

## NOTES AND QUERIES

### NON-CONFORMIST AND ANGLICAN REGISTRATION IN THE HALIFAX AREA 1740-99

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The aim of this exercise is to show the extent of anglican and non-conformist registration of baptisms and burials in the eighteenth century. The area studied is the ancient parish of Halifax, which, at this time, was divided into three chapelries, namely Elland, Heptonstall and Halifax. Fortunately the administrative boundaries of the two registration systems coincide sufficiently at this chapelry level to make a comparison possible, though it is not possible to do this at the township level.

Tables 1 and 2 give the results of the analysis. Briefly these show, first, a dramatic increase in the absolute number of baptisms and burials recorded over the period 1740-99; second, a marked increase in the proportion of baptisms recorded in the non-conformist registers as opposed to those kept by the anglican clergy and similarly an increase — though much less marked — in the proportion of burials so recorded. Thus, whereas in the 1740s some 3.3 per cent of all baptisms in Halifax and 0.3 per cent of all burials appeared in non-conformist registers, by the 1790s the percentages were respectively 36.0 and 12.6.

The figures do demonstrate very graphically the decline in the attractiveness of the anglican church, particularly for baptisms but also for burials over the period 1740-99 and so confirm the now generally acknowledged inadequacy of the late eighteenth-century anglican registers for the purpose of demographic analysis.

Table 1. **Anglican and non-conformist baptisms and burials in each of Halifax's chapelries**

	Anglican						Non-conformist					
	Elland		Heptonstall		Halifax		Elland		Heptonstall		Halifax	
	Baptisms	Burials	Baptisms	Burials	Baptisms	Burials	Baptisms	Burials	Baptisms	Burials	Baptisms	Burials
1740-9	1847	1023	1764	1082	5300	3880	118	0	11	0	177	20
1750-9	2652	1367	2298	1559	5610	4534	94	0	77	0	842	85
1760-9	3010	1531	2670	1755	5976	5350	74	0	99	0	1346	207
1770-9	3226	1593	2713	1898	6864	5400	39	1	164	1	1469	430
1780-9	4221	2308	2864	1702	7375	6191	244	43	267	0	3026	750
1790-9	3633	2264	3327	2084	7106	6720	783	343	584	1	6536	1251

45

Table 2. **Baptisms and burials in non-conformist registers in Halifax as a percentage of all anglican and non-conformist registrations.**

	Baptisms				Burials			
	Elland	Heptonstall	Halifax	Parish	Elland	Heptonstall	Halifax	Parish
1740-9 .....	6.0	0.6	3.2	3.3	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.3
1750-9 .....	3.5	3.2	13.1	8.8	0.0	0.0	1.8	1.1
1760-9 .....	2.4	3.6	18.4	11.5	0.0	0.0	3.7	2.3
1770-9 .....	1.2	5.7	17.6	11.6	0.1	0.1	7.4	4.6
1780-9 .....	5.5	8.5	41.0	24.5	1.9	0.0	10.8	7.2
1790-9 .....	17.7	14.9	46.6	36.0	13.2	0.1	15.7	12.6