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.
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


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