Local Population Studies

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EDITORIAL

The Public Record Office: the Lord Chancellor’s working party’s feasibility study

The working party appointed by the Lord Chancellor to examine the feasibility of bringing together all the records in the custody of the Public Record Office on a single site at Kew has completed the first part of its task and a document setting out its initial findings has been circulated for consultation to a small group of organisations representing record users. The working party intends to place its final recommendations before the Lord Chancellor in time for him to reach a decision by the end of the year. It will be interesting to see what the consultees make of the present offering which, whatever its authors intended it to be, is not a feasibility study within the terms of reference set out by the Lord Chancellor in the House of Lords last December. The report consists of five widely spaced typescript pages half of which are devoted to a review of the present disposition of the Public Record Office and half to the financial costs and physical problems of moving to Kew and to a possible timetable for such a move. Readers will no doubt call to mind the Lord Chancellor’s request to the working party that he wished to be ‘fully informed not only of the feasibility and cost’ of bringing together all the records in the custody of the Public Record Office on a single site at Kew ‘but also on its implication for those who make use of records in the office and for the staff employed there’. Yet the study devotes no more than ten lines to a section headed ‘public use of the Public Record Office’ which states the basic facts of the use readers make of the Public Record Office; and elsewhere the only references to staff are in the eight lines which refer to significant staff savings amounting to ten per cent.

But though the report is altogether too slight it contains useful information much of which few people outside Public Record Office staff circles are likely to have seen before and some of which is central to the debate which lies ahead. The present disposition of the Public Record Office in terms of linear feet of storage space is as follows. Chancery Lane has a capacity of 100,000 linear feet of which 79,000 feet are occupied; Kew offers a theoretical capacity of 360,000 linear feet but of this 31,500 feet are for the moment unusable because the basement is liable to flooding: of the remainder, 289,000 linear feet are in use. The third building used by the public is in Portugal Street where, on the ground floor, fifty nine microfilm readers (soon to be increased to eighty three) cater for the needs of readers using census items, while the third floor houses a large part of the conservation department. The Public Record Office also has a share in the Government records repository at Hayes where 60,000 of the 1,137,000 linear feet of storage space contain its material. This picture begins to acquire an ominous perspective when it is realised that between now and the year 2,000 at the present rate of accrual, a further 129,000 linear feet of records must be expected (this includes the OPCS registers which the Registrar General intends to transfer to the Public Record Office). Without new storage space there will be a shortfall of around 37,000 linear feet at the end of the century and this figure would increase to 68,500 linear feet if the Kew basement is left out of the reckoning. Of course this calculation assumes the continued use of Chancery Lane
and if that were to be given up the need for new accommodation would be immediate. The Kew site as it exists now has insufficient space to house the contents of Chancery Lane let alone cope with any projected growth so substantial new developments would be the only solution. As the remedy to this problem the report advocates an upward extension of the existing building at Kew and the construction of a second separate building joined to the first by a bridge link. The working party rejected the idea of enlarging the present building by more than one storey on the grounds of planning (there is an active conservation lobby in the area) and constructional difficulties. The cost of these developments is estimated to be about £1 million for the addition to the present building and around £10 million for the new one. The work could begin in 1983 and the concentration of the Public Record Office at Kew be complete by 1987 or 1988. Thus for an estimated £11 million the requirements of the Public Record Office could be met but for only twelve or thirteen years until the year 2,000. Thereafter, as the report explains, ‘the needs of the Public Record Office would be met by further developments of the site’ though how the planning and constructional difficulties which are judged to be such an impediment now will be surmounted then, is not made clear.

It is to be hoped that this will be one of the questions which will be raised during the consultation process. Perhaps at the same time the experts will reveal how a figure of £7 million was arrived at as the required sum to renovate the Chancery Lane building for continued use as a record office! In fact one question must be asked that is more fundamental than either of these; is Kew really a suitable site for a record office unless the storage space is well above ground? The references in the report to the flood-proofing of the existing basement and the construction of a second building also with a basement will arouse fears and suspicions which will not be dispelled without substantial evidence that the system of flood-proofing selected will secure these buildings from this hazard beyond all conceivable doubt. It is not only technical detail which is lacking in the report; in an exercise described by the Lord Chancellor as a feasibility study which would take into account the interests of staff and users, it is disappointing to find so little attention paid to the implications of the proposed move to Kew for these two groups. They are, after all, both important elements in this equation; yet of the staff as we have indicated already the report is content to say no more than rehousing the office at Kew would lead to a ten per cent saving in cost. But what are the feelings of the staff towards such a move, especially those who so far have not worked at Kew? How many would refuse to make the move and, in the long term, when employment prospects improve, what are the chances of being able to compete for labour in West London, in the past an area of comparative prosperity and high wages? It is well known that shortage of staff was a serious problem when the office at Kew first opened. Will this not happen again? Are these not the questions to which the Lord Chancellor will be hoping to find answers in this report?

Public Record Office readers may be comforted to learn that there were 20,000 of them between October 1979 and September 1980 and that they made 98,000 visits. Forty per cent of all visits were to Kew, thirty four per cent to Portugal Street and twenty six per cent to Chancery Lane. In
general the users of Kew and Chancery Lane visited more frequently and stayed longer on each visit than users of Portugal Street. But interesting though all this information may be it does not begin to expose the arguments which readers will want the Lord Chancellor to take into account when the time arrives for him to weigh the evidence and reach a decision. It would not be appropriate here to repeat the case for the retention of Chancery Lane and a central London facility such as Portugal Street (see LPS 24) but it is important that the people the working party has chosen to consult should do so vigorously.

The report in its present form is not a study of the feasibility of concentrating all the Public Record Office’s activities on a single site at Kew. Not only does it fail to give any consideration to the interests of Public Record Office staff and users it carefully omits or avoids the proper evaluation of a number of serious technical and financial questions. There is no reason to cast doubt on the spirit in which the Lord Chancellor set out on this enquiry. It was quite reasonable to suppose a working party could produce a fair assessment of the issues within the space of six to twelve months; but now, so much remains to be done at the consultation stage there must be a real risk that the final draft which will reach the Lord Chancellor's desk in the autumn will not contain the even-handed analysis of the issues he asked for last December.

Record Office fees for access: important new developments

Within the last four weeks there have been tangible signs of success for the campaign against record office admission charges. Derbyshire, one of the two recalcitrant record offices, has abandoned entrance fees; and the Association of County Archivists in a specially prepared document has condemned the practice of charging for access. This excellent news is tempered only by the continuing failure to persuade North Yorkshire to return to normality or Devon to alter its plans to institute charges in July.

The decision in Derbyshire must owe something to the change of council following the elections last month; but while this may have created the opportunity for a reassessment of policy it is plain that the arguments which were successfully presented to the Policy-Finance and General Purposes sub-committee in favour of a return to free access owed little to whatever ideological differences in outlook there may be between the former Conservative and the new Labour council. Certainly the point was made that the charges could bear heavily on people in part-time education, out of work or working short-time but the heart of the case lay elsewhere. First in the reference to the complaint received from a depositor that he had not been consulted about the imposition of charges and that the County Council was therefore guilty of unilaterally changing the conditions of deposit; and second in the observation that in North Yorkshire, the only other record office to have imposed charges, depositors had begun withdrawing deposits. These are compelling arguments especially for local government officials who recognise that the only proper answer to the accusation of unilateral action is to make contact with, and seek approval from, everyone who has deposited records with the county record office. This mammoth task, far beyond the means of the record office's
slender secretarial and administrative facilities, would require special additional services the cost of which must outweigh any financial benefit derived from fee income. Furthermore it could lead to withdrawals or to demands for arrangements to share fee income; in other words all the ingredients of an administrative nightmare. No doubt the staff of the record office and of the clerk's department on whom this burden would have fallen were delighted when their councillors agreed to set them free from the thicket in which they had become entangled.

The Association of County Archivists' statement Record Office Charges: A Policy Paper, in the words of the press release which heralded its publication, 'represents the professional views of the heads of county archive services in England and Wales'. The most significant aspect of the contribution it makes to the campaign against charges is contained in the guidelines it lays down for archivists to follow in relation to charges (see below). In future any archivist who initiates a policy of charging for access in effect puts himself beyond the professional pale. Of course there are no sanctions. There will be no threats of expulsion or other penalties; yet nonetheless these rules will be recognised by archivists and by the authorities that employ them as part of a professional code of conduct and as such, treated with respect. The document brings together information and arguments which will be of use to anyone faced with the need to muster a case against record office admission charges and for this reason we quote extensively from it in what follows.

The paper begins with a review of the various public, private and diocesan sources from which records held in record offices emanate. It points out that customarily no fees have been imposed for general access and that the question has arisen now as a result of the conflict between increasing public use of record offices and the decreasing financial resources available to them. In fact the practice of making charges in certain cases for the inspection of documents held by local authorities has a long pedigree. The Tithe Act 1836, the Copyhold Act 1894, the Local Government Act 1972 and others allow for a charge to be made for inspecting records in local authority control. The Association might have added that in a number of the cases it refers to, the fee is specified and not left to the discretion of the authority having custody of the records; for instance, tithe documents, or documents referring to land enfranchised under the 1841 Copyhold Act may be inspected on payment of two shillings and sixpence; or, according to the provisions of the law of Property Act 1922, court rolls relating to enfranchised land may be seen on payment of the fee prescribed by the Lord Chancellor. (How much will it cost to see these documents in Devon? Perhaps readers will let us know.)

In describing the consequences of charging fees for access the Association follows much of the argument which was set out in our last editorial. It may be listed as follows.

Unless the scale of charges is pitched at an economic level profit is likely to be small once administrative costs have been deducted and will be further reduced by exemptions.

In any case there is no guarantee that an authority will allow the income
which accrues to be used for the benefit of the record office.
Public access to the records held in record offices is comparable with
the services provided by libraries which are free and this must lead to
unfavourable comparison.

The imposition of charges may bring about a decrease in the use made
of a record office and this in turn to a decrease in the provision made
for the service.

It may also enlighten depositors as to the financial value of their
records and consequently lead them to withdraw their holdings from
deposit.

The terms of deposit may exclude or have not considered charging for
access to the records and new terms of deposit may have to be
negotiated with depositors and where necessary with a depositor’s suc-
cessor. This may lead to problems in determining ownership as for ex-
ample between a solicitor and his client. Furthermore, if a charge is to be
made, the owner may wish to strike a bargain with the record office about
the division of income between them; all of which creates additional
clerical burdens.

It is surprising that the Association does not make reference here to the
Local Government Records Acts 1962 on which this part of their case
rests. This states that a record office may charge for its services but also
makes it plain in section 1(2) that the general right to charge must not
‘contravene conditions subject to which records are under the control of
a local authority’; in other words a record office that charges fees for
documents which have been received under conditions which do not
include an agreement to charge fees has placed itself the wrong side of
the law. And this will be true whether the original agreement with a
depositor was verbal or in writing.
The Association statement concludes with six principles to be observed.
These are:

1. Access to records should be as unrestricted as possible having
regard to their age, subject, and the terms of their deposit.

2. There should be no charge for giving information relating to a
record office’s holding of records.

3. There should be no charge for personal searches except those
charges authorised by statute for specific categories of records.

4. There should be no charge to depositors for rent or other services
except where expense has been incurred in repair or cataloguing
etc. of the records in anticipation of a long term deposit and the
records have been withdrawn by the depositor after a short period,
particularly if a depositor intends to profit commercially by a record
office’s services.

5. There should be no charge for lectures and exhibitions where these
are of benefit to a record office.

6. Charges are permissible for the exploitation of records for com-
mercial purposes by persons other than the owners: for example,
for illustrations in books and magazines published for profit, for use
in advertising or for publication in any other way.
The whole sphere of charges for the use of records is beset with
problems as to the ownership of the records, whether the user is
a student, a professional record searcher or an amateur to whom
the study is equally important, and also as to the ability of the user to pay. A system of voluntary donations will, in many cases, be simpler and be less resented by the user.

It is to be hoped that the Association has sent a copy of its paper to the chairman of the North Yorkshire Library Archives and Museums committee and the chairman of the Devon Amenities and Countryside committee. If in the face of reasoned argument such as this they persist in their folly they may not only be acting in a way that puts them outside the law, they risk what amounts to self destruction as depositors withdraw their documents or demand new terms of deposit. Meanwhile the climate of opinion amongst record owners and users within their territory will be soured, perhaps permanently.

In LPS 25 we printed details of the North Yorkshire and Derbyshire admission tariffs and readers may be interested to see how the table of charges which has now been issued for Devon compares with them. Devon has adopted a middle course at £1 per person per day; markedly less than North Yorkshire’s £2.50 per day though double the Derbyshire figure. There is also a £10 ‘season ticket’ valid for twelve months and provision for student groups to apply for special tickets. The exemptions also stand somewhere between the narrow line drawn by North Yorkshire and the comparative liberality of Derbyshire. They are applicable to:

(a) teachers, researchers, students or pupils at any university, college or school.
(b) County or District Councillors or members of County Council or District Council staff on official business.
(c) Local government electors exercising their statutory right to inspect minutes or valuation records of their particular authority.

To claim exemption under categories (a) and (b) a signed certificate must be submitted and under (c) proof of identification of residence. (It is interesting to note that Devon unlike North Yorkshire does not apparently recognise the existence of documents which they are required by statute to produce on payment of a specified fee.) We understand that the income anticipated from the new policy is between £3,000 and £5,000 per annum.

We hope that record users everywhere will feel encouraged by the Association of County Archivists’ unequivocal opposition to admission charges and the Derbyshire Record Office’s return to the fold. We know that a number of people outside Yorkshire have written to the North Yorkshire Record Office to express their dismay at the policy that has been adopted; and we hope readers wherever they live will consider taking some part in the argument which remains to be won here and in Devon. Letters should be addressed to the North Yorkshire County Record Office, County Hall, Northallerton, North Yorkshire and to the Devon County Record Office, County Hall, Exeter, Devon.

Christopher Charlton
Michael Drake
Terence Gwynne
May Pickles
Roger Schofield
Richard Wall

June 1981
NEWS FROM THE CAMBRIDGE GROUP FOR THE HISTORY OF POPULATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

One intriguing question about life in the past is the extent to which people in a given locality were geographically mobile. What proportion of the population were likely to leave a community, and who were the people who replaced them? In order to assess this type of movement, it is necessary to use two or more reliable listings, not too distant from each other in time, which divide the inhabitants into households. With these, the researcher can measure gross population turnover by counting the people named on the first list but not on the second, thus providing a figure for disappearances from the community. Similarly, by using the names of those present on the second list but not on the first, the number of appearances can be established. Some of those disappearing will have died, and some whose names appear only on the second list will be children born to families already living in the community. But once deaths, taken from the parish registers, have been deducted from the total disappearances, and births have been subtracted from the appearances, the researcher is left with the overall emigration and immigration totals for the period in question. Of course, two listings used in this way provide no information on changes in population occurring within the period lying between them, and whole families could have entered the community after the date of the first listing and departed again before the second was taken, leaving no trace of their presence unless it was recorded by an isolated entry in the registers of births, marriages and deaths.

Unfortunately, pairs of listings like these are very rare for pre-industrial England. Probably the best-known examples are those of 1676-88 for the parish of Clayworth in Nottinghamshire, with some 400 inhabitants, and of 1618-28 for the smaller parish of Cogenhoe, not far from Northampton. These have been analysed first by Peter Laslett and John Harrison as one of the Historical essays, 1600-1750, presented to David Ogg, ed. H. E. Bell and R. L. Ollard, 1963, and later by Peter Laslett in Family life and illicit love in earlier generations, 1977. There proved to be considerable movement in and out of both villages. In Clayworth, for example, 38 per cent. of the population present in 1676 had left by 1688, while 40 per cent of the inhabitants had entered the village since the earlier listing was taken.

By the middle of the nineteenth century, an abundant source of material for turn-over studies becomes available for all parishes through the detailed enumerators’ schedules taken at ten-yearly intervals for the national censuses. The 1841 schedules are slightly less revealing than later censuses in that they show an individual’s county of birth, and not the parish. By 1851, however, it is possible to see at a glance a person’s name, marital status, relationship to the household head, sex, occupation and place of birth. Armed with this information, the researcher is able to go beyond the assessment of gross turnover and migration rates. Topics that can be studied include whether migrants moved singly, or as complete family groups; at what stage in their life cycle this movement took place; how far different occupational groups were involved in migration; how much of the population movement inwards was local, or even consisted of people born in the parish who had out-migrated as unmarried individuals and later re-
appeared as married and with a family; or to what extent a change in the household headship through death altered the structure, or caused the disappearance, of the household in question.

