

TRADES & OCCUPATIONS IN

GLOUCESTER, TEWKESBURY AND CIRENCESTER IN 1608

from MEN & ARMOUR FOR GLOUCESTERSHIRE by John Smyth

Men & Armour for Gloucestershire, 1608 is a list of the men of the county between the ages of twenty and sixty, able and fit to serve in the militia, and reviewed by Henry, Lord Berkeley, Lord Lieutenant of the county, in September 1608. It also states, in most instances, the man's occupation; gives some indication of his age and stature, and states whether he is a trained soldier. It was compiled by John Smyth of North Nibley, Steward of the Hundred of Berkeley.

In the tables below, relating to the three principal towns in the county at that time, the men engaged in each of more than a hundred trades and occupations have been counted and the various occupations grouped into industries or related trades. The tables are part of an analysis of the returns for the whole county, not yet completed. A similar analysis by A.J. and R.H. Tawney was published in an article in Economic History Review in 1934 (2). They wrote as economic - not local- historians and the work has some minor defects which may be better discussed when this analysis has been completed.

When considering the tables it must be remembered that they do not include the whole labour force. No women are included, neither are men unfit for military service or under the age of twenty years. Furthermore, as Men & Armour is stated to be a list of the men reviewed by Lord Berkeley it does not include men who, because of temporary illness or incapacity, were unable to be present, or those who wilfully neglected to attend. The number of men in the last category is not likely to have been high, for the penalty was a fine of 40s. or ten days imprisonment (3), though Smyth himself states that many in Berkeley Hundred failed to appear (4). These groups of men must together have comprised a considerable proportion of the male work force. In addition a large number of the men were not assigned to any particular industry but classified as labourers or given no occupation. These comprised approximately 16% of the men listed in Gloucester, 22% of those listed in Tewkesbury and Cirencester.

As a result of these omissions some obvious improbabilities appear in the tables. Richard Baker, bellfounder in Gloucester, had, apparently, no assistants; the 8 brewers in the city had only 3. It seems improbable that tanning can have been carried out single handed, but the 12 tanners in Gloucester are accredited with only 5 assistants - 4 of them servants to one employer - and the 12 tanners in Tewkesbury with only one. The 2 pinmakers in Gloucester probably employed only women and children. Employees of the other master craftsmen must have been among the men omitted from the list or those given no occupation or classed as labourers.

The system of classification was not uniform in the three towns. In Gloucester only 1.2% of the men were classed as labourers; in Cirencester 12.3%, in Tewkesbury 18.2%. On the

other hand, whereas in Gloucester the occupation of 14.7% of the men was not stated, in Cirencester the percentage was 9.4 and in Tewkesbury only 3.5. Probably most of the men whose occupation was not given in Gloucester would have been classed as labourers in Tewkesbury.

It was somewhat surprising to find that in Gloucester, the county town, only 35 more men were listed than in Tewkesbury. However, Barton Liberty, Barton Street, and Southgate Street, beyond the city walls, which formed part of the city as an economic, though not an administrative unit, were listed separately. Seventy-seven men were listed in these areas and a separate analysis is shown below. As no definite occupation was noted for 53 of them their omission from the tables for Gloucester makes little difference except to the total.

The industries and commerce of all three towns were similar. There were farmers in all three, more in Gloucester than in the other two: 2 in the West Ward, 6 in the North and 12 in the East Ward. The towns were inhabited mainly by small shopkeepers and tradesmen engaged in supplying the needs of the local populace chiefly in food, drink and clothing. The most important manufacture was that of textiles, particularly woollen cloth in Cirencester, where it employed almost 18% of the men, and in Gloucester where it employed almost 11%. The weaving of silk employed 10 men in Gloucester, and some felt-making was also carried on there and in Tewkesbury. There were few weavers in Tewkesbury which, with 5 dyers, 1 tucker and 5 shearmen, was more concerned with the finishing of cloth, probably for shipment down river to Bristol and eventual export.

There were 4 millers in Tewkesbury, none in Cirencester or Gloucester, though there were 5 in the immediate vicinity of the latter town. Brewing, 11 men, and malt-making, 13 men were important in Gloucester. In Tewkesbury, where only 1 brewer was recorded, 14 men were engaged in making malt. One brewer, apparently employing no assistant, would not have used all the malt made in Tewkesbury so much of this, too, was probably shipped down the river. Furthermore, 12 coopers were employed in Tewkesbury against 5 in Gloucester. This, too, suggests shipment of some commodity. Only one man in all three towns was described as a merchant: he lived in Tewkesbury.

