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Placing the Strutt family of Belper, Derbyshire: an historical geography of
a late-nineteenth century industrial family

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Abstract

The Strutts of Belper have been an important industrial family for understanding how industrial pioneers and paternalists influenced the space they inhabited and manoeuvred through the creation of factory settlements. The earlier generations of the Strutts are notable for their contribution to Derby through ideas of improvement and Enlightenment progressivism demonstrated by William Strutt's design of the Derbyshire General Infirmary and Joseph Strutt's funding of the Derby Arboretum. Drawing on ideas of industrial paternalism (Nielson, 2000) and improvement (Billinge, 1996; Conway, 1991; Elliott, 2009), this thesis examines the public lives and civic presence of the later generations of the family which have been somewhat overlooked in comparison to the earlier members. It also investigates the public presence of the female members of the family by drawing on ideas of separate spheres ideology (Davidoff and Hall, 2002; Moore, 2016) and gendered notions of space (Price, 2009). Finally, it contributes to the body of literature that addresses the challenges geographers face when working in archives (Bressey, 2020; Hodder, 2017; McDonagh, 2017).

Qualitative data was collected from the digital archives of the British Newspaper Archives (BNA), the Wellcome Collection online archive and from the Derbyshire Record Office (DRO), home to the Strutt's family records collection. Qualitative content analysis was used to identify emerging themes and then a thematic approach was used to explore the civic life of the Strutts.

The findings reveal that the later generation were active and influential in civic spaces through their involvement in education, welfare of the locality and leisure activities of their tenantry and the wider population. They were also at the forefront of the public health debate on compulsory vaccination through their involvement in the local politics of vaccination. In addition, through social and civic welfare, the Strutt women entered traditionally male-dominated public spaces, contesting the ideology that middle-class Victorian women were confined to the private sphere and revealing how women could navigate these spaces to challenge gendered conceptions of space. Further studies of the women's presence in the newspapers would contribute to the body of literature working to find silenced, missing or overlooked voices (Bressey, 2020; McDonagh, 2017).

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I would like to thank both of my supervisors, Susanne Seymour and David Beckingham, for their ideas and advice throughout the project. This project underwent a variety of changes and took several different directions as it navigated a year of Covid-19 restrictions, and Susanne and David were both huge supporters of it despite the challenges faced.

This project would not have survived without the incredible project that has digitised millions of pages of historical newspapers which are available in the British Newspaper Archive. Conducting a project in a pandemic made archival research impossible at certain points throughout the year, so the availability of digitised newspapers enabled my historical research to continue.

When the Derbyshire Record Office was able to open, the staff were extremely thorough in ensuring the safety of visitors so that material could still be viewed whilst living through a pandemic. It really was wonderful to get back into the archives, and I would like to thank all the members of staff for their help.

A big thank you to my friends who rambled through Derbyshire with me when that was all we could do. Those few hours a week out of the house made the world of difference. Finally, to my family, who have always been the biggest support – thank you.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Research aim

This thesis aims to place the industrial family of the Strutts of Belper geographically to investigate the spaces the family addressed, navigated, and shaped between 1850 and 1899. The earlier members of the Strutt family are notable for their role as industrial pioneers and paternalists and their contribution to the ideas and actions of Enlightenment and improvement (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958; Elliott, 2009). This study investigates the neglected later generations of the family as industrialists and landowners, aiming to reveal how they shaped the spaces they traversed and agitated, both public and private, using online and physical archival material. It also aims to investigate the gendered notions of space to find the Strutt women in spaces of civility in the later generations (McDermid, 2009). Through the newspaper reports, thinking about the Strutts through the spaces of their citizenly practices, cut by classed and gendered norms, makes the papers not just spaces of record, but spaces of projection too. They show the work the Strutts did to promote their understanding of their place in civic society.

Physical archives have been made more inaccessible in the past few years due to the Covid-19 pandemic which has highlighted the challenges of archival work more intensely. This thesis reflects on a range of methodological challenges historical geographers face when using the archive, such as abundance and finding disempowered groups, contributing to a growing body of literature that addresses the problems of archival work (Bressey, 2020; Hodder, 2017; McDonagh, 2017). It also explores how the Strutts were interpreted in written published texts to investigate how the later generations were perceived by different authors in the varying spaces they occupied in relation to their position as mill owners and landowners. Finally, it examines the civic lives of the Strutt family using newspapers to reveal the elements of public life they showed concerns for and how this was portrayed to the public, drawing on literature on industrial paternalism (Nielsen, 2000; Grill, 2012) and improvement (Billinge, 1996; Conway, 1991; Elliott, 2009) to examine the later generation that came from a family of paternalists and social reformers. This also includes an investigation of the public lives of the Strutt women using a feminist historical geography approach which draws on ideas and critiques of separate spheres ideology (Davidoff and Hall, 2002; Moore, 2016) and gendered notions of space (Price, 2009). Despite the limited physical access to archival material due to the pressures of Covid-19, it was still possible to write historical geographies around the Strutt family from the themes emerging when working with a public newspaper record.

1.2. Introducing the Strutt Family

The Strutt family of Belper was headed by Jedediah Strutt who was born into a farming family from South Normanton, Derbyshire in 1726 (Power, 1999a). Jedediah was an important figure in the ‘industrial revolution’ as in 1757 his design, the “Derby Rib”, was patented which enabled ribbed knitting to be carried out by machine. He became partners with William Woollat, a hosier and his brother-in-law, and Samuel Need, a hosier of Nottingham. After moving to Derby, Jedediah owned two silk mills there by 1770. Strutt also became a partner of Richard Arkwright, inventor of the water spinning frame, after Arkwright had approached Strutt and Samuel Need for technical and financial support. They worked together at Cromford in Derbyshire from 1771 producing water powered, mechanically-spun cotton yarn (Fitton, 1989). Strutt built the first Belper cotton mill in 1776, followed by a series of others, and on his death in 1797 his three sons, William, George and Joseph, continued the running of the business which became W. G. J. Strutt Ltd (Hacker, 1960; Power, 1999a). The family built model factory settlements in Belper and Milford and were factory paternalists who provided housing, food, medical advice, schools, and churches to their workers (Cooper, 1983; Revill, 1999). Their paternalistic activities extended into Derby where Jedediah, Joseph and William lived for considerable parts of their lives and established a cotton mill in the 1790s (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). Their most notable contributions there were the Derbyshire General Infirmary – designed by William – and the Derby Arboretum – funded by Joseph (Elliott, 2009; Revill, 1999). These endeavours were proponents of Enlightenment progressivism and ideas of improvement (Daniels and Seymour, 1990) which will be discussed in greater depth in the literature review to investigate the changes the Strutt’s made that impacted social and spatial landscapes of Derbyshire through the economic and social transformations intimately connected by their various works.

In the nineteenth century some individual family members began to have less of a direct involvement with the cotton industry (Booth, 2018). For instance, William’s son, Edward Strutt, was a political figure and MP for Derby (1830-1848), Arundel (1851-1852) and Nottingham (1852-1856) (Fisher, 2009). In 1856 he was raised to peerage as 1st Baron Belper (UK Parliament, no date). Edward had a desire for learning, like his father, and studied at the University of Cambridge (Fisher, 2009). He was a partner in the family firm but did not take an active role in it. The family became as much gentry landowners as they were industrialists in the later generation with the family estates at Belper and Milford (Power, 1999b), and Edward Strutt’s Kingston estate in Nottinghamshire (Fisher, 2009). Nevertheless, some of the family remained involved with the management of the mills into the twentieth century. The English Sewing Cotton Co (later the English Sewing Company) formed in 1897 and incorporated the Strutts’ mills with others to protect these declining businesses against cheap foreign imports and strong competition in cotton manufacture (Belper Local History Group, 1998; Farnie, 1979). This marked the end of the longstanding dynasty of W. G. J. Strutt Ltd. Nonetheless, George Herbert

Strutt, the great-grandson of George Benson Strutt, lived in Belper and was active in the town's affairs in the early twentieth century (Booth, 2018; Power, 1999a). In 1904 he donated the River Gardens, in 1909 a school, in 1910 public baths, and in 1922 the Memorial Gardens to Belper. Therefore, the family had a longstanding association with contributions to civic society.

1.3. Rationale for project

The industrial and purportedly paternal activities of the early generations of Strutts - Jedediah and his sons - are well documented. The active role George Herbert Strutt played in Belper's civic affairs in the early-twentieth century is likewise well known (Booth, 2018; Power, 1999a). However, accounts of the family and business in the later nineteenth century are largely absent from secondary literature. For example, while the Belper Heritage and Character Assessment has a section on the historical development of Belper, the coverage of the Strutts ends in c. 1850 where it is stated that the "cotton industry continued under Jedediah Strutt's descendants" (AECOM, 2016: 17). Therefore, this study provides a geographical analysis of the spaces navigated by the later generations of Strutts, between 1850 and 1899, to investigate their civic presence as a family who inherited a significant intellectual, familial, and economic set of networks.

1.4. Change in focus due to Covid-19

The project initially aimed to investigate the Strutts through a greater emphasis on their relationship to the mills and the connections they had to the previous generation's ideas of Enlightenment and improvement with a focus on mill management. Through accessing physical archives in the Derbyshire Record Office (DRO), which holds the personal and business records of the family, the project was planned to focus more on mill management and the ideas of paternalism and improvement articulated by the Strutts in their own writings. However, the forced closure of the DRO because of the pandemic restricted access to personal and business correspondence, which would throw light on their ideas and practices in more detail. Therefore, an alternative method of research was required which resulted in the focus shifting to the digital newspaper repository of the British Newspaper Archive (BNA) which was more accessible, albeit with a cost to use which will be discussed in the methodology. This allowed for an investigation into the public portrayal of the Strutts, changing the focus from a private record to a public one.

1.5. Synopsis of methods

This thesis primarily draws upon material gathered from the newspaper repositories of the BNA and the travel guides on the Wellcome Collection online archive. It also analyses some material from the Strutt family collection at the DRO. The data from

the newspapers was analysed using qualitative content analysis which identified emerging themes. A thematic approach was then employed to explore the Strutts' presence in civic life. Geographers have been engaging in key debates around the methodological implications of working in physical and online archives, and the challenges these sites produce for archival research is further explored in Chapter Three.

1.6. Structure of thesis

This thesis consists of seven chapters. Chapter Two provides a review of the literature on industrial paternalism, the Strutts, Enlightenment and improvement, and the life of women in the Victorian period. It closes with an outline of the research questions that have been used to inform the study. Chapter Three explores the research approach, the methods used to collect the data from the archives, and how the sources were analysed. It identifies the challenges historical geographers face in using physical and online archives and highlights the challenges posed to this study. Chapter Four reflects on these core methodological challenges, contributing to historical geographers' debates around working in archives. Chapter Five explores the later Strutt generations and their connections to the mills to investigate how the family were perceived as paternalists and improvers in the spaces they occupied by travel writers, a newspaper reporter, and a *British Trade Journal* reporter. Chapter Six analyses the civic presence of male and female members of the Strutt family as revealed through newspaper articles in light of debates over paternalism, improvement and gendered space. It investigates the spaces they were associated with, their activities and how their presence was portrayed to the public. Finally, Chapter Seven presents the main findings in relation to the research questions and offers suggestions for further research.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

This chapter develops an understanding of the existing literature on industrial paternalism and Enlightenment and improvement progressivism in which the Strutts were embedded as factory masters and social reformers. It also provides a reading of the life of Victorian women and conflicting views around female confinement to the separate sphere ideology. The chapter firstly discusses industrial paternalism in the nineteenth century and how this led to the development of factory communities (Nielsen, 2000). Secondly, it details how the Strutts were active in the scientific culture of Derby and how, through the Derby Arboretum and General Infirmary, they promoted social and moral improvement in the middle and working classes (Elliott, 2009). Thirdly, it investigates gendered relations in the Victorian era, and to what extent women were confined to the separate sphere ideology (Davidoff and Hall, 2002; Moore, 2016). Finally, the chapter introduces the research questions which provided a focus for the collection of data.

2.2. Industrial Paternalism

According to Nielsen (2000: 59) industrial paternalism is partly viewed as “a system of non-anonymous personal relations between master and man (sic.), partly as a system where wage is paid in kind (housing, foods) rather than in cash and finally as a system with a certain degree of caring for the workers on the part of the paternalist”. Small and large factory communities developed in the second half of the eighteenth century as factories were situated in rural surroundings with little or no existing food supplies, housing, or amenities. These areas provided (water)power to work machines, space, and low-level land expenses for industrialists to establish these factory communities (Nielsen, 2000). Companies would provide their workers with food, schools, health care, a church, and more, most likely due to the lack of a welfare state with the paternalistic factory organisations adopting the role of provider of several welfare services (Ottosson *et al.*, 2020). As paternalists, the Strutt family in Belper transformed the village in the late-eighteenth and early-nineteenth century into a cotton factory community through the various welfare services and provisions for their workers. The Strutts built a school, a chapel, and an Anglican church; provided housing, food, and coal to their workers; and medical advice for female workers (Cooper, 1983).

But these paternalistic benefits also became management techniques to regulate and stabilise the local workforce with industrialists viewing the reproductive arrangements needed for their workers as vital to ensure worker participation in the labour force (Nielsen, 2000; Ottosson *et al.*, 2020; Reid, 1985). Paternalism in the late-nineteenth century was used to refer to the “strategic benevolence in hierarchical relationships”, such as that between factory owner and worker, whereby there was some form of benevolence and some form of restraint (Grill, 2012: 359). Receiving welfare from the company meant that workers were highly dependent on

the employer and had to pay the price of loyalty (Ottosson *et al.*, 2020). It was in the interests of the employer to invest in their workers' welfare beyond that of the factory to ensure that they participated in the production system (Jonas, 2009). Jonas argued that in the latter part of the nineteenth century paternalism in the period of manufacture evolved around company towns and communities that were self-contained. A private company (often owned by a single family) or single industry would dominate these spaces where paternalistic factory regimes would emerge. Whilst the dominance of the Strutts in Belper during the first half of the nineteenth century is well-documented, the role of the family in Belper in the late-nineteenth century is less well-known. Revill (1999) suggests that by the 1850s the Strutts – particularly Edward Strutt who was active in political life – had retreated from town life. Therefore, an investigation into the public life of the late-nineteenth century Strutts explores their activities and the spaces they moved in to understand their influence after that of the generations who created the factory community.

Belper was not the only place influenced by the Strutts, with Derby also experiencing the paternalistic attention of the family. In the first half of the nineteenth century Derby was instilled with the expectations and culture of industrial paternalism largely due to the Strutt family (Revill, 1999). The Strutts behaved as factory paternalists in Derby regarding the town as an “overgrown factory village” like Belper (Revill, 1999: 198). Strutt paternalism was displayed through two important acts. The first was the construction of the Derbyshire Infirmary which William Strutt designed having taken inspiration from Benthamite principles. The second creation of the Derby Arboretum was a model for rational recreation and gifted to the town when Joseph Strutt became first Mayor of Derby. These were important spaces that used ideas from Enlightenment scientific culture for the social and moral improvement of the middle and working classes.

2.3. The Strutts and Enlightenment and Improvement

The Enlightenment was a critical approach that allowed constructive action and thought (Hankins, 1985). Enlightenment ideas of reason, of the utility of science, and of moral progress have both a geography and a history and are placed in time and space (Withers and Livingstone, 1999). During the European Enlightenment period, learned academies, scientific societies, and field clubs were cultural innovations which grew up in a range of places (Livingstone, 2003). The idea that knowledge and science is ‘situated’ has become a recognised feature within the history of science and science studies (Withers and Livingstone, 1999). In the past, the places where science is practiced seemed to be of little consequence with some geographers exempting science from the “imperatives of spatial significance” (Livingstone, 2003: 2). More recently, literature has questioned the transcendental and universal nature of science, instead offering an alternative that science is socially made and conditioned by its local geographical circumstances and historical context (Withers, 2005).

Livingstone (2003: 11) states that “place is essential to the generation of knowledge” as scientific theory is mobile, unstable, and varies from place to place due to spatial forces shaping meaning. The consumption of knowledge can be experienced differently as ideas travel between places and move between people and cultures (Livingstone, 2003). As knowledge migrates, it does not necessarily replicate, and as ideas circulate, they are translated and transformed because representations are encountered by people differently in different environments. For example, geographers have argued that the geographical circulation and distribution of books is significant in understanding how the ideas and knowledge they hold is disseminated, and how the interpretation and reception of books is spatially varied (Keighren, 2013). Livingstone (2005: 392) signals that as science concerns the transfer of knowledge, the modes of transmission, and the acts of communication, location is therefore significant in hermeneutic encounters by “attending to the spaces where readers and texts are brought into dialogue”. Work on the geography of reading has revealed that the varied practices of reading are key components in the making of natural knowledge for the nineteenth century (Withers, 2005). Reception studies have considered how reading helped the formation of scientific communities through hermeneutic practices.

Scientific associations were crucial in exchanging ideas and developing public Enlightenment scientific culture (Elliott, 2009). In mainland Europe, Enlightenment and improvement were synonymous in small and short-lived economic societies. Towns were a space for improvement, bettering the lives of those who wanted to find happiness through industry, knowledge, skill, and science. Derby was a specific site where Enlightenment ideas were used to disperse scientific knowledge and ideas of improvement. In Derby, conceptions of Enlightenment were motivated by industrialisation and natural philosophy. Literary and Philosophical societies aided in developing and distributing scientific ideas which were associated with a progressive culture (Elliott, 2009). Erasmus Darwin, a physician, natural philosopher, and key thinker in the Midlands Enlightenment, inspired the Derby Philosophical Society and together with William Strutt and ten others founded it in 1784 (Elliott, 2009; Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). It was a regional organisation and a significant British scientific association (Elliott, 2009).

Elliott (2009) suggests that the Strutts were amongst the most influential political and scientific leaders in Derbyshire between the 1780s and 1840s. William and Joseph Strutt were members of the Derby Philosophical Society, which brought together industrialists, manufacturers, gentry, medical men, and other individuals. The Derby Philosophical Society formed a scientific library and was used as a forum to discuss the latest developments in chemistry and electricity. At the forefront of national campaigns and local improvement, the Derby philosophers were inspired by Enlightenment progressivism, and they promoted urban improvement for economic and social benefits, striving to attain support from improvement commissioners, local Tories, and the Corporation. Inspiration provided by Enlightenment science resulted in members of the Derby Philosophical Society taking a lead in the political

societies and rising to social and political eminence through their interest in technological and scientific innovation. For example, William Strutt was interested in the use of iron for construction and used iron castings and pillars in the Belper mills to create a fire-resistant structure.

Scientific education was also of importance to the Derby philosophers as they believed it would serve crucial economic and moral objectives and promote socio-political progress (Elliott, 2009). Experiential and empirical learning was advocated, emphasising the importance of individual experience and use of mathematical and scientific observation, equipment, and objects. The Derby philosophers promoted civic scientific culture through the Derby Mechanics' Institute which was founded in response to political and social tensions intensified by poor health, poor sanitation, and rapid immigration (Elliott, 2009). The Strutts, alongside their philosophical acquaintances, provided strong backing to the Mechanics' Institute which was relatively successful in its endeavour to promote scientific education for the public, albeit more so for the middle-class than the working-class (Elliott, 2009).

In 1808, the Derby philosophers founded the Derby Literary and Philosophical Society which was perceived to be a more public institution than the older Philosophical Society (Elliott, 2009). The new society was a public platform for science, allowing the promotion of scientific education as a method of encouraging social improvement. Membership included Anglican and Dissenting clergy, tutors, cotton merchants, maltsters, brewers, and medical men, which was more diverse than that of the Derby Philosophical Society. Members of the Derby Literary and Philosophical Society aimed to promote original, intellectual, and scientific work and maintain a public platform for science. This was carried out by: hosting frequent meetings to read and discuss papers; advocating the industrial and commercial use of science; equipping a laboratory for the purpose of investigation and education; attempting to use the society to create scientific networks nationally and internationally; and finally, promoting public lectures. The society was paramount in establishing science in the public culture of Derby.

During the eight years the Derby Literary and Philosophical Society was independent, the Strutts and their associates focused on campaigning, which included campaigning against taxation, in favour of parliamentary reforms, and for the abolition of the Test and Corporations Acts (Elliott, 2009). They believed that promoting public scientific culture played an important role in achieving dissenting political and social objectives, and they were prominent in reform campaigns. The Strutts were Unitarians and key political reformers who were significantly present when campaigning with the Derby Philosophical Society. In 1802, William Strutt was appointed president of the Derby Philosophical Society after Darwin died. Furthermore, Joseph Strutt became the first head of the reformed corporation and mayor in 1835 of the newly elected town council, and Edward Strutt became Baron Belper.