An example of how work can be undertaken on these lines is to be found in a recent study of continuity and change in a north-west Essex village, which contained 520 inhabitants in 1861. (Jean Robin, Elmdon, 1980.) Elmdon's emigration rate of 35.5 per cent over the 10 years from 1851-61, or an average of 3.5 per cent a year, very closely paralleled that of Clayworth some 170 years earlier, where the average annual rate for those leaving the village was 3.2 per cent over a 12-year period. The immigration rates, however, were less comparable, averaging only 1.9 per cent a year for Elmdon compared with 3.3 per cent annually in Clayworth.

Six out of every 10 of those leaving Elmdon emigrated singly. Only 4 of the 109 single emigrants involved were over 30 years of age. Six were Elmdon girls leaving on marriage; a handful, mostly servants, were previous immigrants who left again; but over three-quarters were young, unmarried people leaving their homes to look for work elsewhere. In this, their behaviour was typical for their age group throughout north-western Europe from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries.

Since so many young people had to leave the village to find employment, it is not surprising that many fewer single individuals came in to Elmdon than left, only 41 in-migrating compared to the 109 leaving. Almost half the incomers were girls marrying into the village, and only 16 represented young people coming to work, of whom just under half were girls forming part of the steady flow of domestic servants who worked for a time at the vicarage and the larger farms, and who later married or moved on. This type of in- and out-migration of young people, however important on a personal level, did little to alter the social structure of the community. The emigration of whole households, on the other hand, might well be expected to change the composition of the village.

A man who not only had a job, but also a cottage, a wife and perhaps children in Elmdon had twice as good a chance of staying on as a male who had not yet set himself up in a separate establishment, but even so, one out of every five male household heads left during the decade, taking their families with them. These household heads, however, represented a cross section of the community, and with one important exception they were replaced by immigrants working in similar occupations. The vicar was succeeded by another clergyman; one farmer emigrated and another took his place; seven craftsmen and tradesmen went with their families, but eight came in. The exception concerned farm workers, for the number leaving exceeded those entering. This was because there was a pool of young farm workers already in Elmdon from whom replacements could be drawn to fill the jobs and cottages of those who left, and who were thus enabled to marry and become household heads themselves. Only five married farm labourers who had in-migrated since 1851 were present in 1861, and of these, three were native Elmdoners returning to the village, while the other two had come to Elmdon proper from the hamlet in the same parish. It was this pre-emption of labouring jobs by Elmdoners themselves
which largely accounts for the immigration rate of 19 per cent over the decade being so much lower than the emigration rate of 35.5 per cent. Overall, although some families were replaced by others, migration of households left the structure of the village largely unaltered.

Death of household heads, too, might be thought to bring major changes in social structure, but again in Elmdon in the mid-nineteenth century it does not seem to have had this effect. Ten of the male household heads who died between 1851 and 1861 left dependent children as well as widows, and the only one of these households to disappear was one in which neither the deceased head nor his widow were Elmdoners. In the other nine cases, the widows stayed on in the village as household heads themselves, most of them in 1861 living in the cottages which they had been occupying with their husbands ten years earlier. All but one were supporting their families by undertaking work of some kind.

The picture revealed by this turnover study of Elmdon is of a village with a central core of stable households, based largely on the Elmdon-born labouring community, with a transient population of domestic servants, craftsmen and tradesmen coming and going. It is also clear that mid-nineteenth century Elmdon, whose economy depended entirely on agriculture apart from the small trades and crafts common to rural villages of its size, could not change itself to accommodate its growing number of young people. Instead, they had to leave.

To find out if Elmdon's pattern was typical of mid-nineteenth century rural areas, more work on population movement in other villages is needed. The enumerators' schedules are available through local Record Offices for anyone who is interested in making such a study.

We have had an encouraging response to the appeal for volunteers to carry out further work on illegitimacy recordings, which we published in number, 24, of Local Population Studies. We said then that we were anxious to extend our knowledge in the sixteenth and the nineteenth centuries, the points when English illegitimacy reached its two peaks during the 400 years for which records exist before the year 1940. We were also keen to have more information on the very interesting question of repetitive bastard bearing, significant as we suppose to the possible existence of a bastardy prone sub-society.

We should like to make a point here which was unfortunately omitted in our original piece on this subject. This is that twins, though they count as two births for fertility purposes, count only as one illegitimate delivery. A single woman having twins is not thereby to be called a 'repeater'.

Some twenty sets of figures have so far been returned to Cambridge in response to our appeal. This encourages us to think that we shall be able to fill the gaps in our information satisfactorily. It is good to know that a collaborative research mechanism which has yielded such an enormous body of information on English demographic history is still in good working order.
The results of the enquiry so far have been instructive, in both the centuries in question. It appears that the impression of very indifferent recording of illegitimacy in the sixteenth century is tending to be confirmed. Only Staplehurst in Hampshire, of the recordings sent to us, inspires confidence that all illegitimacies were registered, and its figures have failed to confirm our hypothesis about the years in question. This was that the illegitimacy ratio should have been high, or very high, in the 1540s and rapidly falling thereafter. But we still hope that more well-kept registers will be discovered by those who have offered or will offer to help. As we stressed before, a lot depends on the sixteenth century for the interpretation of the history of English illegitimacy.

In the nineteenth century the registration situation is very much better. But we still cannot confirm the possibility that the ecclesiastical recording of illegitimacy would show higher ratios than the civil, especially in the 1840s and 1850s, when the nineteenth century peak took place. One parish, Staplehurst again, did reach 18 per cent for the period 1840-5, but most had bastardy ratios of 3-6 per cent, falling off slightly after the 1840s.

This is all we can say at present. If you would like to join in this venture please write to Peter Laslett at the Cambridge Group.

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HISTORICAL DEMOGRAPHY IN THE NINETEENTH AND TWENTIETH CENTURIES IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CIVIL REGISTERS

Brian Benson and Richard Wall

Brian Benson recently received his PhD at John Hopkins University, Baltimore, U.S.A.

Richard Wall is a Senior Research Officer at the SSRC Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, and the reasearch on which the present paper is based was undertaken in 1977-8 when Brian Benson was working in association with the Cambridge Group.

Introduction

The historian of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is beset with sources. In both volume and variety they threaten to overwhelm him with detail which he can probe only with the aid of the computer. This richness the historical demographer would appear to share. The Annual Reports of the Registrar General, published census tabulations and the enumerators' schedules made available under the hundred years rule, would seem to offer all that would be wanted on the demographic transition of the nineteenth century. Yet the plethora of demographic sources is more apparent than real. The Annual Reports have their uses but they reflect contemporary preoccupations, detailing mortality but saying very little about fertility. Access to the civil registers which would provide that information is permitted only via the indexes of named persons, thus precluding reconstitution of communities, the linking together of births, deaths and marriages of the resident population of particular settlements. When these linkages are made, the demographic information (age, etc.) of each individual in the population becomes known and their presence in or absence from observation over time and the risk of a vital event can (within certain limits) also be known. The technique of reconstitution therefore enables the calculation of important demographic statistics. For this reason, a recurring theme in this article will be whether or not the records we examine are of sufficient volume and quality to permit the use of this method.

Current research on the historical demography of England comes to a virtual stop in 1837 which was the year of the setting up of the civil registers. Parish registers have always been considered (and probably are) increasingly unreliable after that date and the alternatives have not been readily identifiable. Yet alternatives there are; much neglected, but surviving in appreciable numbers, their potential untapped. Elsewhere, we have called attention to several examples of these records and to the critical issues of preservation and confidentiality which are
associated with them. In this paper, it is our aim to explore more fully the types of records useful for historical demographic research that can be found in local repositories. At the outset, it should be made clear that this paper does not represent an exhaustive survey of nineteenth and early twentieth century holdings of local record offices even though attention has been focussed on a specific class of records. We report here on enquiries carried out in four areas of the country: Cambridgeshire, Devon, Northumberland and Oxfordshire. Some of these localities proved more fruitful than others, but each contained materials that differed to a large extent from those found elsewhere. This lack of overlap suggests that further work could unearth other records useful to the historical demographer. We hope the present paper will prove a stimulus to this work.

So that one has some yardstick with which to judge new records, we will commence by describing the records of the Registrar General beginning with what is available at the local level in the **Annual Reports for England Wales** and then moving on to consider the civil registers themselves. Information on the latter is based on our analysis of the civil registers of the Devon parish of Colyton between 1837 and 1871 which was culled before 1974 when civil registers were open to inspection.

**Annual Reports of the Registrar General for England and Wales**

For studies centring on levels of aggregation lower than that of the county, i.e., the registration district and sub-district level, there is little information contained in the **Annual Reports** that throws light on the nature and causes of demographic change. Moreover, some of the tabulations are available either at the district or sub-district level and not at both, while others are available for some decades of the nineteenth century but not all. This remains true even if we restrict the analysis to the period between 1850 and the First World War. A further problem is that for certain purposes even sub-districts are unsatisfactory units since they can comprise a number of parishes of varying character.

Information on marriages is available only at the district level. However, the form of tabulation remained essentially the same throughout the period and in some respects is quite comprehensive. First, the total of each year’s marriages is divided by the mode of solemnisation, Church of England or otherwise. Those marriages solemnised by Anglican rites are then further classified by banns, licence or superintendent registrar certificate. The non-Anglican marriages are also broken down into further categories: Roman Catholics, ‘other Christian’, Quaker, Jewish and civil marriage. Quarterly totals of marriages are also given so some measure of seasonal variation in the number of marriages is possible. Strangely, neither for births nor for deaths was this information made available at the district or sub-district levels. Marriages are also classified according to the marital status of the partners at the time of the ceremony but age of partners, not being regularly recorded in civil registers, is not tabulated. The only information on this key variable is the number of those not of full age (i.e. under twenty-one) at the time of marriage. Finally, there is an approximate measure of illiteracy: the
number of each sex who signed the marriage register with a mark. Although national trends in illiteracy, as just defined, are well known, much work remains to be done at the local level.

Births are tabulated at the district level and, in less detail, at that of the sub-district but the amount of information given is disappointing. At both levels, births are classified as legitimate or otherwise throughout the period (1850-1914). However, a classification of births by sex, present for both levels, ceases to appear after 1880. There is, of course, no attempt at age-specific marital fertility (hence the need for reconstitution studies using the civil registers), although crude birth rates and other measures of fertility such as the general fertility rate can be calculated for those years when the decennial census yields population totals and the number of women in the reproductive age group.

It is to mortality studies that the Registrar General gave most attention during this period. Nonetheless, limitations exist on what is available at the local level. For sub-districts, only the total of deaths of males and females is given. At the district level this classification is also broken down by age. Unfortunately this latter classification is not made after 1884. Beginning in 1854 and continuing throughout the remainder of the period is a district-level tabulation of deaths by cause of death. This valuable table includes twenty-three causes of death, most of them infectious diseases. Further columns give the number of deaths due to 'other causes' and those into which an inquest was made. It may also be mentioned that the decennial supplements to the *Annual Reports* contain additional district-level material. Despite being ten year totals, which can be a drawback when one is trying to mark changes in mortality patterns, the deaths tabulated therein are classified by both age and cause, a feature missing from the *Annual Reports*. The first two supplements covering the 1850s and the 1860s also classified these deaths by sex. However, between the 1860s and the early years of the twentieth century only total deaths in separate age groups were classified by sex.

**Civil registers**

As was mentioned above, our assessment of the content of these registers is based on an examination of the registers for one Devon parish (Colyton) between 1837 and 1871. There is therefore the danger that we may be relying on an experience that was not typical of that of the nation at large. The danger arises from the fact that although registrars throughout the country relied on the same printed form, they appear to have had some discretion as to the exact detail to be included on each event. It is difficult to be certain about this when so few civil registers have been analysed but it would seem that at the same time as one registrar in south-east Devon was regularly including in his marriage register information on the occupation of the bride as well as the groom and the exact ages of both parties, most registrars in Cambridgeshire were omitting this information. Of four Cambridgeshire registers recently examined, only Linton gave information on ages of marriage partners before 1861.
while occupational information on the bride was regularly given throughout the nineteenth century only for the Cambridge districts.

In the case of Colyton it would seem that civil registers do have considerable advantages over the parish registers of the same date. For example, while the Colyton burial register in the 1840s contains no more than the date of burial, age, Christian name and surname, the civil register omits the date of burial but provides instead the date of death, date of registration, cause of death, marital status and occupation of the deceased and the signature or mark of the person present at the death. On the other hand, there is not so much difference between the birth and baptism registers. The latter in the Colyton case provides the sex, date of baptism, Christian name and surname of the child as well as the Christian name, residence and occupation of the father and Christian name of the mother. The civil register offers in addition date of birth, and date of registration, but omits date of baptism and does not always carry the Christian name of the child, at least in the early years. In the case of marriages, there was no civil ceremony for those who married in the parish church. The only marriages of which registrars were notified were those taking place at the register office or in licensed nonconformist chapels. The same information was recorded on a civil ceremony as on a marriage in the parish church but the registrars were a little more conscientious in their form filling, giving the occupation of the bride and exact ages of the parties, whereas the Anglicans tended to say 'of full age'. But as we have mentioned, in this respect the civil registers of Colyton may conceivably be above average quality.

All of the civil registers, however, are at present barred to the historian, limiting his ability to interpret this crucial period in British demographic history. Other sources of vital registration and medical data, less perfect perhaps, must therefore be located. These records will now be discussed under three heads: mortality and morbidity, fertility, and marriage and the family.

**Mortality and morbidity**

Of the three series of vital events (births, marriages and deaths) it proved to be most difficult to find substitutes for the records of deaths to which the Registrar General had devoted so much attention. We may begin by dismissing the Quarterly Account of the register of births, marriages and deaths for Bicester and Bletchingdon districts found in the County Record Office at Oxford. Although initially these looked promising, inspection showed that they consisted of no more than totals of deaths and births for parishes within the district. Admittedly there is no information at the parish level in the **Annual Reports of the Registrar General** but totals of events for an isolated district over a relatively limited time period (1838-65) yield little scope for further research except for a parish by parish comparison of the number of events of each type that were registered simultaneously in parish and civil registers. If the experience with Colyton is appropriate, and there we had the opportunity of comparing the names of individuals registered in both series, neither the civil nor parish registers succeeded in being completely comprehensive.
A more promising set of mortality records comprising medical certificates of causes of death also come from the Bletchingdon district. The coverage is again limited both spatially and temporally (1870-1905) but these records do have the advantage that causes of death are assigned to named individuals who, in many cases, may be found in other sources, for example, census enumerators' schedules. This would add personal or parental occupation to the information already contained in the certificates on cause, age and residence (the latter consisting of parish only, not street and house number). One important point not possible to settle without thorough investigation is whether all deaths occurring within the Bletchingdon district in this period were recorded on the certificates. Without birth and marriage records for the same area, reconstruction is of course impossible. But if all deaths were recorded, then when the 1881 census enumeration schedules become available, it will become possible to calculate age, and cause specific mortality for those males resident in 1871. Any males no longer resident in the district in 1881 and not referred to in the death registers could be presumed migrants, although they may have died after migrating. The analysis may have to be restricted to males since women changed their name on marriage and may not be successfully identified in the register of deaths. Only those girls aged between nought and four in 1871 could legitimately be included by assuming a minimum marriage age of fifteen.

No mortality records comparable with the Bletchingdon ones turned up anywhere else in the course of our search. However, at the Cambridgeshire Record Office we did find a certain amount of information on infant deaths. The 1871 Vaccination Act (34 and 35 Vict. c.98) directed that all infant deaths were to be reported to the vaccination officer. Of the resultant registers, only a small collection has survived covering the period 1912-15 and relating to two sub-districts within the county. The forms contain columns for the entry of the following information: the number of the deaths in the registrar's death register, the date and place of death, the sex, age, name and surname of the infant, and the name and surname of the father (or mother if the child was illegitimate) together with the parental occupation. The infants are also cross-referenced by their number in the birth register of the sub-district if the birth was registered there. Finally, the forms contain a place for remarks. In this section the Cambridge registers often gave the home address of the infant since 'place of death' turned out in many cases to be a hospital.

If a larger series of these registers could be found some useful work on infant mortality could be done. The distribution of infant deaths during the first year of life would allow endogenous and exogenous mortality to be distinguished. Geographical and occupational differentials in infant mortality could also be examined. Finally, the frequency with which families changed residence when their children were very young could be gauged by referring to the cross-references and the birth register.

The major problem, of course, is the very short period covered by the surviving registers. It is fortunate therefore that the birth registers which were also drawn up under the vaccination act do record the date of
death of the infant if this occurred before vaccination could take place. How thorough this recording was remains to be seen but it should be possible to establish this by direct comparison between the birth and death registers where these overlap.

