 census); and Frederick P. E. Warwick (15), born *c*1836, Canada, cabinet maker apprentice (1851 census).

[235] *LG*, 8 September 1848, p.3342.

[236] *LG*, 22 May 1855, p.1994.

[237] See Vincent H. Hallpeker [sic] (41), born *c*1820, London, pianoforte maker employing two sons; also Henry J. Hallpeker (17), born *c*1844, London, pianoforte maker; and Vincent N. Hallepeker (15), born *c*1846, London, pianoforte maker (1861 census).

father's financial difficulties, chose to retrain instead as a watch maker.[238] His younger brother persisted as an action maker but also encountered financial difficulties,[239] and at the age of 54 wrote 'a very pathetic letter, in which he advised his son not to get into bad companionship' and threw himself under a train at Bishops Street station.[240] His estate was worth £200 when he died,[241] while that of his brother, who lived to 75, was valued at nearly ten thousand pounds.[242] Their respective sons kept to their father's profession, with the result that Vincent's son was bankrupt by the petition of a Berlin piano manufacturer the year after his father's death.[243] A similar story pertains to the Cassini family, who were contemporaries of the Hallpikes. Henry Thomas Cassini was a piano regulator living in Hampstead when he filed for bankruptcy as an insolvent debtor in 1845.[244] Thirteen years later he was insolvent again while working as a hammer coverer,[245] which was a specialism adopted by two of his sons before the eldest (also Henry Thomas) elected to specialise as a dealer.[246] The younger son married as a minor and was bankrupt within a decade,[247] and the father owned less than £200 when he died.[248] Henry Thomas junior, however, left effects worth nearly £15,000.[249] These two families

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[238] See marriage of Henry Julius Hallpike (watchmaker) and Emily Mary Dancaster, at St Marylebone, Westminster, 24 August 1867 (Ancestry).

[239] For his work, see Vincent A. Hallpike (25), born *c*1846, Pancras (1871 census). For his financial difficulties, see *The Illustrated Police News*, 7 April, 1900. Before committing suicide Hallpike had his photograph taken and sent copies with letters to his wife and son. To his wife he wrote: 'I was born a bad child, and have been bad ever since'.

[240] *Leicester Chronicle and the Leicestershire Mercury*, 31 March 1900.

[241] NPC, Vincent Angelo Hallpike, date of probate 26 July 1900 (Ancestry).

[242] NPC, Henry Julius Hallpike, date of probate 20 November 1919 (Ancestry).

[243] See A. J. Hallpike (trading as N. H. Hallpike and Co.), *LG*, 30 July 1901, p.5080. He was trading as a dealer under his wife's name and working as a pianoforte hammer coverer. See Albert J. Hallpeke [sic] (24), born *c*1877, London, pianoforte hammer coverer, employer (1901 census).

[244] For his work as a regulator, see Henry Thos Casseni [sic] (30), born *c*1811, Middlesex, regulator of piano (1841 census). For his bankruptcy see *LG*, 3 October 1845, p.3014.

[245] *LG*, 27 April 1858, p.2087. It is possible (though unlikely) that this prosecution relates to his son, also Henry Thomas, for reasons explained in the text. However, that the prosecution describes the debtor's occupation as 'Pianoforte Hammer Coverer, occasionally Dealing in Pianos' (which latter occupation became the chosen occupation of the son) does lend credence to the possibility that it may relate to the son.

[246] See Henry T. Cassini (26), born *c*1835, Paddington, pianoforte hammer coverer employing one man [possibly his brother]; and John Cassini (23), born *c*1838, Paddington, piano forte hammer coverer (1861 census). For Henry's career as a piano dealer see Henry T. Cassini (34), born *c*1837, Paddington, pianoforte dealer (1871 census) and Henry T. Cassini (46), born *c*1835, London, pianoforte dealer (1881 census).

[247] See marriage of John Cassini (minor), piano forte hammer coverer, to Mary Ann Simmons (minor), at St Marylebone, Westminster, 7 July 1856 (Ancestry). For bankruptcy details, see *LG*, 24 January 1865, pp.346–47.

[248] NPC, Henry Thomas Cassini, date of probate 14 May 1877 (Ancestry).

[249] NPC, Henry Thomas Cassini, date of probate 17 February 1890 (Ancestry).

demonstrate the selective nature of the 'insolvency gene', with one son passively repeating his father's working practices (and also, probably, his mistakes) and the other son learning from his experience.

Successive family debt, such as described, caused repeated diminution in the family's ultimate wealth, but rarely threatened its liquidity as a whole. Concurrent family debt, however (as evidenced by the Black family of oilmen and piano key makers), was of immediate concern in that the family's adult population might lose its liquidity simultaneously. Some families, such as the Locke family of small work, hammer rail and action makers, suffered both forms of debt, and were disadvantaged concurrently and ultimately. Brothers William, George Lewis and Henry Locke, were prosecuted jointly and severally on six occasions over twelve years, and William repeatedly admitted to gaol.[250] George Lewis strove to restore the family's fortunes with a patent, in 1862, for 'improvements in the motive, mechanism of pianofortes', but the family suffered three more prosecutions nonetheless.[251] Their relation, Edward Charles Locke, moved his piano making business to Manchester where he was also declared insolvent and imprisoned,[252] and again four years later, though he tried to supplement his income as a photographic artist and the keeper of a 'London Chop House'.[253] His son took over their piano making business in 1887 but was bankrupt the following year.[254] While no professional connection has been established between the two branches of the family, their repeated insolvency illustrates the pervasive nature of the 'insolvency gene', and the fact that they persisted in the trade, despite successive and concurrent prosecution,[255] is evidence

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[250] For William Locke, see *LG*, 22 December 1857, p.4545 (insolvent debtor); *LG*, 25 May 1860, p.2035 (insolvent debtor, sued with George Louis [sic] Locke); and *LG*, 25 November 1864, p.6061 (bankrupt, sued with George Lewis Locke). For George Lewis Locke, see *LG*, 16 April 1861, p.1650; and *LG*, 29 November 1864, p.6331. For Henry Locke, see *LG*, 15 May 1883, p.2595.

[251] *LG*, 28 November 1862, p.5941.

[252] *LG*, 21 May 1852, p.1464.

[253] *LG*, 12 September 1856, p.3100. Similarly, William Rogers of Seymour Street, Euston Square, was not only a piano maker, but 'kept what was known in those days as a cook-shop or eating-house.' Bamberger (April 1928), p.1301.

[254] For dissolution of partnership, see *LG*, 25 March 1887, p.1784. For bankruptcy of Edward Augustus Locke, trading as Locke and Son, see *LG*, 20 April 1888, p.2305. For proof of their relationship, see Edward C. Locke (44), born *c*1817, London, Middlesex; and Edward A. Locke (13), born *c*1848, London (1861 census). Precise relationship to William, George Lewis and Henry Locke not yet proved.

[255] And, also, the refusal of Edward Charles Locke's discharge due to poor accounting, trading while insolvent and rash and hazardous speculation. *LG*, 18 October 1889, p.5553.

of the recovery they believed they could achieve – and were able to achieve – in an industry that was tolerant of their debt.

One means of reducing the risk of concurrent family debt was to divide the business between different family members. The Simon family adopted this approach, though, ultimately, they were not protected from successive prosecution. Max Simon, a German 'pianoforte agent' and importer, was bankrupt by a creditor's petition in the summer of 1892, and the family repaired from Oxford Street to cheaper premises in Kilburn.[256] During the fifteen years in which he waited to be discharged, Max worked as a 'pianoforte manufacturer' and employer at an unknown location, assisted by his eldest son, Hardy.[257] Since the time of her husband's bankruptcy, his wife had been 'trading separately and apart from her Husband and having separate estate and assets' as the Wonder Pianoforte Manufacturing Company: first at 198 Seymour Street, Euston Square (where she had been in partnership with Francis Heard), and later at 275b Holloway Road.[258] This arrangement served to protect a portion of the family assets, though Ida, too, was bankrupt by a creditor's petition, the year after her husband received notice of his discharge.[259] Their son, meanwhile, began trading as the Hardy Pianoforte Works, a few doors from his mother's factory, at 255 Holloway Road,[260] but was declared bankrupt by a creditor's petition one month after his mother.[261] His discharge was suspended for three years due to multiple misdemeanours, including 'gambling and culpable neglect of his business affairs',[262] but whether his gambling contributed to his parents' insolvency or *vice versa* has not been proved. Hardy remained in London to work as the 'manager of pianoforte and upholstery factory' and his parents moved to Brighton to establish a sea-front boarding house, where they

[256] *LG*, 19 August 1892, p.4769.
[257] See, Max Simon (47), born *c*1854, foreign subject, pianoforte manufacturer (employer); and Hardy Simon (20), born *c*1881, unknown, assistant (1901 census). When his discharge was finally granted, in 1907, his certificate was suspended for two years on the grounds of insufficient assets, poor booking and trading when knowing himself to have been insolvent. *LG*, 21 June 1907, p.4332.
[258] For partnership with Francis Heard, see *LG*, 10 February 1893, p.773. For bankruptcy at 275b Holloway Road, see *LG*, 8 December 1908, p.9430.
[259] Definition of Creditor's petition 4–1(A), *The Bankruptcy Act 1883*, p.2.
[260] *LG*, 8 December 1908, p.9430.
[261] Definition of Creditor's petition 4–1(A), *The Bankruptcy Act 1883*, p.2.
[262] *LG*, 4 May 1909, p.3462.

recovered sufficiently for Max's estate to be valued at £774 4s 4d when he died.[263] The Chudleigh family employed a similar tactic post-bankruptcy, but also failed to protect themselves them from future prosecution. The death of William Henry Chudleigh, in 1891,[264] was probably a catalyst in the bankruptcy of Chudleigh Brothers the following year.[265] A smaller firm, named Chudleigh and Co., operating from Camden Town and Wigmore Street, was placed in the names of two of their sisters who are not known to have had any previous involvement in running the family firm,[266] and this was possibly a strategy to distance the new firm from creditors of the former firm who had received only 1s 1 ½ d in the pound.[267] The new firm, when it failed six years later, returned less than a penny in the pound,[268] so the path to insolvency was well learned.

For well-known firms such as Allison & Allison of Dean Street, Soho, who were bankrupt in 1848, support for recovery would have been strong. The expectations of the workforce and pride in the family product would have encouraged sufficient momentum for the business to begin again anew. As the inspector general for companies estimated in 1896, 90% of company failures were not caused by '*bona fide* miscalculation of probable results' but by 'circumstances connected with their promotion, formation, or management',[269] and this appears to have been the case for

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[263] For Hardy's future employment, see Hardy Simon (30), born *c*1881, Germany, manager of pianoforte & upholstery factory (worker) (1911 census). For his parents' move to Brighton, see Man [sic] Simon (57), born *c*1854, Hamburg Resident, Germany, boarding house keeper (1991 census). For Max's probate wealth, see NPC, Max Simon, date of probate 11 May 1934 (Ancestry).

[264] See *St Giles' parish death register*, second quarter, 1891, William Henry Chudleigh (40), born *c*1851 (Ancestry).

[265] William Henry posthumously. See *LG*, 1 January 1892, p.33.

[266] See *LG*, 6 December 1898, p.7949.

[267] For the first and final dividend of the Chudleigh Brothers, see *LG*, 21 March 1893, p.1819.

[268] For the final dividend of Chudleigh & Co., see *LG*, 25 August 1899, p.5357. The Schuppisser brothers, Charles Erard and Francis Louis, who later took over Chudleigh and Co., were also bankrupt, in 1900, having over-stretched themselves, perhaps, operating also as H. Schuppisser and Sons in Buck Street, Camden Town, and, later, as The Selbyn Piano Company in Regent Street. *LG*, 13 March 1900, p.1756. A timber merchant to the trade observed that 'Henry Schupisser [sic] [...] was always proud that he had been brought up with the firm of S. & P. Erard. Although he made few pianos, such as he made were of excellent quality. I think his great hit was an oblique piano. He had two sons – Charles and Francis. By what I knew of Francis, he certainly could not have rested in making a few pianos a week. He was out for something greater, and eventually they blossomed out into a very large way of business, with a factory in Camden Town. By time they came to grief [...] In those days they made what was then considered a very cheap instrument. Another brother of Henry Schupisser was in partnership with a maker named Monk, and they traded as Monk & Schupisser.' Bamberger (October 1928), n.p.

[269] Lester (1995), p.3.

Allison & Allison. The company did not falter because its product was unsound, but because its management was unfit. Robert and Thomas Allison employed about forty men at their Soho premises when they were bankrupt in 1848.[270] Formed with a capital of £6,300, the business had become 'a very profitable one' (their profits being from 40 to 60 per cent), but by 1847 the company was reduced to 'considerable pecuniary embarrassments', and soliciting advances from its creditors in the form of interest-bearing loans.[271] Various actions were brought against them in 1848, most of which were settled, but the experience 'occasioned them to employ an accountant to look into their affairs, who stated that they were solvent' with a surplus of £5,000. No account was made, however, for depreciation in the value of their stock,[272] and debts owing by the firm at the time of their bankruptcy amounted to approximately £34,000.[273] It appeared to the commissioner that the owners 'could not have devised more fatal means to prejudice the creditors at large than those which they adopted' and their certificates were suspended for two years from the date of the hearing. It was the commissioner's further opinion that the bankrupts 'ought not to be permitted to enter into trade again until they had really felt the impropriety of their conduct'.[274] Particulars of the case, as reported from the Court of Bankruptcy, are recorded at Appendix 19. Thomas Allison withdrew from the business shortly after,[275] but upon receipt of his discharge Robert advertised the removal of 'Robert Allison and Co.'s Patent Pianoforte Manufactory' to new premises in Regent Street, from where he sent a cottage piano to The Great Exhibition set with grey and white keys in a pattern indicating the major and minor scales.[276] As a strategy for restoring the company's reputation and liquidity the invention was 'more curious than useful',[277] but a more successful initiative may have been the introduction of a new 'boudoir' piano which aimed 'to meet a demand now becoming very general for a cheaper kind of instrument than they have hitherto

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[270] *LG*, 10 October 1848, p.3673. For the size of the workforce, see 'Questions as to wages' in *DN*, 25 November 1848.
[271] 'In re. Allison and Allison' in *MP*, 2 August 1849.
[272] *DN*, 7 February 1849.
[273] *MP*, 2 August 1849.
[274] 'In re. Allison and Allison' in *MP*, 2 August 1849.
[275] He was still operating as a 'piano forte maker (master 40 men)' in 1851. See Thomas Alison [sic] (50), born *c*1801, Almink [Alnwick], Northumberland (1851 census). However, his name was not included in advertisements announcing the move and he died on 21 December 1854. See *Caledonian Mercury*, 28 December 1854.
[276] *DN*, 4 March 1851.
[277] Mactaggart (1986), p.19.

been in the habit of making'.[278] The company's original attempts to avoid insolvency are discussed again below.

William Ennever (who with James Steedman advertised as successor to Allison & Allison in the 1850s)[279] was himself bankrupt in 1854, so no doubt aware of the importance of keeping accurate accounts.[280] In 1864, he advertised for a 'confidential clerk and bookkeeper' in the form of 'a gentleman with great experience in commercial transactions to take the management of the office'.[281] It will be remembered that mandatory accounting was not introduced until the Companies Act of 1900,[282] so for most of the study period methods of accounting among the workforce were informal and peculiar to the company concerned. In a small business managed by family members with no formal training, standards of accounting were required to meet only the satisfaction of the individuals involved and the existing *status quo*. If business increased, and transactions became more complex, the challenge to balance assets against capital and liability was also increased (to wit, the experience of Allison & Allison). So, too, was the risk of concurrent family debt. A lack of professional accounting may have been a factor in the insolvency of the following small workshops to have experienced concurrent family debt: namely, father and son John and Charles Peter Tomkinson, of Hoxton, who were prosecuted together as piano makers in 1868;[283] key makers Mark Habell and his son Mark Anthony, of Kentish Town, who negotiated a deed of composition the same year;[284] brothers George Samuel Burling and Edward Thomas Burling, who employed 14 men and five boys at Goswell Road, and were bankrupt in 1870;[285] and brothers, James, David William and Henry Thomas Chissholme, of 61 Berners

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[278] *DN*, 8 January 1851.
[279] *The Leeds Mercury*, 1 May 1852.
[280] *LG*, 13 October 1854, p.3108.
[281] *The Times*, 18 May 1864.
[282] It had been a criminal offence since 1857 'to falsify the company's books and accounts with intent to defraud'. Day (2000), p.8.
[283] *LG*, 21 July 1868, p.4088. For confirmation of their relationship, see John Tomkinson (60), born *c*1801, St Pancras, pianoforte maker; and Charles P. Tomkinson (20), born *c*1841, Shoreditch, wood carver, both living at 9 Rushton Street, Shoreditch (1861 census). The son ended his career as a tuner. See Charles P. Tomkinson (40), born *c*1841, Shoreditch (1881 census); Charles P. Tomkinson (50), born *c*1841, Hoxton (1891 census); and Chas P. Tomkinson (60), born *c*1841, Shoreditch (1901 census).
[284] *LG*, 11 December 1868, p.6627. The son was adjudged bankrupt the following year. See *LG*, 20 July 1869, p.4098.
[285] *LG*, 19 August 1870, p.3897. For the size of the workforce, see George Burling (42), born *c*1819, St Luke (1861 census).

Street, who were prosecuted as makers in 1871.[286] Also, James Cooper and his son, James Thomas Cooper, who had a dealership in Berners Street, and were bankrupt together in 1871,[287] partners Thomas Shepheard Mugridge (who operated from Chappells Pianoforte Factory in Belmont Street in 1881) and his son, William, who were bankrupt as manufacturers at 15 Little Camden Street, Camden Town, in 1897;[288] and the widow of piano maker Henry Tolkien and their two sons, who were bankrupt trading as H. Tolkien, in 1889, four years after Henry Tolkien's death.[289] While no documentary evidence has been found to prove that a lack of financial expertise was the catalyst for insolvency in these particular firms, a hierarchy of 'inbred' management would have compounded any natural familial deficiency.

Measures taken to postpone, evade, and recover from insolvency

Some of the measures taken to postpone or evade insolvency have been mentioned already, such as entering into marriage, lodging patents (discussed again below), soliciting loans, seeking extra employment, establishing new companies, and transferring companies into different names. Others involved the reduction of overheads (e.g. rent and employees), the sale of stock, raising funds by public means, relocating abroad, and leaving the industry entirely (for which latter course of action very few examples are recorded).

A strategy for which numerous examples exist was that of moving premises. In the fifteen years prior to his insolvency in 1837, Joseph Challenger recorded almost a

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[286] *LG*, 1 September 1871, p.3854.

[287] *LG*, 23 April 1872, p.2044.

[288] For their connection with the firm of Chappell, see Thomas J. Mugridge (53), born *c*1828, Ashburton, Devon, pianoforte maker employing 109 men and 20 boys (1881 census). For their bankruptcy, see *LG*, 8 June 1897, p.3228.

[289] For the bankruptcy of Charlotte Tolkien (widow) and sons Henry Montieth and William Brindley Augustus Tolkien, see *LG*, 9 July 1889, p.3722. For the death of Henry Tolkien, see NPC, Henry Tolkien, date of probate 9 February 1885 (Ancestry). In 1861, Henry suspended his business as a pianoforte maker and music seller due to 'bad trade'. *The Era*, 17 March 1861. Henry's brother, John Benjamin, was bankrupt as a pianoforte and music seller in 1877. See *LG*, 16 November 1877, p.6306. For proof of their relationship, see 'The Suicide in the Blackheath Tunnel' in *DN*, 21 April 1862. A contemporary in the trade recalled that 'Henry Tolkein [sic], whose shop was in King William Street, with the factory at Stoke Newington [...] in his day was a pioneer in advertising pianos, and he must have had a very successful business. His factory manager was Justin Browne, and that may have accounted for Tolkein's [sic] success. Justin Browne subsequently started on his own, and I think he won the reputation of making the best built British pianos. They were absolutely substantial. If I remember, he restricted his styles to the minimum, and he never employed a traveller. Once or twice a year he used to visit his customers, and always came back with plenty of orders.' Bamberger (August 1928), p.295.

dozen addresses in St Pancras, Camden Town, Hampstead Road and Regent's Park,[290] but in a similar interval subsequently, only two more addresses are recorded, suggesting that his frequent moves were motivated by financial stresses that were eased, or possibly resolved, during the course of insolvency proceedings.[291] The eventual employment of two sons as journeymen may have also lessened the need for the family to move again. A requirement for larger, perhaps cheaper, accommodation was common to many of the debtors with children, but even those without numerous dependants were prone to move repeatedly. String manufacturer and stringer Daniel Peter Joseph Aloysius Lynch recorded eight addresses prior to his bankruptcy in 1866,[292] and the musical instrument maker Herman Wrede junior reported seven addresses prior to his prosecution in 1858.[293] These men were not exceptional in having links to so many properties: debtors often moved to evade their creditors, or to avoid paying rent that was due. Commissioners investigating the bankruptcy of the Chudleigh sisters, in 1898, never did manage to ascertain their residential address.[294]

Other strategies for recovery were adopted *in situ*. Allison & Allison offered part of their premises for sale 'to public competition, at the Auction Mart', including 'a most capital dwelling-house, extensive warerooms [...] a brick building at the rear, four floors high, possessing most convenient and extensive workshops',[295] but they were still in possession the following year, having made only 'a communication between

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[290] *LG*, 3 October 1837, p.2552.

[291] For Bury Street address, see, baptism of Arthur Clement Challenger (28 November 1841) at St George, Bloomsbury; parents Joseph (musician) and Emma Challenger (Ancestry). For Robert Street address, Marylebone, see Joseph Challenger (51), born *c*1800, Bath, Somerset (1851 census).

[292] Other than his workshop at 15 George Street, Euston Road, he occupied premises in Bayham Street, Camden Town; Park Street, Euston Road; then Burton Street; Nelson Terrace; College Street; Saint James's Terrace; Winchester Street; Carlton Street; and at the time of his prosecution was living at Hawley Villa, Kentish Town. *LG*, 24 July 1866, p.4210.

[293] From Kingsland Place, Kingsland, to Buckingham Road, then West Green in Tottenham; Duke Street, Spitalfields (spending part of the time in the Debtors' Prison for London and Middlesex); then four rental properties in Duke Street and three in Queen Street, while his family lived in Banner Street, St Luke's. *LG*, 26 February 1858, p.1014.

[294] *LG*, 6 December 1898, p.7949.

[295] *DN*, 2 June 1847.

their warerooms and manufactories in Wardour and Dean Streets',[296] and, as noted earlier, their position was not improved and they were bankrupt four months later.[297]

Offsite, and in the wake of a fire at his premises in 1789, Charles Clagget organised a 'Grand Concert of Vocal and Instrument Music' at Hanover Square for his own benefit, and advertised for sale an 'Original Painting of the Portraits of Handel and [the composer] Geminiani' which was to be 'disposed of' to raise funds.[298] He was also bankrupt three years later.[299] A similar tactic was employed by George Augustus Kollmann, who gave a series of concerts at the Hanover Square Rooms and Willis's Rooms, in King's Street, St James's, in the year to June 1839,[300] as well as securing an extension of his patent for 'certain improvements in the mechanism and general construction of piano fortes' in February 1839.[301] The success of his concerts was limited, with one journalist complaining that they were 'full an hour too long'[302] and another that:

> His concert as a whole [...was] wo[e]fully too long. We could willingly have dispensed with Signor Puzzi's horn solo, which as a composition was little short of execrable, to say nothing of the two song by Donizetti and Mercadante, which were sad trash; the duet of Travers, which was a decided bore; and Mr Parry's ballad, which was pure and unsophisticated twaddle. The loss of these would have been a decided gain [...][303]

The concerts were discontinued shortly after. Perhaps sensing that his reputation was in decline, Kollmann diversified his interests, and established a 'Railway, Locomotive and Carriage Improvement Company' the year before he died,[304] but the

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[296] *MP*, 10 May 1848.
[297] *LG*, 10 October 1848, p.3673. The contents of the house were sold after the death of Thomas Allison's widow, in 1858. For the death of Mary Allison (42), see *MC*, 1 August 1856. For the sale of the property's 'capital furniture [...] and effects', see *DN*, 18 March 1857.
[298] *World (1787)*, 29 March 1790.
[299] *LG*, 26 March 1793, pp.257–58.
[300] See *MP*, 18 June 1838; *MP*, 25 June 1838 (and again 30 June); *MP*, 4 July 1838 (and again 5 July); *MP*, 9 April 1839 (and again 13 April); *The Era*, 21 April 1839; *MC*, 2 May 1839; report on the concert in *MC*, 8 May 1839; *MP*, 14 May 1839; report of the concert as 'much too long' in *MP*, 28 May 1839; and another in *The Charter*, 2 June 1839, claiming it was 'full an hour too long'; *The Era*, 2 June 1839; and *MP*, 14 June 1839.
[301] *MP*, 2 February 1839.
[302] *The Charter*, 2 June 1839.
[303] *The Era*, 2 June 1839.
[304] *MC*, 27 September 1844.

venture was unsuccessful and was wound up a decade later.[305] After his death, his sister assumed his position as Organist and Chapel Keeper of the German Chapel Royal, St James's, and supplemented her income as a music teacher 'occasionally Buying and Selling Piano Fortes'. The work was insufficient to restore her liquidity, however, and, still suffering the cost of her brother's bankruptcy, she was insolvent the following year.[306] The full history of the Kollmann family is recorded elsewhere.[307]

Some of the workforce seeking to increase their income applied for a victualler's licence. According to one source, 'it was extremely common for publicans, particularly in smaller establishments, to work only part time, combining run[ning] a bar with other work' as 'during the day running the pub was left in the hands of his wife and other members of the family'.[308] Works manager Giovanni Battista Rissone applied for a beer licence at the Kennington Licensing Sessions just prior to his bankruptcy in 1905,[309] but he eventually took work as a hotel porter.[310] Briefly, Robert Henry Rodwell held the licence to 'The Golden Horse' pub, in Theobald's Road, Red Lion Square, in the period between his bankruptcy as a piano maker in 1844, and again *in forma pauperis* in 1870.[311] Insolvent piano maker Thomas Scotcher was also a licensed retailer of beer and tobacco.[312] As noted in Chapter 3, piano silker Charles Cook acquired the licence at the 'Neville Cross' public house in Denmark Road, Kilburn, subsequent to his bankruptcy in 1880, and accumulated an estate worth more than £10,000.[313] The position of landlord was not always so lucrative. James Wallis Hubbard (a struggling piano silker, recorded at Appendix 1) was bankrupt in 1879 while running the 'Staves Porter' public house, in Jacob-street,

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[305] *LG*, 5 January 1849, p.35.
[306] *MC*, 27 September 1844.
[307] Kassler and Kollmann (2008).
[308] The Pub History Society: www.pubhistorysociety.co.uk/ancestors.pdf, consulted April 2011.
[309] He worked at his former manufacturing business Rose, Coop & Co. which he sold in 1902. Trial of Thomas Coop, 6 March 1905 (OB t19050306-267). For notice of Rissone's bankruptcy, see *LG*, 3 October 1905, p.6671.
[310] See G. B. Pio Rissone (34), born *c*1877, Italy, hotel porter (1911 census). He restored his finances to leave £2478 6s 6d when he died aged 80. NPC, Giovanni Battista Pio Rissone, date of probate 10 April 1957 (Ancestry).
[311] He held the licence from April 1853 to October the following year. *The Era*, 24 April 1853; and *The Era*, 1 October 1854. For details of his bankruptcies, see *LG*, 2 January 1844, p.24; and *LG*, 4 January 1870, p.81.
[312] *LG*, 14 February 1851, p.403.
[313] NPC, Charles Cook, date of probate 28 May 1888 (Ancestry). The history of the Cook family of silkers is recorded in Chapter 3.

