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EDITORIAL

The review of the Local Government: Mr Gummer moves the goalposts

Mr Gummer’s revision of the guidelines of the Local Government Review which was announced recently did not attract the widespread press coverage it deserved. At a time when media attention was focused on the party conferences this was inevitable. As a result, or so we believe, much of the significance of this the latest in a series of about turns, has been overlooked.

Gummer’s new directive to the Local Government Commission was contained in a statement of just over three hundred words. Seldom have goal posts been moved so far with such apparent economy of effort. The Commissioners had set off on their task with clear instructions to weigh the cost implications of each possible situation they considered and so deliver to a grateful nation a more economical form of local government. Thus the Commission’s first clutch of reports placed due emphasis on the savings to be made in adopting their preferred choices. It came as no surprise to the accountants that this bias led the Commission to recommend larger local government units and, so as it soon became clear, to herald the abolition of a substantial proportion of the existing district councils. This it would appear was an outcome the government had not foreseen but with Gummer’s hand on the scalpel the matter has been swiftly and neatly dealt with. The statement which brought about this radical change of direction conveys its true meaning only to those who are aware of its context. The Commission, he says, ‘is not precluded from recommending an option which would be marginally more expensive than the status quo if the extra cost would be outweighed by other considerations’. And on the size of the new authorities he added ‘very large unitary authorities would need special justification in terms of community identity’. Thus two key assumptions which underpinned the Commission’s approach have been removed. No longer do Commissioners have to find the most economical framework. Indeed they can recommend options which cost more than the present system which Mr Gummer’s predecessors have so often condemned as profligate; nor if they expect to have their advice accepted should they recommend large unitary authorities.

Just so that his message is clear beyond all doubt Gummer reaffirms his commitment to the unitary system. ‘In some areas the Commission may wish to recommend a continuation of the existing two tier structure. But the government expects that to be the exception, and that the result with be a substantial increase on the number of unitary authorities in both urban and rural areas’. Now we know beyond doubt where the government stands on local government reform it may be pertinent to ask why this ‘review of the review’ was considered necessary. How had the government and the Commissioners diverged so far from what we must assume had begun as a
common objective? The answer is to be found in the different perceptions of the review that have been held by successive Ministers. At its inception Michael Heseltine, or so it is said, had a simple agenda. He saw the process as fixing once and for all the spendthrift County Councils which had so hampered his progress in resolving the poll tax issue. He had in mind a pattern of low cost low spending unitary authorities. By the time the parcel had passed to his successor, Michael Howard, it had become clear that removing the County Councils and moving towards District based unitary authorities would not deliver the economies that had been promised and sought. Howard’s revision of the Commissioner’s guidelines removed the concept of a national blueprint of unitary authorities and left it with more freedom to prescribe appropriate remedies on a county by county basis using as a yardstick clear economies in cost on the one hand and community identity on the other. It was on this basis that the Commission set about its task. The review was now said to be fair and balanced. Heseltine’s malice had been replaced by Howard’s sense of equity and scientific enquiry, and though not everyone believed the Commission would be allowed a clear run, the protestations from Sir John Banham that he would not be deflected from his task offered some reassurance. Then it was Gummer’s turn. The additional pressures he faced came both from the Commission and from the district councils who saw in the decisions reached in the first tranche of the review clear signs that under the existing guidelines few of them would survive.

The Commissioners’ first taste of the review at grass roots level cannot have been pleasant. They found themselves saddled with a so called community index which we predicted would prove to be unworkable (see LPS 49 1992, 7) and which Sir John has now described as naive and open to legal challenge. They faced hostility and resentment at public meetings from people who saw no need for change and from lobbyists defending jobs and political positions. On top of all this they were undermined by government hints that the Commission’s findings would be ignored. Such views have been widely canvassed by conservative members of parliament in Derbyshire but perhaps the most blatant threat came from the local government minister David Curry at the Association of District Councils Annual Conference where he suggested that the Derbyshire recommendations would be overturned. Perhaps the government had expected Sir John to be more pliant. If this was the case they have been disappointed. He has joined certain of his fellow Commissioners in making it clear that he, like them, will resign if the Commissioner’s recommendations are ignored. At the same time he has fuelled speculation that his heart is no longer in the job by accepting an appointment as Chairman of Tarmac and agreeing to take up office sometime next year. We said that this commitment played no part in Sir John’s request to Mr Gummer to accelerate the review process. Wherever the idea came from the plan now is to review all the remaining counties by the end of 1994. To achieve this timetable an extra Commissioner will be appointed and the five Commissioners who work two days a month will be asked to work two days a week.

Mr Gummer’s new guidelines do not apply to the first tranche authorities for which the Commission’s initial recommendations are now available. This has not prevented authorities such as the Derbyshire district councils who found
little comfort in the Commission’s recommendations (for a unitary authority similar in size to the present County Council and a second based on the City of Derby) from using the new criteria as a stick to beat the Commission with, and as a political boast that the government having now declared its own precenrences cannot stand back and watch them die. It remains to be seen how Gummer will walk this particular tightrope on the one hand keeping faith with the Commission and on the other maintaining the logic of the stance he has selected.

Not all the first tranche recommendations are as contentious as those for Derbyshire. In the one final report so far the Commission recommended that the Isle of Wight should have a single island-wide unitary authority. In Durham the initial recommendations are for a Durham City authority and a second countywide unitary authority. In the case of Avon Cleveland and Humberside all are to be abolished with Cleveland being divided into four unitary authorities based on the present districts and the cities of Bristol and Hull becoming unitary authorities. The remaining areas would be returned to their historic county units but administered by unitary authorities. Somerset would become a single unitary authority but Gloucestershire and North Yorkshire would be divided. Lincolnshire would continue with the present two tier administration by County and District Councils. It would be hard to imagine a more diverse pattern. Assuming such diversity survives to become part of the Commission’s final recommendations, we cannot see how this in itself can avoid becoming a live political issue for Mr Gummer or for his successor.

Whatever the outcome for these final tranche areas the Gummer guidelines applied to the remainder of the country so producing a pattern of district based unitary councils each of modest size will deliver just about the worst possible scenario for specialist services and from which the archive and library service will not be immune. As the Society of Archivists has consistently pointed out, any system of provision based on units smaller than the present counties must lead to joint arrangements between the local government units servicing the old county area. The record of such arrangements in the former Metropolitan Counties is not encouraging and as we have observed on previous occasions in these pages there is an inherent structural weakness in such joint arrangements. Services delivered on this basis belong to no one. While local authorities may be enthusiastic and supportive – and there is no guarantee that they will be – the effectiveness of the system is likely to be determined by the weakest element in the consortium. We support the Society of Archivists’ plea for binding and long term agreements where cooperative arrangements have to be established but we are under no illusion as to their effectiveness. Once whatever regulatory authority the government appoints has been replaced by the realities of local politics and local financial choices and constraints the services run by consortia will become the cindarella services.

We have in the past urged readers to participate in the review process and now, conscious that a larger number than at any time since the review began has the chance to become involved, we again emphasise the need to make sure the interests of record offices and library users are recognised. The review
process allows two brief opportunities for consultation. The first begins as soon as the Commissioners appointed to your county sets up their standard. In theory leaflets and advertisements should appear and some Commissioners hold surgeries to explain the review format. The second follows the Commissioners’ publication of their consultation document and this will be accompanied by public meetings and a questionnaire. Our advice to those who do want to play their part is to recognise from the outset that effective lobbying involves mobilising a significant number of people. It is not enough to leave things to the secretary of the local society. A letter from the secretary will be required but it should not be seen as a substitute for numerous letters from individual members. It is also advisable to think in broad terms of any potential allies who may be enlisted to the cause. Who is there in your area apart from the obvious records and library users who is likely to be concerned about a reduction in services but who may not have recognised the threat this area of local authority provision faces as a result of local government reorganisation? We can suggest one or two likely areas of support. The members of the WEA, University Extra Mural and Local Authority classes should be sympathetic; so too may be the members of the Local Civic Society and at County level, the Rural Community Council. Outside the larger towns where travelling costs and distances are recognised to be serious factors, support for the continued provision of services at the existing level is likely to be forthcoming from voluntary groups of all kinds and it is possible that parish and town councils can be persuaded to take these issues into account when they prepare their statement for the Commission.

It is also worth bearing in mind that there are two directions in which you should address your case. It is of course important to see that the Commissioners recognise the value of a countywide library and record office provision so that even if they decide to recommend a division of responsibility between a number of authorities they will see the necessity of safeguards to protect the quality of delivery. But much can also be achieved by dialogue with your local authorities in the hope of ensuring that if they inherit the mantle of library or museum provider or of participating in a voluntary or statutory agreement for these services they will be prepared to meet the full costs of safeguarding professional posts and of offering a service at least as comprehensive as what is available now. We have spoken to several well informed commentators who have seen the notional budgets prepared by some of the prospective district based unitary councils. We are told they make depressing reading; services would be cut to a minimum; records placed at risk; and adequate resources denied for the purchase or acquisition of new deposits. These is also the spectre of charging record office customers.

You will notice that we have not mentioned record offices or library staff in our campaigning advice. Their position is likely to be awkward once the review begins. They may be tied to an authority policy they do not agree with but which they cannot publicly repudiate. They may also be aware that by adopting a high profile now in defence of their own interests they could antagonise the politicians and senior local government staff who will be their new masters. Those who witnessed 1974 will recall that local government reorganisation offers countless opportunities to pay off old scores, repay
political debts and reshape a workforce to suit the new regime. It is at times like this that the views of the professional associations are so useful. However threatened library or record office staff may feel, they can surely find ways of putting you in touch with the appropriate statements and so avoid labelling themselves as proponents of a particular standpoint. You could in any case contact the Society of Archivists yourself. If you wish to do this you should write to Patrick Cleary, Executive Secretary, Information House, 20-24 Old Street, London EC1V 9AP (telephone 071-253-5087).

Archivists speak of an increasingly hostile and unsympathetic climate of opinion surrounding their work at central and at local government levels. They have not found a responsive ear at the Department of the Environment to the case they have made for special consideration and while there is some talk of archives being formally placed under the care of the Department of National Heritage it is by no means clear that this would help the service in its present predicament or that patronage from this new government department would offer sustained protection in the longer term. Nothing short of a new legislative framework would do that and we do not believe that is yet on offer. No account of the current impression of despondency would be complete without reference to Ian Sproat’s suggestion that the time may now have come for users to pay for library services. It would appear we must now prepare to defend that front as well.

We shall continue to monitor developments and we would be pleased to hear from any readers who can supply information or personal observations on the review process and on its outcome for library and record office services.

Index Errata

A new Index to LPS covering issues 21 to 50 was distributed with the last issue of the journal. Unfortunately, a small number of errors have been brought to our attention.

p.5 In the Subject Index, a reference to issue 37, 45 should be added to the entry for ‘Frankpledge’.
p.35 The entries for Walsall and Wolverhampton under Warwickshire should be moved to Staffordshire (p.34).
p.36 For ‘Askrig4g’ read ‘Askrigg’.
No price increase!

Readers will hopefully welcome the news that in its summer review of accounts and costings, the editorial board agreed to maintain the price of LPS at its present level for at least the next year. Consequently, the direct subscription price of the journal remains at £6.00 (overseas £7.00), the last increase being levied in Spring 1991.

Tom Arkell
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October 1993

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

Days of the week for baptisms, burials and marriages from family reconstitution, 1542-1847

At present the Group is basing a new book of the population history of England on the family reconstitutions that have been made of the registers of some 26 parishes.\(^1\) We chose the 26 parishes, out of a total of 34 which were completed, because they had good registration, and had a work force that was typical of the country as a whole in the mid-nineteenth century. Moreover, they produced a scale of events whose timing was much the same as was provided by the 404 parishes on which our first book on population history was based.\(^2\) In fact it was hard to resist the conclusion that at least in the early nineteenth century, and perhaps over a longer period, the reconstituted parishes shared many of the characteristics that would have been displayed by a randomly drawn sampling procedure from the 10,000 ancient parishes of England.

Family reconstitutions can be used to work out the precise interval that elapsed between birth and death, and birth and marriage. The family reconstitution forms, therefore, preserve the day that the event occurred, but in the vast majority of cases it is the date of baptism, not birth and the date of burial, not death. Only in the case of marriage is the date of the ceremony the real one. This is not the disadvantage it might appear to be. In the case of baptisms, the average interval went up from 8 days in the later seventeenth century to an average of 30 days by 1791-1812.\(^3\) Thus even at an early date, with the exception of a few cases in which the child was sickly so the ceremony could not be delayed, a couple had the choice of a day on which to baptise their child, and this choice was governed by the canon law, as well as their own leisure preferences. In the case of marriage, the ceremony involved considerable feasting, and so we might expect the day of the week that was chosen to reflect almost entirely the parties preferences for leisure activities. And in the case of burials, it would seem that since most people were buried within three days of death, the need for prompt disposal of a decomposing corpse within a short time was paramount in a society where embalming was little practised outside the ranks of the gentry.\(^4\)

On the family reconstitution form, therefore, we have noted down the exact day of baptism, of marriage, and of burial. We needed to convert the dates into the days of the week, a long and tedious job that is usually done with the help of Cheney’s Handbook of dates.\(^5\) In the case of our reconstitution files, however, every date was pre-converted to the large number of days that had elapsed since the first of January in the first year. The computer algorithm that did this took due account of leap years and the 11 days lost in September 1752 when the Julian and Gregorian calendars were reconciled. All we had to do was, therefore, to divide the number corresponding to the date by 7 to get the
day of the week. Since it so happened that one got an ‘0’ when it was a Wednesday, and so on until a ‘6’ when it was a Tuesday, one had a very handy way of working out the day of the week corresponding to any date in the past.

Table 1 gives the names of the 26 reconstituted parishes, numbering from North to the South, and they are displayed on Figure 1. The table shows that they were very far from being a fully recorded set from 1538, the start of parochial registration. Some parishes, such as Shepshed in Leicestershire, were in observation from 1538 until 1850, while others, such as Lowestoft in Suffolk, were only contributing reconstituted families from 1561 to 1731. So if we take the set of 26 reconstituted parishes, and every date in the whole set, we get the equivalent days of the week in those parishes that are contributing at the same time. If each of the 26 parishes told the same story there would be no difficulty, but this was not always the case, so that in the sixteenth century the picture of the relative popularity of different days may reflect in part the gradual appearance of more parishes in the set. Also, in 1801 Birstall goes out of
Table 1  List of 26 parishes reconstituted (north to south)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Starts</th>
<th>Stops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Earsdon</td>
<td>Northumbs</td>
<td>1604</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Birstall</td>
<td>Yorks, W.R.</td>
<td>1595</td>
<td>1801</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Methley</td>
<td>Yorks, W.R.</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>1813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Gainsborough</td>
<td>Lincs</td>
<td>1564</td>
<td>1813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Gedling</td>
<td>Notts</td>
<td>1565</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Bottesford</td>
<td>Leics</td>
<td>1581</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shepshed</td>
<td>Leics</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Austrey</td>
<td>Warwicks</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>1837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. March</td>
<td>Cambs</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>1752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Lowestoft</td>
<td>Suffolk</td>
<td>1561</td>
<td>1731</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Willingham</td>
<td>Cambs</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>1813</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Alcester</td>
<td>Warwicks</td>
<td>1562</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Banbury</td>
<td>Bucks</td>
<td>1564</td>
<td>1838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Southall</td>
<td>Bedfords</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>1842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Great Oakley</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>1839</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Terling</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Aldenhall</td>
<td>Herts</td>
<td>1559</td>
<td>1840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Ash</td>
<td>Kent</td>
<td>1654</td>
<td>1841</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Odiham</td>
<td>Hants</td>
<td>1539</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Reigate</td>
<td>Surrey</td>
<td>1560</td>
<td>1770</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Hartland</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1558</td>
<td>1838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Mochard Bishop</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1660</td>
<td>1852</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. Colyton</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1540</td>
<td>1838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Bridford</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1538</td>
<td>1850</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Dawlish</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1654</td>
<td>1838</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Ipplepen</td>
<td>Devon</td>
<td>1671</td>
<td>1838</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: E.A. Wrigley, English population history, Table 2.1.

observation, and as Birstall was growing in size and contributing about 24 per cent of the baptisms by that date, its sudden disappearance can have a marked effect on the relative popularity of different days of the week.

To find the days of the week the reconstitution file of baptisms, marriages and burials was, therefore, taken as a whole from 1540 until 1849. Table 2 gives the numbers of events of each ceremony, in the first 40 year period (1540-79), in the maximum 40 year period, and overall (1540-1849). The reconstitution set contains about a quarter of a million baptisms, 67,000 marriages and 230,000 burials. Converted into the number of ceremonies per year over the 310-year period from 1540 to 1849, the figures are 820 a year for baptisms, 217 a year for marriages, and 742 a year for burials. The somewhat lower figures for the first period (1540-79) are eloquent testimony of the growth of the reconstitution file over time. 5

Burials

Burials were a simple matter in that there was no clear ruling from the Church as to the day on which a corpse was to be buried. The 68th of the 1603 Canons of the Church of England stated that:
Table 2  Numbers of ceremonies recorded in the 26 reconstituted parishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>No./year</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Baptisms</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1540-79</td>
<td>4205</td>
<td>105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1819</td>
<td>48632</td>
<td>1216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>257269</td>
<td>830</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marriages</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1540-79</td>
<td>3373</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1780-1819</td>
<td>12879</td>
<td>322</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>67394</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Burials</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1540-79</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1700-39</td>
<td>40577</td>
<td>1013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>230045</td>
<td>742</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:**  Original family reconstitution forms.

