Wootton Bassett - Trades Union Membership

The origins of trade unions can be traced back to 18th century Britian, where the rapid expansion of industrial society then taking place, drew women, children, rural workers and immigrants into the work force in large numbers and in new roles. This pool of unskilled and semi-skilled labour spontaneously organised in fits and starts throughout its beginnings, and would later be an important arena for the development of trade unions. Trade unions have sometimes been seen as the successors to the guilds of medieval Europe, though the relationship between the two is disputed, as the masters of the guilds employed workers (apprentices and journeymen) who were not permitted to organise.

The first attempts at setting up a national general union were made in the 1820s and 30s. The National Association for the Protection of Labour was established in 1830 by John Doherty, after an apparantly unsuccessful attempt to create a similar national presence with the National Union of Cotton-Spinners. The Association quickly enrolled approximately 150 unions, consisting mostly of textile related unions, but also including mechanics, blacksmiths, and various others.

More permanent trade unions were established from the 1850's, better resourced but often as radical.

Recent historical research puts forward the view that trade unions are part of a broader movement of benefit societies, which includes medieval guilds, Freemasons, Oddfellows. Friendly Societies, and other fraternal organisations.

Date of Admission		Surname	Given Names	Date of Birth		Age at Entry	Name of Union	Trade	Number of Years	Union Branch and No.	Company Employed By	Union Exclusion			Status at Entry	Date of Marriage		Date of Death		Place of Death	Notes
												Date of		Reason for Exclusion							
Year	Date			Year	Date							Year	Date			Year	Date	Year	Date		
###	20-Jun	Aldridge	Ernest	###		46	National Union of Railwaymen	Railway Worker - Labourer		Swindon 1	Great Western Railway				Married	###					Married Lila Sturmey; Born in Wootton Bassett; Resider

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