

THE SKILLED LABOURER
1760-1832

BY THE SAME AUTHORS

THE TOWN LABOURER

1760-1832

The New Civilisation. 8*vo.*

THE VILLAGE LABOURER

1760-1832

A Study in the Government of England
before the Reform Bill. 8*vo.*

LONGMANS, GREEN AND CO.

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BY

J. L. HAMMOND AND BARBARA HAMMOND

AUTHORS OF

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TO
ARTHUR AND DOROTHEA PONSONBY

PREFACE

IN the *Town Labourer* the writers tried to give a picture of the social conditions created by the great changes of the Industrial Revolution. They described the general character of the new life of town and factory, the ideas and difficulties of the class in power and the outlook and the temper of the workers. This book treats the same period from a different aspect. Its aim is to present the detailed history of particular bodies of skilled workers during those changes. It would be impossible to cover all industries in a book planned on the scale of this volume: the industries chosen are those for which the fullest records were available.

The writers owe a substantial debt to Professor George Unwin, who has helped them liberally from his large store of special knowledge of industrial history. They are under obligations to other friends, notably Mr. A. Clutton Brock, Mr. G. D. H. Cole, Professor L. T. Hobhouse, Mr. R. H. Tawney, and Professor Graham Wallas. Mr. G. W. Daniels has been kind enough to make some valuable suggestions on the subject of the early history of the cotton trade, on which he speaks with special authority, and Mr. T. W. Hanson of Halifax, who is steeped in the exciting history of the West Riding, has given important help for the chapter on the Yorkshire Luddites. The Appendix is due to Mr. A. G. C. Lloyd of Capetown.

The writers published in the *Town Labourer* a list of their principal authorities. It seems unnecessary to reproduce that list, but a few books on which they have drawn more specially for this volume should be mentioned. They are: *Annals of Coal Mining*, by R. L. Galloway; *History of the*

viii **THE SKILLED LABOURER,**

Cotton Manufacture, by Edward Baines ; *The Lancashire Cotton Industry*, by Professor S. J. Chapman ; *Yorkshire Past and Present*, by Thomas Baines ; *The History of Wool and Wool-combing*, by James Burnley ; *History of the Worsted Manufacture in England*, by John James ; *A History of Machine-Wrought Hosiery and Lace Manufactures*, by William Felkin ; and *The Risings of the Luddites*, by Frank Pecl.

HEMEL HEMPSTEAD, November 1919.

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APPENDIX

OLIVER'S LATER HISTORY

MR. A. C. G. LLOYD, the Librarian of the South African Public Library, was kind enough to write to us after reading *The Town Labourer* to say that there was good reason to believe that Oliver turned up afterwards in Cape Colony as William Oliver Jones, Inspector of Buildings during the Governorship of Lord Charles Somerset, and he directed our attention to documents that were likely to throw some light on the point.

From these documents it seems quite clear that Jones was Oliver. Lord Charles Somerset is described by Dr Theal as a high-handed and extravagant Governor, and his administration provoked a great deal of discontent. Some of his critics roundly accused him of corruption. Certain of these allegations were examined by a Commission of Inquiry which was sent to the Cape. One of the complaints urged against Somerset was that he treated Jones as an intimate and confidential adviser and that Jones had received advances from the Public Treasury for buildings for which he gave no account. The Commission of Inquiry found fault with these financial arrangements, and both Lieut.-Colonel Bird, who was Secretary to the Government at the Cape from 1818 to 1824, and Somerset made statements to the Commission about Jones which bear on his history.

Bird, who was very hostile to Somerset, said: 'Lord Charles Somerset may now affect to regret having placed so much confidence in W. O. Jones, but was Lord Charles Somerset ignorant of the character of W. O. Jones? did he not know who W. O. Jones was? and may it not be inferred that therefore he gave him confidential employment?' (Theal, *Records of the Cape Colony*, vol. xxi. p. 168).

Somerset gave some important evidence about the circumstances under which Jones originally found public employment. 'I have now only to add that the employment of W. O. Jones did not originate with me. When I returned from England I found him superintending the repairs of the wharf and doing the duty of inspector of government buildings, the inspector having had a long leave of absence from the acting Governor. Lieut.-Colonel Bird informed me, that Mr. W. O. Jones brought out a letter from Mr. Goulburn, under date 10th January 1820, recommending him for employment here, and it was in consequence of such

recommendation of him that I confirmed him in the appointment of inspector of government buildings on the resignation of Mr. Melville' (*Ibid.*, vol. xxiii. p. 475).

Mr. Goulburn was Under-Secretary for the Colonies from 1812 to 1821. This statement explains how it is that Jones was able to enter Cape Colony without the usual formalities, which at the time were very strict. There is no record of his receiving any permit.

Jones was more than once publicly identified with Oliver and the allegation was never directly denied.

Thus a colonist of the name of Bishop Burnett, who brought several charges against Lord Charles Somerset, accused Jones of writing and posting up a libellous placard attacking the Governor in the hope of incriminating Burnett. This charge was not proved, but in his petition to Parliament Burnett calls Jones 'Oliver the spy,' and Brougham when presenting that petition referred to this allegation (*Hansard*, June 16 and 22, 1825).

Jones died in August 1827 without ever accounting for the public money that had passed through his hands (Bird's statement, *Theal's Records*, vol. xxxiii. p. 392.) Compare Somerset's statement, *ibid.*, vol. xxxi. p. 275 :

'It has long been matter of more regret and vexation to me than I can find words to express, that the inspector neglected to keep his accounts in the form required, which has rendered it impossible to ascertain with precision the exact expense of each distinct service on which the artificers and labourers were employed under him.'

He left a will, dated 10th December 1824 (Cape Archives Orphan Chamber Wills, vol. ciii. of 1827) in which he described himself as a native of Ponsonbury in the County of Salop, aged about fifty, and married to Harriet born Dear of Fulbourn, Cambridgeshire.

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