No Minister shall refuse or delay...to Bury any corpse that is brought to the church or church yard (convenient warning being given him thereof before) in such manner and form as is prescribed in the said Book of Common Prayer.\(^7\)

The **1645 Directory of Publique Worship**, which superseded the Canons until 1660, added a 'puritan' twist to the tale, by requiring corpses to be 'there immediately interred without any ceremony'.\(^8\) In the rubrics of the Prayer Book of 1662 incumbents were expressly prohibited from using the burial service in the case of the unbaptised, the excommunicate and those that had laid violent hands upon themselves.\(^9\)

We might, therefore, expect to find people dying at random across the week; and being buried at random too. We should, furthermore, expect to find the same number of burials, or 14.3 per cent, occurring from Sunday through Saturday. In order to show the percentage claimed by each day in each year, a graph was drawn with the percentages claimed by each day in each year set vertically upon each other. Thus in Figure 2 we would expect to find an even split across the days of the week in each year, with each day claiming 14.3 per cent. On the graph a line had been drawn for Sunday at 14.3 per cent, and for Monday at 28.6 per cent (=14.3 per cent + 14.3 per cent), and so on up to 85.8 per cent for Friday's cumulative percentage. Note that the score for Saturday is included in the top part of the graph between the totals for Sunday to Friday inclusive **and** 100 per cent. The total number of burials recorded each year is, therefore, standardised by being made equal to 100 per cent, and the graph shows the degree to which each day attracts the same relative number (i.e. percentage) of burials.
Thus if each day were attracting the same number of burials we should expect to find the graph showing lines for the cumulative percentages lying along the 14 per cent, 29 per cent etc. up to 86 per cent line. If any day gained more than its 14 per cent, or even-split share, it would push the line above the 14 per cent difference from the day below it. And a day which attracts fewer than the 14 per cent even-split would come at a correspondingly thinner distance from the day below it. Thus an increase in Sunday's claim on the recording of burials, would push up the first line on the graph, say to 20 per cent. If it did so entirely by attracting burials from Saturday, then the line for Saturday would be reduced to 9 per cent, and Saturday would appear thinner than normal by having its line drawn at 91 per cent instead of at 86 per cent. Note that the lines for other days would still have the even-split of 14.3 per cent of the burials occurring to them. Thus they would still be apart by the distance corresponding to 14 per cent measured for each day on the left-hand vertical bar of the graph.

Finally, the graph of the proportion of ceremonies measured in this way was rather violent it its movement; in particular when the numbers were especially small as in the early decades. To get round the problem, what is displayed are the 5-year moving averages of burials, baptisms and marriages from 1542 to 1847.

Figure 3 shows how the 230,000 burials were distributed across the days of the week. Not surprisingly, up to 1570 the graph shows some tremors resulting
from small numbers, but between 1570 and about 1650 the days of the week all seem to have recorded that 14 per cent that was predicted on the basis of burials occurring at random, with no preference for a given day of burial. From 1650 to 1825, Sunday became a much more popular day on which to be buried, the fraction rising from 14 to 25 per cent. This was gained almost entirely from burials on Monday and on Saturday, and must represent a genuine shift towards Sunday from these two surrounding days. After 1825, the pattern reverts to that of 1650. This may be a genuine effect, but the gradual disappearance of the parishes contributing burials presumably influenced the results quite substantially.

Baptisms

Although people had little influence on when they might be buried, they could certainly choose when they might baptise their child. But the church was also interested in the time of baptism and its attitude was conveniently summarised in the rubrics to the Prayer Books of 1549 and 1552.

The pastors and curates shall oft admonish the people that they defer not the Baptisme of Infants any longer than the Sunday, or other Holy day next after the child be borne, unless upon a great and reasonable
cause declared to the Curate, and by him approved. And also they shall warn them that without great cause, and necessity, they baptize not children at home in their houses.\textsuperscript{10}

The expectation was that the baptism would usually be the next Sunday; only a few would occur on another day, if a Holy day intervened or because of the imminent danger of the infant’s death. The 68th Canon of 1603 said very much the same sort of thing, and the Prayer Book of 1662 extended the time during which a baptism was recommended until ‘the 1st or 2nd Sunday next after their birth, or other holiday falling between’.\textsuperscript{11} It is clear that a baptism on a Sunday was the preferred outcome.

Figure 4 gives the percentage of all the baptisms recorded on a Sunday through to a Saturday. The graph starts with most days having an even-split proportion of baptisms, but that is soon lost in the general protestant desire to have a baptism on a Sunday. In 1550 Sunday recorded 32 per cent (in place of 14 per cent of all baptisms, drawing them mainly from Tuesday and Thursday. But then Mary’s reign intervened and with it came a reversion to catholic discipline: the even-split distribution of baptisms was re-established almost exactly within the reign. When the reign changed to that of Elizabeth, so the protestant ethic with its preference for a Sunday for baptisms more and more reasserted itself, so that in 1640 no fewer than 60 per cent of all baptisms occurred on a Sunday.

After this date baptisms on a Sunday fell markedly to reach 33 per cent by 1660. In fact, in the period 1640 to 1660 baptisms on almost all other days increased, with Thursday growing the most. This was exactly the period during which the parish registers became notoriously defective in the years of uncertainty and civil strife following the calling of the Short Parliament in 1640, but the disarray continued right through the period of the interregnum and only stopped its precipitous decline when the Canons were restored in the first year of Charles II.\textsuperscript{12}

The period that then began in 1661 lasted until 1737, the percentage of baptisms being performed on each day of the week in the latter year being almost exactly the same as in the former year. The only days which changed were Thursday and Friday: the former grew less popular and the latter more popular for recording baptisms. From 1737 on the old protestant preference for baptism on Sunday reasserted itself and the percentage of baptisms recorded on a Sunday in 1800 almost reached the maximum of 60 per cent recorded in 1640. In 1800 the parish of Birstall went out of observation, but baptism on a Sunday was still very much the order of the day and the percentage being recorded on a Sunday among those parishes still in observation attained almost 70 per cent. The pre-eminence of Sunday seems to have been gained by the more or less even squeezing of the other days of the week, as Sunday at last gained the place that the authors of the rubrics of the Prayer Books of Edward VI envisioned it should have.

This establishment of the primacy of Sunday, with the curious exception of the period from 1661 to 1737, was a general occurrence in each of the parishes. There were, however, some individual variations. Amongst the parishes that
were market towns, Banbury (Oxon) had a weak preference for Sunday, retaining Wednesday and Friday as notable baptism days, and Gainsborough (Lincs) eschewed Sunday altogether in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, by putting its trust most unusually in Saturday with 44 per cent of all baptisms recorded on this day around 1800. Bottesford, the agricultural parish in Leicestershire, also avoided the re-establishment of Sunday, keeping Monday, Wednesday and Friday as popular baptising days. Shepshed (Leics) and Willingham (Cambs) also avoided the massive pre-eminence of Sunday in the early nineteenth century, largely through also having Monday (and Tuesday in the case of Willingham) as a day when many baptisms were recorded.

Marriages

Of the three vital events it is probably with marriages that we shall find the choice of the day of the week as the firmest evidence we shall acquire of the preference of ordinary people for a holiday. The church in the 62nd Canon of 1603 only expressed the requirement that banns had to be called on three earlier weeks during divine service in the churches where the parties dwelled, with no objection being raised. In the case of people under 21, no objection could be raised by their parents. At all times the requirement as to banns could be avoided by the issue of a Faculty or Licence. In all cases the ceremony was
to be held in the church or chapel where one of the parties dwelled, on any day between the hours of eight and twelve in the forenoon, at the time of Divine Service. That is, no day of the week was outlawed. This eminent fairness as to the day of the week was compromised by the 1645 Directory of Publicke Worship which stated that ‘we advise it be not on the Lord’s Day’.16

If there was little guidance from the ecclesiastical authorities as to the day of the week that marriages could be celebrated on, we are left with the opinions of the marriage partners and their friends as to the most appropriate day. The cumulative proportions of all marriages that were claimed by Sunday through Saturday are given in Figure 5. Up to 1575 the proportions claimed by each day varied somewhat as more parishes came into observation. There is some sign that Sunday became less popular during Mary’s catholic reign, but the same is true of Monday. These first two days accounted for 32 per cent and 23 per cent (60 per cent in all) of the marriages recorded around 1575. The only other days with an almost even-split proportion (14 per cent) were Thursday and Saturday; the other days had far fewer than this.

The first period visible in the figure lasts from 1575 until 1658, when the lines of the graph stop their fall only to reverse themselves and rise again. The proportion recorded on a Sunday fell from 33 per cent to 6 per cent, and the
fraction recorded on a Monday fell from 27 per cent to 18 per cent. However, both the proportions on a Tuesday and on a Wednesday grew from very small fractions until they formed an even-split (14 per cent) division of the whole. The really large movement was caused by Thursday which began in 1575 with an almost even-split proportion (14 per cent) and ended the period in 1661 with a third (32 per cent) of the distribution of marriages. Of the two remaining days, both Friday and Saturday had about the same proportions of marriages in 1658 as they had in 1575 (in Saturday’s case, actually, rather fewer).

The second period visible in Figure 5 runs from 1658 to 1780. Here Sunday recovered quickly to reach 16 per cent, and kept almost the same proportion throughout the period. The same was approximately true of the other days of the week, with two conspicuous exceptions: Thursday, which declined from 32 per cent in 1658 to an even-split of 14 per cent in 1780, and Monday which rose from 18 per cent to 30 per cent. Monday, therefore, took over from Thursday as the most popular day for weddings.

After 1780 right up to the 1830s, Saturday claimed more marriages being recorded, from 6 per cent to approximately 14 per cent, while Friday remained at the earlier figure. Saturday’s increased proportionate share came from all the days from Monday to Thursday, with Sunday keeping just over an even-split fraction of marriages. Since marriages varied considerably by parish, the picture shown for the last few years, after 1830, is probably too much interfered with by differences in the parishes still in observation to be subject to sensible comment.

The changes in pattern which were greatest across the whole period were the decline of marriage on a Sunday and the rise on a Thursday in the early period from 1570 to 1660; and the decline of Thursday and the rise of Monday in the later period from 1661 to 1780. After 1800 there was also a rise of marriages celebrated on a Saturday, the day which most people today associate with a wedding.

The rise of the Monday marriages, on so-called St Monday, has been taken as a mark either of domestic industry or of a particularly urban working pattern, in which work was traditionally done on a Tuesday to Saturday. We can test this hypothesis on the prevalence of St Monday, by dividing up the parishes into four groups depending upon the pattern of the occupations as given in the 1831 Census. In the first group we place all those communities in which there was at least 60 per cent of the males aged 21 and over employed in agriculture, in the second group all the communities with at least 30 per cent in industrial employments, in the third group all the communities with at least 40 per cent in retail and handicrafts and in the fourth group the rest which had rather mixed occupational categories.

Table 3 shows that of the parishes, which shared the national tendency towards an increasing proportionate share of marriages on Monday in the period 1658-1780, were all three of the ‘industrial’ parishes, and four out of the eight ‘agricultural’ parishes. It so happened that only two out of the five ‘retail and handicraft’ parishes and four out of the ten mixed parishes shared the same
### Table 3  Parishes which followed the national patterns of Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays by 1831 occupational grouping

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agricultural</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Willingham</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Oakley</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terling</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aldenham</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ash</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hartland</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morchard Bishop</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bnford</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industrial</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birstall</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gedling</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shepshed</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail and Handicrafts</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gainsborough</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowestoft</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alcester</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banbury</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dawlish</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Others</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlsdon</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methley</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bottesford</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Austrey</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southill</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Odiham</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reigate</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colyton</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ipplepen</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Notes:** Y means 'yes', the parish does follow the 'national' pattern.
**Source:** Original family reconstitution forms.

The predominance of Monday as a day for especially frequent marriages, St Monday, therefore, appears to be a mark of 'industrial' employment, but one half of the 'agricultural' parishes also shared the Monday predominance. It was definitely not associated with the characteristic 'urban', which are to be found amongst that of 'retail and handicraft' and the 'other' parishes.

The same division of the parishes can be used to investigate the growth of the share of Thursday up to 32 per cent in the middle of the seventeenth century, followed by its decline to 14 per cent by 1780. This pattern was followed by seven out of the eight 'agricultural' parishes. This agricultural patterning of the Thursday boom and bust was also indicated by the fact that none of the three 'industrial' parishes had the pattern, and amongst the other two groups there were only six out of the total of fifteen parishes (40 per cent) that were affected.

Finally we can see which of the parishes produced a rise in the proportionate share of weddings celebrated on Saturday in the early nineteenth century. This seems to be all the agricultural parishes, and two 'other' parishes, located in the strip of land between Southill in Bedfordshire, on the northern edge, and
Hartland in Devon on the southern. But just before we claim these as representing the southern agricultural shape of things to come, we should pause to notice that Earsdon in Northumberland had a pattern of Saturday marriages too. Not only did it share the pattern, but by the eighteenth century it had a significant fraction of its population engaged in coal mining. Thus this mixed-industrial parish had 30 per cent of its marriages still being recorded on a Sunday, which, if they are added to the Saturday figure of 26 per cent, makes a total of 56 per cent, recorded on a traditional week-end of a Saturday and Sunday.

Nowadays of one were to ask on which day a person would get married it is likely that one would receive the answer Saturday. But the overwhelming predominance of Saturday today was achieved very fast in our own century, largely after the second world war, which is quite another story. But thanks to the information kept in the family reconstitutions we can follow the changes in the weekly patterns of burials, baptisms and marriages for a period of 300 years, from the mid-sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth centuries.

NOTES

1. E.A. Wrigley et al, English population history from family reconstitution, (Cambridge), forthcoming 1995, will give full details of the reconstitutions and the parishes.
6. To give some idea of how accurate the figures based on samples of this size would be, one could say that if there were an even split between the days of the week, so that each day comprised 14 per cent of the total, then a random sample of 100 items (as in the sixteenth century) would give an estimate subject to an error rate of 3.5 per cent. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries a randomly drawn sample of 1,000 would be subject to an error rate of 1.2 per cent.
9. Gibson, Codex, 450.
13. Birstall contributed approximately 24 per cent of all baptisms in its final years.
14. See the article by Dr J. Boulton, 'Economy of time? Wedding days and the working week in the past', Local Population Studies, 43 (1989), 28-46. This article was based on some London parishes and Colyton, together with some sample data for the distribution in 1864 printed by the Registrar General. 27th Annual Report of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages in England, (London, 1866) xv.
15. The clauses in relation to banns were added to the rubrics in the Prayer Books of 1549, 1552 and 1661.
16. This was limited to bishops and their commissaries by the 101st Canon of 1603.
17. Firth and Rait, Acts and Ordinances, I, 582. The advice lasted until 1660.
18. For the first option see E. Hopkins, 'Working hours and working conditions during the industrial revolution: a re-appraisal', Economic History Review, 35 (1982), 55-66; and for the second, see M. Harrison, 'The ordering of the time environment: time, work and the occurrence of crowds 1790-1835', Past and Present, 110 (1986), 134-68.
19. 1831 Census, Enumeration Abstract, vols I and II, Parliamentary Papers, XXXVI and XXXVII.
NEWS FROM THE LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES SOCIETY

The Victorians in Shropshire

LPSS provided a treat for fans of BBC Radio 4’s ‘The Archers’ with a weekend conference held, not in Ambridge itself, but at the next best location – the Harper Adams Agricultural College near Newport in Shropshire.

Mention of a programme devoted to the everyday lives of ordinary people is not inappropriate, for the weekend of 16-18 April 1993 was devoted to some of the most useful sources for ordinary people’s lives – trade directories, tithe records and censuses – mostly from the Victorian period. And though it was not wholly devoted to ‘country folk’, much was said about life in market towns and their rural hinterlands.

Dr George Baugh, editor of the Shropshire V.C.H., gave us a review of the thousand-year history of tithes, and of the records which they have produced in recent times including the maps made after the Tithe Commutation Act of 1836. This kind of record is often seen as part of the local historian’s standard equipment, so it was especially interesting to hear about the problems and peculiarities of particular tithe records. This theme was picked up in discussion, when Dennis Mills mentioned that he had found many East Midlands examples of rectors taking one-seventh of the corn as tithe, rather than one-tenth.

Although the Victorian censuses are favourite sources for LPSS members, few people have used the 1851 Census of Religious Worship. The year of the Great Exhibition was also marked by the first and last attempt to examine the church- and chapel-going habits of the British. The source is full of difficulties – starting with that of how to convert the numbers of ‘attendances’ recorded into numbers of actual people – but it hints at interesting and curious differences between different parts of the country and between different kinds of community. Our thanks to Dr John Aitken, of Birmingham University, for taking us through them. Discussion brought out curious examples of local differences in attendance, such as men going to morning services and women to evening ones, or farmers to morning services and their labourers to evening ones. The Society’s A.G.M. was held on the afternoon of 17 April, and a separate report appears below.

There was a Saturday afternoon session on the uses of computers in local history, with the alternative of a guided tour of the Pig Unit, the silage clamp and the slurry lagoon.

Being in border country, we expected a Welsh raid and were happy when this produced Dr C. Roy Lewis of the University of Wales, and Dr Rees Pryce of the Open University in Wales. Dr Lewis revealed that Mr John Patten, the Secretary of State for Education, had, in a former life, made a study of status and occupations in East Anglian towns. Dr Lewis is now extending this to the
Shrewsbury/Hereford area, mainly using local trade directories. Dr Pryce delighted us with an illustrated talk on the same rural and small-town society seen through the workings of one particular trade – country clock-making. He introduced us, figuratively speaking, to Samuel Roberts, one of its gifted eighteenth-century practitioners who was also a farmer and land tax collector. Roberts’ business records survive, along with at least 30 of the 600 clocks he made.

If Sunday was wet, it was scarcely dull, for Professor David Vincent came from Keele University to talk about the study of Victorian Eccleshall carried out by his adult education class. The use of various local records (including police records with insights into ‘suspected persons’) built up a many-sided picture of a local centre which was losing its old importance as it was by-passed by railway-building and road improvements. It was a tight little world with little movement between social classes (and most of that through marriage), and where the survival of the 1868 Poll Book enables us to witness the Anglican minister, members of the older professions and farmers voting Tory, while the non-conformist minister, members of the newer professions and labourers (with, of course, the shoemakers) voting Liberal. Discussion of these local sources picked up on the question of how prostitutes appear in censuses: Mary Hodges mentioned that in Portsmouth they were listed as ‘corset-makers’, Dennis Mills added that in Aldershot they appeared as ‘actresses’.

Three workshops, which followed up the main themes of the conference, were held on Saturday and repeated the following morning. Dennis Mills ran one on Census Analysis, Margaret Hill on Trade Directories, and Trevor Hill on Tithe Apportionments.

