HEATHCOAT AND THE LUDDITES

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The course of the Napoleonic wars, with blockade and counter-blockade, made business a gamble. There was every incitement to manufacturing enterprise, except security. England's control of the seas, and her new power of machine production, not yet imitated in other lands, gave her a monopoly of many markets in America, Africa and the Far East. But the European markets were alternately open and closed to British goods according to the vagaries of diplomacy and war. One year an allied state would have its armies clothed and shod by British workmen: next year it might be under the heel of France, a part of Napoleon's "continental system". The unnecessary war with the United States (1812-1815) was another element of disturbance to trade. The sufferings of the English working class were increased by these violent fluctuations of demand and employment; and unemployment was worst of all during the post-war slump after Waterloo (Trevelyan).

Loughborough at the end of the French Wars

For eight hundred years Loughborough had been a market town serving the Charnwood Forest and Soar Valley villages, and a link in the road chain joining London with Derby and then through to Carlisle and Leeds. The later eighteenth century saw great changes. In transport the Soar Navigation and the Soar and Trent Canal supplemented the turnpike roads and economic changes brought new employment. Worsted hosiery became the county's major occupation, with 12,183 knitting frames at work in 1812, each of which provided work for two or three people, since a knitter would typically require the services of a bobbin winder and a seamer. (1) Loughborough was becoming an industrial town. Knitting had been recently supplemented by mohair spinning by power machinery, and, and in the later years of the Napoleonic wars it attracted another new industry, machine lace making.

The war - hard times and empty bellies:

(1811) The operation of the Decrees of the Emperor of France against British commerce was, at this times, beginning to tell fearfully upon the condition of the working classes. An excessive high price of the necessaries of life, joined to scarcity of employment compelled thousands to have recourse to parochial relief for the support of themselves and their families (2).

The Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars went on almost continuously for a whole generation - between 1793 - 1815. The manner in which they were conducted, using economic blockade to weaken the enemy, meant that trades not directly related to munitions and war material were starved of resources and deprived of their export sectors. At the same time, food supplies were interrupted by several periods of bad harvests and excessively high prices, the worst being in the years 1795 -6, 1799 - 81 and 1811 -12, when they reached three times higher than the immediate pre-war average (3). During these periods of high food prices, real wages plummeted, and demand for consumer goods such as knitwear had a tendency to fall as workers withdrew their spending from all but essential foodstuffs and rent.

The knitting trade:

The knitting trade, Loughborough's staple, was conducted at this time mainly by home-working, with relatively few large workshops. The trade was largely in the hands of middlemen called bag-hosiers who put out work and rented frames to workers. The tradition in the Leicester area (including Loughborough and Shepshed) was for employers to extract frame-rents even when the workers were not receiving any yarn to work up, so there was a strong incentive to rent more frames than the market could keep in work, except during the busiest periods.

In the first few years of the century, circumstances combined to encourage masters to proliferate stocking frames and recruit men to operate them:

....from 1800 to 1810, the demand of men for the Army drew so large a draft from the Frame-work knitters.....that the supply of labour was kept under the demand for it, and wages, in consequence, ranged as high as they could do, consistently with the profit which must be ensured to the employer. This demand, as a natural consequence, attracted workmen from less well-paid branches; and many young agricultural labourers and parish apprentices were added to their numbers: - which was further facilitated by a large increase in the number of frames, created mainly through the inducement of frame-rents...The combined circumstances so increased the supply of labour that it became equal to, if not exceeding, the demand, and in a short period wages began to decline (5)

As commonly happens at times of depressed profits and sales, manufacturers sought ways of reducing costs in order to exploit what market opportunities existed. The time-honoured ways of doing this were to cut wage costs and reduce quality and both these expedients were amply demonstrated in the hosiery trade of the east midlands. Although the knitting trades were in a state of constant innovation, with new processes being developed constantly, wages, in the form of piece-rates were inclined to fall as new processes, such as the Derby rib-frame became embedded, and ceased to be the property of small groups of skilled knitters. In addition the trade was a relatively open one, since the coarser and simpler forms of work were quickly learned, and strong young men and women could learn to operate a frame in their later teens.

