Gender, Class and a Naming Process in the English Long Eighteenth Century: Leicestershire, *c.* 1680–1836

Dave Postles

Abstract

During the 'long eighteenth century', a novel practice of naming was introduced into England which had a long precedent in some parts of continental Europe. Associated at first with aristocratic status, two 'forenames' were selectively adopted at various levels of English society. How that process occurred is illustrated here through a selective sample of Leicestershire parishes as it varied by the intersections of gender and class.

Introduction

> Among Jane Austen's earliest writings are two spoof entries in a parish marriage register, where she published fictitious banns between Jane Austen of Steventon and Henry Frederic Howard Fitzwilliam of London. A second entry announced the forthcoming nuptials of Edmund Arthur William Mortimer of Liverpool and the same plain Jane Austen of Steventon.[1]

Something had happened to personal naming in the long eighteenth century in England: the adoption of a practice of 'multiple given names', which had developed much earlier in some parts of continental Europe, in southern Europe and France during the Middle Ages and in the higher social groups in 'Germany' in the sixteenth century.[2] Significantly, for the English context, the suggestion has been advanced that it was in the long eighteenth century that profound change in the perception of childhood occurred.[3] The influences operating extended from Locke in the late seventeenth century into the ruminations of the Romantics. Childhood was reappraised as the epitome of innocence. Much of the comment has, nonetheless, not differentiated attitudes by gender and some, indeed, has concentrated almost exclusively on the relationship between father and (eldest) son.[4]

---

1 Freya Johnston, review of E. J. Clery, *Eighteen Hundred and Eleven: Poetry, Protest and Economic Crisis* (Cambridge, 2017), in *London Review of Books*, 40 (18) (2018), p. 37.

2 K. Leibring, 'Given names in European naming systems', in C. Hough (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Names and Naming* (Oxford, 2016), pp. 207–8.

3 H. Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society since 1500* (Harlow, 1995), pp. 61–78; more circumspectly, L A. Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent–Child Relations from 1500 to 1900* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 106, and B. Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World: from the Black Death to the Industrial Age* (Oxford, 1993), pp. 137–8.

4 J. Delumeau, D. Roche *et al.*, *L'Histoire des Pères et de la Paternité* (Paris, 1990).

Change, indeed, did occur and the corpus of names was transformed by new accretions or previously rarely elicited monikers. The pattern of names in the middle of the eighteenth century, for example, differed considerably at the centre as well as the margins from the correlative ranking in the middle of the previous century. As importantly, a new procedure had been introduced in the late seventeenth century: the conferring of two given names.

Before the turn into the eighteenth century, it has been suggested, this process of 'multiple given names' 'set the peerage apart from most other social classes ... although [it] was rare prior to 1700.'[5] Between 1538 and 1649, merely four peers received two given names.[6] By the 1660s, 5.2 per cent of peers were christened with two baptismal names. By the 1690s, the proportion had expanded to 9.2 per cent.[7]

This propensity to confer two given names had already begun to be adopted by the non-noble before 1700. Of course, its preference was associated first with those of gentle status or in the advancing 'middling sort'. Accordingly, on 8 December 1675 the daughter of Thomas Moor, a gentleman of Buckminster (Leics.) was baptised Henrietta Maria.[8] In 1692, Frances Anna was received into the church in St Margaret's parish, Leicester.[9] On the male side, William Thomas Hutchins and William John Dand were entered in the baptism register for Kibworth Beauchamp, although the latter was christened in London, respectively in 1688 and 1685.[10]

The potential foreign element of this double naming is perhaps represented by the early adoption of Henrietta Maria, the child of Thomas Stripling of Barwell so christened on 29 June 1670.[11] It is more forcefully reflected in a baptism in St Martin's in Leicester:

> Memorandum That Anna Margaretta the Daughter of Major George Joachim van Podewells & Anna Maria his wife was baptised by ... a minister of the Lutheran Church in the house of Mathew Fish in the parish of St Martins in Leicester on the 15 day of september Anno domini 1697.[12]

The interpretation of this transformation of the naming process is illustrated through a purposive sample of parish registers. The principal component is just under thirty sets of parish registers from Leicestershire between *c.* 1660 and 1836. The chronological point of departure is determined by the general introduction of double given names; the concluding date reflects the incipience of the proliferation of the phenomenon and the establishment of civil registration of births which diminishes the accuracy of Church of England

---

5   S. Smith-Bannister, *Names and Naming Patterns in England, 1538–1700* (Oxford, 1997), p. 124.
6   For the preferred terminology of 'multiple given names' see, Leibring, 'Given names in European naming systems', pp. 207–8.
7   Smith-Bannister, *Names and Naming Patterns*, p. 124.
8   Record Office for Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland (ROLLR) 1D41/3/27–28 (Moore's burial entry records his gentle status in March 1676–1677).
9   ROLLR 7D41/2 (31 March 1692).
10   ROLLR DE5417/1 (16 October 1688; 19 June 1685).
11   ROLLR DE1330/1.
12   ROLLR DE1564/1. For the continental background to multiple given names, see S. Wilson, *The Means of Naming: A Social and Cultural History of Personal Naming in Western Europe* (London, 1998), pp. 215–21.

records.[13] The discussion, however, is further compartmentalised. The first section is devoted to the earlier development of double baptismal names to 1812 (which coincides with the introduction of printed and standard registers of baptisms by Rose's Act).[14] Here, the impact of gender on naming is the principal focus. The second part considers developments from 1813 to 1836 for a particular consequence: the insinuation of class as well as gender. The conclusion attempts to coordinate the implications which are intimated through the earlier elucidation. In various places, the generalised or aggregate data are complemented by detailed localised cases. The principal rationale here is to explore whether and to what extent differences existed between urban and rural social contexts. Such an examination has significance for projections about the character of the middling sort or middle class and diverse evocations of the 'cultural' division between the 'urbane' and the 'rustic', if such existed.[15]

It is necessary first to describe in more detail the purposive sample of parishes. One element consists of a cluster of parishes in north-west Leicestershire, the justification for which is the industrializing context. In this locality, running from the county borough of Leicester up the Soar valley to Loughborough and Shepshed, there developed a putting-out textile industry, contentiously denominated 'proto-industrialization'.[16] Inclusion of this 'industrial region' allows investigation of naming practices within the 'proletariat'.[17] To balance this conglomeration, predominantly rural parishes have been selected from across the county (see Figure 1).[18] These parishes comprehend both large and small areas and populations. For further contextualization, all the small towns in the county have been examined.[19] Finally, the analysis comprehends the four main parishes in the county

---

13   An Act for registering births, deaths and marriages in England. 6 & 7 William IV, c. 86. M.J. Cullen, 'The making of the Civil Registration Act of 1836', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, 25 (1974), pp. 39–59.