Conference attenders were again treated to two bookstalls. One run by the LPHBC, which did a record amount of trade, and a second one run by our friends from the Society of Genealogists.

We owe many thanks to the Harper Adams College authorities for providing us with accommodation, and especially to Trevor and Margaret Hill for undertaking all the work involved in organising and running the event.

And as for the Archers? Young David Archer’s wife Ruth spent two years at Harper Adams. Bert Fry, Phil Archer’s versatile farmworker (and probably the first agricultural labourer to be named in one of these reports), enjoyed considerable social success when he took part in Ruth’s end of course celebrations at the College.

Local Population Studies Society Annual General Meeting

This was held at Harper Adams College, on Saturday 17 April 1993 during the Society’s residential conference, with 30 members attending. The Chair was taken by Dr D.R. Mills, Chairman of the Executive Committee.

Dr Mills explained that Professor P.E.H. Hair had decided to stand down as Chairman and that he had been invited by the Committee to assume the
responsibility, at least until after the General Meeting. He reminded members how much the Society owed to Paul Hair, who had taken over as Chairman in 1985. He had been untiring and had attended 17 of the 18 conferences held while he was Chairman. He asked members to record a formal vote of thanks, and this was agreed unanimously.

Membership

Sir David Cooke reported that he had looked very closely at the Membership Lists recently. He had been ruthless and had weeded out 200 names. On Thursday 15 April, there were 379 paid-up members.

Many members had first come into contact with the Society as D301 students, at the Open University, when they had enjoyed block membership, and had subsequently become individual members. It had been hoped to revive this system for DA301 but budgetary constraints had ruled this out. However, all DA301 students will receive a copy of LPS in their initial Course Package and will be encouraged to join as individual members. This will be re-inforced by an annual Day School.

Birkbeck College continued to be a major source of subscription income, but on a reduced scale as it had halved the number of courses for which it takes out Society membership. The number of ex-Birkbeck students continuing as individual members had been very disappointing.

In an attempt to increase both awareness of LPSS and the Society’s membership, Dennis Mills had spearheaded a project to drum up further membership in Academic Departments. A letter signed jointly by Dennis Mills, Kevin Schurer (LPS) and David Cooke would be going out shortly to senior staff in Universities, asking them to encourage their students to join.

Costs and Subscriptions

LPSS numbers inevitably takes one on to costs and subscriptions. Here matters become more complex as we have to liaise with LPS. All members receive two copies of LPS each year and Journal costs form a significant element of our total expenditure. The cost of each issue depends on the size of the overall print run. If numbers fall, the unit cost goes up.

Changes in LPS prices and LPSS subscriptions cannot be made overnight and a system has evolved which allows LPS and LPSS to move in step. The Committee has looked at the implications and proposed to raise subscriptions from 1 April 1994. The new rates would be £12.00 for ordinary members, £10.00 for student members and £15.00 for overseas members (outside the EC). All members will be sent new Bankers Order Forms and asked to sign Covenants. All this takes time to achieve. Subscriptions went up from £8.00 to £10.00 in April 1991, but we are still receiving Bankers Order payments at £8.00 and even some still at £6.00.
Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer produced copies of the Accounts for the latest Financial Year, making the point that it had only just finished and that they had not yet been audited. Copies of the Audited Accounts would go out with Newsletter 12. While there had been a modest surplus for the year, she pointed out that the cost of 2 issues of the Journal represented some 95 per cent of the current balance and that this was why she had recommended very strongly to her Committee colleagues that subscriptions be increased to provide a safe buffer against rising costs.

The meeting took note of the financial position and thanked Miss Hodges for her hard work. They also expressed gratitude to Dr Grace Briggs for her work as Hon. Auditor. The Secretary announced that, as it had not been possible to present audited accounts, these would be taken at an Extraordinary General Meeting to be held at the next Day Conference. (Held in Manchester, see report below).

Conference Secretary's Report

Dennis Mills reported on the Bradford Conference, held in November 1992, and gave outline details of the Society's comprehensive plans for the next two years.

Amendments to the Society's Constitution

Two amendments had been proposed: one to increase the size of the Committee from ten to twelve, as the national spread of membership had made it hard to achieve a quorum in the past; and the other, to give the Committee the power to co-opt members between General Meetings. This was to resolve an anomaly in the Constitution. Both proposals were agreed unanimously.

Election of Committee

The Committee had nominated Dr Eilidh Garrett of the Cambridge Group to fill the vacancy created by Paul Hair's resignation. All other members of the committee had expressed a willingness to continue. A single, composite motion, proposing the election/re-election of the following members of the Committee (Cooke, Franklin, Garrett, Gatley, Hodges, Mills, Reed, Steel) was approved unanimously. There were also two members of the Committee nominated by LPS. These posts were held by Tom Arkell and May Pickles.

The change to the Constitution meant that there were two further vacancies on the Committee. It had not been possible to put any names forward in time for this meeting. The Committee would therefore be co-opting two members, under its new powers granted at Item 8B. One of these was likely to be Professor Michael Drake, well known to ex-students of D301 (this has since been done and Professor Drake is now Chairman).
Local Population History Book Club

Peter Franklin reported that turnover for 1992/93 had been some £1,800, slightly down on that for 1991/92. Unlike previous years, the greater part of the year’s business had come from postal trade and not at Conferences. He now had a list of around 100 titles. The Trustees had appointed an Auditor, and details of the audited accounts would be given in the Newsletter. The first repayment of £150 from the Book Club to the Society had been made. The Book Club Trustees would be considering the second tranche at their forthcoming meeting.

Conference Report – Manchester, 11 September 1993

Despite all the old tales, the sun shone as some 70 seekers after knowledge assembled at the All Saints Building of Manchester Metropolitan University, to the south of the city centre, for a conference jointly sponsored by the Manchester and Lancashire Family History Society and LPSS.

The theme for the day was ‘Exploring Parish Registers’, and it soon became apparent that every word in the title was to be used. Dr Bernard Diaz of the University of Liverpool spoke about Nominal Data, contrasting the conventional approaches that many of us use with some new techniques being investigated by his students. As he said, every event affecting an individual can be considered in three dimensions, the classic X and Y co-ordinates providing the geographical location, with Z fixing the event in time. He went on to outline the way in which events could be visualised as ‘Stars’, to be visited or seen from Starship Enterprise!

Dr John Perkins then brought us back to earth with a description of the work that had been done, and was still being done, by the Lancashire Parish Register Society. He illustrated this with examples of the anomalies found when transcribing entries and when comparing the texts of the Parish Registers and the Bishops’ or Ecclesiastical Transcripts. There is a vast amount of work still to be done – enough to keep the Society busy for the next century – and a strong case exists for cross-checking and re-validating much of the work that has already been done.

After an excellent lunch provided by the University’s catering staff, Mrs Marnie Mason spoke about the effect of the 1645 plague on Manchester, where some 15 per cent of the population had died over a 10 month period. She had been able to use both the Parish Registers and the Protestation Returns to plot the distribution of the disease within the parish and to see the impact that it had made on families and neighbourhoods. While deaths had been concentrated in the urban centres of Manchester and Salford, the whole area had been affected as trade with Manchester came to a standstill while the epidemic lasted.

After the tea break, when LPSS members had attended a brief Extraordinary General meeting to approve the 1992/3 accounts, two workshops were held. Mrs Mason used her workshop to look at individual cases in more detail than had been possible during her talk, while Dr Diaz showed how computer
programs could be used to interpret Parish Registers. He explained 'parsing' techniques and the way in which a set of rules could be drawn up to handle a wide range of options. He had to admit, however, that it would be some time before acceptable results could be obtained from scanning printed transcripts, let alone original registers.

The sun was still shining when people left for home, well-fed, wiser but probably poorer (as both Societies' book shops had been busy throughout the day). It had been a good day with much thought-provoking talk and discussion for all flavours of historian!

Forthcoming conferences and day schools

Saturday, November 6, 1993
LONDON day school, hosts will be the University of London Extra-Mural Society for Genealogy and History of the Family and the Birkbeck College Centre for Extra-Mural Studies, 32 Tavistock Square WC1. Theme: Migration and Immigration. Fee: £20, and £10 for Birkbeck concessions. (The society's programme secretary is Dr John Reed, Willow Tree Ho, Westleigh Drive, Bromley, BR1 2PN. Telephone 081 467 1452).

Saturday, April 16, 1994
STOKE, day school, at Stoke Town Hall (note new venue). Theme: Family and community in Staffs and Cheshire. (Organiser: Dr David Gatley, 114 Thornton Rd, Shelton, Stoke-on-Trent, ST4 2BD. Telephone 0782 415340).

Saturday, June 11, 1994
LONDON day school, at the Institute of Historical Research, Senate House, University of London. The British Local History Room has been booked to enable those attending to browse in this important library, which has a collection of VCH volumes, many county directories and poll books, etc. Theme: What is community history?: concepts, sources, problems, potentialities, for the special benefit of Open University students on the new DA301 course. Studying family and community history, 1800-1970. (Chair: Prof. Ruth Finnegan). All members welcome. (Organiser: Dr Dennis Mills, 17 Rectory Lane, Branston, Lincoln, LN4 1NA. Telephone 0522 791764).

July 8-10, 1994
BATH week-end conference, at Bath College of Higher Education. Note the changed date and venue. This will include the AGM. Theme: Learning from each other: Family History, Population and One-Name Studies. Joint conference with the Guild of One-Name Studies. (Organiser: Don J. Steel, 'Brooking', Jarvis Lane, East Brent, Highbridge, Somerset. Telephone 0278 760535).

Saturday, September 17, 1994
BIRMINGHAM day school, at the School of Continuing Education, University of Birmingham. Theme: The Poor Law. Dr John Aitken of the School will run the day school jointly with R.G. (Bob) Field, 45 Moreland Rd, Droitwich, WR9 8RN. Telephone 0905 773420.
1994-5: at least one event to be run in conjunction with the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure on their project concerning the 1891-1921 census enumerators’ books. (Organiser: Dr Eilidh Garrett, at the Group’s address, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge, CB2 1QA. Telephone 0223 333180).

Saturday, March 25, 1995
OXFORD day school, at the Department of Continuing Education, Rewley House, Wellington Square, Oxford. Theme: Family and household: a reappraisal. (Organiser: Miss M. Hodges, 3 Trinity St, St Ebbe’s, Oxford, OX1 1TN. Telephone 0865 244176).

YORKSHIRE week-end conference in the second half of 1995. Theme: Possibly, Farming, farmers and related trades. (Organiser: Sir David Cooke Bt, 8 Royal Crescent, Harrogate, HG2 8AB. Telephone 0423 560429).

Dennis Mills, Conference Secretary.
A NEW Local Population Studies Supplement

SURVEYING THE PEOPLE
The interpretation and use of document sources for the study of population in the later seventeenth century

edited by
K. Schürer and T. Arkell

This new book provides a commentary on four key sources for the investigation of population and society in the later seventeenth century — namely the Hearth taxes, the poll taxes, the Marriage Duty Act assessments and the Compton Census. The book provides introductory sections giving details of the legal and administrative framework of these important sources, discussing also the problems associated with their interpretation and use. Subsequent chapters, twelve in total, provide illustration of the uses to which the documents can be put, and the research issues which may be addressed.

This volume, published in collaboration with the Leopard's Head Press, Oxford, with support of the Marc Fitch Fund, can be obtained at the cost of £10 (plus £1 p&p) from Mrs M. Ballington, Local Population Studies, Tawney House, Matlock, Derbyshire DE4 3BT.
LOCAL HISTORY AND SOCIETAL HISTORY

Charles Phythian-Adams

Professor Charles Phythian-Adams was a pupil and, for a short time subsequently in the Department of English Local History at the University of Leicester, a colleague of the late W.G. Hoskins. He has been head of that Department for the last decade.

Editors' Note – The text of this article is that of a lecture delivered to an LPSS day conference held at Madingley Hall, Cambridge, and we are grateful to Professor Phythian-Adams for giving us permission to reproduce it in the pages of LPS. The text, which is reproduced as delivered, introduces a number of interesting issues concerning the study of local history, and these in turn have important implications for the examination of local populations. It is our intention to comment on some of the ideas raised in this article in the next issue of LPS.

Insofar as the two approaches are even separable, both English Local History and the historical study of local populations have long shared a pre-occupation with 'place': place as a given entity, an observable starting point; place as a manageable unit of analysis; place as a concentrated source of desirable evidence; place as site for a measurable population or a 'community' of people, and therefore as a perceptible social reality, the investigation of which requires no further justification; and, above all, place as inevitably something central: a point from which a social area may be measured and distance decay lovingly calculated; or, in the case of urban place, a hub around which an economic hinterland may revolve, or towards which migrants are drawn centripetally. More than that, a good deal of the literature, whether locally, regionally or nationally inspired, still seems implicitly to adopt a view of society as essentially an aggregation of inhabited places in which, for analytical purposes, like-places may be categorized and grouped economically, or the unlike ranked hierarchically upwards from the humble farmstead through all sorts and conditions of rural and urban settlement to the capital itself. Ultimately such a portrait is effectively the England of Christaller: England as layer upon layer of ever-widening hexagons; England as a geometrical model. Beautiful it may be, but such an England bears little relation to the people who constitute a society or to the culture which informs it.

Nevertheless, if it has to be admitted that most of us working in local historical fields have in some sense contributed to such tacit assumptions (simply because – perhaps subconsciously – we have often allowed our basic units of analysis to determine also our constructions of wider conceptual frameworks), it has also to be said that those who claim to write the social history of this country or a region of it are equally distortive in their approach. In their case, the central organizing principle tends to be what they call 'social structure', a term which is usually restricted to describe degrees of social stratification as these may be variously defined according to rank, class, status, wealth, power, tenure and so on. From there it is but a short step to such related matters as inheritance or social mobility on the one hand, or, on the other, social control, order and

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disorder, social deviance and the social customs and problems of both privileged and under-privileged. In this concentration on society as essentially a structure of social self-discipline glued together by relations of superiority and inferiority, and with, as a consequence, its own in-built system of rewards and penalties, such concerns of the local historian and the local demographer as ‘the family’ or ‘the community’ – whether rural, urban or even ‘gentle’ at the level of the county – may be, and are, fitted easily enough. Yet, of course, and as with ‘class’, these matters too are mostly assimilated only at theoretical levels which are generalized up to that of the nation as a whole. In much social history, reference may be made both to settlement on the ground and to the variety of experience accorded to distinct pays; even a sense of localism may be emphasized en passant; but the conceptual leap that then is usually made from the evidence for individual people variously living and inter-relating on terra firma to a national level of collective abstraction, is sufficiently breath-taking as to demand notice.

Such formulations of English society, indeed, are reminiscent of the attempts made earlier this century to reconstruct ‘the medieval manor’ or ‘the village community’ by integrating individual fragments of evidence, from all over the country and from more than one century, in order to contrive a single imaginative construct of theoretically nationwide applicability. Modern historians of English society at different periods similarly tend to disregard the importance of regional variation – largely because we local and regional historians have not furnished sufficiently numerous case studies – but in doing so, implicitly rather than explicitly, the social historians themselves impose a homogeneous view of society as a total entity which is demonstrably spurious. Indeed it is arguable that many current social historians do not analyse society as such at all, but rather a body of broadly shared social conventions (both formal and informal), social expectations, and even societal images. Those precise concerns, however, I would urge, are more accurately to be associated with the ever-evolving general principles of social organization. It is on these that those actually living on the ground in different areas of the country variously draw and then interpret in their own localized manner. There may not therefore be one national ‘society’, but there surely can be a nation composed of many identifiable but interlinked societies. In other words, there may exist regionalized social systems that, over significant stretches of time in pre-modern periods at least, involve personal interactions more within broadly recognizable territories than between such territories.

It is the reconstruction, measurement and understanding of such systems and their inter-connectedness in terms of actual people living on the ground in the past – as opposed to nationally generalized sets of conventions – that I would describe as ‘societal’ history in deliberate contrast to the more thematic concerns of ‘social’ history. In what now follows then it will be necessary to ignore the very interesting conceptual problems that are posed by the constant interaction between change in real societies and the normative absorption of such to the national level of what I am calling ‘the social organization’. All that there is space for, is to summarize, as opposed to argue, a possible new framework of understanding with which some of us at the University of Leicester Department of English Local History have been concerned over the last decade or so, more
details of which are available at greater length in a collective volume of essays entitled, Societies, cultures and kinship 1580-1850: cultural provinces and English Local History, published by the Leicester University Press.¹ In this approach we are concerned with the interaction of a complex of variables: time – both short-term and very long-term; cultural contexts; social territories; and kinship (and other) interconnections as these find expression in residential patterns. At its most elementary, the goal is to identify the ways in which and why, at different spatial levels, certain relatively proximate communities usually tend to be more closely linked to others within a determinable grouping than to communities in other groupings not all that far away. The results of this work are very suggestive indeed. At the very least I am hoping, then, that given the shortage of helpers at Leicester – not least because of the ever widening concerns of the department – we may be able to convince others similarly to seek out and to investigate such problems for themselves in their own home-territories and, having done so, to be so kind as to communicate their results to us. What is needed above all, are strategically located case-studies from every region of the country for different periods.

First, however, it is necessary to outline – and in the space available, all too simplistically – how one might possibly identify what are now beginning to look to us like the most relevant levels of cultural and societal reality in the past.