More comprehensive in their coverage are the registers of the many Burial Boards established in the nineteenth century to administer public cemeteries as the churchyards tilled up. The amount of information given on the deceased by these registers can be limited, amounting in some cases to no more than Christian name and surname. But their temporal coverage is good; the register of the Ickleton (south Cambridgeshire) Board, for example, begins in 1884 and continues up to 1967. Also, it is clear that certain categories of burials such as those of the stillborn, which are frequently omitted from parish registers, are included in the Burial Board registers. Yet it is the case that the registers vary in quality over time and between Boards. The better ones give the age of the deceased and may include, as does the register of the Bideford (Devon) public cemetery in the 1840's, the relationship of the deceased to the head of the family and the occupation of the latter. The early Ickleton registers give the relationship between the person paying for the burial and the deceased thus making it feasible to measure the closeness and type of relationship (e.g. parent-child, daughter-mother-in-law) against the amount spent on the funeral and grave.

The difficulty with all Burial Board registers arises from uncertainty about their spatial coverage. Were the cemeteries restricted to current parishioners only, or were one-time parishioners allowed to be buried as well, perhaps returned from distant parts after an absence of many years? Or indeed, were these cemeteries open to anyone who could pay the required fee? In addition, some individuals were no doubt able to maintain an option to burial in the churchyard. It is therefore only through examination of all the surviving registers (ecclesiastical as well as non-ecclesiastical) that the complete burial pattern of an area can emerge.

One goal of our search was to find morbidity records, and a number of quite promising sources were drawn to our attention. For example, a set of weekly returns compiled by the Poor Law Medical Officer of Bletchingdon Union contains the following information: Christian name, surname, age, residence, and occupation (1846 only) of the patient, disease for which he was being treated, days of the week on which he was attended or given medicine, 'necessaries' (usually food) ordered for him, some general remarks on his present state of health and finally any other observations that seemed necessary. The main problem with these records is their fragmentary nature. They survive only for a period of several months during the years of 1836, 1846 and 1892. It would be interesting to know, for example, how many of the persons regularly relieved under the Poor Law were in receipt of their special benefits. Even on their own, however, these records offer an insight into those diseases which nineteenth-century medical practice (as opposed to, say professional opinion in the London medical journals) thought might best be treated by improvements in diet.
A second valuable example of morbidity records was located in the Northumberland County Record Office in the form of the register of the Morpeth Dispensary. The register runs to three volumes and covers the period 1864-1914 except for a gap between the first two volumes of five years, 1877-1881. Particularly striking is the fact that each volume contains an average of 10,000 entries. Regularly entered are the following particulars on each patient: a serial number, his age and residence, the date of application to the dispensary, by whom he was recommended, the nature of his disease, the outcome of his illness (death or recovery), the date of death or discharge, any observations, and the name of the attending physician or surgeon. Clearly, these records could be used to examine several aspects of disease, such as its age and geographical incidence. Moreover, the inclusion of the death/recovery category offers the chance for insight into its fatality.

Finally we might consider some early records resulting from legislation enforcing vaccination against smallpox. Three sets of records were examined: the Weekly Vaccination Returns by vaccination officers of Bicester Union (Oxon.) in the years 1836, 1846 and 1892; the Vaccinator’s Register of Fritwell District (Oxon.), which runs from 1869-1888; and the Vaccination Register of Caxton Sub-district (Cambs.) which begins in 1871. Apart from what they offer on the vaccination process itself these records are of interest to us as possible substitutes for birth registers. Of the three, vaccination registers are primarily useful in this latter regard since they alone contain information on the parentage of the vaccinated child. On the other hand it would be a mistake to pass over the weekly vaccination returns as they show how the vaccinator moved from village to village (one day in each week per village for the set of records we examined) and how many children he saw on each occasion. Table 1 below shows what information was allowed for on these forms. For comparative purposes information is also given for the vaccinators' and vaccination registers.

As might be expected these forms were completed in varying degrees of detail. For example, the response of the vaccination officer to the question on place of vaccination amounted to no more than ‘parents’ house’ for the cases of the current week. The vaccinators’ registers also identify the parish of residence at the time of vaccination. The information in the vaccination registers, however, is slightly different: parish of residence at time of birth. The vaccination registers also improve in quality over the time specifying the home address in terms of street and house number by the 1940s, at least in the city of Cambridge. The research possibilities of this material are considerable as has already been mentioned. For example, their use in conjunction with census enumerators’ schedules or birth records should reveal whether vaccination was truly comprehensive. But because of the need to control for families in observation not even the vaccination registers can be fully exploited without recourse to other material.

**Midwives, births and stillbirths**

The Midwives Act of 1902 has justifiably been seen as marking a major advance in the control and regulation of midwives leading to a general
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weekly vaccination returns</th>
<th>Vaccinators Register</th>
<th>Vaccination Register</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Date of vaccination</td>
<td>1. No. of case</td>
<td>1. No. in birth register</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Christian name</td>
<td>2. Date of vaccination</td>
<td>2. When born</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Age</td>
<td>4. Surname</td>
<td>4. Name (if any) of the child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. State of health</td>
<td>5. Whether a re-vaccination</td>
<td>5. Sex</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Where vaccinated</td>
<td>6. Age</td>
<td>6. Name and surname of father (or mother if illegitimate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Date of observation</td>
<td>7. Place of residence</td>
<td>7. Rank, occupation and profession of father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Residence at time of vaccination</td>
<td>9. Name or no. in register of subject with whose lymph vaccination is performed</td>
<td>9. Notice: to whom given</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Successful vaccination</td>
<td>10. Initials of vaccinator</td>
<td>10. Date of medical certificate of successful vaccination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Unsuccessful vaccination</td>
<td>11. When and where inspected</td>
<td>11. Date of certificate of 'insusceptibility' or of having had smallpox</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Where observed</td>
<td>13. Date of sending certificate to Vaccination Officer</td>
<td>13. Date of death of child if dead before vaccination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Fee due</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1Bicester Union 1846. Oxford R.O. V1 b(7). Rows 1-6 for cases of current week, 7-13 for cases of preceding week.

2Fritwell District. Oxford R.O. V1 b(1).

3Cambridgeshire R.O. Caxton Sub-district. Extracts from the Register Book of Births (civil registers) in rows 1-7; Minutes of notice pursuant to 30+31 Vict. c.84 S15 in rows 8+9 and Register of certificates in rows 10-13.
improvement in standards within the profession. Just how rigorous administrative control could be may be gleaned from the reports on individual midwives preserved in the registers of the Inspectors of Midwives, appointed under the Act of 1902. In the late 1920s, for example, each midwife was visited four or five times a year and a note made on each occasion of the cleanliness of her house, dress, bag and appliances. Admittedly, some columns of the report book, notably those headed antiseptics and drugs were left blank, but quite why is not clear. One possibility is that antiseptics were in general use and not worthy of comment while the issue of drugs may have been at the discretion of the doctor.

More illuminating are the occasional comments such as 'has fish kettle for sterilising but has used enamel kidney tray' or, from an earlier book (1912-16), 'nails short and dirty'. Clearly inspection of midwives was no routine matter.

The reports were preceded by certain biographical details on the midwives. Items it was intended to cover included her name, address, certificate number, age, marital status, qualifications, training, place of work, and literacy. In practice no attempt was made to measure literacy while the age column, too, was left blank in the later period. Nevertheless it is quite clear that there is considerable information available on the composition of the profession. It can be shown whether the profession was dominated by single or married women while information on qualification (for example certificate of the Midwifery Board) and on training (both the place and duration of training are specified) in conjunction with the reports on midwives affords an opportunity for assessing how inspectors viewed the products of the various training institutions. Were the best trained the most active in the profession? More generally, how well trained were rural midwives in the early part of the twentieth century and how did the situation change during and after the First World War?

These questions and others can be answered from the study of the Inspectors' Report Books but one could also shift the focus from the midwife to that of the community and calculate how many practising midwives were available in any given area from year to year. In addition, at the end of each year the Inspectors entered in a table details of the cases that each midwife had attended. From this table it is possible to ascertain how many cases each midwife had attended and how frequently they had ended with a stillbirth or the death of the mother or child. In Table 2, we reproduce the record of one midwife between the years 1911 and 1917. It is not exactly typical since this midwife was busier than most but it does give some indication of the range of duties, some unconnected with midwifery, which a midwife might undertake. It is also very clear that the case load might vary substantially from year to year.

If we want to move beyond tabular information on births, then it is possible to turn to three sets of records resulting respectively from the 1871 Vaccination Act, the Notification of Births Act of 1915 and the Public Health Act of 1936. The chief attraction of the vaccination regis-
ters is that they provide an opportunity to measure fertility according to parental occupation at a time when national fertility rates were in the process of their long decline. The same point arises here, however, as arose when considering the mortality information to be found in this material. The registers on their own yield little because of the difficulty of controlling for families no longer in observation. In other words, in some families there may have been no further births because the spouse

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Activities of one Oxfordshire midwife, 1911-17.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of cases for years 1911-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1911  1912  1913  1914  1915  1916  1917</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midwifery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30  7  6  5  10  7  7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5  5  4  3  3  3  2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Requests for extra medical help¹</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6  2  -  3  3  3  2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stillbirths delivered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3  1  -  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deaths, mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laying out dead</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1  2  4  3  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Puerperal fever</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-  1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suspensions for transmitting infection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Dashes and blanks in columns as in original.

(1) It is not stated whether the requests for extra medical help originated from midwife, patient or doctor.

had died, or there appeared to be no more births because the family had migrated. In addition to this observational problem, the registers also have the drawback of not containing certain important information, such as mother’s age. Thus, on their own the registers will allow only the study of birth intervals. On the other hand, once linked to a marriage record (see below) which gives the age of the bride, then other fertility measures may be calculated, such as the mean age of childbearing and rates of age-specific marital fertility. It remains true that unless it is known that a woman has completed her reproductive period, error may creep in, for instance in biasing downward the mean age of childbearing. In reconstitution studies of the pre-industrial period non-survivors can be identified in the burial registers. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, these may be supplemented by the census enumerators’ schedules as these become available, by such alternative burial records as we have identified above, and by directories which record the continued presence of families.

The Notification of Births Act (1915) required that notice of every birth be given within thirty-six hours to the Medical Officer of Health at his office. The information transferred into books included the date of birth, surname and address of the mother, sex of the child and whether the child was live or stillborn. There are two major omissions, the name of the child and the occupation of the father. Otherwise the Notification Registers would seem a useful substitute for the Vaccination Registers should these not have survived and indispensable once the Vaccination Registers cease in 1948. One point of difference from the Vaccination
Registers may be noted. The latter name the father while the former name the mother. Any linking of the two (assuming their survival for the same area) would need to be based on the following three pieces of information: surname, date of birth and, although the Vaccination Registers may not always be explicit, place of birth.

For part, though probably not for all, of the period information in the Notification Registers can also be supplemented by references to the notifications themselves. These do give the Christian name of the mother but their main value lies in the extra information on the birth, ranging from time of birth to gestation period (in case of premature birth) and weight of the infant at birth. The only disadvantage of these records, at least in the case of Oxford, is their form: one event per form in large bundles which in the course of time have split asunder.

A fourth set of records of relevance for fertility research is now to be found at the County Record Office at Cambridge. This is the collection of birth registers kept by the School Attendance Committee. Beginning in 1915, the registers cover the city of Cambridge and run unbroken until 1969 with only slight variations in format. The source of the information is never made explicit but the format of the documents suggests that the educational authorities made a contemporary copy of the civil register of births and later used the information to locate children and place them in school. Importantly, unsuccessful attempts to find children were recorded along with the successful ones and therefore these books become not only registers of births but of pre-school migrations and mortalities as well. Table 3, which contains a sample of entries should make it clear that this material offers a number of research possibilities. Occupational data are given with which the background of various school populations could be examined; residence information could be correlated with pre-school mortality; and of course the birth statistics could be studied in the light of information on parental occupation. A word of caution is necessary however. The entries in Table 3 are taken from the register when it is at its best. The authorities did not always succeed in noting the destinations of out-migrants, and no attempt was made to record parental occupation after 1924. On the other hand, beginning at this date the task of locating families moving within the Cambridge area is eased by the inclusion of an alphabetical index to each volume.

Unfortunately it must be said that as regards fertility research these registers share the limitations of the vaccination registers. That is, it is again difficult to be sure that families are still in observation except by the production of a further child. We also still lack that vital datum, mother’s age at the birth of a child. It should prove possible to solve the former problems to some extent by linking in other sources such as directories, electoral registers and rate books. In the latter regard it is unfortunate that the marriage notice-books for Cambridge, which would give the age of the bride (and future mother), terminate in 1911.

Marriage and the family

Ecclesiastical registration is more comprehensive in respect of marriages than it is for either births or deaths. Nevertheless, as with other series
of vital events, the church registers cease after 1837 to provide a record for the entire population. One supplement to the church registers of an area is its series of marriage notice books. These provide the same information as the registers of marriage except for the date of the marriage and the signatures of the parties. Where the actual notices themselves survive as in the case of the Newmarket district then the signature or mark of one of the parties is available (it was not required that both the prospective bride and groom inform the registrar of the forthcoming marriage). The marriage notices therefore may be used to show whether it was the man or the woman who notified the registrar of the forthcoming marriage as well as the more obvious points (drawing on either the notices or the notice books) concerning who married whom and the occupation and marital status of the bride and groom. The occupation of the bride in particular is a much neglected piece of information and might with advantage be compared with the percentage of women of the appropriate age groups for whom an occupation was recorded in the census enumerators' schedules. Age at marriage would form another appropriate subject for study although not all notice books give exact ages, some, as with the marriage notice book for the Chesterton Union (Cambridge) in its earlier years, revealing no more than that the parties were 'of full age.' The same issue arises more critically in regard to period of residence in the parish which almost invariably is given in the form of 'more than one month' except when the parties felt that something exceptional was at issue and declared, for example, that they had resided in the parish all their lives. One of the principal disadvantages of working with marriage notice registers is the same as that connected with registers of banns. They are only registers of intentions and in some cases the marriage did not take place. Though probably a minority occurrence, this may not always have been picked up by the Superintendent Registrar at the time and an appropriate deletion made. It is unfortunate too that the survival of these records is again extremely patchy. Only rarely do vaccination and marriage notices or books survive for the same area: for just six years in the case of the city of Cambridge (1905-11) and not at all for the county.

For information on the family it is traditional to rely heavily, if not exclusively, on the census enumerators’ books. These provide perfectly adequate data on the size, shape and composition of the co-resident domestic group. For example, it is possible to discover the numbers and ages of children at home, the frequency with which families cared for relatives outside the immediate nuclear family, and the frequency with which elderly persons headed their own households. However the national censuses become available only after a hundred years and even then can tell us nothing about the strains of coping with the burdens of supporting additional family members. Yet there are a number of other records which can be illuminating in this regard and one of these we came across amongst the records of the Oxford Area Health Authority. It consists of a register of 'defectives' not in institutions or under guardianship: in other words it covers persons with some mental or physical handicap for whom the local authorities had some responsibility but not day to day care. In such a situation regular monitoring of the families with whom these persons lived was essential. From the registers it is possible to measure the frequency of contact between the authority and
Table 3  Register of the Cambridge School Attendance Committee (sample entries)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of child</th>
<th>Date of birth</th>
<th>Name of father</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ruby Irene</td>
<td>3-5-19</td>
<td>Westley, Harold</td>
<td>9 Aylestone Rd.</td>
<td>Motor Driver</td>
<td>Left. to Haverhill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christine M.</td>
<td>18-4-19</td>
<td>Apthorpe, Wm. H.</td>
<td>40 Kimberley Rd.</td>
<td>Electrical Engineer</td>
<td>Left. to London</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harold</td>
<td>16-4-19</td>
<td>Cobbold, Charles A.</td>
<td>2 North St.</td>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>St. Lucas Infant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albert John</td>
<td>9-5-19</td>
<td>Corner, Reginald H.</td>
<td>33 Hertford St.</td>
<td>Baker</td>
<td>Left. Somerset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alfred James</td>
<td>9-3-20</td>
<td>Andrews, Walter</td>
<td>15 Derby Rd.</td>
<td>Wheelturner, Railway</td>
<td>Deceased, 22-2-22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4  Specimen response of Inspector of defectives not in institutions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question heading</th>
<th>Inspector’s answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical state</td>
<td>Appears good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental state</td>
<td>Fairly normal; answered all questions sensibly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General appearance</td>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation</td>
<td>Good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surroundings</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has advice previously given been acted upon?</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are means of care and control afforded for the</td>
<td>Works on farm. Has been in hospital 6 weeks from injuries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>defective adequate?</td>
<td>Accident occurred while at work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations of supervising officer</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advice given to person caring for the defective</td>
<td>—</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How cared for?</td>
<td>Clean. Step-mother has no affection for boy and health visitor thinks his life at home is unhappy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹The name, date of birth and residence of the patient, the name of the person caring for him and the date of the inspector’s visit are also listed on the form. They have not been given here for reasons of confidentiality. A hyphen indicates that this space was left blank in the register.
the various families and to assess the physical and mental state of the individuals concerned. Since the relationship (son, stepson) is frequently given, it is also possible to judge how close the relationship usually had to be before an individual would accept a responsibility of this sort. As regards the quality of care, it is important, as with the registers of the Inspectors of midwives, to consider both the printed question on the form and the sometimes laconic replies of the Inspectors. In this way one can distinguish between ideal and reality in administrative control of family behaviour. A visit during 1934 to a man then aged nineteen and in the care of his father and stepmother yielded the information given in Table 4.