Dockhead, Bermondsey, and died leaving only £12.[314] Other supplementary jobs were equally ineffectual in staving off insolvency, suggesting that the cause of debt lay with the debtor rather than his occupation. Action maker Henry Swindon Wilson 'dabbled in an entertainment with dissolving views and comic singing by himself, but [...] lost money by the affair', and lowered the man who supplied him with the apparatus to a state of financial distress.[315] Maker William Meryweather [sic] Thomson, of 69 Theobald's Road, Grays Inn Lane, moved to Croydon to work as a 'Tobacconist and Dealer in Fancy Goods, Ginger Beer, Lemonade, and Walking-sticks' but was insolvent, nonetheless, in 1860.[316] Thomson was one of very few of the workforce to quit the piano industry to follow a new career, turning his hand to 'tobacconist and artist', then 'photographer', 'carver and gilder' and finally 'perambulater [sic] manufacturer'.[317] Another was maker Henry Thomas Chissholme, who became a 'Private Soldier in Her Majesty's 12th Lancers' following his bankruptcy with his brothers in 1871.[318] Even those who moved abroad were inclined to remain in the trade. Maker William Matthew Statham who established a piano factory in San Francisco has been noted earlier. Maker Thomas Loud migrated to America after the sale of his bankrupt estate in 1810,[319] and dealer John Charles Kemp took his children to Canada following his bankruptcy in 1904.[320] Although attempts to stave off insolvency were ultimately unsuccessful in all these cases, the great majority of those prosecuted found a means of recovery within the trade, to a lesser or greater degree.

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[314] For his bankruptcy, see *LG*, 8 August 1879, p.4875. For his final wealth, see NPC, James Wallis Hubbard, date of probate 24 June 1884 (Ancestry).

[315] See *LG*, 18 October 1859, p.3786; and *MC*, 17 November 1859.

[316] *LG*, 21 February 1860, p.631.

[317] For 'tobacconist & artist', see William M. Thompson [sic] (31), born *c*1830, Croydon, Surrey (1861 census); for 'photographer', see *LG*, 8 February 1867, p.730; for 'carver and gilder', see William M. Thomson (41), born *c*1830, Croydon (1871 census); and for 'perambulater [sic] manufacturer', see William S. [sic] Thomson, widower (61), born *c*1830, Croydon, Surrey (1891 census).

[318] *LG*, 1 September 1871, p.3854.

[319] For details of his bankruptcy and the sale of his estate, see *LG*, 18 September 1810, p.1477; *MC*, 6 October 1810; *LG*, 9 October 1810, p.1611; *LG*, 10 November 1810, p.1801; and *LG*, 18 December 1810, p.2029. For his move to America, see 'Correspondence 10/15/02 passengers #20 & 21 Loud' at: http://immigrantships.net/v2/1800v2/hudson18250618.html, consulted 25 August 2012.

[320] For bankruptcy, see *LG*, 22 July 1904, p.4793. For migration, see *LG*, 4 April 1913, p.2496.

Insolvency and patents

One means of restoring a reputation tarnished by insolvency was to patent an improvement for the piano, and several of the study population adopted this approach. Most allowed their patent to lapse after three years rather than pay an additional £50 in stamp duty, however,[321] suggesting that any benefits that may have accrued were unequal to the expense of protecting them.[322] George Henry Brockbank twice lodged a patent for improvements to piano actions the year after becoming bankrupt.[323] He lodged a total of six patents in 23 years, though none made him rich and he ended his career as a tuner.[324] Maker John Henry Schucht lodged a patent for 'improvements in the construction of pianoforte, violins, guitars, organs, and other similar musical instruments' after his first bankruptcy, and another, three years later, for 'improvements in pianoforte, harmonium, and organ keys'. He also failed to profit by his invention and was bankrupt again a decade later.[325] Robert Anderson Rüst lodged four patents over a period of twenty years and nine prosecutions: two for unspecified improvements in pianos, a third concerning the construction of the case, and a fourth for 'improvements in condensing and preserving milk and in apparatus therefor, the same apparatus being applicable to other purposes'; this latter patent while he was still working as a piano maker.[326] Maker William Robert Norminton, former partner of George Nutting, lodged two patents between his first and second bankruptcy: the first for 'a new self escapement hopper to prevent blocking in the upright plain action pianoforte' and the second for

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[321] For example of £100 stamp duty after seven years, see *LG*, 14 February 1868, p.730.

[322] Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the procedure for obtaining a patent in Britain was clumsy and expensive, requiring two signatures from the monarch and the presentation of a petition at seven different offices where separate fees were due. According to evidence given to the Commons Select Committee on the Law of Patents in 1829, a simple English patent cost about £20, a lengthier one about £200, and patents to cover England, Ireland and Scotland about £300. Adams, J. N., 'History of the patent system' in T. Takenaka (ed.), *Patent Law and Theory: A Handbook of Contemporary Research* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing, 2008), pp.101–31, at p.124, f.n.138.

[323] For first prosecution and patent, see *LG*, 12 January 1869, p.198; and *LG*, 25 March 1870, p.1899. For second prosecution and patent, see *LG*, 24 March 1874, p.1855; and *LG*, 4 June 1875, p.2916.

[324] George H. Brockbank (69), born *c*1822, Newcastle (1891 census). For details of his patents, see Appendix 11.

[325] For prosecution, see *LG*, 21 June 1867, p.3516. For patents, see *LG*, 26 January 1869, p.416; and *LG*, 8 November 1872, p.5226.

[326] For first insolvency, see *LG*, 25 December 1849, p.3938. For two patents for improvements that followed, see *LG*, 15 October 1852, p.2688; and *LG*, 22 July 1853, p.2029. For prosecution that followed, see *LG*, 2 May 1854, p.1394. For third prosecution and subsequent patent regarding case construction, see *LG*, 2 May 1854, p.1394; and *LG*, 27 May 1859, p.2131–32; and *LG*, 27 December 1861, p.5581. For final patent concerning milk, see *LG*, 27 June 1873, p.3106.

'improvements in manufacturing pianofortes to transpose the key board, keys, and action one or more notes either above or below concert pitch'.[327] He was also bankrupt again.[328] It is possible these men would have lodged their patents whatever the outcome, given that invention and uncertain return ran in tandem, but other members of the study population appear to have lodged a patent in a bid to avert insolvency. Maker and dealer Thomas Rolfe lodged his patent for unspecified 'improvements' to the instrument one month before a petition for bankruptcy was filed against him,[329] and the 'Pianoforte and Dining Table Manufacturer' William Dodson lodged a patent for 'improvements in the construction of pianofortes' the year before he was bankrupt.[330] Journeyman piano maker Benjamin Johnson lodged a patent the year before his bankruptcy, and another the year after,[331] though neither prevented or resolved his debt and he was bankrupt again three years later, having lodged two more patents for unspecified 'improvements in pianofortes' in the interim.[332] The value of these patents to restoring the maker's reputation or liquidity – or to the development of the piano – is largely questionable.

Figure 35 (below) shows the annual distribution of 193 patents to have been lodged by 167 members of the domestic workforce between 1785 and 1878, as noted in *The London Gazette* and listed at Appendix 11.[333] Patents lodged by members of the workforce who were prosecuted for debt at some time in their career (not necessarily at the time of their lodging a patent) are coloured red, and those who remained solvent are coloured blue.

Prior to 1852, patents were not numbered or required to be published, which is a fact reflected at Figure 35 by the paucity of study data prior to this date.[334] London's Great Exhibition of 1851 accelerated demand for reform of the patent laws and the following year *The Patent Law Amendment Act* established The Patent Office which

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[327] See *LG*, 18 August 1871, p.3657; and *LG*, 6 September 1878, p.5048.
[328] See *LG*, 11 October 1878, p.5535.
[329] See *LG*, 8 May 1857, p.1628; and *LG*, 15 June 1858, p.2940.
[330] See *LG*, 11 February 1876, p.603; and *LG*, 17 July 1877, p.4226.
[331] See *LG*, 1 November 1861, p.4351; *LG*, 1 August 1862, p.3860; and *LG*, 21 August 1863, p.4156.
[332] For third, fourth and fifth patents, see *LG*, 14 April 1865, p.2052; *LG*, 27 October 1865, p.5042; and *LG*, 20 April 1866, p.2526. For final bankruptcy, see *LG*, 28 August 1866, p.4775.
[333] Patents lodged by proxy, by patentees living overseas, are not included.
[334] Intellectual Property Office: www.ipo.gov.uk/types/patent/p-about/p-whatis/p-oldnumbers/p-oldnumbers-1617.htm, consulted 29 January 2013.

simplified the procedure for obtaining a patent and reduced the legal fees.[335] The expense for the first three years was £20 in fees, and £5 in stamp duty.[336] As seen at Figure 35, patents lodged by the piano industry began to increase at this time, generated by aspirations to invention fomented by The Great Exhibition. That so many of the patents noted in the first years of the new system were lodged by members of the workforce who would later become insolvent suggests the extent to which ambition and pretension could be a precursor to insolvency.

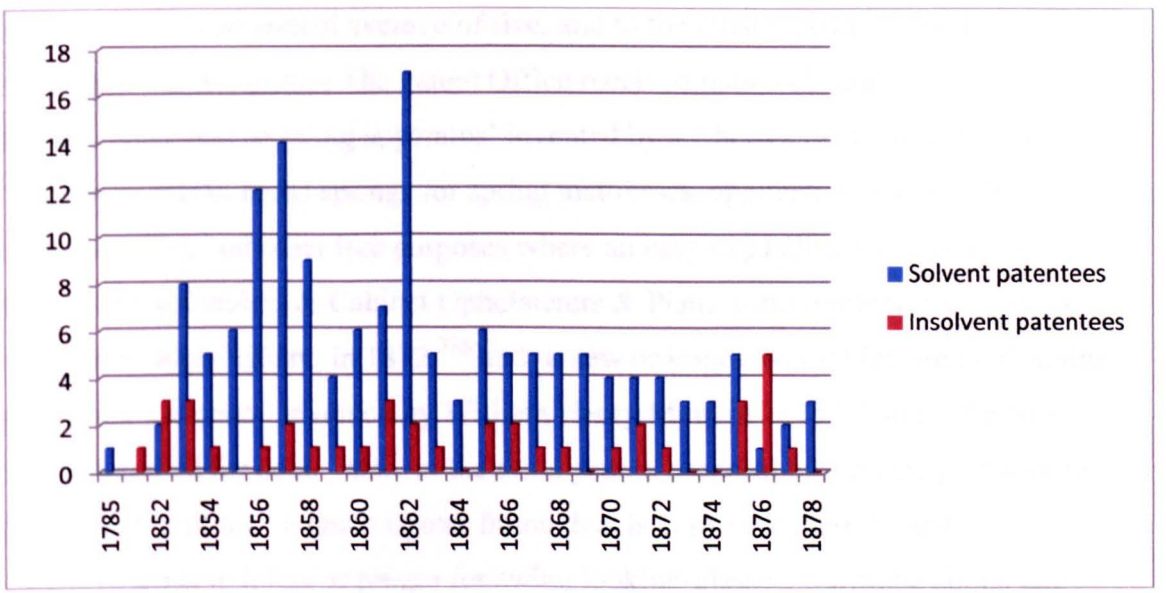

Figure 35: Distribution of patents lodged by the workforce. Domestic patents only (i.e. England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland - excludes patents communicated from abroad). Insolvent patentees were not necessarily insolvent when they lodged their patent, but insolvent at some time in their career, whether before or after. Source: *The London Gazette* (1785–1878).

The Paris International Exhibition of 1855 prompted a further surge in patent applications, followed by a peak in 1862 when London hosted the exhibition for a second time, and members of the workforce rushed to align themselves with patented manufacturers exhibiting at the show. The two patents lodged by 'insolvents' that year relate to the manufacturer George Crawford, who was not yet an insolvent (but bankrupt five years later), and George Lewis Locke, a 'Journeyman Pianoforte Small Work Maker' who had been prosecuted for insolvency the year before. Crawford probably shared the motivation of fellow solvents in seeking to raise his prestige at

[335] Intellectual Property Office: www.ipo.gov.uk/types/patent/p-about/p-whatis/p-history/p-history-19century.htm, consulted 29 January 2013.

[336] Hansard, 19 March 1852, Lords sitting, 'Patent Law Amendment (No. 2) Bill'. Online at: http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/lords/1852/mar/19/patent-law-amendment-no-2-bill, consulted 29 January 2013.

the time of the exhibition, but the timing of Locke's patent can be linked directly to his insolvency. That Locke was the only insolvent member of the workforce to lodge a patent in 1862 (among eleven to have been prosecuted that year, and an equal number the year before), implies that the cost of lodging a patent (albeit reduced), outweighed the patent's value as a propaganda tool for those with little cash. Diminishing interest in the exhibitions that followed (the Paris International in 1867, the Austrian International in 1873, the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia in 1876, and a second Paris International in 1878) reduced patent applications in the period 1863 to 1878 to an annual average of five, and to the most innovative, perhaps, of the workforce. In this period The Patent Office received notice of 'improvements in railway brake and coupling apparatus' invented by a Chelsea piano tuner in 1869;[337] 'improvements in metal springs for spring mattresses, application also for chairs, couches, sofas, and other like purposes where an easy expanding force is desirable' by the 'Brassfounders & Cabinet Upholsterers & Piano-forte Ironmongers' Atkins and Son of Birmingham, in 1872;[338] and 'a new or improved tool for use in trimming pianoforte hammers' invented by William Henry Mott, in 1875,[339] none of whom was prosecuted for debt. Also, in the same year, a proposal by a music professor in Haverstock Hill for ' a much lighter frame than is at present used',[340] and 'improvements in joints or hinges for swing looking-glasses, wardrobe doors, and other doors, and for other articles' invented by a 'pianoforte and organ tuner' in 1878.[341] Among the insolvents, manufacturer Alfred Squire lodged notice of 'improvements in the method of and apparatus for stopping and retarding tram cars and all rolling stock', in 1876, and was bankrupt two years later;[342] and the action manufacturer Henry Brooks patented 'improvements in stopping apparatus for scent and others bottles or vessels' and filed for liquidation six years later.[343] The designs of Squire and Brooks sprang from commercial interests rather than a desire to elevate their profile in the piano industry, which was already well regarded.

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[337] See James Duffey, *LG*, 2 April 1869, p.2067.
[338] *LG*, 2 August 1872, p.3459.
[339] *LG*, 16 April 1875, p.2152.
[340] *LG*, 26 November 1875, p.5830.
[341] See Samuel Adams, *LG*, 18 October 1878, p.5633.
[342] For patent, see *LG*, 25 August 1876, p.4742. For first bankruptcy, see *LG*, 14 May 1878, p.3075.
[343] For patent (one of three), see *LG*, 19 October 1877, p.5697. For bankruptcy, see *LG*, 3 October 1882, p.4486.

Trustees

Because creditors had the task of appointing trustees to a bankrupt estate, the position was often filled by a member of the trade who was owed a sum of money. If the debt were large it was in the interest of the candidate to accept the position as it gave him the most powerful means of ensuring the best possible return from the sale of the estate. Several prominent members of the industry were appointed in this way, including the manufacturers John Brinsmead, Charles Cadby,[344] George Nutting and George Richard Metzler, each of whom accepted the position twice. Between them, James and John Hopkinson acted as trustees on six occasions (working together twice as co-trustees), and the piano action maker Henry Brooks acted as sole or joint trustee five times in fifteen years, before his own insolvency in 1882. Together with the timber merchant Stephen Rogers and the ironmonger Joseph Goddard, who were trustees to three and four members of the piano industry respectively (and probably to other of their insolvent customers in different trades as well), Brooks was possibly the most experienced of the study trustees. His biography is recorded at Appendix 20. A list of trustees drawn from the piano industry between 1841 and 1890 appears at Appendix 21.

The responsibilities assumed by the trustee could be onerous, as it was often necessary for trustees to continue the bankrupt's business until it could be profitably sold or liquidated, while at the same time managing their own affairs as well.[345] Hence, eminent members of the industry were considered suited to the task as they had experience of the complexities involved, and they often worked together to share their expertise. Charles Cadby and the music publisher Thomas Chappell acted as co-trustees in the bankruptcy of a Lancastrian music seller in 1856, and Cadby worked with another music publisher, George Thomas Metzler, nine years later, to settle the estate of a music seller in Exeter. In turn, Metzler worked with John Hopkinson in the bankruptcy of the music publishers and instrument sellers, Foster and King of Regent Street, in 1856, and Hopkinson had already acted as trustee in

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[344] Charles Cadby 'had peculiar traits, and always received one most politely in his dressing gown and cap'. Bamberger (May 1928), p.1407.

[345] The trustee appointed to act in the bankruptcy of George Challenger and Joseph Cadby (trading as Challenger and Co., of Pianoforte Works, Langham Street, Portland Road), in 1880, died before completing the task, and the bankruptcy was still unresolved 25 years later. For original bankruptcy, see *LG*, 26 March 1880, p.2285. For appointment of new trustee, see *LG*, 25 April 1905, p.3077.

the bankruptcy of a music dealer in Chester five years earlier, when his co-trustee was the music publisher Robert Addison. John Brinsmead and Charles Collard were appointed joint trustees in the estate of a Bristol music seller in 1867, and Henry John Kirkman worked as co-trustee with Thomas Chappell in the bankruptcy of a music seller in Gloucester the year before. In 1859, George Metzler and George Nutting administered the bankruptcy of another music dealer in York. Henry Brooks worked with the timber merchant Stephen Rogers in the bankruptcy of piano maker William Joseph Ennever in 1854; Stephen Rogers worked with Joseph Goddard in the bankruptcy of the maker James Steedman in 1857; and Goddard and the action maker Richard Dawson settled the bankruptcy of the piano maker George Jay in 1860. For details, see Appendix 21. Small suppliers were also keen to recoup as much of their debt as possible and the trustees appointed to the bankrupt manufacturer Charles Hampton, in 1869, were his veneer merchant, string manufacturer and ivory merchant.[346] Those of piano maker Henry Jacobs of Cardington Street, Hampstead Road, in 1845, were his timber merchant and ironmonger.[347]

The appointment of exemplar businessmen to the position of trustee was helpful to a failed situation in restoring a sense of smooth running to the trade. The appointment of former bankrupts – some of whom the court had censured as reckless or dishonest – can only have reinforced the disarray. That creditors considered five former bankrupts suitable to hold a position of fiscal responsibility – two of whom were judged to have been reckless or dishonest – is a curious point. James Ballingall was appointed co-trustee to a Bognor piano dealer ten years after his discharge with a second-class certificate in 1851,[348] and Kensington piano maker Charles Kelly was a former bankrupt issued with a third-class certificate for dishonest dealing when he was appointed trustee for a Warwick music seller in 1866.[349] That a decade had passed since their own bankruptcy suggests either the success with which these men had recovered their reputation, or that local creditors were unaware (or unconcerned) that the men had been prosecuted in London when they appointed them trustee.

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[346] *LG*, 28 September 1869, p.5272.
[347] *LG*, 22 July 1845, p.2202.
[348] For Ballingall's second-class certificate, see *LG*, 7 November 1851, p.2924. For appointment as co-trustee, see *LG*, 5 July 1861, p.2816.
[349] See *LG*, 13 November 1855, pp.4221–22; and *LG*, 3 August 1866, p.4381.

Even creditors who appointed a local trustee, and who must have been aware of their past insolvency, were not dissuaded from appointing them to the role. London maker Thomas Owen was appointed trustee to Robert Anderson Rüst only three years after his own bankruptcy in 1861.[350] More remarkable is the fact that Rüst, with five prosecutions and a third-class certificate, was considered fit to administer the estate of an insolvent Fleet Street accountant in 1870.[351] The courts came to appreciate the paradox of such a situation and under the provisions of the *Bankruptcy Act* of 1883 the conduct of the trustee was to be the concern of the Board of Trade.[352]

Overview

It has been established that levels of insolvency in the piano industry were not ineluctably tethered to the national trend. The industry's foreign markets were sufficiently diverse to overcome restrictions to the export trade during periods of conflict abroad, and demand for the product at home, from a public tolerant of varying standards of quality, cushioned practitioners from nationwide patterns of insolvency. Neither did changes to the debt laws exacerbate rates of insolvency. More accurately, the debtor was progressively freed from the control of his creditor and gaoler, and, with an increasing variety of solutions made available to him, his autonomy was improved. The greatest stimulus to rates of insolvency did not, then, spring from the laws introduced to administer them. Neither did undue insolvency spring from widespread gambling or reckless speculation, though a number of the workforce was engaged in such activities, and also in criminal dealings.

It has also been demonstrated that increased insolvency did not result from factory fires or the sale of large businesses such as Messrs Kirkman, showing that potentially ruinous developments in the industry were able to be contained by the industry, and workers' jobs secured. Influences not able to be controlled by the industry stemmed from activity in other trades. The greatest inducements to insolvency during the study period – beyond the inherent instances of failure to be assumed in any trade –

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[350] For bankruptcy of Thomas Owen, see *LG,* 12 November 1861, p.4548. For his appointment as trustee to Robert Anderson Rüst, see *LG,* 20 January 1865, p.286.

[351] For details of his discharge, see *LG,* 19 August 1859, p.3173. For his appointment as trustee, see *LG,* 18 November 1870, p.5015.

[352] *The Bankruptcy Act 1883*, Introduction, pp.xix–xx.

were the economic crises that flowed from the mishandled business dealings of other trades.

Viewed from the following perspective, the casualties among the workforce are shown to have been remarkably few. Figure 36 (below) shows, in blue, the annual number of trade advertisements in London's commercial directories between 1770 and 1914, overlaid, in red, with the total industry prosecutions for debt in the same years. The disparity between the two is magnified by the following statistics. Taking the year 1881 (for which this study has the most complete data), it is shown that six members of the workforce were prosecuted for debt, 360 advertised in the directory, and the London workforce (according to the census) comprised a minimum of 4,919.[353] Therefore, 0.1% of the capital workforce was prosecuted for debt.

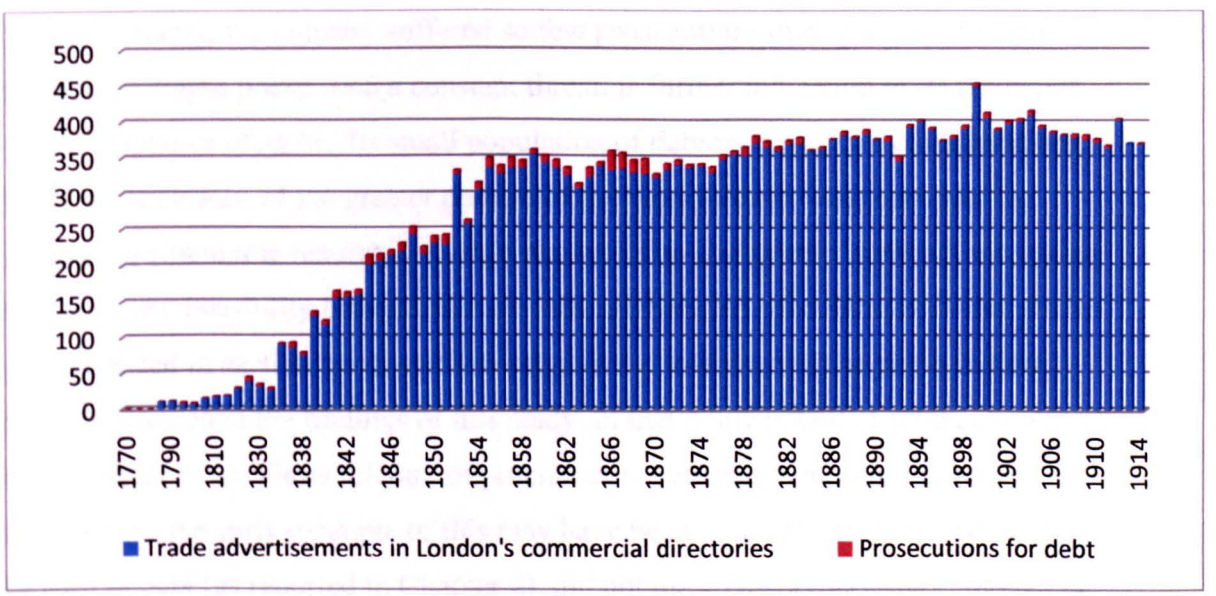

Figure 36: Trade advertisements v. industry prosecutions for debt. Sources: early commercial directories (1765–1839), the *Post Office London Directory* (1840–1914), and *The London Gazette* (1770–1914).

Without census data for the whole study period, it is not possible to extract any further calculations from the chart, but it is instructive to observe how slight was the number of insolvencies experienced by the trade. Moreover, those who succumbed to insolvency were not so permanently disadvantaged that they were prevented from returning to their work. Either their financial problems were not insurmountable or

[353] See Chapter 6, p.228.

they were not considered so. Prospects of recovery must have appeared good, for the majority of insolvents returned to the piano industry, even though it was possible for them to find employment elsewhere, as shown in section three.

As observed by Jill Lepore, the idea that debt was necessary for trade, and had to be forgiven, was consequent to the rise of a market economy. Providing the same debt relief to everyone made risk-taking less risky, and an industry's willingness to forgive debt lay behind a good part of its prosperity.[354] The veracity of this principle is well supported by this study. The debts of the study population did not obstruct the rise of the industry, and the industry's willingness to forgive its debtors gave them renewed opportunity to contribute to the industry's prosperity. Even those prone to repeated insolvency were able to make a sustained contribution to the trade, to its greater or lesser advantage.

That, ultimately, the industry suffered so few prosecutions during a period when financial collapse posed such a constant threat, is further indication of its resilience to, and tolerance of, debt. Its small population of debtors raises two considerations. First, the resistance of the greater portion of the workforce to most catalysts for insolvency (including restricted foreign markets, fire and unemployment), excepting the economic instability brought about by the mishandled speculation of other trades (as evidenced in section two); and second, that the tolerance of the piano industry probably exceeded the findings of this study, in that many potential prosecutions were averted by creditors tolerant of practitioners suffering temporary financial difficulties. An early example of this may have been Americus Backers, who though he died in debt (as reported in Chapter 2), did not die an insolvent debtor, though he owed debts amounting to more than one hundred and twenty pounds.[355] As early as 1778, then, creditors could be aware of the potential for prosperity in the industry, and inclined to tolerate its short-term debt. By the same token, as late as 1869, direct

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[354] Lepore, J., 'I.O.U. How we used to treat debtors', *The New Yorker* (13 April 2009). Available online at: www.newyorker.com/reporting/2009/04/13/090413fa_fact_lepore, consulted 21 May 2013.