2.3.1. The Derby Arboretum

Amongst the middle class during the 1820s and 1830s, there was an increasing sense that recreation should be linked with improvement (Conway, 1991). Moralists, reformers, and others were interested in popular recreations and the term 'rational recreation' denoted activities these groups approved of. The Victorians shaped recreation by giving it a role and a geography (Billinge, 1996). The aim was to design programmes that delivered recreation for those who required its inspiring characteristics, promoting 'rational' recreation to control "working class discontent thought to be manifest in the riots, demonstrations and strikes of urban industrial England" (Elliott, 2001: 147). The Derby Arboretum was intended as a rational recreation institute, aiming to promote scientific education and middle-class civic identity (Elliott, 2009). The amelioration of social problems through improving the morals and intellect of the working-class as a response to the perceived brutality of working-class pleasures, such as the Derby football, was also a focus (Elliott, 2001). As a Liberal municipal project, it was inspired by Joseph Strutt and the Derby philosophers who endorsed the benefits of rational recreation for social progress (Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2016). Joseph Strutt funded the Arboretum and J. C. Loudon designed it (Daniels and Seymour, 1990; Elliott, 2009). Strutt acknowledged that the 1836 Enclosure Act, exempting common fields from enclosure if they occupied space within a specific radius of large towns, helped to inspire the Derby Arboretum's creation (Conway, 1991; Elliott, 2001; Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2016). Strutt decided that there was no wasteland or commons near Derby available as an open space for recreation due to the fast growth of Derby, therefore he decided to appropriate a piece of land for the purpose of recreation (Conway, 1991). Loudon's early career involved designs for landed estates in the countryside but his attention then shifted to the urban context, he protested against the enclosure of common lands and became a strong advocate of the creation of urban public parks (Elliott, 2001).

Strutt and Loudon intended the Arboretum to reflect their shared educational, scientific, and social objectives (Elliott, 2009). They shared progressive Enlightenment beliefs, valuing scientific education and institutions for all social classes, as well as the social improvement of the working-class. With the arboretum, Joseph Strutt wanted to provide a space for those whose work had helped create his wealth (Elliott, 2009). He believed that wealth carried social obligations and duties as well as privileges, a perception somewhat inspired by his Unitarianism (Elliott, 2001). In his speech at the opening ceremony, Joseph Strutt emphasised the rational, recreational, and political objectives of the Arboretum (Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2016). As a utilitarian venture, it improved the environment, provided instruction, and gave pleasure to those who visited it. Admission fees were charged to help maintain the Arboretum, and it was only free to all classes of the public on Sundays and Wednesdays, therefore it was a semi-public park (Conway, 1991). It took until 1882 for free access to be given to the Arboretum. Elliott (2009: 254) argues that the Arboretum can be interpreted as a "paternalistic attempt to regulate the leisure

activities of the middle and working classes". Therefore, the Arboretum represented a space of regulated social improvement by providing education and pleasure for the middle and working classes whilst regulating their use of space.

2.3.2. The Derbyshire General Infirmary

As a medical institute, the Derbyshire General Infirmary (1810) encapsulated many of the characteristics of the Enlightenment theoretical and institutional medical revolution (Elliott, 2000). Its design was significant as "it united some of the greatest preoccupations of European late-Enlightenment architecture" (Elliott, 2009: 166). The Infirmary's design applied ideas from medicine and natural philosophy to the reform of public institutions and maintained control and power through reorganising space. Reflected in its design were many Enlightenment philanthropic concerns connected to the systems of labour control and power established by businessmen and manufacturers. William Strutt inspired the creation of the Derbyshire Infirmary, and he used his previous experience and knowledge of industrial technology from designing mills and bridges to reform the Infirmary by using fire-resistant material for its construction (Elliott, 2009; Elliott, Watkins and Daniels, 2016). The Infirmary was an original example of how novel industrial technology was applied to medical institutions for moral and clinical reasons, capturing the changes in Enlightenment institutions and medicines (Elliott, 2000; 2009). Strutt corresponded on engineering matters with the Bentham brothers and used their Panopticon-type design in the Belper Round Mill (Elliott, 2009). Bentham's plan of the Panopticon used iron and glass structures encouraged by institutional control as it potentially maximised security, strength, transparency, light, and central control. This influenced the design of the Infirmary as a glass and iron structure was used for the domed roof, iron used for the beams and pillars, and iron-framed windows.

Enlightenment architecture was concerned with health, population, and urban living problems the socio-economic changes brought by urban flowering and population growth in the eighteenth century (Elliott, 2009). Urban elites had a growing concern for the health of urban populations; and Enlightenment philosophers were faced with the problem of maintaining control over the labour force and optimising their utility, whilst preventing undue contact, physical proximity, and overcrowding (Elliott, 2000; 2009). Known for harbouring disease, prisons and hospitals became spaces to develop economic systems of control that omitted violence or brutal restraint. Hospitals isolated sick people from the labouring population in good health, a task that philanthropists and philosophers, such as Bentham, recognised needed economic and efficient control (Elliott, 2009). The Infirmary achieved this by providing automatic flushing toilets and a thermo-ventilation system which provided self-sufficient wings; as well as controlling patient movement and isolating infection by positioning small wards with separate toilet provisions around a central staircase. The Derbyshire Infirmary was a model for many other medical institutes, with various physicians, philosophers, writers and more touring the building for inspiration, with

the Infirmary providing “practical demonstrations of the economy and efficacy of the application of industrial technology to domestic economy” (Elliott, 2009: 177).

As demonstrated, the male members of the Strutt family were prominent in Derby scientific culture through their contributions of Enlightenment and improvement ideas. However, female members of the family were also interested in the sciences and were involved in scientific culture (Elliott, 2009). For example, William’s daughters, Anne, Frances, and Elizabeth were honorary members of the Mechanics’ Institute and the Derbyshire Horticultural Society. Furthermore, in 1843 George Benson Strutt’s daughter-in-law, Susannah Strutt, provided fossils to the Town and County Museum exhibition. Early meetings of the Derby Philosophical Society were held in homes and feeling discontent in their roles of making tea at these events, Darwin devised experiments adapted for the women to enjoy. Nonetheless, scientific topics were generally discussed between males and Elliott (2009: 231) concludes that in Derby “[w]omen were still regarded primarily as audience for science rather than doers of science”. The lives of middle-class Victorian women were considerably different to that of men.

2.4. Life of Victorian women

In the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century the social structure of Britain was marked by distinct classes resulting from capitalist development and the process of industrialisation accelerating, contrasting to former hierarchies that were based on rank (Vaid, 1985). Class formations and capitalist production changed the lives of both women and men, and the production process resulted in specialisation, economic activity becoming concentrated outside of the home, and a division of labour. Socially, the home became separated from the workplace as industrialisation led to the family ceasing to be a component of economic production. This was especially relevant in relation to textiles as before the industrial revolution and growth of factories, they were made by hand in the home (Farago, 2017). A narrower and more specialised role occurred for the family of the middle and working-class in areas not directly feeding into the capitalist economy (Vaid, 1985). Specialisation revolved around the moral, the spiritual, and the domestic which were placed at the woman’s feet to deliver.

Along with the more specialised and narrower role of the home, a division of labour between men and women occurred which developed the ideology of ‘separate spheres’, whereby the men’s realm was the public sphere of business, government, and politics, and the women’s realm the private sphere of home (Steinbach, 2012; Vaid, 1985). The distinct gender roles the separate sphere ideology promoted were the dominant gender codes for the late-eighteenth and nineteenth century and a powerful social force, but they were not universal, and most historians acknowledge that they remained mainly confined to the middle classes (Steinbach, 2012). The ideal of the ‘angel in the home’ represented a mother who was self-sacrificing, devoted, and pure and became part of the “quintessentially geographical doctrine of

‘separate spheres’” (Moore, 2016: 151). The domestic ideology was not adopted by the population that fell below the comfortable middle-class socio-economic level, partly due to families needing women’s earnings to survive. Working-class women had more in common with working-class men than they did with the “‘angel in the home’ ideal” of middle-class women (Price, 2009: 331). Working-class women were often required to perform both domestic and commercial labour, going to work whilst also maintaining the domestic space of the home (Murdoch, 2014).

As textile production moved out of the home and into factories, transforming the space of production from the home to the factory, working-class women entered these spaces to participate in the production of textiles (Morgan, 1997). For example, in Belper working-class women participated in the labour force at the Strutts’ mills on the winding machines (Belper North Mill, 2021), therefore the separate sphere ideology fails to capture the lived experience of working women. Nonetheless, working-class women had to contend with gender ideologies associating women with domesticity which informed employer decisions (Morgan, 1997). In contrast, the employment of women in the cotton industry on a large scale enabled them to participate more in workplace struggles, and the shared work experience between men and women allowed the latter to exercise more power in the family. McDowell and Massey (1984) argue that place is important for the acceptance of societal positions by men and women. The north-west of England cotton towns, particularly Lancashire, have a long history of paid labour for women outside of the home as during the industrial revolution women were employed as weavers. Whereas in the coal mining areas of Durham, the separation between men as breadwinners and women as domestic labourers was almost total. Women were excluded from this male world of work, which, in turn, excluded them from local social and political life. Therefore, in nineteenth century Britain, different regions with different industries significantly impacted the level of access working-class women had to the labour market. The cotton industry enabled women to earn a wage for themselves, but in the Victorian middle-class this caused a moral outrage (McDowell and Massey, 1984).

Victorian beliefs relating to gender roles idealised the home “as a feminized space of consumption, socialization, and respite from the rigors of capitalism” (Price, 2009: 331). Middle-class writers by the 1830s and 1840s were publishing novels, poems and household guides noting the domestic life of women to promote the “ideal of women’s natural mission and characteristics”, stemming from their roles as wives and mothers (Murdoch, 2014: 80). Women were considered more nurturing and suitable to caring for home, children, and husband, and seen to be unfit for the world of business and politics (Steinbach, 2012). The private domestic sphere constrained female behaviour, while men could access and enjoy the public sphere of the arts and government (Elliott, 2009). Whilst this division of labour was not a new phenomenon, and the idea of separate spheres present before the 1780s, the transfer of the economic and other functions from the home typically left middle-class women financially dependent on men (Davidoff and Hall, 2002; Vaid, 1985).

Feminist geographers have engaged with separate spheres ideology to understand women as social subjects through the interconnections between the sphere of reproduction and sphere of production (Rose, 1993). Through separate spheres ideology, Davidoff and Hall (2002) suggest that middle-class women were excluded from paid work and situated in the domestic sphere which was elevated as a moral space. Constructions of masculinity and femininity were key to building this moral order that separated middle-class men and women and resulted in the emergence of a gendered concept of class. By linking the story of gender and the story of class, Davidoff and Hall (2002: xviii) insisted on the importance of notions of home and family, and masculinity and femininity to “the mainstream narratives of national history”. Whilst Davidoff and Hall (2002: xvi) asserted that separate spheres “became the common-sense of the middle-class”, they argue that a narrative consumed solely by the development of separate spheres misinterprets their intention to present an argument in which the material and ideological had equal agency (Steinbach, 2012). The separate sphere ideology was fractured, and there were crossings of the boundaries in material and imagined forms (Davidoff and Hall, 2002). These included independent women who made claims for themselves by using the language of their sphere; women who were employed in the supposed private sphere of the home as domestic servants; as well as men who failed to provide for their families, breaking the mould of the male’s role to provide economically. The separate sphere ideology was not always adhered to obediently, with separate spheres often overtly and covertly challenged (Steinbach, 2012).

Separate spheres started to become partially deconstructed through nascent feminism in the mid to late-nineteenth century (Davidoff and Hall, 2002). Feminism was constructed on a sense of grievance and the exclusion women felt from the public sphere with the consequences of this prompting their demand for entry to the professions, citizenship rights, and education. However, contemporaries were concerned that if women, the traditional homemakers, were allowed access to education, legal and political privileges, and employment, then the family, home, and thus society would suffer (Vaid, 1985). This led to organised feminist action through new groupings such as the Langham Place group which was a struggle organised by middle-class women fighting for the eradication of women’s confinement to the domestic sphere (Rendall, 2005; Vaid, 1985). They practised a liberal feminist politics which negotiated gender and class tensions, paving a legacy of respectability and moderation for future feminist generations. Campaigns for female suffrage alongside female participation in literary and scientific culture were associated with dissent (Elliott, 2009). Therefore, separate spheres was an unstable concept with the public and private sphere vulnerable and permeable to manipulation at the levels of both reality and rhetoric (Steinbach, 2012).

Geography, history, and politics scholars have noted that the gendered geography associated with the public/private divide did not reflect the lives women lived in reality (Moore, 2016). During the late-nineteenth century working-class women joined cooperative movements and trade unions, whilst middle-class women

participated in social and civic welfare work with over half a million women by the 1890s working in social inspection. Therefore, women were becoming increasingly politicised. For the Strutts, the male members of the family managed the mills - which employed working-class women - with the female members participating very little in the family business. However, the female members were not necessarily confined to the home as separate spheres ideology would suggest. The Strutt women were present in public life as they either attended events with their husbands, by themselves with their own endeavours, as demonstrated through accounts in the *Derby Mercury* newspaper, or through their participation in Derby's scientific culture (Elliott, 2009). Therefore, the extent to which the separate spheres ideology solely confined middle-class women to the home is questionable. There is a complex gender play occurring that whilst middle-class women were less present in spaces of production, they could be present in public spaces. Geographically, a separation of public and private does not solely concern distinct spheres, but different spaces.

The division between public and private has been a concept which scholars have critically engaged with, not only in the past, but the present too. Seen by the employment of women in the cotton industry but not in mining in the nineteenth century (McDowell and Massey, 1984), geographers have shown that questions of geography are fundamental to the transformation of gender relations. Furthermore, using a feminist historical geography approach, Moore (2018: 1) argues that historical geography provides methodological tools to enable the use of the past "as a form of female power to engage with the inequalities that women still face". She suggests that the expectations that Victorian women be devoted to the family in the private sphere as passive beings who are too fragile for public life is still occurring today in the 'Victorian present'. She evidences the exposure of Hollywood's sexual assault instances and the #MeToo movement in 2017 as a poignant example of the challenges women still face. The 2017 worldwide Women's Marches protesting about abortion rights and equal pay demonstrated that there is still a long way to go before gender equality is achieved. Therefore, the gendered politics of place and space is an important aspect brought to the sub-discipline by feminist historical geographies.

2.5. Research Questions

Having examined how the Strutt family made an impact across the spatial landscape of Derbyshire, and the economic and social transformations intimately connected by their various works as paternalists and urban social and moral reformers, this thesis questions how the Strutts' actions at the Belper mills, Infirmary, and Derby Arboretum were perceived by various writers in the late nineteenth century? Investigating the perception of the family through their industrial history analyses how the spaces they occupied shaped the projection of the family onto public readers in the late-nineteenth century.

The thesis also asks the question: how were the Strutt family active in civic life as displayed through the newspapers? Examining the civic presence and life of the later generation of the Strutt family in the late-nineteenth century gives insight into the lesser-known members of the family and the ways in which they were active in civic life. Furthermore, considering the contested separate spheres ideology that confined middle-class women to the private, domestic sphere, the thesis investigates the public life of the Strutt women, exploring the gendered notions of space in the later nineteenth century.

Finally, due to the impacts of the Covid-19, the thesis also addresses a question that unfolded during the research process: that is, by reflecting on the challenges of archival research, how does the process of working in physical and online archives, in search of the Strutts, contribute to geographers' conversations on doing archival research? The following chapter reflects on key concerns for geographers working in archives, which are then applied in Chapter Four to the research conducted for this thesis in relation to the archival work. Chapter Three also explores the research approach used to answer the research questions and provides an assessment of the methods of data collection and analysis.

3. Methodology

3.1. Introduction

This chapter discusses the methods used to investigate the Strutt family's engagements with and impacts on civic spaces, and the geographically informed tactics they deployed. It evaluates the use of physical archives and the challenges of fragments, power systems, absence, and abundance geographers face in them. It then reviews the promise of digital archives, with a particular focus on the digitisation of newspapers, before outlining the problems of access, absence, and abundance. The next section introduces the data collected and provides a background to the sources. Finally, the methods used to analyse the data are discussed, outlining the use of qualitative content analysis and a thematic approach when analysing newspaper articles.

3.2. Research Approach

Historical geography analyses aspects of the past indirectly using archival, visual, and textual techniques to examine phenomena after they occurred (Baker, 1997; Heffernan, 2020). This project has drawn on material from both online and physical archives as the foundation for research. Initially, online archives were the main source of research as the Covid-19 pandemic affected the access to physical archives. Online archives have many benefits to research in an increasingly digital era (Bressey, 2020; Hodder, 2017); however, they also pose challenges. For example, the abundance in online archives is a problem historical geographers must face (Hodder, 2017). Therefore, this chapter discusses the benefits and challenges of working with online archives, in particular newspaper archives, as well as physical archives that I was able to access when they reopened.

3.2.1. Impacts of Covid-19

Starting a research project during the Covid-19 pandemic undoubtedly brought some challenges. The value of browsing shelves for relevant books was impossible for large periods due to the pandemic, which, in some instances, was a hindrance when trying to find material in the East Midlands Collection (EMC) within Manuscripts and Special Collections at the University of Nottingham. This is because the collection consists of pamphlets, periodicals, books, and other materials on the historic counties in the East Midlands which are not available digitally. Therefore, being able to visit the collections in person, and physically sifting through the material would have been useful to see if there was relevant material beyond that found through a keyword search via the online search. As this was not possible, I emailed the EMC team to ask if they could help with my search. Archivists and librarians know their collections (Ogborn, 2010), so it was helpful to contact them, and they provided a list of potentially useful documents. Many have begun to question the value of open shelves within university libraries as increasing amounts of information is digitised

(Wilders, 2017). Arguably, the necessity of browsing shelves freely should not be taken for granted as it provides one with the opportunity to find information and material that might have been missed if solely searched for in online library searches.

The uncertainty around access to the physical archive of the Derbyshire Record Office (DRO) because of its five-month closure due to national lockdowns and a UK Government tiering system in response to the pandemic (Department of Health and Social Care, 2021) increased my need to find alternative sources of material. Online archives grew in importance for my research, and the British Newspaper Archive (BNA) and the Wellcome Collection's online resources provided material when access to the physical archive was impossible. This required a reformulation of the research questions as the focus of the data collection changed to analysis of the geographies of the Strutts as represented in newspapers and tour guides, with the re-opening of the DRO in Spring 2021 contributing to the material gathered from the BNA.

When the DRO reopened in April 2021 it was with restrictions on access. It was only possible to book 2.5-hour slots to consult only pre-ordered material. This created a struggle between ordering too much or too little for the time given. It also reduced the possibility of finding data through serendipity in the archives. Featherstone (2006: 594) suggests that serendipity leads to finding useful material in archives, often more so than rational searching because when in the archive, discovering "material which can be made to speak may itself be subject to a high degree of contingency". For example, Michel Foucault used French national libraries in unorthodox ways by reading diagonally, through a range of centuries and civilisations, arts, and sciences, which led to the unusual juxtapositions he arrived at assembling new "possibilities to radically re-think and re-classify received wisdom" (Featherstone, 2016: 594). Therefore, the reduced opportunity to physically look at material potentially limited the discoveries I might have made.

3.2.2. Archives

As a historical record an archive provides researchers with access to a wide range of original primary source material (Harris, 2018). Archival work provides a base of evidence and creates a basis for defining key questions around historical, social, cultural, political, and economic concerns (Ventresca and Mohr, 2017). Using archives enables researchers to investigate alternative insights into the character and nature of past structures, processes, and events. However, the archive is a fragmentary and partial collection of historical material, it is not history but a view into the past through surviving documents (Black, 2010; Harris, 2018; Hodder, 2017). Conducting archival work has been problematised by geographers due to the fragmentary nature of the archive (Hodder, 2017). However, geographers have been embracing these fragments by piecing together lives, stories, and accounts from more than one collection, or by using oral histories alongside archival material (Mills, 2013). By actively seeking out the cracks in archives and investigating fragments, geographers have used them to "explain the incomplete nature of our lives, states,

institutions and everyday geographies” (Mills, 2013: 704). Therefore, creatively engaging with the fragments found in archives has enabled geographers to explore archival material in new ways, bringing the fragments to life.

Metaphors of absence and partiality have become prevalent when discussing the incomplete nature of archives within geographical historical research. A historical approach is restricted by the absence of certain groups in the archive and the uneven survival of sources (Craggs, 2016). Whilst they are sites of memory, archives are also spaces of forgetting, erasure, and loss, where the voices of some are silenced or silent (Craggs, 2016; Moore, 2010). This often makes it challenging to find archival material produced by or relating to people who were disempowered historically as there is often a dominance of materials that reflect the values and views of those who exercised, political, economic, and social power (Craggs, 2016; Harris, 2018). Mills (2013) suggests that the visibility of women and other marginalised groups varies between individual archives. I found that the Strutt women, though part of an elite family, were largely absent from the Strutt family collections in the DRO. The absence of the Strutt women I faced will be investigated further in Chapter Four to highlight these issues of absence researchers encounter and potential solutions to overcome these challenges – including the use of online databases.

