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EDITORIAL

Our new National Library

The serpentine progress of the new British Library building at St Pancras continues to enrage its critics, discourage and frustrate its supporters and dismay library staff and readers. It has now been admitted that the new building cannot be handed over to the British Library before the end of 1996 and so will not be open before the end of 1997. Even this timetable assumes a safe passage through the commissioning process, book removal and re-housing and the discovery of no more trailing wires or defective insulation. Only the Channel Tunnel among contemporary high profile projects has stumbled on so many unforeseen obstacles and overrun so many target dates.

Parliamentary concern – in some cases anger – reached a new height in July when Lord Donoughue described the management of the project as ‘the worst piece of management and administrative malpractice in Whitehall history’. He sought confirmation that miles of cabling had been installed and ripped out, 27,000 roof tiles bought and rejected because the colour was ‘not quite right’ and ‘vast sprinkler systems and shelving installed and removed’. The Minister, Baroness Trumpington, assured him that these technical issues were matters for the contractors and project managers and the government could have no knowledge of any faults until they had been brought to light. Their Lordships were on familiar ground.

Lord Annan recalled a question he had asked in December 1991 requesting the appointment of a single project manager so that the buck was not continually passed from the Office of Arts and Libraries to the Property Services Agency and from them to Laings and from Laings to their sub contractors. He had been assured that new management techniques were in place and costs firmly under control. He also asked whether there had been corruption. ‘Is it true that quite unnecessary work has been done in order to keep the pot boiling and the sub contractors milking the public purse from the public udder?’ The Minister assured him that each of the two cases of alleged impropriety had been investigated and no evidence of fraud found. She went on to say that the £450m budget would be exceeded but it would not be possible to estimate by how much until all the technical problems had been resolved and a programme of work drawn up. Viscount Eccles called upon the House to set aside its disappointment and recognise that when St Pancras is completed it will be the finest national library anywhere. ‘It will be far better than any library in America or in Europe. We shall be extremely proud of it when it is finished’. But Baroness Jeger was not to be diverted. ‘Those technical problems are being used as an excuse. Who has been sacked or who has got into trouble over that matter?’ Establishing liability, she was told, will be a complex matter. A high powered team has been set up to deal with the commercial issues but the
Minister felt it unwise to go further while sensitive and delicate negotiations were in hand. Their Lordships were not satisfied. Lord Crickhowell’s concern was that this sad affair had affected the arts budget which as he put it ‘fed from the same departmental udder’ and he feared continuing damage. For his part, Lord Stallard recited an old refrain; ‘even when it is complete it will be totally inadequate for the purpose for which it was intended’.

The Minister parried the blows. Lord Crickhowell was mistaken. The Secretary of State had dealt with the matter. Lord Stallard should note there would be 130 more seats than at present and with the new technology readers would spend less time in the library allowing a faster turnaround and increasingly material would be delivered outside the reading rooms by other means.

Parliamentary exchanges such as this one, press features and adverse comments through readers’ networks, and timetables issued and withdrawn, have all played their part in focusing unwelcome attention on this project. At best muddled and at worst malign public perception of the affair had begun to bruise the reputation of the British Library management putting at risk their credibility with Government, their readers and their own staff. A response was overdue. It was delivered in the form of a pamphlet written by the Chairman of the British Library Sir Anthony Kenny. This attempts to set out ‘objectively the history of the project from its inception to the present time’. Sir Anthony has adopted a bold strategy. His account must be authoritative if it is to be believed so must recognise the faults and delays which have beset the project. But who is to bear the blame? The library can only lose by cultivating an impression of government incompetence. It cannot afford to point a finger at the politicians or civil servants any more than it would want to accept the burden of failure on its own shoulders. But if Sir Anthony’s principal task is to explain rather than blame he has another of almost equal importance. He must shoot the white elephant. The new library must regain its status as a great national symbol.

Sir Anthony handles a complex story of political muddle, treasury short-termism and bureaucratic incompetence with tact and skill. It began in 1977 when the Labour government accepted the vision of a library occupying 200,000 square metres, housing 3,500 readers and 25 million books but failed to provide financial commitment, Shirley William’s approval being limited to no more than the first 76,000 square metres.