The factor, which was changing the face of the trade to the detriment of both workers and consumers, was the making of large pieces of knitted cloth on wide frames and making garments such as stockings by seaming and cutting them out. This process produced a greatly inferior garment since, unlike a wrought garment it would unravel and disintegrate when the stitching broke. In addition, the shape of the garment was produced by wetting, stretching and shaping post-production, rather than being integrated into the manufacture by varying the number of stitches in a row. The consequence was to reduce the labour costs and produce a garment indistinguishable, until worn and washed, from a fully-fashioned stocking.

The witnesses before a select Committee appointed to investigate the matter in 1819 agreed that cut-ups were little known in the trade until 1810-12, after which they became more and more common. A Leicester witness, Thomas Hitchcock, summed up the position in 1819:

You are largely engaged in the manufacturing of worsted hose in Leicester?
- Yes.
State to the committee what is the present position of the trade in Leicester.

- The present state of the workmen is deplorable, most certainly. They are forced to work several hours a day, more than they did some seven or ten years ago. Some of them three hours a-day, at least, on an average, more than they did; yet they cannot earn more than half the money they then got.
Do you attribute the alteration in their condition to any particular circumstance?
- Principally to the introduction of a new article which has prevailed during the last four or five years. From the introduction of that article, labour has been decreasing to the present time.
That you attribute to the cut-up work?
- I attribute its principally to the cut-up work (6).

Since the hosiery masters depended upon frame-rents for an important part of their revenues, they ensured that the changes impacted upon the knitters and their families. They spread work thinly among the workforce, who found themselves working short time, or sometimes given no yarn at all to work. By 1816 these changes were in full force, and the whole knitting community was being steadily pauperised.

The Combination Acts - renewed repression of trade unions:

Before the Napoleonic period, trades unions were illegal organisations, feared by the authorities as being secret, conspiratorial cabals of workers plotting against the public good. These fears were exacerbated in the 1790's when the French Revolution aroused a sympathetic resonance among many radicals and working-class activists. However, as the Master Millwrights complained in their petition to Parliament in 1795:

....the only method of punishing such delinquents (i.e. strikers) under the existing laws, is by preferring an indictment, at the session or assizes, after the commission of the offence, but before that time arrives, the offenders frequently remove to different parts of the country" (7).

Not unnaturally, the desire of employers was to have the quickest and most expeditious methods of proceeding, and, if possible, one, which would punish the leaders before the offence, had been committed. The Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800, achieved this, allowing summary jurisdiction before the local magistrates, and making the ongoing existence of a combination (trade union) illegal. The punishments allowed by the Combinations Acts were relatively minor ones - a maximum of three months imprisonment or two months with hard labour - but the ease with which employers could take proceedings made the Acts much feared.
It is clear that a consequence of this increased repression of open bargaining and peaceful protest, was an increase in violence. This association was made, in clear and unequivocal terms by George Coldham, the Town Clerk of Nottingham in a letter to the Home Office:

I have the pleasure to assure you that I regard the resumption of the Practice of Frame breaking as a strong and decisive Evidence of the Disintegration of the System of Combination as applied for the purpose of accomplishing an Increase of wages. I consider that this has been effected by the joint aid of a depressed trade, of an Increasing supply of labourers in the manufacturing by the Discharge of the Militia Regiments of the Manufacturing districts, and of the confusion and dismay occasioned by the seizure of the Books and Papers of the Committee of the Combination (8).