Scholars in the late 1980s were concerned that gender was being neglected as a key social structure which resulted in historical geography disseminating an inaccurate construction of the past (Rose and Ogborn, 1988). Engaging with the politics of gender since then, historical geography has gained a political edge, with feminist scholars placing women into the discipline’s history (Moore, 2018). Feminist historical geography “asks geographical questions of historical material and is informed by feminist theories, approaches and methodologies” (McDonagh, 2018: 1564). A distinct focus for feminist geographers is women’s lives and the lives of other marginalised groups, as well as the ways in which space and gender, in both the past and present, are co-constituted (McDonagh, 2018). The work of feminist geographers has led to cultural and historical geographers reclaiming home - which was typically ignored as domestic, private, mundane, and feminised - as a spatial imaginary and material site worthy of critical consideration.

Whilst absence is one challenge faced by those working in archives, abundance in the archives is also an issue (Hodder, 2017). Reflecting on the practice of historical research requires a greater awareness of the challenges geographers encounter, especially since digitisation of records is making some material more accessible (Hodder, 2017; Lorimer, 2009; Rosenzweig, 2003). The extent of archival material is one of the greatest challenges geographers have when working in the archive as the amount of potentially relevant material can be huge (Hodder, 2017; McGeachan *et al.*, 2012).

Scholars rely on archival catalogues when deciding what material to explore (Dunley and Pugh, 2021), however these documents can present challenges. Some archival records are indexed and catalogued well with detailed descriptions provided of the

material within the archives (Harris, 2018). However, other archival collections are poorly indexed and catalogued, if at all, and some historical societies, libraries and museums have material that requires indexing. This can make it difficult to pinpoint what one will find useful or not. Parts of the catalogue for the Strutt family records is lacking detailed descriptions making it challenging when attempting to locate relevant material, further explored in Chapter Four.

3.2.3. Online archives

Digital tools facilitate the discovery of historical research topics and shape the histories that researchers can write about (Solberg, 2012). Digital technologies are increasingly governing the realm of potential research, allowing for new interpretations of material previously overlooked, forgotten or that is inaccessible - especially due to distance (Maurantonio, 2014). Advances in technology have signalled a new era for historical research, as previously, researchers have been influenced by the ability to access archives and travel to distant locations which has constrained potential research. Online archives allow researchers to gain knowledge outside the more traditional spaces used in the past and enable access to social data that was unavailable before (Friday, 2015; Harris, 2018). Therefore, some researchers argue that the “archive can no longer be limited to a place that holds a finite collection of objects” (Harris, 2018: 46). As a result, the archive is a space that is continuously growing, creating, and recreating (Foster, 2004; Harris, 2018).

The vast quantity of material available in the digitised archive can be overwhelming and, consequently, brings challenges when using these sites (Friday, 2015). With a plethora of material to search through it makes it difficult for the researcher to know if all the relevant material has been found in the archive, especially if certain groups are difficult to find. Therefore, the researcher is required to engage in innovative and intuitive ways of thinking and decision-making to allow the potential of new discoveries. Bressey (2020) encountered negation, silences, and absences in her search of nineteenth century newspapers for people of colour working in forms of domestic service. However, Bressey identified that the advertisement sections of British newspapers were an archival space where one could find ‘coloured’ workers by using the terminology of the period being researched, despite the ethical challenges it presented. She used filtering systems in these sections which revealed individuals who worked as butlers, nurses, cooks and entertainers. Bressey discovered material of relevance which would previously have been missed if she had not challenged these absences and used an innovative way to find these individuals. Therefore, it is crucial for scholars working with digital archives to challenge these databases to allow the opportunity to make new discoveries.

Despite a large amount of material now digitised, there is also a considerable amount that is not, particularly collections in provincial archives. My own research has shown that certain material can only be accessed in physical format in the archive. The Strutt family papers and business records I hoped to access were only

available at the DRO, demonstrating that in an increasingly digitised world, there is still a need to access records in person. Furthermore, it might be thought that digitisation overcomes the physical fragility of conventional archives. However, digital sources have an intrinsic fragility due to information being duplicated, altered or its origin being unclear, formats becoming unreadable, or lack of clarity as to who their owner is making it uncertain as to who has responsibility to preserve the material (Hodder, 2017). Nevertheless, digital archives are increasingly providing new opportunities for research with the digitisation of newspapers being one prominent way.

3.2.4. Newspaper Archives

Newspaper archives for scholars across the social sciences and humanities are a key resource as a subject to study, as a source of knowledge, and as a way of investigating broader political, social, and cultural trends (Deacon, 2007). Newspapers reflect the cultural and social values of a specific time and place and frequently hold information that is unavailable anywhere else (Tanacković *et al.*, 2014; Vella, 2008). Some scholars consult newspapers solely for the political record with few recognising the wider significance of investigating the role the press had in shaping and reflecting society (Knudson, 1993). Knudson argues that the past should be concerned with what individuals believed was happening, as disclosed to them through mass communication, not solely what actually happened in a specific place or time. Newspapers document how reporters and editors organised and displayed information and reveal how they filtered or disregarded potential news reports (Vella, 2008). Consequently, the actions of those reading the newspapers could have been influenced by their perception of events resulting in a change to the historical outcome (Knudson, 1993). This makes newspapers primary sources for scholars who are aiming to explore public opinion as newspapers employ their own reality as facilitators of social change or barriers of repression.

Newspaper digitisation has claimed to provide academic research with a source of data that allows easy access for researchers, enabling them to interact with material at any time (Friday, 2015). Digitised newspapers, as part of the digital turn, are increasingly becoming available to researchers in vast quantities (Bressey, 2020). Newspaper digitisation has allowed the expansion of source materials and promises to cut research time as searches for information can be conducted at a quicker pace as time-consuming manual searches are no longer required (Maurantonio, 2014). A greater coverage of articles can be achieved in a shorter amount of time manual searches take due to the capability of search terms to scan through large collections. However, finding what a researcher wants in the material a digital search generates can still be a time-consuming task, as I have found when searching the BNA for articles on the Strutts. This is because many results can be produced, over a thousand in my search, which is a considerable amount of data to analyse. Therefore, whilst it might be quicker to find potential data to analyse, it is not

necessarily quicker when analysing if datasets are available within a few clicks (Deacon, 2007).

Geographers are confronted with practical challenges in the face of an abundance of archival material, especially with the methodological demands the digital age brings (Hodder, 2017). Large datasets generated when searching in newspaper archives can make meaningful analysis using traditional methods unattainable for individuals (Bressey, 2020). Therefore, it is crucial that parameters are set when searching for material so that results are concentrated into a meaningful sample (Friday, 2015). Using advanced searches and proximity operators to refine search terms helps to achieve a more focused result which should provide a more useful body of material to work with. However, Friday emphasises that refining search terms fails to overcome the problem of missing issues within the database, and the lack of accuracy in OCR (optical character recognition). Therefore, it is important to not assume that all the available data has been gathered when conducting a keyword search. Furthermore, the abundance of material in newspaper archives is not a solution if there are voices missing from these datasets in the first place (Bressey, 2020).

3.3. Collection of data

3.3.1. The Strutt family collections in the Derbyshire Record Office

Before this project began, when I was researching potential sources relating to the Strutt family of Belper for my undergraduate dissertation, the National Archives catalogue provided a gateway to the discovery of the business records on W. G. J. Strutt Ltd housed in the DRO. With further research, I discovered the work Fitton and Wadsworth (1958) had conducted on the Strutts after the English Sewing Cotton Company brought the business records to Fitton's attention. The records were found in the West Mill at Belper and were transferred to the University of Manchester where Professor Fitton studied the documents to investigate the growth of the early cotton factory system. These records¹ are now located at the DRO, having been donated in 2008 from the Manchester Archives and Local Studies (Derbyshire Record Office, 2021). Studying these documents for my undergraduate dissertation led me to find collections pertaining to the private lives of the Strutt family more specifically, providing an opportunity to investigate the lives of the Strutts both in relation to the mills and beyond them. The collections I have engaged with are described in Table 1 using information provided about each collection in the DRO's online catalogue. A table of the individual records consulted can be found in Table 1.

¹ W G and J Strutt Ltd of Belper, cotton spinners D6948

Table 1 Collections pertaining to the Strutt family of Belper located in the Derbyshire Record Office

| Reference no. | Title | Date | Creator | Organisation type | Extent | Custodial History | Acknowledgments |
|---------------|--|----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|---|
| D2943 | Strutt family of Belper | 1814-20th cent | Strutt family of Belper | Family and estate | Unknown | Donated by a descendent of Jedediah Strutt in 1986 | Catalogued by a county archivist (September 2009) |
| D3638 | English Sewing Cotton Company Ltd and predecessors | c1836-1977 | English Sewing Cotton Company Limited | Business - Commerce and Manufacturing | 3 boxes, 1 outsize volume, 1 object | Records deposited in July 1992 | Catalogued by a county archivist (May 2008) |
| D3772 | Strutt family of Belper | [1541]-1988 | Strutt family of Belper | Family, Estate and Personal Papers | 31.25 shelves | Deposited by Strutt Estate Office 1993-2000 with further items deposited by the family (2015) and the Estate Trustees (2019) | Unknown |
| D6948 | W G and J Strutt Ltd of Belper, cotton spinners | 1771 - 1935 | English Sewing Cotton Company Limited | Business – commerce and manufacturing | 53 boxes and 80 outsize volumes | Donated from the Manchester Archives and Local Studies | Catalogued by an archivist (Nov 2008) |

As demonstrated in Table 1, the date range for each collection spans a considerable number of years which meant that much material in these collections would be irrelevant for the period studied. This is also reflected in the extent of each collection, which is considerably large, therefore it was important to have a clear focus when choosing material to order. I first began visiting the DRO in October 2020 at the beginning of this project as the uncertainty around another potential lockdown in winter 2020/21 was ever looming. Being at the start of the project, when the focus was more on mill management, I chose to investigate material concerning labour within the mills, such as records of work, number of employees,

and wages paid, as well as a few records on the land owned by the Strutts. However, the second National Lockdown in November 2020 saw the closure of the DRO resulting in my search for material turning to online avenues through the BNA, and consequently, the research questions shifting. The BNA was used to search for newspaper articles, however full access to articles was unavailable through the University of Nottingham Newspaper resources, therefore I purchased a subscription at £8.64 per month for a three-month subscription.

When the DRO reopened in April 2021 the focus of the project had changed due to the emerging themes from the newspaper searches which were centred around the civic life of the Strutts. Therefore, I used these themes to search for material in the DRO collections between 1850 and 1899. Throughout the subsequent visits I looked at personal correspondence between members of the family, newspaper cuttings saved by the family, tenant information for properties rented by the Strutts, travel journals, estate documents, expenditure books, and servant records. However, the physical archive material became less of a focus compared to the newspaper material due to the restrictions when accessing records in the DRO and the timeframe. For each visit, material requested had to be ordered in advance and visiting time limited. This made it a challenge to know how much to order to maximise use of time and not order too much or too little.

Furthermore, the abundance of material in the physical archive, as seen by the collections' extent, combined with the lack of access to the archive meant that it was difficult to know when ordering which material to prioritise that would be most appropriate to find the emerging themes. Finally, finding the Strutt women in these documents proved difficult as even in the family, estate and personal paper collections their voices are lacking, and often I stumbled across them at raw material level rather than catalogue description level, with the exception of a few cases. Finding particular voices in the archives is a challenge geographers investigating marginalised groups are often faced with and an alternative method needs to be deployed, such as going against the grain of the archive, to find these voices (Bressey, 2020; McGeachan, 2018). This is not to say that the female family members or themes are not in the collections where the Strutts are prominent, the challenge was a limit on visits to the DRO with time constraints and an abundance of material to search through, making it hard to consolidate all the potential material. Conducting historical research can be a challenging and time-consuming task (Craggs, 2016) and Chapter Four provides an extended methodological reflection on the challenges of archival research.

3.3.2. Online Archives

The *Derby Mercury* newspaper was the focus in the search for the civic life of the Strutts as it was a prominent newspaper during the period this project is concerned with. The *Derby Mercury* was founded on 23 March 1732 by Samuel Drewry from Stafford (Craven, 2007). It was initially released weekly until it became daily towards

the end of the eighteenth century. The *Mercury* had free reign over the distribution of news in Derby until the *Whig Derby and Chesterfield Reporter* came along in 1823 (Armitage, 2014; Craven, 2007; Elliott, 2009: 22). It stayed within the Drewry family for four generations until it was sold on (Craven, 2007). The *Mercury* ceased publication in 1930 as the *Derby Daily Express* put paid to it. The *Mercury* took an anti-radical, traditional, conservative viewpoint in its columns and one aspect of local life its editor, Alfred Wallis, favoured was the reporting of tumults, crimes, and their outcomes. The Strutt family, and in particular Edward Strutt who was a MP, were Whig not Tory supporters (The History of Parliament Trust, 2020). Therefore, these opposing positions could shape the reporting of the lives of the Strutts. Using the Tory *Mercury* and not the *Whig Reporter* in the exploration of the Strutts' civic lives provides an account from a paper on the opposite side to the Strutts' political alliances and it is interesting to examine whether this makes the paper less in support of the Strutts' actions.

Using parameters was crucial to achieve a more refined search of potential data. The date of newspapers ranged from 1850 to 1899, and using keywords allowed me to identify tangible 'things' in the dataset, such as places, people, and events (Deacon, 2007), which I then analysed to find themes, further discussed in the following section. The search started off broadly as I used "Strutt" and "Belper" as keywords which generated 3240 articles. I then refined the search by inputting the keywords – "fair", "festival", "fete", "wakes" – alongside "Belper" and "Strutt". These words were added as background research into the Strutts showed that an aspect of civic life in Belper was various fairs throughout the year (Giles, 1999). These produced results of any keywords present in a complete page of the newspaper - the keywords were not limited to just appearing together in the same article - which allowed for a variety of topics to emerge, not just those relating to fairs. This generated nearly 1150 articles, so to narrow down further I chose article as the type of text, reducing the size to 947. I sample checked these to identify the type of coverage which revealed that many results were Strutts mentioned in lists of schemes they supported. Therefore, I included "George Henry Strutt" and "Edward Strutt", due to their active role during the period, to refine the search further. I sampled the first 20 articles that appeared in the list for each decade to find data relating to the Strutts in civic life. These were not arranged in date order but in relevance, so a variety of articles for different years in each decade were studied. This sample size was chosen as Reason and Garcia (2007) suggest that parameters are dictated by elements external to the data, one being the amount of data a researcher can cope with in the time given for the project. Therefore, alongside the physical archival material, 20 articles each decade was the amount I decided would be feasible to study as it was a long process of going through and finding information on the Strutts and civic life. Due to this it is important to note that it is not possible to be exhaustive in this work, rather, a sample of this size, albeit relying on the search tool, allowed the identification of themes which could then be used to investigate the Strutts in civic life.

When searching for the female members of the family, I used “Mrs Strutt” and “Miss Strutt” in the search rather than individual names as previous searches for the males revealed women’s first names were rarely included. “Miss” has always inferred an unmarried marital status for women, however, until the eighteenth century it never applied to adult women, only to girls (Erickson, 2014). Furthermore, in the middle of the eighteenth century “Mrs” described a social status before it changed to show marital status. Using these search terms generated 27 articles in the period of study which contrasts to the 769 results generated when searching for “Mr Strutt” in the *Mercury* for example. I extended the digital search to the *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal* – also a newspaper reporting on events in Derbyshire during the latter half of the nineteenth century – when finding the female members. When added to the *Mercury’s* results, this doubled the number of articles produced in the search for the female Strutts. However, even when including another newspaper, the results were relatively small, which demonstrates the absence of women from historical material. The female members show up far less in the newspapers, as well as the physical archives, than the male members, demonstrating the challenge researchers face when searching for marginalised groups in archive collections. Researchers must find alternative ways to search for these groups (McDonagh, 2018), the implications of which will be reflected on in Chapter Four.

Another online archive used was the Wellcome Collection which is a “free museum and library exploring health and human experience” (Wellcome Collection, no date). Available in this digital archive are the nineteenth century Guides to the Peak District in Derbyshire for travellers wishing to visit this area. A keyword search of the following words was used to identify relevant data concerning the Strutts in four guides: Derby, Belper, Strutt, Arboretum, Infirmary, and cotton. Joseph Strutt was instrumental in establishing the Derby Arboretum in 1840; William Strutt likewise in relation to the Derbyshire General Infirmary in 1810. Therefore, these keywords were chosen as they covered a range of known civic areas the Strutts had influence in/over. Useful sources identified included a guide from 1827 written by the Reverend R. Ward of Wirksworth which is a guide to the Peak of Derbyshire “containing a concise account of Buxton, Matlock, and Castleton, and other remarkable places and objects” (Ward, 1827: title page). The author’s intention was to provide accounts for visitors to the area in the hope it would prove useful. The second Peak guide written in 1830 by Stephen Glover, who was an author and antiquary, contains “topographical, statistical, and general history of Buxton, Chatsworth, Edensor, Castlton² [!] Bakewell, Haddon, Matlock, and Cromford; with an introduction...of the trade and manufactures of the county; an alphabetical list of noblemen and gentlemen's seats, and several road sketches” (Glover, 1830: title page). The last guide was written in 1872 by William Henry Robertson who was a physician studying the effects of local mineral waters on disease in Buxton (Royal College of Physicians, 2019), and the consulting physician to the Buxton Bath Charity and Devonshire Hospital (Robertson, 1872). The guide is a handbook of the Peak of

² Spelling error on original printed document

Derbyshire and on the use of the Buxton mineral waters. There is a guide from 1886 but it is a revised edition of Robertson's 1872 guide containing the same information on the Strutts, therefore it has not been analysed. Whilst the first two guides fall outside the period of study, I included them both to examine the coverage of the Strutts and their mills when their industrial influence was at its height.

3.4. Data analysis

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyse the coverage of the Strutts in the newspaper articles in more depth to understand meanings of the representation of the Strutts' activities. Qualitative content analysis provides more of a focus when identifying themes from datasets and requires the researcher to understand the social context of the material being analysed, often drawn from previous work (Mason, 1994; Reason and Garcia, 2007). The complexity of this approach supports the preference for a smaller sample size so that "a detailed account of embedded meanings and a proper conceptualization of the material" can be achieved (Reason and Garcia, 2007: 308). Having extensive knowledge of the Strutts already from their activities before 1850 aided in the understanding of the themes and content emerging from the datasets.

The themes that emerged from content analysis of the newspaper samples were as follows: leisure, education/school, health, and welfare. Therefore, a thematic approach towards the newspaper data analysed the public portrayal of the Strutts in civic life in Belper and beyond. As the newspapers were an important part of the project, the data collected from the DRO was informed by the themes emerging from the newspaper articles. This was important as the large amount of material in each collection needed narrowing down, guided by the newspaper-derived themes, as it was too much to look at every document in the period of study with the extreme time constraints.

An important aspect of the study was understanding the individual roles members of the Strutt family adopted. As an iterative process I created a family tree which drew on primary as well as secondary research. This acknowledged the roles of, and portrayed information on, individual family members' lives which was gathered from Armitage (2014), Fitton and Wadsworth (1958) and Booth (2018). It also helped to identify the Strutt women who were present in the archives. Information on the place of residence and role in the business or in society, found from newspaper articles and books, was included. This provided greater depth to understand how the family evolved from the earlier period, extensively studied by scholars, into the late-nineteenth century. The family tree is split into three elements starting with the earlier generations. The second element portrays William's side of the family and the third George Benson's side. This was to allow for a more focused coverage of the later generation who were identified in the data as active in civic space. Making use of the DRO online catalogue, I also provided references to the records that relate to certain members of the family to demonstrate the material that has been preserved

and that could be analysed in further studies of the Strutt family. Both the family tree and table containing the records that mention individual family members are presented in Chapter Five.

The analysis of archives is not simply a description of the contents within the archive, rather the structures of archives involve choices which reveal and conceal aspects of the past (Harris, 2018). The power of organisations and people influence the creation of archives and the preservation of certain records over others, and this makes it more challenging to find evidence of disempowered groups. The organisational processes occurring within archives, such as cataloguing and indexing, shape the meaning of archival material. Therefore, archival analysis is more than encountering a set of texts, it is a meaning-making activity that often involves piecing together historical fragments, reading between the lines, and questioning the influences that decided which material to deposit or not (Harris, 2018; Mills, 2013). Having been restricted in terms of access to the physical archive, I became more acutely aware of the challenges the researcher can face when trying to analyse archival material in a site that is not passive but shaped by a variety of influences on how a researcher experiences it. Therefore, an applied discussion of archives as sites that researchers need to navigate to accurately investigate the past follows from this chapter. This considers the various challenges faced when accessing archives and contributes to the reflection on doing historical research, encouraged by Lorimer (2009).

