During the eighteenth century, West Yorkshire experienced unprecedented prosperity due to the success of its dynamic wool textile industry. A substantial and independent ‘middling sort’ did particularly well since production was based on small, often household-based, production units with a very high degree of real autonomy, all coordinated by an abnormally large number of merchants. Many historians have identified this area as one of the crucial loci of class formation in England in the early and mid-nineteenth century, but during the previous period it had shown few signs that class conflict was developing. Indeed, Smail has even argued that the Halifax middle class had already become a conscious entity by 1750, but he saw this as a relatively painless process of separation rather than one of forcible cleavage. A potentially chaotic mass of manufacturers and merchants had thus evidently managed to generate a consensus that organic economic change was both necessary and beneficial for the whole community, something that is clearly of great interest to the historian, especially given the general perception that class conflict was soon to envelop the area. Understanding the nature of this consensus and how it was created and sustained, must depend to a great extent upon recovering the attitudes and expectations of the mass of middle-ranking clothiers and small merchants, and their relationships with other sections of society.
Statistical analysis of probate, bankruptcy and similar records is an essential part of this, but to understand motivation we have to get closer to the typical actors as individuals in their own social settings. Earle’s work on London, for instance, aims to see the middling sort ‘as complete human beings, rather than just cyphers with a certain economic function’. Davidoff and Hall tried to get even closer to the ethos of the middle class in East Anglia and Birmingham through a greater reliance on personal documents. Valuable work has been done on the West Yorkshire middle class, but with so decentralized an economy and a social structure with so low a centre of gravity, the typical actors were extremely unlikely to leave records that allow much intimacy. However, one particular document, the ‘Memoirs of Thomas Wright and his Family, interspersed with Remarks and Moral Reflections on Occurring Circumstances, &c., written by Himself for the Information, Instruction, and Amusement of his Children, 1797’, forms a rare exception. The author was born in 1736, described himself simply as a clothier when he married in 1766 and died of typhus in 1801, so he was entirely a man of the eighteenth century and wrote with no sense of the vast changes to come. He seems to have been intelligent and perceptive and whereas most business autobiographies are celebratory, this is a justification for a life of self-confessed under-achievement. Arguably Wright was a particularly perceptive commentator precisely because of a conscious intellectual detachment from the local obsession with business, to which he attributed his failures in large part. He was also apparently noted locally for his memory and where it can be checked against other records, his accuracy is proven. His account thus creates a small and rare loophole in Thompson’s rule that ‘only the successful . . . are remembered. The blind alley, the lost causes, and the losers themselves are forgotten. The narrative is discursive and mostly concerned with everyday life, and provides much unwitting testimony on the nature of local society. Around seventy relatives appear in some detail, most of them involved in business either personally or as part of a family unit. It is the four generations alive in the mid- to late eighteenth century which are the real focus, and unlike conventional family trees this one ramifies out through cousins and connections by marriage rather than back through time so that distant relatives with little connection with Wright receive substantial attention. The emphasis on kinship is appropriate for a face-to-face society where people naturally turned to relatives for help, but the account also shows the importance of non-kinship links, particularly those based on community and religion. Informal networks were crucial for the business community because this was a predominantly rural area. Urban institutions such as guilds and corporations only existed in Leeds, and even there the normal institutional framework was mostly either lacking or ineffective.

On its own no one person’s account can be definitive, and any study of a small area has limitations, but this one complements existing studies which tend to focus on towns, on their wealthier inhabitants, and on radical changes in industrial activity and organization. The rural manufacture of coarse woollens, which were the original product of West Yorkshire and the contiguous parts of east Lancashire, is a socio-economic matrix with few parallels in its ability to generate and support continuous change from within, and the woollen district Wright lived in represents the area where this original matrix seems to have persisted longest. Traditional community structures were at their most robust and persistent here and its entrepreneurial group showed the greatest continuity of personnel and small-scale activity into the nineteenth and even twentieth centuries. Birshott parish, where Wright spent most of his life, was also one of the main centres of West Yorkshire Luddism, and the famous siege of Rawfolds Mill in 1812 occurred only half a mile from his house. Joseph Priestley was born and spent his formative years there, and Davidoff and Hall see him as a key figure in developing the new middle-class outlook they document. Wright himself stood socially just above the point where a fracture would occur if a controlling middle class was to break with an exploited working class, so there is every reason to see the views and experiences contained within his account as of much more than local or personal significance.