[355] He owed his landlord £65 in rent due at the time of his decease (NA PROB 31/673/580); his executor £33 1s 4 ½d for 'cash lent and goods delivered' (NA PROB 31/673/580); and his vintner 'fourteen pounds and upwards for cash lent and liquors had' (NA PROB 31/669/361). A further £2 8s 9d was owed for new window lights installed in his workshop and £7 in taxes (NA PROB 31/673/580), totalling £121 10s 1 ½d, a debt amounting to more than £7,600 today.

action was still being taken to protect innocent members of the workforce from potential prosecution, by raising public funds to replace burnt tools, as shown in section two.

Protecting innocent members of the workforce, tolerating financial difficulties in the short term, and giving debtors a second chance post-prosecution, was different to condoning debt – and, in effect, enabling it – such that it ran and ran to the detriment of the industry. Prosecution served as a check to the excessive loss that resulted from such behaviour (as in the case of Herman Wrede, junior), and removed the industry's 'dead wood', in the form of those who were perhaps only ever peripheral to the trade, and easily dissuaded from the industry and diverted into other careers (for example, William Meryweather Thomson, the eventual perambulator manufacturer, and the former pork butcher Thomas Humphrey Williams). The prosecution of men like these increased the prosperity of the industry in that they were no longer a drain on its income. It also helped safeguard industry standards. Even for respected firms such as Allison & Allison, Monington & Weston, and Henry Brooks,[356] prosecution would have been a positive agent for improvement. Recovery required the re-evaluation of business practices, the recalibration of financial planning, and perhaps changes to the company product, as in the Allison & Allison 'boudoir piano'. Prosecuted individuals, also, would have been required to review their overheads and expenditure in light of their earning capacity. That the majority of the study population achieved these improvements is evidenced by the fact that 85% avoided further prosecution. That those who were prosecuted again still managed to maintain some form of career in the trade is proof of the health of the industry. It would not be until the decline in the popularity of the piano in the twentieth century that bankruptcy and insolvency would prove so decidedly fatal to business.

[356] Brooks' failure was 'attributable mainly to the investment of too much capital in stock, the debtors being left without ready money available to meet his engagements'. *The Times*, 30 September 1882. See Appendix 20.

Chapter 6:
The 1881 workforce

The British government began a decadal census of its inhabitants in 1801 and those conducted between 1841 and 1911 are available to view online.[1] The English census of 1881 is the first to allow a search of the population by occupation.[2] Earlier censuses are searchable by name only, making the identification of an anonymous body of workers a practical impossibility, but by entering the word 'piano' or 'pianoforte' in the search engine for 1881, large numbers of the piano-related workforce are brought to light. Their name, age, address, birthplace, marital status and occupation are revealed, and without further enquiry this data alone adds greatly to our understanding of the workforce in terms of its size, gender, occupation and location. Nearly 6,500 men, women and children are found to have worked in approximately 400 piano-related occupations across 42 English counties, the majority based in London. But these figures tell only part of the story. A more complex interpretation may be drawn from secondary information not immediately apparent from the data. The social standing, entrepreneurial spirit, family history, social acquaintance, success, hardship and disappointment of the workforce may all be deduced from the census, and their individual and collective careers provide a surprising insight into piano-making in mid-Victorian England.

Background

In the year before the 1881 census was taken, the combined output of the English piano industry was estimated at between 30-35,000 instruments. Annual production had increased by a third since the previous census, and by the end of the century it was set to approach 100,000 instruments, most of them made in the capital.[3] The *Post Office London Directory* for 1881 lists 233 makers operating in the city: 106 firms and partnerships and 127 smaller concerns. Large firms, such as Brinsmead, Broadwood, Collard & Collard, Chappell and Challen, employed several hundred

[1] Ancestry website: www.ancestry.co.uk
[2] The next census of England to allow a search by occupation is that of 1911.
[3] Ehrlich (1996), p.157.

workmen, while the smallest, like that of John Campell, employed perhaps a man and a boy.[4] It is doubtful whether Campell produced a great many instruments, but according to his census return he was a 'master pianoforte maker'.[5] More than sixty other 'makers' listed in the directory that year were not 'master pianoforte makers' according to their census returns, but dealers, music setters, teachers, tuners and makers of other instruments. Some recorded secondary professions as well, such as lodging house keeper, cork merchant, and Chelsea pensioner. The directory classification for 'piano maker' was possibly too narrow for some.

According to Ehrlich, the pianos made in England at this time were the creation of approximately thirty reputable firms, excluding numerous so-called 'shoddy' firms making sub-standard produce (of which Campell's establishment may have been one).[6] In 1881 the London piano manufacturing industry covered an area from Hammersmith in the west, to Westminster in the east, to Kentish Town in the north. Figure 38 (below) shows this area on a map, marked with the principal reputable firms noted in the *Post Office London Directory* that year. The hub of the industry centred in St Pancras, which returned a population of 236,258 residents in 1881.[7] Of these, 1,893 are identified by this study as working in the piano industry, so in 1881 the piano industry workforce in St Pancras comprised 0.8 per cent of the local population. Several factors made the area popular with piano makers: the established supply of timber, brass, iron and ivory to the existing furniture trade, the availability of large properties and cheap rents north of the city centre, and plentiful haulage for heavy, bulky goods via the Regent's Canal and the railway terminals at King's Cross, Euston and St Pancras. Some of the older firms in the area had enjoyed these facilities since the 1860s, migrating north from the industry's origins in Soho via premises along Tottenham Court Road, but new firms had also gathered in the area to draw on the ready workforce and exploit the same amenities.

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[4] For a list of those who stated the size of their workforce on their census return, see Appendix 28.
[5] See John H. Campell (36), born *c*1845, Scotland, living at 68 Lupus Street, St George, Hanover Square (1881 census).
[6] Ehrlich (1996), p.157.
[7] August, A., *Poor Women's Lives: Gender, Work and Poverty in Late-Victorian London* (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1999), p.144.

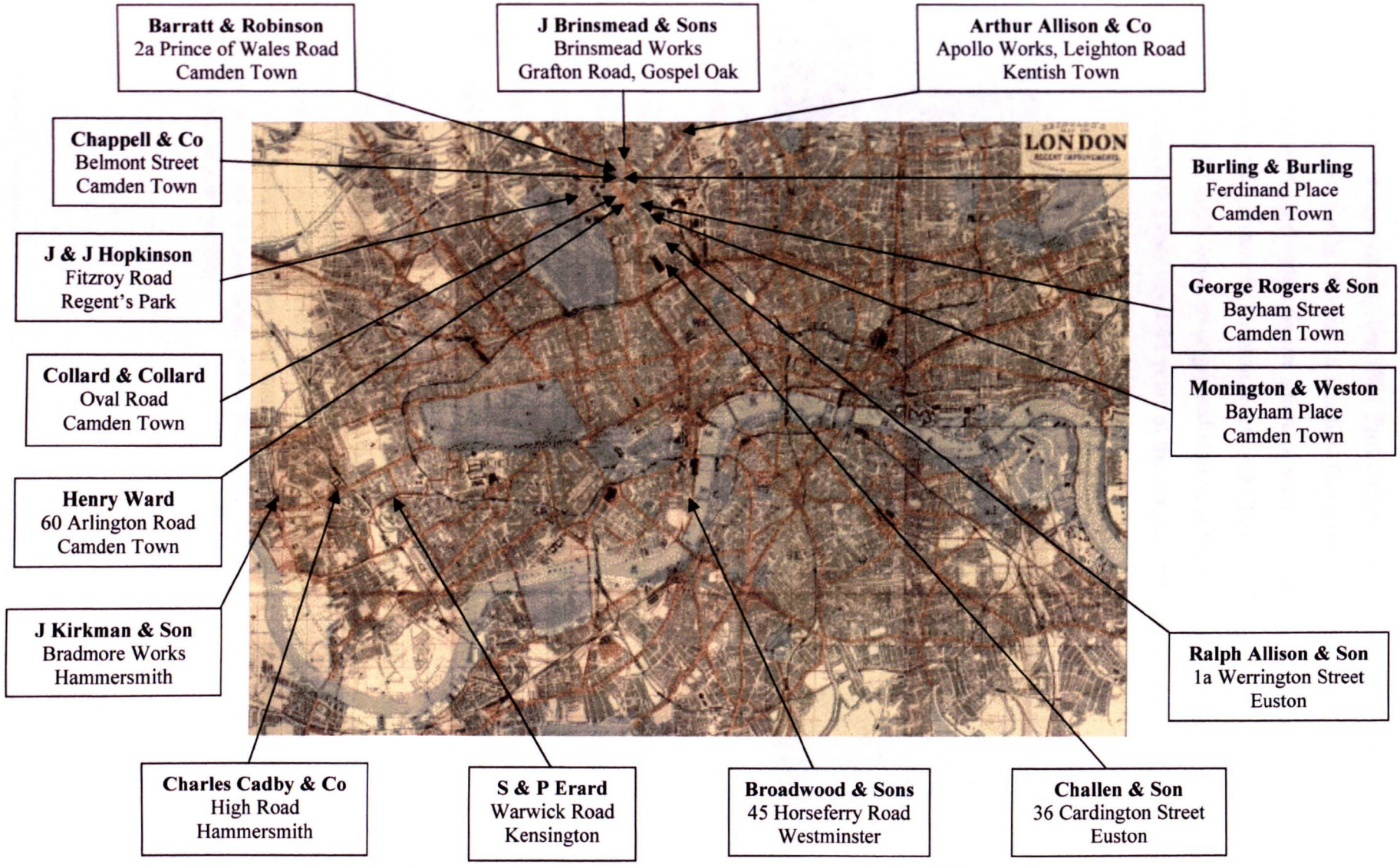

Figure 38: Map showing the location of major London piano factories in 1881. Source: *The Post Office London Directory* 1881.

The northernmost factory noted in the 1881 *Post Office London Directory* was that of Arthur Allison at the 'Apollo Works' in Kentish Town (see Figures 39 and 40). Built with a footprint approximating the shape of a grand piano, the building occupied a site on the corner of Leighton Road and Charlton King's Road, within easy access of the Kentish Town over-ground station at the far end of Leighton Road. The company had been established 44 years at the time of the census, and their annual production had grown to around 600 instruments.[8]


Figures 39 and 40: Former factory of Arthur Allison & Co., Apollo Works, Charlton King's Road/Leighton Road, Kentish Town (now residential flats).

Three-quarters of a mile to the west was the Brinsmead factory, covering nearly an acre along the Grafton Road in Gospel Oak (see Figure 41). This was built by 1874 to replace the company's old premises in Chenies Street, Tottenham Court Road, and was equipped with 'a most complete system of machinery', and a drying room said to be the largest in Europe. It was reported in the press as follows:[9]

> The main body of the works, though constituting only a single building, really consists of four distinct buildings, being divided into that number by brick walls of great solidity...The horizontal dimensions of the building are 189ft by 45ft. It is constructed with four floors and a low basement storey, which is asphalted, and contains the shafting from which the machinery above is driven. On each floor there are two large shops, a store room, and an examining room, making four rooms in all, or 16 in the whole building.

[8] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.
[9] 'An English Piano Factory' in *The Derby Mercury*, 9 September 1874.

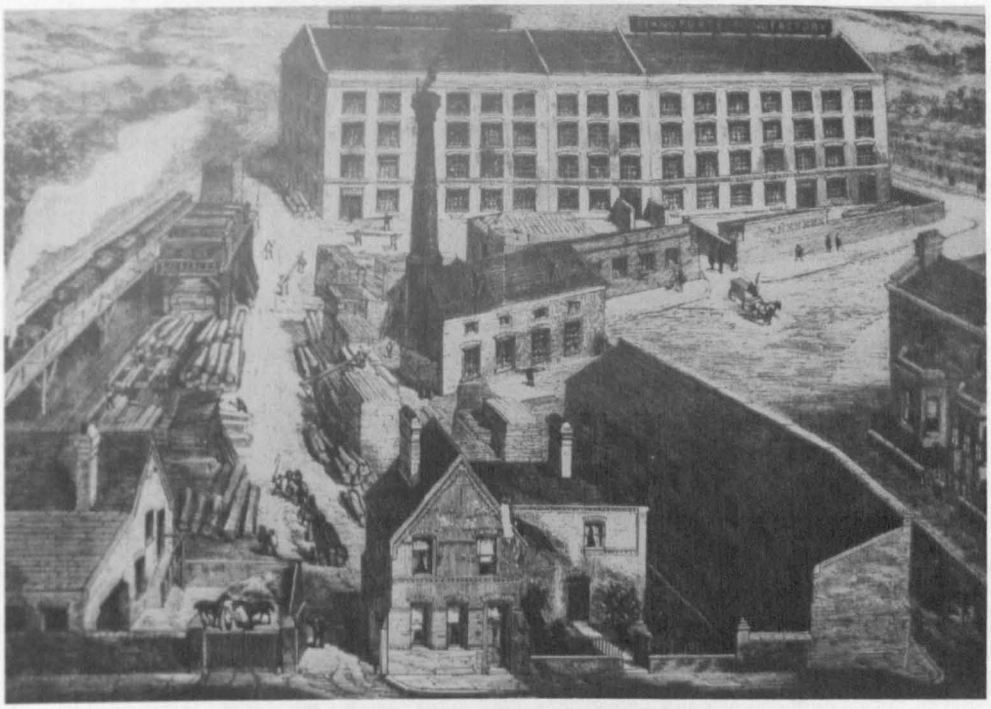

Figure 41: Illustration of the Brinsmead Factory, 1874. Source: *The Pictorial World*, see Laurence (2010), p. 18.

The factory's capacity was reportedly 3,000 pianos a year with a workforce of 300 men (i.e. 10 pianos per man) but their output in 1880 is estimated to have been less than a quarter of that sum.[10] Of the 700 or so instruments produced in 1881, a number of newly-patented 'Top Tuner' uprights counted among them, but the model achieved little practical or commercial success and was eventually withdrawn.[11]

At the foot of Grafton Road, near the mainline station of Kentish Town West, was the young firm of Barratt & Robinson, established only four years when the census was taken and producing approximately 100 instruments a year.[12] The company was set to acquire many of its larger competitors over the course of the following century. A short walk to the south along Ferdinand Street was the Chappell steam factory, with 109 men and 20 boys working on a site stretching west to Belmont Street. The

[10] For Brinsmead's assessment of the work's capacity (which was probably exaggerated for the press), see *The Pall Mall Gazette*, 18 March 1876. For Ehrlich's estimation of their output, see Ehrlich (1996), p.144. In 1898, Thomas James Brinsmead stated that the company kept 'over 200 hands' and manufactured '50 pianos a week'. Trial of Thomas Edward Brinsmead, Francis Richard Jordan, Ernest Albert Harrison Ainsworth, Henry Peter Bernard, William Henry Kaye, and Edwin Ballantine, 25 April 1898 (OB t18980425-335).

[11] The design of the 'Top Tuner' was intended to stabilise tuning by using machine-threaded, vertical tuning pins set in the top of the cast-iron frame. Laurence (2010), pp.22–23.

[12] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

company produced about 600 pianos a year at the time of the census.[13] To the west of the Chappell factory, beyond the sprawling goods yard of Chalk Farm Station in a largely residential area on the edge of Primrose Hill, the workforce of J. & J. Hopkinson was making about 800 pianos a year.[14] Crossing the railway line to the east, Collard & Collard were producing about 1,950 pianos, with a workforce of 601.[15] They had twice built their factory on the same site on the Oval Road, first in 1851 and again the following year after a factory fire (see Appendices 15 and 16). Their tripartite premises comprised a round, four-storey building for the production of upright pianos (see Figure 42); a rectangular building to the rear producing grands; and an assortment of outbuildings opposite, where iron frames were fettled, finished and bronzed, and completed backs were strung.[16] One of the women identified in the census worked here as a 'back coverer'.[17] In the year of this study, a newly patented, pedal-operated 'celeste' muting strip was introduced to the grand production line.[18]

Other factories operating in Camden Town were Burling & Burling in Ferdinand Place (making about 500 pianos per year), Henry Ward on the Arlington Road (output unknown),[19] George Rogers & Son in Bayham Street (approximately 300 pianos), and Monington & Weston (est. 1858) in Bayham Place. Monington and Weston 'at one time employed 100 highly skilled wood carvers, and in the years when heavy mahogany carving was popular [their] pianos were in great demand'.[20]

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[13] For size of workforce, see Thomas J. Mugridge (53), born *c*1828, Ashburton, Devon (1881 census). For annual production figures, see Ehrlich (1996), p.144. With regard to the firm of Muggeridge & Ulph, a timber merchant recalled that 'Their factory was in Belmont Street, Chalk Farm, and I understood the whole output was absorbed by Messrs. Chappell of Bond Street. Eventually the businesswas taken over by Chappell's, and I believe the Muggeridge & Ulph site still forms part of the existing Chappell building.' Bamberger (July 1928), p.175.

[14] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

[15] For estimated output, see Ehrlich (1996), p.144. For size of workforce, see William S. Collard (38), born *c*1843, Tottenham Court Road, Middlesex (1881 census). This figure had not changed in 10 years. See evidence of George Griffiths, manager at Collard & Collard, trial of George Dawe and Edward Wallace Bishop, 4 April 1870 (OB t18700404-351).

[16] Laurence (2010), p.61.

[17] Elizabeth Brown (63), born *c*1818, Devon (1881 census). Jeff Prett, Steinway technician, suggests that 'back covering' involved dressing the back of an upright piano with a cloth-covered panel. Private communication, May 2007.

[18] For more details of Collard's 'celeste' muting strip, see Laurence (2010), p.63.

[19] Henry later built an adjoining factory next door 'to oblige his old friend, Charles Challen, whose factory close to Euston station had been acquired for street improvements'. The premises were subsequently occupied by George Roger & Son, before they moved to Fitzroy Road. Ward was also an ivory cutter, cutting tusks for piano key work. Bamberger (February 1928), p.1083.

[20] Wainwright (1975), p.136.

Further south were Ralph Allison & Sons in Werrington Street near Euston station, and on the western boundary of the station Challen & Son, with a steam factory at 36 Cardington Street.[21] Challen were making about 500 pianos a year at this time.[22]

Figure 42: Former factory of Collard & Collard, Oval Road, Regent's Park, 2010 (photo by the author).

Not every firm sought to base its works near Camden Town. The western boundary of the industry was staked by the 'Bradmore Works' of the Kirkman factory in Aldensley Road, Hammersmith, where about 900 pianos were made in 1881.[23] Their close neighbour to the east was the Cadby piano factory, built in 1874 on the High Road (now Hammersmith Road), on a site adjoining Olympia Hall today.[24] It covered 1.5 acres and was known as Cadby Hall:

> Four distinct blocks were built along with showrooms, which were approached by a carriage drive to the entrance porch [...] Above the three floors of showrooms were rooms occupied by the housekeeper. Administration and private offices for use by members of the firm were situated at the rear of the building [...] Set back forty feet from the rear of Cadby Hall itself was a five-level factory in which the finer portions of the pianos were crafted and assembled. Behind the factory block was a five-level mill where most of the sawing, planing and heavier tasks associated with piano

[21] They also had works in Hanway Street (in the axis of Tottenham Court Road and Oxford Street). See 1881 *POLD*. They later moved to premises in Arlington Road, adjacent to Henry Ward. See Laurence (2010), p.32.

[22] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

[23] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

[24] Cadby's original factory had been at Liquorpond Street, Holborn, but 'The Metropolitan Board of Works required his premises for street widening, so he was bought out, and he built his factory at Cadby Hall'. Bamberger (May 1928), p.1407.

making were executed. Towards the rear of the property were additional timber stores, a packing-case shop, stables and a coach-house.[25]

Further to the east, Erard's factory on the corner of Warwick Road and Pembroke Road, Kensington, employed 127 men in 1881, manufacturing between 500 and 660 pianos per year:[26]

> The principal buildings were two four-storey blocks, each some 140 feet in length and divided into nine bays with wide segmental-headed small-paned windows. These blocks [...] were at the eastern end of the site, parallel to each other and to Pembroke Road. To the west, on each side of a long driveway, were a number of other structures which, on the evidence of the French factory, were probably used principally for the storage and seasoning of timber. Initially the factory occupied an area of about two acres [...but] the factory was enlarged in 1859 when a further one and a half acres immediately to the south of the main site were added to its grounds [...so] at its greatest extent the factory occupied some four acres of land.[27]

The largest factory to the south and east, in Horseferry Road, Westminster, had been much extended since John Broadwood secured the original site in 1823, and by 1881 the company employed 629 men and 67 boys making approximately 2,600 instruments a year.[28] Between them, these factories produced more than 10,000 pianos in 1881. In terms of output, the Broadwood factory was the most prolific, followed by Collard & Collard (1,950), Kirkman (900), Hopkinson (800), Brinsmead (700), Allison (600), Erard (550), Chappell (500), and Burling & Burling (500).[29] In terms of efficiency their ranking was very different. Table 11 (below) shows the

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[25] Bird, P., 'J. Lyons & Co., Cadby Hall': www.kzwp.com/lyons/cadbyhall.htm, consulted 15 June 2011.

[26] The factory was under construction by March 1851 and probably came into production towards the end of that year. In 1881 the census listed the factory as having 127 employees. Hobhouse, H. (ed.), 'The Edwardes estate: Pembroke Square, Pembroke Gardens and Pembroke Road area', *Survey of London: volume 42: Kensington Square to Earl's Court* (London, 1986), pp.268–282, at p.280. Available at: www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=50325, consulted 19 September 2011. It was closed in 1890 when 'the whole of their stock of timber and veneers, together with machinery and the benches, &c., for a hundred workmen [was] sold by auction, at the factory'. *DN*, 15 August 1890. For estimated output, which was between one half and two-thirds that of the Paris factory, see Ehrlich (1996), p.111.

[27] In 1855, according to its own publicity, Erards produced annually over 1,000 pianos and harps at its Kensington factory and employed some 300 workers (including its showroom staff in Great Marlborough Street). Hobhouse (1986), p.280. Available at: www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=50325, consulted 19 September 2011.

[28] For lease of Horseferry Road, see Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.108. For 1881 workforce, see Frederick Rose (52), born *c*1829, Marylebone (1881 census). For estimated output, see Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

[29] Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

average number of pianos made *per capita* at Chappell, Erard, Broadwood and Collard & Collard – a calculation made possible by members of management recording the size of the company workforce on their census return:[30]

Factory	Census workforce 1881	Output 1880	Estimated pianos per man per year
Chappell	129	600	4.6
Erard	127	(550)	4.3
Broadwood	696	(2,600)	3.7
Collard & Collard	601	1,950	3.2

Table 11: Major factories for which both workforce and output figures are recorded, allowing an estimation of their output *per capita*. Sources: 1881 census, and (figures in brackets) Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

According to Table 11, Chappell and Erard were producing more instruments per man per year than either Broadwood or Collard, yet with a far smaller workforce. Assuming all four firms employed a similar ratio of administrative to piano making staff, Broadwood and Collard were respectively 20% and 30% less efficient than Chappell.[31] For the factory staff at Broadwood and Collard to have claimed the same output per man as Chappell, their administrative (i.e. non piano making) staff would have had to exceed that of Chappell by 131 and 177 respectively. Such an administrative workforce would have been untenable, so the greater output *per capita* of the Chappell factory must be attributed to the superior efficiency of their working practices.

Table 11 also shows that the average number of instruments made each year by these London employees was 3.9, or one instrument from the labour of each man every three months or thereabouts. The history of individual output has been discussed elsewhere. Cole calculates that Americus Backers' workshop produced 'about seven large pianos per year' in the 1770s,[32] his workshop being equipped with six benches

[30] For the Broadwood firm, see Frederick Rose (52), born *c*1829, Marylebone (1881 census). For Collard & Collard, see William S. Collard (38), born *c*1843, Tottenham Court Road, Middlesex (1881 census). For Chappell's, see Thomas S. Mugridge (53), born *c*1828, Ashburton, Devon (1881 census).

[31] Collard's efficiency probably wasn't helped by their manually-operated lift which transported pianos between departments. It was 'very slow, and employees would waste a ridiculous amount of time just standing around waiting for the lift's arrival on their floor'. Laurence (2010), p.61.

[32] Cole, M. (1998), p.125.

denoting (according to Christopher Clarke) the presence of six workers,[33] each making, therefore, just over one piano a year. William Pole considered that by 1851 'about six or seven instruments [were] made in a year by an amount of labor [sic] equivalent to that of one man',[34] a figure agreed by Ehrlich who calculated that 'even Broadwood's elaborate division of labour achieved an annual productivity of only about seven pianos per man'.[35] Pole conceded that 'in the larger houses where the more expensive kinds are made the proportion will be less – say about four or five to a man,' arriving at a figure approximating that of the Chappell workforce in 1881. Where only the output of a factory has been known to date, by dividing its output by 3.9 the size of its workforce may now be estimated, as shown at Table 12:

Factory	**(Estimated workforce based on *per capita* figure of 3.9 pianos p.a.)**	**Known (or estimated) output in 1880**
Kirkman	(230)	900
Hopkinson	(205)	800
Brinsmead	(179)	(700)
Allison	(154)	600
Burling & Burling	(128)	(500)
Challen	(128)	500
Cramer	(128)	500
Rogers	(77)	300
Challenger	(41)	160
Barrat & Robinson	(25)	100

Table 12: Major factories for which output figures are recorded, and a calculation of their approximate workforce. Sources: 1881 census and Ehrlich (1996), p.144.

Calculations at Table 12 suggest that Kirkman and Hopkinson employed more than 200 men, and Brinsmead slightly fewer. Brinsmead's claim in 1874, therefore, that their works could produce 3,000 instruments a year with 300 men, had not been tested and the closest they came to achieving this figure was around 1910 when the factory made about 2,000 instruments a year.[36]

Given the output of so many purpose-built factories, it seems hardly credible that the proprietors of small workshops would seek to compete. Paradoxically, however, small workshops were able to produce, per man, a number of instruments

[33] For the number of benches in Backers' workshop, see Cole, M. (1998), p.375. Also, Clarke (2004), pp.239–70, at p.248.
[34] Mactaggart (1986), p.16.
[35] Ehrlich (1996), p.38.
[36] Ehrlich (1996), p.145.

comparable to that of their larger competitors. Cheap labour and 'an abundant supply of pre-manufactured parts available on credit' could, 'if carefully assembled [...] result in a useful cheap product'.[37]

Firm	Address	Men	Boys	Total
James Ballingall & Sons	38 & 40 Great College Street, Camden Town	13	5	18
Edward Wallis Bishop	72 Belmont Street, Camden Town	13	2	15
William Bryson	121 Cromer Street, Grays Inn Road	2	-	2
John Haig Campell	68 Lupus Street, Pimlico*	1	1	2
John Crosswell	471 New Cross Street, Deptford*	3	-	3
William Dunkley	101 High Street, Clapham	12	-	12
Alexander Eason	217 & 219 Kentish Town Road	5	-	5
Richard Edwards	2 Seymour Street, Euston	4	-	4
James Hulbert & Sons	8 Gladstone Street, Wyvil Road	20	5	25
Hunton & Crocker	174 Carlton Road, Kentish Town	4	-	4
Richard Pearce	26 Eagle Wharf Road, Hoxton	10	-	10
Plumb & Co	42 High Street, Camden Town	11	1	12
James Pocock & Son	103 Westbourne Grove, Bayswater	4	3	7
Priestly & Son	8 Edward Street, Hampstead Road, Euston	17	2	19
William Rogers	35 Drummond Street, Euston Sq	10	3	13
Henry Schupisser	36 High Street, Camden Town*	3	2	5
Seager, Lucas & Pyne	Monsell Road, Finsbury Park*	5	-	5
James Stephen	54 Queen Street, Camden Town	3	-	3
John Strong	60 Seymour Street, Euston	5	1	6
Charles Venables & Co	2 & 4 Canonbury Road, Islington	24	-	24

** Operating from a residential address.*

Table 13: Small-scale makers in the 1881 *Post Office London Directory* to have indicated the size of their workforce in the census. Sources: 1881 census and *Post Office London Directory 1881.*

Table 13 lists the small-scale makers to have advertised in the 1881 *Post Office London Directory* and recorded the size of their workforce in the census. For a full list of the study population to have noted their workforce in the census, see Appendix 28. None of the above firms employed more than 25 hands and 30% employed fewer than five, indicating that small workshops akin to those of the early London

[37] Ehrlich (1996), p.150.

piano makers were still in existence in 1881, and several, like their forebears, still operated from a residential address.