Luddism in the East Midlands

Frame breaking, like all machine-breaking, was a well-known, almost time-hallowed response to crisis conditions in industry, whether a crisis of wage or piece-rates, or of the threat of new technology to employment. In an environment in which even a liberal, good employer like Jedediah Strutt built his mill at Belper with loopholes for muskets, the eighteenth century saw a series of frame-breaking incidents in the East Midland towns, mostly in response to reductions in rates. What made the disturbances of 1811 - 16 different was that the occurrences had a name - the Eponymous Ned Ludd was identified with Anstey in Leicestershire, and the attacks were motivated, co-ordinated and purposeful - almost insurrectionary (9).

Luddism appeared in the East Midlands in early 1811 during a period of particularly sharp depression in the hosiery trades. Knitters' families found their incomes fall to around seven shillings a week, if work was available, but few were able to obtain enough work to made a full week's wage. Thousands of families were forced to seek help from the Overseers of the Poor, and in the three Nottingham parishes at the beginning of January 1812 4,248 families, including 13,350 people were receiving relief . Early in 1811, threats of recrimination against hosiers paying reduced wages turned to action in early March, when sixty-three frames belonging to Messrs. Bolton were destroyed at Arnold. During the next three weeks gangs of upwards of fifty men, armed with pistols, guns and heavy hammers broke two hundred more frames, and the terms Ludd, and Neds began to be heard (10).

Although the authorities offered large rewards for information, and around 800 horse and 1000 foot-soldiers were billeted in Nottingham, attacks on knitting frames intensified during the Autumn and Winter of 1811 - 12. In one attack, an attacker was shot dead, and his funeral was made a mass demonstration of Luddite strength, to the extent that the Riot Act had to be read. The following days saw a high point of activity, with frames, destroyed and factories and houses attacked. Four frame-breakers were caught by the Yeomanry and committed for trial, whereupon hosiery masters who were active members of the Yeomanry became special targets for attack. The Magistrates published the following letter:

There is an outrageous spirit of tumult and riot, houses are broken into by armed men, many stocking frames are destroyed, the lives of opposers ate threatened, arms are seized, stacks are fired, and private property destroyed, contributions are levied under the name of charity, but under the real influence of terror...all this tends towards insurrection....." (11).

Felkin himself, as a young man of 17, was sent around to announce far and wide that his master, in an attempt to protect his 3,000 frames, would pay an advance of one shilling per dozen, whether other hosiers followed or not, a clear indication that the attacks on frames had at least a temporary effect in alleviating conditions. However, the masters and the local authorities had to take action to keep the peace, and the Corporation of Nottingham took steps to procure a change in law, making frame-breaking once again punishable by death. In February 1812, at the time when the four frame-breakers captured in November were sentenced to transportation, two for fourteen years, two for seven, this Act came before Parliament. In his maiden speech to the House of Lords, the poet, Lord Byron was almost a lone voice raised in defence of the hosiery workers:

During the short time I recently passed in Nottinghamshire, not twelve hours elapsed without some fresh act of violence; and on the day I left the county I was informed that forty frames had been broken the preceding evening, as usual, without resistance and without violence. Such was then the state of the country, and such I believe it to be at this moment. But whilst

these outrages must be admitted to exist to an alarming extent, it cannot be denied that they have arisen from circumstances of the most unparalleled distress. The perseverance of these miserable men in these proceedings tends to prove that nothing but absolute want could have driven a large and once honest and industrious body of the people into the commission of excesses so hazardous to themselves, their families and the community (12).

In Leicestershire, although the poverty and suffering were equally severe, there was no such outbreak of violence. Felkin describes a more sophisticated approach, of sabotage rather than confrontation. "During the excesses in Nottinghamshire, though few frames were broken in Leicestershire, yet the spirit of discontent was equally active there, but it shewed itself in a far more rational form". The "rational form" he describes was to remove the jack wires from the frames of low-paying hosiers, which rendered the frames useless for the time, but did them no lasting harm (13). This point is of some importance, because, although it is clear that Heathcote and Boden expected and prepared for an attack on their lace-machines in Loughorough, there was nothing in the past experience of Loughborough - or Leicestershire as a whole - to justify such an expectation - it clearly derived from elsewhere.

