

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870

This is an innovative study of middle class behaviour and property relations in English towns in Georgian and Victorian Britain. Through the lens of wills, family papers, property deeds, account books and letters, the author offers a new reading of the ways in which middle class families survived and surmounted the economic difficulties of early industrial society. He argues that these were essentially ‘networked’ families created and affirmed by ‘gift’ networks of material goods, finance, services and support with property very much at the centre of middle class survival strategies. His approach combines microhistorical studies of individual families with a broader analysis of the national and even international networks within which these families operated. The result is a significant contribution to the history of the middle classes, to economic, business, urban and gender history, and to debates about the place of structural and cultural analysis in historical understanding.

R. J. MORRIS is Professor of Economic and Social History at the University of Edinburgh. He was President of the European Association of Urban Historians in 2000–02.

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Men, Women and Property in England, 1780–1870

*A Social and Economic History of Family
Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes*

R. J. Morris

University of Edinburgh



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK

40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA

10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia

Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain

Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© R.J. Morris 2005

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2005

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface in 10/12pt Plantin system Advent 3B2 8.01[TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data

Morris, R.J. (Robert John)

Men, women, and property in England, 1780-1870: a social and economic history of family strategies amongst the Leeds middle classes / R.J. Morris.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 83808 8 (hardback)

1. Middle class-England-Leeds-History. 2. Middle class families-England-Leeds-History. 3. Property-Social aspects-England-Leeds.

4. Leeds(England)-Social conditions-18th century. 5. Leeds (England)-Social conditions-19th century. I. Title.

HT690.G7M674 2004 306.3'2/086220942-dc22 2004049688

ISBN 0 521 83808 8 hardback

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>List of figures</i>	vii
<i>List of tables</i>	ix
<i>Acknowledgements</i>	xiii
1 Joseph Henry Oates: a world of madeira and honey	1
2 In search of the British middle class	20
Labels, languages and discourses	20
Structures of material resource	33
Stories, narratives and histories	58
3 Reading the wills: a window on family and property	79
The Leeds probate cohort, 1830–34	79
Law, custom and practice	87
Men and children	109
4 The property cycle	142
Robert Jowitt, woolstapler	142
William Hey, surgeon: human capital and real estate	158
Choices	161
The mortgage men	166
John Jowitt's story	168
The property cycle and the middle classes	170
5 Strategies and the urban landscape	178
6 Women and things and trusts	233
Women	233
Things	247
Trusts	254
Sole and separate use	260
7 Life after death	264
Nathan Rider's children	265

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi	Contents	
	The widowhood of William Lupton's Ann	275
	The Black Horse and Schedule E	284
	The rescue of Sarah Stocks	296
	Networked families	300
	The story of Mrs Jane Hey	307
8	Networks and place	318
	How stands the sense of place?	339
9	The economic history of the British middle class, 1816–70	347
	Appendix	364
	Legacy duty, 1816–70	364
	Probate duty and Income Tax, 1840–70	364
	Legacy and Probate duty, 1801–16	366
10	Conclusion and Epilogue	367
	<i>Bibliography</i>	417
	<i>Index</i>	439

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of figures

2.1 Indicators of the number of bankruptcies in Britain, 1780–1844	54
3.1 Occupational status and male probate, Leeds 1830–34	81
3.2 Percentage distribution of sworn value of probate, Leeds 1830–34	87
3.3 Interval between the date of a will and the date of death, Leeds, 1830–34	91
4.1 Profits and expenses of William Hey and Sons, 1827–42	159
4.2 Income of William Hey II and his sons from the firm of William Hey and sons, 1827–41	160
4.3 William Hey II, expenses and income, 1827–42	161
4.4 Age and occupation for solicitors, merchants and house proprietors, Great Britain 1851	168
4.5 John Jowitt. Income and household spending, 1832–63	170
4.6 John Jowitt. Sources of income, 1832–63	171
4.7 John Jowitt. Capital structure, 1832–63	171
4.8 Household spending of Robert and John Jowitt compared by estimated age	172
4.9 Robert and John Jowitt. Capital in the firm by age	173
5.1 William Hey II. Sources of rentier income, 1828–42	190
5.2 William Hey's real estate. The Slip in Yard area in 1770	191
5.3 William Hey II's real estate. The Commercial Street area in 1815	192
5.4 William Hey II's real estate, 1782–1847	193
5.5 Tenants and owners in the Slip in Yard/Bond Street area, 1822	194
5.6 Tenants and owners of the Hey family properties in the Slip in Yard/Commercial Street area, 1834–47	195
5.7 John Taylor's World. Property and family east of Briggate, 1822–34	200
5.8 The 'urban estates' of Neville Street, 1841–47	208
5.9 The 'urban estate' of Henry Arnott, gentleman, 1831	216