If, for example, national space is reasonably to be characterized not by a crude aggregation of places but by a broadly stable and definable territory, by a shared culture, and by a body of people who regard themselves as natives, then similarly determinable qualities should also influence the ways in which local historians might seek to delimit their spatial sub-divisions of England. It is clearly the case, for example, that at no time will a regional population ever be evenly distributed across a territory, nor equally will that population be disposed without some degree of differentiation from its neighbours. In all regions of England the denser concentrations of people are separated from each other by landscapes of sparser settlement, and the wider you draw your map of this the clearer it becomes that, in terms of both nucleated rural settlements and towns, the most heavily populated areas are invariably the major river valleys. At the inland perimeters of entire drainage systems the watershed zones tend to be pastoral pays of woodland, wold or fell, and to be late and sparsely settled or, in mountainous areas, not inhabited at all. At the outermost limits there is the barrier of the sea. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the areas of most major drainage systems once seem to have been broadly reflected also in the extents of early territories – either large territories or groups of smaller territories – with zones of intercommoning between each such neighbouring territory along the watershed divisions; though in other cases, the more aggressive entities pushed over their watershed limits and drew their frontiers along the next river on the other side. Subsequently, as a result of deliberate but separate administrative reorganizations at identifiably different dates, such territories in much of the country north of the Thames were themselves broadly replaced in turn by groups of component counties which, consequently, may still be seen to fit quite neatly into their physical matrices. True there is rarely ever an absolutely precise coincidence of geography with administrative
convenience, but such differences are never very serious. The areas of overlap indeed – and especially when occasionally, they are extensive – are, as we shall see, themselves of absorbing interest, because of what they reveal of the crucial cultural mechanisms inter-connecting populations in either side of watershed divisions. Overall, the result is, however, that such a group of counties, like Cambridgeshire, Huntingdonshire, Bedfordshire and Northamptonshire for example, clearly has much more in common internally than it does with Essex, Hertfordshire and others in the Thames valley on the one hand, or even with the bulk of East Anglia on the other.

Internally, such broad provincial settings have to be regarded as of profound cultural significance. Both the ethnic histories of their inhabitants and the general developments of their dialects tend to vary one from another. For each one of them shares an ‘aspect’ that is unique to itself; each is uniquely vulnerable to particularized external influences or settlement from the outside. Inland, either they will look ‘inwards’ towards and then along the line of a major navigable river like the Trent, the Severn or the Thames; or at the national margins, like East Anglia or the north-east for example, they will look ‘outwards’ eventually via parallel river lines from a shared coastline towards one or more of the neighbouring foreign cultures (whether British or Continental) with which they have alternately frequent maritime links and intermittent hostile international relations. Given in addition that towns – or certainly the more important of them – hug the river valleys, the identification of regional urban hierarchies and networks with such settings tends to be highly specific, so it is equally apparent that for centuries the commerce in both goods and ideas was to a large degree similarly focused within such contexts. Until the conquest of the watersheds (in some instances through substantial urban colonization or rural squatter settlement at different periods of demographic expansion, or by new modes of communication), it is arguable that the fourteen several groupings of counties here defined, may be seen to have comprised what will now be termed the basic ‘cultural provinces’ of England. It is because of this cultural dimension, indeed, that the outer boundaries encircling each have been taken to be those of the pre-1974 counties rather than the physical lines of the watersheds (see Figures 1-4).

It is within such cultural sub-divisions of the country then that we might locate the largely separate local social systems which are here being called ‘societies’. With the possible exception of the Solway Plain region (the old county of Cumberland plus what was northern Westmorland), a cultural province is never co-terminous with the territory of a single society insofar as the latter may be delimited with any pretense to precision. Once again, however, since the major drainage basins themselves subdivide into the areas described by each of their component tributary systems, and since in so many cases one or occasionally two such systems tend to equate generally with the areal extent of each immediately encompassing shire, it does become possible in most regions, I believe, to talk broadly of ‘shire societies’.2 That, however, should never stop us recognizing that, in some instances, a very early form of shire like Hallamshire may continue to interrupt a later county area, and in doing so retain its own sense of independence.
Figure 2  Northern 'cultural provinces'

- - - - - - watersheds of major drainage systems
- - pre-1974 county boundaries
- - overlap zones between - - - - and - - - -
- - boundaries of cultural provinces (by county groups)
- - - - - - - - major navigable rivers

(below the map)
Figure 3 Western 'cultural provinces'
In most counties, nevertheless, there will be a readily identifiable heartland area (sometimes even two such areas) of above-average population density distributed across a spectrum of rural settlements and focusing eventually on one or even two successful county towns. ‘Downstream’ along the axis of the major river, towards the core of the environing province, as it were, or along the major road lines communicating with other nearby ‘provinces’ or with the capital, such localized allegiances are likely to merge with wider concerns. ‘Upstream’, local mores will more probably exert themselves (the sturdy cultural independence of the pastoral areas being often quoted in such connections). Whatever the case, it now seems to be widely accepted that, to judge from the surname evidence, certain regionally identifiable family stocks perdured and proliferated over the generations within the broad confines of most shires, or not far beyond, simply because, as many studies of pre-modern England show, the great majority of people moved only short distances when they migrated, while some of those others who moved further away, say to the capital, may well have returned to their county of origin at some later stage of the life-cycle. One does not have to believe that every shire society was demarcated abruptly by a line coincidental with the continuous boundary of the county to accept, moreover, that the county was also either, firstly, the named area with which most people were associated in the past; or secondly, as territory that its male inhabitants were expected to defend or to represent militarily; or thirdly, an area of jurisdiction, taxation and administration in many more locally constraining ways than is the case today; or, finally, a tract of England which to a significant degree could boast its own customs, history, maps, politics, newspaper circulation, and hence a proven identity of its own.

The few significant spatial exceptions to the broad equivalence of shire and society — Wiltshire, Warwickshire, Westmorland, Suffolk, Gloucestershire, Lincolnshire and Yorkshire (though in the last two cases their historic subdivisions broadly equate with shires elsewhere) — in fact tend to support the general rule, since what partitions all of those named is the exceptional local configuration of their historic boundaries in defiance of the underlying watershed pattern. East Anglian counties stretch towards the Fens for obvious agrarian reasons; Wiltshire (Wessex) and Gloucestershire (the Hwicce) reach towards the Thames; while the Scandinavian partition of Mercia accounts for the artificial structure of Warwickshire. In the great majority of shires, however, there are clearly-identifiable, well-populated heartlands which, on most sides, fade as it were demographically at their margins, to varying degrees of coincidence with the broad lines of their county boundaries.

It must be emphasized here that it is not being suggested that there were never links across such boundaries. Current work, indeed, suggests that, in particular, when for long stretches county boundaries follow the lines of significant rivers — especially those, like the Tees, the Welland and the Suffolk Stour, which divide specific cultural provinces one from another — the inhabitants of both sides of each immediate valley in question will conjoin, to comprise an introverted form of frontier society to some degree independent, whether administratively, economically or culturally, of the two parent shire societies concerned in each case, and will focus in, per contra, on their own mini-capitals — one or more solid market towns. At the level of national peripheries, of
course, the societal significance of such valley arrangements will be that much more extreme: one need only recall for earlier centuries in particular the special circumstances of the Tweed or the Lyddel towards Scotland on the one hand, or the valley of the Wye below Monmouth on the other.

Exceptional as these considerations may be, however, they do serve to highlight the crucial role of towns and the manner in which these focus both society and culture. Yet what is becoming increasingly clear is that, while urban centrality in local social systems and thus also in the heartlands of shire societies is the one element of the Christaller view that seems to work, the town, per se, can no longer usefully be regarded simply in terms of the inhabitants of a bounded place. As will be explained further below, the spatial components of local societies, like their parent ‘provincial cultures’ as sub-divisions of the national territory, somewhat resemble the plates of earth tectonics; that is, areas superficially linked but, below the surface, essentially divided. At the level of local societies, it seems to be becoming apparent that there are basically two quite differently structured elements, the one urban and centralized, the other rural and dispersed. In the case of urban society, however, we need first to disentangle the economic from the societal. The centrality in question has nothing to do with the extent of a rural hinterland - as a marketing area or as an undifferentiated field from which migrants may be drawn. It has to do quite specifically with the distribution of those people who most commonly interact with one another on a regular basis and largely within the terms of the local urban conventions in question. In other words, the central urban place will be linked - according to its importance - to a range of proximate rural places (usually biased towards ‘urban’ economic activities) in its immediate shadow and ‘from which’, as I put it in 1986, it will draw ‘most heavily in terms of marriage partners, kinship connections, and its regular labour force’. That means, also, that certain nearby rural places - perhaps largely those away from the major routes of communication to the town - will therefore not be so connected.

Thus defined, the historical existence of urban societies that transcend the technical limits of ‘the town’ can hardly be gainsaid. The earliest documentation for them is at least as old as Domesday book from which Professor Christopher Dyer has so ingeniously disentangled settlements of rurally adjacent dependant cottagers in urban contexts. Much of the traceable medieval history of suburbanization, moreover, represents, as later, the urban absorption of already partially urbanized rural settlements in the town’s immediate vicinity. If such settlements tended originally to be no more than hamlets, in later urbanizing periods, of course, entire villages and rural parishes would be engulfed. One could say, indeed, that in times of urban expansion, today’s urban society will become eventually tomorrow’s central town.

A view of urban society as comprising a constellation of personally interdependent rural and urban sub-communities liberates us at once not only from the conventional and often sterile preoccupation with ‘the’ town, but also from such simplistic views which hold, or at least imply, both that ‘place’ is exactly co-terminous with ‘community’, and that ‘society’ is constituted by undifferentiated aggregations of such places/communities. On the contrary,
and at a much more realistic level, what gives society continuity, stability and its traditions are variously enduring personal linkages or relationships. Indeed, one should go further and emphasize that 'society' and 'community' represent quite different functions of time. Society is essentially a product of inter-generational process and its basic unit is therefore the lineage; whereas 'community' is largely a product of intra-generational process and its basic unit is the family or even no more than a stage in the domestic cycle of its members. Lineage finds spatial expression across many communities and often within a broadly definable region: family exists where it is at the time. Society and community therefore mesh where lineage and place coincide, where certain families – usually a minority – are stable over time and inter-marry with similar stable families in the same place or in the same immediate locality, thus contriving what Marilyn Strathern has described at community level as 'kinship at the core'.

'Around' such families, as it were, roam offspring and other relatives who 'carry' their kinship connections with them, through different communities, over lesser or further geographical distances from their surviving lineage cores.

The degree to which the local towns and cities exerted sufficient attractive powers as to draw such lineage representatives further into the heartlands of either local societies or the cultural province itself, as opposed to losing them altogether to local societies in other provinces, is still a matter of uncertainty. There must be, however, a presumption that those lineages that are 'circulated' over long periods of time through the local urban societies and back again into rural contexts may be seen not only as the local cultural custodians but also as standard-bearers, ever refreshing the evolving nature of the local culture as it is constantly re-interpreted in the towns: those locations most susceptible to 'foreign' ideas and influences.

Now I have deliberately dwelt on society as a matter of both process and space under this urban heading, because in societal terms, towns, or rather urban societies, must be regarded as central in two quite separate senses. The town itself will be the centre of its own urban society at any one time; but, to different degrees according to its ranking, the urban society in its turn will clearly also be a cultural pivot both in a much wider spatial sense and also over time. In other words, the urban element in a local society operates dynamically in terms of both space and time, whereas the rural platelets in this reconstruction of societal tectonics, seem to behave rather differently.

Rural areas may sometimes boast what Dr Mary Carter describes as mini-centres – minor trading nodes situated on communication axes – but their non-agricultural activities tend to be so minor that these cannot be regarded as central in the same sense as a town. Such places surely were frequently leap-frogsed whether for shopping purposes, courtship or betterment-migration. In the countryside, therefore, the differentiation between communities does not seem to be so significant. What is apparent, however, both from work done by Dr Anne Mitson on south Nottinghamshire in the late sixteenth- and seventeenth centuries, and by Dr Mary Carter herself on Huntingdonshire in the late seventeenth- and early eighteenth centuries, is that spatially-definable groups of adjacent rural places, often within the same pays, might be internally
linked together – the basic cement again being kinship. Dr Mitson’s careful work – based on the integration of family reconstructions from eleven nearby parishes – in particular, demonstrates how certain families might be common in some numbers within quite small rural neighbourhoods of dynastic families, families that both inter-married and furnished those who typically comprised the parochial office-holding elites of the area. 7 Patterns of indebtedness in Dr Mitson’s Nottinghamshire and concentrated land-holding patterns in Dr Carter’s pioneering analysis of Huntingdonshire both represent but further dimensions of the same phenomenon.

It is the residually enduring nature of such family networks, however, that is so pronounced and with it their continuing dominance of neighbouring community cores over the decades. These spatial networks in their turn thus demarcate definable areas that are transcended only by a tiny minority of such geographically ramifying local lineages. Below that superior level, Dr Mitson is able to demonstrate the edges of three neighbourhoods within her small area: two rural units (each of which may have stretched further beyond the limits of her study area) and one partial entity comprising the parishes of Radford and Lenton which clearly represented the westerly rural outskirts of an urban society centred on next-door Nottingham, in much the same way as did the so-called ‘urban villages’ identified by Dr Carter in the immediate vicinity of St. Ives. Not only then is an urban society to be demarcated from a rural one, but even at close quarters, and even in the heartlands of two separate local societies, "rural" too may be distinguished from "rural" despite the absence of insurmountable physical barriers to impede easy social intercourse between adjacent neighbourhoods. In both urban and rural cases, therefore, it seems to be the spatially definable neighbourhood that mediates between ‘community’ and ‘society’.

It follows, therefore, that where one neighbourhood is situated in relation to the local social system as a whole is bound to be a matter of some significance. In particular, away from the main lines of communication (whether road or water) along which societal structures are likely to be at their most changeable, one would reasonably expect there to be consistently marked contrasts between arrangements in heartland locations as opposed to those at the periphery and especially where the latter are characterized by pays of dispersed settlement. If dynastic neighbourhoods have edges of sorts, what about the nature of the limits both of local societies per se and also of those where by definition – at the watershed margins – the edges of both local societies and cultural provinces coincide?

In the two heartlands that have now been studied so microscopically the answers are not unanimous. In the case of the Trent, the provincial axis at this point between Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, Dr Mitson’s rural neighbourhoods in Nottinghamshire may have overlapped the county boundary into Derbyshire on the western side of her sample area to some as yet-unknown distance. By contrast, despite the axial line of the Great Ouse, Dr Carter finds a very definite societal barrier between Huntingdonshire and Cambridgeshire towards the fens. Obviously this is an important and challenging field of enquiry, and given the varying dispositions of kinship
neighbourhoods, it may well be that a zig-zag pattern determining the edges of adjacent localized networks, but cutting backwards and forwards across the formal boundary between two societies, is what we might most realistically expect from future investigation. At the moment we are obviously casting our analytical nets over areas that are as yet far-too-spatially restricted.

Rather different problems attend attempts to characterise the physical limits of what simultaneously may broadly be the edge of both a local society and a cultural province. In this case there are two alternative landscape contexts which need to be distinguished. The more straightforward is that where the outer limit of a group of counties roughly coincides with the watershed zone itself—in other words, usually along relatively higher ground than that occupied by the heartlands of the local societies on either side. Divisions of this kind are marked most commonly by strikingly empty landscapes of fell or wold in which you can almost see societal allegiances visibly petering out towards the dividing boundary-line. Such a context—though rather more subtly—characterizes the boundary between the Trent drainage basin and that of the Severn/Avon where Leicestershire bounds with Warwickshire. It was there that, some years ago, a group of us first identified the remarkable failure of nineteenth-century Leicestershire’s people to marry beyond their immediate kinship neighbourhood into the adjacent local society of Warwickshire. An alternative scenario is involved, however, when, as we have seen, the cultural limit of a group of counties or a province overlaps the watershed. In many such cases the gap between the lip of the drainage basin and the line of cultural boundary is dominated by an entire valley or vale or even the upper reaches of a minor drainage system running parallel to the watershed. In their aspects such valleys look towards the heartlands of their parent societies eventually in ways that the river-frontier valleys do not, but for all that they represent some of the most secret inland recesses of England and as such, usually boast their own market-town centres and detectable cultural lives of their own. Examples of such are innumerable and range from the valley of the south Tyne above Alston on the edge of Cumbria, through the valley of the Kennet above Hungerford, to such vales as those of Malmesbury and Taunton Dene. In minor variations of this type, the county boundary may clip across the valley as does the division between Yorkshire and Derbyshire across the upper valley of the Sheaf, or that between Surrey and Kent across the valley of the Eden. In the latter area, indeed, another fascinating study done at Leicester by Dr Evelyn Lord has shown that, in the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth centuries, kinship networks seem to have accommodated themselves more to the east/west lines of the North Downs, of the Greensand ridge and of the valley of the Eden, than to the obstacle posed by the watershed rim of the Thames basin and hence contact southward with Sussex. The whole of this vast Wealden area, of course, epitomises the theme of simultaneous division between societies and cultures, and serves to emphasize how only recently is it even appropriate to speak of the ‘South-east’ as some kind of broadly unified entity. For centuries before, the wide zone of the Weald delimited virtually separate societies respectively to the north, east and south of it. One might add that a similar zone, containing such diagnostic place-names as Upper Weald near Stoney Stratford and a noticeable sparsity of settlement, also once characterised the watershed landscape between the Thames drainage basin and
that of the Ouse, where the cultural limits of the Thames culture as defined by the northern boundary of Buckinghamshire overlap physically into the inland territory of the Wash basin.

Such cultural and societal limits must be regarded as very real: even today, one has to be insensitive to a degree not to notice the accumulating visible signs of a new cultural and physical environment as you move across the boundary between two such great cultural sub-divisions of England. It is this, then that also lends particular significance to one last category of town and its urban society. For around the inland perimeter of every cultural province there are to be found a select number of usually quite modest market centres – often originally in quite isolated situations but on one of the major lines of communication – which often discovered their economic rationale probably relatively late in the period of medieval urban expansion. Such transitional places, the cultural portals of the provinces, would include Royston, Saffron Walden and Daventry on the edge of the Ouse basin, and elsewhere Hitchin, Haltwhistle, Newcastle-under-Lyne, Lutterworth and Alton. Only a very few, indeed, as in the cases of Coventry in the first place, and then later, on the other side of the same watershed, Birmingham, grew to such sizes that they may be said eventually to have united into one wider economic system the formerly distinct regional urban networks that had characterised two neighbouring cultural provinces: in these two cases, those of the Trent on the one hand and of the Severn/Avon basin, on the other. The point that needs emphasizing here, however, is not the economic significance of the evolution of supra-regional economic systems, but the cultural implications. The emergence of new provincial capitals, influencing, as it were, new super-provinces, creates new patterns of migratory flows, by and large in addition to the possible traditional patterns that have been suggested. But if so, do such shifts of focus change or help, perhaps, to entrench previous societal allegiances and identities?