3.5. Conclusion

The methods above have demonstrated the challenges historical geographers have of abundance, absence, fragments, and silence. The absence, silence, and fragmentary nature of marginalised groups in archival spaces reveals much about the lives of these groups. Exploring newspaper coverage fragments on the Strutt women draws on gender to explore the spaces of civic life of the Strutt females. Newspapers can be used as sources to reveal public opinion of events portrayed, and the digitised articles of the *Derby Mercury* were used to explore the portrayal of the Strutt family in public life.

Researching at a time when research was hindered due to the global pandemic, and faced with challenges of abundance, silence, and fragments, I became more attuned to the challenges that archival analysis presents. Therefore, the following chapter provides a methodological reflection to demonstrate the importance of reflecting on archives as sites open to influences which affect the material contained within them. I argue that it is important to reflect on the archive as a space of varying degrees of power, presence, absence, and silence, rather than to simply analyse individual materials without relating them to the processes that put them in the archive in the first place.

4. Methodological Reflections

4.1. Introduction

Since the 1990s, as the 'archival turn' began, post-colonial scholarship has highlighted the link between the archive and the historical development of systems of control, governance, and power (Hodder, 2017). Rather than merely being a repository storing various historical documents, "the archive was repositioned as a subject of study in its own right" (Hodder, 2017: 453). Therefore, how researchers connect with the archives, the presence of voices and absence of others, and the power systems occurring in them are just as important to study as the individual documents held within. However, this does not just relate to physical collections. Instead, historical geographers need to take seriously the implications of the lessons of the archival turn for digital collections that with limited exceptions, haven't done enough to reflect on doing research with such archives (Bressey, 2020; Hodder, 2017).

Archives are not neutral, they hold the "power to privilege and marginalize", and dually function as an agent for engendering counternarratives and reinforcing social inequalities (Ahmed, 2019: 20; Engel and Rutter, 2021). Many archives are created top down whereby organisations and people with influence and power have chosen which records to preserve (Harris, 2018). Choices on the preservation of material reveals certain elements of the past whilst discarding material conceals others, and this exclusion of certain documents and memories often overlooks certain groups (Alphen, 2016; Hodder, 2017). This makes it more difficult to find records pertaining to those who were disempowered (Harris, 2018). The abundant nature of the archive, in particular the digital archive, does not overcome the politics of exclusion if groups of people were not recorded in these sources in the first place (Bressey, 2020; Harris, 2018). The Strutt women were present in the newspapers but were occasionally difficult to find as they were referred to as a relation of a male member and their name not stated. Exploring the process of identifying the Strutt women in the records contributes to a growing body of literature that historical geographers, such as McDonagh (2009, 2017), have been developing to find and present overlooked women in history.

Like Engel and Rutter (2021: 7), whose research endeavours "to reconceptualise the archive as more of a set of questions than a stable place or series of answers", this chapter provides an applied discussion on the practicalities of working in both physical and online archives with material that is in abundance and hiding the voices of women to contribute to a growing body of work which reflects on doing historical research. The chapter begins by exploring the abundance scholars are faced with in online and physical archives and how this has been experienced in this project. Finally, it reflects on the complexities of finding women in the physical and digital archives and highlights the ways in which geographers have worked to overcome these obstacles.

4.2. Working with an abundance of material

Digital archives have created new avenues for researchers to access material, which in the middle of a pandemic, has helped combat the lack of access to physical archives as they have been made more inaccessible than ever before (Engel and Rutter, 2021). Through digitisation, scholars and individuals outside of academia have gained access to more material. This has created the issue of abundance as online platforms have experienced rapid expansion (Hodder, 2017). Researchers are also increasingly being demanded to pull data from a larger range of archives by the recent turn to global history and transnational perspective. This study is of a smaller scale to Hodder's research on the transnational histories of radical pacifism; however, the issue of abundance was certainly relevant when searching for the Strutts in the newspaper archive that generated thousands of results. Geographers are providing new ways to manage the task of sorting through material in historical geography research.

Biography as a method is one strategy used to navigate archival abundance (Hodder, 2017). This involves exploring the relationship between individuals, the spaces they manoeuvre, and the places they inhabit (Lester, 2012). Used as a qualitative sampling device it considers a wide range of material to tell deeper, wider, and more complex stories within the time and financial constraints of research (Hodder, 2017). Geographers using a biographical approach consider what difference geographical thought makes to investigating past lives. For example, on scientific biography, Livingstone (2003) states that the measure of life could be opened up in new ways by having an increased sensitivity to the spaces of life. An "awareness of the spaces of biography, of the places of identity, of the geography of selfhood" would develop understanding "of the mutual making of science and scientist" (Livingstone, 2003: 183). Furthermore, biography can also be used to challenge prominent histories and find forgotten ones (McGeachan, 2018). For example, Bressey (2013) uses a biographical approach to reveal black women's historical geographies in Victorian London that were previously hidden, which is investigated further in the discussion on finding women in the archives. In this respect, abundant databases, such as the digital newspaper archive, create new opportunities to examine multi-ethnic histories by surfacing more results for these groups (Bressey, 2020), and biography is one method to retrieve and reassemble these past lives (McGeachan, 2018).

The BNA created an opportunity for this study to access material that became of utmost importance when the DRO was closed due to the pandemic. However, using the BNA to search for material relating to the Strutts generated thousands of articles which, as discussed in the methodology, were filtered and sampled. This generation of large quantities of results in full-text searches means that there are often too many for the researcher to see them all (Underwood, 2014). The algorithm sorts the results by some measure of relevance which is not clear to the researcher. Therefore, there are technological questions about the hits displayed to the researcher. The BNA search ordered the results retrieved by relevance which would have determined the articles looked at in the sample. Therefore, it is important to emphasise that the

findings drawn on the civic life of the Strutts were not exhaustive but offered an insight into the spaces they moved in and influenced.

There is also an argument that conducting a full-text search in digital databases is, as Underwood (2014: 64) coins it, “a Boolean fishing expedition” for material that may or may not exist. Underwood suggests that using the search box is more than just a finding aid, but also an experiment as you change the words you use if you fail to find data to work with. There is also greater chance of confirmation bias as an abundance of data in these databases can display themes and examples of anything more easily due to the significant amount of text available through digital searches. Underwood suggests that a problem is created when sorting through sources in terms of the relevance to the query as it filters out alternative theses that might be discovered but are missed due to choosing material that one already expected to find. By using the keywords of fair, fete, etc., due to prior knowledge of the Strutts’ involvement in these, it was expected that there would be an extensive coverage of these events, which would have revealed what was expected. However, the Strutts’ presence and influence at fairs displayed through the newspapers was considerably less than one would expect. Instead, using “Belper” and “Strutt” as keywords revealed far more about the civic presence of the Strutt family, widening the focus away from what was assumed previously. Arguably, having a place and family name to search for rather than a topic focuses the search results more on the specific location and people of interest. Therefore, as a research project investigating a family in a particular space, the themes emerging from the newspapers were not already assumed.

4.3. Finding women in the archive

At the beginning of this research project a key aim was to investigate the roles of the female members identified on the family tree in Chapter Five. Exploring their connections in society and the roles they had, for example, if they too were philanthropists, and learning about their role in driving ideas in areas of improvement in the late nineteenth century were key areas of interest. However, it was more challenging than initially anticipated when trying to locate the Strutt women in the secondary literature, online, and physical archives despite them being women of elite status. Finding archival records of those who were disempowered is more difficult than finding material on those with influence and power (Harris, 2018). It was soon realised that a study into the Strutt women would become a huge undertaking and one that would require developing a methodology, as Chaudhuri *et al.* (2010) propose, that reconstructs women’s lives by producing new archives, reading documents in different ways to discover new meanings, and to merge many strands of information together to reveal complexities. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and time pressures this was too huge a task for a year’s project in a time of uncertainty as projects like this can require an extensive amount of labour (Engel and Rutter, 2021). Instead, a reflection on the complexities of finding women in these

sources is presented so that the Strutt women are not forgotten or bypassed when the Strutt family is remembered.

The BNA became an important source as the digitisation of newspapers provides potential for an abundance of material to combat the erasure of marginalised groups by facilitating the identification of these individuals previously unable to be found with pre-digital methodologies (Bressey, 2020). The Strutt women were searched for using the generic titles of “Mrs Strutt” and “Miss Strutt” as the sampling of articles revealed that the Strutt women’s first names were rarely recorded in the papers. One example is the following report from Wednesday 12th May 1880 in the *Derby Mercury* on a bazaar held at the National School Room in Long Eaton in aid of both the “Fund for Erection of a New Infant School, and the 20th Derbyshire...Rifle Volunteer Fund”.³ “Mrs Herbert Strutt” (1856-1897) was one of the ladies who allowed their name to appear as a patroness for the event (Booth, 2018). This article is an example of the role a female member of the Strutt family might have undertaken in the community, one of philanthropy and support for charitable events as middle-class women were entering public spaces to participate in social and civic welfare work in the late-nineteenth century (Moore, 2016). It also demonstrates that for this public reading, Edith Strutt appears as “Mrs Herbert Strutt”, defined by her relation to her husband as married women would typically take their spouse’s name in this way (Goldin and Shim, 2004).

The search for the Strutt women generated a small number of results which showed, for example, that they often appeared in lists of people attending social events, at prize givings where they distributed the prizes, and as hosts, alongside their husbands, of events for various organisations/groups. However, when reading an article on George Henry Strutt, a reference to Susan Agnes Strutt (1847-1894) was made which had not been picked up in the BNA search for the Strutt women. Susan Agnes Strutt was mentioned in the *Derby Mercury* on Wednesday 25th July 1894 as her father, George Henry Strutt, offered to pay for the Ward Block No. 1 at the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary “with the condition that it shall be named the Susan Strutt Ward Block” due to the death of his daughter that year.⁴ The Governors of the Infirmary remembered the late Susan Strutt and described her as spending her “life in doing good works”. On Friday 13th July 1894, the *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal* also reported on George Henry Strutt’s actions, yet Susan Strutt here goes unnamed and was merely referred to as “his late daughter, who throughout her life took the deepest interest in the sick and suffering”.⁵ It was through searching for George Henry Strutt that a public record of Susan Strutt was found, especially in the *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal* article which neglected to mention Susan’s name. This demonstrates the difficulties in locating women in newspaper materials.

³ “Advertisements and Notices”, *Derby Mercury*, May 12, 1880, p. 4.

⁴ “The Derbyshire Royal Infirmary”, *Derby Mercury*, July 25, 1894, p. 3.

⁵ “The Opening of the Derbyshire Royal Infirmary”, *Derbyshire Advertiser and Journal*, July 13, 1894, p. 5.

One solution would be to look for Strutt and female relative terms such as wife, mother, and daughter. Geographers have been finding new solutions to find disempowered groups in the archive. For example, Bressey's (2013) work on the experiences and places of integration in England aims to open up historical geographies for black and white women in Victorian London by reading against the grain (McGeachan, 2018). With a more challenging task due to not having named women to search for, Bressey (2013) reads against the grain of the archival data to investigate the relationship between black and white women at work through investigating job advertisements. She does this in part by using an array of potentially relevant search terms. Therefore, reading against the grain in the archive provides an opportunity to discover groups of people who are absent, or in the case of the Strutt women not always in plain sight, as an innovative way to find these individuals.

Despite the complications of finding women in the digital archives, digitisation does create the potential to find women in these sources through keyword searches. However, this is not possible in physical archives if women are not present in an archive's catalogue. Digital searches allow the direct reach into the documents, ostensibly not so reliant on the cataloguing of archivists or volunteers. The Strutt women appear in the DRO catalogue sporadically when either searching for them through the advanced search or when searching the fonds in the collections. Women's voices in the archive are often hidden or lost entirely which makes it challenging when attempting to learn about their histories (Chaudhuri *et al.*, 2010). Often histories of women remain fragmentary due to the difficulties in finding women in the archives (Burton, 2010). However, the traces of these women in the archives can provide an insight into the lives of a group who are often obscured by figures or events deemed more significant. Therefore, any mention of the female members of the Strutt family in the DRO catalogue should be considered significant to understanding the lives of these women, even if it is only in short fragments.

There were several occasions when the Strutt females covered by the period of study were mentioned in the catalogue. In D2943/F/9/4/3/1-6 there are letters from Ann Strutt (1795-1873) to Fanny, Edward and Bessy Strutt from her travels in Italy. D3772/E64/1 contains the Strutt photograph album with Agnes Strutt, Susan Strutt and Emily Strutt's⁶ photographs included. There are also documents in D3772/E44 containing material on both female and male member's wills, legacies, and trusts. Finally, D3772/E59 is titled Mrs Mary Emily Strutt⁷ (George Herbert's second wife, married in 1898) (Booth, 2018) and has five documents which include her correspondence and accounts; her affairs regarding jewellery, the Kingairloch estate, and miscellaneous legal business; her tenancy agreement for 18 Berkeley Street, London; documents relating to her death; and finally, a schedule and valuation of items belonging to Mary. The documents in D3772/E59 range from 1928-1951 which

⁶ Dates unknown

⁷ Date unknown

follow the death of George Herbert Strutt in 1928. The 1922 Law of Property Act permitted a husband or wife to inherit the property of the other and in 1926 legislation passed allowed women to hold and dispose of property in the same way as men (UK Parliament, 2021d). Therefore, this gave women more power to control their own lives and was probably why Mary controlled the affairs to do with the estate and legal business when George Herbert died. As these documents are outside the period this study is focusing on these materials were not examined in depth. However, they do, to an extent, demonstrate how Mary Strutt took on the management and affairs of the estate and business after her husband's death, with similarities to the women McDonagh (2009) writes of who managed landed estates as widows.

Due to the existence of coverture before the Married Women's Property Acts (1870 and 1882), it has been assumed by scholars that men were almost exclusively property-owners as women had few legal rights to property (McDonagh, 2018). However, in her own work, McDonagh (2009, 2017) has challenged this assumption and demonstrated that women were property-owners substantially more than initially thought. McDonagh (2009, 2017, 2018) examined female landowners and the role they played in managing English landscape in the eighteenth century, contributing to scholarship that attempts to challenge and interrogate binary and idealised readings of space as male or female, civic or domestic, public or private. This creates new spaces and topics for historical geographical research to investigate, giving geographers the opportunity to find women who were perhaps hiding in plain sight. Therefore, it is important to recognise Mary's role in the family's business affairs as McDonagh (2017) argues that women's contributions are generally unrecognised in archive catalogues, family histories, and existing historiography.

In the Strutt family catalogue George Henry Strutt's wife, Agnes Strutt, is not registered for her contribution in his expenditure books⁸. In the fifth expenditure book Agnes signs off a sheet of expenses from May 1895 to December 1895. Presumably, her participation in the expenditure books is due to her husband dying in 1895. Agnes' name also briefly appears in the record of payments to servants working at Bridge Hill House⁹ (where George and Agnes resided) as signing off on payments made to the servants. Whilst the expenditure books are George Henry's, the catalogue fails to attribute Agnes' contribution to these. The coincidental find of Agnes in these records demonstrates how it was necessary to access the physical material relating to the Strutt men to find traces of the Strutt women. The voices of women and their texts are often obscured by a lack of recognition in the catalogue, which results in a disempowerment of women in the archives. It is a challenge to find

⁸ D3772/E49/11/1-6

⁹ D3772/E49/32/3

the women amongst the male members of the family and highlights the difficulty in accessing women's hidden histories (McDonagh, 2009).

Engel and Rutter (2021: 6) argue that often archival material regarding women "was only preserved when they were connected to 'men of importance'". Women's historians suggest that an exclusion of documents concerning women is due to them not being deemed legitimate subjects of history until recently, which as a result, is reflected in archival collections (Chaudhuri *et al.*, 2010). Whilst the records in the D3772 collection were deposited between 1993 and 2000 by the Strutt Estate Office and more items in 2015 and 2019 by the family and via the Estate Trustees respectively, the cataloguing is seriously lacking in respect to portraying the lives of the female Strutts despite the relatively recent cataloguing. Both the physical and digital newspaper archive underrepresent the Strutt women, as despite an abundance of material in the BNA, if the voices of women are silenced, absent or minimal in the first place, then discovering these voices is severely hindered (Bressey, 2020).

The Strutt collections would benefit from an investigation into the fragmentary element of the Strutt women in the later nineteenth century to attempt a biography on the lives of the women who were mothers, wives, sisters, and daughters of the male members of the family. Viewing this archive as a site for the production of knowledge and not just a repository of information would allow a new perspective on the Strutt family to be viewed, one that includes women. Likewise, the DRO catalogue would benefit from a more detailed description of the documents pertaining to the female members of the family. As well as using the digital newspaper archives, feminist geographies and histories could potentially discover a great deal more about the female Strutts, who are an important group to help understand how middle-class women in an industrial family navigated the private spaces of the family and public spaces of civic society –which will be analysed further in Chapter Six.

4.4. Conclusion

The digital abundance of archival material requires geographers to find alternative ways to navigate the vast amount of material at their disposal. The abundance of digital newspaper archives has also helped to open up historical geographies for multi-ethnic communities and groups previously missing from the literature (Bressey, 2013; Bressey, 2020). Biography is one approach which allows researchers to shift, sort and scope the material they are faced with, and to tell the narratives of previously silenced groups (Hodder, 2017; McGeachan, 2018). The thematic approach to the BNA when finding the civic presence of the Strutts allows an exploration into the range of activities the family were participating in, revealing the portrayal of the Strutts to the *Derby Mercury's* readership.

The Strutt women were considerably harder to find in the BNA and the family collections at the DRO than the male relatives. Often the Strutt women were found by 'chance', typically through looking at material relating to the Strutt men. Acknowledging the presence of women in archival material is crucial to understanding and discovering the contributions that women made in family histories as these are often unrecognised in archive catalogues. Finding women in the archives requires going against the grain which offers opportunities to find groups of people in the historical material who are often hidden from plain sight. Going against the grain of the Strutt family collections to find these women would allow an additional narrative to be told, one with a greater female presence that contributes to the existing industrial understanding of the family.

The following chapters focus on the themes that emerged from the physical and online archive to demonstrate that despite all the challenges, there is still a discussion to be had of the later nineteenth century historical geography of the Strutts of Belper.

5. The Strutt Family and the Mills

5.1. Introduction

The production of cotton thread in the mills at Belper, run by the Strutt family, is an important part of the industrial history of the Derwent Valley (AECOM, 2016). After Jedediah Strutt died his sons adopted the name W. G. J. Strutt Ltd for the firm. From the production of cotton in 1778 and over the following forty years, “Belper became a Strutt company town” (Cooper, 1983: 92). In 1844 the Strutts employed around 2000 workers and owned 500 houses in Belper to accommodate their workers (Chapman, 1976). According to Fitton and Wadsworth (1958: 169):

“Under them it [W. G. J. Strutt Ltd] became the largest in the country, celebrated not only for its size and for the excellence of its buildings and equipment but for its efforts to ensure the well-being of its workers. It was a model, spoken of in praise by such severe critics of the factory system as Owen, Faucher and Gaskell.”

Fitton and Wadsworth were economic historians specialising in the early factory system and cotton textile industry, and their study provides a classic business study of the records (Nakagwa, 1959). The early generations of the Strutt family were held in high esteem for their role in developing the cotton industry in Belper during the late eighteenth century to early nineteenth century. Continuing the work of their father, William, George, and Joseph propelled Belper into a prominent place of industry and a key site of employment for working-class men, women, and children (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). Much has been written and researched on this earlier period, from Jedediah’s early life and him starting up the business in Belper, to his sons continuing the management and improvement of the mills, and their contributions to public life (for example see AECOM, 2016; Cooper, 1983; Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). However, there is little written on the family after this period in the late nineteenth century.

Who continued managing the mills when George Benson died? Which descendants from the three brothers stayed involved in the mills or became less involved? This chapter investigates the Strutts as a mill owning family and how this was continued into a less studied period. It tracks what individual family members were doing, their contribution to the mills, and how these activities were then perceived through various documents. Firstly, offered here for the first time, a family tree of the Strutt family, beginning with Jedediah Strutt, displays the various generations of the Strutts, the roles they played in their lifetime, and their place of residence. A table of records pertaining to the Strutt family in their personal collection, located in the DRO, highlights those family members active in the later nineteenth century. The chapter then analyses the spaces of the Strutts as interpreted in written texts to investigate how the later generation was being perceived by different authors in the varying spaces they occupied and in relation to the mills at Belper. The texts analysed are an article from the *British Trade Journal* in 1882 located in the English Sewing Cotton Company Limited collection at the DRO; a newspaper cutting located in the

Strutt Family's collection at the DRO; and finally, three Peak Guides from 1827, 1830, and 1872 which are written for travellers visiting the Peak District.

5.2. Investigating the Strutt Family

The family tree below (Figure 1, Figure 2 and Figure 3) attempts to track the family in the later nineteenth century and establish the role certain members played in society and in Belper with the mills. The protagonists that will be focused on in this chapter are colour-coded red. The information in the tree was gathered from Fitton and Wadsworth (1958), Fitton (1989), the Strutt family pedigree document located on the Belper research website (Booth, 2018), Cooper (1983), Power (1999a) and from the *Derby Mercury* newspaper articles through the BNA search. Table 2 has been created to display the materials where named individual family members are cited in the description of material in the D3772 Strutt family collection. This also helps the identification of family members who were involved in the mills.