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii	List of figures	
5.10	The 'urban estate' of Thomas Crosland, gentleman, 1831	219
5.11	Social economy of the built environment of Leeds, 1780-1850	232
7.1	The management of Nathan Rider's estate seen from the point of view of Mary Rider, 1819-28	268
7.2	Income from rent and sales from the real estate managed by Nathan Rider's executors, 1813-27	270
7.3	Outgoings from the 'estate' of Nathan Rider, 1814-26	270
7.4	Plan of an estate situated between North Street and Wade Lane in the Town of Leeds divided into Lots for Sale, c.1830	280
7.5a	House in west end of Merrion Street, Leeds	283
7.5b	Lower eastern end of Merrion Street, Leeds	284
7.6a	Plan of a house to be built in Merrion Street, Leeds, 1838, ground floor	285
7.6b	Upper floor	286
7.6c	Cellar plan	287
7.7	Plot boundaries and outcomes of the Merrion Street estate as shown on the Ordnance Survey large-scale town plan surveyed in 1847	288
7.8	The Mabgate estate of Mrs Arthur Lupton on the Ordnance Survey large-scale town plan surveyed in 1847	293
7.9	Summary of receipts of Jane Hey, 1859-80	308
8.1	Extract from the reminiscences of Miss Wainhouse	319
8.2	The geography of the Fenton network	324
8.3	The geography of the Oates family	325
9.1	Probate duty per capita in Britain, 1816-70	349
9.2	Probate duty per capita at constant prices, Britain 1816-70	351
9.3	Probate duty per capita in Britain deflated by Boot and Feinstein index, 1815-50	353
9.4	Bricks and glass per capita, Britain, 1816-50	357
9.5	Ratio of probate duty to GNP, United Kingdom, 1830-70	359
9.6	Ratio of probate duty paid to GNP, United Kingdom, 1830-70 (five-year periods)	360
9.7	Legacy duty per capita at current and constant prices, Britain, 1816-70	365
9.8	Probate duty per capita and income tax take per penny standard rate, Britain, 1840-70	365
9.9	Legacy and probate duty per capita in England and Wales, 1801-16	366

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of tables

2.1	Mean age of first marriage in England, 1600–1911	36
2.2	Estimated proportion of people never married in England per 1000 of cohort aged 40–44 in the stated year	36
2.3	Mean age of marriage, 1650–1850. Society of Friends compared with twelve reconstituted parishes	37
2.4	Estimates of national product. Percentage growth per year	38
2.5	Occupational structure of England and Wales, 1520–1801, as a percentage of the total population	39
2.6	Industrial production, 1730–1830. Percentage change per annum	39
2.7	Urban hierarchy of England and Wales, 1700–1801. Population in thousands	40
2.8	Population growth of leading urban centres in England and Wales, 1700–1801	41
2.9	Farm labourers' wages, 1767–1845	41
2.10	Average full-time earnings for adult male workers, 1797–1851 (£ per year at constant prices, 1850)	43
2.11	Trends in full-time earnings, adult male workers, 1797–1851. (1851 earnings = 100)	43
2.12	Indicators of income distribution derived from the Window Tax Assessment and Inhabited House Duty, England and Wales	44
2.13	Inequality and income shares from the principal social commentators, 1688–1867	45
2.14	Gross domestic fixed capital formation, Great Britain 1761–1860. £m per annum, decade averages at 1851–60 prices	46
2.15	Gross stock of domestic reproducible fixed capital, Great Britain, 1760–1860. £m at 1851–60 replacement cost	48
2.16	Valuation of the property of John Hebblethwaite, Leeds 1840	50
2.17	Male employment status and age, 1851	55