Conclusion

In this article, we have demonstrated that at least partial substitutes for the, at present, restricted civil registers of births, deaths and marriages can be found in local repositories such as county record offices and in the care of local health authorities. Indeed, our search revealed a considerable variety of materials, ranging from actual death certificates (upon which civil registers were based) to school attendance registers, for which civil registers themselves were used as a base. It must be emphasised nevertheless that there are limits to what can be done with the information we have found. We have mentioned the problems of critically missing data, such as mother’s age and of the difficulty in knowing when a person is in observation and at risk to an event such as a birth. Furthermore, we have yet to locate series of births, deaths and marriages occurring together and of length sufficient to permit the use of family reconstitution. Applying this technique, the problems noted above would disappear and accurate vital rates could be calculated.

In addition, other types of records have been identified which offer considerable information on the problems and responsibilities of families during a time when the state was beginning to supervise matters it had previously left untouched. There can be no doubt that in future such records will be valued as major sources not only for the history of the family but of the welfare state. Families did not always cope so easily with problems which society expected them to solve, nor was the administrative control as enlightened or sufficient as it might have been.

In the face of a ban of uncertain duration on the use of the civil registers, we hope to have stimulated further efforts towards locating alternative sources of data for the study of nineteenth and early twentieth century historical demography. Major tasks remain in listing and evaluating the relevant holdings of county record offices and local health authorities — only two of many likely sources. The deposit of older cemetery records in the appropriate archives needs to be encouraged. Policies for the preservation of records must be worked out. Unfortunately time is working against these efforts. Many records have already been lost to natural decay and deliberate destruction. Further delay will mean further loss.
A final appeal

The authors would like to urge readers of Local Population Studies to search their local record offices for similar kinds of sources and to report their findings to:

Richard Wall,
SSRC Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure,
27 Trumpington Street,
Cambridge CB2 1QA.

NOTES

1. For further information see E. A. Wrigley's chapter on the technique of family reconstitution in E. A. Wrigley, ed. Introduction to English historical demography, London, 1966, pp. 96-159.


3. The authors would like to acknowledge the assistance given them in the course of this research by the staffs of the Area Health Authorities of Oxfordshire and Cambridgeshire and of the County Record Offices of these counties. Special thanks are due to Dr E. P. Lawrence, Community Physician of the Oxfordshire Area Health Authority and to Mr J. M. Farrar, Archivist at the County Record Office in Cambridge. The authors are also grateful to Dr Anne Crowther of New Hall, Cambridge and to members of the SSRC Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure for reading an earlier draft of this article.

4. These were the prescribed forms of Anglican marriage according to the Marriage Act of 1836, see An Act for marriages in England, 6 and 7 William IV, cap 85, sections 1, 1V, V11.

5. Ms Penelope Wilcox kindly made known to us this information, which comes from her research at the Open University into Cambridgeshire working women and their marriage patterns.

6. Marriages occurring in the parish church are included in the totals found in the Annual Reports by virtue of the efforts of the local Registrar in going to the churches within his district and obtaining the particulars of those marriages.

7. According to J. Bourgeois-Pichat in his classic article, 'La mesure de la mortalité infantile,' Population, 6(2), 1951, pp. 233-48; 6(3), pp. 459-80, endogenous infant mortality arises from the circumstances of the antenatal period and the birth process whereas exogenous infant mortality is due completely to external or environmental causes.

8. We are grateful to Mr. David Souden for this information as well as for a thorough description of several other sets of relevant material which he examined in the Northumberland County Record Office. Not described here, but available in that office are a series of records of the Morpeth Cottage Hospital beginning in 1898, a set of records of the Alnwick Infirmary running from 1824-48, the vaccinator's register of N. Longbenton district, 1872-92, and a set of prescription books from the Morpeth dispensary which run from 1840 to the end of the century.


10. However, the existence for Tiverton, Devon, of Burial Board registers which run from 1855 to 1895 and marriage notice registers which run from 1837 to 1970 suggests that this might not be too much to hope for.
THE FAMINE OF 1527 IN ESSEX

David Dymond

David Dymond is resident tutor in Suffolk for the University of Cambridge Board of Extra-mural Studies.

Recent work by economic historians and demographers has emphasised the frequent shortage of food which afflicted England during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.¹ This led not only to rising prices but also, it is alleged, to widespread starvation and death. At times of such crisis, various attempts were made to control the movement and price of grain, and by means of special commissions the central government undertook surveys of the stocks of food in threatened areas. The results of these investigations were enshrined in corn certificates, some of which still survive. Sir William Ashley drew attention to these documents as long ago as 1928, but curiously they have not been used as widely as might be expected.²

The purpose of this article is to draw attention to a corn certificate of 1527 which survives for a block of ten parishes in the north-west of Essex, part of the largest hundred in the county called Hinckford.³ These ten parishes lie within a large bend of the river Stour, opposite the Suffolk towns of Clare, Melford and Sudbury. The certificate is complete and systematic, and therefore seems an obvious candidate for detailed analysis.

John Stow in his Annales confirms that 1527 was indeed a year of crisis and dearth.⁴ Heavy rain during the previous winter had ‘destroyed cornfields, pastures, and beasts.’ To make matters worse, it rained every day from 12 April until 3 June ‘wherby Corne failed sore in the yeare following.’ So, after a run of five good years, the harvest of 1527 was disastrous. The price of wheat rose higher than it had ever been since 1450, ‘with an average price for the harvest year fully two-thirds above the norm.’⁵ The inevitable result was widespread discontent which sometimes, in Norfolk for example, erupted into violence. To contemporaries the winter of 1527-8 must have seemed the worst and most dangerous within living memory; indeed only two other harvest years in the entire sixteenth century (1556 and 1596) exceeded 1527 for the scarcity of wheat.

The commissioner appointed by the Crown to survey this piece of Hinckford Hundred was William Clopton, Esq. of Liston Hall. He was the second son of Sir William Clopton of Long Melford, and grandson of the celebrated John Clopton who had been largely responsible for the grand rebuilding of Melford Church during the years 1460 to 1495. This
distinguished landowning family had lived at Kentwell Manor since the later 14th century, but William Clopton as a second son established a new branch at Liston where it remained until the eighteenth century.

Clopton's commission began its work on 15 December 1527, when the situation was already critical.' The certificate records how much grain was available in each parish, and how much extra was needed, in order to support the population over a period of thirty-eight weeks: until, that is, the feast of the Nativity of Our Lady on 8 September 1528, when presumably the next harvest, or most of it, would already be cut and new supplies of grain therefore available. This dramatically illustrates the historical significance of the 'harvest year.' The commission's calculations were based on the assumption that in a week six persons would consume a bushel of 'breadcorn' and a bushel and a half of 'drinkcorn.'

We are told nothing of the actual methods by which the information was gathered, but there seems no reason to doubt that, as in Staffordshire and Yorkshire, the commissioners organised a search by constables and other local officials of all barns, garner, stacks, ricks, mows and 'other suspeious places in the same to have hydde corne.' Other commisioners working in Wiltshire and Northamptonshire distinguished three kinds of corn: that needed by householders for 'the fynding of their houses;' that needed for the 'sowing of their grounde;' and finally their surplus which could (and should) be sold. After a survey had been made, steps could be taken to control local markets. For instance, Robert Chauntrell of Northamptonshire commanded those with surpluses to send 'to the markett Townes adjoyning to them weekly Corne to sell to them that have nede.' He claimed that since his first inspection the local situation had improved, and that 'the markettes have ben sufficently furnysshed with Corne able to suffise all byers commyng thether and more.' The main concern was for 'pore pepull that hathe no maner of Corne growing' and therefore must buy or borrow.'

In Hinckford, William Clopton's stated task was to certify the amounts of 'corn sold and unsold,' again excluding the seed needed for the following year. For each parish, the following details were given, in this order:

- Total population including men, women and children
- Total quantity available of wheat, rye and maslin
- Total quantity available of barley and malt
- Total quantity available of peas, oats, and 'harres' (probably vetches)
- Amount of breadcorn needed for the next 38 weeks
- Amount of drinkcorn needed for the next 38 weeks
- Amount of breadcorn lacking
- Amount of drinkcorn lacking (or in surplus)
- Surplus, if any, of peas, oats or 'harres.'

A full transcript of the general introduction, the conclusion and a typical parochial entry will be found in the appendix. As however the main interest of this document is numerical, the full details for all ten parishes are given in columns (Table 1). The information is given in a slightly different order from the original, to make comparisons between the villages easier.
### Table 1 Hinchford Hundred, Essex: the corn certificate of 1527.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballingdon</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>153.59</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>138.59</td>
<td>220.81</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>153.81</td>
<td>16^3</td>
<td>16^3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp Otten</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>88.38</td>
<td>26.38</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>196.25</td>
<td>84.25^3</td>
<td>63.63</td>
<td>63.63</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp St. Paul</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>103.66</td>
<td>16.25</td>
<td>77.41</td>
<td>134.5</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>113.5</td>
<td>10.63^3</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp Walter (Belchamp Will'm)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>83.66</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>59.16</td>
<td>105.5</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18.25</td>
<td>13.75</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borley</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>82.53</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>63.41</td>
<td>103.25</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>63.25</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brondon (Brondon)</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15.03</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>22.56</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>27.44^2</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foxearth</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>99.44</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>89.41</td>
<td>126.5</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>86.5</td>
<td>10^4</td>
<td>10^4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liston (Lyston)</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>47.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52.5</td>
<td>70.38</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>30.38</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleton (Medilton)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>71.03</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>61.53</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3^3</td>
<td>3^3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentlow</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>67.03</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td>1055</td>
<td>811.85</td>
<td>179.63</td>
<td>652.04</td>
<td>1124.50</td>
<td>721.25</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>124.01</td>
<td>113.38</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals quoted in certificate</strong></td>
<td>1055</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>119.63</td>
<td>572.12</td>
<td>—</td>
<td>732</td>
<td>451.88</td>
<td>(112.63)</td>
<td>—</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. All quantities in quarters.
2. Surplus.
3. Peas.
In attempting to interpret these figures, one must first establish how particular crops were used. It is an historical fact that malt and ale were made from several kinds of grain, and not necessarily barley, while bread too was made of any grain, as well as peas, beans and other pulses. Fortunately however, this certificate does not seem to be based on the assumption that the drinkcorn was barley, and that the breadcorn was wheat or rye. This is made clear by the fact that one can usually add the quantities in store to the quantities ‘lacking,’ and arrive at the figure ‘needed.’ Where surpluses existed, the excess can be taken from the stock, to give the amount needed. However, there are several exceptions, most of which have one figure wrong and seem to be the result of scribal or mathematical errors.¹²

There is no doubt that breadcorn was in desperately short supply. A comparison of columns B and C shows that on average these ten parishes had only 22 per cent of the wheat, rye and maslin which they needed — 180 quarters instead of 812 (unfortunately the individual kinds of grain, here and elsewhere, are not distinguished but lumped together). Only Brundon with its tiny population of nineteen had sufficient. Faced with this massive deficiency, the commissioner also investigated the stocks of peas, beans and other pulses which, though normally grown as provender for animals, could if necessary be put into bread. William Harrison, himself an Essex rector, commented on this practice in Elizabethan times: ‘poore neighbours in some shires are inforced to content themselves with rie or barleie, yea, and in time of dearth, manie with bread made either of beans, peason, or otes, or of altogether and some acornes among ...’¹³ In Hinckford, the certificate records both the stock of pulses and the surplus: in most parishes the two figures are the same. The normally low quantities may mean that the amounts needed for animals had already been excluded. At Foxearth, one can only make the figures tally by assuming that the surplus of peas was reckoned as part of the breadcorn — surely a significant discrepancy. Even with the stocks of peas, beans and vetches, these ten parishes of Hinckford could on average only raise 37.4 per cent of what they needed for ‘the staff of life.’

Although the brewing of ale demanded half as much grain again as the making of bread, supplies were not so alarmingly short. The harvest of barley in 1527 had clearly been better than that of wheat, rye and maslin. Indeed, Foxearth nearly had sufficient for its needs, Brundon this time had twice what it needed, and Belchamp Otten had a surprisingly healthy surplus. On average the ten parishes had 64 per cent of the drinkcorn they required.

The crisis assumes another dimension if we add together all the stocks mentioned for each parish, and compare them with the total requirement of that place (see Table 2). Brundon and Belchamp Otten each had a reasonable surplus and were in a class of their own — even though the second village was about six times larger than the first. The other eight parishes were all short of food and drink: seven of them had less than 50 per cent of what was needed, and four had less than 40 per cent. In total, in spite of some surpluses, the ten parishes could only raise 53 per cent of their requirements. Not surprisingly the shortage was most severe in Ballingdon and Belchamp St. Paul which had the largest populations
But the depth of the crisis did not simply reflect the number of inhabitants. For example, Foxearth and Belchamp St. Paul had roughly the same populations, yet the first had 62 per cent of what it needed, and the second only 28 per cent. These intriguing differences must be related to variations in geography, farming, social structure and manorial custom.

Table 2  Total crops as a percentage of needs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank order</th>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Crops as a % of needs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. (10)</td>
<td>Brundon</td>
<td>172.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. (4)</td>
<td>Belchamp Otten</td>
<td>142.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. (3)</td>
<td>Foxearth</td>
<td>62.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. (9)</td>
<td>Liston</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. (7)</td>
<td>Middleton</td>
<td>46.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. (6)</td>
<td>Borley</td>
<td>42.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. (8)</td>
<td>Pentlow</td>
<td>36.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. (5)</td>
<td>Belchamp Walter</td>
<td>32.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. (1)</td>
<td>Ballingdon</td>
<td>31.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. (2)</td>
<td>Belchamp St. Paul</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: These figures ignore the proportion of breadcorn to drinkcorn.

The numbers in brackets give the rank-order of parishes by size of population.

On the basis of William Clopton’s figures, the 131 inhabitants of Belchamp St. Paul were hit the hardest. If the rates of consumption quoted in the certificate are accurate, their stocks of breadcorn and drinkcorn would have been exhausted in another ten weeks or so, at about the end of February 1528. They would still have had to wait another five months before the next harvest was due. And that in its turn was to be poor. By the beginning of March, all the villages, except Brundon, would have run out of breadcorn; by the beginning of May six of the ten would have no drinkcorn either. Unfortunately we have as yet no evidence from the Hinckford parishes as to what happened after the survey was made. To what extent was consumption reduced to eke out supplies? Were the better-off willing to sell or give grain to their poorest neighbours? Were new stocks of food brought in by the authorities? How many people, unable to find sufficient food, actually starved and died?

Fortunately, information at the level of individual households is supplied in a Wiltshire certificate for the fragmented hundred of Elstub-cum-Everley. For example, in the parish of East Overton, six people had corn to sell. One of these, Thomas Goddard, was presumably lord of the manor with a large household of twenty-eight persons. He had twenty quarters of wheat for sale, but no barley. The other five landholders, whose households averaged 7.2 persons, had for sale seven quarters of wheat between them, and 4 1/4 quarters of barley. In the same parish six other households contained thirty men, women and children: they had no corn or grain at all.

Of course the crops mentioned in the certificates were not the only kinds of food available. In spite of the risks involved, villagers would have been
tempted to dig into their precious supplies of seed-corn, that is, the barley, oats and pulses which were due to be sown in the spring. Indeed the possibility is recognised in the introduction to the Hinckford certificate, where Clopton warned that seeds were 'to be sown as nygh as all the same cornes cowde or myght be,' which presumably means as large an acreage and as thickly as in normal years. Furthermore, because Hinckford had a predominantly enclosed landscape with a balance between arable and pastoral farming, animals must have yielded unknown quantities of food, such as cheese, beef, mutton and pork. Also, in all probability, various kinds of poultry and eggs were available, and perhaps stocks of vegetables and fruit. Even when people finally faced starvation, they always had the chance of catching wild animals, and of gathering the edible leaves, roots and fruits of wild plants. William Camden illustrated this possibility with his story of the famine at Aldeburgh in Suffolk, caused apparently by a very late harvest in 1555: 'there grow pease miraculously among the rocks [that is, sea-peas on the shingle beach], without any earth at all about them ..., and brought downe the price of corne.' Nevertheless, for the majority of the population, bread and ale formed the staple diet — as the certificates themselves vividly testify. William Clopton's figures seem to be based on the premise that the average person needed about 2½ lbs of bread a day, and at least two pints of ale.