It is being argued, then, that within provincially-extensive economic and cultural contexts there existed localized societies with their own cultural identities, societal structures, and processes that were focused to a point where we may reasonably describe them as comprising local social systems. It is not being denied that such systems interlocked with one another in personal terms (they would hardly have been but the local parts of a national whole if they had been that discrete), nor, equally, is it being asserted that province never merged into province via broadly definable intermediate zones. Finally, it is certainly not overlooked that England had a capital which drew into its own special form of urban society the more mobile representatives of the provinces in a whole range of capacities; and which, conversely, also exerted its own influences outwards along the major arterial roads of the country or up the navigable rivers of the provinces, and therefore, perhaps especially, through the inland river ports situated where these two modes of communication intersected.

In the space available, of course, there has been no room either to build above the level of what seem to have been widely experienced spatial expressions of kinship and culture and then towards other elements in the social structure,
when these last, at any period, are seen more properly as to do with the relational structures of inter-personal behaviour according to local conventions, rather than as a national system of hierarchy. What has been sought here, then, has been to establish no more than a basis for an alternative way of analyzing society so that closer respect might now be paid to geographical and cultural variation. Is it not obvious, for example, that societies and cultures facing towards a British-dominated Irish Sea will inevitably differ fundamentally from those looking out towards the Low Countries?

Only once we have re-defined our units of analysis does it become possible to think relationally about societal mechanisms and process, or to identify in such contexts, the functions of certain forms of centre or, for example, of different types of valley society. Above all, only then may we begin to think comparatively and systematically about the manner in which different societies or different cultures precisely behave, and how rapidly, in response to inexorable pressures for change. For while it has been possible here to emphasize the relevance of space, culture and process, what has also had to be left to one side – except by passing implication – is the nature of long-term change at the level of residential form. What has been stressed by contrast, and deliberately, is the necessity for local historians of society to take long views of their subject, to recognize that society is not to be understood simply in terms of typical historical periodization.

Societal history then is not social history as it is currently practised. Unlike the essentially short-term thematic concerns of social history, societal history has a direct and immediate resonance for every citizen who wishes to situate himself or herself in time and space today, because it relates to recognizable workaday contexts that are narrower than the elusive notion of England or Britain as a national whole, but wider than that of a single place. As such, societal history is primarily the proper concern of all those who regard themselves as students either of English Local History or of local demography. It seems to me, indeed, that we are now all on the edge of very exciting analytical possibilities to which both the specialist and the layman should be able to contribute – whether from a humanistic or a scientific point of view. There are societal concepts to be sophisticated, methodologies to be honed, and innumerable measurements to be taken. The ultimate goal is nothing less than a properly-grounded understanding of the rich geographical and cultural diversity of the 'English' as an ever-evolving people. In striving – however imperfectly – towards such an end, however, we shall have finally to relinquish our still-lingered obsession with the uniqueness and centrality of the single place.

NOTES

1. C. Phythian-Adams ed., Societies, cultures and kinship 1580-1850: cultural provinces and English local history, (Leicester, 1993), with contributions by Charles Phythian-Adams, Anne Mitson, Mary Carter and Evelyn Lord. Fuller references to all the matters discussed here will be found in that volume.
THE RECONSTITUTION OF NINETEENTH CENTURY RURAL COMMUNITIES

Claire Jarvis

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Introduction

The technique of family reconstitution is well known to local population historians. The first manual reconstitution of an English parish, that of Colyton in Devon, was undertaken thirty years ago, when it took nearly a year of full-time work to do one study. Despite the time-intensive nature of the work, several reconstitutions have followed, primarily because an astonishing amount of demographic information – ranging from age at marriage and fertility measures to infant and child mortality rates – can be extracted from such studies. More recently, attempts have been made at 'total reconstitution', whereby documents such as tax assessments and poor relief records are linked to the family reconstitution forms (FRFs). The demographic history of an area can then be placed in its more general social and economic context. A list of most of the reconstitutions which have been done to date can be found in a valuable recent book, which also gives an accessible introduction to the technique itself. Around a half of one per cent of all English parishes have now been reconstituted manually. With the advent of mainframe computer facilities, attempts have been made to computerise the family reconstitution process. Although family reconstitution will always be a relatively time-consuming technique which demands a considerable amount of informed historical judgement at every stage, reconstitutions of parishes with populations of up to 2,000 can now be done on personal computers in around a fortieth of the time that it would take to do them manually.

Reconstitution studies, however, are overwhelmingly concentrated in the period between 1538 and 1812. There are several good reasons for this. Most register transcriptions end in 1812; and some nineteenth century registers are still kept in the parish, rather than at the county record office. Registers are also known to deteriorate in quality from the mid-eighteenth century onwards, and become increasingly inadequate as records of births and deaths in the population. According to the Report from Commissioners of 1845, which allows totals of baptisms and burials from parish registers to be compared with totals of births and deaths from vital registers for 1839-40, only 74 per cent of births and 85 per cent of deaths were listed in the parish registers of England and Wales.

Finally, after Rose's Act of 1812, standard format register books were brought into use everywhere. Family relationships, of the form 'Margaret Taylor, aged 4, daughter of Stephen and Mary, buried 6 April, 1710' which are often found in
good early parish registers, are no longer given. After 1812, we would only be
told that Margaret Taylor, aged 4, had been buried. This means that it is no
longer possible to carry out a reconstitution in the conventional way, where a
burial may only be allocated to an infant or child if the entry in the burial
register records the relationship of the dead child to its parents, in the full
form. Linking rules are explained in an early article on family reconstitution by
E.A. Wrigley; this is still essential reading for anyone contemplating a
reconstitution. Fairly strict rules are applied to ensure that all reconstitution
studies are carried out in comparable fashion – if they are not, any differences
found in the results of different studies may well be spurious. This is,
incidentally, a powerful reason for preferring computerised to manual family
reconstitution, as it means that we can ensure that the same stringent linking
rules are applied to every link in every reconstitution; with manual
reconstructions it is very tempting for the individual researcher to choose the
links which appear to be the most likely, with the attendant possibility of
systematic bias.

It is unfortunate that the traditional source of the population historian appears
to become useless at the beginning of the century that contains the most
interesting and perplexing demographic event of all – the ‘demographic
transition’ – and is not replaced by any comparably useful source. Although
the nineteenth century saw the routine collection of demographic information
for the first time, vital registration is not available to the researcher in a useful
form.

The reconstitution of nineteenth century communities

It is far from certain, however, that all nineteenth century reconstructions are
doomed to failure. The nineteenth century hand is easy to read, and, even
where registers are not kept in the county record office, most vicars are happy
to allow bona fide researchers free access to registers still kept in the parish
church. It is also clear that parish registers do not uniformly deteriorate in
quality from the mid-eighteenth century: although only half of births were
recorded in parish registers in Wales, in the south-eastern counties of England
91 per cent were reported. P.R.A. Hinde’s study of the very small parish of
Berwick St James, and J. Robin’s study of Colyton indicate that studies can
continue into the nineteenth century.

This study aims to examine some nineteenth century registers carefully in order
to discover whether the source material is good enough, in theory, to support
reconstitution studies. If the registers are adequate, it is then necessary to find a
legitimate way of linking events on each FRF so that we get results which are
comparable with studies of earlier periods. If this is possible, we will be able to
extend our knowledge of ‘microdemography’ right through from the beginning
of the sixteenth century to the end of the nineteenth – and beyond. Three
parishes, which had already been the subject of reconstructions to 1799, were
chosen for this exploration: Blackmore, Willingale Spain and Willingale Doe.
The parishes are situated in central Essex, and had a joint population of nearly
1,500 in 1851.
Table 1  People in censuses 'missing' from the parish registers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of person missing</th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. children in families</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. all children missing</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. 'transitional' child</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. household head or spouse</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. stepchildren</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. only children</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. first child</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. lodger or servant</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total number claiming reconstitution parish as birthplace

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>742</td>
<td>656</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>614</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  'Transitional' child: child in the middle of a family in which earlier children were born in another parish and later children were all found in the reconstitution parish registers.

It is immediately clear that, in one respect at least, nineteenth century studies have an advantage over earlier studies. Typically, we rely on parish registers that are good by certain rather subjective standards. The registers of a prospective family reconstitution study are checked for gaps and underregistration, and the burial registers, especially, must be detailed over long periods of time. However, the nineteenth century census enumerators' books may be used to give a good objective idea of how comprehensive a nineteenth century parish register is. For example, Sarah Phillips, aged 58, who was living in Willingale Spain in 1851, and who gave Willingale Spain as her birthplace, should be found in the baptism register of 1793. Everyone claiming a reconstitution parish as a birthplace may be traced in this way; if large numbers are missing, the baptism registers are clearly defective. Seven hundred and sixty two people claimed one of the three Essex reconstitution parishes as a birthplace, and should therefore be found in the baptism registers. Of these, twenty were married women whose maiden names could not be found from the marriages registers, leaving a possible 742 people to trace.

The checking process is time consuming, but very useful. In the first search of the registers, 65 people (9 per cent) were not traced in the first search of the registers. This figure is high enough to cause concern, as it could lead to certain distortions in the reconstitutions, though it is lower than proportions found in some other studies; Wall, using this technique, initially found that 20 per cent of supposed Colytonians were missing from the baptism registers. Yasumoto, however, found that 8.7 per cent of baptisms were missing when the 1851 census for Methley, in the West Riding of Yorkshire, was compared with the baptism registers. These 65 people may be put into eight different categories, and are shown in the first column of Table 1.
In twelve cases in 1851 one or two children are missing from a family that is otherwise fully registered. The nine people in category two were probably nonconformists, as all the children from two whole families were missing from the parish registers. (The first two of the nine were children of a couple who had baptised several earlier children at a nearby Independent chapel but, as the nonconformist registers stop in 1837, there is no way of tracing later children baptised in the chapel.) The twenty-one people in categories 1 and 2 were probably genuinely missing from the parish registers. There is more doubt, however, about the remaining forty four people, and the numbering of the categories in Table 1 roughly represents declining confidence in the belief that the people in question were genuinely missing from the parish registers. In category 3 the ‘transitional’ child is a child in the middle of a family where the older children of the family were born in another parish, and the younger children were all found in the present parish registers. The reconstitution is therefore one of the non-migratory population only. Such children may be genuinely missing from these parish registers; but it is more likely that they were actually born and baptised in another parish shortly before the family moved to the reconstitution parish.

In eighteen cases in 1851 the household head or spouse of the household head claimed to have been born in the parish. Three of these cases were discounted immediately, as they changed their place of birth to another parish in the 1861 census. Some of the remaining fifteen may be genuinely missing, perhaps indicating special problems with the parish registers at the end of the eighteenth century. It is more likely, however, that they were born elsewhere and for convenience or genuine lack of knowledge, stated that they were born in the parish that they were living in at the time and had perhaps lived in for most of their lives.

By treating people in categories 1, 2, 3 and 4 as all genuinely missing from the parish registers, then, we are likely to overstate the problems of parochial non-registration, although there is no way of estimating by how much. People in the remaining four categories, however, are highly unlikely to be genuinely missing from the parish registers. Seven ‘missing’ people were stepchildren of the household head (that is, children of the wife from a previous marriage). In all of these cases the wife was not from the parish in question; neither could her previous marriage be traced in the marriage registers. It is likely that the children were born elsewhere, and were simply lumped in with children of the present marriage. In the same way, the four single children whose parents came from other parishes can also probably be discounted. Eight first children were missing from the parish registers; a little detective work reveals that all were born before their parents’ marriage and baptised in their mother’s name; they took the father’s name when their parents eventually married. An extreme example of this is found in the 1871 census. In 1861 a William Scriviner, household head, listed Eliza Oakley as his housekeeper, along with several children baptised as illegitimate children of Eliza Oakley. In 1871, however, Eliza was described as the wife of William and she and all of the children took the surname Scriviner.
The final category, lodgers and servants, comprise an exceptionally mobile section of the population, and may also be discounted.

If we assume that only the first four categories, comprising 41 people in 1851, are genuinely missing, the percentage of missing baptisms falls from 9 per cent to 6 per cent. Even this is likely to be an overstatement. If only categories 1 and 2 are treated as genuinely missing, the real figure lies in the regions of only 2 or 3 per cent. This is a remarkable and quite unexpected finding: following the received wisdom concerning nineteenth century parish registers, I had expected to find substantial proportions missing from the registers. With such a small proportion of baptisms genuinely missing, the likely effect on the results from a reconstitution study will be minimal; and, as we will see later, the bias from the very small numbers actually missing can be directly assessed. The same procedure can be used to check baptism registers for as long as enumerators' books are available and Table 1 also shows people missing from the registers up to 1881 (this study was undertaken before the 1891 books became available). Categories 1-4 remain stable at around 6 per cent in all four censuses, with the total proportion missing remaining at around 9 per cent, with a small decline in the 1881 census. There is clearly little reason to suppose that a nineteenth century reconstitution will suffer seriously from increasingly large numbers of people missing from the parish registers.

It was noted earlier that the format of nineteenth century registers means that the conventional way of making links is no longer possible. Either the rules have to be adapted, or reconstitutions cannot be extended beyond 1812. Although family relationships are not given in nineteenth century registers, age at burial is always given, so we still have a field, apart from name, on which to link burials to baptisms. Burials may be linked to children, for example, if the age at burial agrees with the baptism date, although a reasonable margin of error — say two years — must be given. Thus, for example, the burial entry 'Annie Bailey, buried 19 March 1830 aged 3', is linked to both 'Anne Baily baptised 1 March 1827' and 'Ann Bailey, baptised 5 April 1825'. When the competing links on the family reconstitution forms are corrected, the burial entry will be allocated to the former baptism entry. Allowing such a large margin of error has the advantage of encompassing all the age at burial misstatements for children that are likely to occur. It is often the case that small infants died before baptism, and special rules are necessary to allocate 'dummy births' to FRFs. The conventional method of inserting these children into 'gaps' in births if the parents' names are given cannot be used with nineteenth century registers, but, because numbers are small, and the range of names in use was relatively large, it is still possible to insert burials without previous baptisms tentatively into family groups. All of the other links are made in the same way as for pre-nineteenth century reconstitutions.

As well as providing an estimate of the comprehensiveness of the baptism registers, the accuracy of the link-making process in nineteenth century reconstitution studies can be checked by comparing FRFs with families in the census enumerators' books. The same checking process, incidentally, can also be used to gauge the effects of bias on the results of the reconstitutions from the people genuinely missing from the baptism registers. Consider, for example,
Table 2  Entry from the 1881 census enumerator's book for Willingale Doe

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>relationship to household head</th>
<th>marital status</th>
<th>age</th>
<th>occupation</th>
<th>place of birth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samuel Perry</td>
<td>head</td>
<td>married</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>agricultural labourer</td>
<td>Willingale Doe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rebecca</td>
<td>wife</td>
<td>married</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harry</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>agricultural labourer</td>
<td>ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sophia</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>single</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>domestic servant</td>
<td>ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emily</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
<td>scholar</td>
<td>ditto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lydia</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>scholar</td>
<td>ditto</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3  Part of family reconstitution form for Samuel and Rebecca Perry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>name</th>
<th>date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>marriage</td>
<td>Samuel Perry and Rebecca Prior of Willingale Doe</td>
<td>13.02.1851</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groom baptism</td>
<td>Samuel Perry son of Samuel and Dorothy</td>
<td>12.08.1827</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groom burial</td>
<td>Samuel Perry aged 68</td>
<td>24.02.1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bride baptism</td>
<td>Rebecca Prior daughter of James and Sarah</td>
<td>15.02.1829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child baptism</td>
<td>Henry Perry son of Samuel and Rebecca</td>
<td>18.07.1858</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child baptism</td>
<td>Sophia Perry daughter of Samuel and Rebecca</td>
<td>18.09.1865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child burial</td>
<td>Sophia Perry aged 20</td>
<td>06.10.1895</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child baptism</td>
<td>Emily Perry daughter of Samuel and Rebecca</td>
<td>16.05.1869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child burial</td>
<td>Emily Perry aged 26</td>
<td>24.02.1896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child baptism</td>
<td>Lydia Perry daughter of Samuel and Rebecca</td>
<td>19.07.1874</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

the family listed in the 1881 enumerator's book for Willingale Doe, shown in Table 2.

By comparing the information on this family with that given on the relevant FRF, part of which is shown in Table 3, the accuracy of the links made in the family reconstitution can be checked. All of the information here tallies, which means that all of the reconstitution links have been correctly made (of course, only the links concerning people still alive and living in the parish at the time of the census can be checked). Overall, I was able to check nearly 2,000 reconstitution links, and found that 6 per cent of FRFs contained one error,
Table 4  Selected results from the nineteenth century reconstitution studies of three Essex parishes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1800-49</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>1850-80</th>
<th>n</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>infant mortality rate (per 1000)</td>
<td>138</td>
<td></td>
<td>164</td>
<td>783*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age at marriage (women)</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>108</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age at marriage (men)</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>25.8</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proportion of pre-nuptial conceptions (1800-80)/(%)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>45</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total marital fertility rate (1800-80)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td>7.0</td>
<td>103**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  * Baptisms. ** Completed marriages.

either because a link was incorrectly made or a child was genuinely missing from the baptism register. The effect of these errors on the rates and measures derived from the FRFs was barely noticeable. It is fair to conclude that these nineteenth century reconstitutions are as historically correct as it is possible for them to be.

Results from nineteenth century reconstitutions

Table 4 shows selected results from the reconstitutions. The infant mortality rates are slightly lower than that of 165.5 per 1,000 which was found by Wrigley and Schofield for the second half of the eighteenth century; the ages at marriage for both men and women are similar to the English figure for the first half of the nineteenth century. Nearly half of first births were conceived before marriage. Again, this result is similar to those found elsewhere. Robin found that pre-nuptial pregnancies in nineteenth century Colyton actually outnumbered pregnancies conceived after marriage. The total marital fertility rate of 7.00 is slightly lower than the average of 7.39 found by Wrigley and Schofield for the earlier period.15

Although these results do not reveal any particular differences between this part of Essex in the nineteenth century and earlier dates (there is no evidence, for example, of the ‘stopping and spacing’ which is characteristic of populations limiting their fertility), they are very important from a methodological point of view. The very fact that a reconstitution can be done at all in the nineteenth century is a fact of considerable interest, as this opens up the possibility of doing other, larger reconstitutions in different areas. The use of an independent source to check registers and verify links made in the reconstitution process is also important: we can measure the accuracy of nineteenth century studies, which is a great deal more than we can ever hope to do in studies of earlier times. I look forward to extending this study, as the 1891 and 1901 enumerators’ books become available, to the time when people first started using mechanical means of birth control to limit their families. Because family reconstitution depends on the strength of parish registers, it is unlikely ever to be of much use in areas that were strongly nonconformist, or in urban areas
where there was a high degree of mobility and non-attendance at any church. However, there is considerable potential for the use of family reconstitution studies to examine the process of family limitation in detail in small rural communities.