14   An Act for the better regulating and preserving parish and other registers of birth, baptisms, marriages, and burials, in England. 52 Geo. III, c. 146. S. Basten, 'From Rose's Bill to Rose's Act: a reappraisal of the 1812 Parish Register Act', *Local Population Studies*, 76 (2006), pp. 43–62.

15   C. Estabrook, U*rbane and Rustic England: Cultural Ties and Social Spheres in the Provinces, 1660–1780* (Manchester, 1998).

16   D.C. Coleman, 'Proto-industrialization: a concept too many', *Economic History Review*, 36 (1983), pp. 435–48 discusses the genesis of the term.

17   ROLLR DE2933/4–7 (Barrow upon Soar, including part of Mountsorrel); DE1965/2–3 (Belton, adjacent, but largely agrarian); DE73/1–3 (Hathern, adjacent, but largely agrarian); DE1287/3–6 (Kegworth, a market vill, but industrializing); DE394/3, DE610/1–7, 12 and 15 (Shepshed, vastly industrializing); for Loughborough, see the note below. For the industrialization in Shepshed see D. Levine, *Family Formation in an Age of Nascent Capitalism* (New York, NY, 1977); P. Hudson, (ed.), *Regions and Industries: A Perspective on the Industrial Revolution in Britain* (Cambridge, 1989).

18   ROLLR 15D55/1–2 and 5 (Appleby Magna); DE/1216/2, 2606/2 (Arnesby); DE2579/2–3, 7–8 (Barkby); DE1330/1–4 (Barwell); DE829/6, 8 (Bottesford); DE2701/1–3 (Great Dalby); DE455/2/1–5 and DE1769/30 (Hoton); DE1717/2–5, 9 (Ibstock); DE5417/1–6 (Kibworth Beauchamp); DE2680/2–5 (Market Bosworth); DE1729/1 and 3 (Markfield); DE430/2–6 (Medbourne); DE966/3–6 (Rothley); DE1621/2–3, 7, 12 (Sheepy Magna); DE1728/1–3 (Wymeswold). For family constitution and agrarian society in Bottesford, see Levine, *Family Formation*.

19   ROLLR DE1013/1–5 (Ashby de la Zouch); DE1135/3–9 (Hinckley); DE667/2–8 (Loughborough); DE2094/1–4 (Lutterworth); DE1587/1–5 (Market Harborough); DE745/5 and24, DE878/1 (Melton Mowbray).

Figure 1   Distribution of the purposive sample of parishes
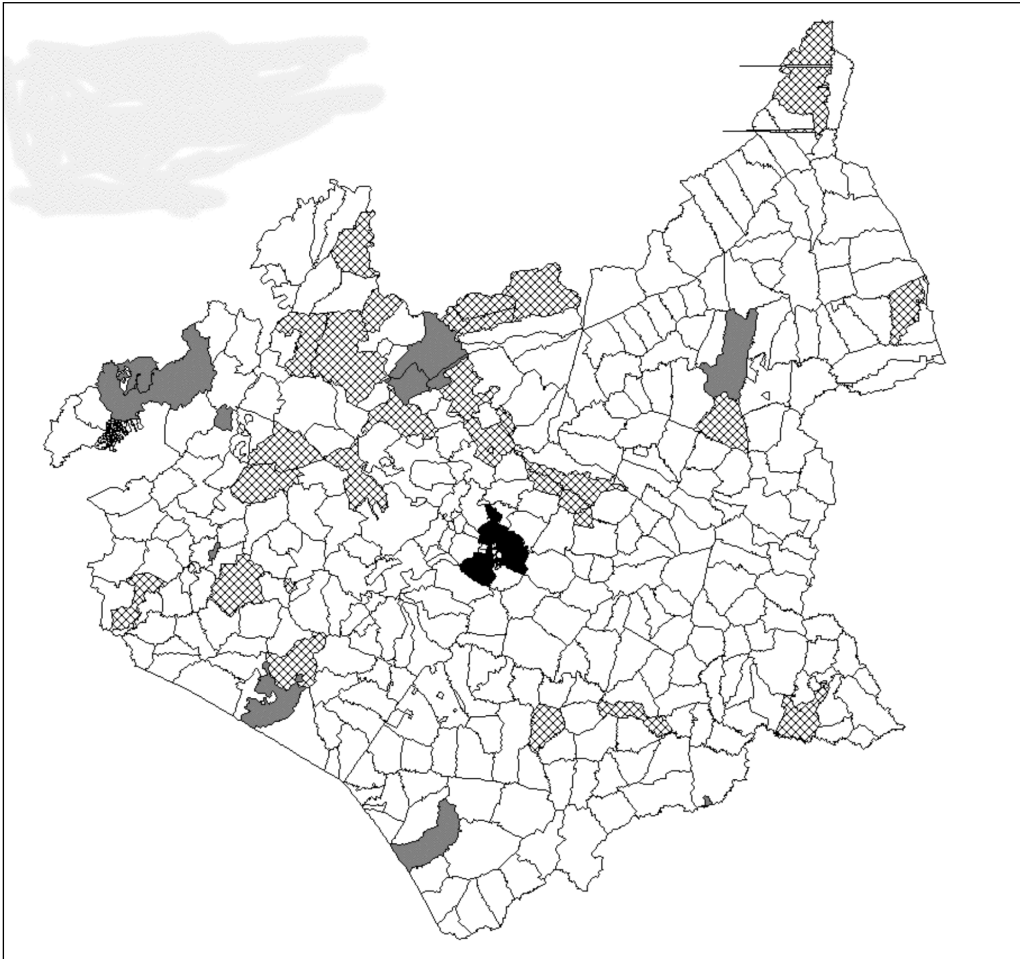
Note: Black indicates the county borough, Leicester, grey fill the small towns, and hatched areas rural parishes.

borough.[20] One was by long custom established as the burgesses' parish (St Martin), while the other (St Margaret) was a liberty outside the formal boundary of the borough, but intensely urbanised. The intention has thus been to represent all social complexities and differences of *pays* or regions within the county. Overall, the purposive sample amounts to about ten per cent of all the ancient parishes in the county. By way of comparison, allusion is made to some parishes in Shropshire, a county on the border with Wales, which might be considered a peripheral location.