Other workshops produced a variety of supplies for the trade and while the majority were based near the 'old' trade around Tottenham Court Road, nearly half were in Camden Town, Kentish Town and Islington. The 1881 *Post Office London Directory* lists 58 suppliers to the trade: 11 action makers; 16 fret cutters; 2 hammer coverers; 2 hammer felters and 5 hammer rail makers; an ivory bleacher; 2 ivory cutters; 11 key makers; 3 pin makers; and 5 small work makers, and the following are those who indicated the size of their workforce in the census:

Firm	Trade	Address	Men	Boys	Total
Joseph Nott	Action maker	13 Kirkwood Rd, Chalk Farm Rd	14	10	24
Charles Frederick Rich	Action maker	Angler's Lane, Kentish Town	2	1	3
Frederick Edwards	Key maker	66 Southampton St, Pentonville*	1	1	2
James Dodimead	Fret cutter	50 Tottenham Court Rd	5	-	5

** Operating from a residential address.*

Table 14: Suppliers in the *Post Office London Directory* to have indicated the size of their workforce in the census. Sources: 1881 census and *Post Office London Directory 1881*.

Again, none of the above firms employed more than 25 hands and one operated from a residential address.[38] The largest of the London supply firms were the action maker Henry Brooks & Co. at 31 Lyme Street, Camden Road, and 31–35 Cumberland Market, Regent's Park, and J. & J. Goddard (est. 1842) at 68 Tottenham Court Road. Goddard's was 'something of a Mecca for London region piano tuners [...and] it was a usual sight on Saturdays to see dozens of them arriving at the Tottenham Court Road shop in order to purchase their supplies of piano wire, tape ends, centre pins and sundry tools necessary for their routine work.'[39] A future manager at Goddard's would be the eldest surviving son of John Brinsmead, who

[38] Frederick Edwards (31), born *c*1850, St John's Wood, Middlesex, key maker, recorded his residential address in the census as 66 Southampton Street, Pentonville; the same address that he advertised in the *POLD*.

[39] Laurence (2010), p.21.

married into the Goddard family,[40] but for the present Thomas Brinsmead and his brothers, Edgar and Sydney, were working with their father at the family factory in Grafton Road, Gospel Oak.[41] A fourth son, Horace, was promoting the firm in Australia and therefore absent from the census.[42]

Other figures of the Victorian piano industry at their posts in 1881 included Broadwood employee Frederick Rose, who was now a partner of the firm and working with his two sons who were foreman and clerk;[43] they shared a house behind the Horseferry Road factory in Page Street and it is thanks to Frederick that we know the number of staff then working for the firm.[44] Fellow colleague and principal technician Alfred J. Hipkins was the company's 'musician agent', living a short distance from the Cadby piano works in Kensington.[45] Henry Fowler Broadwood was retired (aged 69) and a 'Land & Funds F[a]rmer [of] 668 Acres Employing 6 Gardeners 19 Men & 4 Boys' at his country estate in Surrey.[46] James Hopkinson was retired at 62, but John Brinsmead worked on at 65.[47] Charles Challen and his wife were visiting relatives in Sussex on the night the census was taken, leaving sons Charles Hollis and Frank in the family house in Oakley Square, and a third generation of the Collard family was in charge of the factory in Oval Road.[48] It is thanks to the eldest of the three brothers, William S. Collard (38), that we know the size of their workforce. Further afield, Edward Pohlman was retired in

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[40] Brinsmead's eldest son, John (born *c*1841), died of 'disease of the spinal cord resulting in paraplegia' on 30 September 1863 at the age of 22 (copy of death certificate, Ancestry website). For Thomas Brinsmead's marriage into the Goddard family, and his employment with Messrs. Goddard, see Laurence (2010), p.21.

[41] See Laurence (2010), pp.13–29.

[42] See Laurence (2010), p.15.

[43] See Frederick Rose (59), born *c*1859, Marylebone, Middlesex, 'Pianoforte Manufacturer Partner In Broadwood Employing 629 Men 67 Boys' (1881 census); George D. Rose (24), born *c*1857, Westminster, Middlesex, foreman to piano manufacturer (1881 census); and Algernon L. Rose (22), born *c*1859, Westminster, Middlesex, clerk to piano manufacturer (1881). Algernon Rose came to be in charge of export sales. See Laurence (1998), p.223.

[44] See Frederick Rose (52), born *c*1829, Marylebone; George D. Rose (24), born *c*1857, Westminster; and Algernon L. Rose (22), born *c*1859, Lambeth, Surrey (1881 census).

[45] See Alfred J. Hipkins (54), born *c*1827, Westminster, living at 100 Warwick Gardens (1881 census).

[46] See Henry F. Broadwood (69), born *c*1812, Kensington, living at Lyne House, Capel Road, Newdigate (1881 census).

[47] See James Hopkinson (62), born *c*1819, Leeds, Yorkshire; and John Brinsmead (65), born *c*1816, Gifford, Devon (1881 census).

[48] See Charles Challen (57), born *c*1824, London; and Charles Hollis Challen (27), born *c*1854, Kilburn, Middlesex (1881 census). Also, William S. Collard (38), born *c*1843, Tottenham Court Road; John C. Collard (35), born *c*1846, London; and Cecil Collard (33), born *c*1848, Kilburn, Middlesex (1881 census).

Halifax at 56, though no doubt advising sons Fred (22) and Edward (20) on the running of the firm,[49] and in Manchester Henry Forsyth was planning the relocation of his music publishing and piano retail business, including 31 men and 6 boys, to spacious new premises on Deansgate.[50] These were just some of the luminaries noted in the census and their contribution to the industry is documented elsewhere. For the majority of the remaining workforce, however, the census may be the only surviving record of their work. This was the London piano industry in 1881, drawn largely from the *Post Office London Directory* and initial findings from the census. The complexity of this scene, and that of the country elsewhere, is further developed by a study of the census.

The census and its difficulties

The census for 1881 was taken on the night of Sunday 3 April and covered England, Scotland, Wales, the Channel Islands, the Isle of Man and the Royal Navy. A few days previously enumeration forms were distributed to every ship and household, and the completed forms collected shortly after. Each form was intended to record the address of the property; whether or not the house was inhabited; the number of rooms occupied (if less than five); the name of every person who slept there the night before; their relationship to the head of the household; their marital status; age last birthday; gender; occupation; place of birth; and whether or not they were deaf, dumb, blind, imbecile, idiot or lunatic. The details collected on these individual forms were then sorted and copied into enumerators' books and the original householders' schedules destroyed. The data that remained is held at The National Archives in Kew.

The accuracy of the information gleaned by the census – and, as a consequence, the data gleaned for this study – is reliant on several key factors, all of which contribute to the veracity of the data and none of which can be assured: namely, the honesty of the individual being enumerated; the accuracy of the official copying their details

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[49] See Edward Pohlman [sic](56), born *c*1825, Halifax Yorks; Fred Pohlman (22), born *c*1859, Halifax, Yorks; and Edward Pohlman (20), born *c*1861, Halifax, Yorks, all living at 7, Parkinson House, Halifax (1881 census).

[50] The firm moved from Cross Street to 126 and 128 Deansgate on 1 September 1881. Anon., 'Forsyth of Manchester', *Music Teacher Magazine* (London: Rhinegold Publishing, January 2008), pp.30–31, at p.31. For size of the workforce, see Henry A. Forsyth (50), born *c*1831, Westminster (1881 census).

into the enumerator's book; the legibility of all handwriting involved; and the accurate transcription of the books into modern electronic format. The compilers of the General Report of the 1881 census conceded that:

> [...] the task is not only one of gigantic dimensions, but one in which strict and unfailing accuracy is practically unattainable. We made every effort to secure as great accuracy as was possible under the circumstances, but we are bound to state that the margin that must be allowed for error is very considerable.[51]

Woollard & Allen's introductory user guide to the 1881 census confirms the complexity of errors that could accrue at every stage of the process, as details were routinely misrecorded, misspelt, mistranscribed, illegible in the original or omitted altogether.[52] Some of these errors are easily weighed, but others are problematic. Was an address written simply as 'Durham' intended to signify the name of the town or the county? Since the latter is the only answer correct in both instances, the county was favoured for this study. Was a 'piano maker tuner' someone who worked as a piano maker *and* a tuner, or a tuner working for a piano maker? The enumerator's sheet was checked to establish whether an ampersand had been omitted in the online transcription and, if not, they were judged to have been the latter. Enumerator sheets were also consulted to check whether piano 'tuners' had been mistranscribed as 'turners' (and *vice versa*), husbands accorded the occupations of their wives (and *vice versa*), and widows bestowed the occupation of their late husband. Martha Brown recorded herself as a 'Piano Maker (wid)', but was she the widow of a former piano maker, or a piano maker *and* a widow? At seventy-five was she even working still? Further investigation suggested that Martha was a piano maker's widow and she was excluded from this study.[53] Other cases were resolved by studying fellow members of the household: Martha Barker became a more plausible 'piano frame maker' once her husband had been identified as a bricklayer's labourer.

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[51] *Census of England and Wales, 1881: Vol. IV, General Report* (London, 1883), p.28. Online Historical Population Reports: www.histpop.org, consulted 2 May 2013.

[52] See Woollard, M., and M. Allen, '1881 census for England and Wales, the Channel Isles and the Isle of Man: introductory user guide, v.0.4' (Distributed by The Data Archive, University of Essex, Colchester, 1999). Online at: http://privatewww.essex.ac.uk/~matthew/, consulted 7 June 2011.

[53] A check was first made with the 1881 *POLD* and other workers in the census to see whether Martha's address was associated with a piano making establishment: it was not.

Martha Brown, Martha Barker and the balance of the study workforce used the word 'piano' or 'pianoforte' to describe their occupation on their census form. Using these words to search the census online has ensured that only people allied to the piano trade have been included in this study. This method has necessarily excluded all those who did not use the word 'piano' or 'pianoforte', however, many of whom had skills required by the industry and were possibly in its employ, such as carvers; gilders; fret-cutters; marquetry workers; French polishers; veneer, timber and ivory suppliers; castor and candle-sconce makers, to name a few. All were allied to the piano trade, but they underpinned the furniture trade as well: it is impossible to know which industry they supported; they may have supported both. An added barrier to segregating the piano and furniture industry workforce lay in their common geography. Unlike piano action makers and gun action makers who worked, almost without exception, in London and Birmingham respectively, the capital's piano and furniture makers inhabited the same north London suburbs, making them impossible to separate by address alone.[54] Omitting these indeterminate workers renders this study incomplete – the workforce may have been several thousand stronger – but maintains its objective integrity. Any errors that may remain embedded in the census (and any that escaped correction in my own data collection) mean the statistics produced by this study cannot pretend to absolute mathematical accuracy. They do, however, offer a highly detailed picture of the workers they expose,

Methodology and study population

A search of the England census for 1881 using the words 'piano' and 'pianoforte' reveals the records of 7,433 people connected with the instrument. A further 259 were located by introducing increasingly implausible misspellings of the two words, for example 'piana', 'penoforte' and 'pianofofte'.[55] Disregarding spurious results such as 'Wife of piano tuner' or 'Daughter of piano maker', the combined total reduced to 7,116. Not all these records belonged to people connected with the

[54] Even without this helpful geographic distinction, piano and gun action makers tended to specify their particular branch of the trade, e.g. 'action maker pianos' and 'breech loading gun action maker'. Carvers and gilders, for example, did not.

[55] The following words were used to search the census: Paineforte, Painfortie, Painofort, Painoforte, Panoforte, Penoforte, Pforte, Piamnoforte, Piana, Pianafort, Pianaforte, Pianforte, Piano, Pianos, Pianof, Pianofofte, Pianofore, Pianoforet, Pianofort, Pianoforte, Pianoforter, Pianofortes, Pianofote, Pianoft, Pianofte, Pinaforte, Pinano, Pinfore, Pinofort and Pinoforte. Other variant spellings produced no results, although piano-related words such as Broadwood, Collard and 'silker' produced a small number.

manufacture or trade of the instrument, however, so 654 piano teachers and pianists, music sellers and setters (who only became involved with the instrument post sale) were also discounted, excepting those who held multiple jobs where at least one involved working with the piano's mechanism, e.g. 'piano teacher & tuner': these were included. The final total came to 6,462 workers, comprising 6,221 men, 137 women and 104 children under the age of 15. They are listed at Appendix 29. Census records of the contemporary American workforce (which made almost the same number of instruments in 1880, i.e. approximately 30,000) total 8,000, and this figure may indicate the potential margin of adjustment required to reflect the size of the English workforce.[56]

The details of each census return were copied in full onto an Excel spreadsheet under the same headings as the source material.[57] A further 42 headings were then added to facilitate interrogation of the data, including columns noting whether the worker was retired, unemployed, hospitalised or institutionalised; the number of family members also employed in the trade; the total number living at the same address; the number of resident servants and lodgers; whether any lodgers also worked in the trade; whether the census worker was the sole earner in the household; and the occupations of each fellow resident, lodger, spouse, child and sibling. Once all records had been entered and checked for errors, a further 23 spreadsheets were created to manipulate the data and create a battery of statistics. These spreadsheets covered a wide range of subjects from 'Occupation', 'Location', 'Migration' and 'Nationality' to 'Unemployment', 'Retirement', 'Age', 'Women' and 'Employers', and the statistics they generated are presented in the tables that follow. To avoid repetition the words 'piano' or 'pianoforte' as descriptors have been omitted. Hence, where the census recorded a 'piano tuner', 'pianoforte maker' or 'piano dealer' they appear in the tables as simply 'tuner', 'maker' or 'dealer'. Where a worker recorded multiple jobs (e.g. 'piano tuner & basket maker'), these are recorded in the same order in which they appeared in the census – in this case as 'tuner & basket maker' – to maintain the worker's ranking of his or her respective professions. Occupations unrelated to the piano have been marked in italics (in this case, 'tuner & *basket*

[56] Ehrlich (1996), p.129.

[57] Information against the headings 'Ed institution' or 'vessel', 'Neighbo[u]rs', 'Piece', 'Folio' and 'Page number' were deemed extraneous and not captured. Unfortunately, the electronic census does not include any details against the heading 'Education/Employment status'.

maker'), as have occupations that appear to be piano-related (e.g. 'French polisher & piano tuner'), but are not positively described as such in the census, appearing, in this case, as '*French polisher* & tuner'. See Appendix 23 for a list of all the occupations recorded by the study population.

All references to London or the capital denote the City of London and the county of Middlesex combined.

Population numbers and rates of increase

The total population of England on the night of 3 April 1881 was just under 24 million: an increase of 14% over the previous decade, and the addition, in effect, of another city with a population the size of London. This increase had swelled London by more than 40%, Surrey by more than 30%, Kent and Essex by more than a quarter, and the counties of Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Derbyshire, Lancashire and Nottinghamshire by 18-23%. Eight other counties had seen their population decline: Cornwall had lost nearly 9% of its inhabitants, Huntingdonshire, Herefordshire, Dorset, Rutland, Westmorland and Cambridgeshire progressively fewer, and Shropshire the least, at 0.5%.[58] As will be shown, the migrations of the study workforce ran in close parallel with these national losses and gains.

The piano industry workforce identified by the study numbered 6,462 of which 98% were men and 2% were women. A direct comparison of the 1881 workforce with that of a decade earlier is not currently feasible as the 1871 census is not searchable by occupation. However, with reference to the General Report of the 1881 census, it is possible to assert that the number of musical instrument makers in 1881 (9,249) had increased by 28% in the course of the decade, and those who gained their livelihood by music in general had increased by 37%.[59] Music making, and piano making, were employing increasing numbers of the population.

Workforce density and location

An examination of the residential addresses returned by the study population showed that 75% of the workforce lived in the capital with the remaining 25% spread thinly

[58] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), pp.6–13.
[59] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.32.

from Cornwall and Kent in the south to Cumberland and Northumberland in the north (see Figure 43).

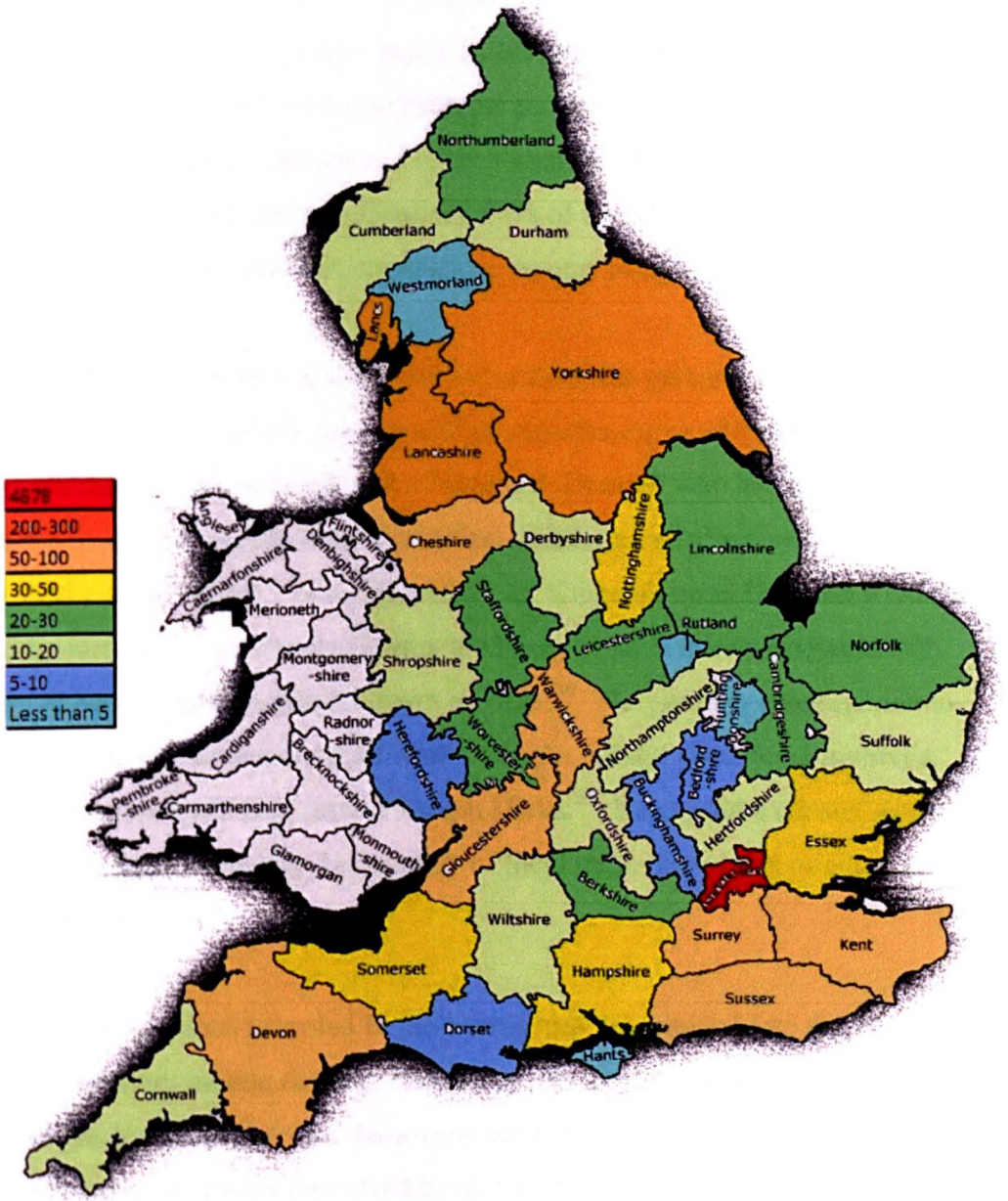

Figure 43: Map showing distribution of the study population by county. Source: 1881 census.

The two most densely populated counties outside the capital (both in terms of the national population and the piano industry workforce) were Lancashire and Yorkshire with 276 and 262 identified piano workers respectively. These two counties claimed 4% of the workforce each – more than double that of any other provincial county. The majority of counties claimed less than fifty piano related workers, the most notable being Rutland and Westmorland with only one apiece: the

tuner working in Rutland covering more than 100 thousand acres on his 'patch', and his counterpart in Westmorland (who also worked as an organist) more than five times that amount. In short, only 1,569 people were identified in the piano industry outside the capital: 426 in physically making instruments, 952 in tuning them, 194 acting as dealers, and the remainder working as packers, porters, removers, repairers, managers, clerks, travellers, factors and warehousemen. Expressed another way, the capital claimed 90% of all identified makers, 46% of tuners, 38% of dealers and 75% of the workforce involved in other, supporting, aspects of the trade.

The densest congregation of workers outside London was gathered around Liverpool where more than 100 worked in the city and its suburbs, some with possible links to the organ builders and piano retailers Rushworth & Dreaper who had premises in the centre of the town. In neighbouring Yorkshire, smaller areas of activity were to be found around Halifax, Leeds, York, Huddersfield, Kingston upon Hull and Bradford. Some of the forty or so workers in Halifax are likely to have been associated with Pohlmann & Sons, established in the town in 1823.[60] The greatest congregation to the south of the country comprised 49 workers in the Bristol area, some involved, perhaps, with the longstanding firm of Joseph Hicks.[61] Rarely did a census return record the name of an employer, but a study of local trade directories might point to possible connections.

Assuming the occupations recorded in the census may be grouped into the four basic categories of making, tuning, dealing, and 'other' (to include clerks, errand boys, accountants, packers, repairers and removers, etc.), Table 15 (below) shows, by county, the number of workers involved in each category of the industry. The total figures resulting from Table 15 exceed the study workforce by 1.3% as 88 workers were involved in multiple aspects of the trade (e.g. as a 'tuner and dealer') and are therefore counted twice.

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[60] 'Pohlmann & Sons, Piano Manufacturers, etc.' at: http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/A2A/records.aspx?cat=203-wyc1118&cid=-1&Gsm=2012-06-18#-1, consulted 16 June 2013. In 1881 Fred and Edward Pohlmann were working as a 'case maker' and a 'case maker finisher'. See Fred Pohlman [sic] (22), born *c*1859, Halifax, Yorks; and Edward Pohlman [sic] (20), born *c*1861, Halifax, Yorks (1881 census).

[61] The Hicks family of cabinet makers in Bristol are credited with making the first street barrel pianos *c*1805. See 'Barrel piano' in Grove Music Online, available at Oxford Music Online: www.oxfordmusiconline.com, consulted 2 May 2013.

County	Maker	Tuner	Dealer	Other	Total	Contd	Maker	Tuner	Dealer	Other	Total
London	3792	827	121	180	4919	North'land	3	12	5	3	23
Lancs	74	157	46	6	283	Cambs	2	17	0	2	21
Yorks	117	116	43	4	280	Herts	5	10	4	1	20
Glos	32	52	8	6	98	Suffolk	2	17	1	0	20
Sussex	19	47	7	8	81	Durham	2	15	2	0	19
Devon	23	40	7	0	70	Northants	2	14	2	0	18
Warwicks	11	41	8	7	67	Oxon	0	13	2	2	17
Surrey	27	28	6	4	65	Derbyshire	2	11	2	1	16
Essex	33	21	1	1	56	Wilts	0	15	1	0	16
Kent	9	42	4	0	55	Cumberland	0	11	3	0	14
Cheshire	7	39	4	2	52	Cornwall	1	8	0	2	11
Hampshire	9	30	8	2	49	Shrops	2	8	0	1	11
Somerset	12	30	6	0	48	Dorset	2	7	0	0	9
Notts	4	26	5	1	36	Bucks	0	7	1	0	8
Norfolk	7	16	4	1	28	Herefordshire	1	5	1	0	7
Lincs	3	18	5	0	26	Beds	1	4	0	0	5
Staffs	5	18	2	0	25	Hunts	0	3	0	0	3
Berks	4	16	2	2	24	Rutland	0	1	0	0	1
Leics	1	16	5	2	24	Westmorland	0	1	0	0	1
Worcs	3	20	0	1	24		**4217***	**1779**	**316**	**239**	**6551**

** Excludes one maker whose resident county was not recorded.*

Table 15: Number of the study population involved in making, tuning, dealing and other aspects of the industry (by county). Decreasing order of size. Source: 1881 census.

As demonstrated at Table 15, opportunities for sourcing and tuning an instrument outside the capital varied widely. Lancashire offered the widest choice of dealers with 46, but none was found in Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Cornwall, Dorset, Huntingdonshire, Rutland, Shropshire, Westmorland or Worcestershire. A search for general musical instrument dealers in these counties revealed only three men working in Worcestershire.[62]

Lancashire also recorded the greatest number of tuners (157), while the counties least well served with tuners were, again, Bedfordshire, Huntingdonshire, Rutland and Westmorland, each with less than five. Yorkshire returned the greatest number of makers outside the capital (117), but allegedly no-one was involved in piano making in Buckinghamshire, Cumberland, Huntingdonshire, Oxfordshire, Rutland, Westmorland or Wiltshire, although between them they recorded seven dealers. John Broadwood recognised a lack of rural specialists as early as 1783 when he sought to organise 'a network of provincial [...] agents, evolving from his existing client base and trade contacts'[63] to facilitate the distribution and service of his instruments, and it is possible that some of the workers recorded in the census were descended from his original contacts. Even so, and despite a greater demand for domestic pianos in 1881, the opportunities for buying and maintaining them outside the capital were arguably little better than today.

Habitation

Excluding members of the workforce who were boarding, lodging, visiting, temporarily hospitalised or institutionalised (and not, therefore, resident in their own home), the average number of residents living in households inhabited by the study population was 5.4: the same as the national average.[64] More commonly, however, the number of residents per study household was only four (see Figure 44 below).

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[62] See Edward J. Spark (51), born *c*1830, Exeter, Devon, musical instrument dealer employing 4 men 1 boy; Cable Guest (29), born *c*1852, Wood Gate, Worcestershire, dealer in musical inst; and William H. Waldron (42), born *c*1849, Little Malvern, Worcestershire, general dealer in musical instruments (1881 census).