John Heathcoat and his business

Hand made lace (pillow lace) was a very slow and expensive handicraft process, practised for centuries in centres like Bedford, Huntingdon and Devon. The spread of the craft had been limited by the high level of skill needed to produce good lace, and, secondly, by the difficulty, until the end of the eighteenth century, of finding a yarn hard, strong and fine enough to supplement the very expensive Flemish linen thread. In 1805, William Cartledge of Woodthorpe, Nottingham succeeded in machine-spinning a suitable lace-making yarn from cotton, thereby creating the conditions for a considerable expansion of lace-making, whether by hand or by machine. Soon afterwards, a technological link was put in place in 1809, when John Heathcoat, one of a number of inventors working in this field, patented a process to make machine-made bobbin lace on a specialised form of knitting frame, which Heathcoat called the "Loughborough" frame. A few years later, Heathcoat, with his partner Boden, began lace-making on bobbin-lace frames in a three-story mill on Mill Street, between the Market-place and the Ashby Road, Loughborough. Estimates on the size of this enterprise vary from a small mill employing fifty-five people, to a huge enterprise operating six to seven hundred frames. Boden, himself, at the trial of the Luddites in April 1817 said that the mill contained "fifty-five frames finished and unfinished (of which) fifty-three were at work, twenty-three on the first floor and thirty in the top story". The value of this plant is hard to estimate, but it is worth noting that the compensation offered Heathoat and Boden after the attack amounted to £10,000 - a very considerable sum (14).

John Heathcoat was born in Duffield, Derbyshire, in 1784, the youngest child of Francis and Elizabeth Heathcoat. His father was a grazier, but from an early age he was destined for an industrial or commercial career. In 1794 his father bought a farm in Long Whatton, near Loughborough, and the family left Derbyshire. John completed his schooling at a local school run by the Parish Clerk James Attenbrow. At fourteen he left school to enter an apprenticeship as a framework knitter with a Mr Swift at Long Whatton, but he soon changed masters, to William Shepherd, a small knitting master and framesmith at Hathern. (15) At 21 he became a partner of Samuel Caldwell, having recently married Caldwell's widowed sister Anne Chamberlin in 1802. Local tradition - still extent - has it that he and his new wife lived at the Stone House in Hathern, Caldwell's old home - the only building now standing in the region with an association with Heathcote (16).

Caldwell was principally a frame-smith, and Heathcoat worked mainly in repairing and setting-up knitting frames. That there was an innovative mind at work seems clear from the fact that in 1804, patent no. 2788, for a "new apparatus to be attached to warp frames, whereby all kinds of thread lace and mitts of a lacy description may be made", was applied for by "Samuel Caldwell, of Hathern, Leicestershire, frame-smith, and John Heathcoat, late of Nottingham, now of Hathern, frame setter-up" (17). Felkin notes that another process, of which the partners had not heard, had anticipated the results of their invention.

The following year, Heathcoat took out another patent, no. 2879, for another adaptation to the stocking frame, and in 1808, he registered another patent, no. 3151, for a traverse bobbin-lace machine, the foundation of his fortune, and the machine that attracted such bitterness, anger and violence. The machine was licensed to other manufacturers - including many independent journeymen owning their own machines. By 1815, there were 1,500 lace-frames at work in Arnold alone, and lace-making was becoming the major branch of the trade in Nottingham, Lenton, Beeston, Radford, Basford, Arnold and Sneinton (18). It is clear that not all these frames were bobbin-lace of Heathcoat's type, but clear also that the royalties paid by lace-masters and jouneymen were a considerable sum and a considerable source of resentment, until, in 1824, Heathcoat's patent was overturned.