---

20   ROLLR 7D41/2–5 (St Margaret); DE1564/1–2 (St Martin); DE8D59/15–17, DE1683/1 (St Mary); DE11D62/2 (St Nicholas).

Table 1   Chronology of the first appearance of a double given name in selected parishes

Date of first appearance	Number of parishes	Refinement
Before 1700	5	
Before 1750	9	1701–10=2; 1711–20=3; 1721–30=1; 1731–40=1; 1741–50=2
1751–1800	14	1751–60=3; 1761–70=2; 1771–80=5; 1781–90=3; 1791–1800=1
1801–10	2	

The introduction of double naming

The chronology of appearance of the double given name presents a considerable degree of variation geographically, which is represented in Table 1. The chronology of adoption thus extended over a century and was protracted.

The second attribute of the process concerns the relatively low acceptance of the practice. Excluding the borough parishes, Shepshed and Loughborough, which are all considered below, just under 400 children received double given names at baptism. The proportion remained minimal overall. In arriving at this conclusion, some ambiguous forms have been excluded, especially Annamaria when it was seemingly entered as a single lexical item. Two daughters in Market Harborough, for example, were christened Annamaria in 1669 and 1675.[21] The same double name was conferred on the daughter of Richard Flint in Great Dalby in 1711, although a definitive double name (Philipa Maria) did not occur in that parish until 1744.[22] A similar situation obtained in Market Bosworth, where the bastard daughter of Mary Durram, Annamariah, was registered three years before Rebecca Maria, the daughter of Sir Henry Atkins, the latter ostensibly the first double name.[23]

A further feature of the practice was the gendered alignment of double given names. In this restricted sample (excluding the borough and the two noted parishes), daughters comprised 72 per cent of the double names and sons only 28 per cent. In the earliest instances of adoption, however, the gender-skewing was less apparent. To cite but a few examples, omitting the two Annamarias above, William Henry, the son of Henry Eagle, turner, disported the first double name in Market Harborough in 1702.[24] In another small town, the registration of George William, son of William Pyke, represented the introduction of multiple given names.[25] The initial entry of a double given name in Kibworth

---

21   ROLLR DE1587/1 (24 October 1669; 4 June 1675).
22   ROLLR DE2701/1 and 2.
23   ROLLR DE2680/2 (12 February 1702/3; 24 May 1705).
24   ROLLR DE1587/1 (16 September 1702).
25   ROLLR DE1013/1 (5 October 1717).

Beauchamp was that attributed to William Thomas Hutchins, baptised on 16 October 1688.[26]

The first double entry in the Medbourne registers related to John Thomas Francis Tasburgh, son of John Tasburgh, esquire, in 1704, the best part of a century before the second occurrence, Mary Ann, in 1797.[27] In Market Bosworth, the first double forenames were associated with gentle families. Sir Henry Atkins and his wife, Rebecca, conferred the names Rebecca Maria on their child in 1705. This daughter having died in infancy, they assigned the same double name to their next daughter, delivered in 1707 or 1708. Subsequently, in the same market vill, Sir Wolstan Dixie and his wife, Theodosia, decided in 1746 to name their daughter Eleanor Frances. Only two decades later did unambiguous double forenames become established in the parish.[28] Such registration symbolises a number of issues: the emulation of the nobility by those of gentle status; like the nobility, the conferment of multiple given names on male as well as female offspring; and the deployment of more than two given names as a further mark of distinction (see below). Demonstrably, however, double given names came rapidly to be associated with female offspring, interrupted occasionally by conferment on sons.

These characteristics can be better illustrated by reference to specific locations. First is the urban context of the county borough, Leicester. In the expanding suburb of St Margaret, the rate of baptisms expanded from 61 per annum in 1761 to 99 in 1764 and was stabilised at that level in 1784 (98). Thereafter it soared by 1812 to more than 350. The first double given names (Frances Anna) were conferred on 3 March 1692–1693, followed by Richard James on 26 May 1717. During the ninety years 1692–1693 to 1783, 31 female children received two given names compared with 12 male children. Between 1784 and 1810 multiple given names accounted for 49 per thousand baptisms (both sexes). In 1811-1812 the level was elevated to 79 per thousand baptisms. The name elements in female double given names consisted of 46 different items. In St Mary's, the first registration of a double forename was inscribed in 1691 (Anna Maria as distinctly two names).[29] Five other female children received double names between 1709 and 1734 before the first male double names in 1747 and 1749.[30] From 1691 to 1812, 127 daughters and 38 sons possessed double forenames.[31] In the smaller parish of St Nicholas, double forenames were delayed until a Mary Anne in February 1745–1746.[32] From the initial occurrence through to 1812, 36 female double names were entered in the register by comparison with 8 male in the context of 40 christenings per annum in 1810.[33]

---

26 ROLLR DE5417/1.
27 ROLLR DE430/2; DE430/5 (1 April 1797).
28 ROLLR DE2680/2 (24 May 1705; 28 February. 1705/6; 3 March 1707/8); DE2680/3 (19 September 1746).
29 ROLLR 8D59/15 (18 June 1691).
30 ROLLR 8D59/15–16 (1709; 1710; 1720/21; 1721; 1734; 1747; 1749).
31 ROLLR 8D59/15–17; DE 1683/1.
32 ROLLR 11D62/3.
33 ROLLR11D62/3–4/.

