To the Merchants, Clothiers and all such as wish well to the Staple Manufactory of this Nation.

The Scribbing-Machines (used to clean wool) have thrown thousands of your workers out of employ, whereby they are brought into great distress, and are not able to procure (acquire) a maintenance (money to take care of) for their families, and deprived (disadvantage) them of the opportunity of bringing up their children to labour (work): We have therefore to request, that prejudice and self-interest may be laid aside, and that you may pay that attention to the following facts, which the nature of the case requires.

The number of Machines extending about seventeen miles south-west of LEEDS, exceed all belief, being no less than one hundred and seventy! and as each machine will do as much work in twelve hours, as ten men can in that time do by hand, and they working night-and-day, one machine will do as much work in one day as would otherwise employ twenty men.

If four men were to be employed at each machine twelve hours, working night and day, it will take eight men in twenty-four hours; so that twelve men are thrown out of employ for every single machine used; full four thousand men are left to shift for a living how they can, and must of course fall to the church if not timely relieved.

This is not all; the injury to the Cloth is great, in so much that in Frizing, instead of leaving a nap upon the cloth, the wool is drawn out and the Cloth is left thread-bare (stripped). Many more evils we could enumerate (list), but we would hope, that the sensible part of mankind, who are not biased by interest, must see the dreadful tendency of their continuance; a depopulation will be the consequence; trade being then lost, the landed interest (wealthy land owners) will have no other satisfaction but that of being last devoured (suffer consequences).

We wish to propose a few questions to those who would plead for the further continuance of these machines:

Men of common sense must know, that so many machines in use, take the work from the hands employed in Scribbling, - and who did that business before machines were invented.

How are those men, thus thrown out of employ to provide for their families; - and what are they to put their children apprentice (train to learn a skill) to, that the rising generation may have something to keep them at work, in order that they may not be like vagabonds (beggars) strolling about in idleness (inactivity)? Some say, begin and learn some other business. - Suppose we do; who will maintain our families, whilst we undertake the arduous task; and when we have learned it, how do we know we shall be any better for all our pains; for by the time we have served our second apprenticeship, another machine may arise, which may take away that business also; so that our families, being half starved whilst we are learning how to provide them with bread, will be wholly so during the period of our third apprenticeship.

But what are our children to do; are they to be brought up in idleness? Indeed as things are, it is no wonder to hear of so many executions (people put to death); for our parts, though we may be thought illiterate (uneducated) men, our conceptions are, that bringing children up to industry (to be productive), and keeping them employed, is the way to keep them from falling into those crimes, which an idle habit naturally leads to.

These things impartially (without bias) considered will we hope, be strong advocates in our favour; and we conceive that men of sense, religion and humanity, will be satisfied of the reasonableness, as well as necessity of this address, and that their own feelings will urge them to espouse the cause of us and our families -

Signed, in behalf of THOUSANDS, by

Joseph Hepworth Thomas Lobley

1. Identify the basic source info
   - What is the title?
   - Who wrote it? Who do they represent?
   - When was it written?
2. What was the claim or argument (summarize)? Provide evidence from the text.
3. Select a quote/passage and explain what it means, why it is important, or why it is interesting.
This statement by the Cloth Merchants of Leeds (a major center of wool manufacture in Yorkshire) defended the use of machines. It appeared in 1791.

At a time when the People, engaged in every other Manufacture (production) in the Kingdom, are exerting (putting forth the effort) themselves to bring their Work to Market at reduced Prices, which can alone be effected by the Aid of Machinery, it certainly is not necessary that the Cloth Merchants (businessmen) of Leeds should have reason to defend a Conduct, which has for its Aim (goal) the Advantage of the country in general, and of the Cloth Trade in particular.

Yet anxious to prevent Misrepresentations, which have usually attended the Introduction of the most useful Machines, the merchants wish to remind the Inhabitants of this Town, of the Advantages derived (obtained) to every flourishing Manufacture from the Application of Machinery; for instance, that of Cotton in particular, which in its internal and foreign Demand is nearly alike to our own, and has in a few Years by the Means of Machinery advanced to its present Importance, and is still increasing.

If then by the Use of Machines, the Manufacture of Cotton, an Article (product) which we import, and are supplied with from other Countries, and which can every where be procured (acquired) on equal Terms, has met with such amazing Success, may not greater Advantages be reasonably expected from cultivating to the utmost the Manufacture of Wool, the Produce of our own Island, an Article in Demand in all Countries, almost the universal Clothing of Mankind?

In the Manufacture of Wool, the Scribbling Mill, the Spinning Frame, and the Fly Shuttle, have reduced manual Labour (physical work) nearly One third, and each of them at its-first Introduction carried an Alarm to the Work People, yet each has contributed to advance the Wages and to increase the Trade, so that if an Attempt was now made to deprive (deny) us of the Use of them, there is no Doubt, but every Person engaged in the Business, would exert himself to defend them.

From these Premises, we the undersigned Merchants, think it a Duty we owe to ourselves, to the Town of Leeds, and to the Nation at large, to declare that we will protect and support the free Use of the proposed Improvements in Cloth-Dressing, by every legal Means in our Power; and if after all, contrary to our Expectations, the Introduction of Machinery should for a Time occasion a Scarcity (shortage) of Work in the Cloth Dressing Trade, we have unanimously agreed to give a Preference to such Workmen as are now settled Inhabitants of this Parish (town), and who give no Opposition to the present Scheme.

Appleby & Sawyer
Bernard Bischoff & Sons
[and 59 other names]