[63] Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.55. As noted by Wainwright, between 1794 and 1796, J. & W. Lintern of Bath took ten grands from Broadwood, and Mr H. Hine, a Liverpool music seller, bought seven assorted pianos. Wainwright (1982), p.80.

[64] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.14.

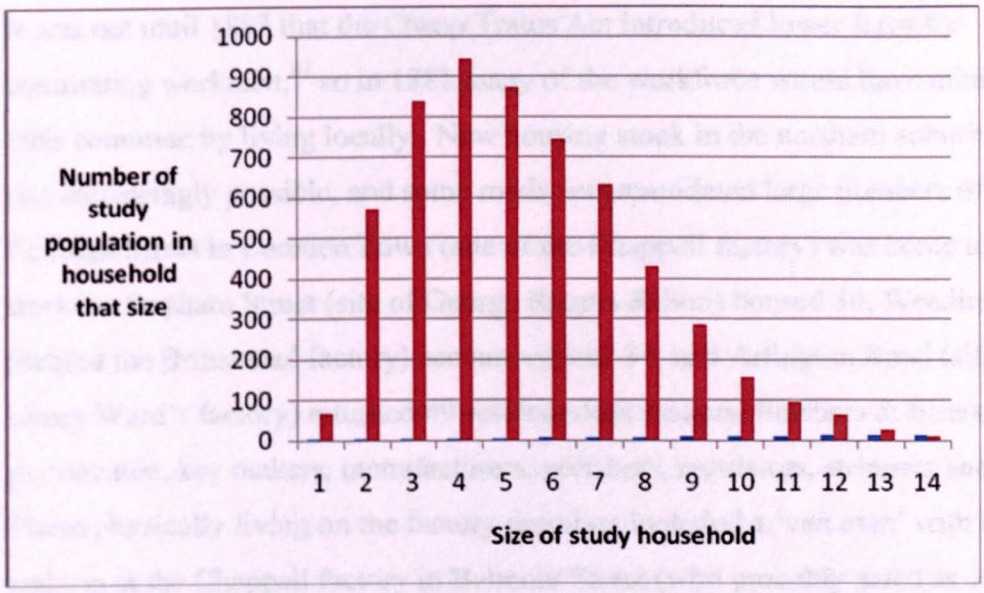

Figure 44: Number of residents per study household (excluding those absent from home on the night of the census). Source: 1881 census.

Figure 44 shows the size of household inhabited by the study population. A small number (67) returned a single occupant, but whether they habitually lived alone is not apparent since 30% of those who declared they were living alone also declared they were married. Of those who were living alone and unmarried, male members of the workforce were ten times more likely to have been living alone than their female counterparts. The majority of the workforce lived in households accommodating between two and ten residents, with just 6% living in households of more than ten. Omitted from the chart (due to the scale) are the households with more than 16 residents. One of the largest was the Marylebone villa of an American merchant which housed 26 inhabitants including 18 servants, one of whom (the coachman) had a son who was apprenticed to the piano trade.[65] The largest household in the study was home to 35 Italian migrants in Holborn, where the head of the house was an 'organ and piano dealer' and 15 of his fellow residents were street organ players who found room to accommodate six visiting musicians.[66] Despite high levels of cohabitation, 36% of study households were supported by only one obvious income. The income and expenditure of the study population is discussed again below.

[65] See Edwin Sargent (18), born *c*1863, Marylebone (1881 census).
[66] See Luigi Bertorelli (57), born *c*1824, Italy (1881 census).

It was not until 1883 that the Cheap Trains Act introduced lower fares for commuting workmen,[67] so in 1881 many of the workforce would have minimised their commute by living locally. New housing stock in the northern suburbs made this increasingly possible, and some roads accommodated large numbers of workers. Belmont Street in Camden Town (site of the Chappell factory) was home to 29 workers, Bayham Street (site of George Rogers & Son) housed 30, Weedington Road (behind the Brinsmead factory) accommodated 34, and Arlington Road (site of Henry Ward's factory) returned 49 resident desk makers, finishers & fitters, journeymen, key makers, manufacturers, polishers, regulators, stringers and tuners. Those physically living on the factory premises included a 'van man' with his wife and son at the Chappell factory in Belmont Street (who probably acted as an unofficial security guard as well), and a 'night watchman' at the Erard factory in Kensington.[68]

Social status in terms of residential address

In 1886, the Victorian philanthropist Charles Booth began a survey of the life and labour of contemporary Londoners and examined, as he did, the working practices of several of the capital's piano manufactories.[69] Among them were the firms of Kirkman, Broadwood, Brinsmead and Challen whose completed questionnaires form part of the Charles Booth Archives held at the London School of Economics.[70] The view of the representative of the Challen factory (at that time) was that men in 'the trade as a rule earn good wages and are able to maintain a comfortable home', and that their wives, by and large, did not work.[71] This view of the workforce, when aligned with the *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty* (1898–99) that accompanied Booth's survey, suggests that piano factory staff would have lived in streets deemed 'fairly comfortable', whose inhabitants commanded 'good ordinary earnings' of

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[67] White, J., *London in the 19th Century* (London: Vintage, 2007), p.91.

[68] See Charles Cable (32), born *c*1849, Suffolk, van man, living at Chappell's pianoforte factory; and John Whitehead (72), born *c*1809, Wandsworth, Surrey, night watchman, living at Erard's pianoforte manufactory (1881 census).

[69] Charles Booth's *Inquiry into the Life and Labour of the People in London* was undertaken between 1886 and 1903.

[70] See *Surgical, Scientific and Electrical Instruments and Musical Instruments and Toys: Interviews, Questionnaires, Statistics and Reports* (CBA Booth A11).

[71] Report of Challen & Son: *Surgical, Scientific and Electrical Instruments and Musical Instruments and Toys: Interviews, Questionnaires, Statistics and Reports* (CBA Booth A11), pp.7–8.

perhaps 22 to 30 shillings per week.[72] Such roads on Booth's maps were shaded pink, with other streets coloured differently to indicate the greater or lesser wealth of their inhabitants.

Consulting Booth's maps with cross-reference to the London addresses of the census workforce builds a more comprehensive view of the workers' status. Not all lived in such comfortable circumstances, though a number enjoyed greater ease and a portion considerably less. It is important to note that a survey of Booth's maps cannot deliver a wholly accurate picture of the demographic of the piano industry workforce for two reasons: first, the maps were compiled 17 years after the 1881 census was taken and the social character of streets and neighbourhoods may have changed in the interim period; and, second, the wealth of the study household may not have been solely attributable to the earning power of the piano worker in residence. Allowing for these considerations, a study of the two sources does reveal the following. In all, 4,857 members of the London workforce (excluding workers who were institutionalised, hospitalised or imprisoned and not, therefore, living in their own homes) inhabited more than 2,100 London streets, of which more than 1,500 streets (or 73%) were identified on Booth's maps.[73] Table 16 shows the number of workers to have dwelt in streets of a single colour, where everyone on the street was considered to have belonged to the same social order:

	Number of residents	% of study pop (3986)
YELLOW: Upper-middle and Upper classes. Wealthy.	10	0.3%
RED: Middle class. Well-to-do.	299	7.5%
PINK: Fairly comfortable. Good ordinary earnings.	1629	40.9%
PURPLE: Mixed. Some comfortable others poor.	824	20.7%
LIGHT BLUE: Poor. 18s. to 21s. a week for a moderate family.	166	4.2%

[72] Booth described this sector of society as 'Class E: Regular standard earnings, 22s to 30s per week for regular work, fairly comfortable. As a rule the wives do not work, but the children do: the boys commonly following the father, the girls taking local trades or going out to service'. Booth, C., *Life and Labour of the People in London,* vol. 1 (London: Macmillan, 1902), pp.33– 62.

[73] Streets not located on Booth's maps had possibly been renamed between 1881 and 1898 (for which checks were made); demolished in the same period; not named due to insufficient space on the map; or named but illegible due to the poor print quality of some areas of the map.

DARK BLUE: Very poor, casual. Chronic want.	23	0.6%
BLACK: Lowest class. Vicious, semi-criminal.	5	0.1%

Table 16: Number (and percentage) of the study population to have lived in London streets shaded one colour only, and therefore considered to have been 'that class' of resident. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty.*

These workers account for 74% of the total study population and their status, according to Booth, may be reasonably assured. The remaining 26% lived in streets marked with a combination of colours – such as dark blue and black, or pink and purple – indicating that the street contained a proportion of the classes represented by both colours. Which of the colours was representative of the resident piano workers cannot be known, so in these instances both colours have been recorded here. This has the effect of doubling the workforce in the streets concerned, so the figures, when added to the study findings above, over-inflate the results (as shown at Table 17):

	Number of residents	**% of study pop (3976)**
YELLOW: Upper-middle and Upper classes. Wealthy.	36	0.9%
RED: Middle class. Well-to-do.	995	25.0%
PINK: Fairly comfortable. Good ordinary earnings.	2515	63.1%
PURPLE: Mixed. Some comfortable others poor.	1100	27.6%
LIGHT BLUE: Poor. 18s. to 21s. a week for a moderate family.	284	7.1%
DARK BLUE: Very poor, casual. Chronic want.	61	1.5%
BLACK: Lowest class. Vicious, semi-criminal.	67	1.7%

Table 17: Total number (and percentage) of the study population to have lived in London streets shaded one or several colours. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty.*

Neither table provides an accurate reflection of the study population. The first, while correct, records only 74% of the study population and the second, though also correct in terms of the information captured, gives a confused reading of the workers' status as they cannot have occupied different coloured areas of the same street. The findings may be usefully considered in another way. Supposing all workers to have lived in a multi-coloured street are deemed to have lived in the 'better' portion of the

street; for example, all those whose street was coloured dark blue and black are considered to have been 'very poor' as opposed to 'criminal', and all those whose street was coloured pink and purple are considered to have been 'fairly comfortable' as opposed to 'poor'. This would shift the spectrum to the brightest viewpoint. The resulting figures present the most optimistic analysis of the workers' residential status. An opposite analysis (shifting the spectrum to the least favourable viewpoint) results in the most pessimistic portrayal of their status. A calculation midway between the two extremes offers a cautious view of their genuine situation. Figure 45 (below) is based on all these calculations: the most optimistic, the most pessimistic, and the median point between the two states.

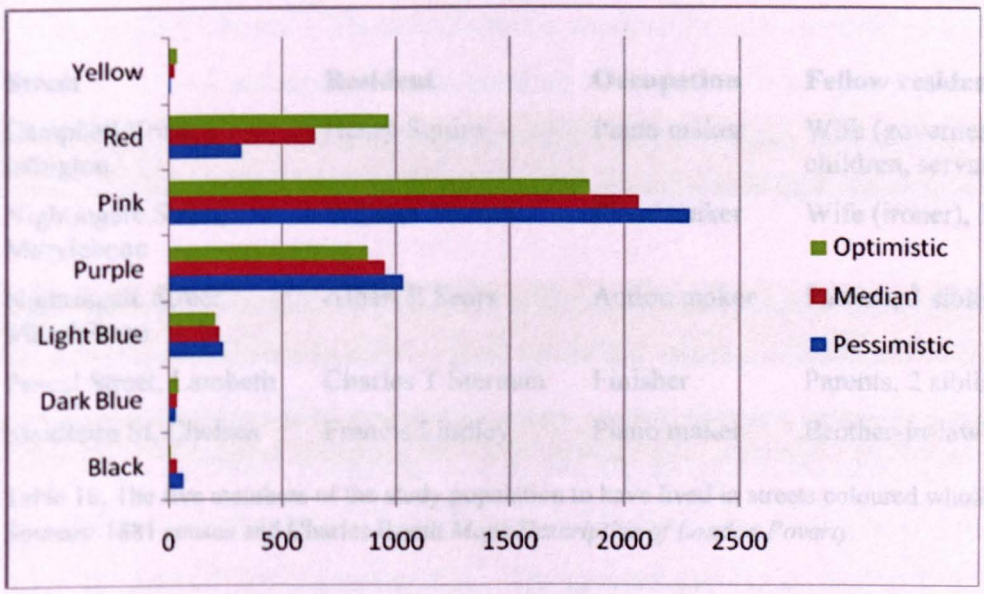

Figure 45: Number of the study workforce (whose streets were identified on Charles Booth's map) to have lived in each colour street, based on an optimistic, median and pessimistic analysis of Booth map findings. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*.

Consistent with the observation of the Challen factory representative, this chart confirms that the greatest number (2,066 or 52%) of the study population lived in streets whose inhabitants were considered 'fairly comfortable' with 'good ordinary earnings'. A lesser number (645 or 16%) were more affluent, living in streets shaded red, whose residents were 'middle class' and 'well-to-do', and less than 1% (or 23) cohabited with the wealthy 'upper-middle and upper classes' in streets shaded yellow. These three categories combined (yellow, red and pink) account for nearly 70% of the study workforce. Less fortunate was the remaining third of the study population considered to have been 'poor', 'very poor', or of the 'lowest class'. Of

these, more than 950 (or 24%) fell into the 'mixed' purple category (some comfortable, others poor) and more than 220 (or 5.6%) were deemed 'poor' (light blue), earning 18 to 21 shillings per week. Another 38 (or 1%) were considered 'very poor' (dark blue), and 36 (or 0.9%) lived among the lowest, 'vicious, semi-criminal' members of society (black), although it is possible these streets were not so degenerate at the time the census was taken.

Who, then, were these workers, and was there a correlation between the work they performed and the streets in which they lived? Beginning with the five members of the workforce to have lived in streets shaded entirely black, the data at Table 18 was recorded:

Street	Resident	Occupation	Fellow residents
Campbell Road, Islington	Henry Squire	Piano maker	Wife (governess), 2 children, servant
Nightingale Street, Marylebone	William Matron	Piano maker	Wife (ironer), 3 children
Nightingale Street, Marylebone	Albert E Sears	Action maker	Parents, 3 siblings
Pascal Street, Lambeth	Charles T Sterman	Finisher	Parents, 2 siblings
Slaidburn St, Chelsea	Francis Lindley	Piano maker	Brother-in-law's family

Table 18: The five members of the study population to have lived in streets coloured wholly black. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*.

Immediately we find an irregularity. Living in one of the most depraved streets in London with his wife, children and servant was the piano maker, Henry Squire,[74] whose extended Devonshire family were noted piano makers in the capital: not the sort of vicious criminal Booth might have led us to expect, nor (according to the enumerator's sheets) living among others ostensibly of that ilk: his neighbours were a boot-maker, tram conductor, postman, bricklayer, carman, coal porter and decorator – all middle-aged men with wives and children still at school. Booth's maps alone cannot explain this anomaly, but Squire's misfortunes may account for his address. In August 1858 his factory and dwelling in Hollingsworth Street, West Holloway (a street shaded purple in Booth's map) were destroyed by fire, and within

[74] For the history of Campbell Road, known as 'Campbell Bunk', see White, J., *Campbell Bunk: The worst street in North London between the wars* (London: Random House, 2013).

three years he was admitted to Debtors Prison *in forma pauperis*.[75] At the time of the census it is likely he was struggling to recover his position.

Residents living at the opposite end of the social scale, in 'wealthy' streets shaded yellow, were notably more congruent. 'Piano forte maker master' John Collard and his brother William lived among the upper classes in Kensington and Marylebone.[76] George John Bruzaud ('pianoforte & harp maker') and his two sons (who also worked for Erard) were similarly well accommodated in Holland Park Terrace, Kensington,[77] and Georgiana Kirkman resided with the prosperous in Ladbrooke Square.[78] Proof of the pecuniary potential of the piano dealer is evidenced by Nathaniel Peach, who resided with his wife and two servants in affluent Montagu Street in Marylebone.[79] These individuals validate the analysis offered by Booth's maps but do not advance our understanding of the piano industry workforce as it is generally recognized that prominent members of the industry accumulated wealth. It is more helpful to study the wider workforce by street and also occupation.

Figure 46 (below) shows the numbers of the study workforce in each of the four broad categories of the industry – making, tuning, dealing and other – who were living in streets identified on Booth's maps. Again, they are based on a median calculation between a pessimistic and optimistic analysis of the data. The majority of workers in each category (except dealing) dwelt in pink streets whose residents were considered 'fairly comfortable'. The greatest number of dealers lived in red streets, but only just: those resident in red streets only exceeded those living in pink streets by one, which is an insignificant number given that the figures used to compile the table derive from median calculations. It may be fairer to assert, therefore, that the majority of each workforce lived in conditions considered 'fairly

[75] For a report of the fire see *Lloyd's Weekly Newspaper*, 8 August 1858. For Squire's insolvency, see *LG*, 10 September 1861, p.39; and *LG*, 5 April 1867, p.2161.

[76] John Collard lived in Addison Road, Kensington, and his brother in Dorset Square, Marylebone. See John C. Collard (35), born *c*1846, London; and William S. Collard (38), born *c*1843, Tottenham Court Road (1881 census).

[77] See George John Bruzand [sic] (67), born *c*1814, Marylebone; Sigismund Charles Bruzand [sic] (30), born *c*1851, Chelsea; and Sebastian Bruzand [sic] (29), born *c*1852, Chelsea (1881 census).

[78] See Georgina [sic] Kirkman (53), born *c*1828, Notting Hill (1881 census).

[79] See Nathaniel F. Peach (43), born *c*1838, Bath, Somerset (1881 census).

comfortable' or better, but that the size of the majority differed in each category. The figures informing Figure 46 are shown at Table 19 (below).

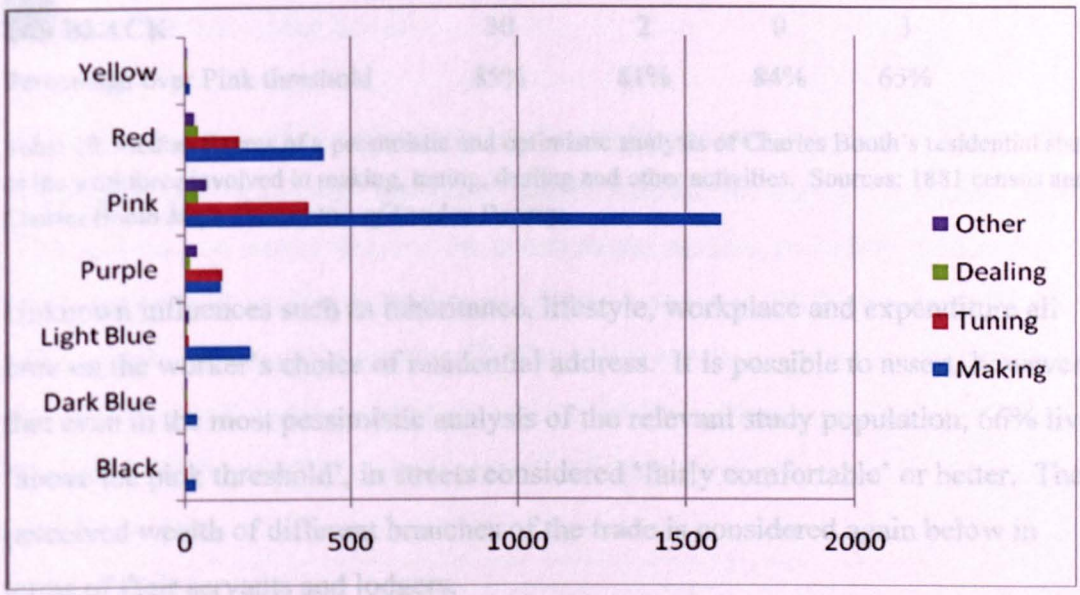

Figure 46: Median figures of a pessimistic and optimistic analysis of Charles Booth's residential status of the workforce involved in making, tuning, dealing and other activities. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*.

Table 19 (below) shows that for those involved in making, the number living 'over' the pink threshold was 85%, for those involved in dealing it was 84%, for tuners 81%, and for those involved in other activities 65%.[80] Since each category of worker was found in each street colour (with the exception of the dealer, who was not found in a black street), the financial distinctions of the study households are not to be understood by this survey alone.

	Makers	Tuners	Dealers	Other
YELLOW:	16	1	1	4
RED:	421	162	**42**	26
PINK:	**1605**	**371**	41	**64**
PURPLE:	106	113	14	36

[80] It should be noted that these figures are slightly conflated due to the dual occupation of some workers (e.g. those who worked as 'maker and tuner' or 'tuner and dealer' and are therefore counted twice). However, since these workers accounted for only 38 members of the study workforce (less than 1%) they do not affect this calculation greatly.

LIGHT BLUE:	198	11	2	11
DARK BLUE:	35	0.5	0.5	1
BLACK:	30	2	0	3
Percentage over Pink threshold	85%	81%	84%	65%

Table 19: Median figures of a pessimistic and optimistic analysis of Charles Booth's residential status of the workforce involved in making, tuning, dealing and other activities. Sources: 1881 census and Charles Booth *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty*.

Unknown influences such as inheritance, lifestyle, workplace and expenditure all bore on the worker's choice of residential address. It is possible to assert, however, that even in the most pessimistic analysis of the relevant study population, 66% lived 'above the pink threshold', in streets considered 'fairly comfortable' or better. The perceived wealth of different branches of the trade is considered again below in terms of their servants and lodgers.

Age of the workforce

It should be noted that a person's age was not always accurately recorded in the census, and their year of birth could alter by several years from one census to the next. Hence – according to the census – the age of the study population ranged from 10 to 84, with an average age of 34. Not all were physically working on the day the census was taken (for reasons discussed below), and the two youngest – 10-year-old boys from Camden Town and Kentish Town – should, technically, have been at school as the school age in 1881 was from three to 13 years.[81] However, both these boys had an older brother in the industry who had probably secured their employment, and they described their work as 'pianoforte (makers)' and 'pianoforte manufactory'.[82] The youngest girls were 13 and also lived in London where they worked as a piano maker and an assistant.[83] They, too, lived with several older family members active in the trade. The remaining children under the age of 15 were all boys – over a third (35%) lived with family members in the industry. Of these 53% had a father working in the business, and 64% a brother. Eighty per cent were

[81] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.20.

[82] See George A. Ayling (10), born *c*1871, St Pancras, 'pianoforte (makers)'; and Harry Taylor (10), born *c*1871, Kentish Town, 'pianoforte manufactory' (1881 census).

[83] See Elizabeth Jones (13), born *c*1868, Notting Hill, pianoforte maker; and Jane Tarrow (13), born *c*1868, Middlesex, pianoforte asst [sic] (1881 census).

learning to make pianos and 15% were learning to tune them. Only one boy noted a job selling pianos: an 'assistant pianoforte tuner and dealer' working for his brother-in-law in Leeds.[84] It appears that many young children were subsumed into the trade by older members of the family.

The oldest member of the workforce lived with his spinster daughter in Cornwall, where he worked as a tuner, aged 84,[85] and he was not the only octogenarian working still: half a dozen others laboured on as tuners and makers, including the London piano maker William Henry Squire, and fellow Londoner, William Seager, whose family made pianos and piano keys.[86] The oldest member of the female workforce was a 75-year-old widow working as a piano dealer in Plymouth, Devon.[87] The age and gender of the workforce are observed at Figure 47.

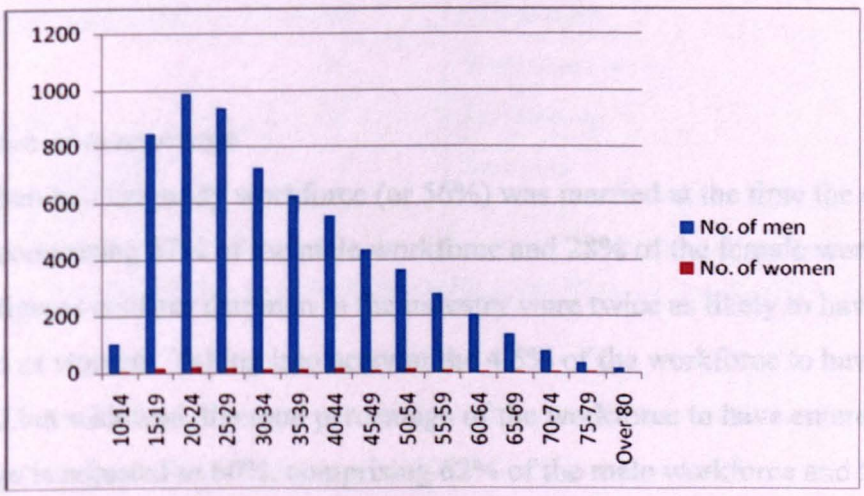

Figure 47: Study population by age and gender, including the unemployed, retired, hospitalised, and all those temporarily confined to a workhouse or institution. Source: 1881 census.

The majority of the workforce was aged between 15 and 60, with less than 10% younger than 15 or older than 60. As shown by the peak in the chart at Figure 47, those aged between 15 and 29 accounted for nearly half (or 44%) of the total workforce, but their numbers may not be a direct indication of their recruitment value to the industry. Older members of the workforce were greatly valued for their experience, and the employment of younger members of the workforce was not

[84] See Archibald Wilson (14), born *c*1867, Hunslet, Yorks (1881 census).
[85] See Robert Wason (84), born *c*1797, West Indies (1881 census).
[86] See William Henry Squire (80), born *c*1801, St Pancras. Also, William Seager (80), born *c*1801, Rochester, Kent (1881 census).
[87] See Mary A. Layton (75), born *c*1806, Witney, Oxon (1881 census).

necessarily at the expense of their elders. The value of ageing members of the workforce is discussed again below.

Of those who recorded their status as apprentice (136 in total), most were aged 11 to 20, but 3% were adults. These included the 25-year-old son of an army pensioner living in Hampstead who may have been encouraged by, and apprenticed to, a piano maker living separately at the same address,[88] and the 29-year-old son of a mechanical engineer in Halifax who may have been attracted by the instrument's mechanism.[89] The eldest of the mature apprentices were two married women studying their husband's profession, one as a 'pupil tuner' (aged 37) and the other (aged 42) as a 'piano maker apprentice'.[90] Male factory workers may have considered female employment an affront to their expertise and a threat to their livelihood, but sole practitioners and family workshops were pleased to recruit cheap labour.

Condition as to marriage

More than half the study workforce (or 56%) was married at the time the census was taken, comprising 57% of the male workforce and 28% of the female workforce. These figures confirm that men in the industry were twice as likely to have been married as women. Taking into account the 4.5% of the workforce to have been married but widowed, the total percentage of the workforce to have entered into marriage is adjusted to 60%, comprising 62% of the male workforce and 52% of the female workforce. These figures indicate that men working in the piano industry were 20% more likely to be married than their female counterparts. From a male perspective, then, remuneration in the piano industry was sufficient to maintain a wife and family, and from a female perspective, the industry was as likely to recruit single women as their married counterparts. This latter fact is reflected in the occupation most performed by women – that of piano silk work (discussed in

[88] See Henry Plant (25), born *c*1856, Cambridgeshire; and Henry C. P. Foster (28), born *c*1853, Camden Town, living separately at 4, Lower Lawn Road, Hampstead (1881 census). The classification 'Middle class. Well-to-do' was applied to Lower Lawn Terrace, Hampstead in Charles Booth's *Maps Descriptive of London Poverty (1898–9)*.