In the spatially-constrained central parish of St Martin, baptisms which had fluctuated between 50 and 70 per annum in the early eighteenth century had augmented to 70–90 per year by its end. The first double naming, as recited above, was bestowed in 1697. From the next conferment in 1706 to 1738, ten children, all female, were baptised with two forenames. From 1738 to 1784, something close to parity existed, 32 daughters and 26 sons. Subsequently, daughters strongly exceeded sons among those with double given names. Between 1697 and 1812, double names were attributed to 173 female offspring and 81 male. Placed in the context of all baptisms, nevertheless, the proportion of children receiving two forenames did not surpass 3 per cent. The comparative paucity of double forenames is confirmed by the numbers at Dawley Magna (Shropshire). Between 1797 and 1812, 2,604 children's baptisms were registered, but merely 2.2 per cent bore double given names.[34]

Another comparative context relates to differences between small town and industrializing village which were contiguous, Loughborough and Shepshed. An immediately obvious divergence is that whilst the first double given name (Elizabeth Catherina) occurred in Loughborough in 1719, it was not until 1774 that the practice (in Sarah Ann) was ostensibly introduced in Shepshed.[35] From 1719 to 1812 in Loughborough, 99 daughters were given double forenames, but only 21 sons; between 1774 and 1812, the equivalent numbers in Shepshed were 27 and none. In Loughborough, the double names of females were composed of 32 different elements, suggesting a greater creativity, even amongst the lower orders, such as Amelia Ann, a labourer's daughter. By contrast, the Shepshed corpus of female double names was dominated, almost to monotony, by Mary Ann. Concomitant with different social composition, the two places, although proximate, exhibited a contrasting lexicon of female double names. In Loughborough, a heterogeneous population with a professional and retail component, female forms displayed more individuality. Where the register recorded occupation or status of fathers of daughters with double forenames, five were assigned gentle status, five professional, two industrial, 17 retail, 14 craft, 8 textile working, one farmer, one bastard, and 12 labouring. In contrast, Shepshed was virtually monolithic in the association of Mary Ann with textile working (see below).

Gentle and middling families tended, although not exclusively, to more florid double names for daughters. Open to them also was the distinction of triple forenames which did not feature amongst the labouring sort, although even in the higher echelons they remained unusual. To some extent, these extended name forms established the cultural capital which erected social boundaries.[36] In the entire corpus of baptisms in all the Leicestershire parishes, merely 14 triple forenames appear, only three of which were borne by male offspring.[37] The earliest incidence occurred in the urban context, in the borough, when

---

34 *Shropshire Parish Registers. Diocese of Lichfield. Volume XVIII* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, n.d.), pp. 263–341.

35 ROLLR DE667/3 (15 December. 1719); DE610/6 (14 March 1774).

36 P. Bourdieu, *Distinction: a Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* trans. R. Nice (London, 2007), pp. 34–41, 76–80.

37 For the males, ROLLR DE1621/12 (Sheepy Magna, March 1759); DE1564/1 (St Martin, Leicester, 1 February. and 25 December. 1770).

Anna Dorothea Carolina, daughter of John and Mary Newton, was accepted into the community of the Church on 18 July 1744.[38] The social character of the families was gentle and middling sort. In 1787, Julia Amelia Sophia, daughter of Samuel and Amelia Sophia Hawke, was christened in the church of Melton Mowbray, a superior venue.[39] Daughters accorded three forenames in Loughborough in 1789 epitomised the social status: Sarah Frances Ann, child of Mr John Thorp, surgeon, and his wife Elizabeth; and Mary Ann Dorothy, offspring of John Dewys, gent., and his wife Sophia.[40] The baptismal name of Eleanor Mary Frances at Barkby in 1792 confirms the association, as infant of the Reverend Henry Woodcock and his wife Ann.[41] Finally, on 16 May 1807, Charlotte Ann Georgiana was received into the parish community in Sheepy Magna, previously baptised at The Friary in Lichfield.[42] This association can be illustrated further from Shropshire. In 1770, Anna Maria Emma was baptised, the daughter of Nicholas Smith, esq., and his wife, Anna Maria, lords of the manor of Condover.[43] Another gentle family, the Durrants, consistently applied multiple given names to their offspring. In 1802, George, esq., and his wife, Marianne, celebrated the baptism of their son, Arthur Edwin Beaufoy, and respectively four and five years later their daughters, Elizabeth Rose Emma Louisa (1806) and Bella Agnes Louisa (1807). Later, two more of their boys were christened Bruce Ernest Alphons and Hope Alfred Eugene (1811).[44]

Several aspects merit further exploration: why these double given names were associated mainly with female offspring; and why the relative adoption of such forms, even for daughters, was overall so minimal. Referring to the second issue, one consideration is the expansion and change in the lexicon of female given names. Names which had hitherto been low in the rank order assumed more significance.

By contrast with male names, there was a persistence of virtue or 'hortatory' names in the female corpus.[45] Two daughters of John Sturgess were registered together in St Mary, Leicester, as Peace and Charity.[46]Daughters of Thomas Goward of Market Harborough were baptised together on 28 May 1713 as Peace and Grace.[47] At another small town, Melton Mowbray, the female child of Peter and Ann Kealey was indeed named Alice

38   ROLLR DE 1564/1.
39   ROLLR DE878/1 (30 September 1787).
40   ROLLR DE667/4 (13 February and 28 July 1789).
41   ROLLR DE2579/3 (3 September 1792).
42   ROLLR DE1621/12. For the others: DE1135/9 (Caroline Louisa Ann, 1807, Hinckley); DE1564/1 (Elizabeth Mary Anne, Sept. 1789, St Martin, Leicester); DE1728/2 (Suzet Mary Louisa, 1805, Wymeswold); DE1013/3 (Sarah Mary Ann, Ashby de la Zouch, June 1798); DE5417/4 (Eliza Laura Catherine, 1812, Kibworth Beauchamp).
43   W.P.W. Phillimore, *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield Vol. VI* (Shropshire Parish Registers Society, 1906), p. 277.
44   W.P.W. Phillimore, *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield Vol. IV* (Shropshire Parish Registers Society, 1902: Tong), pp. 115, 118, 171.
45   D.H. Fischer, *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (America: A Cultural History, Vol. I)* (Oxford, 1990), p. 97 ('hortatory').
46   ROLLR 8D59/15 (19 November. 1729).
47   ROLLR DE1587/1.