NOTES

1. See, for example, P. Sharpe, 'The total reconstitution method: a tool for class-specific study?', Local Population Studies, 44 (1990), 41-51.
7. The transition to low fertility and mortality is generally accepted to have begun in the later eighteenth century in England, though the control of fertility by mechanical methods is not apparent until the later nineteenth century. For a full definition of the demographic transition see, C. Wilson (ed.), R. Pressat, The dictionary of demography, (Oxford, 1985), 52-54.
8. Reports from Commissioners, 571-2. The south-east counties comprise the non-metropolitan areas of Surrey and Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and Berkshire.
14. The conventional methods of making links is explained by E.A. Wrigley in English historical demography, 1-7, and is further explored in C. Davey, 'Reconstructing local population history', 1-15.
THE CHANGING PATTERN OF MALE FORENAMES IN MEDIEVAL LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND TO c.1350

David Postles

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Recent interest in patterns of forenaming has arisen from their potential as cultural indicators in all historical periods. Particularly extreme changes occurred in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries in England, illustrated here by reference to Leicestershire and Rutland, although the full extent and pace of change – in the same general direction throughout the country – varied both by region and by social group. Attention has unfortunately to be directed here only to the personal names of males, since it is impossible to accumulate sufficient data about females to make significant statements. The intention then is to concentrate on the names of the male peasantry. There were two main strands to the general trend, of which one was the gradual eclipse of 'insular' personal names by newly introduced 'continental' forenames during the twelfth century, and the other consisted of the increasing tendency to concentration in the active stock of 'continental' forenames.

'Insular' personal names comprised firstly those West Germanic (WG) personal names brought directly into England by the Saxons and so constituted the body of Old English (OE) personal names, and secondly Scandinavian names (OSc, comprising Old Danish and Old Norse forms), which also had their origin in West Germany, but which were introduced into England through Scandinavia. These latter, migratory names included not only name-forms which had not been introduced into England at the earlier time, but also similar ones which were distinguished from OE forms only by phonemic and dialectal changes.

Subsequently a variety of new name-forms was introduced in the late eleventh century, consisting predominantly of Continental-Germanic (C-G) ones which had migrated through north-west France and are consequently known as West Frankish, but including also Christian names in the restricted sense of Saints' and Biblical names. Although not entirely absent from England before the Conquest, Christian names only gained an extensive foothold in the twelfth century and indeed did not really proliferate until the latter half. Additionally, a further set of Scandinavian name-forms entered England, which had previously migrated through north France and are in some cases only distinguishable from earlier Scandinavian forms in England by their phonology. Celtic names were a further subsidiary name-set, brought in this case by Breton overlords, and principally comprising Alan, Brian and Joel (the latter initially in its Middle Breton form, Judhael).
Leicestershire and Rutland were located within the area of the Five Boroughs, which encompassed Derby, Nottingham, Leicester, Lincoln and Stamford. In adjacent parts of Lincolnshire and Nottinghamshire (within the Northern Danelaw) Scandinavian personal names persisted through the twelfth century.\(^8\)

The first part of this paper consequently examines the persistence and decline of insular personal names in Leicestershire and Rutland during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries, from admittedly fragmentary evidence, whilst the second part is concerned with the subsequent concentration within the corpus of active forenames, with the circumstances of unusual forenames and with any differences between urban and rural naming patterns. The causes of some of these changes were predominantly cultural, but demographic variables were also closely involved, especially in the development of distinguishing bynames or second names.

**The displacement of insular personal names**

Evidence in these two counties for naming patterns during the twelfth century is sparse, but the earliest is within a generation of Domesday Book, and comes from the two surveys of the tenants of Burton Abbey at Appleby Magna c.1114-28.\(^8\) In the later Survey B many villeins still bore recognisably insular (OE) names without a qualifying byname, such as Alwin, Sewin, Lewin, Godric and Leveric, as well as OSe Toki, but some forms may have been either OE or C-G forms, as in the case of Almar, Alric, Ordric and Flabald.\(^9\) One other tenant held the personal name of Blancard, a distinctly Anglo-Norman nickname forename.\(^10\) The *censarii* of Survey B, peasants who principally paid a money rent, had mainly insular names, but included a Ranulf (C-G) and the *filii Alurici* (sons of Aluric — but Aluric is ambiguous). Godwin (OE) *prepositus* (the reeve) held two and a half virgates, but was complemented by Algar (C-G) who held two bovates, whilst the *coteti* (cottagers) all bore C-G names (Walter, Gerard and ambiguously Aluric). In the earlier Survey A, however, only one molman, equivalent to *censarius*, bore a recognisably insular name (Godwin who held, one and a half virgates), whilst six others held C-G ones (Algar, Frane, two Richards, Roger and Norbert).\(^11\) Within a generation of 1086, therefore, extensive changes were occurring amongst the naming patterns of male peasants, but not to the extent of any significant development of bynames, which may tend to suggest that the active stock was still sufficiently wide to avoid the need for bynames for identification and that processes of bynaming had not been transmitted this far down the social scale.

Further evidence is not forthcoming before the Inquest of Templars in 1185, which included some vills in Rutland, particularly Empingham.\(^12\)Enumerated there were Wlwi (two bovates), Gode (one bovate), and Alured (another bovate), although other tenants were Odo, Simon, Richard, Pagan and Philip, that is five with C-G and Christian names compared with three with OE ones. At nearby Greetham, only the common OE forename Godwin survived.\(^13\)

By the middle of the thirteenth century (c.1225-58) insular forenames had been almost totally eclipsed.\(^14\) For example, the fourteen jurors at Lyddington (Rutland) for the survey of the manor of the bishop of Lincoln all bore C-G
names, twelve of whom had bynames whilst only two, who had unusual forenames within the community (Norman and Alexander) did not. The bishop's cotarii (cottagers) at Caldecott included two named Alured (one without a byname and the other qualified as iuxta aquam ('near the stream'), but the remaining seven bore C-G or Christian names. In the survey of Asfordby probably only Gamel (OSc) (with no byname) represented insular personal names, but earlier generations were reflected in the patronymic byname filius Altwni and the appositional or elided patronym of Richard Gamel. Equally, however, patronymic bynames attest earlier C-G forms, such as Hugh filius Asceliini who held one virgate and Reginald filius Terrici (a hypocoristic or pet-form of Theodoric from north-west France). Current holders of less usual C-G and other forenames without bynames included Humfrey, Colinus (hypocoristic or pet-form of Nicholas) and Silvester.

Further, but anecdotal, evidence is contained in some charters relating to vills in Leicestershire at the turn of the century. Nicholas filius Godwini was a former tenant in Thrussington in the late twelfth century, whilst Turkil (OSc) filius Hoviet held a toft and croft in Leire and Ralph filius Dunninghi (OE Dunning) a virgate in Cossington c.1200. At one of the Dalbys another Turkil held a messuage in the early thirteenth century and at Welby a carucate had been formerly held by Odo (C-G) filius Ketelini (OSc). William filius Turkel held a virgate in Hathern about the same time.

More quantitative data occur in the customal of Rothley of c.1245, in which over 500 tenants were enumerated in about twelve vills within the soke of Rothley in north-east Leicestershire. Virtually all bore C-G or Christian forenames, with the exception of Oky, Wulsy, Gamel, Godwin, Unwine, Hereward, Syrich, Hasclof, Osmund, Seward and Cole, but again previous generations were reflected in the patronymic bynames filius Edwymi, filius Brithwine and filius Edwardi, as well as the elided patronym of Walter Sueyn and the widow of Seamon. Four tenants with forenames which were unique in the community had no byname, of which two were insular (Oky and Hereward), perhaps reflecting their present unusualness.

This episodic evidence thus suggests that insular forenames were being eclipsed from a generation after Domesday Book and survived very imperfectly by the late twelfth century, even in this area which had been subjected to Scandinavian influence. The later (lack of) development of bynames from insular personal names confirms their paucity, since the only persistent ones were Omm, Gamel, Toky, Thurukil and, perhaps ambivalently, Sweyn, as well as the continuance of the family name of Orger (insular Odger) in Melton Mowbray from at least c.1245 through to the early fifteenth century.

The active stock of forenames

By the thirteenth century too the active body of forenames had become extremely concentrated. Whereas Forssner listed some 500 male C-G forenames (that is, excluding Christian names) mainly from occurrences in the twelfth century, the number in use had declined radically in these two counties by the late thirteenth century, as illustrated in Table 1. The wider context of the data
Table 1  Frequency of-forenames in Leicestershire and Rutland in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place/area</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>n</th>
<th>Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Leicester</td>
<td>1271</td>
<td>643</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibworth Harcourt</td>
<td>c.1280</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rutland</td>
<td>1296</td>
<td>1630</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>25.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leicestershire</td>
<td>1327</td>
<td>3871</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>66.50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  Population = male population in question, in some cases just taxable male population. Further values are: Leicester standard deviation 21.37, median 2, minimum 1, maximum 110, first quartile 1, third quartile 10; Kibworth Harcourt standard deviation 11.33, median 5, minimum 1, maximum 43, first quartile 2, third quartile 14; Rutland standard deviation 50.44, median 2, minimum 1, maximum 250, first quartile 1, third quartile 19; Leics. standard deviation 162.00, median 3, minimum 1, maximum 799, first quartile 1, third quartile 46. The data for Kibworth are taken from a tithing list, that is of all males aged over 12; those for Rutland and Leics. are from lay subsidies; those for Leicester from a tallage of burgesses.\textsuperscript{19} For Leicester compare the 149 females assessed between 1271 and 1318 who bore 27 different forenames.

for the lay subsidies has been discussed elsewhere.\textsuperscript{20} Although the lay subsidies are imperfect sources, since they were wealth-specific and thus probably excluded up to 66 per cent of heads of households, they do provide some indication of the level of concentration of forenames. Comparing frequency of forenames with mean taxation also produces a normal distribution, with frequently occurring forenames associated with average levels of taxation in the peak between the tails, whilst the two tails comprise at one extreme infrequent forenames associated with low levels of taxation and, in the other tail, infrequent forenames associated with higher levels of taxation. Infrequent forenames were thus associated with low wealth as well as with affluence. Some examples of infrequent forenames associated with lower levels of taxation within their communities in Rutland in 1296 are: a Gervase (without a byname) at Wardley (23.75d); Auncelm de Weston at Cottesmore (31.5d); Remund (without a byname) at Gretton (34d); Sampson \textit{Faber} at Braunston (14.5d); Hamund (no byname) at Oakham (22.5d); Auered de Belmesthorp at Riäll (13d); Aubrey (no byname) at Ketton (14.75d) and Eustace de Tykesouer at Empingham (24d). In these cases the levels of assessment should be compared with the mean level of 48.74d (standard deviation of 56.03).

Thus also a small number of taxpayers with unusual forenames were not attributed a byname for the purposes of identification in the lay subsidy in Rutland in 1296, although only a half dozen out of a taxable population of 1,630. Occasionally this phenomenon occurred in more localized circumstances, such as in court rolls, which were still formal written records and only intermittently betray colloquial naming processes. Such an instance is that of Sampson on the manor of Merton College at Barkby between c.1279 and 1300. It was more customary by that time, however, for bynames to be attributed even when the bearer had an exceptional forename, as in the cases of Gregory Brabason and Anselm Brabasoun who both held a virgate in Mowsley in 1279-80, although an additional, but ambivalent, influence here might have been the distinct and foreign nature of their byname.\textsuperscript{21}
Table 2  
Frequency of the most common forenames in each area/place

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forename</th>
<th>Leicester n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Kibworth n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Rutland n</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Leics. n</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>16.5</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>15.3</td>
<td>799</td>
<td>20.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>12.4</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>163</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>733</td>
<td>18.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Robert</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>530</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>154</td>
<td>9.5</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>4.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richard</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>7.4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>9.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ralph</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roger</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>5.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugh</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nicholas</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ivo</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:  
n = number of bearers; % = percentage of the entire ‘population’ in the source. Dates as Table 1.

A few burgesses without bynames occurred in the tallages of the borough of Leicester between 1271 and 1318, such as Jakemyn, Huberd and Hernitus, although it is fairly conclusive that the first was the alien, Jakemyn of Liège. For the most part, however, the burgesses had bynames, some of which indeed, at least amongst the core burghal families, were becoming hereditary from the middle of the thirteenth century. Most burgesses accordingly bore common forenames; 643 male burgesses who contributed to the tallage in 1271 bore only 56 different forenames, of which the rank order is presented above. This general distribution mirrors that in the rural communities of the county, with the same predominant top forenames.

Amongst the unusual forenames were a few which did not seem to recur (as far as can be ascertained given the deficiency of the lay subsidy) in the surrounding rural communities; distinctive amongst these were Cirecoc, Curteys, Colin, Walrand, Gregory, Aco, Oda, Waudin and (possibly) Ingram in 1271, to which should be added from 1286 Jakemyn, Dode (possibly OE Dodda), Huberd, Hernytus and Ayllo and from 1307 Poney and (possibly) Abraham. Some indeed became transformed into bynames from personal names in the borough (Abram, Ace, Walrand, Ingram, Óde and Dode). Details of this transition, from patronym to appositional patronym, are occasionally evident, as the change from filius Aconis to Ace, filius Milonis to Mile, filius Gameli to Gamel, and filius Nigelli to the hypocoristic form Ne(e), whilst Dode as a byname occurred as both Dode and Dodesone. Curteys was also a byname in the borough, but may have derived from a nickname rather than from the forename.

Other bynames from personal names contributed to the stock of less usual names in the borough at an earlier time, such as Baudwine, Seman, Heutewyn, Alsi, Hemery, Herold, Utrib, Umfrey, Steyn, Geryn, Leuwys, Theboud, Bertram, Mayhu, Illory and Merlyn. Russel may have a similar etymology, as Forssner noted the sporadic incidence of the forename Roscelinus, but might conceivably
have been a nickname-byname. Some of these bynames were derived from insular personal names of some generations earlier (Seman, Alsi, Herold, Ufred, Osemund, Steyn, and Thurstan), whilst Merlyn is entirely exotic. Many of the OSc forms might be expected, but Ufred (OE) is more usually associated with the north of England. Similarly, Seman, although in evidence in several regions including the south-west, had a wider incidence in East Anglia.

It is thus possible that some of these less usual forenames and bynames from personal names had been introduced into the borough by migration, some perhaps by longer-distance migration. One potential, but equivocal, method of ascertaining whether this was so, is to examine how many less usual forenames were combined with toponymic bynames. The problem with this method is that it is by no means clear that bearers of toponymic bynames were all at this time actual migrants rather than descendants of earlier migrants from whom they had inherited a surname. The bearers of a less usual forename and toponymic byname included Gregory de Walton (possibly Walton on the Wolds, Leics.), Walkelin de Monsorel (Mountsorrel, Leics.), James de Huncote (Leics.), Oda de Wikingston (one of the Wigstons, Leics.), Herbert de Swythelund (Swithland, Leics.), Poney de Lidnygton (Lyddington, Rutland), and Abraham de Euenton (Evington, now in Leicester). Less usual forenames are defined here as those which were held by only one or two burgesses in Leicester, but were not always exceptional in the wider stock of Middle English naming. Given the inferred origins of the toponymic bynames, it seems that a large proportion would have derived from the rural hinterland of the borough, which suggests that the lay subsidy, through its omission of a large proportion of heads of households, might have also excluded a small number of unusual forenames.

Conversely many of the less usual bynames may have been generated within the burghal community, a supposition which is tenuously based on the association of some of the names with other forms of byname (principally occupational). It cannot be shown conclusively that males bearing non-toponymic bynames were indigenous to the borough, but this method may be used as a general indicator. Given that 35.5 per cent of the male burgesses' tallaged in 1271 bore toponymic bynames, it might be reasonable to assume that those with other forms of bynames were endogamous (23.5 per cent bore occupational ones and 15.9 per cent nickname-bynames). The proportion of toponymic bynames was considerably higher than in the surrounding countryside. These assumed denizens included Ingram Carnifex, Cireccc Curteys, Curteys Cordwanarius, Colin le Chaloner, Warin le Sclater, Walrand le border, Gregory Pistor, Ernalde Molendinarius (alias de molendo), Waudin Crede, Aco cum barba, Bertram Capervn, Gregory Cocos, Colin ad fontem, Waryn Petyl, Dode le Carter, Thurstan Botilf and Nigel le Scherman.

The urban tallages finally provide some evidence of the beginning of the use of hypocoristic forms of forename and diminutive suffixes in forenames rather than (as is more usual in written records) only in bynames derived from personal names. Bate and Batecroc were not unusual forms, but Cireccc, Colin (from Nicholas), Gilot (hypocoristic of Gilbert with diminutive suffix), Dike (Richard) and Wacke (documented as a hypocoristic of Walkelin in 1276) are
less well evidenced for the late thirteenth century. Whilst -coc (-cok) was a Middle English suffix, -ot was one of those diminutive suffixes of French extraction.31 Bynames from personal names also reflected these colloquialisms: Mile; Ne(e)l (Nigel); Beneyt (Benedict); and the common Nicole. Davy occurred in 1286 as a hypocoristic forename, but was more profligate as a forename (Dau) in the lay subsidy of Rutland in 1296.32

Whilst the corpus of urban forenames had many similarities with that of the surrounding countryside, there were still differences at the margins. In both town and country, the active corpus of forenames had become heavily circumscribed by the late thirteenth century, to the exclusion of insular forms, and with a concentration of certain C-G and one particular Christian name. There is a difference in the sizes of the ‘populations’ examined: 1,630 taxpayers in Rutland, 3,871 in Leicestershire, but only 643 burgesses in Leicester. In all, the different stocks of forenames in active use (with some under-recording) were sixty-four, fifty-nine and fifty-six. At the margins, some unusual bynames seem to have been distinctive to the borough, but no certainty can be attached to this point.