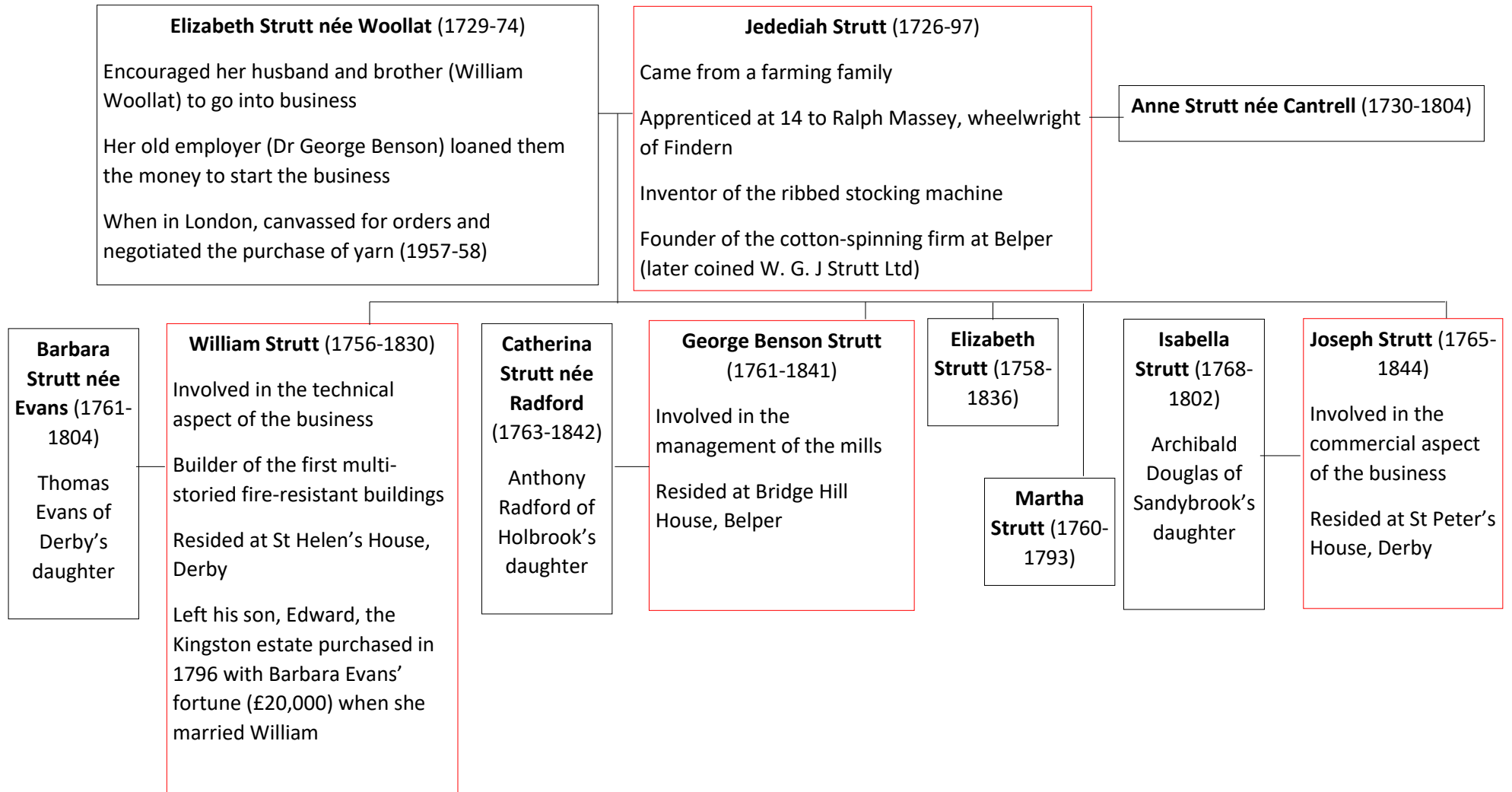


Figure 1 Jeddiah Strutt and the Second Generation

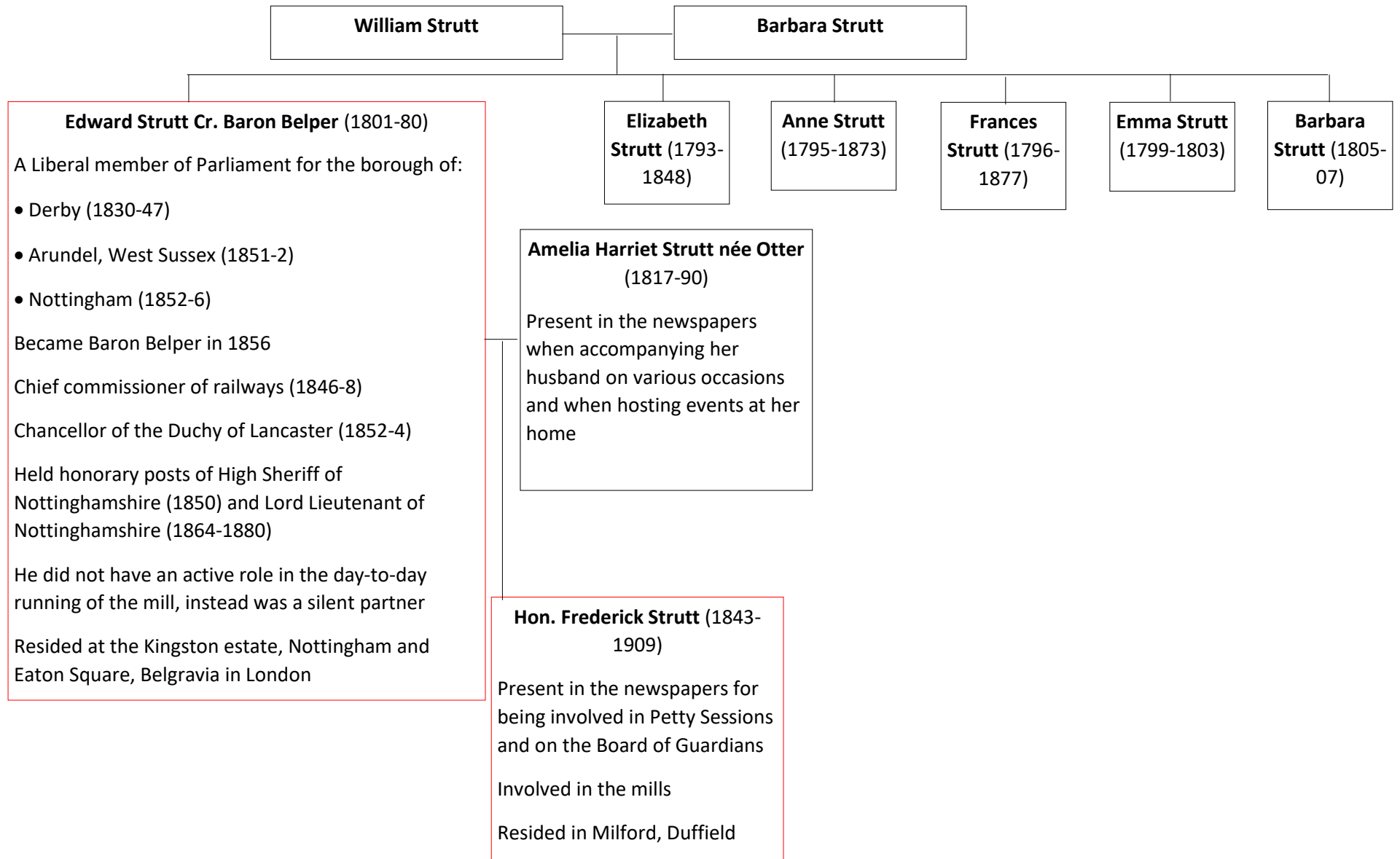


Figure 2 Descendants of William Strutt

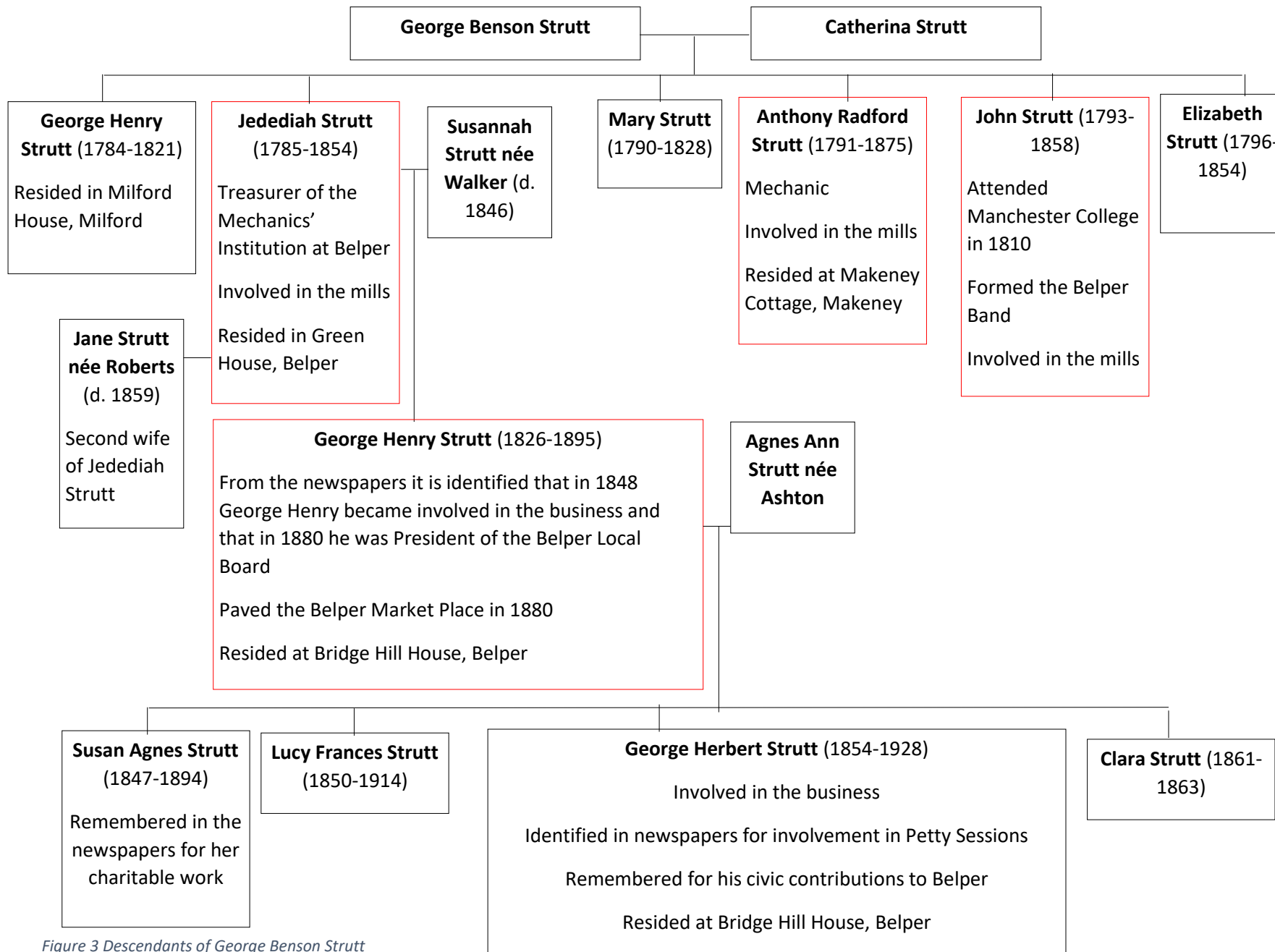


Figure 3 Descendants of George Benson Strutt

Table 2 Records in the D3772 collection where individual family members are referenced

| Reference number | Title | Date | Family member related to |
|------------------|---|-------------------------|---|
| D3772/E8/1 | Map of Bridgehill Estate, Belper | 1886 | George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E9/1 | Enfranchisement and conveyance of Little Eaton Estate to George Henry Strutt and by him to George Herbert Strutt, with plans | 1892-1893 | George Henry Strutt and George Herbert Strutt |
| D3772/E13/1 | Photograph of George Henry Strutt | 1895 | George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E17/1-2 | Ledgers of the Trustees of George Henry Strutt | 1895-1921 | George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E27/6/1-33 | Mr A R Strutt's estate ledger | 1873 | Anthony Radford Strutt |
| D3772/E28/5-7 | George Herbert Strutt executor's bank pass book, Apr 1895 - Sep 1898 (No.1) | 1895-1898 | George Herbert Strutt |
| D3772/E28/6 | George Herbert Strutt's head office account bank pass books | 1899-1914 | George Herbert Strutt |
| D3772/E28/7 | George Henry Strutt's Belper account bank pass books | 1893-1914 | George Herbert Strutt |
| D3772/E29/22 | Detailed Valuation Book by Hugh Shaw & Son Oldham May 1891 of Machinery Plant WG & J Strutt Belper & Milford on transfer of business to GHS" | 1891 | George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E30/5 | Account books of Mrs Strutt, Bridge Hill: House and housekeeping All records are missing | 1887 - 1900 | Agnes Ann Strutt |
| D3772/E30/6 | Mrs Strutt's bank books | 1885-1900 | Agnes Ann Strutt |
| D3772/E30/7 | Mrs Strutt correspondence | 1882-1883 and 1895-1899 | Mrs Strutt |
| D3772/E30/8 | Probate of will and accounts relating to the executorship | 1895-1900 | Agnes Ann Strutt |
| D3772/E30/14 | Mrs Strutt's account books | 1877-1901 | Mrs Strutt |
| D3772/E41/1 | Annual balance ledger inc spinning, calico, bleaching, hosiery, silk accounts etc for William, Frederick, Jedidiah, Anthony, George Benson, John, Edward, Anthony R, George Henry, Hon Frederick Strutt and Lord Belper | 1801-1892 | Anthony Radford, George Henry, Edward, and Hon Frederick Strutt |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|-----------|--------------------------------|
| D3772/E41/4 | Annual accounts for Lord Belper, 1881-1892, George Henry Strutt 1892-1894 - | 1881-1894 | Edward and George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E47/1 | Family estate papers | 1895 | George Henry Strutt |
| D3772/E49/10/10-21 | George Henry Strutt – no further information provided | 1826-1895 | George Henry Strutt |

From the family tree above there appears to be two distinct strands of the family that take on different roles in the later nineteenth century. Firstly, the son of William Strutt, Edward, had an influential political role not only in the immediate locality of Belper and Derby, but further afield in Nottingham, Surrey, and Lancaster. Edward had a less significant role in the firm and acted more as a silent partner in the co-partnership that various male members of the family shared (Edward's association with the firm is demonstrated in the *Derby Mercury* on Wednesday 6th September 1848 when George Henry Strutt joins the firm alongside Edward and other members of the family).¹⁰ Arguably this is also shown by the lack of reference to Edward in the family collections in the DRO as it is organised in a way to understand the family history from the perspective of the mills. Edward moved away from the industrial space associated with the firm into spaces of politics more so than any other member of the family.

Edward's father, William Strutt, married into a more landed family with the Kingston estate purchased with the money from his wife, Barbara Evans', dowry of £20,000 following upon their marriage. The Evanses were the owners of a cotton-spinning mill in Derby at Darley Abbey (Cooper, 1983). Thomas Evans, Barbara's father, also owned lead mines and iron-slitting mills, and extensive landed property in Derbyshire, as well as establishing a bank in 1771 in Derby (Lindsay, 1960). William Strutt, along with his sister, Elizabeth (who married two of Thomas Evans' sons – in turn), until 1808 was a partner in the bank Evans established (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). The addition of the cotton mill to Evans' repertoire increased the family's substantial wealth considerably. In the nineteenth century, a lesser gentry consisted of businessmen and non-landed elite who wanted to buy into the lifestyle of land ownership, becoming part of a landed gentry (Rothery, 2008). The Evans family appear to already be part of this landed gentry which the Strutt family entered through the marriages between William Strutt and Barbara Evans, and Elizabeth Strutt and William Evans (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958).¹¹ In the landownership argument of the nineteenth century, a debate on entails indicated the desire to ensure that land stayed in the family for future generations (Beckett, 1984). These estates passed to generations of the family which were inherited through primogeniture (Rothery, 2018). Therefore, this process embedded the Strutt family in the economic and social geography of the region as the Strutt influence continued when Edward inherited the estate from his father.

Hacker (1960) suggests that William's letters to his son emphasised the important of knowledge. Fitton and Wadsworth (1958) suggest that William wanted to better the life of

¹⁰ "Notice", *Derby Mercury*, September 6, 1848, p. 2.

¹¹ Elizabeth Strutt later married William's brother, Walter Evans, a year after his death.

his son, and Edward attended the University of Cambridge and pursued a career in politics (Fisher, 2009). William appeared to steer Edward, despite being his only son, away from the direct management of the mills to focus on endeavours that echoed his position as an influential political and scientific leader in Derby (Elliott, 2009). In contrast to William's son, Edward, direct descendants of George Benson Strutt appeared to remain involved in the daily running of the mill in the locality of Belper. Jedediah, Anthony Radford, and John Strutt (sons of George Benson) were all involved in the mills in their lifetime, and Jedediah's son, George Henry Strutt, joined the firm in 1848, with his son, George Herbert Strutt, also later involved in the running of the mills. George Henry and George Herbert appear to be key mill-owning members of the family in the later period as they are referenced regularly in the collection (Table 2). Joseph Strutt's only son died before he did so none of his direct descendants managed the mills (Booth, 2018). Therefore, it required George Benson's direct descendants to manage the daily running of the mills. This sheds an interesting light on the family post-1850s when the chronology of the firm stops in existing research (as seen in the AECOM, 2016 report that details the historical development of Belper).

The separation of the family is portrayed geographically as Jedediah, Anthony Radford, John, and George Henry Strutt resided locally either in Belper or near to the town. George Henry also appears to have a prominent role in Belper demonstrated in Table 2 by the records that relate to the Belper and Milford estate that he managed (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). However, as well as residing at the Kingston estate in Nottinghamshire, Edward Strutt lived in his home in London, moving geographically further than his cousins or nephew. Geographical location could be a significant reason for the relationships Edward formed, and consequently, the roles he assumed throughout his lifetime in his political career due to his proximity to parliament by living in London. However, unlike himself, Edward's son, the Hon Frederick Strutt, lived locally in Milford and was involved with the firm, demonstrated by his presence in the family's collection in the DRO shown in Table 2 in account ledgers. Frederick was William's third son therefore would not have inherited his father's landed property due to primogeniture (Rothery, 2018). This suggests that for some members of the family the firm was still important to them in the late nineteenth century as a space of work, despite other members reaching into different spheres, mainly political and landed. This reading is suggested through the geographical location of, and reference to, individual family members, found in the existing literature and DRO archives catalogue (see Table 1). However, a critical reading would highlight that there are potentially other records, personal and company, in this collection that show the involvement of other members of the family spanning across many generations that is not clear from just looking at the catalogue. Therefore, the records mentioned are not exhaustive when there is possibly more material that could provide further information on individual members if the catalogue descriptions were explicit, or time restrictions were relaxed.

Establishing the structure of the Strutt family in the later period of the nineteenth century is crucial when aiming to understand the spaces in which Strutt family members were associated and influenced. The role of some members who remained involved in the mills and the management of the Belper and Milford estate; and, Lord Belper becoming part of a more landed gentry and political representative demonstrates the family's evolution from

the farmer Jedediah Strutt began life as. Through Jedediah's success as a hosier and cotton spinner the Strutt family gained their wealth, with his sons continuing the business, as well as becoming influential figures in Derby through William and Joseph's contribution to progressive improvement through the General Infirmary and Arboretum. The success of the firm and the circles the family were moving in paved the way for the later generation. Whilst Edward Strutt was moving away from mill ownership, though still associated with them, the mills remained significant to the family's identity. The following section investigates how the later generations of the family were perceived in written texts from 1850-1899, particularly in terms of their associations with the mills and other private and civic spaces.

5.3. The Strutts in the *British Trade Journal* and newspaper cutting

In the December 1st 1882 monthly edition of the *British Trade Journal*, there was a section titled British Industries which covered the Messrs. W. G. and J. Strutt company written by an anonymous author.¹² The *British Trade Journal* was an export journal which covered items of commercial interest to potential buyers from abroad (Dangerfield, 1948). It was distributed in a variety of countries such as India, Peru, Australia, Japan, amongst others. The cotton industry in the second half of the nineteenth century became increasingly dependent on foreign markets and its export trade expanded quicker than its domestic trade (Farnie, 1979). Therefore, it would have been beneficial to the Strutts' firm to be showcased in potential areas of trade around the world. The history of how the Strutts' firm came to be was a key focus of the article which began by detailing Jedediah Strutt's early invention of the Derby ribbing machine and the technical aspect of how this machine worked. It then discussed the partnership between Strutt, Arkwright, and Need as cotton manufacture began in the Derwent Valley, before the partnership ended and Jedediah came into possession of the Belper and Milford mills.