Virtue.[48] Patience, Grace, Comfort, and Constance all recurred in Leicestershire parishes.[49] On the other hand, the imposition of some of these names emitted either irony or, indeed, exhortation. Penitent Wier *alias* Jones received her name as the bastard daughter of Margery Jones.[50] Illegitimacy was the circumstance of the naming of the girl, Temperance.[51] Similarly, the bastard daughter of Dorothy Davies was accorded the name Honour.[52]

Some neologisms were introduced with a purportedly feminine form, such as the Angeletta baptised in Leebotwood (Shropshire) and Longnor (same county), both in 1736.[53] Rosanna recurred frequently in Dawley Magna in that county.[54] Benedicta and Philadelphia occurred on the same day in Barwell in 1716–1717.[55] There, too, in 1787 was registered the child's name Britannia.[56] Names from antiquity were revived and, indeed, employed as pseudonyms by female correspondents to such print outputs as *The Gentleman's Magazine,* such as Felicia and Caelia.[57] Contemporary literature, particularly the new genre of novels associated with the 'culture of sensibility' and the *bourgeoisie*, disported these feminine forms: Pamela, Clarissa, Belinda.[58] Novel adaptations of male names appeared: Cornelia, Philippa, Georgiana. A Cornelia was baptised in St Mary, Leicester, in May 1666 and another in 1728 in Market Bosworth.[59] Female forms of names thus displayed a degree of creativity not expressed in male forms. Perhaps paradigmatic of this individuality of female forms was Dulcibella, baptised in Wem (Shropshire) in 1808.[60] In some instances, the name form is quite surprising, such as the Sedilla, daughter of Saul and Elizabeth Ann Greasley, received into St Martin, Leicester, in April 1809—some adaptation of sedilia, the clerical seat?[61] (Such creativity is not a

---

48 ROLLR DE878/1 (15 December. 1789).
49 For the ambiguity of Comfort, see F. Moretti, *The Bourgeois between History and Literature* (London, 2014), pp. 42–6.
50 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield Vol. XVIII* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, n.d.), pp. 42, 50 (baptism 1704–1705; burial 1714).
51 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Ellastone Part II* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, 1912), p. 365.
52 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield Vol. XX* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, 1934), p. 160 (Great Ness, 1766).
53 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield. Vol. V* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, 1905) (Leebotwood, p. 51; Longnor, p. 28).
54 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield. Vol. XVIII* (Shropshire Parish Register Society, n.d.), pp. 142, 151–2, 176, 179, 181, 198, 209.
55 ROLLR DE1330/1 (7 February. 1716–1717).
56 ROLLR DE1330/3 (6 May 1787).
57 *The Gentleman's Magazine*, 5 (1735), pp. 16–7 (Prompter XXI 'Of unmarried Ladies': virtue and reputation; Leanora and Prudentia); 43 (Selina); 45 (Fidelia); 47 (Delia); 48 (Chloe); 97 (Belinda); 98 (Celia).
58 For the occasional appearance of Clarissa: ROLLR DE1587/3a (24 January 1785) (the daughter of James and Rebecca Drake, he a grazier); Alexander Pope, *The Rape of the Lock* (1712) introduced Belinda.
59 ROLLR 8D59/15; DE2680/2 (2 Sept. 1728); for these names, L. Davidoff, M. Doolittle, J. Fink and K. Holden, *The Family Story: Blood, Contract and Intimacy, 1830–1960* (Harlow, 1999), p. 93.
60 W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield Vol. X* (Shropshire Parish Registers Society, 1908), p. 801.
61 ROLLR DE1564/1.

universal feature of naming in traditional societies.)[62] Although names by and large contain no lexicographical content, they have emotive resonance. Although merely lexical items, there was nonetheless in the apparent inflection -a, an association with femininity. Such operators only affected the margin, however, and other explanations must be considered below.

The even greater paucity of double given names of male children can be partly explained by some transitions in the lexicon of names. Surnames were frequently adapted to reflect the lineage. Biblical names featured consistently, especially amongst nonconformists, but low in the rank order. Some virtue names were conferred, exemplified in 1699 by Abstinence, son of Abstinence Pougher, whose second son in 1707 received the Old Testament name Samuel. This name recurred in the same family line in 1730.[63]Again, however, the impact was only peripheral. There may have been an impulsion to avoid intimations of effeminacy. For example, the entry for the baptism of the son of Alexander and Frances Dudgeon at St Mary, Leicester, on 5 January 1779 recorded: 'Plain Harry'.[64] The cause of the low and slow adoption of double given names resides elsewhere: in conformity to social norms.

Mary Ann(e): part I

Reluctance to adopt the new form of naming derived from a conformity to traditional 'community' norms.[65] When families of the lower orders stepped outside these norms, they implemented a defensive tactic of concentration on a particular name form: Mary Ann(e).[66] In relative terms, Mary Ann appeared after double names had become established, not featuring amongst the earliest manifestations. The first occasion was the celebration of a baptism in St Nicholas, Leicester, in 1745–1746.[67] In that urban context, it recurred in 1756 in St Mary, 1762 in St Martin and 1766 in St Nicholas.[68] Even more delayed was its appearance in Loughborough in 1785.[69]

Referring back to St Mary, Leicester, after the introduction of Mary Ann in 1756, all but 29 of the 127 daughters with double forenames baptised up to 1812 received the name Mary Ann. In St Nicholas after 1745–1746, merely 8 of 36 female children with double names did not bear the name Mary Ann. In St Margaret after 1766, 194 (66 per cent) of the

---

62   S. Harrison, *Stealing People's Names: History and Politics in a Sepik River Cosmology* (Cambridge, 1990), p. 55.

63   ROLLR 11D62/2 (26 December 1699; 3 November 1707); 11D62/3 (27 November 1730) (St Nicholas, Leicester).

64   ROLLR 8D59/17.

65   For the 'pervasiveness of ostracism throughout society', K.D. Williams, *Ostracism: the Power of Silence* (London, 2001), p. 9.