The attack on the Mill

The one major - and uncharacteristic - episode of Luddism in Loughborough came right at the end of the Luddite period, on the night of June 28/9th. 1816. Loughborough had not experienced any frame-breaking up to this date, but in Nottingham, luddism - quiescent since 1812 - seems to have been revived in the spring of 1816 - focussed specifically upon the new lace-frames. Two incidents of frame-breaking took place in May 1816 in Nottingham, and on the l8th. June, nineteen point-lace machines, presumably of Heathcoat's design, were broken in the shops of William Wright and Thomas Mullen at New Radford and some finished lace was stolen. Two men were arrested for the offence but both were acquitted on an alibi (18).

Most of the machines operated on license from Heathcoat were in Nottingham, but Heathcoat himself located in Loughborough. Along with his partner John Boden he operated a three-story factory just off the market-place with fifty-five bobbin-lace-frames. Heathcoat had refined his original machine a number of times over the previous seven years, and, according to the trade union leader Gravener Henson he was developing a powered version of the bobbin lace machine, which threatened to bring down piece-rates in the lace trade, and this was what provoked the attack (19)

The attack seems to have been expected. Heathcoat had raised a defence force of six night watchmen armed with pistols and bayonets and a number of special constables had been enrolled to watch the works. However, the greater experience and ruthlessness of the "old Neds" prevailed.

At midnight, on the way to the mill, noisy and boisterous, the gang bumped into Mrs Mackie, a resident of Mill Street and kidnapped her - shouting to a neighbour to "blow out your candle before we blow out your brain". They then entered the mill from the rear entrance on Ashby Road and into the casting-shop. In this room were three workers, John Asher, Thomas Ironman and John Webster who were acting as watchmen. John Asher fired a pistol, harmlessly and one of the attackers returned fire, wounding Mr Asher. The other two guards were overpowered and placed under guard. The Neds then went through the fame-shops,

wrecking 55 frames and burning some finished lace. They found and overpowered more workers, Ambrose Woodford, James Powell, William Soars and John North in one of the rooms, and Joseph Sherwin, Samuel Street, William Squires, John Langham and Thomas Smith in another. All were ordered at gunpoint to lie down on the floor. Within half an hour the gang left and made their way back to Nottingham, leaving the factory's productive capacity destroyed and one watchman shot and wounded. Before leaving there was one mysterious incident. One of the Luddites, who had been solicitous in his enquiries after the condition of James Asher, proposed to "shake hands with the wounded man", but shook hands instead with Webster, another Luddite, who offered his hand. (20)

Years later, four of the Neds who survived told the story of their return to Nottingham to Gravener Henson. They lay all the following day in the long grass of Loughborough meadows, probably suffering from severe hangovers, "Then, not venturing to cross the bridge over the Soar or through the toll-bar at Cotes for fear of detection, taking bye-paths along the river by Zouch mills, there crossing it, and so pursuing their course over Red hill, crossing by the Trent ferry at Barton they took their way along the bank, till they reached Nottingham" (21).

James Towle, the leader of the gang responsible for the Loughborough job had been recognised at the time of the attack and he and two other men, Benjamin Badder and John Slater, were arrested within a few days. They came to trial at Leicester Assizes in early August, amidst scenes of mass demonstrations designed to intimidate the jury. The jury dismissed the evidence of seventy-one witnesses called to establish an alibi and convicted Towle, although Slater was acquitted, the case against Badder having previously been dropped. Towle was sentenced to death, but appealed against the conviction. His appeal was heard in November, but dismissed, and he was hanged on a newly built gallows on Horspool Street in Nottingham. According to the report in the Leicester journal:

At 12 o'clock he was brought upon the platform ..where he evinced a manly and becoming fortitude, worthy of a better fate. He bowed on his entrance to the populace, but made no address. After the Chaplain had gone through the usual prayers; the Prisoner gave out and sang the hymn with great solemnity and a very audible voice after which...he was launched into eternity and appeared to die without struggle or emotion". (22).