One other major aspect of the certificate remains to be discussed: the number of inhabitants quoted from each parish. The majority of the surviving certificates of 1527-8, for the other areas, either do not mention the population or they give the numbers of people in the poorer households only, who were especially vulnerable in these years of crisis. Several returns of this kind relate to three hundreds in Wiltshire. A return for Amesbury Hundred in Wiltshire gives figures for 'men and women,' presumably excluding children, while for two parishes in Middlesex the numbers of 'housing people' or communicants are recorded. Only for four areas do we have certain figures for total population: for ten hundreds in Kent (not the constituent parishes) for the hundred of Elstree-cum-Everley in Wiltshire, for six parishes in Middlesex, and for the ten parishes in Hinckford. This kind of information is particularly rare at such an early date; for rural areas it may indeed be unique. Normally historians can only calculate the approximate size of local populations, either from parish registers which may survive intermittently from 1538 onwards, or from other sources which mention groups within communities — such as taxpayers, manorial tenants and adult communicants. By contrast, these corn certificates contain what amounts to a local census of men, women and children. The Hinckford figures appear to be much more than rough estimates: we must therefore hope that they are accurate, although our confidence is to some extent undermined by the number of errors in calculating grain. The ten communities range from Ballingdon which was a poor suburb of the important manufacturing town of Sudbury and had 223 inhabitants, to the decayed village of Brundon with only nineteen souls. In between these extremes, those parishes which were most nucleated on Chapman and Andre's map of Essex in 1777 had the highest populations in 1527 (for example, Belchamp St Paul and Foxearth), while those which were more scattered had fewest inhabitants in 1527 (for example, Pentlow and Liston).
Table 3  Population and structure, 1527.

Parishes are arranged by size of population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Population 1527</th>
<th>Tax-payers 1524</th>
<th>Multiplier</th>
<th>Tax paid 1524</th>
<th>Tax (1524) per person (1527)</th>
<th>Percentage payers of 4d (1524)</th>
<th>Acres per person (1527)</th>
<th>Population 1811 (with rank order)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Ballingdon</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>50(^1)</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>£2.09.04</td>
<td>2.5d</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td></td>
<td>532(^{1}(1))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Belchamp St. Paul</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>3.74</td>
<td>£8.13.10</td>
<td>15.9d</td>
<td>54%</td>
<td>19.1</td>
<td>496(^2)(2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Foxearth</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>4.84</td>
<td>£3.13.10</td>
<td>7.0d</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>12.6</td>
<td>328(^3)(4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Belchamp Otten</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4.71</td>
<td>£4.00.02</td>
<td>8.5d</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>259(^4)(5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Belchamp Walter</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3.21</td>
<td>£4.08.00</td>
<td>10.0d</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>459(^5)(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Borley</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.93</td>
<td>£2.05.10</td>
<td>5.3d</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>7.5</td>
<td>190(^6)(7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Middleton</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>5.56</td>
<td>£0.18.10</td>
<td>2.5d</td>
<td>69%</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>90(^7)(8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Pentlow</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>£5.11.06</td>
<td>15.9d</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>254(^8)(6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Liston</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>£2.06.00</td>
<td>9.2d</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>64(^9)(9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Brundon</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
<td>—(^1)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Institutional payments from colleges and gilds have been omitted.

\(^2\) The multiplier is the figure required to convert tax-payers (1524) into total population (1527).

\(^3\) Acreages are taken from William White's History, gazetteer and directory of Essex (1848).

\(^4\) In the Lay Subsidy of 1524 and in the 1811 Census, the figures for Ballingdon and Brundon are added together.
On average the ten parishes had 105.5 inhabitants. If one takes out the rather exceptional ‘suburban’ population of Ballingdon, the average drops to 92.4. Such figures may seem low, but conversely these parishes are not particularly large — on average only about 1,300 acres. Moreover, we are here dealing with the reduced population of late medieval England, which had only partially recovered from the disasters of the fourteenth century. John Patten calculates that in the 1520’s Bury St. Edmunds was the largest town in Suffolk with a population of only 3,550, and that several market towns in the same county, such as Needham Market and Halesworth, had fewer than 500 inhabitants. In the light of that, the figures quoted in the corn certificate for ten predominantly agricultural parishes seem quite acceptable. It is a fascinating but unexplained paradox that the Essex side of the Stour Valley remained far more agricultural than the Suffolk side with its string of manufacturing and commercial towns like Clare, Glemsford, Melford, Sudbury, Bures and Nayland.

The figures for 1527 obviously lend themselves to a comparison with the well-known Lay Subsidy of 1523-5, in spite of changes which will have happened in the intervening years. The Lay Subsidy has often been used to estimate total populations, but there has always been uncertainty about the numbers of people exempted from the tax, and about the average size of families and households in the early sixteenth century. Table 3 gives the total population for each parish in 1527 against the number of taxpayers in 1524, with other details which help to define the social and economic character of each community.

Naturally the number of taxpayers crudely reflects the total population, but in detail surprising discrepancies are visible. For example, Belchamp Walter and Borley had almost the same number of inhabitants, yet the first paid almost twice as much tax as the second, and had more than twice as many taxpayers. Other interesting differences of a social kind are apparent. Of the large taxing population of Belchamp Walter, 67 per cent were only able to pay the basic 4d (the lowest amount that could be paid), as compared with Borley’s 47 per cent. So although Borley had proportionally fewer taxpayers than any of the other ten parishes, it had a significantly larger proportion of better-off people among them: 40 per cent of its taxpayers paid 2s. or more, compared with Belchamp Walter’s 24 per cent. This may help to explain why Borley had 10 per cent more food than Belchamp Walter in 1527. Here and elsewhere the total amount paid in tax has to be seen against the total number of taxpayers, and against the proportion within that total of middle- and upper-level taxpayers, those whom in other contexts we might call yeomen, clothiers or gentry (see Table 4).

Another interesting comparison can be made between the two villages of Liston and Pentlow. They both had low populations, but no fewer than 80 per cent of Liston’s taxpayers paid at the basic 4d whereas at Pentlow only 37 per cent did so. Therefore, Pentlow paid more than twice as much in total. It seems to have been a more prosperous and graded community, with the highest proportion of taxpayers to total population: 33 per cent of its taxpayers paid 2s. or more, compared with 7 per cent at
Table 4 Numbers of taxpayers in 1524, divided into five exclusive groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>4d.</th>
<th>5d. +</th>
<th>2s. +</th>
<th>£1+</th>
<th>£2+</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ballingdon</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp Otten</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp St. Paul</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belchamp Walter</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borley</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brundon</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foxearth</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liston</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middleton</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pentlow</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. In the Lay Subsidy of 1524, the figures for Ballingdon and Brundon are added together.

Liston. Yet Liston had the greater reserves of food in 1527. Most of it probably belonged to William Clopton himself, who was principal landowner and paid a staggering 87 per cent of the tax raised in the parish.

No obvious connection can be demonstrated between the social composition of the parishes and their ability to feed themselves in 1527. Perhaps the more populous parishes, those which had high proportions of middle- and upper-level taxpayers, tended to survive the crisis better than most. For example, Belchamp Otten and Foxearth each had a fairly high proportion of better-off inhabitants: the first had more than enough food in 1527, and the second had 62 per cent of what was needed. Yet on the other hand, Borley, which had an even higher proportion of people with wealth, could only find 42.5 per cent of its required food. A slightly less risky generalisation can be hazarded about villages with small populations: there the contribution of one outstandingly wealthy individual, as at Liston and probably Brundon, may have boosted the totals of crops in store (whether or not this food was made available to the poorer inhabitants). Yet Pentlow which had relative prosperity and a high acreage per person is a clear exception: in 1527 it could only provide 36.9 per cent of its needs.

The multiplier in Table 3 expresses the proportion of taxpayers to total population. The highest multipliers represent those parishes with proportionally few paying tax. Middleton is a good example, which indeed shows poorly on all counts. It had relatively few taxpayers, paid less in total than any other parish, and had the second highest proportion of those paying the basic 4d; only two people paid more than 2s, and nobody more than 6/8d. Curiously, it was by no means the worst affected place in 1527.

The levels of population in 1527 can be profitably compared with those recorded in the census of 1811 (see Table 3). Although at various times during those three centuries the populations were probably static or even declining, most of the parishes, by 1811, had doubled, trebled cr
quadrupled their size. Only two villages, among the least populated in 1527, were roughly at the same level. Also interesting is the fact that, in spite of the considerable growth of population, these ten parishes remained in almost the same rank-order. There were, however, two exceptions. Pentlow, which had ranked eighth in 1527, climbed to sixth position in 1811 by trebling its population; similarly Belchamp Walter, previously fifth, more than quadrupled its size and became third. Significantly these two parishes were the least densely populated in 1527, and were therefore particularly good candidates for later expansion.

At present, this seems about as far as analysis can usefully go. It is hoped that future work in this part of Essex on manorial records, wills and other sources will reveal more of the events of 1527, and enable us to see greater meaning in William Clopton's intriguing statistics.

Notes


3. PRO: SP1.45. ff.191-2. It is curious that Ashton does not mention the Hinckford returns, though he mentions others in the same volume.


7. It was also at Christmastide that 'great scarcity of corn' was reported at Norwich; see Francis Blomefield, *History of Norfolk*, 111, 1806, p.198.


10. Maslin is a mixed grain, usually wheat and rye.

11. 'Harres' were a kind of pulse, probably vetches or tares; see R. E. Latham, Medieval Latin word-list, 1965, p.221. P. D. A. Harvey suggests a mixture of peas and vetches, in *Manorial records of Cuxham, Oxfordshire*, c.1200-1359, 1976, p.786.

12. Twenty sets of figures are given for breadcorn and drinkcorn. In twelve cases the figures tally; in six others, a mistake was apparently made. At Foxearth, the surplus of peas was apparently included in the breadcorn. Only the drinkcorn at Belchamp Walter seemed to reveal no relationship between the figures quoted.


15. PRO: SP1.45, ff.202-8. In the whole hundred of Elstub-cum-Everley the average size of households was 5.30 persons.
16. The wheat and rye seed was, of course, already in the ground.


18. William Camden, _Britannia_, translated by Philemon Holland, 1610, p.466. The uses of wild plants for food, particularly in times of shortage and famine, is a fascinating subject, but so far local historians have contributed little to it. It is known, for example, that the roots of cow parsley and dandelion were eaten during the winter, while in the spring the fresh leaves of hawthorn ('bread and cheese tree') or the young shoots of bracken could supplement a meagre diet. A useful introduction is Mrs. M. Grieve, _A modern herbal_, reprint of 1974.

19. These calculations are based on several assumptions: that a bushel of wheat weighed the standard 63lbs, though customary bushels may have been in use; that bread weighs 1½ times the weight of its flour (mainly because of water which is added and partly driven off by baking); that one bushel of malt produced 7 galls of ale, as it did in one Suffolk household in the 15th century (_Household book of Dame Alice de Bryene, 1412-13, Sufi. Inst. of Arch., 1931_) — though ale may have been also much thinner, especially in times of shortage.

20. The figures for the ten Kentish hundreds are in PRO: SP1.59, fl.274-5; for the five Middlesexparishes in PRO: E163.16/9.

21. Similar surveys do, however, exist for towns. See the census of inhabitants and provisions done for Coventry in 1520, transcribed in Tawney and Power, eds. _Tudor economic documents_, I, pp.141-43.

22. The figures for drinkcom and breadcorn involved certain mathematical calculations * (see Note 12); so did the summary figures for Hinckford which are also flawed (see Appendix and Table 1). In these cases there was probably a higher chance of mistakes creeping in, than with a straightforward count of inhabitants.


24. This calculation is based on figures in William White. _History, gazetteer and directory of Essex_, 1848.


28. On balance, most of the multipliers in Table 3 (including the overall average of 4.32) can be regarded as the minimum average size of household: the true figures are probably higher. Only Borley and Middleton seem to have had fewer taxpayers than heads of households, so Hinckford seems to have had comparatively few exemptions from tax in 1524. Indeed, the likelihood is that some households contained more than one taxpayer.

The average household size for other areas covered by corn certificates in 1527 is as follows: Elstbourne-cum-Everley Hundred, Wilts., 5.3: Branch and Dole Hundred, Wilts., 5.14: Underditch Hundred, Wilts., 3.86: Alderbury Hundred, Wilts., 3.00. In all save the first, the figures refer to relatively poor families, with no reserves of food. (PRO: SP1.46, fl.127, 131 and 133) Laslett's work on a hundred communities in pre-industrial England, from Elizabethan times until the early nineteenth century, suggests an average household size of 4.75 or a little less. See Peter Laslett and Richard Wall, _Household and family in past time_, 1972, pp. 125-58.

29. The 'allowance' is presumably the grain needed to supply each household until the next harvest was due. In other words, it is for 'the fynding of their houses' (see text).
Appendix

THE CORN CERTIFICATE FOR THE HUNDRED OF HINCKFORD IN ESSEX, 1527
A transcript of selected parts

(PRO: SP 1.45, ff.191-2)

(f.191)
The Certificat of all the Corn sold & unsold in all the townes underwritton within the hundred of hynkford in the Countie of Essex, Serched & vewed by William Clopton esquier, oon of the Commissyoners of our soverayn lord the King, over and above the alowauce (29) and Sufficent Sidd of Barlie, peces & otes & harres to sowe the lonedes of every husbandman ther this next Sidd tyme, to be sownen as nygh as all the same cornes cowde or myght be, by me extemyd & numberid with the numbr of pepull inbantaunces that are to be fownt & susteyned within every of the said townes undernaymd. The same vewe & serch begynnyng the xv daie of Decembre in the xix yer of the reygn of our soverayn lord Kyng Henry the viijth. In maner & forme as hereafter ensuyngly doth appere.

Belcham otten
In men women & Children ther Cxlij
In whete myxteleon & Rie xxvj quarters iiij bus [hels]
In barly & malt Clxxxvj quarters iiij bus
In peces otes & harres lxilj quarters v bus

Accompted to serve & sustayn the said numbr of pepull in bredcorn after the rate of a busshell for every vj persons a weke during the space of xxxvij weeks, that is to saie, from the xv daie of Decembir to the Natyvye of our lady next coming Summa tot [alis] lxxxvij quarters iiij bus Accompted lykwise to sustayn the pepull in drynkcorn after the [dimidium=half] rate of every vj persons for a weke to a bushell & di [midium] durying the said xxxvij wekes amowntyth

to the Summa of Cxij quarters
and so apperith in lak of bredcorn after the rate aforseyd lxij quarters
Summa of the drynkcorn after the rate aforsaid in Surplusage lxxxvij quarters iiij bus
Summa of the Surplusage in peces otes & harres lxilj quarters v bus

Brandon
In men women ................... (etc)
........................................
....................................

(f.192)
Summa of all the [?pepull] Within the townes abovesaid Mlij lv
Summa of all the bredcorn Within the said hundred vxxx xix quarters v bus
Summa of all the drynkcorn within the townes abovesaid DCCxxxij quarters
Summa of the lak of bredcorn after the rate abovevsaid Dlxxij quarters j bus ij pecks
Summa of the lak of drynkcorn after the rate & tyme abovevsaid CCCCIj quarters vij bus
Summa of all the peces otes & harres within the said townes vxxx xij quarters v bus

Wyllum Cloptun

40
NOTES AND QUERIES

ILLEGITIMATES RECORDED IN THE 1831 CLERGYMEN'S RETURNS

Stephen A. Royle

In the ‘News from the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure’ published in Local Population Studies 24, 1980, there appeared a discussion of some of the problems encountered in trying to discover rates of illegitimacy in the early nineteenth century. The 1820s especially were singled out as a decade for which it is particularly difficult to conduct research, a point made more fully in the recent Bastardy and its Comparative History.¹ The problem is that Rose’s act of 1812 set out to standardise Parish Register entries by the issuing of printed forms and although far from successful — vital registration not being finally standardised until 1837 — many printed editions of Parish Registers take the act as a watershed and come to an end in 1812. This in turn accounts for many volunteer researchers using the printed versions of Parish Registers also ceasing work at 1812. From 1837-1838 most areas have readily available civil registration returns but the 1812-1837 period is rather less well documented than the eras before or after. The Cambridge Group express particular concern for the lack of information available on illegitimacy as the 1820’s seem to have represented a ‘set-back in the upward slope of illegitimacy levels towards the mid 19th century high.’

