

## RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

### THE USE OF MARRIAGE HORIZONS TO MEASURE MIGRATION: SOME CONCLUSIONS FROM A STUDY OF POCKLINGTON, EAST YORKSHIRE IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY

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In the LPS 43, in an article on population change and stability in Nantwich, Grace Wyatt used the place of residence given in the registers for the parish as indicators of migratory movements.<sup>1</sup> Indeed, this method of using the residence information for bride and groom given at the time of marriage, and recorded in the marriage register, has been taken as evidence of personal mobility and of the range of contact between communities, in a number of previous studies.<sup>2</sup> However, contrary to this work the detailed analysis of 1174 marriage partners recorded in the registers of Stanhope, County Durham, by Pain and Smith has shown the potential limitations of such data.<sup>3</sup>

The Stanhope study made use of data available for the years 1798 to 1812, enabling the residence of the bride and groom, as shown in the marriage register, to be compared with their place of birth, as given in the baptismal entries for their children. The form of the Stanhope registers stems from a request from Bishop Barrington who had 'asked for baptismal registers to be annotated with the place of birth of the parents of a child baptized.'<sup>4</sup> It was some twenty years earlier, in 1777, that Archbishop Markham had ordered that the scheme developed by William Dade in York should be put into practice in the diocese of York. Some parishes never adopted the system, others followed it fully for only a few years, but the information in Yorkshire registers as to the residence and occupation of parents and grandparents has been used to throw considerable light on migration during this period.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately those responsible for the Pocklington parish registers only persevered for the four years from 1779 to 1783 inclusive, but an analysis of ninety-one marriages at Pocklington between 1773 and 1782 and the baptismal entries during those four years, underlines the limitations of marriage horizons as an indication of migration and personal mobility. For a significant number of brides the residence, given as Pocklington at the time of their marriage in the parish church, is at odds with the extra parochial residence of the bride's father as recorded at the baptism of a child or children baptized between 1779 and 1783.

At best the information available is considerable as shown by the following example from the Pocklington register of baptisms for 1779:<sup>6</sup>

<b>Infant's Christian name</b>	George Lyon
<b>Infant's surname</b>	Weddall
<b>Father's name, profession, descent and abode</b>	John Weddall of Pocklington Gentleman son of Thos. Weddall of Bubwith merchant by Beatrix his wife dau. of Edward Barrett of Bubwith merchant
<b>Mother's name and descent</b>	Mary Dau: of Robert Plummer of Whitby merchant by Sarah dau: of Richd Cross of Pocklington, merchant
<b>Born</b>	On Wednesday the 10th Novr 1779
<b>Baptized</b>	On Saturday the 20th Novr 1779

In contrast, the marriage entry for John Weddall and Mary Plummer in the Pocklington marriage register for 1774 reads:

No 148. John Weddall of the Parish of East Cottingwith and Mary Plummer of this Parish, spinster. Married in this Church by licence 17th February in the year 1774

Pain and Smith remark that in Durham Bishop Barrington asked that the baptism register should show the place of birth of the parents of the baptized child. In Yorkshire the directive of Archbishop Markham is less clear, but in Pocklington the register appears to record the residence of the grandparents at the time of the baptism (or at date of death, if the grandparent was no longer alive). Where the residence of the bride's father in the baptisms register differs from that of the bride in the relevant marriage entry, it could be that the bride's father had moved after the date of his daughter's marriage. However, it would seem more likely that the bride's family home was outside Pocklington and that she had moved to Pocklington before her marriage.

One must immediately record a note of caution. Pain and Smith were using registers for the fourteen years between 1798 and 1812 and analysed 587 couples who could be cross-referenced to the Stanhope marriage register. In contrast, this note is based on an analysis of forty-two brides who could be cross-referenced to the Pocklington baptism register, and in seven cases the wife's father's residence was not given.