Four innkeepers employing 6 servants were recorded in Gloucester; in Cirencester 3 innkeepers and 9 servants; in Tewkesbury 3 innkeepers with 18 servants, 13 of whom are described as tipplers or tapsters. The comparatively large number of men employed in innkeeping strengthens the supposition that Tewkesbury may have been a more important commercial centre than Gloucester; so also does the fact that more men there were employed in transport by land than in Gloucester.

The 29 mercers and 13 drapers in Gloucester are evidence of the city's greater importance as a shopping centre than Tewkesbury, where there were 12 and 3 respectively. With the exception of the area around Bristol, Gloucester probably held a monopoly in high-class goods for only there were furriers or goldsmiths recorded. The apparent large number of tailors, 20 in Gloucester and 27 in Tewkesbury, was actually ~~few~~ more than adequate to cater for the needs of the townsfolk. One man in every 24 listed in Gloucester was a tailor, one in 17 in Tewkesbury, and one in 25 in Cirencester, but these ratios,

except for Tewkesbury, were little higher than those in rural hundreds. For this present analysis about two thirds of the whole county has so far been covered, and in the whole of that area one man in every 27 listed was a tailor, for there was one or more in almost every village. They supplied the needs of the working-class country folk; only the wealthy or yeoman class bought clothes in the towns. The high proportion of tailors in the borough of Tewkesbury was balanced by the exceptionally low proportion in the remainder of Tewkesbury Hundred where there was only one tailor to every 45 men listed.

Tanning and the preparation of leather were important in Gloucester, employing 21 men, and in Tewkesbury, where 14 men were so employed. Shoemaking employed 28 men in Gloucester, 29 in Tewkesbury, and 25 in Cirencester. This trade was concentrated in the towns more than tailoring was, for whereas of the towns and villages for the which the lists have so far been analysed 179 had one or more tailors, only 68 had a shoemaker. In Gloucester one man in 16 was a shoemaker, in Tewkesbury one in 15, in Cirencester one in 14; in the whole area so far covered one man in 53. Probably two thirds of the footwear manufactured in the three towns was sold to the country people in the surrounding villages.

Glove-making gave employment to 11 men in Gloucester, 18 in Tewkesbury, and 10 in Cirencester, and probably to a larger number of women in all three towns. In times when trade was prospering there must have been ample employment for Gloucester women in spinning, glove-making, and pin-making, and for Cirencester women in spinning and glove-making. There was probably less employment for women in Tewkesbury.

There were very few professional men in the three towns. The absence of schoolmasters, with the exception of one in Tewkesbury, is not surprising for many schoolmasters at that time were clerks in holy orders and consequently exempt from militia service. Tewkesbury had a surgeon and another lived just outside the borough at Panington, but the townsfolk of Gloucester and Cirencester relied for medical attention on the apothecaries, barbers, or wise-women for no surgeon or physician lived in or near either town. In 1605 the Mayor of Gloucester ordered an old apothecary who acted as municipal surgeon to perform an autopsy on the body of a man suspected to be a victim of plague. In 1636 two women were sent to inspect the corpse of another suspected victim and to make a diagnosis (5). Three musicians were listed in Gloucester and two in Cirencester. As early as 1451 the council in Gloucester employed four public musicians. They were paid £2 a year for their liveries and services in playing in the main streets of the city at four in the morning and on various civic occasions (6).

The presence of only one lawyer in Gloucester 'John Hitchman, gent. Attorney at Lawe', is surprising, for Gloucester was the seat of both city and county quarter sessions and assizes and of the diocesan consistory court. It may be noted that he was classified as 'gent' so possibly there were other lawyers amongst the 12 gentlemen recorded in the city. An apparitor, a court official, was living near the city at Highnam. There may have been lawyers among the gentlemen recorded in Tewkesbury and Cirencester. The scriveners listed, one in each of these towns, may have been notaries, persons publicly authorised to draw up or attest contracts. Two stationers are recorded in Gloucester

but there was probably only one for 'Toby Longford, Stationer, 1m' was listed in South Ward, and 'Toby Longford 1m tr' in the East Ward, both of similar age and physique.