66   For tactic rather than strategy, M. de Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life* trans. S. Rendall (Berkeley, CA, 1984), pp. 25, 36–7, 45; for glosses, J. Aherne, *Michel de Certeau: Interpretation and its Other* (Stanford, CA, 1995), pp. 160–4; B. Highmore, *Michel de Certeau: Analysing Culture* ((London, 2006), pp. 177–8; I. Buchanan, *Michel de Certeau: Cultural Theorist* (London, 2000), pp. 86–105.

67   ROLLR 11D62/3.

68   ROLLR 8D59/15, DE1564/1 and 7D41/4.

69   ROLLR DE667/4.

Table 2	Chronology of the first appearance of Mary Ann in other parishes
1777, 1778
1781, 1782, 1785, 1786 (2), 1789 (3)
1790 (2), 1795, 1797, 1799
1801 (2), 1802, 1803, 1804
Not before 1812 (2)

292 infant girls with two forenames were christened Mary Ann. The corresponding proportion in St Martin after 1762 amounted to 56 per cent (97 of 173), but with a much higher concentration (67 per cent) after 1778. The cohort was lower in Loughborough, about 35 per cent, extending across social groups where evidence is available: one gentle; one professional; one industrialist; four retail; seven craft; four textile workers; six labourers; and a bastard. In a conglomeration of the other parishes, Mary Ann accounted for 46 per cent of the daughters with double forenames, but increasingly concentrated after 1780.

The late arrival and the concentration of incidence after 1780 suggest that the name became associated with labouring people. Confirmation can be adduced from the parish of Shepshed and the small town of Hinckley, both dominated by textile industry. In Shepshed, Mary Ann was the default name for daughters with two names. In Hinckley, between 1780 and 1812, 94 children had double names conferred, only 16 of whom were sons. Of the 78 daughters, 59 had the double baptismal name Mary Ann, the name having become almost monotonous after 1804. The association is apparent between the name Mary Ann and the industrial working class and certainly the lower orders. The latter connection is implicit in the number of bastard children assigned the name, such as the two illegitimate infants called Mary Anne baptised in St Martin, Leicester, in 1796 and 1797.[70] In Dawley Magna, between 1797 and 1812, all 56 children baptised with double forenames were girls, 52 of whom disported the name Mary Ann(e).[71] In double naming, Mary Ann thus became associated with labouring people.

Expansion, 1813–1836

Initially, the subsequent development of double names might best be illustrated by returning to Loughborough and Shepshed. During these two decades or so, 1,099 daughters and 1,117 sons were baptised in Shepshed compared with 2,065 and 2,243 respectively in Loughborough. Selecting only unambiguous double forenames, the rate for daughters in Shepshed was 54 double names per thousand baptisms and for sons 26 per thousand. In Loughborough, the comparable levels were 165 and 109 per thousand. Two features are evident: the greater density of double names in the mixed economy of the small town in contrast with the monolithic occupational structure of the industrial village; and the contin-

---

70   ROLLR DE1564/1.
71   W.P.W. Phillimore (ed.), *Shropshire Parish Registers: Diocese of Lichfield. Volume XVIII*, 263–341 (first occurrence 1789: p. 213).

uing greater purchase of double names among females with the caveat for Shepshed that the numbers are small enough not to rule out stochastic variation. Recognizing that condition, almost half the bearers of the daughters with double names in Shepshed derived from textile-working families and another 12 per cent from labourers. In Loughborough, the distribution was less concentrated. Twenty per cent of daughters belonged to retail families, 21 per cent to crafts, 20 per cent to textile and 19 per cent to labouring kinship. Demonstrably, the same wider pattern obtained amongst sons: 26 per cent retail; 17 per cent craft; 12 per cent textiles; and 16 per cent labourers. The adoption of the double name, although not intense, had penetrated all social groups.[72]

Table 3 and Figure 2 furnish detailed data at the local level from other selected parishes in the county. 'Refinement' here refers to the exclusion of second forenames which are ostensibly surnames deployed as second forenames rather than 'true' forenames. The preferential conferment of double forenames on daughters is apparent.

Table 3   Multiple given names, 1813–1836

Parish	Raw: daughters (per 1,000)	Refined: daughters (per 1,000)	Raw: sons per 1,000)	Refined: sons (per 1,000)
Melton Mowbray	155	140	109	50
Ashby de la Zouch	126	110	72	28
Lutterworth	243	233	135	43
Barrow upon Soar	68	59	57	19
Bottesford	111	92	68	30
Hathern	73	55	37	17
Belton	95	73	94	38
Kegworth	96	84	58	25
Hoton	108	47	42	9
Wymeswold	125	107	92	28
Rothley	121	84	101	26
Barkby	112	97	70	41
Kibworth Beauchamp	148	119	142	72
Arnesby	165	140	141	60
Sheepy Magna	100	90	44	18
Markfield	148	140	68	28
Medbourne	178	172	109	66
Ibstock	93	93	51	25
Great Dalby	123	108	35	0
Appleby Magna	88	60	72	36
Barwell	106	79	23	8

Note: Raw numbers include all those with double given names. The columns headed 'refined' exclude second forenames which are ostensibly surnames deployed as second forenames rather than 'true' forenames