The author presented to the reader the prominence of the firm "in the industrial history of the country", alluding to its national importance as it overcame struggles, such as "panics, depressions, [and] commercial crises", to remain in "a state of permanent, though, perhaps, not immutable, existence". Whilst the tone was overtly complimentary to the firm, it also implied a level of vulnerability to its existence, perhaps due to the stresses the cotton industry was facing, demonstrated by the depression in 1877-79 (Farnie, 1979). The public statement about the firm, its history and current goods presented by the author were circulated overseas. Considering how the interpretation of knowledge has spatial variations makes the international perception of the Strutts difficult to evaluate as location is significant in the hermeneutic encounters between the reader and the text (Keighren, 2013; Livingstone, 2005). For example, how would readers in Japan or India, who may have had past dealings with the Strutts, view the family-run firm from the perception of the author? However, the author of the article appeared to perceive the firm as important enough in industrial history, and in the present day (1882), for an account of it to be circulated via the

¹² D3638/30 Article on Belper and Milford Mills in the *British Trade Journal* 1882

British Trade Journal to reach its national and international readership, despite the declining prices the British cotton industry was experiencing (Farnie, 1979).

In the article, the mills in 1882 were said to be “held by [Jedediah’s] descendants today”. These descendants were referenced shortly after William, George and Joseph were introduced for taking over the firm when their father died, and the roles they each played consequently. Edward Strutt was mentioned as William’s son, and for his role as a member of the House of Commons and a Minister, as well as being “raised to the peerage in 1856 as Lord Belper”. Jedediah, Anthony, and John were then mentioned for being George Benson’s sons, before the current members of the firm were said to be “Lord Belper (as a sleeping partner), the Hon. Frederick Strutt, Major A. W. Holmes, and Mr. John Hunter”. The only other reference to a member of the later generation of the family specifically is of the “handsome fountain” situated outside of the mill that was gifted by George Henry Strutt of Bridgehill who was referred to as “a late partner in the firm”. The role of the later generation in the mill was focused on much less than the legacy Jedediah and his sons left behind. It was mainly the political spaces Edward entered that became a key aspect linking the family to the mills. In the ending note, the family was said to be “represented by Lord Belper” with the remaining members of the family, alongside Major A. W. Holmes, and Mr. John Hunter, who ran the mills grouped together as Messrs. Strutt. Therefore, the legacy of the family through the earlier generation had a greater significance in the article compared to the current members who were just presented as a part of the firm. Furthermore, the presence of Holmes and Hunter suggests a certain distancing of the family involvement in the daily running of the mills.

In the Strutt family collection, D2943/F/9/3/8 is a newspaper cutting concerning Belper and the Strutts which covers the history of the firm and the process of cotton spinning. As it is a cutting and not the whole paper, the author or name of paper is not evident, which is one challenge researchers face when working with an archetypal archival ‘fragment’ (Mills, 2013). When the article was preserved by a member of the family, it is unlikely that a concern for a researcher’s interest in the future was even acknowledged. An attempt to find the article through the BNA keyword search proved unsuccessful, as did another through Google. The cutting is also undated, however the author stated that the firm consisted of Lord Belper, Mr G. H. Strutt, Major Holmes, the Hon. Frederick Strutt, and Mr. Hunter, suggesting that it was written several years prior to the *British Trade Journal*’s article as George Henry Strutt was still a partner.

The section on the history of the firm in the newspaper cutting details the construction of the mills and Jedediah’s rise to an eminent figure of industry. The importance locally of this history was referenced in the article through Jedediah’s involvement in the mills at Nottingham and Cromford with Arkwright, and then at Belper, demonstrating the growth of Jedediah’s industrial influence in local spaces. Furthermore, the roles of William, George, and Joseph in the firm, as well as the gifting of the Arboretum was referenced. Again, like in the *British Trade Journal* article, the legacy left behind by the earlier generations was a key association the Strutt family had to the industry in the later period. The Strutt family were also perceived in the newspaper cutting as critical for raising Belper “from a mere hamlet to

the position of an important town” through erecting the “splendid mills” with Belper owing “its prosperity to Messrs. Strutt”. The cotton mills were not the only industry at Belper in the late eighteenth century, with a nail, hosiery, and pottery presence also (Power, 1999b), however, the author failed to mention these other industries and instead implied that Belper’s success as a manufacturing town was because of the Strutt family. The Strutt family were held in incredibly high regard for their role in the industry.

By also delivering a positive account of the Strutts, perhaps the most interesting geographical perspective offered by the author of the *British Trade Journal* is the glorification of Messrs. Strutt for their attention to making the lives of their workers “tolerably harmonious”. Having visited the mills prior to writing the article, the author stated that “the mill’ cannot be seen in the faces of working men, women, or children” and that there “is nothing here of the typical Lancashire ‘operative’ look” which “comes as frequently from a settled home life degenerating into ‘domestic Bohemianism’ as from overwork”. Likewise, the author of the newspaper cutting wrote that manufactory was associated by most with “coaldust and smoke, dirt and impure air” with “the majority of these hives situated in large and populous cities”. However, whilst the operatives of these factories “as a rule have not a very healthy appearance”, the Strutts’ mills are “most striking exceptions to the generality of the factories”. This is owed to the waterpower that works the machinery resulting in an absence of smoke, and because of this, the interior of the mills had a “snowy whiteness” to them. Differences in spaces of industry due to the power used to run the mills appeared to influence the perception of them in different places.

Textile mills dominated the landscape in many of Lancashire’s towns as important economic buildings that provided work for half a million people, as well as those who were dependent on the income provided by the industry (Phelps et.al, 2016). People worked six days a week in these mills doing up to fourteen hours each day, two hours more than recorded at Strutt’s mills in 1816 (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). Furthermore, the geographical concentration of the cotton industry in Lancashire was reinforced by the withdrawal of leading employers from the cotton industry due to the depression in the 1860s (Farnie, 1979). The British cotton industry was in decline throughout the late nineteenth century, yet the author of the *British Trade Journal* appeared to be pushing for the Strutts’ firm to be acknowledged and to stand out from the mainstream Lancashire cotton industry. It is striking that both authors were suggesting that the Belper mills were different to other factories, and perhaps the author of the *British Trade Journal* article was suggesting to the readers of the day that the Strutts had a greater concern for workers’ wellbeing, making them less like cogs in a machine but workers with lives beyond that of the factory, than was the case in Lancashire. These accounts might have been the public legacy of the firm’s reputation which reported the Strutts’ mills as exemplary models. Fitton and Wadsworth (1958) argue that the Strutts were examples of good employers for the time in the earlier period, and it appears that the newspapers were drawing on that legacy in the late-nineteenth century.

At Belper, Messrs. Strutt were praised by the author of the *British Trade Journal* for “the genuineness of both the business operations and what many would call the charity or

liberality of the firm” which is “bound up with the responsibilities and duties of such ‘leaders of industry’”. This suggests a continuation of the paternalistic approach which earlier authors claim the Strutts had employed from the beginning of their business (e.g. Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958). Whether this followed the approach from the earlier generations or was a form of welfare paternalism which Nielsen (2000) argues was undertaken to prevent state interference and socialism in the late nineteenth century is unclear. However, it does show that the Strutt family were *perceived* as conscientious businessmen even over 100 years after opening the mills, and that they were perceived, by the author, to create a space of harmony for their workers. However, the perceptions created by the author do not necessarily reflect what was occurring between the Strutts and their workforce during a period of change as socialist politics and working-class militancy began in the late-1870s due to the economic downturn (Lawrence, 1992). Perhaps the smaller scale of the Belper mills allowed the Strutts to contain unrest and offer more to maintain a paternalistic control over the working-class workers, which would have been more difficult in Lancashire due to the large number of firms. Geographically, through the author’s comparison between Lancashire and Belper, there appeared to be a variation between cotton mills in the late-nineteenth century as spaces of industry underwent change. Political docility was reduced amongst the working-class in the late-1870s as the rediscovery of socialism prompted the modern labour movement which saw the transition from class consciousness to class collaboration (Lawrence, 1992). Therefore, the dynamics between factory master and worker were changing as the working-class began to resist control. Further research into resistance at Belper and how locally the working-class were connecting with a national change in the balance between the working-class and their employer would hopefully reveal how workers struggled for greater worker agency.

5.4. The Strutts in travel writing

Many visitors travelled to Derbyshire “in search of the Wonders of the Peak”, with the Elizabethan antiquarian, William Camden, the first author to write about the seven wonders¹³ (Hey, 2008: 281). These wonders turned the Peak District into one of the earliest tourist attractions. Areas in the Derbyshire Peak were popular with visitors able to spend some days at Matlock, Buxton, and Bakewell to enjoy the waters, and then experience “the natural delights of Dovedale or Castleton” (Sweet, no date). Since the eighteenth-century Matlock Bath was one area in Derbyshire popular with visitors due to its beauty and facilities, namely the public bath (Hey, 2008). This section will explore how the Strutts, and their mills, were presented to the readers of the three travel guides from 1827, 1830 and 1872.

Reverend Ward (1827: iii) hoped that his guide to the Peak of Derbyshire was “found useful to strangers who visit the highly interesting scenes in the Peak of Derbyshire” and his aim was to “give plain concise accounts of the various remarkable places and objects, to which he has referred”. The mills at Belper were referenced at the beginning of the chapter on

¹³ Chatsworth House, Eldon Hole, Mam Tor, Tideswell well, Poole’s Cavern, St Anne’s Well at Buxton and Peak Cavern.

Matlock Bath as Ward described the villages and towns passed from Derby through to Matlock Bath. Belper was said to have “extensive cotton mills and elegant houses belonging to Mess. Strutt” with one of the mills “worked by a wheel of very uncommon dimensions; the face it presents to the water being no less than forty feet in breadth” (Ward, 1827: 41). The reader of the time was given a brief description of Belper’s industry and the Strutts presented as esteemed figures with their elegant houses. Furthermore, Ward’s guide presented the spaces of leisure he believed his readers should visit. The industrial town of Belper was not considered the most important part of Derbyshire for the traveller to visit as his focus remained on areas popular with visitors already – Matlock, Matlock Bath, Buxton, and Castleton – the spa towns of Derbyshire. Areas of ‘natural’ beauty such as the Peak Forest, Poole’s Hole (Cavern) and Mam Tor were also present in the guide to attract the tourist. The natural element of the physical landscape of nature and topography at these sites of wonder appeared to be the focal areas Ward believed the reader should travel to, suggesting that the industrial town of Belper was worthy of note as it was passed through but not necessarily stopped at.

Unlike Ward’s guide, Glover’s 1830 Peak Guide had a greater focus on the trade and manufactures of the county, as well as the topographical, statistical, and general history of several towns (though not Belper not specifically). The guide contained a “topographical history of the principal places of the Peak” and “will lead the traveller to every interesting object and will direct the man of science or those whose business calls them to this county” (Glover, 1830: iii). The industrial spaces of Derbyshire were a prominent focus for Glover, and Jedediah Strutt featured in the introduction for his invention of the Derby rib and partnership with Arkwright in the eighteenth century. On the Belper and Milford mills, the introduction also detailed the history of the construction (and destruction from fire) of the mills, and the number of employees. Furthermore, in the road sketch map no. 4 in the objects of worthy notice section, Belper was emphasised as “an important market-town” with a rise in respectability and population “indebted to the extensive cotton works of Messrs. Strutt” (Glover, 1830: xxxiv). Whilst Belper did not have a dedicated section in the guide, the author still found it important to mention the industrial history of Belper and the Strutts, going into greater detail than Ward, as Glover’s guide was directed at a more scientific and business audience. Glover highlighted the industrial space the Strutts occupied to the traveller, who was concerned with trade and manufacture, detailing the contribution the Strutts had made to manufacturing.

In comparison to the earlier guides, Robertson’s 1872 guide to the Peak of Derbyshire and Buxton only briefly referenced Belper and the Strutts. Jedediah was mentioned as a person “connected with Derbyshire by eminent or successful lives” and as a “great inventor of industrial machinery, and also a founder of a wealthy and distinguished family” who “gave the great Arboretum to the town of Derby” (Robertson, 1872: 55). Joseph Strutt was also mentioned for gifting the Arboretum later in the guide. Finally, Belper was referred to as “an important seat of the cotton manufacture”, but the Strutt family was not mentioned for building the cotton industry in the town. In this guide the family was remembered for the earlier generation’s contribution as eminent people in Derby and the benevolence they practiced. The focus was less about their role as cotton manufacturers who shaped the

industrial landscape of the Derwent Valley through the cotton mills. Their role as paternalists was recognised as extending beyond the factory gates practising benevolence that was not limited to their workers but also extended to the improvement of Derby. The readers were presented with the reputation of the Strutts' paternalism.

The amount of material in these guides on industry in the region for the traveller is declining by the 1870s. In the eighteenth-century industrial districts were tourist attractions with scientific and industrial showcases confirming the power of the nation (Daniels, 1993). Travellers were driven by the increasing prosperity of manufacturing towns and set out to witness the growth in industry for themselves (Sweet, no date). Eighteenth century tourism in Belper is still an important aspect of research today, with one aspect of the Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site research framework's agenda being the impact of tourism in the eighteenth century on the Derwent Valley (Derwent Valley Mills, 2016). However, by the nineteenth century, visiting spaces of industry was falling out of fashion. The exception was Glover's guide that was aimed at a traveller interested in trade and manufacture, however, he only touched on the Strutts and the mills at Belper with his main focus on towns further north. Robinson's guide, with a concern for the mineral water at Buxton, and consequently, a more scientific approach due to his role as a research physician merely mentioned the cotton industry and history of the Strutt family as a historical nod to the region. In 1872 in the Peak Guide, the mills became less associated with the Strutt family, with the current family members not mentioned, as despite cotton manufacture occurring at Belper still, the area and its cotton textile industry were not as innovative as in the early nineteenth century with the focus moving towards other scientific ventures.

On the scientific and improvement nature of the early Strutts, in the chapter on Derby in the 1827 guide, the General Infirmary, of which William Strutt "was the moving spirit in the building of the hospital" (Hacker, 1960: 56), was said by Ward (1827: 34) to be "in the opinions of some persons,...a subject of regret" due to the expenditure and plans not being "regulated with so much attention to economy as to render the establishment less dependent on future contributions". Whilst in this guide the Strutts were not mentioned in association with the Infirmary, it was a prominent part of their family history and the role they played in the health of the population of Derby. Not all spaces of the Strutts were perceived in a positive light by a writer who was presenting these locations as remarkable places. In a guide designed for detailing the leisure prospects of Derbyshire for visitors to the region, the space of health the Strutt family was heavily associated with was seen as less than the complete success many said it was. This contrasts to Glover's guide where the Infirmary was linked to William Strutt and his contribution "to this benevolent institution" was praised (Glover, 1830: 28). The Mechanics' Institution was also referenced as being "founded, under the care of Messrs. W and J. Strutt" (Glover, 1830: 29). The Strutts were present in spaces of science and improvement in the early nineteenth century, and the role William and Joseph both played as influential political and scientific leaders in the early nineteenth century (Elliott, 2009) was portrayed in the 1830 guide to travellers visiting for science and business.

5.5. Conclusion

The Strutt family experienced a dramatic transformation from their farming roots in the early eighteenth century, becoming eminent industrialists with a cotton firm that had an international reach, and established landed gentry and politicians. In the later period a division in the family saw many members remain partners of the firm, involved in the daily running of the mills. However, Edward Strutt, whilst still a silent partner, was less concerned with the family business, instead taking on several political roles throughout his life. The marriage of his father to his mother, who came from an already landed mill-owning family, no doubt contributed to his ability to access these political and influential spaces outside of Belper and Derby.

In the *British Trade Journal* and newspaper cutting that were both focused on the Belper mills, of the later generation, Edward was the family member held in the highest-esteem due to his political influence. Jedediah Strutt was remembered for his successful construction of the mills and his sons for their contribution to civic life through the Derbyshire Infirmary and Arboretum, representing them as benevolent individuals concerned for their locality. The members of the later generation who remained involved with the mills were perceived as conscientious employers, concerned for the wellbeing of their workforce, more so than was the case in Lancashire factories, suggesting that geographically there was a difference between workers' experiences in the factory. The mills at Belper were represented as much better for the workers than those in Lancashire and this impression was exported across the globe. This occurred at a time when the working-class were becoming more politically active and challenging the class expectations they were confined to. By displaying the Strutts as benevolent and less oppressive towards the treatment of the workers, the author could have been reacting to the class changes occurring at the time and showing that the Strutts were not the same as the Lancashire cotton masters.

However, as the late nineteenth century experienced working-class resistance to class structure, and socialism grew in prevalence, it would be unwise to assume that Belper was in a bubble and untouched by these movements. Further research into the working-class of the Belper mills would be necessary to investigate any resistance in the later period. This would require going against the grain of the archive by accessing the Strutt records at the DRO and trying to find evidence of uprisings or resistance that went unnoticed, or not documented, by the author of the *British Trade Journal* article and the newspaper cutting.

Finally, in the travel writing of the Peak Guides the Strutts were seriously lacking in significance compared to other aspects of Derbyshire the authors found more worthy of note. The earlier guides referenced the Strutts in greater detail than the 1872 guide which did not associate the cotton industry in Belper to the Strutt family specifically. The interest in industrial tourism that was prevalent in the eighteenth century was much less prominent during the entirety of the nineteenth century, with spa towns becoming more popular. Whilst the earlier generation of the family was still being perceived in the 1872 guide as eminent industrialists and benevolent through the gifting of the Arboretum, the current generation running the mills were not a concern for the author at all.

In all the written texts the individual actions of the later nineteenth century generation were not of great concern, unlike those of William and Joseph, little was revealed about their role in civic society. The next chapter investigates, through newspaper articles, the civic lives of the later generation to understand how they were being publicly portrayed in the newspapers and the roles they played.

6. The Civic Lives of the Strutt Family

6.1. Introduction

The legacy of the earlier generations of the Strutt family through their construction of the mills and development of a factory town at Belper and Milford; their co-development of the Cromford mill in 1770s-early 1780s; their core industrial and civic presence in Derby; and their contribution to Derby through the Arboretum and General Infirmary is widely acknowledged. However, the industrial concerns and civic lives of the later generations of the family are less well known. Therefore, using newspapers, the chapter reconstructs aspects of the Strutts' presence in civic society between 1850 and 1899.

In the mid- to late-nineteenth century the local and provincial newspaper press had distinct political divisions, Liberal on one side and Tory on the other, but in a governmental respect were liberal by crossing party lines (Joyce, 2003). The local press worked to reconstruct the city and the town as a community which both governance and politics could build upon. The activities reported were treated as aspects of life of a single entity, and Joyce argues that through the representation in the newspaper, this entity was transparent and established as one. Transparency was performed through the content of the news, with detailed and exhaustive news reports that relied on accounts of what was exactly said to be relayed to the reader. The *Derby Mercury* was no exception and many of the articles analysed were extensive in their account of what was said at the various activities.

The civic concerns the Strutts demonstrated, and the themes that appeared regularly in the *Mercury*, were education, welfare of the locality, public health, and leisure. The *Derby Mercury* revealed that members of the Strutt family would sit on school boards, be part of assessment committees for education, and advocate the importance of children gaining an education. Concern for the locality was shown through members of the family at Petty Sessions when deciding the punishment for crimes committed in Belper, as well as their strong opinions, as recorded in the *Mercury*, on the disgraceful behaviour of individuals who engaged in physical violence. Furthermore, the Strutts also took an active role in the improvement of space, for example through the improvement of buildings and streets. Their civic engagement with public health was demonstrated through articles that recorded the meetings of the Board for the Derbyshire General Infirmary of which members of the family were part of. They also showed concern for the health of the locality, for example, through their concern for the water quality of Belper. Finally, the Strutts supported leisure activities and were often recorded as present at local events, such as local concerts, and often contributed financial support.

As industrial paternalists, a philanthropic and benevolent nature coupled with an underlying concern to govern and regulate civic behaviour was portrayed through the newspapers and will be explored in the chapter (Nielsen, 2000). The earlier generation's ideas on rational recreation and moral improvement of the middle and working classes is reproduced in some of the civic actions in which the later generation were involved, providing an insight into the continued beliefs of the Strutt family spanning over several decades. Gendered notions of space are also explored in the chapter as women entered the public sphere through an

increasingly prominent form of social inspection involving charity and education (McDermid, 2009). It is important to emphasise that the various articles analysed in the chapter are not exhaustive to the Strutts' activities, rather the selection chosen represents the scopes of their activities as publicly portrayed in the *Derby Mercury* as a space of display.