[89] See Allan Charnock (29), born *c*1852, Kidderminster, Worcestershire (1881 census).

[90] See Louisa J. Percy (37), born *c*1844, Sheerness, Kent. Also, Sarah Anne Dove (42), born *c*1839, London (1881 census).

Chapter 3) – wherein half the female workforce was either wife or widow, and the other half was neither.

Female as compared with male occupations

The female study workforce performed a variety of practical and managerial roles ranging from apprentice maker to tuner, to proprietor of one of the largest piano making firms in London.[91] In total, they recorded more than forty different job titles which are listed in full at Appendix 24. The following is a summary of their employment in assorted branches of the trade.

Female occupation	Total	Contd	Total
Silk work	35	Fitting & finishing	3
Dealing	30	Casework	3
Making (unspecified)	26	Office work	2
Tuning	20	Warehouse work	2
Key making	8	Part making	1
Assistant/apprentice	4	Stringing	1
Management	4		**139**

Table 20: Summary of female occupations (by category and size). Decreasing order. Source: 1881 census.

The greatest number of women occupied in a single line of work was that employed in piano silk work (35 in total), and in 1881 women enjoyed a near monopoly in this line of work.[92] With the exception of two women working in the north of England,[93] all the silk workers identified in the study lived near the centre of the industry in London. The General Report of the 1881 census recorded that 'Silk, silk goods [and their] manufacture' was one of 44 areas of work in which women outnumbered men,[94] and, certainly, the female silk workers recorded in the census outnumbered their male counterparts by 35:1. Women enjoyed long years of employment in this line of work and their ages recorded in the census ranged from 17 to 74. Piano dealing appears to have been another branch of employment particularly suited to

[91] See Georgina [sic] Kirkman (53), born *c*1828, Notting Hill (1881 census). Georgiana was head of the Kirkman family enterprise in Hammersmith.

[92] Only one man was recorded in the census as a piano silker. See Alfred Cook (29), born *c*1852, St Pancras (1881 census).

[93] One in Lancashire and the other in Yorkshire, who also dealt in tea. See Appendix 1.

[94] On this occasion 39,694 to 17,655. *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.30.

women with 22% of the female workforce working as dealers as opposed to 4.5% of the male. The number of women involved in making instruments (including piano silkers) was 81 (or 58% of their total), and those in tuning them one quarter that amount (20 or 14%). The remaining 2% of the female workforce was employed as managers, partners, cashiers, clerks, and warehouse workers. Given that women accounted for 30% of the national workforce in 1881, those in the piano industry were notably under-represented at only 2% of the industry workforce.[95]

The employment of women in key making, which was 'mainly joinery work done by men and boys',[96] offered women and girls a variety of simple tasks such as selecting ivory key tops to ensure that individual keyboards were of uniform colour and grain, and gluing ebony or stained wood onto keys intended as sharps. Eight women reported their employment in this line of work but undoubtedly there were more. So, too, were there likely to have been more women making component parts of the piano's action than the single female 'part maker' recorded in the study, especially given the future recognition of female proficiency in the skill.[97] Surprisingly, no women were identified as piano polishers although more than 3,000 female French polishers were returned in the census at large. The earliest discovered reference to female French polishers in the piano industry dates to their employment at Broadwood in 1916.[98] Reflecting the national pattern, a quarter of the female workforce was employed in the country and the remainder in the metropolis.

Makers

Table 21 (below) lists the total number of the study population to have recorded their work in various aspects of making pianos. The number of piano makers recorded in the census may be expressed in three ways. Firstly, as the total number of workers who described their occupation as 'piano maker' on their census return, of which

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[95] In 1881, the total number of males returned in some definite occupation was 7,783,646 and females 3,403,918. Women therefore comprised 30% of the total working population of 11,187,564. Taking into account the rearing of children and the management of domestic life, however, the numbers of men and women working were considered equal. *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.29.

[96] *Guide to employment for Boys and Girls in Greater London, A* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1938), pp.162–63.

[97] See Mary Calcutt (42), born *c*1849, St Pancras, Middlesex (1881 census). The government census of 1921 recorded 370 male and 143 female piano action makers, fitters and assemblers working in the United Kingdom. Laurence (2010), Appendix 7.

[98] Wainwright (1982), p.284.

there were 2,630, as shown in the first line at Table 21. This figure is deficient, however, in that it disregards 1,588 piano makers who described their work in greater detail, e.g. 'action maker', 'back maker' or 'leg turner'. The total number of people identified in piano making is therefore expressed more accurately as the sum of these two figures, or 4,218. A third expression of the workforce presents a different total and records the sum of people working in each piano making activity. This total is greater than the second because several workers recorded multiple manufacturing occupations (e.g. 'finisher & turner' or 'maker & desk maker') and are therefore counted twice, raising the total number for this calculation of the workforce to 4,231. This last method of calculating the workforce provides the basis for the following table. A full list of piano making occupations recorded in the census appears at Appendix 25. The numbers involved in core piano making activities are summarised here as follows:

Occupation	Total	Men	Women	Contd	Total	Men	Women
'Piano maker'	2630	2612	18	Silkwork	36	1	35
Fitting & finishing	427	424	3	Miscellaneous	35	35	0
Misc making	252	250	2	Polishing	21	21	0
Key making	219	211	8	Factory work	25	25	0
Casework	166	165	1	Machine Operating	17	17	0
Apprentices & assistants	124	114	10	Part making	16	15	1
Action work	107	107	0	Foremen	11	11	0
Strings & stringing	51	50	1	Smithwork	10	10	0
Back making	41	39	2	Business/ Partner	4	2	2
Hammer work	39	39	0	**Total**	**4231**	**4148**	**83**

Table 21: Number of the study population recorded in core piano making activities. Source: 1881 census.

As shown at Table 21, the total number of workers recorded in each activity is diluted by the fact that so many of the workforce returned their occupation as simply 'piano maker'. This generalisation frustrates an exact calculation of all those involved in each activity and only allows a broad conjecture that those involved in 'fitting and finishing' had greater pride in their piano making skills than those

working as factory labourers or part makers, and were inclined to record the fact. Messrs. Broadwood recorded the precise nature of their employees' work in 1851 when they listed 42 separate jobs pertaining to the manufacture of their instruments.[99] Their list reflected the Broadwood factory process of the time, but the census shows the diversity of roles performed elsewhere, with as many as 125 different job titles identified in the piano's manufacture. Among the more unusual were 'carver', 'cleaner up', 'engraver', 'gilder', 'gluer', 'hinge dresser',[100] 'moulding maker', 'pin maker', 'screw cutter', 'sharp maker', 'smelt worker' and 'timber marker'; all indicators of the acute division of labour that still existed in the English piano industry even thirty years after Broadwood published their list and piano cases in America were being polished by machine.[101] None of the study workforce recorded the use of a machine to polish cases (in fact, very few recorded working with machinery): rather they were engine drivers or machinists and one a 'piano puncher for machine', this latter job suggestive of creating piano rolls for pneumatic player pianos via a keyboard-operated punch machine – a relatively modern innovation in 1881.[102] For the most part the manufacturing jobs recorded in the census were recognisably traditional.

As shown earlier, at Table 15, the majority of piano makers were based in London with Lancashire and Yorkshire attracting the greatest density outside the capital. The most northerly were three men based in Northumberland who may have had ties with the Scottish trade,[103] and in the south was a 68-year-old widow employing three men and a boy in Dorset.[104] Only seven workers combined piano making with unrelated jobs and these were a 'maker & *stationer*, '*oilman* & key maker', 'maker &

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[99] Mactaggart (1986), pp.16–17.

[100] A hinge dresser removed the flash from castings of hinges.

[101] A description of Boardman & Gray's factory in Albany, New York, in January 1854, records that 'a large machine, driven by the engine, [was] used for rubbing the tops of pianos and other large surfaces'. Godey's Lady's Book (Philadelphia, January 1854), reproduced in Swenson, E., 'Boardman and Grey: A Tour Through a Pre-Civil War Piano Factory' (Edward E. Swenson, 2008). Online at: www.mozartpiano.com/articles/boardmangray.php, consulted 27 May 2011.

[102] See Richard T. Corden (19), born *c*1862, Stapleford, Nottinghamshire (1881 census).

[103] See George Martin (35), born *c*1846, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland; Thomas Penman (64), born *c*1817, Newcastle upon Tyne, Northumberland; and James Wasley (46), born *c*1835, London (1881 census).

[104] See Ann Grimes (68), born *c*1813, East Coker, Dorset (1881 census).

tobacconist, '*tea dealer* & silker', 'finisher & *insurance agent*', '*picture dealer* & maker' and a 'finisher & *grocer*' to be discussed again below.[105]

Tuners

According to the General Report of the census, seven of the piano tuners enumerated in 1881 were 'afflicted by blindness'.[106] The tuning master for the Royal Normal College of the Blind that year was John Young and he appears in the census, aged 38, living with his wife and six children in Lewisham.[107] The college, which had been established nearly a decade earlier in three small houses near Crystal Palace, was now based in larger premises in Upper Norwood, South London, and it is likely some of the seven blind piano tuners were among its former pupils.[108] Piano tuners accounted for 1779 members of the study workforce and Table 22 (below) records their distribution.

As with the study population of makers, the greatest number of tuners outside London was gathered in Lancashire and Yorkshire, with the remainder spread unevenly across the country, but with every county claiming at least one. A significant number of the tuners working outside London (197 or 21%) – including the solitary tuner based in Rutland – hailed from the capital, but whether these London tuners were already qualified when they moved to the provinces is not apparent; they may have moved with their parents as children. London born tuners were found in Lancashire (29 or 15%), Sussex (20 or 10%) and Yorkshire (15 or 8%) with the remaining 85% inhabiting every provincial county except Dorset, Huntingdonshire and Westmorland, almost as though they had been sent from the capital to establish a provincial network. And to some extent this may have been the case.

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[105] See William Baker (44), born *c*1837, St Pancras, Middlesex, pianoforte maker & stationer; John Black (56), born *c*1825, Scotland, oilman & pianoforte key maker (employing 9 men & 1 boy); Richard M. Cartwright (69), born *c*1812, Bristol, Somerset, pianoforte maker tobacconist; Elizabeth Coates (42), born *c*1839, Skipton, Yorks, tea dealer pianoforte silker; George Durrant (56), born *c*1825, Lindfield, Sussex, pianoforte finisher & insurance agent; Robert W. Edbrook (26), born *c*1855, Bath, Somerset, picture dealer & piano maker; and Thomas James Revill (25), born *c*1856, Middlesex, pianofort [sic] finisher & grocer (1881 census).

[106] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.62.

[107] See John Young (38), born *c*1843, Westminster (1881 census).

[108] The college was established on 1 March 1872. Website of the Royal National College for the Blind: www.rncb.ac.uk, consulted 15 September 2011.

County	Total	Men	Women	Contd	Total	Men	Women
London	827	817	10	Leicestershire	16	16	0
Lancashire	157	156	1	Norfolk	16	16	0
Yorkshire	116	116	3	Durham	15	15	0
Gloucestershire	52	51	1	Wiltshire	15	15	0
Sussex	47	47	0	Northants	14	14	0
Kent	42	42	0	Oxon	13	13	0
Warwickshire	41	40	1	Northumberland	12	12	0
Devon	40	39	1	Cumberland	11	11	0
Cheshire	39	39	0	Derbyshire	11	11	0
Hampshire	30	30	0	Hertfordshire	10	10	0
Somerset	30	29	1	Cornwall	8	8	0
Surrey	28	28	0	Shropshire	8	8	0
Nottinghamshire	26	26	0	Buckinghamshire	7	7	0
Essex	21	21	0	Dorset	7	7	0
Worcestershire	20	20	0	Herefordshire	5	5	0
Lincolnshire	18	18	0	Bedfordshire	4	4	0
Staffs	18	16	2	Huntingdonshire	3	3	0
Cambridgeshire	17	17	0	Rutland	1	1	0
Suffolk	17	17	0	Westmorland	1	1	0
Berkshire	16	16	0		**1779**	**1759**	**20**
				Outside London	**952**	**942**	**10**

Table 22: Location of tuners (by county). Decreasing order. Source: 1881 census.

By 1886 Broadwood was considered to have had a 'monopoly of provincial tunings' generating a sum approaching £12,000 a year.[109] Their tuners would have been highly skilled employees (or former employees) of the firm – or perhaps credible tuners trained elsewhere – who were prepared to commute or relocate to areas outside the capital. Tuners born in the provinces comprised half the nation's total, and may not have been so highly skilled, having inequitable access to recognised apprenticeships. This may explain why 3% of tuners born in the provinces combined tuning with paradoxically unrelated jobs, such as baker, basket maker, draper, grocer, haberdasher, insurance agent, lay clerk, printer, refreshment house keeper, soldier, surveyor, tea dealer, undertaker and watch repairer. Even so, the majority gave priority to their status as a piano tuner on their census return (e.g. 'piano tuner &

[109] For Broadwood's network of agents, see Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), p.55. For their tuning monopoly and its value see Ehrlich (1996), pp.105 and 147. Steinway, by contrast (in 1923), employed 16 outdoor tuners generating a profit of £1,082 that year. Archives of Steinway & Sons London, 'Revised List of Allowances for Tuners' dated 1 June 1923. Information kindly supplied by Allen Wright of Steinway, London.

basket maker', and not *vice versa*), suggesting either that they considered tuning to be their primary occupation or that it generated the greater income. In contrast, only three provincially-born piano makers (or 0.1%) reported holding an unrelated secondary job: a 'finisher & *insurance agent*' in Sussex, a '*picture dealer* & maker' in Lancashire, and a '*tea dealer* & silker' in Yorkshire.[110] This discrepancy between the number of tuners and makers involved in unrelated secondary occupations suggests two causal factors. Either there was more work for piano makers (leaving no time for a second job) or their work was better paid (negating the need for a second job); or, conversely, there was less work for piano tuners (making a second job a necessity) or it was less well paid (again, making a second job a necessity). Independent rural piano tuners could earn 10s 6d per instrument in 1770 (equating to about £33 today):[111] the same amount as recommended for an experienced London tuner nearly a century later in 1854 (equating to approximately £30 today).[112] As late as 1947 the Piano Tuners' Association reported that the standard price of tuning an upright piano could be 'as much as' 10s 6d in some parts of the country (equating to just £13 today).[113] These figures reflect not only the value attributed to a piano tuning in 1881, but the decline in its perceived value to the public – and even to the Piano Tuners' Association itself – in later years.[114] In 1881, however, independent rural tuners could earn a reasonable income provided they had sufficient customers. Among the tuners recorded in Lancashire were the wife of a 'Ship scraper builder' working in Everton, and the wife of tripe dresser working in Kingston upon Hull.[115] A curious occupation recorded in Wisbech in Cambridgeshire was that of a 19-year-old boy working as a 'Striker for [a] W[ounded?] tuner'.[116]

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[110] See (respectively) George Durrant (56), born *c*1825, Lindfield, Sussex; Robert W. Edbrook (26), born *c*1855, Bath, Somerset; and Elizabeth Coates (42), born *c*1839, Skipton, Yorks (1881 census).

[111] Sheldrick, G., *The Accounts of Thomas Green 1742–1790* (Hertfordshire Record Society, 1992), p.40.

[112] Ehrlich (1996), p.44.

[113] Sherlock, L., *The Piano Tuners' Association: A History: 1913–2005* (Oxford: Trafford Publishing (UK) Ltd, 2006), p.37.

[114] Battling this degradation of their income, the last fee proposed by the Piano Tuners' Association (in 2010) for tuning a rural piano was approximately £37, equating to approximately 15/6d in 1881. *Pianoforte Tuners' Association Year Book – 2010/11*, p.9.

[115] See (respectively) Mary Ann Gott (24), born *c*1857, Plymouth, Devon; and Ellen Field (29), born *c*1852, Oldham, Lancashire (1881 census).

[116] See Richard Jessop (19), born *c*1862, Wisbech, Cambs (1881 census). See also Peter Grundy (65), born *c*1816, Astley, Lancs (1881 census), who recorded his occupation as 'striker and pianoforte tuner'.

Dealers

A total of 316 members of the workforce identified themselves as piano dealers, merchants or sellers, among them 285 men and 31 women. The majority was based in London (38%), with the remaining 195 distributed unevenly around the provinces, as shown in the following table:

County	Total	Men	Women	Contd	Total	Men	Women
London	121	102	19	Derbyshire	2	2	0
Lancashire	46	45	1	Durham	2	2	0
Yorkshire	43	39	4	Northants	2	2	0
Gloucestershire	8	7	1	Oxon	2	2	0
Hampshire	8	7	1	Staffordshire	2	2	0
Warwickshire	8	7	1	Buckinghamshire	1	0	1
Devon	7	6	1	Essex	1	1	0
Sussex	7	7	0	Herefordshire	1	1	0
Somerset	6	6	0	Suffolk	1	1	0
Surrey	6	5	1	Wiltshire	1	1	0
Leicestershire	5	5	0	Bedfordshire	0	0	0
Lincolnshire	5	5	0	Cambridgeshire	0	0	0
Northumberland	5	5	0	Cornwall	0	0	0
Nottinghamshire	5	4	1	Dorset	0	0	0
Cheshire	4	4	0	Huntingdonshire	0	0	0
Hertfordshire	4	4	0	Rutland	0	0	0
Kent	4	4	0	Shropshire	0	0	0
Norfolk	4	4	0	Westmorland	0	0	0
Cumberland	3	3	0	Worcestershire	0	0	0
Berkshire	2	2	0	**Total**	**316**	**285**	**31**

Table 23: Location of dealers (by county). Decreasing order. Source: 1881 census.

Table 23 shows that dealers in Lancashire and Yorkshire would have been able to stock a selection of instruments made locally alongside those introduced from London and abroad as they had at least 191 makers in their midst and a predominance of piano making activity outside the capital. So, too, might dealers in Gloucestershire, albeit with perhaps a smaller choice of instruments, having only 32 local makers in their midst, 19 based in Bristol.[117] Dealers in a dozen other counties, however, were at least as numerous as their piano making counterparts, making it

[117] Gloucestershire's piano making population would be increased in 1911 with the relocation of Douglas Grover's London firm to the Woodchester Mills near Stroud. The Stroud Piano Company, as it became known, would eventually acquire the manufacturing rights to the last of the London brands. Wainwright (1975), p.136.

unlikely that they stocked much local product, if at all. Even so, with an estimated annual production of 30,000 to 35,000 pianos made elsewhere in the country and a mounting supply of fashionable German imports,[118] dealers were able to earn a profitable living. Nearly half the dealers identified in the census employed a servant (46%) and some as many as four. The subject of servants is discussed again below.

Other workers in the industry

In addition to all those making, tuning and selling pianos, 239 workers were identified in a variety of supporting roles. These 'other' workers were engaged as office clerks, cashiers and managers; factors, importers and agents; packers, porters and removal men; repairers; a fireman at a piano steam saw mill in Soho, and a factory night watchman at Erard's piano factory in Kensington. Their statistics are shown at Table 24.

Occupation	Total	Men	Women	Contd	Total	Men	Women
Porters	90	90	0	Packers	11	11	0
Office workers	45	43	2	Misc	9	7	2
Repairers	23	23	0	Factors & importers	7	7	0
Removers & drivers	21	21	0	Errand boys & messengers	5	5	0
Warehouse workers	16	15	1				
Managers	12	12	0	**Total**	**239**	**234**	**5**

Table 24: Number of the study population recorded in 'other' activities. Decreasing order. Source: 1881 census.

Unemployed (including the sick, retired and imprisoned)

Allowing for all those incapacitated for work by physical defects and not referring to the piano industry *per se*, the General Report of the census considered that 'the really idle proportion of the community would probably prove to be but very small'.[119] Certainly, the number of piano workers idle through unemployment on the night of the census amounted to only 0.9% of the workforce (as shown at Table 25 below) and it is likely none was idle through choice. The same was no doubt true of the 15 workers hospitalised or recovering in a convalescent home, the 18 confined to a lunatic asylum, the five in unidentified institutions, and the 21 reduced to living in a

[118] Ehrlich (1996), p.150.
[119] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.50.

workhouse. The four workers serving a prison sentence may have preferred to have been at work as well.

	Asylum	Former	Hospital	Institution	Lunatic	Prisoner	Retired	Unemployed	Workhouse	Total
Action maker								1		1
Book keeper								1		1
Case fitter								1		1
Case maker								2	1	3
Dealer		1					3			4
Factory worker								1		1
Finisher	1		1					1		3
Fitter up					1					1
Hammer coverer						1				1
Key maker								2		2
Maker			12	2	11	3	33	35	14	110
Manufacturer		1		1			2			4
Marker off			1							1
Part maker								1		1
Porter								1		1
Regulator								1		1
Silker								1		1
Tool & key maker								1		1
Tuner	1		1		6		6	8	6	28
Total	**2**	**2**	**15**	**3**	**18**	**4**	**44**	**57**	**21**	**166**

Table 25: Occupation and status of the unemployed (all male except the silk worker). Source: 1881 census.

As shown at Table 25, the largest group of 'idle' workers (other than the unemployed) consisted of those who had retired. A study of the 44 retirees recorded in the census suggests that retirement opportunities among the workforce were not democratic. The only occupations to record retirees were those of maker or manufacturer (35), tuner (6) and dealer (3): certainly no-one working as a journeyman, belly maker or hammer coverer recorded their retirement, although other sources note the award of annuities to long-serving employees of large firms after dedicated years of service.[120] At the time of the census no law was in existence requiring older members of the workforce to cease work once they had reached a specified age so the majority would have kept on working until they were no longer

[120] Broadwood's wages sheets for 1840, for example, note weekly payments of between 10 shillings and £1 18s 6d to each of four employees (or their widows) awarded annuities (SHC 2185/JB/74/1).

able. Long-serving employees were traditionally valued for their knowledge and experience and were often employed until a great age, and, even if they chose to leave, most businesses were too small to assume the financial responsibility of offering pensions to their employees who might number a dozen or so (as shown earlier at Table 13).

A study of the founding members of leading firms in the industry shows that many did choose to retire. Edward Pohlman had retired by the age of 56, James Hopkinson by 62, William Frederick Collard at 66, William Challen at 71, and John Brinsmead, eventually, at 90.[121] Others worked until their death: John Broadwood died at his workplace aged 80, and Frederick William Collard, at 88.[122] All were affluent men with appointed heirs so the question of their retirement would have been one of personal choice. Retirement for the remainder of the workforce is likely to have arisen through three eventualities: an accumulation of wealth, an inability to work, or the succession of an heir. It is not possible to assert that all the retirees in the census ceased to work on the grounds of financial stability, despite their greater potential (as manufacturers, tuners and dealers) to generate the necessary wealth compared with their salaried counterparts. Certainly, a significant number (21) employed a servant (and several more than one), and a similar number supported large unwaged families (suggesting savings sufficient to maintain an entire household), but some indicators in the census point to lesser wealth. Several retirees housed a lodger (some more than one) and not all (according to Charles Booth's poverty maps of 1898–9 which, it will be remembered, were drawn nearly twenty years after the census was taken and are not, therefore, a fully contemporary barometer) lived in well-to-do, middle class areas. Some lived in areas of mixed income. It is likely, therefore, that some of the census retirees (the eldest being 92) were forced from the workplace through old age and incapacity, regardless of their financial circumstances.[123] For those in

[121] See Edward Pohlman [sic] (56), born *c*1825, Halifax Yorks, 'retired pianoforte maker'; and James Hopkinson (62), born *c*1819, Leeds, Yorkshire, 'retired pianofte [sic] maker' (1881 census). For William Frederick Collard, see Laurence (2010), p.58. For William Challen, see William Challen (50), born *c*1791, [Storrington, Sussex] (1841 census) and Laurence (2010), p.32. For John Brinsmead, see Laurence (2010), p.14.

[122] For John Broadwood, see Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), pp.86 and 161. For Frederick William Collard, see Laurence (2010), p.57.

[123] The General Report of the 1881 Census cautions that a 'cause of inaccuracy in the age-returns is the tendency of old persons, when uncertain as to their exact age, to exaggeration' and

particularly straightened circumstances, friendly societies such as the Music Trades' Benevolent Society provided a safeguard 'to keep them from the fear of poverty',[124] but others may have relied on the support of immediate family. Whatever their situation, the retirees recorded in the census comprised only 0.7% of the workforce. Most were based in London (70%) and none was female.

Figure 48 records the ages of the retirees identified in the study (from 40 to 92): their average age was 67. The youngest was a piano tuner living in Islington with his wife and four children and it is likely he was reasonably wealthy since no other member of his family returned an occupation and his eldest sons were then aged 18 and 19.[125] The oldest was a former piano maker living in Putney, who is also likely to have been fairly wealthy as he lived with two servants and a hired nurse.[126]

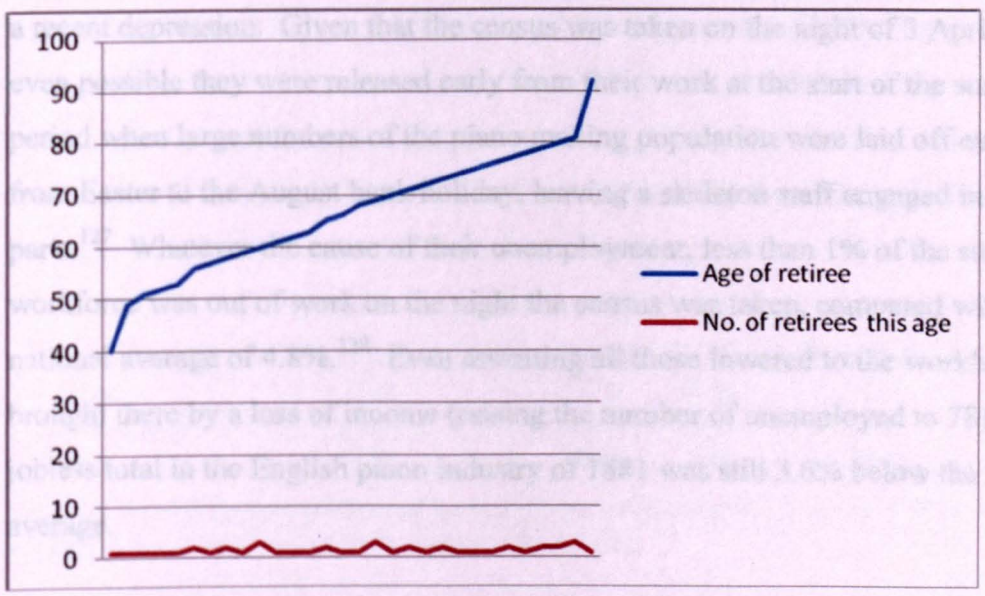

Figure 48: Number and age of retired study population in 1881. NB: not their age of retirement, which is unknown. Source: 1881 census.

recommends that 'very little trust should be put in the quinquennial or even the decennial totals after 85'. *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.18.

[124] According to Louis Bamberger, the Music Trades' Benevolent Society was established by the son of a leather merchant who, on 'passing through the musical section of the [1851] Exhibition [...] saw the business possibilities of handling the Swiss pine then on show' and subsequently became sole importer of the wood into the country. His son became attached to the trade and established the fund upon hearing that the piano maker Edward Burling 'was in a very bad way in a local infirmary'. Burling died before he could be helped, but the society continued, and by 1928 had funds of £20,000. Bamberger (May 1928), p.1407. Wainwright considers the society was established in 1902. Wainwright (1982), p.274.