This account is not suitable for rigorous statistical analysis, but when the information scattered through the narrative is brought together its relational and dynamic nature allows a nuanced examination of many lives over long periods. Contrasting Wright’s views with his own actions, and then with those of others, also provides a double guard against excessive subjectivity. However, even subjectivity has a value in that the radical changes West Yorkshire went through during this period stemmed in part at least from the mentalities of people like Thomas Wright, for the course taken by West Yorkshire was very different from that of the other traditional English wool textile areas even though they all traded in the same world markets.
Wright was born at Mulcure Hall, near the parish church in Halifax. This was the home of his maternal grandfather, Thomas Cordingly, who had grown up in Bowling, near Bradford, and had inherited a small estate there, including at least three farmhouses and four cottages. Cordingly leased and operated several local fulling and corn mills, and as he prospered he acquired houses in Halifax and another estate at Little Bowling. His family, who were Dissenters, thus came to be considered ‘very creditable and substantial’. He was elderly at the time of his daughter’s marriage to Wright’s father John, and soon handed over the business to his son-in-law. Thomas Wright was the only one of four children to survive infancy, and his early childhood was therefore geared to expectations of a fairly elevated station in life by local standards. In 1738, however, his mother, father and grandfather died in quick succession, leaving his grandmother in sole charge of both the business and a very young Thomas. She ‘was obliged to rely on the faithfulness of different persons to transact her business for her, which she did till nearly stripped of all her property’, while the nurse she engaged appropriated many personal possessions.

Soon the mills and Mulcure Hall were given up, and they moved into ‘one of our own houses at the bottom of the town’. One of the mills was taken over by another Thomas Cordingly, Wright’s half-uncle, and the rest went to Richard Akerd, who may have been a relation by marriage. Wright’s grandmother died soon after, bequeathing everything to him under the guardianship of his widowed great-aunt, her half-sister Lydia Ellison. She took Wright to live with her in Birkenshaw, which lies about six miles east of Halifax. It formed one of several hamlets within the township of Gomersal, which in turn was one of the eight townships in the ancient parish of Birstall. The Ellisons were a substantial and extensive Dissenting cloth-making clan that spread over several of the townships and also had links towards Bradford, about three and a half miles north-west. Over the next few years Lydia and Wright moved in with several of her children in turn. For a while he attended Bradford Grammar School to get a classically-based education suitable for the son of a man of substance, but it became clear that his dwindling inheritance would not support such a lifestyle as an adult. He was taught mathematics and accounting by Betty Ward, who gave classes at her home, and he did odd jobs for relatives, such as taking cloth to the mill for his uncle Samuel Wood. He also worked alongside another clothier uncle, Richard Ellison, in a desultory fashion as an informal apprentice. This was a common arrangement, and when Richard died in 1754 Wright remained with the widow until she remarried. He then bought the cloth-making equipment off her to set up on his own. Most, but not all, links with the Ellison clan were broken off acrimoniously when he came of age as he felt that they, and especially Samuel Wood, were simply appropriating his inheritance under the guise of recouping expenses.