The project survived the review instituted by the new Conservative government in 1980 though the approved work was split into two phases and the £22.5 million which had been allocated was cut to £9.5 million. Somehow the project emerged in 1985 with just enough building work underway for Richard Luce, then Minister for the Arts, to conclude that it must go forward and he gave his approval for a further sub stage, though the treasury did not grant financial approval until April 1987. It was not until July 1990 that £150 million was authorised for the so-called completion phase, a further 32,000 square metres. At the same time plans for the original stages two and three were given up and it was decided that the five acres to the north of the site on which they were to have been built should be sold once the new building had been completed.
For ten years between 1978 and 1988 there had been no overall budget. Work had to be planned year by year. By 1990 the building which had been expected to cost £116 million had an estimated cost of £300 million and was not expected to be open until 1993. The National Audit Office investigation found itself unable to quantify the effect of the phased construction programme on cost and efficiency but no less than £152.5 million was attributed to inflation. Sir Anthony is discreet to the point of silence. It is not for him to apportion praise or blame. He does not need to do so. It is plain that Ministers from each administration since 1977 were responsible for much of the increase in cost and, by their failure to approve and to fund the overall scheme, for the delay.

Sir Anthony also considers the administration of the project. For many years neither the British Library nor the sponsoring department, the Office of Arts and Libraries, had effective control. This was in the hands of the Property Services Agency and remained so until 1988 when the PSA became answerable to a steering committee chaired by the OAL. Subsequently, privatisation of the PSA and the creation of the Department of National Heritage placed the project firmly in the hands of that department and with commercial management. At last a structure was in place which permitted close consultation with the Library and brought together the DNH and treasury officials on a monthly basis.

It is unfortunate, as Sir Anthony himself confesses, that even this system became tarnished by failure at least in respect of its quality control. The faults in cabling and in the fire protection systems which Lord Donoughue referred to were not identified at the installation stage and rectification will now involve further cost and delay.

Sir Anthony deals more firmly with those he describes as ‘Friends and Enemies of St Pancras’. The critics he divides into traditionalists and futurists. The one demands a solution which retains the Round Reading Room in Bloomsbury; the other sees the printed book being superseded by the computerised database. The traditionalists have drawn support from those who have criticised Colin St John Wilson’s design and from the widely canvassed assertion that the new library in its scaled down form will be inadequate in storage and ancillary facilities and in seats for readers. As buildings away from St Pancras site will be required – so the argument runs – why not retain the Round Room? Sir Anthony accepts that the present scaled down version of the St Pancras library will not house all the British Library’s functions but asserts that the original concept from the 1970s was too lavish. The original plan provided 3,440 seats, more than tripling what was then the total provision of 1,100 seats. The present plan offers 1,192 reader desks an increase of 11 per cent over current provision. Sir Anthony claims that this will suffice. He argues that readers will make more efficient use of the reader desks available because they will find that rapid delivery of material shortens the length of their visit to the library.

He also predicts longer opening hours and more material delivered by remote access through document services from Boston Spa. At the same time he acknowledges that every Public Enquiry into the project has expressed concern that this provision will be inadequate.
We wonder how far his confidence in St Pancras seat provision has been diminished by the library's recent experiences of crisis demand which were described by Dr Brian Lang, the Chief Executive, in the British Library's 21st Annual Report, 1993-4? However, after presenting the best case he can muster to support the judgement of the Politicians and Library administrators who have delivered what is surely a woefully inadequate provision Sir Anthony wisely concludes that the Library will not really know what level of usage will be possible until the new accommodation is in use and the library must retain the possibility of building further reading rooms adjacent to the present site if extra demand materialises.

The futurists are more easily dealt with. Their vision of the existing library collections replaced by electronic replicas and of a world in which publishing has become wholly electronic, is in Sir Anthony's phrase, 'a triumph of technological hope over economic experience'. The costs rule out such developments even if problems of the rapid obsolescence of 'reading' technology could be overcome and there existed a social climate in which the destruction of books on such a scale would be sanctioned.