[125] See Felix Higgs (40), born *c*1841, Clerkenwell, Middlesex (1881 census).

[126] See William Theobalds (92), born *c*1789, Pentonville, Middlesex (1881 census).

The members of the workforce most likely to have been hospitalised, unemployed, lunatic or committed to the workhouse were those involved in making. Given that makers comprised 65% of the overall workforce this finding might be construed as a simple reflection of their greater number, but an analysis of the unemployed (excluding retirees) in each branch of the trade shows that makers were twice as likely to be out of work as other branches of the industry: 2.3%, as opposed to 1.2% of tuners, 0.9% of porters and 0.3% of dealers. Reasonably, it might be expected that making instruments in a factory or workshop would attract more injuries than selling or tuning them in a shop or domestic setting and, certainly, serious and sometimes fatal accidents were reported in piano factories around the country (see Appendix 26). But it cannot be known that all those hospitalised at the time of the census were admitted for work-related injuries. Similarly, the census does not record whether the unemployed members of the workforce were long-term unemployed or casualties of a recent depression. Given that the census was taken on the night of 3 April, it is even possible they were released early from their work at the start of the summer period when large numbers of the piano making population were laid off each year from Easter to the August bank holiday, leaving a skeleton staff engaged in making parts.[127] Whatever the cause of their unemployment, less than 1% of the study workforce was out of work on the night the census was taken, compared with a national average of 4.8%.[128] Even assuming all those lowered to the workhouse were brought there by a loss of income (raising the number of unemployed to 78), the jobless total in the English piano industry of 1881 was still 3.6% below the national average.

The instances of lunacy among the workforce matched more closely the national average in England and Wales. The General Report of the census recorded that the total number of persons returned as suffering from some or other form of insanity was one person in every 307.[129] Taking into account the 18 piano workers recorded in lunatic asylums and the 2 in unnamed asylums, the piano workforce returned a total of one person suffering insanity in every 323. Most of these were makers and, again, this is probably a direct reflection of their greater proportion of the workforce.

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[127] Easter fell a fortnight after the census was taken, on 17 April, 1881.

[128] From 1881 to 1913 the average unemployment rate in Britain was 4.8%. Blacks Academy website: www.blacksacademy.net/content/3156.html, consulted 10 August 2011.

[129] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.66.

Of the criminal element, four members of the study workforce were in custody on the night the census was taken: one hammer coverer and four piano makers. The former, John Cassini (43), was serving time in Holloway prison for reasons unknown.[130] Piano maker George Day (32) was in the Chattenden Convict Prison in Kent;[131] a 78-year-old French-born maker was in 'Her Majesty's Prison, Cold Bath Fields' in Clerkenwell;[132] and a 39-year-old maker from Devon was detained (perhaps only for the night) in a police cell in Old Street, St Lukes.[133] Nationwide, the number imprisoned on the night of 3 April 1881 was equal to 1.07 per 1,000 of the entire population,[134] so the number of prisoners among the study population was comparatively low at only 0.06 per 1,000.

Migration

Table 26 provides a high-level summary of the migrant status of the English study workforce on the night the census was taken. It shows the total number of workers born in London and the provincial counties and, of these, the number and percentage who were still living in their county of birth on the night the census was taken, and the number and percentage who had since moved.

Birth County	Total Natives	Remained	%	Migrated	%
London	3729	3370	90%	315	8%
Other counties	2305	734	32%	1542	67%
Total	**6034**	**4104**	**8%**	**1857**	**31%**

Table 26: Number (and percentage) of the English-born study population to have remained in, or migrated from, their county of birth. Source: 1881 census.

NB: The discrepancy in the percentage total of those who remained and those who migrated is caused by two factors: a) workers whose migrant status could not be determined due to the non-recording of their birth or residential county; and b) an aggregate omission of decimal places in the table's calculations.

Almost one third of the study population had moved from their county of birth by the time the census was taken. How many of these workers moved expressly to find work cannot be known, but an indication of their willingness to relocate may be

[130] See John Cassine [sic] (43), born *c*1838, Kilburn, Middlesex (1881 census).
[131] See George Day (32), born *c*1849, Guernsey, Channel Isles (1881 census).
[132] See J. S. [sic] (78), born *c*1803, France (1881 census).
[133] See Thomas Colman (39), born *c*1842, Abbotsham, Devon (1881 census).
[134] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.72.

gauged from the following observations. The General Report of the 1881 census reported that among the population at large, 75% of all those enumerated were still living in their county of birth on the night the census was taken.[135] Among the study workforce this figure was 68% (or 4,104 as shown at Table 26 above). Expressed in contrary figures, the number of the study population to have moved, by 1881, from their county of birth was 31% (or 1,857), compared with only 25% of the wider population. The migratory inclination among the piano industry workforce was therefore greater than that among the average population. The General Report further stated that 47% of the nation's migrant population moved no further afield than to a neighbouring parish and those who did move further relocated to an industrial centre.[136] This was certainly the case for the majority of the migrant study workforce who moved to the industrial centres of London (1,154), Lancashire (114) and Yorkshire (52) – 71% of them in total – but those who moved elsewhere were not necessarily to be found in a neighbouring county. Only 37% of the study population moved to this small extent: 10% less than the national average. These migrant piano workers exchanged one rural location for another more distant (62%), such as Cumberland for Cheshire, or Devon for Hampshire. For the most part, however, the population to have moved in this way comprised no more than a handful of individuals in any direction; they were not to be found relocating *en masse*.

It cannot be known whether the study migrants were already employed in the trade when they moved, or moved before joining the trade, but two particulars are apparent, all else being equal: either members of the piano trade were more willing to relocate to work in their chosen career than other members of the working population, or people who were willing to migrate often met with an opportunity to join the industry; either of which may be true. Table 27 (below) shows the migratory pattern of the study population in more detail.

[135] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.51.
[136] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.52.

County	Native pop. (a)	Native pop. adjusted (b)	Remained (c)	% (d)	Migrated (e)	% (f)	Mostly to (g)	Incoming workers (h)	Incomers as % of native pop. (i)	Mostly from (j)
Beds	15	15	0	0%	15	100%	London	3	20%	Middx
Berks	36	36	6	17%	30	83%	London	14	39%	Essex/Middx
Bucks	32	32	4	13%	28	88%	London	4	13%	Glos/Middx/ Northants/Yorks
Cambs	42	40	13	31%	27	64%	London	7	17%	Middx
Cheshire	30	30	12	40%	18	60%	Lancs	31	103%	Suffolk
Cornwall	28	26	4	14%	22	79%	London	4	14%	Middx
Cumberland	16	16	8	50%	8	50%	Yorks	4	25%	Middx
Derbys	18	18	5	28%	13	72%	London	8	44%	Middx
Devon	178	176	37	21%	139	78%	London	27	15%	Middx
Dorset	25	25	5	20%	20	80%	London	4	16%	Devon/Kent/Lancs/Somerset
Durham	21	20	7	33%	13	62%	London	9	43%	Yorks
Essex	87	87	11	13%	76	87%	London	41	47%	Middx
Glos	111	111	48	43%	63	57%	London	42	38%	Middx
Hamps	83	82	20	24%	62	75%	London	23	28%	Middx
Herefordshire	2	2	1	50%	1	50%	London	5	250%	Middx
Herts	43	43	7	16%	36	84%	London	8	19%	Middx
Hunts	12	12	2	17%	10	83%	London	1	8%	Beds
Kent	128	127	22	17%	105	82%	London	28	22%	Middx
Lancs	193	190	132	68%	58	30%	London	114	59%	Middx/then Yorks
Leics	16	15	9	56%	6	38%	London	11	69%	Middx
Lincs	38	38	8	21%	30	79%	London	15	39%	Middx

County	Native pop. (a)	Native pop. adjusted (b)	Remained (c)	% (d)	Migrated (e)	% (f)	Mostly to (g)	Incoming workers (h)	Incomers as % of native pop. (i)	Mostly from (j)
London	3729	3686	3370	90%	316	8%	Lancs	1156	31%	Surrey
Norfolk	74	73	21	28%	52	70%	London	5	7%	Suffolk
Northants	26	26	9	35%	17	65%	London	4	15%	Middx
Northumberland	38	37	10	26%	27	71%	London	12	32%	Durham
Notts	28	28	21	75%	7	25%	Lancs/Lon	12	43%	Middx
Oxon	26	26	7	27%	19	73%	London	9	35%	Middx
Rutland	3	3	0	0%	3	100%	London	1	33%	Middx
Shrops	14	14	3	21%	11	79%	London	7	50%	Middx
Somerset	106	106	21	20%	85	80%	London	20	19%	Glos/Middx
Staffs	29	29	7	24%	22	76%	London	13	45%	Middx
Suffolk	47	47	12	26%	35	74%	London	7	15%	Middx
Surrey	261	258	11	4%	247	95%	London	43	16%	Middx
Sussex	74	74	27	36%	47	64%	London	51	69%	Middx
Warwicks	65	65	31	48%	34	52%	London	31	48%	Middx
Westmorland	2	2	0	0%	2	100%	Glos/Lon	1	50%	Yorks
Wilts	39	39	9	23%	30	77%	London	5	13%	Middx
Worcs	27	27	7	26%	20	74%	London	16	59%	Middx
Yorks	287	281	177	62%	104	36%	London	61	21%	Middx/then Lancs
Unknown	5						Unknown	1		
	6034	**5962**	**4104**		**1858**			**1858**		

Table 27: Migration of the study population by county, showing total numbers lost and gained. Source: 1881 census.

See following page for explanation of columns.

Table 27 shows (a) the number of the English study population born in each county; (b) adjusted to remove visitors;[137] (c) the number and (d) percentage of the resident population who were native to that county (i.e. born there); (e) the number and (f) percentage of the study population who were originally born in that county but had left by the time of the census; (g) their preferred destination; (h) the number and (i) percentage of workers resident in the county at the time of the census who were born elsewhere; and (j) where the majority of them were born.

It notes the number of piano workers born in each county (adjusted to exclude all those whose residential counties were not recorded, including visitors), and the numbers lost and gained to each county through migration. As will be seen, some counties lost large numbers of their indigenous piano industry workforce to migration. Bedfordshire, Rutland and Westmorland lost 100%, Surrey lost 95% and eight other counties lost more than 80%. Many of these (apart from Somerset and Dorset) bordered the capital where inducements to move may have been the greatest and upheaval potentially the least, but counties farther afield also lost heavily: Lincolnshire, Dorset and Shropshire each lost 79% of their native piano industry workforce and attracted, on average, only 30% in return. In fact, 34 of England's counties lost more than 50% of their indigenous workforce to other areas, with only Cheshire, Herefordshire and London attracting a greater number than they lost. Bedfordshire recovered from elsewhere a third of the workforce they had lost, and those lost from Rutland and Westmorland were also numerically replaced, but, in total, the loss of native workers from rural, non-industrial counties (i.e. those other than London, Lancashire and Yorkshire) amounted to 1,380 (or 76%) of their collective native population, while their compensating gain from inward migration amounted to only 583 (or 32%) of their collective native population.

The counties to attract the most migrant workers were the industrial centres of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and the provincial counties of Sussex, Surrey, Gloucestershire and Essex, but compared with London their gains were not large: Sussex, Surrey, Gloucestershire and Essex attracted only 40–50 workers each, having lost, in the case of Surrey, as many as 250.

[137] Visitors are removed from this chart because their county of residence (and therefore their pattern of migration, if any) is not known.

A few counties managed to retain a significant proportion of their native workforce, the most static being London with 90% and Nottinghamshire with 75%. Only five other counties retained more than 50% of their original workforce, namely Lancashire, Yorkshire, Leicestershire, Cumberland and Herefordshire.

How far the migratory pattern of the piano industry population paralleled that of the general population may be demonstrated as follows. According to the General Report of the census, the counties to attract the greatest population from without were those of a more industrial nature (i.e. London, Surrey, Sussex, Essex, Leicestershire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire, Cheshire, Lancashire, Yorkshire and Durham). These counties were fed, in effect, by the exported labour of the 'agricultural' counties. Comparing these counties with the counties chosen by the migrant study population, London, Lancashire and Yorkshire received 71% of migrant piano workers, but only 2.3% of the study population relocated to Surrey, 2.7% to Sussex, 2.3% to Essex, 0.6% to Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire, 1.6% to Cheshire and 0.5% to Durham. Whatever the industry of these latter industrial counties, it did not attract large numbers of the migrant piano industry population. The remaining 18.4% of the migrant piano workers chose to settle in 'agricultural' counties such as Gloucestershire, Hampshire, Kent, Somerset, Warwickshire and Devon. In this sense, the piano industry of 1881 cannot be described as a wholly industrial enterprise.

Migration of skills

Assuming, again, that the skills recorded in the census may be grouped into the four categories of making, tuning, dealing, and 'other', the following tables summarise the migration of trade skills into and out of (firstly) London and (secondly) the other English counties. They also show the consequential loss or addition to the original native skill set in these areas. These tables differ from Table 27 (above) in that they are concerned with the migration of skills rather than the individuals who performed them and as some workers were multi-skilled the figures therefore differ. The discrepancy in the overall percentage gain and loss in the final columns of the tables below (i.e. a 30% gain in London corresponding to a 31% loss in the counties) results from two considerations: the incoming migrant population and an aggregate omission of decimal places in the tables' calculations.

London

Trade	Native workforce	Number lost to other counties	Number gained from Other Counties	Abroad	Total	Total gain/loss	% gain (loss)
Makers	2812	104	831	227	1058	954	34%
Tuners	773	188	200	42	242	54	7%
Dealers	90	25	42	13	55	30	33%
Other	80	5	94	10	104	99	124%
Total*	**3755**	**322**	**1167**	**292**	**1459**	**1137**	**30%**

Table 28: Migration of trade skills into and out of the capital. Source: 1881 census.

Elsewhere in England

Trade	Native workforce	Number lost to London	Number gained from London	Abroad	Total	Total gain/loss	% gain (loss)
Makers	1116	828	104	25	129	(699)	(63%)
Tuners	899	200	188	56	244	44	5%
Dealers	205	43	25	7	32	(11)	(5%)
Other	143	94	5	4	9	(85)	(59%)
Total*	**2363**	**1164**	**322**	**92**	**414**	**(751)**	**(32%)**

Table 29: Migration of trade skills into and out of the provinces. Source: 1881 census.

* Totals differ from census totals given at Table 27 because:

1. Workers holding multiple jobs (e.g. maker and tuner) are included here twice;
2. Visiting workers are included among their native workforce, but not among the workforce they were visiting;
3. 42 members of the workforce whose place of birth was not recorded have not been included; and
4. One maker whose current residential county was not recorded has been included in his native workforce, but omitted from the migrant figures.

Table 28 shows that London lost 322 (or 8.5%) of its native born skills to other parts of the country but gained 1,459 (or 39%) in return, including 292 from abroad. Overall, it gained 1,137 skills (an increase of 30% over its original number) which swelled the skill base that had remained by precisely one third. London's greatest loss in a single branch of the trade was of 188 tuners (remembering, of course, that they may not have been tuners when they left) and its greatest gain was of 1,058 makers, 227 from abroad, these latter probably in consideration of the city's international piano-making reputation.

Table 29 shows that the provincial counties lost 1,164 (or 49%) of their native born skills to London and gained only 414 in return, including 92 from abroad. These newcomers swelled the skill base that had remained by 35%. The greatest loss to the provincial counties in a single branch of the trade was of 828 makers (or 74% of their

original workforce) to London, recouping only 129 (or 11%) in return, including 25 foreigners. These new piano makers swelled the piano making population that remained by 45%. The provincial trade to lose the least of its number was that of dealing; only 43 dealers moved to London (reducing the dealers in the provinces by 21%) suggesting that there was a recognised living to be made in piano dealing outside the capital. The greatest gain to the provincial counties in a single skill was that of tuning; 188 incoming tuners augmented the tuning population that remained by 27%.

The migrant population was often found to include several members of the same family: fathers, sons, uncles, brothers and cousins, sometimes as many as three or four together, but in the case of the Bustard family from Devon, a total of five who migrated to St Pancras to work as piano makers.[138] The link between London and Devon in terms of the piano trade has yet to be fully explained, but of the 178 members of the study workforce born in Devon, 123 migrated to London, and 11 travelled in the opposite direction. The county bred a number of successful men in the trade, including John Brinsmead, Charles Cadby, John and Henry Squire, and Thomas Mugridge of Chappell. All hailed from villages in Devon where news of their success would have been well reported. To what extent any of the workforce was encouraged to migrate by the success of fellow denizens can only be surmised.

Foreigners

Table 30 (below) shows the nationalities of the study workforce and the proportions in which these nationalities contributed to the total.[139] On the night the census was taken foreign nationals accounted for 6% of the total study population.

The greatest number of foreign migrants arrived from Scotland, comprising 34% of the study's foreign population and 2% of the total study population. Among the population at large, Scottish nationals accounted for less than 1% (or 9.8 in every

[138] See William Bustard (76), born *c*1805, Brand Cliff, Devon; William Bustard (47), born *c*1834, Brand Cliff, Devon; Charles Bustard (30), born *c*1851, Devon; James Bustard (38), born *c*1843, Devon; and Thomas Bustard (36), born *c*1845, Devon (1881 census).

[139] For the purpose of this study, foreigners denote all those born outside England, including those born in Scotland, Ireland and Wales. Three foreign nationals recorded their status as 'visitor' on their census return, but whether they were visiting from abroad or resident in England and visiting locally cannot be known: they have been included in the figures.

1,000 members of the population),[140] so with 2% of its workforce hailing from Scotland the piano industry may be considered to have been doubly endowed with Scottish nationals. A search of the online census for Scotland in 1881 shows a workforce totalling approximately 336.[141] Broadly, then, 30% of Scotland's piano related workforce was working in England in 1881. In the wider population, Scottish migrants settled mainly in the northern counties of Northumberland and Durham,[142] but among the study workforce the majority (115), like John Broadwood and Robert Stodart before them, settled in London. In this respect they may be considered to have migrated expressly for the purpose of joining the industry in the capital. Only one Scottish migrant travelled beyond the capital, where he worked as a tuner in Kent.

	Total	Men	Women	% of study pop.	Contd	Total	Men	Women	% of study pop.
England	6034	5901	133	93.38%	West Indies	3	2	1	0.05%
Scotland	146	145	1	2.26%	Austria	2	2		0.03%
Germany	58	57	1	0.90%	Belgium	2	2		0.03%
Ireland	42	42		0.65%	East Indies	2	2		0.03%
Wales	28	28		0.43%	Hungary	2	2		0.03%
Italy	20	19	1	0.26%	Jamaica	2	2		0.03%
Channel Isles	17	17		0.26%	Poland	2	2		0.03%
France	14	14		0.22%	Russia	2	2		0.03%
America	7	6	1	0.11%	Bahamas	1	1		0.02%
Prussia	6	6		0.09%	Barbados	1	1		0.02%
Denmark	5	5		0.08%	Bermuda	1	1		0.02%
Netherlands	4	4		0.06%	Bohemia	1	1		0.02%
Canada	3	3		0.05%	New Zealand	1	1		0.02%
Australia	3	3		0.05%	Sri Lanka	1	1		0.02%
India	3	3		0.05%	Switzerland	1	1		0.02%
Norway	3	3		0.05%	Unknown	42	41	1	0.65%
Spain	3	3		0.05%	**Total**	**6462**	**6323**	**139**	
					Total foreigners	**386**	**381**	**5**	

Table 30: Nationality of the study population on the night of the census. Source: 1881 census.

[140] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.52.
[141] Using the words 'piano' and 'pianoforte' only.
[142] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.52.

The second largest influx of foreigners came from Germany, comprising 58 workers (or 13% of the foreign intake), which was a small number compared with those who settled in America, where, according to Ehrlich:

> Nearly half the 2,535 'pianoforte makers' listed in the 1870 American occupational census were German-born. No other country of origin approached this figure, and in no other industry was there such a dominance by one national group.[143]

Given that Germany was such a prodigious manufacturer of pianos at this time (Ehrlich estimates their annual output at between 60 and 70,000 instruments in the 1880s, i.e. double that of England),[144] and given that German piano making ethos was more closely aligned to the 'American system', with its over-stringing and iron frames (innovations that were slow to be adopted in England), it is perhaps surprising to find any of their workforce working in England. On the other hand, their numbers were very few. Those to join the study workforce comprised only 0.1% of the German migrants living in England that night, and, of all the European states, England was home to the greatest number of German migrants.[145] Perhaps more surprising were the five tuners and two makers to join the English workforce from America.

The third largest intake of migrants came from Ireland. At the time of the census 'there were in England and Wales one ninth part as many Irishmen as in Ireland itself',[146] and they numbered 21 in every 1,000 of the general population, or 2.1%. Among the study population, however, they numbered only 6 in every 1,000 members of the workforce (or 0.6%) and in this respect Irish migrants cannot be said to have made an exaggerated contribution to the English study workforce in 1881. The majority settled in London (27), and the remainder in the west of England, excepting one piano key maker who travelled as far as the east coast and Essex.

Almost the exact number to have migrated from England to Wales (27) moved in the opposite direction (28), leaving a near static workforce in Wales of 31 makers, tuners

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[143] Ehrlich (1996), p.142.
[144] Ehrlich (1996), p.68.
[145] The total number of German migrants in the overall census was 37,301. *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.56.
[146] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.53.

and dealers living in Caernarvonshire, Brecknockshire, Glamorganshire, Monmouthshire and Pembrokeshire. Among those living in the north-west of Wales was the retired piano manufacturer John Hopkinson, from Kent, now aged 69 and living with his wife and two servants in Caernarvonshire.[147] The remainder of the foreign workforce hailed from Europe and Scandinavia, Russia, America and the British Empire: only five were female, the majority were in their forties and several were octogenarians.

Concerning the distribution of foreigners present in England on the night the census was taken, Table 31 (below) shows their numbers in each of the counties they inhabited. Nearly half the provincial counties in England returned no foreign migrants working in any quarter of the piano industry and are therefore missing from this table.[148]

The majority of foreign workers was enumerated in London (294 or 76%) where they comprised 6% of the local workforce. More than three-quarters (77%) were involved in making pianos in the capital, and 14% in tuning them. These figures equate broadly with the local study population, wherein 77% were involved in making instruments and 17% in tuning them. Taking this analogy further, 4% of the migrant population was involved in selling instruments in the capital (compared with 2.3% of the local study population), and 4% of the migrant population were involved in other aspects of the trade (as were 4% of the local population). Expressed another way, foreign workers in London were more likely to have been selling pianos than the local study population, equally likely to have been making them and working in other aspects of the trade, but less likely to have been working among them as tuners.

Outside the capital, the greatest number of foreign study workers was congregated in Lancashire (7%) and Yorkshire (4%) where they comprised 16% of the local study workforce. In these two counties combined, 39% of foreign migrants were involved

[147] See John Hopkinson (69), born *c*1812, Chatham, Kent, living in Criccieth (1881 census of Wales).

[148] Namely, Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Cambridgeshire, Cumberland, Devon, Dorset, Herefordshire, Huntingdonshire, Lancashire, Leicestershire, Norfolk, Rutland, Suffolk, Westmorland and Worcestershire.

in making pianos, 52% in tuning them, and 4% each in selling them and other aspects of the trade.

County	Total	Maker	Tuner	Dealer	Other
London	294	228	42	13	12
Lancashire	27	6	18	1	2
Yorkshire	17	11	5	1	
Cheshire	8	1	7		
Somerset	6	1	3	2	
Staffordshire	4		4		
Warwickshire	4		4		
Essex	3	2	1		
Kent	3	1	2		
Surrey	3			1	2
Berkshire	2		2		
Gloucestershire	2		2		
Hampshire	2	1	1		
Cornwall	1		1		
Derbyshire	1		1		
Durham	1		1		
Hertfordshire	1			1	
Northants	1		1		
Northumberland	1		1		
Nottinghamshire	1			1	
Oxfordshire	1				
Shropshire	1		1		
Sussex	1	1			
Wiltshire	1		1		
Total	**386**	**252**	**98**	**20**	**17**

Table 31: Distribution and occupation of the foreign born workforce. Source: 1881 census.

NB: One foreign migrant living in London worked as a 'maker and tuner' and his skills have been counted twice.

Expressed proportionately, there were 4% more foreign makers than local makers, and 2% more foreign tuners than local tuners. However, foreign migrants were, proportionately, 14% less likely to have been involved in selling instruments in Lancashire and Yorkshire than the local study population, and 12% less likely to have been involved in other aspects of the trade. These figures indicate that more foreign dealers were attracted to work in the capital (where they may have engaged, perhaps, in exporting English instruments to their native country), than in the provinces (where the choice of instruments would have been less), and that very few

foreign makers were attracted to work outside the capital, although a greater number of foreign tuners found work outside the capital than in within it. Furthermore, the capital offered more work to foreigners in 'other' aspects of the trade than the provincial counties, suggesting that those with a greater command of the English language may have had better opportunities in London for working in the two professions that arguably required the greater fluency, namely selling instruments to the public and working in the trade's administration. In no other county outside London did foreign migrants number more than ten, suggesting that migrant workers in provincial counties were drawn to these areas for reasons other than business or commercial connections: perhaps for family or marital reasons. The occupations of the foreign study population are listed by nation at Appendix 27.

Family participation

As demonstrated by the five members of the Bustard family who moved to the capital from Devon, extensive family participation in the trade was not unknown in the late nineteenth century. Census findings confirm that nearly 20% of the study population lived with another family member working in the trade. The majority (13%) lived with one other member, but 4% lived with two, and 1% with three, and several families, like the Bustards, claimed as many as five. The largest – a family working as makers in St Pancras – claimed a total of six: a father and five sons.[149] The employment of sons within a family business was a commercial and traditional form of recruitment, but the female workforce also engendered a culture of nepotism, as discussed in Chapter 3.

A common notion attached to the piano industry is that many of its early practitioners began their careers as cabinet makers, or were the sons of cabinet makers, and certainly, there are many examples of this in the early trade: William Southwell was apprenticed in cabinet making, and John Broadwood, the son of a carpenter, served an apprenticeship as a joiner.[150] In 1881, the census shows that for

[149] For other examples of five family members participating in the trade, see Frederick Dunhill (46), born *c*1835, Lambeth (1881 census); Albert Jones (34), born *c*1847, Germany (1881 census); George Schomberg (64), born *c*1817, West Indies (1881 census); and John Francis Scipeo (58), born *c*1823, Stepney (1881 census). For the family of six, see Charles Eungblut (56), born *c*1825, London, and his five sons (1881 census).