More surprising than the apparent scarcity of lawyers in the three towns is the absence from the lists of any city, town, county or central government officials except one sergeant in Gloucester and one bailiff in Cirencester. The sergeant in Gloucester was, presumably, one of the 4 sergeants-at-mace authorised by the charter granted by Richard III in 1483. The governor of the county gaol at Gloucester Castle may have been listed as a gentleman; so, too, may the Town Clerk and the collector of customs, for Gloucester was an official port. But no mention is made of turnkeys at the gaol or of officers in the Houses of Correction in Gloucester, Tewkesbury, or Cirencester. No collector of tolls in the markets of the three towns is recorded. Perhaps the sergeant performed this task in Gloucester. There is no mention of a beadle in any of the town or city parishes, of porters at the city gates, of custodians at the Booth Hall or Tolsey, or of workhouse masters. There were two bailiffs, a 'high' and a 'low' at Tewkesbury. They supervised the markets and quays, administered the assizes of bread and ale and were responsible for the town accounts and the holding of the town court (7). Neither is recorded in Men & Armour. Perhaps they, too, were given the status of gentlemen, but the lesser officials would not have been. Possibly some of these offices were part-time occupations. The question, however, arises: were they deliberately omitted? Were they exempt from militia service?

Surprising, too, is the absence from the list for Gloucester of sailors, boatmen, or any kind of workers on the the river or quay, for Gloucester had been made a port by the charter granted by Queen Elizabeth in 1580 and the first Custom House had been built at the King's Quay in the same year (8). At Tewkesbury 23 mariners and 4 trowmen were listed and many seafaring men were recorded on the riverside below Gloucester. At Minsterworth were 25 sailors and 5 shipwrights and 1 servant. There were many more sailors and shipwrights lower down the river. Why were none listed in the port of Gloucester?

There are two possible answers, the first and most obvious being that there were, indeed, no sailors living in the city. A few miles above Gloucester the Severn divides, the eastern branch flowing by Gloucester quay, the western through Maisemore and by-passing the city. The branches join again immediately below the city. For ships not wishing to berth at Gloucester the western branch was both shorter and more convenient for by taking it they avoided a U-bend which must have been difficult for sailing boats to negotiate. There is evidence that through-shiping did, in fact, take that route. By a charter of Edward III, 1334-5, Gloucester was granted the right to levy tolls for seven years on goods coming to the town by the Severn, and the privilege was renewed for a further seven years in 1345 (9). In the period around 1608 Gloucester claimed the right to levy tolls on cargoes passing by the city; a right apparently dating from a Star Chamber decree of 1505. The receipts were supposed to pay for the repair of Over Bridge and the tolls were collected there (10). Over Bridge spans the western branch of the river; the collection of tolls there shows that through-shiping used that branch. That being so, sailors would find it more convenient to have their homes at Elmore or Minsterworth.

The second possibility is that because Gloucester was a port sailors there were liable to impressment into the Royal Navy and were, consequently, exempt from militia service, whereas sailors in Tewkesbury and Severnside villages, which were not ports, were not exempt. If so, a further complication arises. By the Charter of 1483, the whole of the Hundreds of Dudstone and Kings Barton - which included Elmore - were incorporated with the city of Gloucester into what was known as the 'Inshire' and entirely separated for legal and administrative purposes from the remainder of Gloucestershire until 1672 (11). During that period were Elmore and the other villages of Dudstone and Kings Barton included in the port of Gloucester? There is no evidence that the question was ever asked.

Careful scrutiny of Men & Armour arouses other questions. For example, the list for Berkeley includes no household or other servants or retainers to Lord Berkeley. Similarly no servants or retainers to Lord Chandos at Sudeley Castle are recorded. Were they exempt from militia service but bound instead to serve in their Lord's personal forces? It was a vexed question which never appears to have been satisfactorily resolved. Lindsay Boynton, in The Elizabethan Militia, 1558-1638 has much to say on this subject. He states also that 'originally, musters embraced all men from the age of 16 to 60 under the rank of baron - nobles and their households, along with certain other exempt groups being privileged not to attend.' (12). With the exception of the clergy, he does not state which groups were exempt. Furthermore, if 16 was the lower age limit for militia service why did John Smyth himself state that Men & Armour refers to men between 20 and 60? (13). Had the regulations altered for the muster in 1608? For military considerations it appears foolish to muster men between 50 and 60 - quite an advanced age for those days - and to exempt lusty young men of 18 to 20 years. Was it because the Lord-Lieutenant was working from lists compiled by the constables and high constables four years previously? To find the answers, or rather to try to find them, it will be necessary to go back to original sources, the laws and government orders relating to the musters of 1608.

Men & Armour is a unique and valuable record of the times but much research is necessary before its true value can be assessed.