His training was very incomplete, especially on the marketing side, and he had little enthusiasm for the clothier’s trade. However, he felt obliged to try life as a manufacturer, saying that ‘my eagerness to remove the odium of following little or no trade out of the way of my being accepted as a husband, was my chief motive’. He borrowed £200 as a ‘stock’, or capital, on the security of his estate, though a good part of this went on expenses that had nothing to do with the business, and he formed a partnership with an experienced neighbour. He sold his own cloth at the Briggate market in Leeds, using the Golden Lion Inn as his base, but he says little about his actual working arrangements while he was single, beyond the fact that he ‘boarded out’ and ‘occupied a room or two’ at Birkenshaw. Thus, in West Yorkshire quite menial work could actually improve the social standing of someone who had a good education and owned property. In a more genteel area, a man such as Wright would undoubtedly have gravitated immediately towards a position in the government bureaucracy, or as a schoolmaster, and not towards manufacturing, if he could not have realized Wright’s own favourite option of living as a rentier.

His ideal type of a wife seems to have been embodied by a Miss C. H., ‘a very handsome, genteel, young lady . . . whose father could give her some fortune, had given her a good education, and who was likely to make a very agreeable, managing wife’. After several amours, however, he married Lydia Birkhead, a clothier’s daughter whose parents disapproved so completely that the couple had to elope to Scotland. Diligence at the loom now seemed doubly important if he was to build a good relationship with them, as well as earning a living. He took Lower Blacup Farm, a typical dwelling, workshop, and farm combined, in Cleckheaton township (about two miles south of Birkenshaw) at a rent of £15 a year. He also ‘bought a cloth-ten
as it stood in the tenter-croft, and a little old cart and its furniture, and other goods and implements for the house and barn, of William Cordingley [apparently no close relation], the late tenant, for which I paid him twenty pounds; but I afterwards thought this a dear bargain. He still had the loom and other necessities for manufacturing acquired from the Ellisons, and a pack of wool was sent over by his new father-in-law.

Starting up in business was thus relatively easy, and he was able to capitalize to a limited extent on the resources and experiences of relatives by both birth and marriage, and of an unrelated neighbour. Compared to many of his contemporaries, success must have seemed very likely but two elements were missing: firstly, he lacked real determination and commitment, and secondly, although his wife came from a prosperous family, she brought no portion because of her parents’ disapproval of the marriage, and subsequent appeals that one should be provided retrospectively were never acceded to. The most he got was an interest-free loan of £50 after they were married, and a similar amount in 1773 when he was in difficulties but trade prospects seemed good. His children received another £300 or so. This contrasts with the experience of William Birkby, who seems to have married a younger sister of Lydia with the Birkheads’ approval, and who received an estimated £1,000 from them in their lifetime. Wright’s initial partnership with his neighbour turned out badly and was terminated after heavy losses, and he never earned enough to support his family without steadily eating into his capital. He was finally absorbed into the small bureaucracy of the area near the end of his life. By then he had sold the coal that lay beneath his land, and mortgaged and sold much of the land itself. He estimated that his estate would have been worth £2,000, if he had retained it into the 1790s, and he was still able to derive £30 per year from it even after the sales.

His first wife died in 1777, leaving five surviving children from seven births, two of whom died in childhood at a later date. After four years as a widower he married Alicia Pinder, the fifteen-year-old daughter of a neighbouring farmer. She had a further six children, making a total of thirteen, and even though only seven survived to adulthood simple economic survival became an increasingly pressing concern. Wright had continued at the clothing trade throughout his first marriage, occasionally attempting other ventures as well, but then he gave it up in favour of another partnership with a neighbour, this time as a dealer. At one time or another during his life he tried a bewildering variety of careers. He speculated through the building of a few cottages and became a sleeping partner of a friend who was a wool dealer. He tried his hand at wholesaling liquor, and then retailing it. He kept a shop and a school, and went on to do the accounts for a local ironworks as well as combining the roles of overseer and accountant in two separate cloth mills, finally finding a haven as a cloth searcher and tax receiver for the government. He saw himself as the victim of many fraudsters for he felt that his partners regularly deceived and robbed him. The £100 invested in the wool trade received only simple interest instead of the expected share of the profits; as a shopkeeper ‘we lost money by roguish customers’; and while he could get scholars for his school, nobody paid the fees.