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x	List of tables	
2.18	Average age of death in selected towns and poor law unions, 1837–40	56
2.19	Estimates of the size of the Leeds middle classes, 1832–39	70
2.20	Occupational and status structure of the Leeds middle classes, 1832 and 1834	71
2.21	Comparative occupational status structures of the middle classes of Leeds and Manchester, 1832 and 1834	73
2.22	Comparative occupational status structures of the middle classes of Leeds and Glasgow, 1832 and 1834	73
2.23	Comparative occupational status structures of the middle classes of Leeds, West Bromwich and Bilston, 1834	74
3.1	Estates brought for probate from the Parish of Leeds, 1830–34	80
3.2	Occupational status and male probate, Leeds 1830–34	81
3.3	Occupational status and average sworn value of probate, Leeds 1830–34	84
3.4	Distribution of sworn value of probate, Leeds 1830–34	86
3.5	Average value of male and female sworn probate, Leeds 1830–34	87
3.6	Type of provision for widows by the male will makers of Leeds, 1830–34	101
3.7	Provision for widows and children in Leeds male wills, 1830–34	106
3.8	Provision (£) for widows and sworn value, Leeds male probates, 1830–34	108
3.9	Type of provision for widows by life cycle stage and socio-economic status, Leeds male probates, 1830–34	109
3.10	Numbers of children mentioned in male wills, Leeds 1830–34	110
3.11	Inheritance strategies and male wills, Leeds 1830–34	110
3.12	Number of children and arrangements for business continuity in Leeds wills, 1830–34	120
3.13	Family and demographic situations of Leeds will makers, 1830–34	124
3.14	The Thackrey and Chadwick families in the Leeds commercial directories of 1822, 1824 and 1834	133
3.15	Relationship between ‘views of property’ and occupational status for the major occupational categories, Leeds 1830–34	140
3.16	Gender and ‘views of property’, Leeds 1830–34	140
3.17	Sworn value of probate and ‘views of property’, Leeds 1830–34	140

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of tables	xi
3.18 Instructions to ‘turn into cash’ and ‘views of property’, Leeds 1830–34	141
4.1 The debts of the Jowitt firm to the executors of John Jowitt, 1816–42	150
4.2 Robert Jowitt: income, consumption and savings, 1806–62	152
4.3 Robert Jowitt: acquisition of assets, 1810–60	155
4.4 Robert Jowitt: sources of income, 1806–62, annual average	155
4.5 John Jowitt, Junior: loans and mortgages, 1796–1814	162
4.6 John Atkinson: rental and finance, 1815–32	164
4.7 William Hey II: shareholdings in 1844	165
4.8 William Hey III: shares held in 1875	165
4.9 The economic history of John Jowitt, 1832–63	174
5.1 Property holdings of William Hey II and other family members in Soke Rate Book of 1841	189
5.2 Probate account of William Hey II, 1844–45	197
5.3 John and Robert Taylor, 1822–34	201
5.4 John Rose: real estate in Neville Street, from the Soke Rate Book of Leeds, 1840	206
5.5 The rentier republics of School Close, 1822–41	209
5.6 Leeds Soke Rate, 1841. Property valuations and descriptions	220
5.7 Properties described as ‘House and Shop’ in the Soke Rate, 1841	220
5.8 Ownership structure of properties in the Leeds Soke Rate of 1841	221
5.9 Property held by each individual or unit of ownership in Soke Rate books, Leeds 1841	222
5.10 Property bundles. Leeds Soke Rate, 1841	223
5.11 Heterogeneous property bundles, Leeds Soke Rate, 1841	225
5.12 Owner-occupier-rentiers in the Leeds Soke Rate, 1841	227
5.13 Real property in Leeds wills, 1830–34	228
5.14 Occupational title and real property in Leeds wills, 1830–34	228
5.15 Sworn value, gender and real property in Leeds wills, 1830–34	229
6.1 Female probates. Average sworn value	234
6.2 Female wills. Average sworn value	234
6.3 Gender and ‘things’ in Leeds wills, 1830–34	252
6.4 Trusts and the sworn values of probate, Leeds 1830–34	259
6.5 Units of real property and trusts, Leeds 1830–34	259
6.6 Beneficiaries of trust as a percentage of total wills, Leeds 1830–34	260