6.2. Education

From the beginning of the Strutts' presence in Belper the family made a central contribution to education in the locality. Sunday schools saw the beginning of a concern for children's education with Jedediah instituting a Sunday school for both boys and girls who worked in the cotton mill at Belper (Cooper, 1983). Continuing into the nineteenth century with the second generation, William and Joseph set up a school in 1807 in the Belper North Mill attic which was later moved to a specialised building at the bottom of Long Row, as seen in Figure 4 (Cooper, 1983). In the early nineteenth century there was a national interest in education with the National Society for Promoting the Education of the Poor forming in 1811 with an aim to develop schooling in expanding industrial towns (UK Parliament, 2021a). The British and Foreign School Society was established in 1814 and provided schooling for children of nonconformist parents. Nonconformist educators encouraged the teaching to girls of modern subjects that some private tutors and commercial schools were delivering, in contrast to a mainstream curriculum for girls limited to subjects and accomplishments deemed suitable for the domestic sphere, such as history, geography and modern languages (Elliott, 2009). Therefore, education was being promoted by societies to encourage working-class children to learn, both boys and girls, and the Strutts were important advocates of both child and adult education. This was demonstrated by William and Joseph Strutt's involvement with the Derby Mechanics' Institute that promoted scientific education to both the working and middle classes, although it was dominated by the higher working class and middle class more than the labouring classes (Elliott, 2009).

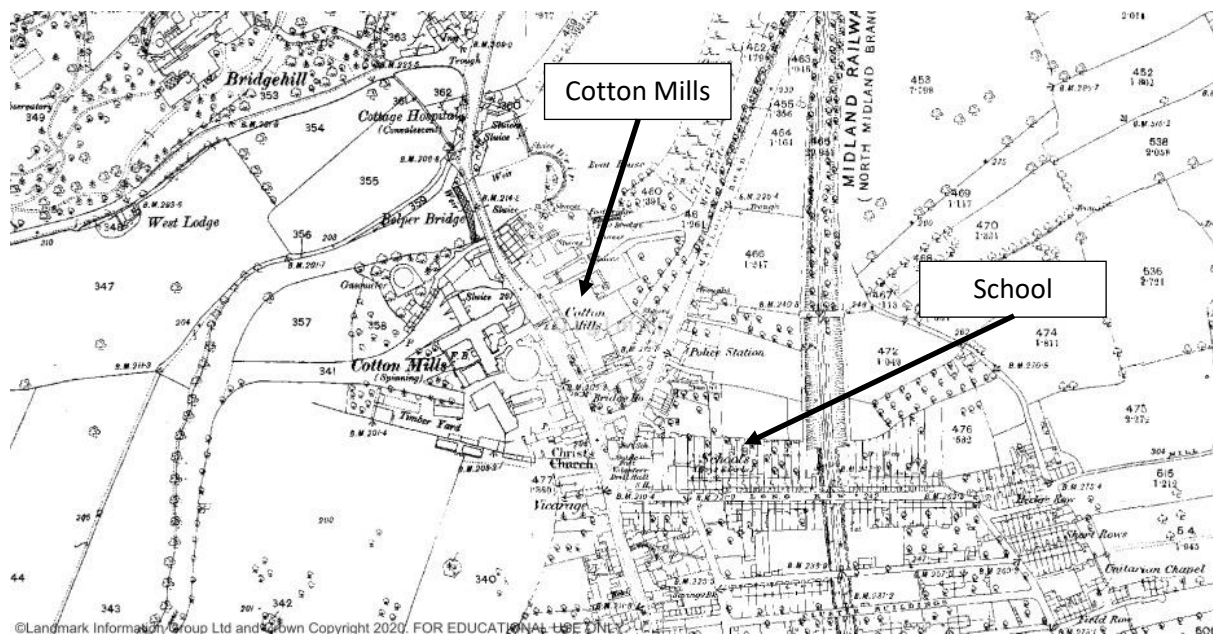


Figure 4 Map showing the location of the School at Belper and the Cotton Mills © Crown Copyright and Landmark Information Group Limited (2021). All rights reserved. (1880).

In the nineteenth century education was increasingly regarded as necessary for society to continue functioning, which involved the need to prepare the young for future roles, teach society's cultural values, and generate and diffuse knowledge (Smelser, 1991). Throughout the period, members of the Strutt family appeared in the newspapers due to their presence at the annual public examination of the boys and girls who attended the Derby British Schools. British schools were supported by the British and Foreign School Society which was formed by evangelical and non-conformist Christians (Clayton, 2018; Lawson and Silver, 1973). The British and Foreign School Society supported several non-sectarian schools that operated on Lancasterian principles (Clayton, 2018). In Derby, the Derby philosophers were "instrumental" in establishing the Lancasterian School (Elliott, 2009: 209). Reported on Wednesday 8th April 1863 in the *Derby Mercury* was Edward Strutt's speech as chair of the Derby British Schools examination.¹⁴ He described the Derby British School as a public school and said that the rate parents paid for their children to attend was high. He stated that previously the school had been funded by charitable contributions but that this was no longer the case. The Strutts had long supported the Lancasterian system with William and Joseph Strutt founding the first elementary school in Derby in 1812 (Fitton and Wadsworth, 1958; Hacker, 1960). The Strutts also founded Lancasterian schools at Belper and Milford where the condition that children had to be able to read before they entered the mills was implemented.

On Wednesday 27th August 1851, the *Derby Mercury* reported on the examinations of the girls and boys at the Derby British Schools.¹⁵ Edward Strutt, alongside his wife, Amelia Strutt, younger branches of the family, and other ladies and gentlemen "who take an interest in the welfare of the institution" attended the examination of the girls. On the evening

¹⁴ "Derby British Schools", *Derby Mercury*, April 8, 1863, p. 2.

¹⁵ "Local News", *Derby Mercury*, August 27, 1851, p. 3.

following the girls' examination, the boys were examined in a larger schoolroom and attendance was greater as the event had been announced by handbills, which was not the case for the girls. Edward Strutt and his wife were also present at the boys' examination, alongside a list of others, and the children's parents with a more "numerous attendance" to that of the girls. The noticeable difference between the examination of the boys and the girls was the more public nature of the boys' examination which also occurred in a larger space. Nevertheless, the examination of the girls was still visible in the newspaper for the reader to acknowledge. In the late nineteenth century Emily Davies and her supporters' efforts in the women's movement led to girls and women being allowed to participate in the 'local examinations' (Jordan, 1991). It was becoming important for girls to be examined and acknowledged for their progress and the education of women was becoming more of a societal concern.

The difference in the aspects the girls and boys were examined on suggests a gendered division of labour was confirmed by education. The girls were asked questions on grammar, history, geography, and other subjects, whereas the boys showed knowledge "of a practical and useful description", with the "reasoning powers of youth...properly exercised, as well as the memory and other faculties, well disciplined". The practical aspects the boys were tested on suggests they were being prepared for entering the labour market. Practical aspects, such as the boys' drawing books - a method used to promote industrial skills (Logan, 1997; Smelser, 1991) - generated particular admiration. Logan (1997) found in his study of gender dimensions in nineteenth-century schooling in Ireland that despite an equality of access for both boys and girls, there was a gendered difference reinforced by the curriculum. Whilst Logan studied Ireland, there does appear to be a gendered difference in the focus of teaching for boys and girls in the Derby school, reinforcing gendered divisions of learning that boys were taught practically to enter the labour market.

Furthermore, for the examination of the Derby British Schools in 1863, the girls presented for inspection "pincushions, macassars, and various articles of infantine apparel, of which the manipulation was very neat and useful".¹⁶ Despite the move for a greater focus on female education, there remained the assertion by many that schools should be committed to "making good wives and mothers" (Jordan, 1991: 441). This assertion referred to the gender ideology of the time that a woman should provide companionship for her husband, be a teacher of her children, and within the home, implement a prevalent moral influence. However, this required an educated woman to adequately execute these functions and academic education was viewed as the best way to prepare for marriage and maternity. Therefore, schools were another space that reinforced gendered roles and reinforced an ideological confinement of women to the domestic sphere.

Throughout his career, Edward promoted education as the greatest security for social order (Fisher, 2009). In the House of Lords, he spoke about the result of education in England. Edward stated that whilst there were large sums of money "munificently subscribed for the purposes of education" and that a substantial number of children attended the schools, the results were not as satisfactory as supposed (HL Deb 08 March 1869). He argued that only a

¹⁶ "Derby British Schools", *Derby Mercury*, April 8, 1863, p. 2.

small proportion of the children who attended these schools gained full benefit from the knowledge taught to them and that “the money expended upon their education was in a great measure thrown away” (HL Deb 08 March 1869). At the examination in 1851 he gave a “few words of excellent advice” to the boys.¹⁷ Whilst the exact words were not recorded in the newspaper article, given Edward’s concern for education, perhaps his intention to advise the boys was so that they made the most of the education delivered to them. Furthermore, as chair at the 1863 examination he responded to a vote of thanks for his services with “it had been a pleasure to him to be present, as he had always taken a deepest interest in the schools”.¹⁸ Edward had strong connections with the East Midlands through his political career as an MP for Derby between 1830 and 1848 (UK Parliament, no date), as well as a family background of supporting and providing learning spaces. Therefore, Edward was civically active in spaces of education throughout his political career, and this was being portrayed in the newspapers.

One barrier to the schemes that reformers made for popular education was the unwillingness of some families to send their children to school (Smelser, 1991). Educational development for reformers was a “struggle between enlightened impulses to reform...and the obstacles thrown up by those unenlightened or otherwise resistant to reform” (Smelser, 1991: 9-10). On his address after the boys’ examinations, Edward reiterated the importance to the families of sending their children to school. Edward emphasised the importance of education for improving lives through knowledge, suggesting that one aspect of Edward’s public life was a concern for the improvement of children’s educational attainment. The Strutt family was prominent for promoting ideas of improvement in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth century, as seen by Joseph’s involvement in the Derby Mechanics’ Institute and the Arboretum, with one outcome of it intended to ameliorate social problems of the working-class through an improvement in intellect and morals (Elliott, 2009). Also, through William and Joseph’s establishment of the Lancasterian school. Edward’s presence at the examinations could have been a type of surveillance to monitor the success of the schools he was so invested in to ensure educational attainment was being achieved.

Education for boys was not always preferred if it reduced the amount of labour available. School attendance was made compulsory by the 1880 Education Act between the ages of five and ten (Daunton, 2007; UK Parliament, 2021b), however, it was only in 1918 that the Education Act raised the school leaving age to fourteen (Parliament UK, 2021c). On Tuesday 16 November 1880, the *Mercury* reported the large gathering of agriculturists at the Derby Town Hall.¹⁹ Mr Druce, who called the meeting, was deputed by the Royal Commission on Agriculture to inquire into the nationwide depression in Derbyshire and other counties. At the meeting, the scarcity of labour was one aspect of discussion. The Education Act²⁰ was mentioned “as one agent against the better supply” and that “now-a-days a boy was kept at school till he was 14” which enabled “a sharp lad” to develop himself and find a job as clerk or another post in town. The opinion stated was that a boy who stayed in education that

¹⁷ “Local News”, *Derby Mercury*, August 27, 1851, p. 3.

¹⁸ “Derby British Schools”, *Derby Mercury*, April 8, 1863, p. 2.

¹⁹ “The Royal Commission on Agriculture”, *Derby Mercury*, November 16, 1880, p. 2.

²⁰ Specific Education Act not mentioned by the speaker.

long was “too good to be a labourer” and that there was plenty of work on a farm for a boy aged twelve but by fourteen or fifteen “he was not so apt to learn”. Whilst it was not compulsory to attend school past the age of ten in 1880, it appears that in Derby, it was common for boys to continue in education until they were slightly older, and as suggested by the discussion at the meeting, in order to improve their job prospects. Derby seemed to be a place that was encouraging of education as it was noticeable in the agricultural industry there were fewer boys to work; instead, they were remaining in education past the minimum legal age.

The Hon. Frederick Strutt responded to the comments on the lack of boys as farm labourers and suggested that whilst boys attending education for longer had affected labour, he believed that “this difficulty would grow less, and it was thought it would right itself”, and in “time they would have generally better educated labourers”. Strutt appeared optimistic about the improvement education would make to agricultural spaces of labour for the farmers in Derbyshire and appeared to be stressing this to the agriculturists present at the meeting. Like his father Edward, Frederick supported the education of children and believed that it was a way to improve their prospects, in this case, as labourers. Frederick Strutt, as a presiding magistrate, also showed his support for education as it was reported on Wednesday 10 March 1880 in the *Mercury* that a School Attendance Officer had relayed the result of cases heard by the magistrate and had “applied for a warrant of distress to be issued” for one school, but that Strutt had paid the 5s fine instead.²¹ Both these newspaper articles portrayed Frederick Strutt as a supporter and advocate of schooling, who would rather pay a fine out of his own pocket than watch a school suffer. This demonstrates that the later generation of Strutts carried forward the same concerns for education that the earlier generation showed in the creation of their own schools.

The female members of the family also showed an interest in education in Derby and Belper. Amelia Strutt accompanied her husband, Edward, to the examinations of the boys and girls at the Derby British Schools in 1851.²² In theory, the separate sphere ideology prevalent in Victorian Britain confined middle-class women to the domestic spaces of the home (Moore, 2016). However, it was accepted that women would enter more public spaces to undertake social inspection, for instance if charity was being dispensed or in support of education (McDermid, 2009). Women were particularly interested in education and at the end of the nineteenth century there were over 200 women on school boards (Moore, 2016). The idea of women as a moral vanguard justified middle-class women’s entry into public movements, and educational spaces became more accessible to women (McDermid, 2009), as seen by Amelia Strutt’s presence in the educational space of the school when accompanying her husband to the examinations. Furthermore, on Wednesday 4th January 1865, it was reported that Mrs and the Misses Strutt “presented the scholars belonging to the various schools” in Belper with Christmas gifts that included clothing, pictures, and books.²³ It is not clear which female members of the family the article was

²¹ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, March 10, 1880, p. 3.

²² “Local News”, *Derby Mercury*, August 27, 1851, p. 3.

²³ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, January 4, 1865, p. 3.

referring to, which as mentioned in Chapter Four, makes it difficult to acknowledge women in archival material.

Unlike Edward's wife, the Strutt women visiting the school were unaccompanied by a male relative. Women were considered to have a natural moral superiority in the separate sphere ideology, and John Ruskin (1819-1900), a writer and philosopher who published ideological statements from the 1860s concerning women, suggested that this was important not only in the domestic sphere but the public sphere too (Austin, 1987; Vaid, 1985). This notion was appealing to feminists as it could be argued that women entering public life would improve its moral nature, albeit in relation to their feminine responsibilities imbued by the "gender orthodoxies of 'complementary natures' ideology" (Beckingham, 2021: 421). Through philanthropic actions, women could enter the public sphere and relinquish their confinement to the private sphere. Therefore, it was perhaps considered more acceptable for the Strutt women to be in public without a 'chaperone' because education was so clearly within the sphere of women's influence. The presence of the Strutt women in the newspapers shows that both male and female members of the Strutt family in the late nineteenth century were actively present in educational spaces of civic life, with women either accompanying their husbands or by themselves.

6.3. Welfare of locality

Analysis of the *Derby Mercury* highlights that the condition of Belper was a public concern for the Strutt family. At a meeting of the Belper Local Board reported on Wednesday 3rd March 1880, of which George Henry Strutt was president, the condition of the marketplace was discussed.²⁴ Local Government Boards worked in the locality to represent the local ratepayers' interests and were overseen by a central board (Ogborn, 1992). In response to the discussion on the Belper marketplace, the central Board in London believed that the "Local Board were not empowered to expend the rates in repairing it". Several months later, it was reported on Wednesday 1st December 1880 that the reason the London Board made this decision was because the Local Board did not own the marketplace.²⁵ The Lord of the Manor held the rights over the marketplace which were not bought by Belper District Council until 1920 (Power, 1999c). Strutt intimated that if the Board completed "the portions of the Market-place which were not known as a highway" then he would apportion the cost to himself and pay. He was complimented at the meeting for "handsomely at his own cost placing the Market-place in so efficient and satisfactory condition". From the 1830s, a physical reorganisation at a municipal scale could "occur only as part of the general reform of local administration", and the reorganisation of local government enabled by the 1835 Municipal Corporations Act brought new powers to pass legislation more easily, especially legislation concerning the physical environment (Otter, 2008). Reformed councils of municipal government oversaw street and housing improvement. It was thought by councils that individuals would become liberal subjects if there was a minimal government governing them yet providing basic services for the municipality. The Act promoted town

²⁴ "District News", *Derby Mercury*, March 3, 1880, p. 2.

²⁵ "District News", *Derby Mercury*, December 1, 1880, p. 8.

government as open government for example through municipal meetings, so that government was witnessed (Joyce, 2003). The open government became associated with the public which, in turn, emphasised the visual and political visibility. The *Mercury* was a part of making these concerns for the town visible through the public distribution of the discussions the Local Board had on the condition of Belper.

However, the Belper Local Board could not improve the state of the marketplace as it was owned by the Lord and not the local state. Strutt's decision to fund the repair work himself arguably shows that he had a desire for the physical improvement of Belper to succeed regardless of the personal cost. A service that would eventually become a standard council task was delivered through philanthropy. If liberalism were to function as a mode of governmentality, it had to be built and maintained, privileging civility, sight, and movement (Otter, 2002). Belper was the heart of the Strutts' cotton empire and the municipality an important part of the Strutts' success, therefore, George's funding to repave the marketplace, whilst one of goodwill, could also have been an act of enlightened self-interest to ensure Belper maintained a liberal society. Whether Strutt's intentions for paving the marketplace were more than that of munificence, the newspapers suggested that George Henry Strutt's public life was one associated with benevolence and generosity. It was reported in the *Mercury* on Wednesday 17th April 1895 that the death of George Henry Strutt "deprives many charitable and other institutions of one of the most generous of benefactors".²⁶ It was also stated that he "disliked giving publicity to all his benefactions, and much help he gave to deserving objects did not find its way into public descriptions". Strutt was portrayed as a humble and community-minded individual who did not revel in brandishing his charitable donations, instead preferring many to go unpublicised. He was represented in a way that suggested that throughout his life he bettered the spaces he moved through by offering his charity to those who needed it.

The concern for the welfare of the locality George Henry Strutt possessed also extended from the street to more explicit spaces of health, with the newspapers covering the broad range of benevolence that he demonstrated. It was reported on Wednesday 25th July 1894 that he offered to pay for the new block in the Derbyshire Infirmary.²⁷ The Infirmary had longstanding ties to the earlier generations of the family and this personal connection could be one reason George was so willing to fund its improvement. Through reporting George's contribution to the locality, the newspaper coverage also revealed that a female member of the family made charitable contributions throughout her life. George offered to fund the new block on the condition it was named after the late Susan Strutt, his daughter, who died in 1894. This offer was accepted, and Susan was praised for her kindness and charitable work. Compared to the male family members it was less common for the female Strutts to be present in the newspapers. Having Susan's philanthropy revealed through reporting of her father George's actions provides an insight into the lives of women which typically attracted less newspaper coverage. This demonstrates that presumably the Strutt women would embark on their own charitable endeavours to support the locality, showing the type

²⁶ "Derbyshire Royal Infirmary", *Derby Mercury*, April 17, 1895, p. 2.

²⁷ "The Derbyshire Royal Infirmary", *Derby Mercury*, July 25, 1894, p. 3.

of work women performed, and that they were not confined to the female spaces associated with the home. By the end of the nineteenth century around 500,000 women worked in charities which were a catalyst for transcending the restrictions of the private sphere (Moore, 2016).

6.4. Public Health

In the late-nineteenth century public health was a key concern for the state with compulsory health legislation being implemented (Porter and Porter, 1988). The compulsory vaccination of children against smallpox was a contentious issue with which the Strutts were actively involved. In the *Derby Mercury* in April 1871 the vaccination of children was a recurring subject. On Wednesday 5th April 1871 the Vaccination Committee Report was published which stated that at the Messrs. Strutt schools ninety-three children were unvaccinated, and they had been “ordered” to be vaccinated by the committee.²⁸ Under the Vaccination Act 1853 it was made compulsory for children in their first three months of life to be vaccinated against smallpox and parents would be fined for failure to comply (University of Glasgow, no date). Near Derby, Leicester was a centre for anti-vaccination and the Mayor of Leicester himself was against compulsory vaccination (Durbach, 2000). Along with the Contagious Diseases Acts, the Vaccination Acts allowed the powers of the state, in the name of public health, to enter spaces of traditional civil liberties to ensure that the health of the whole community was protected against infectious diseases (Porter and Porter, 1988). The spaces of education that the Strutts were publicly invested in were no exception and were infiltrated by the state’s power to act in the name of public health. George Henry Strutt was a supporter of the vaccination legislation and would actively enforce the penalties if a parent refused to have their child vaccinated. The paternalistic nature of the Strutts was displayed in the newspaper through their regulation of locals by enforcing the law and monitoring defiance against these laws. Similarly, monitoring of public behaviour at Belper was continuously undertaken through the Watchmen’s reports that monitored who went over the bridge, lamps, water levels and tellers of the clocks.²⁹ Therefore, whilst the Strutts acted in a benevolent nature in some aspects of civic life, their charitable donations for instance, they would still act to regulate and enforce laws on civic society.