There was clearly no presumption locally that a man must be trained for a particular trade and remain within it for life. Despite being an inward-looking society in many ways, in this sense it was very open, something that is also reflected in the substantial journeys which he records. Most dramatic was his elopement to Scotland, but he also made social visits to York and Hull while on an extensive tour into Lincolnshire with a friend who went there to buy wool, and there was a ten-day trip to London with another friend. He was sent on a mission to Nottinghamshire as a commissioner in a Chancery case, but most extensive of all was a general tour through Wales and the Midlands helping to raise money to build a Methodist chapel. Regular trips to Manchester and Liverpool formed part of his venture into the wholesaling of alcoholic beverages, and as a youth he had pursued a girl he was courting (ultimately without success) on several trips to Bolton. He spent many seasons at the spa in Scarborough, and pleasure trips to Ripon and Harrogate are also recorded.

Mere possession of assets did not ensure that Wright would participate in the good life such trips symbolize, and he felt that his education had actually harmed his prospects as a manufacturer. Yet his intellectual abilities gave him a position of respect in the community outside the economic sphere, and even towards the end of his life others approached him to offer him responsible positions precisely because of their good opinion of him, and because of his knowledge of accounts. When acting on his own behalf he admitted that he could not summon up the diligence necessary for success, or the ruthlessness that was sometimes appropriate, even though he could make saleable cloth.
characterized by general benevolence or altruism, as his grandmother’s experience in Halifax confirmed. Some of his relatives proved that there was plenty of money to be made in Birstall, but it was not made effortlessly. Rather, effective businessmen respected each other and saw no reason to drive each other to ruin, but those who could not look after their own affairs got little sympathy. This was mutuality with a very hard edge, and a capitalist who was not personally able and willing to make his money work for him was almost certain to suffer the consequences. Yet the rewards for those who could do well were high, better than those that attached to drawing rents from an agrarian estate, so the area was not characterized by a desire to seek security through the purchase of land for its own sake.

This made for a meritocratic approach to life rather than egalitarianism and Wright allocated his relations and acquaintances to differing social strata very readily, mostly within the middling sort. Thus, while his maternal grandfather John Brooke, a Presbyterian and a cloth manufacturer, was ‘among the better sort of the middling rank of people’ because he had landed property, his father-in-law William Birkhead, who also made coarse white cloth, ‘ranked as one of the lower order of tradesmen in the middle ranks of the people’ in his early years because he did not. He did not regard the group as closed or privileged, and said of the Birkheads:

their predecessors, themselves, their descendants, and the collateral branches of the families on each side . . . were not sprung from princess . . . a few of them were in easy circumstances, but far the greater part in a low situation; . . . they themselves, notwithstanding their accidental good fortune in accumulating a little wealth on some favourable occasions, which made them, in this respect, a little better than some of their neighbours) were of mean education and low attainments in knowledge. They bore, indeed, a pretty fair character for honesty in their dealings in common with many of their neighbours, and paid a strict attention to the formalities of their religion; but had no just ground, I conceive, for that mighty self-importance which they seemed desirous of assuming over their neighbours.  

Only two members of the upper classes receive even a mention. Cordingley’s mills were all leased from Lord Irwin of Temple Newsam, Lord of the Manor of Halifax, while after some of the shooting sessions that regularly took him away from the loom as a youth, Wright spent some evenings in the home of Dr Richardson, the non-resident Lord of the Manor of Birkenshaw. His education and continued wide reading would presumably have made him a congenial companion compared to many of the other local men, especially given Dr Richardson’s known scientific bent, but there is no certainty that the two actually even met. Less rare, but still not common, are references to labourers, people he clearly pitied to some extent but was concerned to keep at arm’s length. He refers to clothiers’ establishments which included a good number of subordinate workers, but it is clear that many of them were boys and apprentices. He later records that his first wife, with whom he had a very troubled relationship, ‘was so weak and imprudent . . . as to rail on me behind my back, to the vulgar fellows we had working in the fields, though they laughed her to scorn for her pains’. This was a society where the long-term personal dependence implied in regular wage work was rare and was looked down upon by the entrepreneurial class, though it should be remembered that many of them would have been journeymen in their time. Some people obviously needed to work for wages regularly for at least part of their time, but even they generally worked on contract rather than for wages for one master. Wright rarely hired anyone to work for him except domestic servants, all of whom acted very independently and with little deference. His links with his ploughmen were not those of master and servants and they were clearly in no awe of him. Wright did not regard himself as a wage-earner when he was employed as an overlooker or a searcher, but his experience showed the vulnerability of anyone who relied on others for their income. He was enticed out of a secure situation into a new one, only to be summarily dismissed once his new employers felt they could manage without him.