Towle died without betraying any of his fellows, but some of them had less fortitude. In January a member of the gang was arrested for a poaching affray, and turned King's evidence, betraying twelve participants in the Loughborough job, including James Towle's younger brother who had been running the gang up to this point - determined to show that they could manage their business without James Towle. At Leicester Assizes in April 1817, the twelve were tried, as had been Towle, on a principal charge of "firing a pistol at John Asher, on of the workmen in the place, with intent to kill him" and eight of them, Savidge, Withers, Amos, Watson, Mitchell, Caldwell, Crowder and Clarke were sentenced to death, principally on the evidence of Blackburn and Burton, two of the other men arrested. Two of the eight were transported for life, while the other six were hanged on a gallows erected close to the Leicester Infirmary, witnessed by a crowd of 15,000 who sang a hymn with the condemned men (23). This event marked the effective end of Luddism in the East Midlands.

Heathcoat had already taken the decisive step to operate lace manufacture in Tiverton in Devon, and was, in fact, in Tiverton at the time the Mill was attacked. That the attack on his mill in Loughborough was a personal one he had no doubt, as he wrote immediately upon

hearing of the attack, to the Mayor of Tiverton asking for protection of his premises there. "I have great apprehension of an immediate attack at this place also. In fact I believe the real cause of this mischief being done is principally, if not wholly, owing to the offence of removing here, and I have been informed upon undoubted authority that the Nottingham Lace Makers have sworn my entire destruction" (24).

After the attack, he refused the offer of £10,000 tied compensation by the West Goscote Hundred, which had to be spent in north Leicestershire, and transferred his whole business to the South West. The factory on Mill Street did not remain empty for long, and soon was back in lace production, under another management. Around the middle of the century it seems to have become of one of the three factories in which the firm, of Hine and Mundella perfected the knitting of fully-fashioned hose on a round frame, powered by steam (25).

Hard times intensified in the hosiery trade and the long post-war slump scarcely lifted until the 1840's. In the early 40's, some attempt to end the worst abuses of truck payments and frame rents was made by Parliament, by which time the knitters had almost forgotten Luddism, and their activist wing was pursuing the new strategy of Chartism in the hope of improving their condition. The solution to their problems came, not from trade union or political action, but from further improvements in knitting machinery which increased productivity and earnings after the late 1840's (26).

Some tentative conclusions, and some unanswered questions:

We try to understand events by categorising them, but often the greatest barrier to understanding is our willingness to place a complex event into one oversimple category. The incident at Heathcoat's mill has been categorised for most of the past two centuries in just such an over-simple way. Calling it a Luddite attack has identified it with models of working-class militancy, obscurantism and bargaining by riot. This interpretation is only sustainable if we exclude inconvenient parts of the story.

There is, of course, some fit between the event and this categorisation. The attackers were "old Neds" with Luddite track-records, and the objectives were obscurantist in essence. However, the attackers were exceptionally well paid for their work, and their history suggests a criminal gang rather than a political conspiracy, and, in addition, the element of bargaining is markedly lacking. Alternative models, such as sabotage and industrial espionage seem worth exploring, and a question is raised about the process, repeated over and over again in which insurrectionary and militant movements decay into criminal conspiracies.

However, granted that the men were "old Neds", with a history of Luddite attacks, was the Loughborough job a Luddite attack? The intense period of Luddite activity in Nottinghamshire was 1811-12. The small spate of attacks on lace-frames in Arnold, New Radford and Loughborough occurred four year later, during which time it seems very likely that Ned Towle and his associates had adopted criminal ways and become, among other things, an armed poaching gang. The Loughborough job was clearly a commercial venture - a contract crime - with a lot of cash in advance. At their trial at the end of March 1817, John Blackburn is reported as saying:

"I sent for little Sam (John Clarke) , saw him at Lambley with William Withers before the Loughborough job above a week. I told him that Savage had said they wanted him and two more for a job, he asked where it was, I told him Loughborough. Withers... said Savage had

£18 down to buy tools and pistols with to do Heathcote's (sic) factory...[Withers] was to have £40 as soon as it was done and £60 to be collected afterwards.... Little Sam said he would not until he was paid for the Radford job, I said I would not go until I was paid for the Radford job and the other chaps too; he (Withers) then said he would settle for the Radford job before he went" (27).