NOTES


Forssner found Blankard only as a byname: Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 49-50.

For the wider context, Clark, 'Women's personal names', 238.


The Queen’s College, Oxford, MS 366, fos. 16r-17r and 19.

For Ascelin and Terric, Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 38-9 and 231-3.

I.H. Jeavies (ed.), A descriptive catalogue of the charters and muniments...at Berkeley Castle, (Bristol, 1892), 17, 43, 61 and 64 (nos 32, 109, 175 and 184). Turkil seems to be an insular form; compare the Norman forms Turketil and Thorkel as in des Gautries, Noms de personnes Scandinaves, 163-5.

G.T. Clark, 'The customary of the manor and soke of Rothley in the county of Leicester', Archaeologia, 47 (1882), 89-130; a revised date is attributed here by reference to PRO C260/86, a contemporary dispute between lord (the Templars) and tenantry. Osmund is possibly ambiguous, as it is listed by des Gautries, Noms de personnes Scandinaves, 86-8, but its context would seem here to be insular. Des Gautries did not list Gamel, Astin, Oky (ON Aki), Orm, Hasclof, and excluded Kolli or Kolr from Normandy, but included one Sven, Toki, Chetell, and commonly Thurstan: des Gautries, Noms de personnes Scandinaves, 118-23, 144-5, 148-9, 163-5, 312-13, 318, and 326-40.

For Odger, Bodleian Library MS. Wood empt. 7, fos. 4v-91r (Brokesby cartulary relating in these leaves to acquisitions in Melton Mowbray); the personal name could be ON (but Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 197, citing examples from Leicestershire and Lincolnshire, suggests improbably C-G); it is more likely to be insular since it does not occur in des Gautries, Noms de personnes Scandinaves.


For Brabasou(n), Bodleian Library, Oxford, Rawl. MS.350, 44.

For Huberd (from Hubert) and Hermitus (aspirated form of Erneis), Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 82-3 and 156.

Aco occurred as a forename as in 1196 (Aco filius Simonis de Petra and Aco filius Ricardi de Vuncha, both possibly foreigners) and occurred in 1258-71 (Aco cum barba); Curteys occurred as a forename in 1264 (Curteys Kepegest) and 1271 (Curteys Cordwanarius). These data are taken from a dBase IV file of the records of the borough of Leicester (Department of English Local History file Lebor, comprising 11,500 data records, 1196-1510).

Aco and Ace may have been ORF forms of Azx: Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 40; for Oda, Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 194-5 and 198-9; for Aylloc (from Adelard), Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 8; and for Waudin (from NP Waldin), Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 240. For Dode, see M. Redin, Studies on uncompound personal names in Old English, (Uppsala, 1919), s.v. Dodda.

Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 220-1. See also the Rocelinus admitted to the freedom in 1198, Records of the Borough of Leicester, 16.

For the incidence of Uchtred, C.M. Fraser (ed.), The Northumberland lay subsidy roll of 1296, (Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne, Record Series, 1, 1968), passim; G.W.S. Barrow, 'Northern English society in the early middle ages', Northern History, 4 (1969), 5.

B. Selten, The Anglo-Saxon heritage in Middle English personal names, (Lund, 1972), 28-9 and 170.

For distances of migration into Leicester inferred from toponymic bynames, P. McClure, 'Patterns of migration in the late middle ages: the evidence of English place-name surnames', Economic History Review, 2nd ser. 32 (1979), 167-82.

The term toponymic is generally preferred to the synonyms 'locative' and 'place-name' surname.

The proportions of toponymic bynames in Rutland in 1296 and Leics. in 1327 were respectively 18.9 per cent and 25 per cent.

Clark, 'Anthroponymy', 564. For Wacke, Bateson, Records of the Borough of Leicester, 138; for other hypocorist forms of Walkelin, Forssner, Continental-Germanic personal names, 239.

PRO E179/165/1.
NOTES ON SOURCES

LOCAL DEMOGRAPHIC STUDIES OF EDWARDIAN ENGLAND AND WALES: THE USE OF THE LLOYD GEORGE 'DOMESDAY' OF LANDOWNERSHIP

Brian Short

A major source of information has been available to historical demographers and others since 1979, but its significance remains largely unassessed. This paper provides a short description of the documents and the reason for their collection, and some examples of ways in which it might be used. Thus students of Edwardian demography can now enhance their researches with reference to such items as owners' and occupiers' names and addresses, landownership and occupation of land, living conditions, housing quality and tenure, and the layout and use of industrial and agricultural buildings. Examples are given below of such items, which exist for virtually the whole of England and Wales, together with reminders of some of the practical problems for users of the material.

The political context of the documents

By the later nineteenth century the concentration of land into the hands of a relative minority was seen by many to be a fundamental problem underlining the poverty of British working people. Many solutions were offered, but the taxation of land values by central and local government was most favoured by the Liberal Party, and on their coming to power in the landslide victory of 1906 they began to implement the idea. The land clauses of Lloyd George's 1909 Finance Bill duly included several duties to be levied on land values and on minerals. These duties were relatively small-scale, but their significance lay in the fact that they required a valuation of all land to be carried out by the Inland Revenue, and it was perceived that this would enable a future government to tax land values at whatever higher rate was decided upon, or even to compensate owners in the event of nationalisation. Landowners were appalled at the prospect.¹

The consequent rejection by the House of Lords of the Finance Bill and the constitutional crisis of 1909-10 is well documented. The Bill reached the statute book only after a year-long struggle and a general election.² Thereafter the valuation could be made and duties levied under the Act of 29 April 1910 – the Finance (1909-10) Act. The most significant was 'Increment Value Duty', to be charged at the rate of 20 per cent of increased values accruing after 30 April 1909 on the occasion of a change of owner, although there were exemptions such as agricultural land if it had no higher value than its current market value for agricultural purposes only.
The defeat of the Lords did not end resistance to the ‘New Domesday’. Parts of the original Act were modified in subsequent years, and landowners banded together in organisations such as the Land Union to combat the valuation and duties. After a number of humiliating reverses in the courts and following the hiatus of war, a Select Committee was appointed to investigate the 1910 duties, and although its report was itself inconclusive, the land clauses and most of the land duties of the Act were finally repealed in 1920, leaving only the mineral rights duty in existence. Death duties and other fiscal measures which impacted on the landed estates were unaffected.

The valuation and its documents

Following the Royal Assent, the Inland Revenue quickly recruited staff, with decentralisation an important consideration. England and Wales was eventually divided into fourteen Divisions, each under the control of a Superintending Valuer. These Divisions were in turn subdivided into 118 Districts, each in the charge of a District Valuation Officer (DVO), by 1914. The pre-existing ‘Income Tax Parish’ (ITP) was adopted as the basic unit for valuation purposes. Sometimes several civil parishes were united to form one ITP, and some 7,000 Land Valuation Officers (LVOs) were appointed for each ITP across the country.

Once the staff were in place, a Valuation Book was sent to the LVO in each ITP who arranged for the local assessor of taxes to copy into it, from the Rate Book or ‘Schedule A’ registers, the description of each property, together with names of owners and occupiers, and the figures for the extent of the property and its rateable value. Any unrated properties also had to be identified and entered onto the Valuation Book. Each hereditament was then given a number, the numbers running consecutively throughout the ITP.

Then, by August 1910, landowners across the country were sent the unpopular ‘Form 4-Land’, on which they were to provide detailed information on every hereditament in their ownership. A fine of £50 was payable if no return was made. By November, the DVOs were able to take the Valuation Books and completed forms from the LVOs, whose task was now substantially at an end. By the end of the financial year, some 10,500,000 forms had been sent out, and 9,600,000 returned completed, at a cost of £174,342 for the financial year 1910-11.

Upon receipt of the books from the LVOs, the District Valuation Office staff transcribed the information into the valuer’s Field Book in which the valuation was actually made. Temporary Valuation Assistants were then posted to different parts of the Districts, armed with the Field Books and Ordnance Survey maps, valuations were made following inspection of the property, and the various values assessed. Notification of the valuation results were then sent to owners.

Each District Office had received two sets of the appropriate Ordnance Survey sheets at the largest available scale. One set was used as a working copy and the other as a permanent record. The boundaries of each hereditament were
marked out and its identification number was entered once the valuation figure was finalised.

An enormous number of disparate documents was engendered. At least 183 Land Forms are believed to have existed, although many of these were merely standard letters. However, only a few types of document are likely to be of interest to historians, some of which have already been mentioned. These main documents are therefore detailed below, together with what information should be present, although all were filled in with varying degrees of precision and understanding.5

a. The Valuation Books

These were known within the Valuation Department, and subsequently unfortunately in many county record offices, as the ‘Domesday Books’, thereby risking confusion with the 1873 ‘New Domesday’ survey of landownership which was far less detailed. These were the first documents to be compiled, and into their pages were transcribed the details from the Rate Book, prior to sending out forms to the various owners. Valuation Books survive for most areas, and are (with the exception of books for the City of London and Westminster (Paddington) which are in the Public Record Office) to be found in county record offices or their equivalents.

Valuation Books should contain information on hereditament address, occupier(s), names(s) and address(es) of owner, area and value. The hereditament numbers are found in column 1, and any research using the documentation should note the relevant numbers, since they are of crucial importance for identifying the property in the other categories of document.

b. Forms of Return

The most common ‘Form of Return’ was Form 4-Land, sent to landowners and subsequently deposited with the DVOs. Owners sometimes kept unofficial copies of these forms for their own records, and these may be found today in estate, solicitors’ and similar collections in local repositories and in the Public Record Office. Most, however, have been destroyed. Owners were required to state the address and parish in which the land was situated, the owner’s and occupier’s names, and the address of the former, whether the interest was freehold, copyhold, or leasehold, the name of the manor if copyhold, details of leases, and to give a description of the land and any buildings etc., and the uses to which they were put, its area, rent obtained, outgoings such as taxes, tithes or any public rights to which it was subject, details of last sale (if any) within twenty years before 30 April 1909, and of subsequent expenditure, and questions about possible mineral rights.

Form 37-Land was the statement of the Provisional Valuation retained by the DVO, a copy of which was sent on Form 36-Land to the owner(s) of each hereditament and other interested parties. Forms 37 were retained by the DVOs, where some may still remain. They were made available to local repositories in 1979, but not all archivists took up the offer and they were only
sporadically transferred. They include the hereditament number, a description of the property, its situation, the name of the occupier and its extent. In addition they give the figures of each category of value and show how these were derived. On the reverse, are the names and addresses of those persons to whom copies of the Provisional Valuation were issued.

c. The Field Books

These number no fewer than 95,000 volumes and are available for consultation in the PRO. They are thought to survive for most areas, although there are gaps, the extent of which is not yet known. They contain the fullest information of all. The entry for each hereditament comprised four pages in the books, with each book containing information on up to 100 hereditaments. All of the information from Form 4 was transcribed onto the first page of the Field Book entry for the hereditament, and the second page included a description of the property which might include details of building materials, numbers and use of rooms, comments on repair and condition as well as suitability for the purpose used, facilities, ancillary buildings and their condition, water supply and sanitary facilities and so on. Comments on the state of cultivation, drainage, land use, etc., are common. On the third page, and for industrial premises or agricultural holdings, sketch plans of farmsteads, traced from the Ordnance Survey sheets, also gave details of buildings and their uses, although as work began to fall behind schedule in 1912 the sketch plans were dispensed with. The lower half of the second page and the final page include figures for the various values. For the most part, four values were calculated, the definitions of these values being extremely complex.

d. Ordnance Survey Sheets

District Offices were furnished with two copies of large scale Ordnance Survey plans for their areas, usually at the scale 1:2500 (approximately 25 inches to one mile), although 1:1250 or even 1:500 sheets were used for built-up areas, while 1:10560 was usual for many upland areas. The most recently available editions were used and, where appropriate, updating was carried out on the ground. The Ordnance Survey agreed to make large-scale revisions for the valuation, and these special editions may also feature in deposits of these plans. Many town maps were revised, since the Valuation Office asked for 8,000 enlargements to 1:1250 to cover such urban areas. The permanent set of Record Plans mounted on linen have now been assembled in the PRO. The second copies were 'working copies', of uneven degrees of completeness and precision, generally containing less information than the Record Sheet Plans. They were offered to local repositories as long ago as 1968, where many still survive.

The Record Sheet Plans are crucially important. They should show the boundaries of the ITP in yellow, and the boundaries of each unit of valuation in pink or green. In practice, unit boundaries are frequently shown in other colours and sometimes the entire unit was shaded in with a colour wash. In any event, each unit of valuation is demarcated, and its number entered onto the plan in red. Detached portions should be braced together, and the various parts of the hereditament given a suffix to the main hereditament number, e.g.
Hereditament No.263/1, 263/2, etc.

e. Miscellaneous material

A great variety of documentation is likely to be found in various archives. Oxford and Cambridge colleges still hold copies of 'forms of return' related to their land holdings, for example. There will also be correspondence between landowners or their solicitors and valuation officials, between landowners and oppositional organisations, and so on. The PRO holds much additional material relating to the work of the Valuation Office and the interpretation of the Act.

The documents: some potential projects

It is clear that the information likely to be found in the valuation documents is of great importance and that they present numerous possibilities for the study of localities in the early twentieth-century. Some possible projects are included in this section, but they do assume the full and correct compilation of the documents. Only detailed local studies can reveal whether this was in fact the case.

The fact that the valuers were specifically concerned to identify owners of land for the purposes of taxation ensured the compilation of full data on owners' and occupiers' names and addresses and land and property ownership. The identification of individuals and the study of landownership are among the most obvious uses of the data, and studies of house repopulation in rural areas, where 1841-91 census addresses are often very ambiguous and where census enumerators might fail to record farm acreages, are immeasurably enhanced. The repopulation study of Canwick, Lincolnshire by Joan Mills was aided by the fact that the 1910 survey provided the only complete set of owners and farm tenants after the enclosure award of 1787. Indeed the 1910 survey represents the most comprehensive set of property records ever compiled in the United Kingdom. Information about owners occurs in the Valuation and Field Books as well as in the Forms of Return. The valuation Books were, of course, primarily copies of the Rate Book, and it might be assumed that the Rate Books will fulfil the same use as the Valuation Books. However, Rate Books in rural areas have frequently not survived, though survival rates in urban areas are sometimes higher. It should be recalled that each of the 95,000 Field Books alone contained four pages of information on each hereditament, with up to 100 hereditaments per book! We may well be dealing with something in the order of 40 million items of information!

Secondly, each hereditament should have its area given, and it follows that some precision as to landownership structures ought to be possible. Moreover the record plans should enable property in the same ownership to be precisely delineated. Since the addresses of owners ought also to be given, it should be possible to make assessments as to the extent of absentee ownership, as well as the derivation of possible family or kinship linkages in towns or parishes hitherto unsuspected. The extent of owner-occupation of land and housing can also be assessed. Also of great importance is the study of tenurial forms. It is possible to examine the extent of freehold ownership as well as the extent of
lease and copyhold ownership. Recent studies of landownership structures in Cumbria and the north Pennines c.1910 have therefore made full use of the documents in this way.¹¹

However, in the use of the documents there are certain difficulties which are encountered. In this instance, for example, one must take into account that the definition of ‘owner’ includes long leaseholders or even long underlessees, and this ought to be stated in the Field Books or Forms of Return since owners were supposed to indicate the existence and identity of superior and subordinate interests.¹²

Thirdly, studies can be made of land occupation structures. For example, the boundaries of farms and other properties can be precisely located, and the study of farm layout and the extent of fragmentation is possible in some detail. Building materials were often described, together with the source of water supply and details of stabling, pigsties and other buildings. The manner in which a rented property was held can also be assessed. Information should be available as to whether a property was held by the week, month, year, and so on. Rents ought to be listed and responsibility for rates, repairs and insurance should also be given. A study of the Ashburnham Estate in East Sussex, covering 579 hereditaments in 17 parishes, demonstrated the occupational structures and the extent of landownership by the Earl of Ashburnham in 1910 in the different parishes, ranging from 100 per cent of the parish in Ashburnham itself to one per cent in parishes more remote from the centre of the estate. The farm boundaries were mapped, sizes analysed, tenancy terms and rents discovered, and the size of living accommodation and condition of housing noted. Of 211 descriptions of the condition of property in the Field Books, whilst 141 were ‘fair’ and only nine were in ‘shocking’ or ‘bad/very poor’ repair, only thirty-two were ‘good’ or ‘very good’.¹³

Again however, one difficulty should be noted. The basic unit of valuation was to be the hereditament. However, this straightforward definition was complicated, in that the owners could require that the hereditament be divided into as many parts as they wished and that each part be separately valued. Moreover, in an amendment of 1911 the owner could request the Valuation Office to value together many pieces of land which were contiguous, even if under separate occupation. In practice, this means that the ‘hereditaments’ delineated on the record plans are actually ‘units of valuation’, and they could comprise part of a hereditament, or several contiguous hereditaments. Theoretically the subdivision or combining of hereditaments ought to be indicated in the Valuation and Field Books. However, it often is not, since valuation staff frequently omitted to note this information. Such information is sometimes found partly in the Field Books, partly in the Valuation Books, but sometimes not at all.¹⁴

Fourthly, information on housing is a prominent feature of the material. The numbers and uses of rooms; house rents; sanitation and water supply; repair and general condition, etc., should all be present in the documents. For those interested in the reconstruction not only of households, but of the environmental context of those households, such records have an obvious use.
Thus we find that owner-occupation was unusual, but that there were various tenancy terms and a wide variety of housing conditions in both town and country. Studies can now be made of living accommodation, and the cramped nature of pre-World War One working-class housing is illustrated graphically. One recent London study has used the Field Books to allow comparisons of housing conditions in Bethnal Green and Shoreditch between 1910 and 1930, using the LCC Housing Confirmation Orders which were drawn up for properties being compulsorily purchased for demolition and rehousing. The 1910 material is also a basic sheet anchor in a house repopulation exercise in Lincoln, where Monson Street is being studied for the City of Lincoln Archaeological Trust, to determine the types of families occupying Lincoln streets in the nineteenth century, population densities, the properties and their builders. The 1910 material shows that many small owners had property in Monson Street, suggesting that its connection with Lord Monson, a local estate owner, was tenuous. The mostly skilled craftsmen in the main street, with unskilled, often Irish workmen in the courtyards off Monson Street, were recorded in the 1881-91 censuses as occupants consistent with small speculative owners, and also consistent with the slum clearance schemes of the 1930s and 1950s.15

Other possible researches include economic studies of land use in urban and rural areas. It is possible to examine rural land use on a field-by-field basis, though this cannot be predicted for any one area without consulting the relevant documents. The identification of farm buildings and their building materials, use and state of repair is frequent in those valuations carried out prior to mid-1912, and in conjunction with the identified land-use patterns should allow for a considerable increase in our knowledge of agricultural practice during this period. It is also possible to study the industrial and commercial structure of towns and cities. The frequently detailed information regarding buildings and equipment enhances our 'archaeological' knowledge of industrial, domestic and other buildings which have since been demolished or heavily altered. The layout of premises such as that of H. and E. Lintott's engineering works in Foundry Lane, Horsham can be reconstructed for c.1910, complete with offices, sheds, lean-tos, 85-feet high chimney, blast-furnaces and crane.16

Many of these topics can be studied over time, and there are many stimulating possibilities for comparative work with other documents. Comparisons with the 1840's Tithe Surveys allows assessments to be made of changes in family ownership and occupation structures, land-use patterns and farm fragmentation or consolidation over the period from the beginning of Victoria's reign to the First World War. Comparison with the 1891 census enumerators' books and relevant directories allows some limited house repopulation, allowing for the 18 years gap. Linkage with the 4th June Agricultural Returns and the National Farm Survey 1941-43 are also exciting prospects.17
Problems of the data

However, research on the valuation material can be frustrating, and there can be many unanticipated difficulties. Some of these problems originate from the way the valuation was conceived and framed in the original Lloyd George legislation, and from the instructions issued to valuation staff. Other problems derive from the idiosyncratic contemporary interpretation of instructions by the different District Valuation Offices and by individuals in those offices. And, unfortunately, archival policies since the first documents reached the public domain in 1968 have created a third category of problems.