Religious affiliation was very important and the rise of the Moravians, Inghamites and, above all, Methodists was reawakening a long and rich tradition of Dissent in Birstall parish after a rather sterile period. Anglicanism was so weak in West Yorkshire in terms of committed adherents, places of worship and clerical personnel that it really already functioned as another sect, though obviously a privileged one. Some of the very few churches were actually chapels of ease paid for by local congregations, who could appoint ministers to reflect their own views rather than those normally associated with the established Church. Wright himself pursued a course of wry
detachment, baptizing his children by his first marriage at a Calvinist chapel of the Old Dissent to please his in-laws, and those by his second marriage at the parish church. He was never personally a Calvinist, and this was the source of some of the bitterness between himself and his first wife's family.46 He leaned instead towards the Methodists and though he never formally joined them he was willing to go to great lengths to raise funds and wrote several long poems attacking their critics, which they published. A malicious relative's accusation that Wright's eldest son was an atheist provoked him to public declarations of distaste for deism and abhorrence for atheism, showing that there were real limits to the acceptable.47 This was definitely a tolerant society, but mostly because it was impossible to prevent a diversity of views flourishing.

II

Turning now to the general experience as it is reflected in the kinship web (see below pp. 40–1), there are no dominant occupational patterns to be found there. Fifteen men were clothiers for at least part of their lives, and this was by far the largest block, but they were by no means a majority even when the solitary cloth dresser is added. The four millers were all probably involved in milling cloth as well as grain, but it is impossible to be precise. Landed property seemed the dominant element in the livelihoods of another six, though patterns of acquisition and inheritance are not those of a true landed class. There were three farmers (as opposed to clothiers with land), a cattle dealer and a butcher. The trades and professions were represented by two innkeepers, two hardware sellers, two apothecaries (one also a surgeon), one Dissenting minister, one retail tobacconist, one stationer/bookseller/printer, a saddler, two shoemakers, a blacksmith, two men involved in speculative building of houses for rent, one cabinet-maker and one joiner. At the bottom of the scale come one labouring mason, three labourers and three soldiers, while most women have no recorded occupation.48 If we extend consideration to those who appear in the account only in passing, there are no radical changes to this picture, though cloth-making is even less dominant, and the professions (very loosely defined) are much better represented, with several ministers, schoolteachers and surgeons added.

Wright thus acknowledged a wide variety of connections, some with individuals well beneath his own status. He respected his uncle Julius Whitehead, 'a mason by trade, an inoffensive orderly man, who ranked among that class... who obtain their bread by their labour', but not most of the eleven children of Nathaniel Brooke. The eldest son fled the country to avoid his father's debts, two others became labourers, two enlisted as soldiers, and a sixth, Edmund, was thrown onto the parish because he had fits. Worst of all perhaps was their sister Lydia, 'who turned out bad, and followed the soldiers'.49 Wright records no attempt to keep Edmund Brooke from needing parish relief, but Elizabeth Wright of Bradford, who was widowed twice, showed that a great deal of help could be obtained from relatives despite very aggravating behaviour. She disputed Wright's guardianship after his parents died and later interfered several times in his affairs, even having him arrested to recover her costs over these actions. He paid up despite his conviction that she was in the wrong and he assisted her on several other occasions explicitly because of their kinship, as did Joseph Hollings of Cottingley, a 'distant and substantial relation'. The existence of children may have been a factor here, but straightforward poverty was clearly more acceptable than apparent mental illness. Even so, with children by both husbands she was always 'very poor and distressed' and eventually 'died in straitened circumstances'.50