Many parents were against the compulsory vaccination of their children. On Wednesday 12 April 1871, George Henry Strutt was referenced in a placard written by Henry Clark, a father refusing to get his child vaccinated.³⁰ This placard was reproduced in the *Mercury* to display the opinion of a pro-vaccinationist on the “clap-trap nature” of the “anti-vaccinationists rhetoric”. In the nineteenth century there was a Victorian anti-vaccination movement in response to the compulsory vaccination of infants against smallpox (Earl, no date). Middle-class reformers and individuals from a working class who were politically active made up the

²⁸ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, April 5, 1871, p. 2.

²⁹ D6948/11/13

³⁰ “VACCINATION”, *Derby Mercury*, April 12, 1871, p. 2.

anti-vaccinationists who saw the mandatory vaccination as an extreme example of class legislation, targeting working-class infants with its policy and imposing penalties on those who deemed themselves 'conscientious objectors' (Durbach, 2000). Supporters of vaccination viewed it as a method of community participation that allowed entry into the national polity (Mooney, 2015). Anti-vaccination activists argued that the government were violating citizens' private affairs and decisions, and the working class were enraged at the imposition of fines. Compulsory vaccination legislations were viewed as "infractions of liberty" by those who campaigned to abolish them (Porter and Porter, 1988: 231).

Henry Clark stated that Strutt had fined him without a hearing or examination. From this reading, and to anti-vaccinationists, Strutt would have appeared callous and controlling. However, the writer argued that Clark's stubbornness against vaccinations stemmed from "imbecile enthusiasm" rather than "reasonable conviction" and tore apart his "laughable" placard suggesting that if "the laws of England are not in unison with his opinions, the best thing he can do is to move to some country where they are so". The *Mercury* supported compulsory vaccination, using Clark's placard to ridicule his views and those of other anti-vaccinationists to their readers, which, in turn, placed Strutt as an important figure in the pro-vaccine corner. During a nationwide movement, the Strutts were at the forefront of the argument for compulsory vaccinations in Derby. George's position echoed the family's desire for improvement of the locality, with health being one of ways the Strutts continuously strove for progress, demonstrated by William's earlier involvement in the General Infirmary. The Infirmary demonstrated a form of control through its design as urban elites were concerned with the health of a growing population (Elliott, 2000; Elliott, 2009). Fining individuals refusing to have vaccinations could be interpreted as a form of control as it enabled local influential people, George Henry Strutt for instance, to penalise those who refused to adhere to the government's Vaccination Act. The freedom and rights of citizens was conditional on their responsible behaviour in the wake of infectious disease (Mooney, 2015). As a spatial and social threat, decisions on vaccination were not isolated to the home. A diseased body would move through the city and infectious disease surveillance became a way to monitor this, but this put liberal subjectivity at risk (Mooney, 2015). According to Mooney, however, within liberalism some believed that interfering with individual liberty was justified if collective self-protection was achieved. Infant vaccination against smallpox was interpreted as a liberal measure to restrict the spread of infection for community protection. Strutt's enforcement of vaccinations could have stemmed from a desire for community protection against disease and the *Mercury* showed support for this through their response to Clark's placard, which publicly presented the Strutts as central in the fight pro-vaccinationists had against anti-vaccinationists.

6.5. Leisure

A recurrent theme emerging from the newspapers was the contribution to leisure and entertainment the Strutt family provided for the locality. The following examples demonstrate the Strutts' contribution as both mill owners and landowners. In the locality of Belper, the Strutt family supported leisure activities for residents. On Wednesday 4th

January 1865 it was reported that Messrs. Strutts had the previous week “kindly permitted their magnificent dancing room in Long-row [Belper] to be opened for public recreation and enjoyment” and that Mr and Mrs Strutt and family were in attendance.³¹ Furthermore, it was reported on Wednesday 11th December 1872 that George Henry Strutt, alongside others, patronised an evening concert by the Belper United Brass Band at the National School Room.³² Finally, as reported on Wednesday 11 July 1883, for the Wakes holiday George provided the meadows at Belper for the scholars, teachers, and friends of the Christ Church who spent a “delightful day” there.³³ Civically, the Strutt family was represented in the newspapers as a generous family by allowing the inhabitants of Belper to access the private spaces of the dancing room and meadows that they controlled for recreation, as well as supporting events held by local groups. The Strutt family’s association with recreation was an important part of their contribution to public life as shown by Joseph Strutt’s patronage of the Derby Arboretum as a form of rational recreation (Elliott, 2009). Rational recreation is interpreted by some as a middle-class desire to achieve social control by imposing their cultural values (Conway, 1991). The presence of the family at the Belper dance in 1865 might have been to show their support and encourage enjoyment for the attendees, but it could also have been a way of monitoring and regulating the proceedings to ensure respectable behaviour. Likewise, George allowing access to the Belper meadows in 1883 could have been a method of regulation, containing the festivities to a specific location.

The family also influenced the leisure time of individuals beyond Belper, as demonstrated by Edward’s influence in Nottinghamshire. On Wednesday 14th August 1850 it was reported that Edward Strutt “gave his annual treat to his tenantry on the Kingstone³⁴ estate” which included the workmen, their wives, and children.³⁵ In the park a game of cricket was played as well as other games, and the “fair portion of the company and children were entertained on the terrace lawn...with tea”. Estate celebrations were considered an important feature of social interactions between landowner and the village in the nineteenth century (Stevens, 2012). They provided “an opportunity to show largesse to the tenantry and workers” (Stevens, 2012: 8). Edward was civically engaging with his tenantry and workers by providing an opportunity for them to partake in a day of leisure. Therefore, he was present in the newspapers due to his position within landed society and the role this entailed when interacting and participating in leisure activities with those employed on his land. These activities echoed the Victorians’ approach to rational recreation which made an individual’s free time restricted by time, defined by place, and controlled by content (Billinge, 1996). Recreation was based on a system that recognised approved activities which were then restricted to suitable times and places, and as demonstrated through the article, Edward organised a time and place for specific activities to be experienced through his estate fete.

³¹ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, January 4, 1865, p. 3.

³² “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, December 11, 1872, p. 3.

³³ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, July 11, 1883, p. 2.

³⁴ In the *Derby Mercury* the Kingstone Estate is spelt Kingstone.

³⁵ “A summary of the Parliamentary proceedings during the past week involves but little that is either interesting or important”, *Derby Mercury*, August 14, 1850, p. 3

Despite being represented in the newspaper for providing a “treat” for his tenantry, there could also have been an element of governance and control.

Nearly two decades later, Edward Strutt’s annual fete for his tenantry was still an important activity. Celebrations on most large estates in Britain became a long-standing tradition (Stevens, 2012), which is apparent by the continuation of Strutt’s celebrations. On Wednesday 6th August 1873 it was reported that an event was held for tenants of Kingston and West Leake in the grounds of Kingston Hall.³⁶ An exhibition of the *Kingston and West Leake Cottage Garden Society*, of which Lord Belper was president, occurred with a flower show and produce from individuals’ gardens judged in various competitions. Flower shows in the nineteenth century were employed by social reformers as a pedagogical and biopolitical tool to discipline the behaviours and desires of the working-class (Lawrence, 2020). These would be gendered, placing the moral defence of the family as the responsibility of the woman. Those being judged and mentioned in the article at Strutt’s fete were all women and the judges were male gardeners of noblemen suggesting that there was a gendered element to the activities occurring at the fete. The gendered association of flowers developed a moral botany that reinforced women as responsible for their family’s moral condition (Lawrence, 2020). Flowers were used by middle-class reformers as vehicles of moral teachings. In the article, Edward appears as a benevolent landowner who organises events for his tenants, however, the events that occurred suggest that he wanted to encourage discipline and moral improvement amongst his tenantry. Edward, in his speech at dinner said that he was “glad to know that the judges commend the state of your gardens”, signalling that his tenants were pleasing him with their contributions to maintaining morality on his estate. Leisure appeared to not only be separate from work, but a constructed and socially regulated set of spatial activities that monitored the lives of citizens.

6.6. Conclusion

The newspapers are a space of record and projection that document the activities and events the Strutt family were publicly participating in during the late nineteenth century. They are also spaces of projection of the Strutts’ civic lives, helping to allow the recorded activities to cohere and show the image of the Strutts as portrayed through the newspapers. Elliott (2009) casts the *Derby Mercury* as Tory in orientation in the early-mid nineteenth century. However, despite the distinct political sides newspapers held in the nineteenth century, they were also liberal in their crossing of the boundaries (Joyce, 2003). Whilst the *Mercury* was conservative and the Strutts Whigs, this did not stop the *Mercury* supporting the views of the Strutts that had similar alignments to their own, for instance, when it came to compulsory vaccination. Therefore, the *Derby Mercury* was recording the spaces through which the Strutts were expressing their own distinctive model of citizenship (Knudson, 1993).

³⁶ “District News”, *Derby Mercury*, August 6, 1873, p. 3.

Through the public sphere of the newspaper, both Edward and Frederick Strutt were portrayed as firm advocates and supporters of education. Their civic lives entered spaces of education, and they used their influence and positions to encourage school attendance, promote education in other industries, and ensure schools were financially supported. Furthermore, the newspapers portrayed Edward Strutt and George Henry Strutt as polymaths as they were concerned with a wide range of affairs in public and civic life. Through the social space of the newspapers the family was transformed, showing the impacts of the Strutts in civic life at a range of scales. Their impacts were felt on the streets through the improvement to the marketplace, they were felt in local individuals' leisure time, they were felt in the national concern for public health, and finally, they were felt in the educational spaces of local children.

Whilst the local newspapers detail the civic activities the Strutts supported and contributed to, they also reveal what was important to the Strutts in the civic environment. George Henry Strutt's contribution to the improvement of the marketplace suggested a civic concern for a liberal society as it was thought that liberal citizens were created if minimal forces governed them whilst still providing basic services. Furthermore, Edward organised a flower show for his tenantry which could be viewed as a fun activity to participate in, but it could also project Edward's concerns for the civic life and moral condition of his tenants. Furthermore, George providing the meadow for the Wakes festival and the attendance of the Strutts at the Belper dance could suggest that by enabling recreation and leisure in the spaces they had influence over, civic behaviour could be monitored and ordered. Therefore, whilst the Strutts appeared to promote leisure in civic life, moral regulation could also be a motivation.

Not only were the male members of the family publicly present in the newspapers but the female members were too. The newspapers show that the Strutt women were moving in charitable circles, with Susan Strutt remembered for her charitable work, and Mrs and the Misses Strutt acknowledged for their contribution of Christmas gifts in the schools. Publicly the Strutt women were recognised for their philanthropic contributions to civic life which were considered acceptable as women were believed to have a natural moral superiority. Women's charitable endeavours, it was argued, would improve the moral standing of society, allowing women with philanthropic intentions to access public spaces. It was accepted that women could enter public spaces to carry out social inspection, and this was increasingly the case with schooling, demonstrated by the number of women on school boards (McDermid, 2009; Moore, 2016).

7. Conclusion

This chapter presents the main findings of this thesis by linking these to the research questions and offering suggestions for further research.

7.1. By reflecting on the challenges of archival research, how does the process of working in physical and online archives, in search of the Strutts, contribute to geographers' conversations on doing archival research?

Having conversations about working in archives and reflecting on the process of conducting research in these spaces allows for a critical approach to challenge the historical documents held within these repositories. The digital age has brought about methodological and technological demands as abundance is experienced due to rapid expansion of digital repositories. Through searches for the Strutts in the BNA a considerable quantity of results was generated which required filtering in order to make analysis possible. Geographers have acknowledged abundance and have provided new ways to work with a large amount of data. Hodder's (2017) biographical approach to transnational histories of radical pacifism is one-way researchers can interrogate a vast amount of data to tell bigger and broader stories and overcome the abundance of archives. This enables an investigation into the relationship between individuals' subjectivity, the spaces in which they move, and the places they inhabit, and this thesis has sought to show how the Strutts' own relationship within spaces of Derbyshire was ultimately bound up with economic and social change and ideas of civic responsibility, improvement, and control.

Finally, finding disempowered groups in the archives is a challenge many geographers have been working to overcome. Although classed as elite women, the Strutt females were not as present as expected and their contributions to records unrecognised. It is argued that archive catalogues generally fail to recognise women's contributions (McDonagh, 2017) which emphasises women's hidden histories in these spaces. Histories of women are often fragmentary and remain so due to the challenge faced when trying to find them in the archives. However, geographers have been working on new solutions to finding disempowered groups, such as women, in the archives, and reading against the grain allows these groups to be revealed. A feminist historical geography focus to researching the lives of the Strutt women by reading against the grain of the archive - using both the articles in the BNA and material from the family collections at the DRO - would reveal a great deal more about the Strutt women. This would enable an exploration into the spaces the female Strutts entered and increase the possibility of discovering a great deal more about their actions.

7.2. How were the Strutts through the Belper mills, Infirmary, and Derby Arboretum perceived by various writers?

The legacy of the earlier generation of the family was perceived by the writers of the *British Trade Journal* and the newspaper cutting as nothing less than an industrial success for the

mills at both Belper and Milford, and for their influential role in raising Belper's status. The firm had not only a local prominence but national status, as it was referred to as important in the industrial history of the country, and international standing, as the journal article was circulated overseas to different audiences. In the travel writing, the perception of the earlier Strutt generation in 1827 and 1830 mirrors that of the legacy left in the later period. The Strutts were perceived as esteemed figures and important industrialists with the only exception in the 1827 guide where the Derbyshire General Infirmary was referred to as a subject of regret for some. However, the 1872 guide did not connect the family to the mills suggesting that, for the traveller, the Strutt family and Belper mills were less of a focal point on their journey. Instead, the improvement of Derby through Joseph Strutt's contribution of the Arboretum was remembered. Therefore, in the late nineteenth century the earlier generation's role in the development of the mills and factory town of Belper and Milford, and in Enlightenment progressivism and improvement through the Derbyshire Infirmary and Arboretum was the legacy being told. Consequently, the perception was given that the industrial history of the Strutt family was a major success for Belper, the industry, and the country.

Individual members of the family from the later nineteenth century were less of a focal point for both the *British Trade Journal* and the newspaper cutting, and not at all for the travel writing. Family members were associated with the firm, with the exception of Edward Strutt whose political career was referenced and himself presented as the family's representative by the journal's author, and George Henry Strutt briefly mentioned for his gift of a fountain. The firm in the later period, in a positive account, was commended for its attention to making the lives of its workers tolerable and harmonious which, according to the journal's writer, appeared to contrast to the operative look seen in the faces of the workers at the Lancashire textile mills. The legacy of "benevolent tyrants" of which Cooper (1983) wrote, and their position as paternalists providing for their workforce with a benevolent nature appeared to be the dominant perception of the Strutts, and consequently, what they are still remembered for. However, tensions between the working class and industrialists/factory masters from the 1870s were rising as the working class became less politically docile and socialism prompted the modern labour movement resulting in a transition from class consciousness to class collaboration (Lawrence, 1992). A further study into resistance, if indeed there was any, at Belper from the workforce would query these positive accounts of the firm to reveal the extent to which Belper was involved in these national labour changes. This would contribute to historical geography research on labour resistance and explore worker agency in an important cotton town.

7.3. How were the Strutt family active in civic life as displayed through the newspapers?

As a space of record and projection, the *Derby Mercury* revealed the civic lives of the Strutt family and the areas they were concerned with. Despite the *Mercury* being of Tory orientation and the Strutts on the Whig side, they still appeared to be supported in their endeavours by the paper. The education of children at the Derby British Schools was an area

Edward Strutt supported, reflecting his interests as an MP with his advocacy of education as beneficial. At the examinations he attended, he was prominent in praising the results of the pupils and sharing his words of advice to both students and parents. The generations before Edward were also advocates of education through the provision of Sunday schools for the mill children and then the creation of Lancasterian schools at Derby, Belper, and Milford. Therefore, similar concerns were shared between generations and Edward used his political influence to speak about educational issues in the House of Lords.

Another aspect of civic life members of the later generation were active in was the welfare of the locality. The condition of Belper mattered to George Henry Strutt as he provided the funds to repave the marketplace. Whether this was out of benevolence or to promote a liberal society through liberal governance is unclear, however it does show that he would use his own wealth in the locality. This was also the case when he funded the new block at the Derbyshire Infirmary under the condition it was named after his daughter. Strutt was active in mill management at Belper, and it appears that the paternalistic nature the earlier generations displayed was still prevalent in the family over 50 years later. The *Mercury* portrays George Henry Strutt as a benevolent figure who performed his charitable donations modestly, often wanting them to go untold.

Spaces of health were significant to the earlier generation as the Derbyshire General Infirmary was inspired by William Strutt who used his construction experience to design and reform the Infirmary for moral and clinical reasons (Elliott, 2000; 2009). In the late nineteenth century, the Strutt family were involved in national conversations and campaigns on public health. During the debates on the compulsory vaccination of children against smallpox, George Henry actively enforced the penalties handed to parents who refused to get their children vaccinated. The *Mercury* supported this view of compulsory vaccination, and consequently, Strutt's enforcement of the penalty. However, anti-vaccinationists argued that the compulsory nature infringed upon an individual's liberty. Strutt had the power to impact the private lives of families by enforcing penalties, and to those families who were anti-vaccination, his involvement in these debates would have been an unwelcome presence in civic life.

With the later generation there was a greater acknowledgement of the Strutts as landowners with Edward's Kingston estate and George Henry's management of the Belper and Milford estate. In this way, leisure was also an aspect of civic life that the Strutts as landowners were active in. Edward threw annual fetes for his tenantry which were portrayed in the newspaper as treats. Furthermore, at Belper the Strutts provided space for leisure activities and patronaged events. The representation of the family in the *Mercury* is one of generosity towards those living on the estates controlled by members of the family. However, the control and regulation of these events to specific spaces the Strutts chose could also be an intention to monitor and regulate the behaviour of citizens to ensure morality was maintained within the population. This echoes the earlier generation's role as moral and social reformers through their work at the Arboretum and Infirmary, to ameliorate social problems through improving morals and intellect (Elliott, 2009).

Finally, the *Mercury* presented occasions when the Strutt women entered public spaces. Critiquing the separate spheres ideology that confined middle-class women to the private/domestic sphere, the Strutt women entered a more public life and participated in social and civic welfare through their support of charity and education. Spaces of education and philanthropy were deemed acceptable for women to enter and justified by women's natural morality. Entering public spaces in this way made it acceptable for women to navigate these male-dominated spaces and many women used this opportunity to transcend the restrictions of the private sphere (Moore, 2016). A further study, which centres on a closer analysis of the Strutt women's citizenly practices and presence in public spaces, would contribute to the growing body of literature that works to reveal how women navigated and contested the gendered notions of space (Moore, 2016).

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9. Sources

9.1. Material from the Derbyshire Record Office

Table 3 List of archival material consulted organised by order of reference in the dissertation

| Reference number | Description |
|-------------------|---|
| D3638/19 | Statistical record of wages paid at Belper and Milford 1902-1916 |
| D3638/4 | Record of ?tests on threads c1895 |
| D3638/5 | Record of ?works and tests (volume marked 'Arthur Hague, Birmingham') [1926] |
| D2943/F/9/2 | File entitled "The Strutts of Derbyshire being the records and biographical memoirs of "Jedediah Strutt (1726-1797) William Strutt (1756-1830) and Edward Strutt, first Lord Belper (1801-1880) by Frederick Strutt", edited by R Harold Paget. It contains only a life of Jedediah (including copies of correspondence) 1898 |
| D3772/T34/6/1-3 | Draft conveyance of the Newell Grange Estate by surviving trustee of the late Jedediah Strutt's children and devisees and mortgagees of the late Joshua Walker to George Henry Strutt (1855) with related documents 1855 |
| D2943/F/9/4/3/1-6 | Letters to Fanny, Edward and Bessy Strutt from Ann Strutt in Italy, 9 May - 27 June 1833 |
| D3772/E64/1 | Album of Strutt Family Portraits - 1861-1881 |
| D3772/E44 | Isabel Clara Hurt (nee Strutt) (b.1881) |
| D3772/E59 | Mrs Mary Emily Strutt |
| D3772/E49/11/1-6 | Expenditure books 1848-1895 |
| D3772/E49/32/3 | Servants |
| D3638/30 | Article on Belper and Milford Mills in British Trade Journal 1882 |
| D2943/F/9/3/8 | In folder containing: D2943/F/9/3/1-21 Newspaper cuttings concerning Belper and the Strutts 1844-1905 and including verses on the death of the Hon Arthur Strutt in 1877. |
| D6948/11/13 | Watchmen's Reports No. 5 Jul 1836-Jul 1842 |

9.2. Newspaper Articles

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