**Table 1      Residence of bridegrooms and brides as recorded in the Pocklington Marriage Register from 1 January 1761 to 31 December 1782**

Residence	Bridegrooms	Brides	Totals
Pocklington	147	195	342
Adjoining parishes	12	5	17
Other parishes up to 5 miles	13	2	15
Between 6 to 10 miles York	5	3	8
York (13 miles)	3	2	5
Other parishes between (11 to 20 miles)	17	0	17
Hull (23 miles)	4	0	4
Other parishes 21 miles or over	6	0	6
Total	207	207	414
Extra parochial	29%	6%	17%
Residence beyond 10 miles	14%	1%	8%

**Table 2      Residence of Pocklington brides at the date of marriage and residence of their respective fathers at the baptism of her first correlated child from January 1773 to March 1782**

	Residence of bride as recorded in marriage register		Residence of bride's father as recorded in baptism register
Residence	All entries	Linked entries	Linked entries
Pocklington	86	32	15
Adjoining parishes	2	0	2
Other parishes up to 5 miles	0	0	2
Between 6 to 10 miles	1	1	5
York (13 miles)	2	2	3
Other parishes between 11 to 20 miles	0	0	5
Hull (23 miles)	0	0	0
Other parishes 21 miles or over	0	0	3
Total	91	35	35
Extra parochial	5%	9%	57%
Residence beyond 10 miles	2%	6%	31%

During the twenty-one years between 1761 and 1782 the marriage registers for Pocklington show the percentage of spouses with a residence beyond ten miles at 8 per cent and, as one might expect, it was normally the man who was ex-parochial - sixty out of the seventy-two cases during that period. (Table 1), But

if one accepts the information in the baptism register, the percentage of correlated brides coming from Pocklington between 1773 and 1782 falls from 91 per cent to 43 per cent, and the percentage coming from beyond ten miles goes up from 6 per cent to 31 per cent (Table 2).

Pain and Smith's research showed an apparent understatement of extra parochial spouses of 16 per cent for both men and women. At Pocklington the residence of the groom at the time of the marriage was, in the sample that could be checked, in accord with that of his father as shown in the relevant baptismal entry with only two exceptions - and they cancel each other out!

One must, however, assume that many of the women married at Pocklington whose fathers resided elsewhere, had migrated to the town before their marriage. Indeed, the baptism entries in the four years from 1779 to 1783 show that 42 per cent of 69 wives of tradesmen whose children were baptized in that period had fathers residing more than ten miles from the town.

The township of Pocklington had a population of 943 in 1743 rising to 1502 in 1801 but the parish registers suggest that the period of rapid growth was from around 1769 to about 1784. Can one therefore postulate that when the population of a small market town such as Pocklington is increasing rapidly, especially when young women of marriageable age are in-migrating, marriage registers provide a particularly poor indication of mobility?

#### NOTES

1. G. Wyatt, 'Population change and stability in a Cheshire parish during the eighteenth century', *Local Population Studies*, 43, 1989, pp.47-54.
2. See for example J. Millard, 'A new approach to the study of marriage horizons', *Local Population Studies*, 28, 1982, pp.10-31 and the references there cited. I am most grateful for the comments and criticisms of Dr David Neave upon an earlier draft of this note.
3. A.J. Pain and M.T. Smith, 'Do marriage horizons accurately measure migration? A test case from Stanhope parish Country Durham', *Local Population Studies*, 33, 1984, pp.44-8.
4. *Ibid*, p.44.
5. W.J. Sheils, 'Mobility and registration in the north in the late eighteenth century', *Local Population Studies*, 23, 1979, pp.41-4.; B.A. Holderness, 'Personal mobility in some rural parishes of Yorkshire 1777-1812', *Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, 42, 1971, pp.444-54. See also M. Long and B. Maltby, 'Personal mobility in three West Riding parishes 1777-1812', *Local Population Studies*, 24, 1980, pp.13-25. and C. Davey, 'A note on mobility in an Essex parish in the early nineteenth century', *Local Population Studies*, 41, 1988, pp.61-6.
6. The parish registers for Pocklington are deposited at the Borthwick Institute of Historical Research, York.