One organisational detail causes two types of problem unless one is familiar with the system. When consulting the Field Books in PRO IR58 one needs to know the ITP in which a civil parish is situated. Unless the civil parish gave its name to the ITP, the class lists will give no indication that the Field Books for the parish survive and searchers may assume that their quest is a fruitless one. Furthermore, even if the civil parish sought is of the same name as the ITP and the Field Books are found, they may well contain material actually situated in other civil parishes, and there will be no indication of this in the PRO finding aids, nor in the Field Book itself.

This problem is quite easily overcome in that the Valuation Books provide the vital entry into the Field Books, since the Land Valuation Officers compiled the Valuation Books by entering the information from the Rate Books of each civil parish in the ITP, and then numbering the hereditaments consecutively throughout the ITP beginning at number 1. Valuation Books were supposed to be confined to a single ITP, though in practice this was not always complied with. However, in these exceptional cases, the numbering of the hereditaments gives the necessary clue to the identity of the ITP. The maps also give the hereditament number, which can then be traced in the Field Books. The PRO now allow the latter to be used in the Map room together with the maps.\(^\text{18}\)

There are also sometimes major omissions in the documents. In parishes around the New Forest, for example, such as Ashley Walk, only some 13 per cent of the civil parish was accounted for in the documents. The reasons for this remain unclear, but are probably linked to the fact that Crown lands such as much of the New Forest were exempted from the payment of Increment Value Duty (Section 10.1). One must also beware of ownership by statutory companies, such as railway, canal, dock, water, and other public utility companies, which were similarly exempted from duty (Section 38.1). In Hartlepool, for example, 58 per cent of the industrial premises were owned by the North-Eastern Railway Co. (NER), and other companies, including sawmills, shipyards, docks and quays, engine yards and sheds, gas and water works. Although land owned by the Crown and by statutory companies was supposed to be valued in case it should pass into other hands, thereby becoming subject to duty, valuers under considerable pressure tended to leave these lands to the last for valuation. The repeal of the land clauses presumably preempted the valuation of some of these lands.\(^\text{19}\)
Descriptive material is also often not found in the Field Books. In the case of large hereditaments such as major industrial premises or large country houses, the relevant details were too copious to enter in the limited space provided in the Field Book and were therefore entered into a separate file. These files are now unavailable and have probably been destroyed. Otherwise, one can also find the instruction 'see notes' in the Field Books, as in the case of the large Spencers Farm of 437 acres belonging to Ernest Gardner MP at Maidenhead, Berkshire. Unfortunately these notes too appear to have been lost.

These problems have been compounded to some extent by archival policies since the documents entered the public domain, and one gains the impression that disastrous choices were only avoided by good fortune.

The first documents to reach the public domain were the Working Sheet maps in 1968. Uneven in quality though they are, they remain the only copies of Ordnance Survey plans with boundaries of hereditaments delineated yet deposited in local repositories. But clearly the context of their compilation, together with their significance, was unknown to most archivists in 1968. Many were merged with nonarchival series of maps, and often no cross-linkage was made with the Valuation Books when the latter reached local repositories. On occasion the sheets went to one repository, while the books later went to another. At least one county disposed of its Working Sheet maps to a local bookseller!

More important was the way in which the main transfer of material took place in 1979. The Valuation Books were offered to local repositories by the PRO as an alternative to destruction, on the understanding that they contained less information than the Field Books. In the event, the Valuation Books are still important for understanding the way the Field Books were compiled. The PRO was even less concerned to emphasise the usefulness of Forms 37 and many repositories failed to collect them, while others destroyed all or most of those that they did collect. Apart from the fact that these forms were often the only document that contained an accurate figure for area and are therefore important in this respect, they are the only document that can be related to the Record Sheets in an unambiguous way. The forms give the provisional valuation of the unit of valuation, which as demonstrated might be part of a hereditament or a combination of several, or many, hereditaments. The unit of valuation – not the hereditament – was indicated on the Record Sheets and the destruction of Form 37 has made the use of the plans more difficult.

The low priority allocated to all documents other than the Field Books by the PRO has often been carried over into local repositories. The Valuation Books can still languish in out-repositories unlisted, or if listed may not yet be indexed. Some archivists in urban areas quite reasonably consider them as duplicate rate books and therefore have not listed them. This low status and the problems caused by its fragmentation ensures that the material still remains unknown to many researchers, thereby increasing the sense of insignificance. It is now to be hoped that historians will realise the significance of the sources, and as users of local record offices, they will put pressure on archivists to devote the proper care and attention to these records that they certainly deserve.
NOTES


3. An account of the office's history and functions was compiled in 1920 which is preserved as PRO IR 74/218. See also The Valuation Office 1910-85: establishing a tradition, (Inland Revenue, 1985).

4. Income Tax Parishes were authorised under the Taxes Management Act (43 & 44 Vict.c.19) 1880, Section 37. They were proposed by local Commissioners of Taxes as convenient units for administrative purposes and had to be approved by the Board of the Inland Revenue. I am grateful to John Goodchild, Principal Local Studies Officer and Archivist, Wakefield Library, for this information. For a fuller discussion of the significance of these units, and a case study from Leicestershire, see Brian Short, The geography of England and Wales in 1910: an evaluation of Lloyd George's 'Domesday' of landownership, (Historical Geography Research Series, no.22, 1989), 26-9. (Available through the LIPSS Book Club - ed.)


6. PRO class IR 58.

7. Definitions of the four values (gross value, full site value, total value), and assessable site value are given in Appendix 2 of Short, The geography of England and Wales, 100-01.

8. PRO IR 121-135, subdivided by DVOs eg, Salford is in the Manchester region IR 133/7.

9. Thus Form 4 papers for the estate of the Whitbread family of Southill Park, Bedfordshire, exist in Bedfordshire CRO W3500-3507, while returns for the Pyms of Hasells Hall, Sandy, are in PM 2937/11.

10. I am grateful to Dr Dennis Mills for this information.


14. Under section 26.1, the herediment could be divided into as many parts as the owners wished and each part was to be separately valued. Moreover, this section was amended by the Revenue Act 1911 Section 5, so that the owner could request the Valuation Office to value together: 'any pieces of land which are contiguous, and which do not in the aggregate exceed one hundred acres in extent...although those pieces of land are under separate occupation'.


17. For the study of Wharfedale farming in 1910 see Short and Reed, Landownership and society, 63-6. The records of the National Farm Survey of England and Wales, 1941-43 may be inspected in PRO MAF 32, and 1:5000 or 1:10560 maps showing herediment boundaries are in PRO MAF 73.

18. The location of parishes within ITNs can also be helped in many cases by referring to the Board of Inland Revenue's Alphabetical list of parishes and places in England and Wales, held in the Map Room, PRO. Since this is dated 1897, however, discrepancies may have arisen by 1910, although an updated volume is available for 1901.
19. Hampshire CRO 152M 82/9/1 Valuation Book and PRO IR58/10697, 10699, 10700 Field Books; Cleveland CRO Valuation Books (uncatalogued); PRO IR58/38100 et seq. See also Short and Reed, *Landownership and society*, 35-9, 59-60.

20. PRO IR58/52286 and map at IR126/3/16.

21. PRO circular GEV33/2/2 (dated 19 September 1979). I am grateful to Alfred Knightbridge, formerly of the PRO, for providing a copy of this document.
MISCELLANY

"ONE FACE, ONE VOICE, ONE HABIT, AND TWO PERSONS!"
THE SURVIVAL OF TWINS IN EARLY MODERN SOCIETY

Chris Galley

In Twelfth Night 'identical' brother and sister twins, Sebastian and Viola are separated following a shipwreck and when finally reunited a third party remarks

How have you made a division of yourself?
An apple cleft in two is not more twin
Than these two creatures.2

Twins also feature in another of Shakespeare's plays. The plot of The Comedy of Errors revolves around two pairs of identical male twins, one free, one slave, born on the same day.

There had she not been long but she became
A joyful mother of two goodly sons;
And which was strange, the one so like the other
As could not be distinguish'd but by names.
That very hour, and in the self-same inn,
A mean woman was delivered
Of such a burden male twins, both alike.
Those, for their parents were exceeding poor,
I bought, and brought up to attend my sons.3

After another shipwreck both pairs of twins become separated and what ensues is a comedy of mistaken identity. Twins are therefore easy to discover in literature as indeed they are in mythology: Castor and Pollux, Romulus and Remus easily spring to mind.4 Yet what of real life? Shakespeare's interest in twins, although based in part on dramatic tradition, no doubt stemmed from him being the father of twins, Hamnet and Judith who were born in 1585. Judith survived into old age but Hamnet died aged 11, largely forgotten. The baptism of twins occurs frequently in parish registers but I have been able to discover only one set of twins born before 1900 who survived to become famous: Henry and Thomas Vaughan who were seventeenth-century poets. The reason for this may have been that many famous people did indeed have a twin, but that fact was simply not important enough to have been recorded. However, the most likely explanation, as with Hamnet, is connected with the survival rate of twins.
Table 1  Infant mortality rates (per 1,000 live births) for baptised twins, York 1561-1700

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Baptisms</th>
<th>Number of births</th>
<th>Infant mortality rate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;1 month</td>
<td>&lt;1 year</td>
<td>Neonatal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unknown</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>476</strong></td>
<td><strong>185</strong></td>
<td><strong>66</strong></td>
<td><strong>389</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In most western countries twins occur once every 80-100 births; so about 1 person in 45 should be a twin. This ratio is not an absolute constant; it varies geographically and is influenced by birth order and mother’s age. There are two types of twin: monozygotic (identical) and dizygotic (dissimilar). Of the two, monozygotic twins are less common occurring in only 4 out of every 1,000 confinements which means that about 20 per cent of twins should be identical. In parish registers there is abundant evidence of twin births. For instance:

Mary and Elizabeth, ye twins of George Scofeild, September ye 4th (1680)

Most twins were not specifically labelled; nevertheless, they are still easy to identify:

Thomas & John, the sons of Charles Yates, bap the 17th day of June (1636)

Thus, it is a relatively straightforward, if time-consuming, task to locate twin baptisms, search through the appropriate burial register, and then calculate infant mortality rates (IMRs) for twins. This procedure has been carried out on 13 of York’s parish registers for the period between 1561 and 1700. Altogether 238 pairs of twins were identified out of a total sample of 28,404 baptisms which gives a twin rate of about 1 in 60. Twin IMRs are shown in Table 1 and it is immediately apparent how high these were with over half not surviving to see their first birthday. IMRs in York were in the region of 260 throughout the seventeenth century and thus, twins experienced over twice the mortality of singleton births. Many twins died shortly after birth. Consequently, rates of neonatal mortality (deaths within one month) were extremely high and it is probable that low birth weight was a major contributing factor to such high levels of mortality. Table 1 also indicates that male twins were much more likely to die than female ones although in general male infants experienced higher rates of mortality. It might be expected that males were given preferential treatment especially when male/female twins were born. To test this thesis Table 2 shows IMRs disaggregated by birth type. While all types of twin suffered high rates of mortality, males suffered most in both categories and any preferential treatment given to males appears, at least, to have been ineffectual.
Table 2  Infant mortality rates (per 1,000 live births) for baptised twins by type of birth, York 1561-1700

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Birth type</th>
<th>Baptisms</th>
<th>Number of burials</th>
<th>Infant mortality rate</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;1 month</td>
<td>&lt;1 year</td>
<td>Neonatal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MM</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF(M)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MF(F)</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>337</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FF</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>286</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Given such high levels of mortality there was a great likelihood that many twins did not survive to be baptised. For example:

Anne daughter of William Morley ye 20 day of Dec, and another twen came to be buried ye same day (1657).\(^\text{10}\)

In many cases all traces of unbaptised twin burials are missing from the registers since unbaptised infant burials were only rarely identified. This causes the linking process to break down and infant mortality is under-estimated. Throughout the whole sample of York baptisms, there is sufficient evidence to suggest that perhaps 8 per cent of births die unbaptised during this period and with many twins dying shortly after birth the level of twin under-registration may have been even higher.\(^\text{11}\) Further, the rather low twin rate and the large excess of female twin baptisms also suggest that many twins, especially male ones, went unrecorded. Attempts to compensate for under-registration are fraught with difficulties, especially given the small numbers involved. If 8 per cent of twins died before they could be baptized the total IMR from Table 1 would need to be increased to 561 (per 1,000 live births) and the male IMR would then be in excess of 600. Whatever the true rate may be have been, clearly all twins were very vulnerable. It is probable that the threat to twins lessened considerably the older they were; nevertheless, child mortality levels in York were still high and applying these levels to the twin IMRs, less that 1 in 3 twins would have survived to reach 15 with less than 1 in 4 male twins surviving to that age.\(^\text{12}\) IMRs in York were about double those in rural areas, but it is likely that a similar mortality differential for twins would have existed there too.\(^\text{13}\) Thus, while the number of twins born was largely invariant, very few sets of twins would have survived to reach adulthood during the early modern period. It has not been possible to differentiate between the mortality experiences of monozygotic and dizygotic twins. However, it is interesting to note that all male twins suffered higher IMRs than male mixed twins, while all female twins suffered lower rates than female mixed twins. If this was due to differences in the mortality experiences of monozygotic and dizygotic twins then identical male twins will have suffered the highest rates of all. Moreover, since male identical twins would have been the ones to be noticed it is not surprising to discover the apparent absence of adult twins from early modern
society.

To conclude, IMRs for twins were so high that very few pairs would have survived into adulthood and it was only following the secular decline in infant mortality at the start of this century that twins became commonplace. Little has been written on this subject and a closer examination of twin mortality levels may repay study. If twin mortality rates mirror those of singletons then being an acutely sensitive sample, secular and spatial variations in twin mortality rates may be able to illuminate topics such as urban/rural differentials in infant mortality, the causes of the secular decline in infant mortality and, by focusing on the changing relationship between neonatal and post-neonatal mortality, how different disease patterns affected infants. Coincidence is a convenient device for the dramatist but surely the greatest coincidence in The Comedy of Errors is not that the pairs of twins are eventually reunited but that they survived to become separated in the first place. Finally I would be grateful for any further information on either famous twins or levels of mortality among twins.14

NOTES

1. Twelfth Night, Act 5 line 208. I wish to express my thanks to the British Academy for the award of a Post-doctoral Research Fellowship and the Local Population Studies Research Fund for financial support. I also wish to thank Graham Mooney, Jill Rudd, Naomi Williams and Bob Woods for helpful suggestions.
2. Twelfth Night, Act 5 lines 214-216.
3. The Comedy of Errors, Act 1 lines 50-58.
4. Other examples include Goldoni’s Venetian Twins, Alexander Dumas’ Man in the iron mask and Esau and Jacob from the Bible.
7. F. Collins ed. The parish register of St Michael le Belfrey, York part 1 1565-1653, (Yorkshire Parish Register Society Vol.1, 1899), 186. There is the possibility that these types of entries may refer to the retrospective baptisms of older children but during the early-modern period such baptisms were rare and when they occurred an appropriate note was usually made.
8. York had 23 parishes and a population of c.12,000 during the seventeenth century. The accuracy of York’s parish registers and levels of mortality within the city are discussed in C. Galley, ‘A never-ending succession of epidemics? Mortality in early-modern York’, Social History of Medicine, 7 (1994).
9. Three sets of triplets were also identified but these have been excluded from the analysis.
10. Collins, Register of St Michael le Belfrey, part 2, 18. Perinatal mortality amongst twin confinements was also high. In the register of St John Ousebridge (Borthwick Institute of Historical Research Y/J 147) there is the following entry: ‘Richard Housman had two children born the one, Elizabeth, borne July 14th baptized 17th, the other still borne the 17th (1661)’. Elizabeth was subsequently buried on 26 July.
11. See Galley, ‘Epidemics’.
13. Mortality of twins is still higher than for singletons. In Belgium between 1920 and 1972 the IMR of twins was around three times greater than that of singletons, see Pressat, Dictionary of Demography, 152.
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Fishermen