---

72   Compare Wilson, *The Means of Naming*, p. 217 (10 per cent in 1800).

Figure 2   Aggregate numbers of baptisms of children, 1813–1836
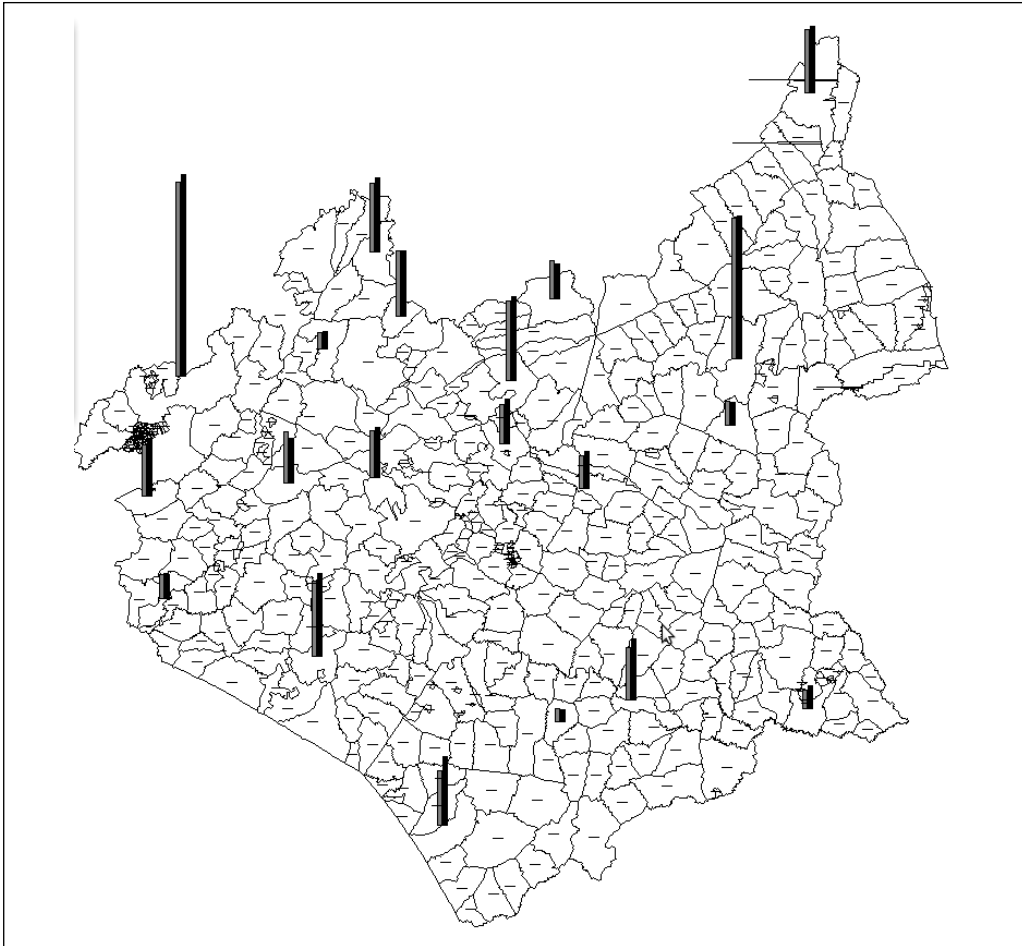
Note: Daughters are represented by grey and sons by black bars and the maximum height signifies 1,500.

Mary Ann(e): part II

Returning for illustrative purposes to Shepshed and Loughborough, in the industrial village 70 per cent of the daughters baptised with double forenames were named Mary Ann(e) and half of those named Mary Ann(e) belonged to framework-knitting families. In Loughborough, Mary Ann(e) composed a smaller proportion, 46 per cent, of the female double forenames, although Sarah Ann(e) amounted to another 13 per cent. Textile-working families in the small town accounted for 71 per cent of the daughters named Mary Ann(e). The influence of the middling sort in the small town resulted in a wider corpus of female double forenames: 73 different combinations containing 37 elements. Mary Ann thus became increasingly connected to industrial and labouring people in these locations.

The analysis can be extended to some of the other market towns, which illustrates further variety in the dissemination of Mary Ann. In Melton Mowbray and Lutterworth, Mary Ann comprised respectively 52 and 46 per cent of all the daughters with double fore-names between 1813 and 1836. Its reception here was associated with the craft trades and servanthood. In Ashby de la Zouch, by contrast, the comparative proportion was as low as 29 per cent.

In the villages (a sample of 18), Mary Ann constituted 36 per cent of female double forenames. Here was the closest connection between Mary Ann and working households, for 49 per cent of the bearers of the names Mary Ann were born into labouring or frame-work-knitting families. This direction is evident too at Leigh in Staffordshire. Between 1795 and 1836, 31 children received double forenames, 9 male and 22 female. Mary Ann(e) comprised 16, five associated with labouring fathers, two with servants and one with a pauper.[73]

> Very soon the Rabbit noticed Alice, as she went hunting about, and called out to her, in an angry tone, "Why, Mary Ann, what *are* you doing out here? Run home this moment and fetch me a pair of gloves and a fan! Quick now!"
> … "He took me for his housemaid", she said to herself as she ran.[74]

Within a short space of time, it was feasible for an upper-class Englishman to presume that his listeners and later readers would understand this association between Mary Ann and the lower orders.

Conclusions

The meaning of child-naming processes has constituted one approach to intra-familial relationships as well as imaginary comparisons of status. Various interpretations have included the extent of patrilinear naming (the reception of the father's name by the male child) and the extent to which that transference represented a patriarchal authority and patrimonial lineage in which the importance of male offspring eclipsed the position of daughters.[75] The attribution of names to daughters in those circumstances raises the question of the emphasis on perceived female virtues.[76] Those actions relate to the residential family, whether nuclear or extended. To what extent the wider spiritual kinship was invoked in naming and the chronology of its putative decline have been analysed too. Although such practices were ostensibly decided within the family, their existence and persistence were informed by external societal norms. Family decisions did not exist in a social vacuum; custom and social expectation imposed conditions and rejection of those imperatives might have conse-

---

73   M. Hall, Staffordshire *Parish Registers: Leigh All Saints Parish Register 1541–1837* (Staffordshire Parish Register Society, 2009), pp. 198–271.

74   L. Carroll, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There,* centenary edition, edited with an introduction by H. Haughton (London, 1998), p. 31

75   Encapsulated in Smith-Bannister, *Names and Naming Patterns.*

76   R.B. Shoemaker, *Gender in English Society 1650–1850: the Emergence of Separate Spheres?* (Harlow, 1998), pp. 23–5.

quences, whether overtly expressed or latently reflected. The child as neophyte was a novice member of the local community.[77] The potential influence of names associated with royalty is more problematic. Although the instance of Henrietta Maria is encountered, its adoption was probably controversial and partisan for two reasons: because she was the consort of Charles I; and because she was foreign, from a nation with which England became embroiled in war. Despite the sanctification by some of the martyred king, his martyrdom was partially received.