John W. Wyatt

TABLES

1. <u>AGRICULTURE, HORTICULTURE & FISHING</u>	Glo.	Tew.	Cir.	
Yeomen	3	7	2	
Husbandmen	17	1	6	
Shepherds	-	-	3	
Gardeners	-	2	3	
Fishermen	-	2	-	
	Total	20	12	14
	%	4.08	2.63	4.01

2. <u>FOOD & DRINK.</u> <u>Manufacture & Sale</u>		Glo.	Tew.	Cir.
a.	MILLING. Millers	-	4	-
b.	BREWING. Brewers	8	1	1
	" Servants	3	-	-
	Maltmakers	13	14	-
c.	Bakers	16	10	6
	" Servants	-	-	1
	Butchers	14	20	19
	Butchers Servants	3	-	-
	Cooks	-	1	-
	Fishmongers	1	1	-
	Salters	3	2	-
	Victuallers	1	-	1
	Vintners	2	2	1
	" Servants	1	-	4
d.	INNKEEPING. Innkeepers	4	3	3
	" Servants	5	-	-
	Chamberlains	-	2	2
	Ostlers	-	3	5
	Tapsters	-	2	2
	Tipplers	-	11	-
Total		75	76	45
%		15.3	16.7	12.89

3. <u>TEXTILES.</u> <u>Manufacture & Allied Trades</u>				
a.	WOOLLEN. Clothiers	4	-	5
	" Servants	-	-	7
	Clothworkers	-	1	-
	Weavers	29	8	42
	" Servants	-	-	2
	Fustian Weavers	2	-	-
	Dyers	1	3	1
	Wool dyers	-	2	-
	Tuckers	-	1	1
	Shearmen	2	5	-
b.	OTHER TEXTILES & FABRICS.			
	Silkweavers	10	-	-
	Feltmakers	2	5	-
c.	ANCILLARY TRADES. Cardmakers	2	-	4
	Cardboardmakers	1	-	-
Total		53	25	62
%		10.81	5.49	17.76

4. <u>CLOTHING.</u> <u>Manufacture &/or Sale</u>				
	Drapers	13	3	4
	Woollen Drapers	-	1	-
	Haberdashers	4	5	-
	Mercers	29	12	9
	" Servants	14	-	1
	Furriers	2	-	-
	Garter Makers Servant	1	-	-
	Glovers	11	18	9
	" Servants	-	-	1
	Hatters	1	-	2
	Tailors	20	27	13
	" Servants	-	-	1
Total		95	66	40
%		19.38	14.5	11.46

5. <u>LEATHER. Manufacture or Use of</u>	Glo.	Tew.	Cir.
Tanners	12	12	2
" Sons	4	-	-
" Servants	4	-	1
Curriers	4	11	1
Tewgorers	-	1	-
Shoemakers	3	28	20
" Sons	-	4	-
" Servants	11	1	5
Cordwainers	17	-	4
" Servants	7	-	-
Cobblers	2	1	-
Solemakers	1	-	-
Saddlers	10	2	5
" Servants	1	-	1
Collarmakers	-	-	1
	Total	63	46
	%	12.85	10.1
			36
			10.31
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6. <u>METALWORK</u>			
Bellfounders	1	-	-
Braziers	1	-	1
Cutlers	5	5	2
Farriers	2	-	1
Goldsmiths	2	-	-
Metalmen	3	-	-
Pewterers	5	2	-
" Servants	1	2	-
Pinmakers (Pinners)	2	-	-
Plumbers	-	-	1
Smiths	9	12	8
" Servants	-	-	1
Wire Drawers	5	-	-
" " Servants	1	-	-
	Total	37	21
	%	7.55	4.61
			14
			4.01
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7. <u>SHIPPING</u>			
Mariners	-	23	-
Trewwmen	-	4	-
	Total	-	27
	%	-	5.93
			-
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8. <u>WOODWORK</u>			
Sawyers	3	-	2
Carpenters	5	7	3
Joiners	3	7	6
Turners	2	1	-
Coopers	5	12	3
Wheelwrights (Wheelers)	-	-	2
Carvers	-	-	1
	Total	18	27
	%	3.67	5.93
			17
			4.87

9. <u>BUILDING</u> (other than woodwork)	Glo.	Tew.	Cir.
Masons	3	2	6
Paviours	-	-	1
Slaters	-	2	2
Tilers	1	1	1
Lattice makers	2	-	-
Glaziers	2	2	2
" Servants	-	-	1
Pargeters	1	-	-
Painters	1	-	-
Total	10	7	13
%	2.04	1.53	3.72

10. <u>TRANSPORT</u> (Land)			
Carriers	1	3	2
" Servants	-	-	1
Carmen	-	4	-
Carters	-	-	3
Hauliers	1	-	-
Total	2	7	6
%	0.4	1.53	1.71