Clearly the important issue is the identity of the paymaster. It is conceivable that a group of poorly paid lace-makers could have agreed to raise a payment after the attack was made, but it seems less than probable that they would have raised the vast sum of £40. in advance. In addition, if, as was said at the time and later, that the issue was low or shrinking pay-rates, why attack Heathcoat who was in the process of migrating to Tiverton, and must be presumed to be unlikely to respond positively to any such assault? The asertions that Heathcoat was paying low wages or seeking to force rates down has the ring of post-hoc rationalisation. At the head of the very prosperous, high-tec sector of point-lace making, he revealed to the friends of his late partner Lacy that he had paid Lacy £50,000 over a few years as his share of Patent Royalties. Heathcoat was more likely to be bidding labour away from less profitable competitors than leading the process of reduction.

One factor which raises questions is the evident fact that Heathcoat had already taken the decision to move at least part of his business to Tiverton. He, himself, ascribed the attack to the envy and resentment of the Lace-masters of Nottingham, who were fighting his patent, and who may have feared the increased competition likely to arise with his introduction of his machinery into the traditional lace-making communities of Devonshire. In the event, the Loughborough job so far confirmed him in his decision that he promptly decided to concentrate all his investment and activity in the South-West, and migrated to Tiverton, taking with him much of his workforce. Whilst a lace-makers committee may have commissioned the attack, so, equally plausibly, might Heathcoat's rivals and competitors. The Assize Court sat on the Old Neds - and condemned them. On the inspiration for the attack the court was singularly incurious (28).

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1. Trevelyan, English Social History, p. 465.
2. Report of the Commission appointed to consider the condition of the Frame-work Knitters. (FKC) 1845, p. 16.
3. Bailey, op. cit. Vol. 4 p. 244.
4. Wells, op. cit. pp. 3- 4; 47-49.
5. FKC, p. 96.
6. Ibid. p.
7. Cole, p. 90.
8. George Coldham, Town Clerk of Nottingham - letter quoted in Gray, pp. 165 - 6.
9. Coldham was an indefatigable servant of the hosiery masters, and as such his testimony on this point has a particular power.
10. Thomis (ii), p. 77. Deakin, p. 5 gives the oft-repeated story of the origin of the name Ludd.
11. Felkin, P. 231 et seq.
12. ibid. p. 233.
13. 12.
14. Felkin, p. 233.

15. Leicester Journal 4 April 1816, p. 3. For Boden's claim see appendix 3 below.
16. Felkin, p. 185.
17. My thanks to Michael Forrest, the present owner of the Stone House for this information, and the loan of an old photograph of the house. In fact, Anne Chamberlin was probably little more than a year older than Heathcoat.
18. Hewitt, pp. 359-60.
19. Thomas, (i), p. 182; Felkin, p. 237.
20. Felkin p. 240. This information seems suspect, since over the next thirty years while Heathcoat built his business in Tiverton, the threatened self-acting frame seems not to have been forthcoming.
21. (Leicester Journal, 4 April 1817, p. 3.
22. Felkin, p. 241.
23. Leicester Journal, 22 NOV 1816, p. 3.
24. Patterson, p. 114, Felkin, 237-8).
25. See appendix 2 below.
26. Armitage, p. 19 et seq.)
27. Leicester Journal, 4. April 1817, p. 3.