The present plan for St Pancras is at its most vulnerable when confronted by the plain facts of the Library's existing inventory and annual accrual of books. The original vision included accommodation for 25 million books, sufficient to meet the Library's needs until well into the next century. The Library as built could not hold even the existing reference collection, so from the start what is described as 'occasional use material' will not be housed at St Pancras. It will be stored at Boston Spa and books will be brought to London on demand or a copy of the material supplied by other means. So the original goal of uniting all the collections on a single site has been given up. Sir Anthony invites us to accept that it was always unreasonable to expect the tax payer to finance 'such a convenience'. The cost of storage per linear metre of books at St Pancras is twice what it would be at Boston Spa and the Library must juggle its holding between these two repositories on the basis of the frequency with which particular classes of books are consulted. The improved information supplied by the new Automated Document Request System will enable managers to determine with increasing accuracy the appropriate disposition of stock. 'The Library', he says, 'is working towards establishing a single library, operating a single collection, based on its two major sites'.

There Sir Anthony rests his case. He has trodden a path through the cuts and muddles which have been the hallmark of the St Pancras project without pointing the finger of blame too firmly in any one direction. Political judgements may have been wrong; the administration may have been cumbersome but the outcome he seems to be saying, however it has been delivered to us, is philosophically and economically apt. St Pancreas will be the great national library we would have known we needed had we thought about it more carefully all those years ago.

We cannot tell how Sir Anthony's hypnotic tale was received at the DNH. Did it calm political fears so enabling a new dialogue to develop; was it ignored;
was it rejected; was it in fact the promise of Lottery money rather than a spirit of rapprochement which re-opened the door?

Whatever the mechanism a door has certainly begun to open. The British Library's annual report contained news of a promising departure from present policy. Dr Brian Lang, the British Library Chief Executive, disclosed that the DNH had invited the Library 'to refine its proposals for the use of the land at the north of the St Pancras site for construction of a Conservation Bindery and photographic processing facilities, and in the longer term new facilities for the National Sound Archive, an additional reading room and a Multi Media Centre. These are facilities which the Chief Executive believes are needed at St Pancras 'if the library is to maintain and improve its services into the next century, and if the nation is to reap the full benefit of its investments in the new building'.

It would be churlish to dwell on the obvious discrepancy between Sir Anthony's and Dr Lang's assessment of the Library's needs. We can see at last a flickering recognition of the folly of alienating the land to the north of the library and of the need to bring the Library's extended family, including even the distant cousins, together at St Pancras. There is a new spirit and a sense of purpose. It is as if the DNH had rediscovered a file containing one of the earliest blueprints for a National Library. If these extensions are approved and built and despite all that has happened, we might yet find we possess a great National Library again.

Friends in high places

Once again the House of Lords has shown the strength of its concern at the situation which may face County Record Offices in those areas in which Unitary Authorities are to be established as a result of the re-organisation of local government in England. Their Lordships, in a debate introduced by Lord Renton, showed themselves to be well briefed; those who spoke covered between them all the pertinent issues. Lord Montagu perceived a threat to the National Archive Services. He pointed out that the service is essentially a local service meeting local needs and is generally small in scale and is not going to be amenable to a sharing out process which would involve the splitting up of collections and of scarce resources. He also asked their Lordships to recognise that new archive centres would be 'way down at the bottom of any priority list for new capital expenditure or, indeed, annual revenue expenditure'. Nor did he believe that voluntary co-operation between Unitary Authorities would be satisfactory. This was a point taken up by Lord Willoughby De Broke who asked for ministerial assurances that there would be something more than mere expectation and hope that Unitary Authorities would maintain county-wide archive services. In his view nothing less than a statutory requirement to maintain county-wide services or an enforceable joint arrangement based on guaranteed revenue and capital funding would provide adequate protection for the present services and for the future. 'After all, archives are probably rather vulnerable. They do not immediately spring to the top of the list of priorities in the minds of Electors of Councillors. Other matters may seem to be more important or more immediate and they are likely to grab their attention. People
may ask, "what is an archivist or a librarian less here and there? A day when the archives are closed does not really matter". But I remind your Lordships that death by a thousand cuts is still death'.