There is, however, one nationwide (England and Wales) source of information that can shed some light on illegitimacy and indeed on other demographic phenomena for a large part of this 1812-1837 period. I refer to the manuscript 1831 Clergymen’s Returns held in the Public Record Office (HO 71/1 — HO 71/130). These are a survival from the compilation of the 1831 Parish Register Abstract² which formed part of the Census report of that year. Full details of the material available in these returns, together with an empirical example of their utility, can be found in my recent article in The Local Historian,³ for present purposes suffice it to say that the major classes of information on each parish’s schedule relate to the numbers of baptisms, burials and marriages from 1821-30 and the age of persons buried for each year from 1813-1830. There is also an estimate of the numbers of persons interred ‘in Burial Grounds of Dissenters, Jews and in other Burial Grounds wherever a Register is kept’ for each year from 1813-30. Additionally there is information of particular interest to students of illegitimacy since the clergymen were instructed to enter ‘what number of illegitimate Children may have been born in your Parish or Chapelry during the Year 1830, according to the best Information you possess or can obtain; and distinguishing Male and Female Children?’

How this data may best be used in the construction of illegitimacy rates must be left open for discussion for there is certainly a dichotomy between the illegitimate births for 1830 and the schedules’ record of baptisms; it cannot be known precisely how many of the illegitimate
children were baptised. John Rickman, the 1831 census controller, was well aware that baptism rates and birth rates need not be one and the same for he noted in his report four causes of under-registration: 'the neglect of incumbents, dissenters baptising after their own fashion or not at all, irreligious negligence and children dying before baptism. In fact, Rickman instructed the clergymen to record on their returns also 'whether any and what annual average Number of Births, Deaths and Marriages may, in your Opinion, have taken place in your Parish, without being noticed in the Parish Register?' and in varying proportions the unentered births must represent the sum of the four causal factors for underrecorded baptisms mentioned in the report.

The relationship between illegitimate births, unentered births and baptisms probably varied from place to place but the 1831 returns at least give the raw material from which some sort of illegitimacy rate can be calculated for 1830. However, the numbers of unentered births was, on occasion, surprisingly high — for example for the textile town of Hinckley, Leicestershire, where there were 7 illegitimate births in 1830, 39 births were on average unentered in the Registers during a period when the annual number of baptisms ranged from only 130 to 193. Such figures may well cast doubt in the researcher’s mind on the validity of earlier illegitimacy rates based on Parish Register information alone when no correction factor of unentered births was available and so the Clergymen’s Returns could prove to be a mixed blessing in the end!

NOTES
2. British Parliamentary Papers 1833 (149) xxxviii (report); 1833 (149) xxxvi (abstract).
THE KELSEALE WONDER

Allison E. Barker

A letter in LPS 21 by Mary Turner of Manchester refers to Anonimus Crossley, infant of indeterminate sex born in 1619. The following transcript is of an entry in the burial register of Kelsale in Suffolk. It refers to the birth of a two-headed child.

'An[n]o d[omi]ni 1545 an[n]o regis H[en]ricii 8 37 in Juni was borne a wonder a monster whose father was Richard Baldrey of Kelsall Begotten in lawful matrimone which childe from the sholdre upward had growinge ii severall neks w[it]h ii fayre heds standing upo[n] them in lick qwantite eche head having, mothe, nose, eies, eares and windpipe goyng down in[to] the throt unto the brest whose body was lick the forme & shape of all other children whiche was sene to many credable people of Kelsall'

There are several interesting points. First, there was no record of the burial of the mother; she seems to have survived what must have been a very difficult birth. It was almost certainly a breech birth (i.e. feet first) which is not easy even today. There would be little problem as far as the shoulders but two heads to be delivered simultaneously would cause difficulties even for an accomplished physician. Kelsale was a small village with an estimated population of about 300 and unlikely to have an eminent doctor in the village. The family may have been sufficiently wealthy to obtain a physician from Saxmundham or Ipswich; we have no knowledge of the status of the Baldrey family in the community.

Secondly, there is the insistence that the child was 'begotten in lawfull matrimone' — there is no suggestion of punishment by God for some awful sin, nor of witchcraft by the mother or bewitching of mother or child by another person. There is no record of any trial for witchcraft in the area during the appropriate period. However neither are there any further entries relating to the Baldrey family; they may have been hounded out of the village deliberately or just by an excess of publicity.

The child was presumably stillborn since there is no record of baptism, but its burial was not secret or hurried; a very full description of the child was given and it was 'sene to many credable people of Kelsall'.

The child was certainly examined closely since the entry notes that the two heads and the body were completely normal (apart from the obvious abnormality) and that the infant had two necks with two windpipes going into the chest. This argues that someone with skill in scientific observation and some anatomical knowledge was present at or shortly after the birth.

The phenomenon was presumably caused by similar influences to those which result in identical twins, but without sufficient of the appropriate stimulus to cause even partial division of the embryo — this would have caused Siamese twins, which are a greater manifestation of the same situation. As a modern medical phenomenon this is not unknown; a two-headed baby was born in Scotland in 1970.
SIAMESE TWINS IN THE PARISH REGISTERS OF SHEPSSHED, LEICESTERSHIRE

David Levine

'Too children of Stephen Sweane growinge together having too hedes foure armes and 4 handes four Legs and fourfe feete & but one Navyll the XVIith of June 1600.'

'Two children of Thomas & Jane Dolman born growing together hawing two heads & necks very complete four arms and hands three legs and Feet and one body of the female sex See a similar entry in the year 1600.' (January 18, 1818)

These two citations occur in the burial register of Shepshed, Leicestershire. No mention was made of these children in the parochial register of baptisms — were they born dead? did their parents or the attending midwife snuff out their brief existence? Such questions spring quickly to mind. The phenomenon of Siamese twins is one lacuna in the history of the family which has received almost no attention. However, we should not be surprised at this silence on the part of commentators in that the event itself is exceedingly rare. The point of this communication is not to propose a history of Siamese twins but rather to comment on several aspects of its occurrence in Shepshed. These two citations are particularly revealing and a short discussion about them would be worthwhile.

From the point of view of the local historian who is concerned with the way in which past generations used their vital records to retain contact with the village’s traditions this notation in 1818 is significant. It shows quite clearly that the register of baptisms, burials and marriages was something more than a registry and played a lively role in the villagers’ consciousness of their past. In point of fact, however, we should correct this previous statement inasmuch as almost none of the villagers in nineteenth century Shepshed would have been able to trace their family’s presence in an unbroken line stretching over some eight or nine generations. Even so, the village records did speak to members of the community and seemingly gave them a sense of continuity.

If, as I have argued, there was scarcely a village family in 1818 which could trace its line directly back to Queen Elizabeth’s final years, can we then try to make any suggestions about the village’s pool of genetic characteristics? Would it be warranted to speculate about the connections — uncertain as they may be — between our two cases? To be thorough would require more than a single parish reconstitution study and, what is more, it would also be necessary to create genealogies which would make it possible to track down the possible links between Stephen Sweane and the later-mentioned Thomas and Jane Dolman. As such links could go equally through the father’s or mother’s side of the family and would need to be traced back across several hundred years the task itself would be formidable. Moreover, even if one could actually make all these connections and construct the appropriate pedigrees we would still be far from certain that a proper correct link was made. A residue of doubt must still remain in the absence of more precise attri-
butions of genetic characteristics of the people in question. Nonetheless, the problem is an intriguing one although it just might be more susceptible to musings than disciplined analysis.

Finally, the actual recording of the events differs in two essential regards: in the first place no mention is made of the mother in the 1600 citation and, secondly, the sex of the children is omitted from the first event. These differences in registration practice would seem to mirror larger changes in family life away from a patriarchal perception to one which was more egalitarian and allowed for the individuality of wives and children.

These random thoughts will, I hope, provoke some further discussion of the question of 'monsters' and unnatural births and shed a ray of light on this purloin of family life in past times.

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FURTHER MATERIAL FOR EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY MOBILITY

Trevor J. Falla

Dr. Sheils may already know of the exceptional detail supplied by almost all Durham and Northumberland parish registers from 1798 to 1812, as the result of instructions sent out by Bishop Barrington of Durham at his Visitation of 1797.¹ By tracing Barrington's career I hope to provide Dr. Sheils with more material for his study of migration. Shute Barrington's first bishopric was that of Llandaff, to which he was appointed in 1769, and in 1781 he ordered more detail to be kept in entries in parish registers, although few of the parishes in his diocese obeyed the order.² Barrington was translated to Salisbury in 1782, but in 1781 a new form of printed register had appeared, entitled Proposed Form of Register for Baptisms, with a similar volume for burials. This contained a preface which provided a brief history of parish registers, and was followed by the forms which made provision for age of the child at baptism, and parents' names, including father's occupation and mother's maiden name. Burial information included age, cause of death, exact place of burial, and varying detail on the parentage of the deceased. The fact that Barrington's Llandaff Visitation order was made in June 1781, and that the Proposed Form was reviewed in the Gentleman's Magazine for August 1781,³ would appear to link the two events. A further connection is established by the parish register of Shrivenham, Berkshire, one of the new printed type, on the title page of which, beneath Proposed Form has been written 'By the Honble. Daines Barrington'.⁴ He was the well-known eighteenth-century antiquarian, brother of Bishop Shute Barrington, and Shrivenham was the family seat, where an elder brother William, Viscount Barrington, was lord of one of the manors.

Examples of the Proposed Form are scattered widely but thinly over the country, from Pembroke to Essex, and Devon to Nottinghamshire.⁵ In 1789 Barrington repeated in Salisbury diocese the order he had made in Llandaff to record more detail in registers, and this is noted in Cholsey, Berkshire, parish register.⁶ This was the full form recommended by William Dade and the Archbishop of York as described by Dr. Sheils, and occurs in several Berkshire parish registers from 1789 onwards.

Barrington was translated to Durham in 1791, and in 1797 again made his decree, this time having sample printed forms made to illustrate the detail he required. These were sent to each incumbent, with a covering letter ordering the forms to be pasted into the parish register, and a reminder that the new entries were to commence on 1 January 1798. Most if not all the clergy in the diocese, which then included Northumberland as well as Durham, obeyed the scheme, and ruled columns in their parchment registers to record the full details as formerly required by the Archbishop of York, and so continued the registers until 1812. Thus the printed parish registers introduced in 1813 which for other counties were a great improvement were for the North-East a disaster, as they greatly reduced the amount of information which had been recorded for the previous fifteen years.

46
My chief interest in the Barrington registers is in the antiquarian circle behind their introduction and the reasons for the increased interest in the eighteenth century in detailed registration of information. I should be pleased to provide a full list of the detailed registers from various counties, particularly Berkshire, when this aspect of my work is completed within the next few months.

**NOTES**

2. Information from the National Library of Wales.
5. Information from several county archivists. I am grateful to Brigadier F.R.L. Goadby for bringing the example of Somerton, Oxfordshire, to my attention, and for informing me of Dr. Sheils' article.

**Editors' Note:**

From time to time books are published which we consider to be of particular importance. In such cases we invite an expert to review the book concerned.

**A NOTE ON STATISTICAL STUDIES OF HISTORICAL SOCIAL STRUCTURE**


— £11.35

Leslie Bradley

As one who has consistently criticised the use in historical demography of statistical methods too sophisticated for the imperfect material on which they were used, I am somewhat surprised to find myself wholeheartedly approving of a computer simulation of household structure! But this book describes a useful and important development. The statistical devices used are relatively simple. The computer enables us to see the results of stated sets of demographic factors operating over a long period and taking account, and this is the new and important feature, of chance elements acting on the individual. Ten per cent, say, of men never marry — but which actual individuals are they?

The initial problem to which the authors address themselves is the rarity in England of the multiple family. Was this the result of the demographic constraints; that is, did the known range of demographic factors (birth
rate, marriage rate, etc.) make the English nuclear family inevitable, or was it due to some behavioural choice? Briefly, and very superficially, the authors start with a community of 206 males and 203 females in 84 families, the choice of which they justify. They then specify fifteen sets of historically possible demographic rates operating with three sets of co-residence rules, one maximising and one minimising the incidence of stem-families, and one intermediate. They use the computer to apply the general demographic rates to specific individuals in their community, using a ‘random number’ facility. So, for any one of the fifteen sets, the development of each household can be followed year by year in a computer run. Since the allocation of demographic events, such as marriage or death, to specific individuals at a given point of time by the random factor is arbitrary and entails definite consequences for the subsequent history of the individual family and household, every run is repeated sixty-four times using different sets of random numbers, 960 runs in all. After simulation runs of 150 years the residential rule minimising stem-families produces an average of 18 per cent of complex families and the other two sets of rules produce between 37 per cent and 55 per cent, whereas most actual English listings show less than 15 per cent. This is, of course, not conclusive — the simulation, for example, does not take any account of migration — but, in the words of the authors, it does suggest that ‘behavioural rules are more potent determinants of average household proportions than are demographic rates within the context we are studying’. The study suggests, too, that the marriage rate is of predominant importance amongst the demographic factors and that the mortality rate, for example, has relatively little influence on average household structure.

One of the difficulties in theorising about the development of family structure has been to estimate whether observed differences between historical communities could be due to chance elements or whether they reflect differences in fundamental factors. This study gives us some idea of the variance about the average which we might reasonably expect from chance.

This is a first study and its results are indicative rather than definitive. The method will undoubtedly be modified and refined, but it does, I think, give us a tool, not for reconstructing historical communities, but for testing theories in a way which, so far as I am aware, has not hitherto been possible.
SOME RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Books and Pamphlets

E. Alwyn Benjamin
Penarth, 1841-71: a glimpse of the past, £4.30, obtainable from the author, 74 Beechwood Drive, Penarth, South Glamorgan, CF6 2OZ.

A history of the town of Penarth for 1841-71, based mainly on the censuses of 1841, 1851, 1861, 1871 for statistics on population, occupations and migration. The book includes transcriptions from the registers of the Church of St Augustine, Penarth, baptisms, 1835-63; marriages, 1831-79; burials, 1832-86. Newspaper files and various records for the district have been consulted, particularly those of the school: a dame school existed in Llandough parish as early as 1821. From all these sources a comprehensive history of Penarth has been built up, showing how it changed over the years from an agricultural village with a population of 475 to an industrial town of 2,652 inhabitants with a considerable immigration mainly from Ireland but also from other parts of the United Kingdom. The dramatic change was due to the rise of coalmining, the expansion of the railways and the fact that, with the opening of the dock in 1865, Penarth became a competitor to Cardiff as a seaport.

The book has been attractively produced with a number of tables, maps and reproductions of early and present-day photographs.

Joan Christodoulou, ed.,
The story of Aspley Guise: the success of an English village, Woburn Sands and District Society, 13 Weathercock Lane, Woburn Sands, Milton Keynes, (1980), 84pp A4; 4 maps, 30 illustrations, £3.00 + 50p postage.

A particularly fine study by a W.E.A. class of the social and demographic history of Aspley Guise based on the 1851 census enumerators' returns, but drawing also on poor law records, land tax assessments and family correspondence. Details of individual families are often limited but in this case sensible use has been made of the material to give an impression of the villagers of all social levels. The contrast in the lives of rich and poor is brought out by quotations from the various documents and a good selection of early photos.

Francis Fulford
The Rector and his flock, A view of the Cambridgeshire village of Croydon in early Victorian days. Copies obtainable from the Series Editor, David Ellison, 41 High Street, Orwell, Cambs.

A transcription of the listing of Croydon, Cambridgeshire of 1843 together with some background history on the village and the rector who carried out the survey. The great charm of the listing are the pen sketches, as
for example, 'Thomas Nash, a widower ... Emily Nash, aged 17. Can read a little ... Emily is not a steady girl and their house is a most destitute, comfortless place'.

A much less polished work than the study of Aspley Guise noted above, but again the product of a community study, this time by a junior form, 2A, at Bassingbourn Village College, who transcribed part of the listing in the summer of 1978.

Compiled by J. S. W. Gibson

A simplified guide to probate jurisdictions: where to look for wills, available from J. S. W. Gibson, Harts Cottage, Church Hanborough, Oxford OX7 2AB. Price £2.25 (including postage).

All the information required by those new to family and local history. The likely location of wills and other probate records and their indexes, both before and after 1858, clearly set out in straightforward language. Maps of all English and Welsh counties, and of Scotland and Ireland, showing probate jurisdiction.
Glossary of testamenteary terms. 72 pages.

Arthur Haupt and Thomas T. Kane


A brief guide to some of the commoner terms used by demographers, pleasantly illustrated and clearly explained. It is a useful supplement to the guide intended for the local population historian prepared by Leslie Bradley — A glossary of local population studies.

L. C. Hector


Local historians in general and students of palaeography in particular will welcome this attractively produced*reissue of Hector’s classic study. The reprint is of the extended and revised second edition which, although published as recently as 1966, has been unobtainable for several years. The explanatory chapters, in which Hector deals with the equipment of the writers, the language used, the complex topics of abbreviations and scribal conventions and expedients, and the development of handwriting, are explicitly written and fully illustrated, while the thirty-six plates giving fifty-six examples of English handwriting have been clearly reproduced. On its first appearance the book was described as a ‘masterpiece’ and that epithet still stands.