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii	List of tables	
6.7	Gender of will maker and relationship to beneficiaries, Leeds 1830–34	260
6.8	Instructions reserving ‘sole and separate’ use, related to beneficiary and to gender, Leeds wills 1830–34	262
7.1	Valuation of the estate of Nathan Rider, 1813	269
7.2	Mary Rider’s account with William Lupton and Co, 1814–28	272
7.3	Joseph Rider’s account with William Lupton and Co, 1814–28	273
7.4	Revenue from the Merrion St estate related to the economic fluctuations of the Leeds economy, 1830–48	281
7.5	Units of property from Schedules D and E, Leeds Improvement Act, 1842	295
9.1	Probate duty paid per capita in Britain, 1816–70	354
9.2	Gross domestic fixed capital formation in dwellings, 1811–60	356
9.3	Estimated rental income from land and farms, housing and shops, England and Wales, 1770–1869	358
9.4	Index of rent income constructed by Clark and by Feinstein, England and Wales, 1780–1889	358
9.5	Ratio of probate duty paid to GDP and total investment, Great Britain 1811–60	360

Cambridge University Press

0521838088 - Men, Women and Property in England, 1780-1870: A Social and Economic History of Family Strategies amongst the Leeds Middle Classes

R. J. Morris

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Acknowledgements

A book which has been as long in the making as this one has benefited from the help and inspiration of many people. It is impossible to thank them all. Amongst colleagues at Edinburgh University, Michael Anderson, Graeme Morton and Stana Nenadic deserve special mention, as do Ann McCrum and Jim Smyth amongst past and present postgraduate students. There have been many cross-currents of university life in the past couple of decades. Amongst those I value most has been developing and teaching in the social science computer laboratory and the experience of taking part in the ESRC-financed SCALI (Social Change and Economic Life Initiative) led by Frank Bechofer at Edinburgh. Listening to sociologists devising a questionnaire and analysing its results is something no historian should miss. Outwith Edinburgh the activities and meetings of the Urban History Group and the European Urban History Association have been especially formative, as were those of the Association for History and Computing. Saying thank you so far covers a couple of hundred people, but amongst those who have been especially helpful and supportive are Geoff Crossick, Lee Davidoff, Simon Gunn, Catherine Hall, Liam Kennedy, Helen Meller, Richard Rodger, Ric Trainor and Brian Young. Dozens of other friends and colleagues have given specific advice and help.

Especially important over the years have been the librarians and archivists of the West Yorkshire Archives Service at Sheepscar in Leeds, in the Brotherton Library at the University of Leeds, the Thoresby Society in Leeds, the Borthwick Institute in the University of York, the National Library of Scotland and the library and special collections of Edinburgh University. Without them the work of being an historian would be impossible.

During the course of this work I have benefited from the funds and research leave schemes of the University of Edinburgh and the Nuffield Trust.

As ever my greatest debt is to Barbara Morris for support and criticism of the best kind, but given the topic of this book, the dedication should be to family, all of them, parents, grandparents, wife, children, sister, cousins, nephews, nieces, even a great-niece, uncles, aunts, in-laws, their in-laws – they know who they are.