Other speakers, notably Earl Russell, emphasised the educational value of historic records and if he and one or two of his noble friends had perhaps seemed to overstate the case then the Baroness Hollis of Heigham was on hand to redress the balance. She felt some of the fears that had been expressed were exaggerated. She saw no risk of historical archive material being splintered or dispersed and knew of no body in government or local government which was calling for such actions. 'The depositors would not permit it, nor do the users and citizens want it...'. 'What is more, no new Unitary Authority could afford a new archive office with its storage and conservation facilities, at a cost of about £2 million a building, for its specialist facilities'. She believed historical archives would remain in their present home, the County town, and she commended the numerous joint arrangements which were in existence already between district and district and between districts and counties, reminding the House that the Audit Commission had pointed out that such arrangements were no different from an authority purchasing a service from a private body which is what local authorities are now required to do under compulsory competitive tendering. But the dispersal of material was not a problem, and if as she expected, joint arrangements would work well, were there in fact any difficulties on the horizon? She felt that there were, and she also recognised that this was a worrying time for staff. She commended to the House proposals put forward by the Association of District Councils that the final year of the County Council's budget plus inflation should be projected into the first two years of re-organisation and then be apportioned on a population basis. Subsequently there should be five or ten year management agreements and she sought government guidance to this effect. For her the real threat to the quality of local government services was not re-organisation but cutting and capping of local government expenditure by central government. The archive world, she suggested, should devote some of its attention to encouraging central government to recognise that local government needs finance to protect and preserve 'the service we are all entitled to ask for'.

Viscount St Davids replied for the government. He pointed out the significant progress which had been made in the development of Local Archive Services, stating that more that £20 million is now spent each year on County Record Offices, at an average cost per head of the population of just 50 pence. It remained the government's view that the level of funding of such services should be a local authority decision. He stressed that the government was fully aware of the importance of archives and cited the establishment of the DNH in 1992 as indicative of their commitment to the preservation, promotion and profitable use of heritage. 'Archives which contain the primary records of our past are the very essence of that heritage'. Central government was already considering the advantages to be derived from bringing record office services within the Department of National Heritage umbrella, and he emphasised the government's awareness of the concern among archivists, local history and family history groups and individual members of the public, for the maintenance of the present high standards of service. He assured the House that there was no reason to fear that the new authorities would take their
obligations for archives less seriously than do the existing authorities. The government did not see itself as having a prescriptive role and where collaborative arrangements are to be made, the government preference would always be for such arrangements to be on a voluntary basis. The government saw its role as a facilitator and was working with the Royal Commission on Historical Manuscripts, the Public Record Office, the Department of National Heritage, the Society of Archivists and the Association of County Archivists on the production of central guidance to the new local authorities about archives services. The aims of this guidance were to establish best practice, to avoid the unnecessary dispersal of collections and to maintain a high quality of storage and access in the service. A draft guidance note had been circulated and it was the government's intention to have guidance in place before the first new authorities came into being.

It is never easy to assess the importance of a debate such as this one. The strength of feeling, the level of knowledge and perception and the quality and range of support was impressive. A great deal of credit must go to the professional organisations which have made the facts known and articulated the arguments without descending to the level of the more obvious lobbyists and propagandists who generally display their fingerprints so obviously, that after a limited period of success no one believes their advice and they are no longer effective.

It must be helpful to have extensive and reliable support within the parliamentary networks where there may be opportunities to influence legislation and new developments, such as those contemplated by the Department of National Heritage. At the same time the purpose of a debate is also - and perhaps primarily - to provoke a response from government. At this level Viscount St David's reactions were sympathetic but inconclusive. There is no suggestion that the government is prepared to legislate to guarantee a level of funding and service; nor is it clear that the promised guidance will amount to anything more than a code of good practice. For our part we remain convinced that nothing less than government prescription can guarantee an adequate level of service within the system of voluntary arrangements to which the government seems committed. We are not persuaded that partners in a joint scheme will feel obliged to maintain funding and we are not so naive as to accept that local pressure from users or from the professional bodies could significantly influence the participants in a joint arrangement. We are however encouraged by the news of further progress in the move to consolidate record office services within the DNH. Joining forces with a new young department keen to make its name must make sense, and we hope that no-one will stand in the way of this rational and constructive development.