The publishers, who have also reissued Martin’s valuable reference book
The Record Interpreter, deserve congratulations both for deciding to make this title available again and for the standard of its production. We hope they will continue to serve the needs of historians in further reissues of out-of-print works of quality.

G. O. Lawton, ed.
Northwich hundred poll tax 1660 and hearth tax 1664, Record Society of Lancashire and Cheshire, Vol. 119, 1979, £9.00 + 85p postage and packing from the Hon. Secretary, Mr. B. C. Redwood, Cheshire Record Office, The Castle, Chester. Issued to Society members in 1979 for £4.50 (individuals) and £7.50 (Institutions).

The poll taxes are some of the most neglected sources for the study of seventeenth-century population. This transcription of one of the more detailed returns of 1660 plus the names of the heads of household chargeable and non-chargeable for the hearth tax four years later is therefore particularly welcome. In a short introduction Mr. Lawton analyses the yield of these and other seventeenth century taxes in the constituent parishes of Northwich hundred, cross-tabulates occupation of the household head, by assessed value of estate, and by the number of persons over sixteen years of age per household. It is not Mr. Lawton’s object, however, to attempt an exhaustive survey. The distribution of the population by marital status remains largely unexamined and there is considerable scope for tracing individuals from one document to the other and from both to the parish registers. The analysis of social structure is marred by lack of comparable data from outside the area (reference to Peter Laslett’s Household and family in past time would have helped), and by some minor errors. It is doubtful, for example, whether persons not sharing the same surname of the household head can be equated with servants because of the possible confusion with lodgers, boarders and certain relatives (for example, married daughter, wife’s sister). Nor is it likely that widows heading households were predominantly widows of husbandmen simply because of a similarity in household size and assessed value of estate.

G. E. Mingay

Country life is characteristically viewed by townspeople as uncomplicated. Professor Mingay’s Rural life in Victorian England, however, describes a complex nexus of relationships that bound together squires, farmers, labourers and a whole array of others, such as land agents, auctioneers, rural craftsmen and clergymen. When to this is added regional and personal differences between good and bad landlords, between neglected and improved farms, it is inevitable that there is a certain vagueness about the overall picture. Nor is it easy to write about rural life when so many of the feelings and attitudes of the villagers went unrecorded. All too often the scraps of evidence that are available record exceptional rather than typical events. The poor in particular show up fitfully, more often commented upon, by farmers, clergy and landowners, than them-
selves commenting upon events. Professor Mingay makes extensive use of two observers, Rider Haggard and Flora Thompson but unaccountably misses out a third, the Reverend Francis Kilvert. The major difficulty with such observers, however, is that we find out more about their perception of 'country' than of the reality of country life. Indeed, there are occasions when the 'insights' of contemporaries can be seriously misleading. For example, the stereotype reappears yet again (p. 193) of the static English villager for whom a ten mile journey was the event of a lifetime prior to the decay of the 'old order' at the end of the nineteenth century. Yet Roger Schofield showed in 1970 (Annales de démographie historique, 1970, pp. 261-74) how different the situation might be even in the eighteenth century. Parents living in the Bedfordshire parish of Cardington in 1782 had seen a third of their surviving sons and a fifth of their surviving daughters over the age of thirty take up residence in London, some forty-five miles distant. In this way London creamed off the surplus of the rural generations: it is the missing element of the village population but no village study would be complete without it. Not surprisingly Cardington parents had been less mobile, although 15 per cent had moved more than ten miles that Professor Mingay treats as exceptional.

Even apart from the mobility issue, however, there is probably reason to question the importance attached to the decay of the old order at the end of Professor Mingay's period. On the lines of Raymond Williams' pursuit of the myth of the golden age (The county and the city, Chatto and Windus, 1973) one suspects that a number of other 'old orders' had given way in earlier periods of history.

Michael Walcot and Jeremy Gibson

Marriage indexes. How to find them. How to use them. How to compile one. Federation of Family History Societies, 1979, 90p, post free from Mrs. A. Chiswell, 96 Beaumont Street, Milehouse, Plymouth PL2 3AQ.

A useful guide to marriage indexes, the detail they contain and the sources used. Historians will regret that it is still recommended that there is no need to record either ability to sign the register or those marriage partners who were previously unmarried.

Margaret Noble

Change in the small towns of the East Riding of Yorkshire, c. 1750-1830, 1929, Hedon Local History Society, No. 5, £1.25, from Mrs. I. Wake, 33 Bellsgarth, Burton Pidsea, Hull.

There are occasions when the requirements of the local historian will be totally at odds with those of the specialist. This account of the occupational structure and migration patterns in East Yorkshire is a case in point. The text is wide-ranging, clear, and the style is confident reserving finer details to the tables. The maps are very well drawn to show the extension of the built-up area between enclosure in the eighteenth century and 1851. On the other hand, specialists will take exception to tables
which do not contain the number of cases on which the percentages are based, to the lack of information about sources, and to the considerable naivety in the handling of information on epidemics. It might be added that much of the material is not fully exploited. Nevertheless as a 'first taste' of what can be achieved by the integration of parish registers and records on landholding (land tax and enclosure awards) Change in the small towns of the East Riding is to be recommended.

Don Steel
Discovering your family history, Edited by Bryn Brooks for BBC Publications (1980), £5.95 hardback, £3.50 paperback.

The BBC television series 'Family history' when first transmitted in the spring of 1979 proved so popular that the initial stock of accompanying leaflets was soon exhausted. The book by Don Steel which accompanied the four programmes' repeat from 17 March 1980 circulated widely and must be carefully appraised.

It is of interest because it sets out to show that the point of the exercise is not simply to name the ancestors but to find out what they were like. This distinguishes this book from several others in the field for the thrust of the argument is always in the direction of understanding the environmental and social contexts which influenced and which were in turn influenced by the individual ancestor's values and aims.

Discovering your family history is divided into two parts, the first and largest section detailing the search for Gordon Honeycombe's pedigree, (the theme of the series), the second offering background information on sources, from maps and newspapers to parish registers and census enumerators' books. The survey is necessarily brief but the lavish illustrations, transcripts and text usually succeed in making it clear what information may be abstracted and, more important, its reliability. To its credit the book documents a number of mistakes in the original genealogical work on the Honeycombe family tree and makes no attempt to research the family back before 1703 when linkage of entries becomes too uncertain. There is a useful warning of the bias that can result if families are followed back exclusively through the male line. The beginner is thus firmly set on the right course.

Even the expert may find that the Honeycombe family yields some useful insights into the social structure of the past. First, the tendency for illegitimacy to 'run' in certain families over successive generations has long been suspected, but the evidence is hard to come by. The Honeycombbs provide it for the nineteenth century.

Second, each generation widened its migration field. From the Cornish parish of St. Cleer in the late eighteenth century this section of the Honeycombbs moved first to the town of Liskeard; from there in the early nineteenth century they were attracted to the dockyard at Devonport,
later still they moved on to dockyards in Kent, to Jersey, and in the twentieth century to Scotland and India.

Third, the strength but also the weaknesses of kin ties is neatly illustrated by the life of Simon Honeycombe, referred to in the book as a surveyor. In 1841, while at school, he lodged with an uncle at Liskeard; later on, as he prospered one of his sisters joined his household. However, only a great deal of detective work revealed the existence of his illegitimate child, that another sister had had three illegitimate children and that his sister-in-law died in poverty.

Margaret Pelling
Cholera, fever and English medicine, 1825-1865, Oxford University Press, 1978, £7.50.

Chiefly a survey and evaluation of contemporary protagonists in the 'sanitation debate' of the mid-nineteenth century: Chadwick, Farr, Southwood-Smith, et al. The biographical detail concerning these super-sanitary heroes is impressive, if rather laboriously and aridly presented. There are no tables, maps, graphs or illustrations. Despite criticisms of ineptitude with statistics aimed at others, notably William Farr and Charles Creighton, Dr Pelling makes no attempt at statistical presentation herself. Rather, she is concerned to illuminate the social and political ramifications of contemporary trends in epidemiology. She interprets the academic furore surrounding the cholera outbreaks as a form of 'publicity stunt', a focus for the various theories of disease transmission, and not necessarily the stimulus to sanitation generally accepted.

Of most use to Local Population Studies readers is the select bibliography at the end of the book. No secondary works are quoted, and many of the items quoted are of purely medical nature. However, she does include works dealing with eye-witness accounts of particular outbreaks, and some giving detailed medical statistics, for example, T. R. Edmond, 'Statistics of the London (fever) hospital', Lancet, 1835-6, ii, pp. 778-83. Unfortunately, this type of data is not dealt with in the text, merely slotted in when it helps to illustrate a point of particular interest in the political or scientific events of the period.

David Pam

The sources for the paper are three very good collections of charters concerned mainly with Edmonton, inquisitions post mortem for manors in both parishes and, above all, civil and criminal cases in the king's courts. The story which spans the period between the late eleventh and the late
fourteenth century reveals that the parishes of Edmonton and Enfield were very much affected by the economy of London. Virtually all the land suitable for arable had been ploughed by 1086; an extremely active land market existed between 1220 and 1350 and London institutions and London merchants bought and sold much of the land in the two parishes. Londoners also issued mortgages on a considerable scale to meet the financial requirements of local freeholders, a practice which often led to the eventual ruin of long established families.

Court cases give an insight into the lives of the villagers. They show how very badly the poor suffered during the calamitous harvests and cattle plagues in the years 1315-21 and during the droughts of 1325 and 1326. Their privations drove them to steal in order to survive.

Inquisitions tell something of the small manors as well as the large. They suggest that the soil in both Edmonton and Enfield deteriorated badly in the second half of the fourteenth century; and show the demesne arable turned over to cheap pasture during a period of high prices.


An attempt by the editors to ‘delineate and encourage a social history of medicine’, using an inter-disciplinary approach. The various chapters review past attitudes, and contemporary literature, and explore the process of innovation in nineteenth century medicine.

Jean l’Esperance discusses the phenomenon of the ‘double standard’ of male and female sexual behaviour in Victorian Britain. The image of female purity would be destroyed if they knew about contraception, and because of this the emergence of the woman doctor was discouraged. Birth control is seen as part of the general ‘self-help’ movement of the 1820s, by Angus McLaren. He investigates the resistance of the physicians to get involved in matters gynaecological as it was thought prejudicial to their newly-found respectability. In this context he suggests that many medical men may have seen their role as regulators of morals, rather than guardians of health.

Ian Inkster deals with the concept of the medical community as a band of ‘marginal men’ and tries to evaluate their position in society. In the early years they were vital, and yet still peripheral to the established social order. Ivan Waddington traces the process of professionalization and the unwieldy tripartite structure of physicians, surgeons and apothecaries. The general practitioner is represented as a product of the middle class movement, which demanded cheap and accessible medical care.

All the studies are based on contemporary material, and fulfill the editors’ goal of presenting a picture of medicine and the medical community from the standpoint of nineteenth century society.
Articles and Periodicals

R. A. McKinley

An analysis of the origin of surnames as linked with social class for East Anglia, based on the Cartae of 1166 and the Subsidy Rolls of the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth centuries; for Oxfordshire on the Hundred Rolls of*1279; and for Lancashire on the Subsidy Rolls of 1242/43, a list of freeholders of 1350 and a list of the Earl of Lancaster's tenants, free and unfree, of 1346. Although allowance has to be made for regional differences, out of the whole body of surnames borne by landowners, a much larger proportion were place-name type surnames than was the case with any other section of the population. From taxpayers listed in some fourteenth-century Subsidy Rolls the proportion with surnames derived from place names varied from 10 per cent to 15 per cent, a much lower ratio than that found for landowners. But by 1523 there was no substantial difference between the types of surnames held by the wealthiest part of the community and the rest of the community, an indication of how much social mobility there had been between the fourteenth and the sixteenth centuries.

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the ratio of surnames derived from place-names was also very high amongst the small but important class of estate officials and similar functionaries.

The chief features of serfs' surnames are the high proportion of surnames derived from topographical terms, such as Field, Brookes, Styles, and from occupations, some of them from skilled trades and a few mercantile activities, whilst there were also many derived from Christian names. In some parts of England, especially in the North, some surnames were formed after the late thirteenth century from a Christian name with the addition of the suffix 'son'.

Susan Stewart

Description of a project undertaken by some thirty to forty persons during four days of the English Genealogical Congress held at St Catharine's College, Cambridge in September 1978, involving the reconstitution of the parish registers of Landbeach, Cambridgeshire for the years 1562-1794. At the end of the congress an interim report on the project was presented. Preliminary findings dealt with infant mortality, the mobility of families, status of marriage partners and length of marriage. It was appreciated that, where the results of the reconstitution of a particular parish were available, these would be of great value to family historians
and genealogists. But it was questionable whether it would be worth the researcher's while to reconstitute a whole parish for the sake of finding events in the family of his interest.

John A. H. Wylie and I. J. Linn
'Observations upon the distribution and spread of the English Sweating Sickness (Sudor Anglicus) in Devon in 1551', Transactions of the Devon Association for the Advancement of Science, 112, pp. 101-15, December 1980.

The authors find two geographically distinct but almost certainly related outbreaks some fifty miles apart, but connected by well established trade routes. They conclude that the sweating sickness was most likely to have been 'a zoonotic arbovirus or possibly a rickettsial disease of the same type. Apart from its high incidence in small villages its influence on mortality statistics country wide was negligible, despite the attention it has received in the literature.

Gordon Young
Rutland Record, Journal of the Rutland Record Society, £1.95 plus 35p packing and postage. Obtainable from: The Hon. Editor, The Rutland Record Society, Rutland County Museum, Catmos Street, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6HW.

Includes a paper by Gordon Young on illiteracy, in nineteenth century Rutland compared with similar figures for the town of Northampton and England as a whole. A more detailed analysis follows of the level of illiteracy by type of parish (number of people, whether a market town or not, presence of railway station and farming type).
MISCELLANY

The Last Clandestine Rush: some soldiers’ marriages of the first World War
Contributed by Roger L. Brown

In that cold January before the great Somme offensive of 1916, the Scottish newspapers’ headings dramatically proclaimed, ‘4000 Clandestine Marriages in Scotland last year’. The country was shocked. Parents were alarmed. The Kirk roused itself and demanded action. What made the matter far worse was, not so much that the number of these irregular marriages had doubled from their previous highest recorded number in 1902, but rather that the majority of the bridegrooms were soldiers fighting for their country. Coming home on short leave from the Front, often totally unexpected, and deciding to marry their girl-friends during their leave, they discovered that the regular ways of matrimony were not open to them. Had the bride known a date in advance she could have had the banns proclaimed or procured a registrar’s certificate, both of which would allow the celebration of a marriage to take place after a seven day interval; or, if the soldier was at home on Sunday, his parish minister could read the banns three times on that Sunday and marry the couple on the following day, as he was permitted to do in such cases by the General Assembly. But, if the soldier came home unexpectedly, the first procedure was of no avail, and if he was not at home on a Sunday the second was useless. Thus, if a couple wished to be married they had no alternative but to resort to a clandestine or irregular form of ceremony. It was said that to facilitate such business various persons set themselves up as ‘marriage agents’, and extracted fees from ten shillings to five pounds for their services. In order to make their ‘authority’ seem the more imposing some of these agents used privately printed papers which they called ‘Special Licences of Marriage’. For these, of course, there was an additional charge!

Such marriages, however, were quite valid. Scottish law, not being affected by the great English Marriage Act of 1753 which had ended clandestine marriages, considered that it was consent, and consent alone, which made matrimony. It mattered not what form the ceremony took, or even if it had none; it was indifferent as to whether the marriage was solemnized in a church or in a private room, or even out of doors; neither witnesses nor a minister of religion were required to be present; while the lack of any declaration that the marriage was about to take place, or announcement that it had been solemnized, was no barrier to its validity. So long as the marriage could be proved to have taken place, even years after its occurrence, and that consent had been deliberately given by two people free to do so, then that marriage would be upheld in the Scotch courts as lawful and valid as any other regularly performed, even though the parties to it had never lived together as man and wife after its performance.

Such a marriage as the one depicted above, could only rest on the most insecure of foundations, that of the evidence of the two parties to it, one of whom could easily repudiate his or her testimony. In order to overcome
this obstacle many of those so married invoked the use of various acts of the seventeenth century in order to support a system that these acts were intended to suppress. The couple would declare their union to a magistrate or sheriff, who would then declare that they had contracted matrimony together, impose a nominal fine, and give them a warrant authorising the local Registrar to register their marriage for a fee of five shillings. While this process could never convert their marriage into a regular one, it did at least provide legal proof that such a marriage had taken place, and also permitted a check to be made as to the number of these marriages.