[150] For Southwell, see Bozarth and Debenham (2009), p.53. For Broadwood, see Cole, M., *Broadwood Square Pianos* (2005), pp.5–6.

those involved in piano making, only 69 (or 1.6%) had a father who worked as a carpenter, cabinet maker or joiner, but that a greater number reported a father (337, or 8%) or mother (12, or less than 0.3%) employed in some aspect of the piano industry. These figures confirm that the piano, rather than wood *per se*, had become an established introduction to piano making.[151] That said, the great majority of the study piano making workforce cannot be said to have arrived at their occupation by parental example. More than 90% had fathers employed in unrelated occupations, such as labouring (farmers, bricklayers, builders, etc.), trade (blacksmiths, boiler makers, boot and shoe makers, coal merchants, etc.), office work (accountants, bank clerks, etc.), specialisms (billard table maker, art dealers, cook to His Majesty, cathedral guide, catholic minister, etc.), or of independent means (property owners, gentlemen, etc.). Their mothers were employed as artificial florists, book binders, brush makers, charwomen, confectioners, dressmakers, publicans and washerwomen, among other occupations. This figure suggests that by 1881 the majority of the workforce arrived at their occupation through choice, or, more likely, the availability of local employment. How else might the Ratcliffe sisters of Clerkenwell (aged 18 and 21) have settled upon their work as piano tuners when their father was a cabman and their mother a bookbinder?[152]

Servants and lodgers

The following table comprises two halves. The left half shows the number of study households to have employed a servant (by trade and by number of servants) and the right shows the number of households to have accommodated a lodger (by trade and by number of lodgers). Beneath each branch of the trade (in brackets) is given the total number of the study population working in that category of the industry.

[151] Taking into consideration siblings who may have encouraged each other into the trade, the percentage of the study workforce potentially introduced to the piano industry by fellow members of industry is significantly increased.

[152] See Esther Ratcliffe (21), born *c*1860, St Pancras; and Louisa Ratcliffe (18), born *c*1853, St Pancras (1881 census).

Servants					Lodgers				
No. of servants	**Makers (4218)**	**Tuners (1779)**	**Dealers (316)**	**Other (239)**	**No. of lodgers**	**Makers (4218)**	**Tuners (1779)**	**Dealers (316)**	**Other (239)**
1	251	210	114	19	1	362	141	18	21
2	50	21	26	9	2	165	51	15	12
3	17	2	3	3	3	40	11	1	5
4	2		3		4	17	7	1	1
5	1				5	13	1		
6					6	3	1		1
7					7	1		1	
8	1				8	2			
					9	2		1	
					23			1	
					24	1			
	322	**233**	**146**	**31**		**606**	**212**	**38**	**40**
	8%	13%	46%	13%		14%	12%	12%	17%

Table 32: Left – Number (and percentage) of the study population to have lived in a household employing servants. Right – Ditto accommodating lodgers. NB: Members of the workforce who recorded multiple jobs (i.e. maker and dealer) are included twice. Source: 1881 census.

Table 32 does not show whether those who employed a servant also housed a lodger and *vice versa.* This information is displayed as follows:

	Servant/s Only	**%**	**Lodger/s only**	**%**	**Both**	**%**	**Neither**	**%**	**Total**
Makers	263	6%	547	13%	59	1%	3349	79%	4218
Tuners	189	11%	168	9%	44	2%	1378	77%	1779
Dealers	128	41%	21	7%	18	6%	149	47%	316
Other	26	11%	35	15%	5	2%	173	72%	239
	606		**771**		**126**		**5049**		**6552**

Table 33: Number (and percentage) of households to have accommodated servants, lodgers, both or neither (by trade). Source: 1881 census.

Tables 32 and 33 combine to show the likelihood of each branch of the trade to have afforded a servant or to have accommodated a lodger, and thus allow a cautious speculation as to the wealth and social status of each branch of the industry.

As shown at Table 32 (left), the percentage to have employed a servant among the four branches of the trade was as follows: 8% of makers, 13% of tuners and of 'other' members of the trade, and 46% – or nearly half – of those of all those involved in piano dealing. Given that dealers were among the least likely to have taken in a lodger (see Table 32, right), with only 12% returning a lodger on their

census form, it may cautiously be surmised that for the majority of dealers, piano dealing was a profitable endeavour: they were more likely to have afforded a servant, and less likely to have required a lodger. These figures are corroborated at Table 33 (above), which shows that 128 dealers returned a servant but no lodger, and 21 returned a lodger but no servant. By this reasoning, dealers were six times more likely to have employed a servant than to have housed a lodger: their finances were fairly secure.

It will be recalled that the *Post Office London Directory* of 1881 listed 233 makers, of which approximately ten managed large factories employing many hands, and the remainder managed smaller firms or were individual makers of occasionally dubious dedication. Discounting these employers, large and small (in London and elsewhere), the remaining and major portion of the piano making workforce was formed of salaried employees assembling pianos and their parts for their respective employers. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, to find that the majority of these employees were not employers in their turn. In fact, as shown at Table 32 (above, right), those involved in making pianos were almost twice as likely to have accommodated a lodger (14%) than to have hired a servant (8%), see Table 32 (above, left). This fact is corroborated by figures at Table 33, showing that among the piano making workforce 263 returned one or more servants but no lodgers, and 547 returned one or more lodgers but no servants. Piano makers were therefore more than twice as likely to have taken in a lodger, than to have hired a servant. Expressed another way, the finances of the piano making workforce were, on the whole, better suited to the returns of a lodger than to the expense of a servant. As shown at Table 33, a small number of makers did employ a servant *and* accommodate a lodger (and some several of each), but these makers numbered only 59 (or 1%) and perhaps for this portion of the workforce the income received from a lodger provided their only means of affording domestic help.

Returning to Table 32 (above, left), it will be observed that where makers did hire servants they tended to hire a greater number than the other branches of the trade (on one occasion as many as 8) and, similarly, where they did accommodate lodgers (Table 32 above, right), they tended to house more again (as many as 24). This

suggests that members of the industry engaged in making instruments claimed both the wealthiest and the least wealthy members of the study workforce.

Turning to the tuning workforce, Table 32 (above, left) shows that those who hired a servant (13%) were slightly more in number than those who accommodated a lodger (12%). Again, these figures are supported by Table 33 (above), which shows that 189 tuners returned a servant but no lodger, and 168 returned a lodger but no servant. Tuners were therefore 12% more likely to have hired a servant than to have housed a lodger or, expressed another way, the chance of a tuner affording domestic help was slightly greater than the likelihood of his requiring the income of a lodger.

Those engaged in 'other' branches of the trade were equally likely to have engaged a servant as their tuning colleagues (13%), but more likely to have admitted a lodger (17%). Referring again to the figures at Table 33, 26 members employed in 'other' aspects of the trade returned a servant but no lodger, whereas 35 returned a lodger but no servant. Expressed another way, these 'other' workers, like the majority of their colleagues involved in making pianos, were more likely to have welcomed the income generated by a lodger than the expense of hiring staff.

Considering now the portion of each branch of the trade to have existed with neither the practical help of servants nor the financial help of lodgers, suggesting they considered themselves neither wealthy enough to indulge in domestic help, nor poor enough to require additional income. Table 33 indicates that nearly 80% of makers existed in this state, plausibly living within a modest income. The same may be said of the tuning workforce for whom the figure was 77%, and, to a lesser extent, those engaged in 'other' aspects of the trade, for whom the figure was 72%. Among the dealers, however, only 47% of households existed in this way – more than half required the assistance of either a servant or a lodger. Examining again the figures at Table 33, a greater number of dealers required a servant (41%) than a lodger (7%). Given that the size of dealers' families was, on average, no larger than those among the other branches of the trade, their greater recruitment of servants cannot be attributed to a greater need. Expressed another way, dealers may have been more disposed to the prestige of having servants than members of the industry employed in other branches of the trade.

Taking all the branches of the workforce combined, 708 (or 10%) of the study workforce lived in a household that employed one or more servants. Of this number, the majority (81%) employed just one member of staff (typically a female domestic servant), but 15% employed two (typically a cook and a housemaid), 4% employed three (perhaps a cook, housemaid and nurse), and a handful employed more. Among these last were the piano manufacturer, William S. Collard, who employed a cook, nurse, housemaid and under-nurse at his house in Dorset Square, Marylebone, and the music publisher, piano manufacturer and 'concert giver', Thomas Chappell, who employed eight servants in George Street, Hanover Square: a governess, cook, kitchen maid, two housemaids, a nurse, butler and footman.[153] Apart from these wealthy manufacturers, for whom a retinue of staff might reasonably have been expected, there appear in the census other members of the study workforce whose employment of a servant is perhaps more surprising. They include a 'baker, grocer and pianoforte tuner' living with his wife and three children in Buckinghamshire,[154] three piano case makers working in London, 13 finishers and fitters, a gilder, two hammer coverers, seven key makers and four silk workers. The statistics at Tables 32 and 33 do not convey the whole story.

Overview

Notwithstanding the appeal and complexity of the statistics presented above, it must be remembered that in all probability the majority are incorrect. On the night of 3 April 1881 the piano industry workforce in England did not number precisely 6,462 members, their average age was possibly not 34, the number of women working among them is likely to have exceeded 139, and the jobs the workforce performed were probably more numerous than the 372 listed at Appendix 23. The list goes on. However, these are the statistics produced by this study, and in the absence of comprehensive data from an unassailable (and almost certainly non-existent) source they offer the most complete account to date of the piano industry workforce in England on the night of 3 April 1881. What is more, as a sample of the true population of all those employed in the industry that night (being perhaps 80% of the likely total, given the size of the contemporary workforce recorded in America

[153] See Thomas P. Chappell (61), born *c*1820, St George, London (1881 census).
[154] See Albert Richard Shrimpton (33), born *c*1848, Long Crendon, Bucks (1881 census).

which, it will be recalled, numbered 8,000), the workers identified by this study are plausibly representative of the total and the statistics generated not widely inaccurate in percentage terms.

What, then, has been learned of the industry and its workforce?

It has been proved that the workforce was at least 6,462 members strong, comprising at least 6,221 men, 137 women and 104 children under the age of 15. Together they numbered fewer than the total number of musicians (25,546) but more than the total number of printers and sellers of musical publications (1,440),[155] and comprised approximately 0.02% of the national population enumerated that night. Some of their number had been put to work at the age of ten while others laboured on at 84 so the industry cannot be considered to have been ageist (though perhaps that is a concept too modern for the study era). The skills required by the industry took so long to perfect and were so highly valued that lengthy careers such as these were perhaps not unexpected. Not all apprentices were aged between 14 and 21 so, again, the industry cannot be considered to have been ageist.

Members of the workforce were drawn from all walks of life. They were not all born of cabinet makers and neither were they necessarily inclined to follow their father's career. Some were the children of gentlemen, teachers and artists whose involvement in the piano industry may have been spurred by intellectual curiosity rather than a pressing need to pay the rent, and others were the children of lamplighters, cow keepers and hawkers whose employment in the piano industry was probably considered a measure of family advancement. It is to be concluded, therefore, that the industry was one of meritocracy. It was not, however, one of equal opportunity for women. Women comprised only 2% of the study population suggesting that the industry was sexist. Women were occasionally granted responsibilities in the absence of men, however, so it was not sexist to the exclusion of pragmatism.

[155] *Census of England and Wales, 1881* (1883), p.32.

The jobs returned by the workforce demonstrated a high level of ownership and separation which points to an industry committed to its habitual *modus operandi*. It could also be inefficient: Broadwood made fewer pianos per man per year than Chappell despite having a workforce more than five times their size. Nonetheless, the Broadwood factory demonstrates the extent to which the industry was a major employer and illustrates how numbers of the workforce were acquainted with large-scale manufacture. In contrast, some of the smaller London makers and suppliers employed no more than 25 hands and the smallest only one: small practitioners within the workforce were not abashed by large-scale competition.

The frequency with which multiple family members were found to be working in the trade confirms that the industry was not averse to nepotism, and families, in their turn, were not averse to investing a large portion of their labour in a single trade: the workforce must have felt confident that the industry was secure. Others chose to diversify. The '*cork merchant* & dealer', '*farmer* & dealer', 'dealer & *sewing machine agent*', '*hairdresser* & dealer', '*photographer* & dealer' and '*undertaker*, tuner & repairer' enumerated that night reveal a workforce not only eclectic but enterprising and resourceful. The majority was involved in making and tuning instruments so for the most part the workforce was practical. A number were engaged in management and intellectual matters, though, such as pattern makers and scale designers, and at the other end of the spectrum errand boys and a 'cleaner up' attended to menial tasks: so the industry provided an assortment of jobs to suit a variety of capabilities and the workforce was varied enough to comply.

Three quarters of the study population worked in the capital signifying that the workforce was mainly metropolitan, and even among provincial counties a large number worked in urban conurbations. On the other hand, a few toiled in near professional isolation (the lone tuners working in Rutland and Westmorland) showing an aptitude for self-sufficiency and autonomy. Nearly a third had moved from their county of birth by the time the census was taken, demonstrating a corresponding disposition to mobility. Most commonly they lived in family households in areas of modest affluence, but some small practitioners lived in their workshop and some employees lived in their employer's premises: the workforce could often be 'married to the job'. Dealers were most likely to employ a servant

and 'other' members of the industry were most inclined to take in a lodger: the workforce could be an employer in its turn, as well as a source of temporary accommodation.

With so few foreigners working in the trade can it be claimed that the workforce was racist? This question is not to be satisfied by the study findings but suffice it to say that while many of the early founders of the industry were foreign nationals from Germany and the Low Countries, the piano industry in England at the time of the 1881 census was predominantly English born. Less than 1% was out of work, implying that the workforce was hard-working and well-employed (perhaps too hard working since so few retirees were noted among them). Only four of their number was imprisoned suggesting they were predominantly law-abiding. The majority was of sound mind and very few were reduced to the workhouse. Overall, they were astute in their choice of occupation.

Chapter 7:
Conclusions

This thesis has demonstrated that the history of the London piano industry is incomplete without a study of its workforce. We cannot pretend to a comprehensive understanding of piano making – and of pianos made – in the capital without knowledge of the men and women who physically made the instruments. Who were these people? What was their background? How and why did they join the industry? What jobs did they perform? And what was their ultimate fate? In addressing such questions, this thesis raises the workforce to the subject of dedicated academic study for the first time. Several thousand workers are identified, and a selective study is made of their professional and personal lives. The careers of little-known and unremarked practitioners, whose activities subtly realign the accepted history of recognized members of the trade, are brought to light; a neglected branch of the industry, piano silk-work, is explored, and the size and composition of its workforce is assessed; and the first comprehensive 'snapshot' of the English workforce, of any period in its history, is presented in a study of the 1881 census. Furthermore, in investigating the workforce, the industry is examined in ways not previously considered: namely, its levels of bankruptcy and insolvency, and its attitude to debt in the trade; its incidence of fire in the workplace, and the subsequent care of its workforce; its making of wills, and the nature of its piano-related bequests; and its social standing in terms of residential address, and the engagement of servants and lodgers. In short, a new subject area is added to the literature.

That the collective workforce has been overlooked for so long may be attributed to a lack of surviving industry archives and no obvious means of identifying those involved. Only recently have modern digital archives facilitated the identification of a large group of people employed in a similar line of work, so research to date has focussed on leading individuals of the known workforce, which has been a legitimate place to start. However, famous makers who advanced the popularity and development of the piano did not work alone, and to attribute the manufacture of the

piano to a handful of celebrated practitioners is to misrepresent the case. Many hundreds of workers collaborated in making instruments in the capital, discussing problems and solutions with their colleagues, and designing tools and jigs to facilitate their work; and the specialist tools that resulted were communicated between workshops by roving journeymen whose expertise combined with in-house innovation to shape successive production techniques. Hence, a far greater body of intellect was involved in advancing the manufacture of the piano than that suggested by lists of individual makers working in the capital, and a far greater and more diverse body of labour was involved in the manufacture of their instruments.

This thesis begins to assess the extent of that workforce, the conditions in which it laboured, and the nature of its collaboration. Findings are both general and specific in that they relate to the workforce as a whole and to individuals. Generally, it is discovered that the workforce was drawn from a wide sector of society: from pauper children and the children of hawkers and cow keepers, to the offspring of gentlemen and missionaries. It is proved that while the early workforce was predominantly foreign, by the late nineteenth century the great majority was English. It is demonstrated that Scottish ambition in the trade did not begin and end with John Broadwood and his associates, but that the greatest migrant population of the workforce in the late nineteenth century also emanated from Scotland. And it is shown that unemployment in the trade at that time was less than half the national average; that most of the workforce lived in households smaller than the national average, in streets deemed 'fairly comfortable' or better, where inhabitants commanded 'good ordinary earnings' or better, but that some lived in streets of the 'lowest class' or were paupers in the workhouse. The extent to which women were little engaged in the workforce is exposed, but also the fact that women were the key agents of piano silk-work, and that piano silk-work was chiefly a cottage industry. It is proved that the high division of factory labour adhered to by Broadwood in 1851 still obtained in 1881, and a calculation is formulated for estimating the size of a given workforce, and its output efficiency *per capita,* relative to that of rival firms. It is demonstrated that the industry could be tolerant of its debtors, and that levels of bankruptcy and insolvency in the trade were not rife, but that rates of serial debt and multiple family debt were disproportionately high. It is demonstrated that those who were prosecuted for debt were able to return to their former occupation, and that, in

general, they chose to do so; and, similarly, that factory fires did not inevitably lead to insolvency. It is also shown that a complex web of interactions, which is not yet fully described, existed in the trade, involving friendships and inter-marriages, working partnerships and the shared use of premises. Specifically, previously unknown apprentices to the founding members of the trade are identified. William Frecker is established as a potential successor, and possible apprentice, of Americus Backers; the number of named Broadwood employees is increased; and more than six-and-a-half thousand previously unknown members of the trade are identified.

This project is ambitious in two respects: in terms of the size of the study population; and in terms of the length of the study period. Both are problematic in that no combination of archive material results in an even account of the entire workforce across the entire period, and the result is necessarily uneven and varied, with a diverse range of findings and a density of information produced for 1881 not matched at any other date. Notwithstanding, the study succeeds on several levels. Firstly, the variety of findings reflects the diversity of the workforce, which is not to be defined by a single characteristic, such as its occupation, gender or location, but by a miscellany of information that opens it to greater interpretation. Learning that the Wornum family of piano makers contemplated closing their factory to establish a religious settlement in America, and that piano dealers were the most likely sector of the workforce to have hired a servant, for example, demonstrates that the manufacture and sale of the piano was not necessarily the sole motivation of the workforce. Similarly, that not every piano making workshop was bequeathed from father to son, and that the business of coal merchant might be considered a more desirable inheritance – even for a piano maker to the Prince of Wales – demotes our conventional view of the prestige attached to piano making, and the strength of tradition between generations. Not only do these findings teach us about the workforce, but they revise our view of the industry, and of the industry's view of itself.

Secondly, as the first work in a new subject area, the thesis introduces a variety of research threads. The workforce is considered not only in terms of its work, but also in terms of its demographic, its pedigree and succession, its connections in the trade, and its financial solvency: themes which prompt questions for further research. An

analysis of the 1911 census compared with that of 1881 would reveal how (and whether) the nature of the workforce altered over a period of thirty years. A study of extant silk-work would establish the variety of designs and expertise that existed in the specialism. A study of the National Archives' bankruptcy case files (from *c*1759) and their Board of Trade bankruptcy case files (from 1881) would confirm the precise levels of debt that led to prosecution. A search for the probate records of the workforce recorded in the 1881 census would provide an indication of the earning potential of different branches of the trade. And the addition of further makers' details to Harding's revised list of makers at Appendix 2 would expose more 'cross-pollination' of makers and their premises.

Thirdly, as a doctoral exercise in research techniques, the thesis applies a range of methodologies, from the detailed biography of a single subject and his instruments, to the statistical analysis of more than six thousand individuals taking more than a year to complete. The majority of findings presents an original contribution to knowledge. The career of William Frecker had not been examined previously, or his links established to Backers, Broadwood and Stodart, or his identity separated from that of a contemporary instrument maker named Fricker. The subject of piano silk-work and the nature of its practitioners had not been admitted as an area of study. No group study had been made of the industry's testators and their wills, its fires and their aftermath, or its bankrupts and insolvents; and no detailed study had been made of the workforce according to its census returns. In short, every chapter delivers a significant amount of new material. Areas of study that intersect with established findings also add new information. Harding notes that John Henry Schrader ceased trading at 7 Princes Street in 1802, but this thesis narrows the date and reveals the probable cause of his abbreviated tenancy. In this respect, not only is a significant amount of new information added to the literature, but our existing knowledge of the workforce is also explained more fully. As noted by Michael Cole with regard to Frecker's career, 'Piece by piece the story is accumulating.'[1]

It might be argued that an attempt to study the workforce from such a variety of angles has achieved neither a comprehensive study of the workforce nor an

[1] Private correspondence, Michael Cole, 31 May 2012.

exhaustive study of the approach. A definitive list has not been made of every person to have worked in the industry, and those to have been identified have not been examined through a single lens. However, since the name of every person to have worked in the industry cannot currently (and may never) be known, the thesis could never pretend to deliver the former. Equally, if all those to have been identified were examined through a single lens only – such as their occupation or financial liquidity, for example – a narrow view of their circumstances would result. A greater awareness of the workforce is generated using the selected study sources (and a greater invitation is made to further research) than that which could have been achieved by unilateral study.

So how has a greater knowledge of the workforce improved our understanding of piano making – and of pianos made – in the capital, and what has been the effect of these findings on our view of the piano industry workforce? In part, this thesis confirms existing theories, in part they are revised, and in part new theories are introduced. Our existing view of the industry as highly traditional in terms of its fine division of labour and resistance to female employment is not disproved. The 372 occupations described in the 1881 census suggest that jobs were still highly segregated in the late nineteenth century, and the identification of only 139 female workers in the census that year confirms that women were still poorly represented in the paid workplace. However, the perception that women were not valued in the industry is disproved by their lengthy contribution to the piano silk trade. Likewise, the perception that jobs in the industry were traditionally passed from father to son is also undermined. The parentage of the 1881 workforce suggests that the tradition of sons following in the career of their father (to the extent that the tradition existed) was weakened significantly by the late nineteenth century, when less than 10% of the study population recorded a father working in the trade. Instances of long family tradition in the industry (such as the several generations of the Laurence family who worked for Broadwood for more than a century) are likely to have gained currency due to their rarity rather than their frequency, therefore. Similarly, the discovery that members of the workforce might instruct the posthumous sale of their business – despite having sons to succeed them – and that their sons might choose to defy that sale, suggests that any tradition that did arise was not necessarily presupposed, but perhaps sought and resisted in equal measure. Ergo, tradition in the trade was not

necessarily a state to which the trade itself subscribed. Similarly, that the industry was open to the contribution of perfumers and corn merchants shows that it was not entirely rigid in its pedigree. It was not so steeped in tradition that it was closed to new blood.

Other findings adjust our view of succession in the industry. The discovery that William Frecker was working in Backers' workshop with all his tools and jigs one year after the latter's death has material implications: Frecker's presence does not discredit Robert Stodart as a key successor to Backers' work, but it does suggest that Stodart was not alone in his legacy: Backers' lineage is diluted. Which other of the workshops whose practitioners died without heir were similarly requisitioned? Who inherited the stock and equipment of Adam Beyer, for example, or John Price (successor to Rice Jones)? Were their workshops sold piecemeal or as a going concern? The possibility of 'takeovers' akin to that of Frecker blurs the clean lines of individual brands implied by lists of known piano makers, and suggests a greater cross-pollination of the industry than has been documented to date. Notwithstanding noted mergers in the industry (such as that of Schrader and Ball, or Nutting and Wood), the trade was potentially more of a melting pot than a stream of distinct and parallel brands.

The notion of tradition in the trade is further diluted by the fact that so few firms continued for more than a matter of years. Despite strong demand for the piano throughout the study period, and the relatively low occurrence (and non-fatal consequences) of bankruptcy and insolvency, many firms were short-lived. This restless state of affairs suggests a livelier workforce than that described by the icon of 'ageing men in leather aprons', and suggests that the modern perception of the trade as one of enduring tradition results from latter-day advertising by long-established firms trying to maintain their position in the face of modern competition, rather than actual historical fact. It is a view reinforced by nearly two hundred patents lodged during the study period by individuals in the workforce. That they patented designs for a wide variety of innovations within and without the trade (from improvements to steel piano wire, to apparatus for condensing milk, and transmitting electric telegraph signals) suggests that the workforce could be probing and progressive. That employers came to resist their suggestions (as asserted by George

Rose on his return from America in 1906), whether through geographic separation or wilful disregard, may have more bearing on the eventual stagnation of the industry than the hypothesis that it stagnated from an over-adherence to tradition. Had the workforce continued to be encouraged in its creativity (per Frecker and his 'brass tubes', and Thom and Allen and their compensating frame) the industry may have maintained sufficient innovative momentum to have kept pace with developments elsewhere; most notably in America. It is suggested, therefore, that the growth of the factory environment and its discrete management hierarchy – and not a sense of unbending tradition among the workforce – proved the industry's eventual impediment to progress.

If theories of tradition in the workforce have been tested and partially revised, what of new theories to have been introduced? Some have been noted already, such as the notion that the workforce and its brands were more of a melting pot than is currently understood; a premise supported by previously unknown associations recorded in the wills and the repeat use of premises. More research is required to explain these inter-connections and how they affected the machinations of the trade. Also, that women were valued service providers to the industry long before they were admitted to the factory environment during the labour shortage of the First World War, albeit in a specialism restricted to the home and the use of a needle and thread.

Other new hypotheses relate to the industry's management of its debtors, and the workforce potential for debt. The first contends that the industry was self-regulating with regard to its debtors: that it managed their decline and recovery through the withholding or extension of credit, and the abstention or initiation of prosecution as it saw fit. In this way, promising enterprises were encouraged, and potentially damaging developments, such as factory fires, mass unemployment, and excessive loss and expenditure, were contained and the *status quo* maintained. The appointment of leading members of the trade to the position of trustee in cases of bankruptcy effected a similar means of control, by smoothing over the industry's failings and restoring confidence in the wake of commercial and fiscal mismanagement. Collaboration of this nature reinforced ties within the trade and introduced new ties, all of which strengthened the industry's capacity for cohesive self-regulation. A second theory contends that the potential for bankruptcy and

insolvency was greater in families susceptible to the so-called 'insolvency gene', the premise for this argument being that poor business practices and fiscal mismanagement were failings that were learned. Passed between successive generations without the check of permanent ruin, the blueprint for financial failure was transmitted along with the means of recovery, leading a significant number of families to multiple prosecutions for 'successive' and 'concurrent' cases of debt.

The sources chosen for this thesis expose a body of workers whose existence has long been implicit but never assessed; from the identification of a pauper apprentice in Zumpe's workshop in 1762, to a workforce of many thousands at the maturation of the industry almost 120 years later. Traditional, well-plumbed archival sources, such as parish registers, newspapers and directories, are proved to be fertile repositories still in the exposé of William Frecker and the industry's silk workers; and the latent potential of modern digital archives is tested and demonstrated in a study of the industry's testators, debtors and census returns. Lance Whitehead (2013) has observed the difficulties encountered to date in the accurate identification of members of the instrument making workforce, and expressed optimism 'that with the continuing development of internet resources we will be able to identify more workers and hence glean a more complete picture of musical instrument manufacture'.[2] The tangible veracity of both eventualities is the product of this thesis.

[2] Whitehead (2013), p.6.

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