Appendix 1. Luddite Oath

I A. B., of my own voluntary will, do declare and solemnly swear, that I never will reveal to any person or persons under the canopy of heaven, the names of the persons who compose this secret committee, their proceedings, place of abode; dress, features, complexion or anything that might lead to a discovery of the same, either by word, deed, or sign, under the penalty of being sent out of the world by the first brother who shall meet me, and my name and character blotted out of existence, and never to be remembered but with contempt and abhorrence; and I further now do swear that I will use my best endeavours to punish by death any traitor or traitors, should any rise up among us, whenever I can find him or them, and though he should fly to the verge of nature, I will pursue him with unceasing vengeance. So help me God and bless me to keep this my oath inviolable.
Cole, p. 115. (Note Cole says this is a typical oath, similar to many reported to the authorities. He notes that, aside from spies and agent provocateurs, the oath was in general scrupulously observed).

Appendix 2. Letter from John Heathcoat to the Mayor of Tiverton.

Tiverton,
1st. July 1816.
Sir;
A messenger has just arrived from my partner Mr. Boden, now at Loughborough, with the unpleasant news that all our valuable machinery at that place was destroyed on Friday last by a large party of Luddites, as it was supposed, from Nottingham, amounting to upwards of an Hundred, with their faces blackened and otherwise disguised.

One man who attempted resistance was shot by them and left for dead, but hopes are entertained of his recovery. The remainder of our workmen, who were placed there for the protection of our property were compelled to lay themselves down with their faces to the floor and not permitted to rise until the mischief was completed under threats of instant

death.. By this atrocious proceeding, several hundred people are thrown out of employment and we are deprived of property of immense value, the machines being a new invention for making Buckingham Lace, and for which I obtained a Patent in the year 1809, and have been occupied ever since in constructing and putting up the same.

I have great apprehension of an immediate attack at this place also; in fact I believe the real cause of this mischief being done is principally, if not wholly, owing to the offence of removing here, and I have been informed upon undoubted authority that the Nottingham Lace Makers have sworn my entire destruction.

I therefore request you to take such steps as you may think best to prevent or defeat any attempt to destroy our manufactury at Tiverton.

I am Sir, your most obedient servant,
John Heathcoat.

(In response to this letter, the Mayor of Tiverton petitioned the Home secretary for troops to be sent to Tiverton to defend the factory (Allen, pp. 216-7).)

Appendix 3. Letter from John Boden to the Magistrates of West Goscote Hundred.

We, John Heathcoat and John Boden of Loughborough aforesaid, manufacturers of bobbin lace and copartners in trade, do hereby, in pursuance of a Act of Parliament made and passed in the 52nd. Year of the reign of his present majesty [1811-12] entitled "An Act for the more effective punishment of persons destroying the property of his Majesty's subjects and enabling the owners of such properties to recover damages for the injury sustained", give notice that in the night of Friday the 28th. or early in the morning of Saturday 29th day of June instant, several persons unlawfully, riotously and tumultuously assembled together, in disturbance of the public peace, did unlawfully and with force, demolish several lace frames or engines used and employed by us in carrying on and conducting our manufactury of Bobbin Lace; and did in like manner begin to demolish and did thereby damage several other lace frames or engines used and employed by us aforesaid, with the machinery belonging thereto respectively, such lace frames or engines being our property and in our factory at Loughborough aforesaid.
And we do further give you notice that we do intend to recover the value of the said frames or engines so demolished, and the amount of the damage done to the said frames and engines so in part demolished and damaged as aforesaid and the machinery belonging thereto respectively from the inhabitants of the said Hundred of West Goscote in the manner authorised by the said Act of Parliament and the several other Acts of Parliament therein referred to.
Witness our Hands this twenty-ninth day of June 1816,
For John Heathcoat and myself,

Jno Boden (signed)

The whole document in Boden's autograph. The document is inscribed by another hand to the effect that it was handed in to the Clerk of West Goscote Hundred at around 1 pm. on the 30th. June. Document 12036/2. County Records Office, Leicestershire.