Movement up and down the social scale both within a lifetime and over the generations was the norm rather than the exception. However, there was no sense of one privileged group moving up as a group, or of a disadvantaged one moving down. Real success in business was not common, and depended upon more than mere application. Personal abilities seem to have been a deciding factor in many cases, and sheer luck should not be discounted, for the cloth trade was so prone to severe shifts of demand that simply being in the right product at the right time could make a man. Thus, Wright saw a boom in the Russian trade as the basis of the success of his father-in-law. Trading was potentially much more rewarding than manufacturing and John Hinchcliffe, who had perhaps the most dramatic success, achieved it through cattle dealing. His parents were 'poor all their life', but he acquired considerable property, took a large farm near his parents, and provided for them in their old age. His only child, Joseph, was classed as a farmer by 1797, lived at Newell Hall, and was characterized as 'a man of good character, much business, and considerable property'.51
were accompanied by the expression of the felicity of the natural and their
activities showed the business of the country. Writers in the last
edition of the country’s leading newspaper wrote that the
population was the subject of so much attention that its
future was threatened by a possible war, which was not
expected to begin until the next year. The war was
announced as a necessary measure to prevent the spread of
imperialism and to protect the country’s interests.

The situation was further complicated by the
presence of foreign powers, who were suspected of
having ulterior motives. The government was under
pressure to take action, but there was a lack of
agreement among the various factions on how to
proceed. The situation was further exacerbated by
the discovery of a plot to overthrow the government by a
group of radical elements.

In the face of these challenges, the government
was determined to take action. It announced that
military operations would begin within the week and
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because of the limited opportunity in such low-development areas. As a result, the community is still working to develop more business and residential districts, which are proposed to be built on reclaimed land. The new 500-acre commercial and residential complex will be located at the edge of the city, near a major highway and the upcoming train station. The development is expected to create thousands of jobs and bring significant economic growth to the area.

The community is also working to improve its infrastructure and public facilities. The city council recently approved a $10 million dollar bond issue to finance the construction of new roads and parks. The money will also be used to upgrade the city’s water and sewer systems, which have been in need of repair for some time. The city hopes to have the new roads and parks completed by the end of next year.

Despite these efforts to improve the economy, the community continues to face challenges. The unemployment rate remains high, and many residents are struggling to make ends meet. The community is working to provide more job training and educational opportunities to help residents find better-paying jobs.

Despite these challenges, the community remains optimistic about its future. With the new development and infrastructure projects, the community is confident that it will continue to grow and thrive for years to come.
would have followed, but there was still a strong sense of place, of

Thomas Wight's Bilateralism was a viable, diverse, and locally

III
could have felt no sense of achievement, on becoming our consultant.

For all the overall success of the West Yorkshire sessions, unnumbered.

The needs of the people, the impact of business on the region, the needs of the community, the needs of the environment, and the needs of the individual. These were all part of the session's agenda, with several versions of a fair and equal society, and one could hope.

voluntary societies of the area, uniting them across boundaries, as potential

opportunities. They can be seen as expressions of assets and

capital possibilities, and the sharing of business acrue and

information, The networks based on chance, encouraged

resource. The networks based on chance encouraged.

According to the situation, the need for information,

and the story around the example was a commercial

collaboration, and the desire to an information network, the access to

them and their networks are information resources, not just

similar content and similar purposes, more inside.

modification of available resources for use in business.
and infrastructures and the populations compatible with small towns elsewhere. Indeed, the commercial and economic activities in towns and rural areas were relatively small and lacking in most instances. Many aspects of the commercial and economic activity in towns was relatively small and lacking in majority of the local institutions. Many aspects of the commercial and economic activities played a distant role in controlling commercial and economic activities, but even these did not become towns, whereas many towns played a distant role.