Those wider external influences which have been elucidated have some congruence and some differences. Although from different positions, there is some compatibility in the conclusions of E.P. Thompson and J.C.D. Clark.[78] The former suggests a binary society divided between the ethos of the aristocracy, mimicked by the emergent middling sort, and contrasting and separate, if not oppositional, norms of the lower social orders.[79] Clark's dominant ideology of an *ancien régime* is not incompatible. Perhaps in contrast is the emphasis on an *arriviste* middling sort or the political consciousness of a middle class. On the one hand, this new polite culture is predominantly, but not exclusively, associated with a commercial ethic.[80] Accepting this influence, another analysis reinforces the argument by reference to a 'culture of sensibility' influenced by female virtue (with a contentious tendency to effeminacy) and literary production (for example, encapsulated by Barker Benfield).[81] Extending the development of this social formation, Wahrman detects the evolution of political consciousness of the middle class from the middle of the eighteenth century.[82] Less decisively, discussion of the emergence of the middling sort in rural and urban contexts allows for little more than their practical dominance.[83] How these somewhat divergent social formations played out is elucidated below through naming processes.

The pattern and processes of naming in the long eighteenth century can be regarded as an index of the observation of communal norms in traditional society, the gradual relinquishment of those former practices, and the stigmatization which ensued associated with a particular gender. Despite other potential influences towards separation of the private

---

77 For a recent summary and contesting of some of the anthropological literature on naming, A.P. Cohen, *Self Consciousness: an Alternative Anthropology of Identity* (London, 2000), pp. 71–9.

78 E.P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (Pontypool, 1991), pp. 16–96; J.C.D. Clark, *English Society, 1688–1832* (Cambridge, 1985).

79 M.S. Archer, *Culture and Agency: the Place of Culture in Social Theory* (Cambridge, 1988), pp. 25–45 (critique of 'downwards conflation' from the social to the individual).

80 P. Langford, *A Polite and Commercial People: England 1727–83* (Oxford, 1989).

81 G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-century Britain* (Chicago, IL, 1992); also D. Wahrman, *The Making of the Modern Self: Identity and Culture in Eighteenth-century England* (New Haven, CT, 2006), pp. 7–82; M. Cohen, 'Manliness, effeminacy and the French: gender and the construction of national character in eighteenth-century England' in T. Hitchcock and M. Cohen (eds), *English Masculinities 1660–1800* Harlow, 1999), pp. 44–61.

82 D. Wahrman, *Imagining the Middle Class: the Political Representation of Class in Britain, c. 1780–1840* (Cambridge, 1995), but for political consciousness of the lower orders, K. Wilson, *The Sense of the People: Politics, Culture and Imperialism in England, 1715–1785* (Cambridge, 1995) (arguing for a plebeian 'public sphere').

83 H. French, *The Middle Sort of People in Provincial England 1600–1750* (Oxford, 2007); S. D'Cruze, *A Pleasing Prospect: Social Change and Urban Culture in Eighteenth-century Colchester* (Hatfield, 2009).

from the public, naming processes operated at the conjunction of the two spheres.[84] The conferment of names was not an exclusively internal family affair. Even the banal can assume a wider significance.[85] The last derogation was informed by both patriarchy and class; patriarchy existed first, but its effects were reinforced by the advent of industrial capitalism.[86]

Working people divided into two groups: those who declined to adopt double names; and those who accepted the practice but inclined to Mary Ann(e). There is some concordance here with Bourdieu's 'distinction', as noted above. Perhaps more pertinently, his idea of *l'habitus linguistique* operated different cultural markers in language by class. Working people were reluctant to leave their own linguistic environment, so that naming remained two different social *milieux*. There is contact here with Woolard's 'sociolinguistic naturalism', emphasizing linguistic authenticity and linguistic anonymity.[87] 'Class can be a major determinant. In all such cases, the register of language indexes a local community identity, grounded firmly in place and often expressing a particular character or sensibility.'[88] The latent or overt coercion for conformity allowed a limited adoption of a new form of naming with the proviso that in its turn it conformed to another tradition (Mary Ann(e)). In this association, however, it became susceptible to derogation.

The process of the full adoption of double forenames endured for over two hundred years. Explanation of such a protracted evolution must account for the apparent reluctance and reticence to accept the new procedure and why, when it was to some extent adopted, it was in such a limited manner; why labouring families accepted a restricted palate. Social licence, communal coercion and expectation to adhere to traditional and revise norms seem to have been at the heart of the matter. The 'new' sentimentality of the eighteenth century remained a literary and *bourgeois* enclosure.[89] The various classes, established and emergent, displayed the downward and upward contempt intended to maintain social distinction and status.[90]

Depending on an examination of a single county invites, of course, questions about representativeness. The justifications for the selection of Leicestershire are both its distance from the metropolis (and thus an indicator of wider dissemination) and its centrality in the country, as well as its economic and social variety. Further 'regional' research will, however, be necessary to validate any conclusions. It is suggested that concentration be directed at parish registers, for reasons of comprehensiveness. Whilst other sources, such as court rolls, provide a window on colloquial forms and registers, they do not produce aggregate data on the scale required.

---

84   S. Coontz, *The Social Origins of Private Life: a History of American Families 1600–1900* (London, 1988), pp. 23–9, 43.

85   H. Lefebvre, *Critique of Everyday Life*, translated by J. Moore (London, 2014), pp. 600–8.

86   K. Weeks, *Constituting Feminist Subjects* (London, 2018), pp. 24, 78–89; historically, J. M. Bennett, *Women in the Medieval English Countryside: Gender and Household in Brigstock before the Plague* (Oxford, 1987), pp. 68–9; J. Wolff, *Feminine Sentences: Essays on Women and Culture* (Cambridge, 1990), pp. 68–70. For a cautionary critique, J. Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (London, 1990), pp. 35–6.

87   K. Woolard, *Singular and Plural: Ideologies of Linguistic Authority in 21st Century Catalonia* (Oxford, 2016).

88   M. Engelke, *Think like an Anthropologist* (London, 2017), p. 201.

89   A. Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500–1800* (New Haven, CT, 1995), pp. 395–6.

90   W.I. Miller, *The Anatomy of Disgust* (New Haven, CT, 1997), pp. 213–34.