Tom Arkell
Christopher Charlton
Terry Gwynne
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April 1995
NEWS FROM THE CAMBRIDGE GROUP FOR THE HISTORY OF POPULATION AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE

Long-run changes in adult mortality

Madame Jeanne Calment recently celebrated her 120th birthday in France and attracted world-wide attention. Will this always be regarded as a rare event, or is it something that the children of today will come to regard as normal? This is a question that is beginning to exercise the minds of Western planners as they become more and more concerned with the ageing of their populations. British data on adult life-expectancy begin in the 1840s and show a sustained upward trend, but is there a ceiling to longevity, or will the trend continue? We can rule out the possibility of genetic drift as a factor in increasing longevity over this time scale, but it is very difficult to apportion the changes between the other competing factors – public health, standard of living, changing epidemiology, medical intervention, etc. – and so get an idea of the processes involved and their possible limits.

Changing life-expectancy has always been a topic of interest to the historical demographer. Although we have 150 years of data by period, this in fact only translated into 50 years of completed cohorts, or of groups of individuals whose whole life-histories are recorded, for example those born between 1841 and 1895. This is much too short for the questions being asked, so taking longevity studies back into the early-modern period would greatly assist our understanding of the trends. The obvious problem with this is the scarcity of data, so the Cambridge Group is attempting to gather together mass biographies that can be exploited for adult-mortality studies. The main requirement is that a data-set has a common definition of the starting point from which mortality can be analysed, and that the entry is independent of the length of subsequent life. Thus we can analyse the mortality of medieval monks who all enter observation at the date they 'profess'; but not the Dictionary of National Biography where there is no standard definition for entry except that a person has lived long enough to be famous.

British sources, although presenting many difficulties, offer the prospect of adult mortality estimates from c.1300 onwards. Published estimates include Hollingsworth's pioneering study based on a mass biography of the British Peerage and we are very grateful to him for making his original forms available to us. From these data, it is clear that life-expectancy over the age of 45 has been increasing steadily since 1600 when the study begins. In addition we have been working on a number of data-sets including the biographies of MPs prepared by the History of Parliament Trust and the details of Scottish ministers contained in the Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanae, and we are searching for other usable datasets.
There are two principal problems in working with these data. The first is the problem of incomplete entries and these amount to a significant proportion of all individuals, especially in the early periods. If records were missing at random, this might not be a problem, but we have to suspect that the losses may be biased. For example, fame and power may be associated with long life as well as making it more likely that a person's events are recorded or researched, which in turn would lead to survivorship estimates being biased upwards. Recent advances in statistical methods, some developed to work with AIDS data, have diminished the problems associated with incomplete and biased event-histories, but have not removed them.

The second problem concerns the representativeness of these data. What does it tell us about the ordinary persons in the past if we know the longevity of an elite group? It has long been assumed that a higher standard of living leads to higher life-expectancy, but the quantitative evidence is more ambiguous than might be expected, especially for adult longevity in the past. Only from the beginning of the 19th century is it clear that adult life-expectancy of the Peerage had advanced beyond that of the ordinary population, and even at the time of their maximum advantage in the middle of the nineteenth century they lived no longer than the average inhabitants of rural areas; what the Registrar General termed the 'Healthy Districts'. Last year's Nobel prize-winner for Economics, Robert Fogel, has tried to resolve this paradox by arguing that the chronic malnutrition of the masses created an epidemiological environment that was hazardous to all social-classes. This may be so, but it needs to be demonstrated. Along with many other questions it is one that could usefully be answered from historical mortality studies.
NEWS FROM THE LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES SOCIETY

Change of address

The Society’s Secretary, Sir David Cooke, Bt, has a new address: 78 Harlow Terrace, Harrogate HG2 8AW. The telephone number remains unchanged: Harrogate (01423) 560429.


This conference was arranged for us by the University of Oxford Department of Continuing Education, through the good offices of Miss Mary Hodges, the Society’s Treasurer. The theme was ‘The family and household revisited’. During the morning session Dr Keith Wrightson, (Cambridge) spoke to the title: ‘The family in early modern England: continuity and change’. This was an excellent talk on post-war research into the evolution or lack of evolution of the family and household over the last 500 years. Wrightson demonstrated that the commonly-held belief that the family in early-modern England was both patriarchal and extended (including more than two generations), in contrast to the nuclear family of today, has simply not been supported by most empirical research undertaken in the past 35 years. Nevertheless, he was critical of modern researchers for failing to acknowledge changes in the nature of the family in response to changes in the economy, as well as the regional differences in family form and composition.