Nevertheless, the commercial and economic activities in towns and rural areas were relatively small and lacking in majority of the local institutions. Many aspects of the commercial and economic activities played a distant role in controlling commercial and economic activities, but even these did not become towns, whereas many towns played a distant role.
THOMAS WRIGHT’S
KINSHIP WEB –
SELECTED
MEMBERS

Richard Horrocks
No information.

Martha Hopkins/Hotton/Whitaker
Paternal grandmother. Born Boston.

Thomas Wright
Paternal grandfather.
Clothiers, Kingsley. Occupation unknown.

William Wright

2nd wife

Thomas Coodey

Abraham Horrocks
Ayo. shoemaker, Bradford.

Elizabeth Wright/Neaves/Coven

John Wright

Eliza Wright
Mother. Died 1738 as infant.

Eliza Coodey/Wright
Mother. Died 1738 as infant.

Thomas and Joshua Coodey
Half-sister. Wife and brother respectively.

Emily Findus

Matthew Whitley
Uncle. Sresenton, Tong.

Jane Hesketh/Whitley
No occupation given.

Abraham Whitley
Great uncle. No information.

Mary Whitley/Whitley
Grand aunt.

Robert Whitley/Whitley
Dressmaker, master, Chekehton.

Lydia Whitley/Whitley
Gardener, T.W.’s gardener.

Timothy Ellison
Clothier, Birkhton. Died young.

3rd wife

Patrick Ellison
Uncle. White clothier, Birkhtown. Died 1754.

Mary Ellison = William Bridge.
Aunt. Clothier, N. Rockley.

Elizabeth Ellison = Samuel Wood
Aunt. Muted clothier, Bradford.

John Ellison
Uncle. Clothier, Birkhtown. Died young.

Richard Brookes
Uncle of first wife. R. Clark’s, Soldier. Died young.

Samuel Brookes
Uncle of first wife. Born Chekehton.

Olsen Brookes

Nethan Wood
Uncle.

John Wood
Hooded weaver. Bradford.

William Wright
First wife’s grandfather.

White clothier, Sresenton, Tong.

Thomas Brookes
Uncle. White clothier. Died young.

Olsen Brookes
Uncle of first wife. Born Chekehton.

Nethan Brookes
Uncle of first wife. Born Chekehton.

Mary Brookes/Birkhtown

Elizabeth Wright/Greenwood

Mary Wright

Joseph Wright

Sarah Wright/Greenwood

Timothy Greenwood

James Wright

John Wright
Son. Born Chekehton. Died 1773.

William Wright
Son, born Chekehton. Died 1773.

Anna Wright

Joseph Wright

Benjamin Wright
Son. Born Birkhtown. Died 1787.

William Wright
Son, born Chekehton. Married 1790.

John Wright

Joseph Wright

Hannah Brookes
Daughter. Born Chekehton.

Nathaniel and Esther Brookes

Edmund Brookes

Hannah Brookes
Daughter. Born Chekehton.

Anna Brookes
Daughter. Born Chekehton.

Joseph Brookes
Servant in London. Married and died there.

Lydia Brookes
Daughter. Born Chekehton.

Benavenport
Apothecary.

John Ellison
Cousin. Builder houses at Birkhtown.

Joseph Brookes
Cousin.

Cattle dealer. Acquires property.

NOTES

Each column on this chart represents a generation in relation to Thomas Wright. As far as possible, sibling groups (indicated by a space bracketed, broken where one parent is different) are organized in the order of birth, but information is often lacking, and where necessary the order has been changed to make the chart simpler in terms of inter-generational linkages.

Thomas Wright’s parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents are shown in bold. As far as sons and grandchildren who are regarded as his direct heirs.

Not everyone died with the autobiographer is included (to save space), but no one is excluded who is mentioned in the rest of the text where there was significant information.