It was this position which the Kirk, and later parliament, decided to alter for the benefit of matrimoniaally-minded soldiers. The Marriage (Scotland) Act of 1916 was rapidly passed, and this permitted all military and naval personnel to marry after giving one day’s notice to the Registrar. The act seems to have answered its purpose, as such clandestine marriages seem to have died out after its commencement. It may well have been the publicity given to these marriages at this time that drew the attention of the parliamentary lawyers to the anomaly of these Scottish clandestine marriages, for an Act of 1939 declared that this kind of marriage would no longer be regarded as valid under Scottish law. It was this Act which ended a long, and even proud tradition, in which these military marriages of the First World War played a not inconsequential part.
CORRESPONDENCE

The Tyne and Wear Archive Users' Consultative Council

Dear Sir,
Following the publication of 'Modern Public Records' which revealed that valuable public records are being destroyed by Government Departments indiscriminately and despite the worries and complaints about financial cuts affecting local archives, it is pleasing to report that in the County of Tyne & Wear the Archive Users' Consultative Council, which was set up in 1975, has worked very successfully to date.

Some readers may recall that Terence Gwynne wrote to the Editor in 1976 explaining the composition of the Council and its purpose.

AUCC has met regularly ever since and its discussions have been wide ranging. Regular reports from the education officer have been received and it is quite clear that the role of the archive service in education, is now firmly established. Moreover, bulletins are now being published and explanatory leaflets regarding the resources of the archive and the list of new acquisitions in recent years is both long and impressive. A considerable rescue operation has been carried out, saving many records that would otherwise have been destroyed and in addition, despite very limited resources, a skilled and valuable document repair service has been created.

All of those practical details which concern researchers, both professional and lay alike, have been ventilated in discussion in the Archive Users' Consultative Council. Dr. W. A. L. Seaman and his supporting staff deserve much credit for the service now offered. Let us not forget however, that the organisation was given the blessing of the county council from the outset and a number of councillors have given dedicated service.

Since good news is not always easy to come by I hope that this success story may be the means of encouraging other local authorities to establish archive users' consultative councils along similar lines, as a first step to improving their service to the community and without incurring any, or any substantial, additional expense.

Yours faithfully,
Ronald I. Duncan.

22 Douglas Avenue, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE3 4XD.

The aged worker in the recent past

Dear Sir,
As a research student at the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure I am presently engaged in analysing the effects of technical change on the ageing worker in Britain, and also the relation of the aged worker to industrial life in general — over the approximate period 1890-1940. I hope to work extensively from data which is tradition-
ally difficult to track down; detailed business or personnel records that might enable me to establish such factors as length of employment, age at retirement, wage levels, job description and details of promotions, pension subscriptions etc. I wonder if readers of LPS might have knowledge of local archives which may contain records of this type, primarily for such staple British industries as mining, textiles, engineering and steel production, as I would be most grateful to have details of their whereabouts.

My colleague Simon Szreter is also interested in discovering data for a slightly earlier period viz 1870-1914. He would be especially interested in records which might indicate family size (or family commitments) of company employees or union members; furthermore, any evidence of the linkage of family ties between established workers and new employees, such as records and references for apprentices, would be exceedingly useful to him.

We would both be extremely grateful for any information your readers might be able to offer as to the whereabouts of records of these types, as very often such records are 'hidden' with other documents or remain lost in the recesses of modern companies.

Yours sincerely,
Stuart Riddle.

Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure,
27, Trumpington Street, Cambridge.

The Liverpool Record Office; a testimonial from a satisfied customer

Dear Editor,

I read with interest the latest Editorial regarding record offices, but think that Liverpool Record Office merited special mention, as an example of the type of service that a record office should provide to all researchers. Although it is a city record office its collection of archive material rivals many of the county record offices. It is open twelve hours a day Monday to Friday and nine hours on Saturday, and sixty-nine hours of free access with ample seating and no booking is praiseworthy indeed when we see the difficulties faced in some areas.

Sincerely,
H. Culling.

Liverpool Family History Society, 11 Lisburn Lane, Liverpool L13 9AE.

Good news from the Cumbria Record Offices

Dear Sir,

I noted with interest that on Page six of Local Population Studies there is a table which sets out record office opening hours in January 1981. I have noted source of your information but it is, nevertheless, inaccurate.
Both our main record offices in Cumbria at Carlisle and Kendal are open for forty hours each week, i.e. Monday-Friday, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. with the exception of public holidays. Our small branch office at Barrow, which is a new development since Cumbria was established is open regularly Monday-Friday, 2 p.m.-5 p.m.

The hours of opening of our Kendal and Carlisle offices have not changed over a period of nineteen years. At Carlisle for a short while before Cumbria was created in 1974 we ran an experiment of late night opening for teachers. This experiment ran for about two years but was not continued as at that time support from teachers did not warrant it.

Yours sincerely,

B. C. Jones,
County Archivist,

Cumbria County Council, Archives Department, The Record Office, The Castle, Carlisle, Cumbria CA3 8UR.

Editor's note. We are delighted to learn that provision in Cumbria is so much better than we had been lead to believe.

Did the Commonwealth Act of 1653 lapse in 1657?

Dear Sir,

The Act of 24 August 1653 ‘touching marriages and the registering thereof, and also touching births and burials’ was confirmed by an Act of 26 June 1657 ‘touching several acts and ordinances’ (Acts and ordinances of the Interregnum, volume 2, pages 1131-42). This confirmation excepted the clause in the Act of 1653 declaring invalid forms of marriage other than that laid down by the Act, and was to continue ‘for six months, from and after the end of the first session of this present Parliament’. As the session ended on 26 June 1657 and as there appears to have been no later continuation act, it is to be presumed that the Act of 1653 ceased to have effect in January 1657/8.

This is confirmed by a note found by chance in a printed copy of the register of Cowfield, Sussex (Sussex Record Society, volume 22, page 115), ‘30 March 1658. This register having been delivered by me (in obedience to the then power comanding of it) unto John Ford upon the 13 of Dec. 1653 whoe was chosen Register of ye Parish, & after his death being delivered to Mr. Tho ffreemen ye next chosen Register. The late Parliament having by theyr Act annulled the pretended Act for such Marriages & Registrings. The sayed Tho Freeman did upon the 30 March 1658 bring the Register back to me to remain in my custody as formerly. George Vinter, Rtor of Cowfold.’

A glance at a selection of registers of City of London parishes published by the Harleian Society showed that in many cases marriages before justices ceased and marriages by ministers resumed in 1657 or early 1658, as noted in Devonshire parishes by your previous correspondent, R. R. Sellman, in LPS 25, page 60. However, later instances of marriages before justices can be found, for example, those of Michaell Fowler and Ellin Carr of St. Lawrence Jewry on 24 April 1658 (Harleian Society Register Section, volume 73, page 71, Guildhall Library MS 6986 folio
The former couple were also married by a minister on the same day as their marriage before a justice.

Yours sincerely,
Richard Harvey,

148 Woodland Drive, Watford WD1 3DB.

Enumeration practice in 1871

Dear Sir,

Recently I noticed that at the bottom of page iv in the 1871 enumerators books there is a line which states, 'Of the above schedules the number filled up by the Enumerator himself was ...'. Being interested in anything which could be relevant to the level of accuracy of the census I noted the details for the four enumerator districts which make up my study area in the county of Somerset.

Table 1. Number and proportion of householders' schedules completed by the enumerator.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. of schedules</th>
<th>No. filled in by enumerator</th>
<th>percentage filled in by enumerator</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pitcombe</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruton East</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruton West</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bruton Hamlets</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Being surprised that the percentage filled in by the enumerators should be so variable, I made an analysis of each district according to the occupation of the first person listed on the schedules (i.e., the household head).

Table 2. Household heads by occupational group and parish of register.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupational group</th>
<th>Pitcombe %</th>
<th>Bruton East %</th>
<th>Bruton West %</th>
<th>Bruton Hamlets %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annuitants</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Craftsmen</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural workers</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourers &amp; servants</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Paupers</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numbers</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>171</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

While it is clear that Bruton West tended to be of a lower social class than Bruton East, that alone cannot account for the high percentage of schedules completed by that enumerator. The enumerator for Bruton West was the managing clerk to a solicitor and was therefore quite competent to ensure that the census was completed in accordance with the instructions. Therefore I would suggest that where a high percentage of schedules have been completed by the enumerator, that might well indicate a high standard of accuracy rather than the reverse.

I would be interested to learn the views of other people on this matter.

Yours sincerely,
Donald M. McCallum,

School of Humanities, Leicester Polytechnic, Scraptoft Campus, Scraptoft, Leicester LE7 9SU.
LOCAL RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

LPS Society Day Conference — A Report

On Saturday 14 March 1981 the LPS Society held a day conference at Portsmouth. This was the first time the Society had visited this area and the response was most rewarding. Nearly one hundred people assembled at the Local Studies Centre in Portsmouth Central Library to hear Professor Michael Drake speak on The Census — Its uses and limitations. They were treated to a lively performance by Professor Drake who described the background to the taking of the nineteenth-century censuses, suggested some of the uses which could be made of the material by local historians and demographers and indicated some of the problems inherent in the use of the census. He described some of the uses of the census in more detail before answering questions from the audience who were eager to raise a wide range of points deriving from Professor Drake’s stimulating address.

After lunch conference members joined workshops of their choice conducted by members of the LPS Society Committee. Afternoon tea was followed by a final plenary session which proved to be of great value. Bill Boorman, a local historian from the area, took the opportunity to address the audience on his researches into smallpox, and encouraged by this a number of the audience addressed the conference with a view to identifying others with similar interests. There was a most fruitful exchange of information which was very much in the spirit of the whole concept of a Local Population Studies Society. For the committee this was one of the most pleasing aspects of the conference and it is hoped that conference members found it a helpful forum for the exchange of ideas, views and information. It was also pleasing to welcome to the conference a group of sixth-formers and some post-graduate students following teacher-education courses. This is an area in which the Society, and LPS itself, is anxious to develop support, representing as it does the local demographers of tomorrow.

Geoffrey Stevenson organised an LPS Society bookstall and was rewarded with buoyant sales. Geoffrey is rapidly developing this side of the book club in addition to the normal postal sales. Barry Stapleton, Vice-Chairman of the LPS Society, also acted in his capacity as Chairman of the Portsmouth and South East Hampshire Local Studies Centre and conducted both the morning and afternoon sessions. He had undertaken much of the organisation of the conference which operated very smoothly, and provided conference members with an excellent lunch. Facilities in general were excellent and the Society is grateful to the Local Studies Centre for providing accommodation and hospitality.

The next day conference is to be held in the Birmingham area in the Autumn of 1981. Members of the committee are always pleased to receive suggestions for venues and topics from Society members. The Portsmouth conference in fact began on the basis of a request from local members. We look forward to a return to the Portsmouth area at a future date.
Cornwall Record Office

The Cornwall Record Office has announced a revision of its opening arrangements. On Monday the office is closed; Tuesday to Thursday the opening hours are 9.30 a.m.-1 p.m.; 2 p.m.-5 p.m.; on Friday they are 9.30 a.m.-1 p.m.; 2 p.m.-4.30 p.m. and on Saturday 9.00 a.m.-12 noon. The archivist advises that readers should make an appointment.

LPS Small Ads is a new service to our readers. For 5p a word (Minimum 40 words) you can advertise the kinds of things you think LPS readers will want. Cash with advertisement to Michael Drake, Faculty of Social Sciences, Open University, Walton Hall, Milton Keynes, MK7 6AA. The deadline for LPS 27 is October 31st 1981.

Guide to the Listings Collection of the SSRC Cambridge Group

The listings held at the Cambridge Group are copies, usually photocopies, of original lists. The listings can be consulted in the Cambridge Group Library and the original documents are usually to be found in the appropriate record office.

A listing is a list of the inhabitants of a community at a certain date. The listings may be ordered street by street and household by household, alphabetically by household, by family or in some other way. Listings vary greatly in the amount and type of information given and in internal consistency. Comparisons with other documents may reveal defects in lists which appear complete.

Most listings are accompanied by tabulations (e.g. distribution of household sizes) on standard forms, but the tables have recently been extended and revised and much work remains to be done.

In addition to the listings noted here, the Cambridge Group holds a number of foreign listings as ancillary English material which cannot properly be classed as listings (e.g. Land Tax returns, Quarter Sessions papers and militia records). These are incomplete and do not list numbers in families or households but might be useful if analysed with a proper listing.

The guide below attempts to show roughly the kind of information the listings give. If an item is always or nearly always given, an ‘X’ is marked, if sometimes mentioned, ‘%’ is marked and, if the information rarely or never appears, ‘—’ is marked. Certain details may, of course, be inferred; for example, if all individuals are named, their sex is obvious. Household heads are always named so it is assumed that their sex is known. An entry in the sex column, therefore, means sex is noted for those other than heads of households. Sex and names are less frequently given for children.

‘Lodgers’ are those listed as such or as ‘boarders.’ ‘Inmates’ and ‘visitors’ are not included in the lodgers column but are always footnoted where they occur, as are ‘strangers.’ Kin includes ‘in-laws’ who may be step-children, but not sons, daughters and spouses. Anything unusual is commented on in the footnotes e.g. if marital status is exceptionally well recorded.
The reasons for drawing up listings and the type of enumerator can give some guide to the kind of information specified and vice versa. But even census returns as required under the Population Act 1801 and in subsequent Acts of Parliament vary in the amount of information given from place to place. An enumerator’s book or schedule tends to be more detailed than the actual census return required by the Population Acts. Incumbents’ documents are likely to give notes on religious persuasion and character of the parishioners.

The listings which relate to the Marriage Duty Act 1694 seem to be of two types — a return of the inhabitants and an assessment. The latter seems to be a list of the inhabitants (giving the amount of tax due, if any) drawn up from a previous Marriage Duty Act return.

The census enumerators’ returns for 1841-71 are not normally noted below unless they have been analysed at the Cambridge Group (e.g. Elmdon, Essex) or unless extra nineteenth century census returns survive (e.g. Puddleton, Dorset). The enumerators’ returns 1841-71 are held in the P.R.O.

The description of the contents of each listing is offered only as a rough guide. Minor defects, for example, the omission of particular houses, are not spelt out, and it cannot be emphasised too strongly that the present guide is no substitute for a detailed examination which, together with comparisons with other documents such as parish registers, may reveal serious deficiencies in lists deemed to be otherwise comprehensive.

Information on any listings not mentioned here would be gratefully received by the SSRC Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA, telephone: Cambridge 354298.

NOTES

GLOUCESTERSHIRE
51. Forest of Dean Listings Children’s sex is never stated; all distinguish tenants and freeholders.
60. Poorer inhabitants; children’s sex not stated.
61. Children’s sex not stated.
62. Incomplete; marital status given.
63. Children’s ages but not sex given.
64. Non-conformists specified; children’s sex not stated.

HAMPSHIRE
65. In addition 1821 summary of ages in 5 year blocks.
66. Households not clearly distinguished.
67. Two lists.
68. Two lists.
69. St. Mary’s Listings: households not clearly distinguished.
70. Strangers noted.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County or Settlement</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Kin</th>
<th>Servants</th>
<th>Lodgers</th>
<th>Head's occupation</th>
<th>Individuals named</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GLOUCESTERSHIRE (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charity List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibury with Arlington and Winsor</td>
<td>1806</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibury with Arlington, Abingdon and Winsor</td>
<td>1808</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Charity List</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arlington</td>
<td>1809</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Bailiff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chipping Sodbury</td>
<td>1795</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Compton Census</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forthampton</td>
<td>1752</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hewelsfield, Forest of Dean</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy Forest Surveyor's Return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Deane, Forest of Dean</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Deputy Forest Surveyor's Return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. Bravelis</td>
<td>1662</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>Incumbent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tetbury</td>
<td>1737</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<p>| HAMPSHIRE |      |                |      |     |           |     |          |          |                  |                  |                     |
| Exton | 1801 | X              | %    | X   |          |     |          |          | X                 |                  | Incumbent's copy of Census Return |
| All Saints within Barr, Southampton | 1695 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1694 Marriage Act Assessment |
| All Saints within Barr, Southampton | 1696 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1694 Marriage Act Assessment |
| All Saints without Barr, Southampton | 1697 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1694 Marriage Act Assessment |
| All Saints without Barr, Southampton | 1695 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1694 Marriage Act Assessment |
| Holy Rhood, Southampton | 1696 | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | X | 1694 Marriage Act Assessment |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County or Settlement</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Household size</th>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Kin</th>
<th>Servants</th>
<th>Lodgers</th>
<th>Head's occupation</th>
<th>Individuals named</th>
<th>Source</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>HAMPSHIRE (cont.)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holy Rhood, Southampton</td>
<td>1696</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>1694 Marriage Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portswood, Southampton</td>
<td>1695</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>1694 Marriage Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portswood, Southampton</td>
<td>1696</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>1694 Marriage Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portswood, Southampton</td>
<td>1697</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>1694 Marriage Act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St. John's, Southampton</td>
<td>1695</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>___</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
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