Following up this cue in the afternoon, Rosalin Barker (Hull) gave a most interesting lecture on maritime families in eighteenth-century northern England. Such families, she argued, contrasted sharply with those in the rest of England. For many women it meant single-parenthood for substantial periods, as well as uncertainty and worry, but this was compensated for by women’s greater say over domestic decisions, and they were more likely than elsewhere to have a role in the local economy. ‘Playing away’ was as much the lot of the lonely wife as it was for the absent husband, whilst those women and children who travelled with their husbands often lived a life of adventure. An example was given of one wife from Hull, who was carried away by native American Indians!

The final session was taken by Malcolm Smith (Durham – and a former LPSS Secretary) on ‘Genes, families and communities’, a less conventional subject for LPSS. Dr Smith took us from the tribes of Israel to the back streets of Hartlepool. His aim was to persuade us that family and population historians have access to a wealth of information of interest to geneticists. From the unfamiliar territory of ‘autosomal recessive’ characteristics we were carried to the rather more familiar concept of inheritance and then on to family trees – particularly that of Joseph (of technicolour dream-coat fame), his brothers, his half-brothers and his half-sister. As Dr Smith pointed out, those who in the past
decried consanguineous marriage because 'it wasn't done in the Bible' were on VERY shaky ground! While degrees of inbreeding are hard to unravel unless very detailed and extensive family trees can be constructed, historians of local population can help to identify likely pockets of close-kin marriage from concentrations of surnames in particular localities. We were shown an example from the shoreline of Hartlepool, where a preponderance of Pounders and Davidsons could be spotted.

Our hearty thanks got to Dr Kate Tiller and her colleagues for putting on this very interesting programme in such pleasant surroundings.

Forthcoming conferences

LPSS members should receive with this number of LPS the full programme of the 1995 residential conference, to be held at De Montfort University’s Lansdowne Campus, Bedford, week-end 14-16 July. The theme will be ‘The rural population’, with sessions on agricultural labourers (nationally, and in Bedfordshire), rural self-sufficiency in services (nineteenth-century Hertfordshire), customary rights and non-wage income, the computerisation of Hertfordshire census enumerators’ books (1851) and sources for Bedfordshire villages, from 1750. There will also be workshops on directories and census enumerators' books; and on official reports. The annual general meeting will be held at 2.15 pm on Saturday, 15, July. The fee for full residential attendance is £112. Partial and non-residential attendance also possible. Non-members very welcome. Full programmes/application forms can be obtained from the Conference Secretary: Dr D.R. Mills, 17 Rectory Lane, Branston, Lincoln LN4 1NA (Telephone 01522-791-764). Please enclose SAE big enough for a sheet of A4.

Forthcoming day schools

Saturday, November 4, 1995. A one-day conference, organised by LPSS and the British Society for Population Studies, to be held at the Division of Continuing Education, University of Sheffield, 10.00 - 16.30. Speakers will include Tony Wrigley (University of Cambridge) and Steve King (University of Central Lancashire). Discussing the pros and cons of the two methodologies. Three researchers will describe their work using reconstitution and reconstruction: Jean Robin (Cambridge Group), 'Movers and stayers: a cohort study from Colyton'; Roger Bellingham (University of Leicester), 'The Dade registers: a source with potential?' and Andrew Blaikie (University of Aberdeen), 'Scottish illegitimacy: the context of reproduction and the reproduction of context'. The cost of the meeting is £14. Those attending are welcome to bring their own lunch, although West Street offers a range of eating options within a few minutes of the venue. For more details please contact Eilidh Garrett at the Cambridge Group, 27 Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1QA.

Saturday, November 18, 1995. A one-day conference organised by the Centre for South-West Historical Studies, University of Exeter in association with LPSS, to be held in the Moot Room, University of Exeter. The title will be, 'Population and community in the south-west'. A flyer will appear in the next LPSS
Newsletter. Further details are available from Dr Jonathan Barry, History Department, Queens Building, University of Exeter, EX4 4QH. (Telephone 01392 264323).