11. <u>MISCELLANEOUS TRADES</u>			
Bedders	2	-	-
Bookbinders	-	-	1
Bottlemakers	-	2	-
Bowyers	1	1	-
Fletchers	1	1	-
Hivemakers	2	-	1
Loiterer	-	-	1
Papermen	-	3	-
Parchment makers	-	1	-
Ropemakers (Ropers)	-	1	-
Saltpetremen	-	1	-
Seveger	-	1	-
Torn maker (Lathemaker)	-	1	-
Total	6	12	3
%	1.22	2.62	0.85

12. <u>OFFICIALS</u>			
Sergeant	1	-	-
Bailiff	-	-	1
Total	1	-	1
%	0.02	-	0.28

13. <u>PROFESSIONAL</u>			
Apothecaries	3	-	1
" Servants	1	-	-
Surgeons	-	1	-
Barbers	3	1	2
Attorneys-at-Law	1	-	-
Scriveners	-	1	1
Stationers	2	1	-
Schoolmasters	-	1	-
Ushers	-	-	1
Musicians	3	-	2

13. continued.. PROFESSIONAL		Glo.	Tew.	Cir.
	Total	13	5	7
	%	2.65	1.01	2.00
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14.	<u>MERCHANTS & DEALERS</u>			
	Merchants	-	1	-
	Chandlers	1	3	3
	Chapmen	-	2	-
	Horse Coursers	-	1	-
	Pedlars	-	1	1
	" Servants	-	1	-
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15.	<u>GENTLEMEN</u>	Total	12	15
		%	2.44	3.29
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16.	<u>SERVANTS TO GENTLEMEN</u>	Total	6	1
		%	1.22	0.21
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17.	<u>NOT STATED</u>		60	15
	Servants to N/S		12	1
		Total	72	16
		%	14.69	3.51
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18.	<u>LABOURERS</u>		6	83
		%	1.22	18.24
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GRAND TOTAL		490	455	349

IMMEDIATE SUBURBS OF GLOUCESTER (Barton Liberty & Southgate Street; Barton Street)

1.	<u>AGRICULTURE</u> etc.			
	Yeomen		1	
	Gardener		1	
2.	<u>BREWER</u>		1	
3a.	<u>WEAVERS</u>		2	
	Broadweavers		2	
4.	<u>CLOTHING</u>			
	Glovers		1	
	" Servants		1	
	Tailors		3	
	" Servants		1	
5.	<u>SHOEMAKERS</u>		1	
6.	<u>SMITHS</u>		3	
9.	<u>PAVIOUR</u>		1	
11.	<u>ROPER</u>		1	
	" Apprentice		1	
14.	<u>CHANDLERS</u>		1	
15.	<u>GENTLEMEN</u>		2	
16.	<u>SERVANTS TO GENTLEMEN</u>		1	
17.	<u>NOT STATED</u>		49	
	Servants to N/S		3	
18.	<u>LABOURERS</u>		1	
		Total	77	

GLOSSARY

Reference to the Oxford English Dictionary and consideration of the words in their context suggests the following as the most probable meanings.

- Bedder or Bedor - Probably maker of beds or upholsterer but could be one who litters cattle.
- Bowyer - Maker of bows.
- Cardmaker, Cardboard maker - Probably makers of the wire brushes used for carding wool i.e. separating and straightening the fibres before spinning.
- Chamberlain - Servant at inn. Masculine form of Chambermaid.
- Chapman - Pedlar.
- Collarmaker - Probably maker of horse collars.
- Cordwainer - Showmaker.
- Fletcher - Maker of arrows.
- Fustian - A thick twilled short napped cloth, usually dyed dark.
- Horse courser - Horse dealer.
- Loiterer - Beggar, idler.
- Pargeter - Plasterer.
- Saltpetreman - Appointed to find and supply saltpetre for gun-powder under a government monopoly.
- Scrivener - A number of meanings:
1. Professional penman or clerk
 2. A notary
 3. One who supplied those who wanted to raise money on security.
- Seveger or seivger - Probably corruption of seveyer; a sieve
- Tewgorer - One who "taws" or softens leather. maker/
- Tippler - Another term for tapster.

A.J. and R.H. Tawney classify cardmaker and cardboard-maker as workers in paper and cardboard, and chamberlain as officials. They classify sevegers or seivgers as agricultural workers but offer no explanation of the word. Tewgorers, (1) bedders, and tornmakers they classify as unidentified occupations.

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