March 1997. A joint conference organised between Staffordshire University and LPSS, on ‘Computerisation of the nineteenth century printed census volumes and vital registration statistics’. For more information contact Dr David Gatley on 01782 294780.

Why not join

THE LPS SOCIETY

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GLOUCESTERSHIRE'S MEDIEVAL TAXPAYERS

Peter Franklin

Dr Peter Franklin is an author and palaeographer with a particular interest in medieval peasant society. He is a long-standing member of the LPSS Committee.

Introduction

This report summarises the results of a project which examined some aspects of the usefulness of the Lay Subsidy Rolls from the period 1290-1332 as sources for demographic, economic and social history. The project involved making and publishing a new edition of the complete text of the Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327, and undertaking a comparative study of a group of 126 medieval taxpayers from the manor of Thornbury in that county. It was made possible by generous financial support from the Local Population Studies Research Fund.

The Lay Subsidies of 1290-1332

For a long period after the Norman Conquest taxation was something rare and strange. The ordinary Englishman was burdened with a whole series of payments to the lord of the manor and to the church, but it was only on the rarest of occasions that the crown required him to pay any tax. Those halcyon days ended halfway through the reign of Edward I, when the king, having conquered the Welsh, set out to do the same thing to the Scots and French in a series of campaigns which were almost incredibly expensive. The normal annual income of Edward’s government was about £27,000 but the cost of the campaigns of the second half of his reign has been estimated at about £800,000. The king’s Jewish moneylenders had already been ruined and expelled, and his Italian bankers could never raise such huge sums. The only solution was to tax many of his subjects, and to do so on a fairly frequent basis. One of the great turning-points in English history had been reached.

The first of these frequent taxes was raised in 1290 and was a great success, producing well over £100,000. In later years they produced much less, usually between £30,000 and £40,000, but they were raised 16 times between 1290 and 1332. These taxes were ‘Lay Subsidies’ – not levies on landed property nor poll taxes, but assessments of fractions of the value of people’s personal property, of their ‘movables’. In practice this meant that country people (whether lords or peasants) were taxed on their livestock and corn, and townsmen on a wider range of possessions, including their best clothes and the tools of their trades.

The amount of tax to be paid by each person was set at a particular fraction of the value of his or her movables. It was established later, in 1334, that those who lived in taxation boroughs and on ancient demesne estates should pay one-tenth of this value and those living elsewhere should pay one-fifteenth.
This is the origin of the name 'Tenths and Fifteenths' by which these taxes came to be known in their later days. But before 1334 they were levied at all kinds of different rates, and often no distinction was made according to where taxpayers lived. The name 'Lay Subsidy' underlines the fact that the clergy were supposed to be taxed separately, but this worked better in theory than in practice. The amounts paid by the clergy had become fixed after the Taxation of Pope Nicholas in the 1290s and clergymen do appear in the Lay Subsidy Rolls, being assessed on movables found on land acquired since that date.

The Exchequer looked upon this new revenue as a special source of income, and the senior officers from each county who collected it (the 'chief taxers') were required to make special records, listings which contained the names of all those who paid. The numbers of taxpayers' names recorded in each of these county Lay Subsidy Rolls ranged from 2,500 in Lancashire to 16,000 in Kent. Their names were arranged according to the hundreds and vills where their property was (which usually means those where they lived), and the sum to be paid by each person was noted. Two copies of each roll were made, of which one was sent to Westminster for approval and the other was retained by the chief taxers as an aid in collecting the money.

Lay Subsidies were assessed and collected in this way for more than four decades, and this makes the years 1290-1332 a special period in the history of taxation. The instructions issued to the local taxmen (the 'subtaxers') required them to undertake a lot of work to produce a new assessment for every taxpayer each time the tax was raised, and in 1334 the system was simplified when the subtaxers were ordered to collect money from each vill and to leave the actual apportioning and raising of it to the vill's inhabitants.

The Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy Roll of 1327

The 1327 Gloucestershire Lay Subsidy Roll in the Public Record Office is the only roll of this kind to survive for that county. It divides the county into 33 divisions, most of which are hundreds, and then into 516 separate lists of taxpayers' and subtaxers’ names. The document is, in the main, clearly-written and well-preserved, and 8,934 names are still readable out of an original total of c.9,094 (or more than 98 per cent).

The text of the roll occupies 28 parchment membranes which are sewn together at the head. The lengths of these vary between about 25 and 34.5 inches, and their widths between about 9.5 and 10.5 inches. The text is written in a number of small, clear hands, characteristic of the early fourteenth century. There are signs that the clerks were working at speed, but no evidence of sloppiness.

Readers may wonder why I was anxious to put a new edition of this document into print when one was already available. It was published some time in the 1850s by Sir Thomas Phillipps, the renowned collector of manuscripts and books. I have to say 'some time in the 1850s', because Sir Thomas did not bother to put dates of publication on his works. Nor, alas, did he equip them with contents pages or indices. These last omissions have made it awkward for anyone in a hurry to locate whichever one of the 516 local lists of names they
seek. And anyone trying to find the name of a particular taxpayer faces a long haul indeed. To compound these faults, Sir Thomas printed very few copies of his works, and it may well be that there were never more than 25 copies of his edition in existence.\textsuperscript{5}

In his own day, Phillipps was criticised for rushing poor editions into print, so I was interested to take the opportunity to compare the original document with his printed text. My comparison revealed that his book reproduces the text of the tax roll very well within the conventions of the mid-nineteenth century. There are minor errors which a proof-reader should have spotted, but only a few of the 9,000 names have been completely misread, and only two have been omitted. If what we are told of his own palaeographical shortcomings is true, then the text must be the work of some of the transcribers he is known to have employed – indeed, differences in the conventions used suggest that it is the work of two hands. The book’s main failing, by far, is its lack of those aids which would help the reader to find things within it.

The demographic potential of the earlier Lay Subsidy Rolls

The new system of tax collecting introduced in 1334 produced simpler records giving the names of places but not those of taxpayers. Their lack of detail made it possible for the British Academy to publish the returns for the whole country in a single volume,\textsuperscript{6} and economic historians and historical geographers have made much use of these data as a guide to the distribution of wealth and population in pre-plague England. In contrast, though many of the rolls of the period 1290-1332 have been published, usually by county record societies, much less attention has been given to their evidence.\textsuperscript{7}

The truth is that historians have treated the Lay Subsidy Rolls of the earlier period with a good deal of suspicion. Medieval tax records have had a bad press at least since Sir Charles Oman pointed out some of the shortcomings of the Poll Tax returns of 1381 for Essex.\textsuperscript{8} The Lay Subsidies of 1290-1332 are not known to have sparked off any popular uprisings in England,\textsuperscript{9} but medievalists have long been aware that the numbers of people who paid them tended to fall as the years passed. It has usually been suspected that this marked growing corruption or evasion, although the amount of evidence put forward in support of this thesis has always been limited and there is plenty of scope for other solutions.\textsuperscript{10} We are talking of the difficult two generations before the Black Death when Professor Postan and his supporters have argued that many of the English peasantry were in grave economic difficulties, and when Postan himself believed that there was extremely high mortality on the Bishop of Winchester’s estates.\textsuperscript{11} Could the falling numbers of taxpayers actually reflect a shrinking population? Many historians now believe that England’s medieval population reached its maximum size not on the eve of the Black Death in 1348, but sometime prior to the onset of the Great Famine in 1315, or even back in the 1290s.

Or could it be that (population size apart) those economic difficulties were progressively reducing the numbers of people who could afford to pay tax? Each time these taxes were raised, Parliament issued instructions that those
whose possessions were worth less than a minimum sum (usually 6s 8d or 10s) were to be exempt from paying because of their poverty.

There is also a more general suspicion: historians normally prefer to work with the earliest records of any particular kind, but Lay Subsidy Rolls from the 1290s are rare. It was not until 1323 that the Exchequer made any provision for them to be preserved, and most of those which survive date from 1327 or 1332. Are these late rolls not likely to be the poorest in quality?

Because of this lack of interest we still know far more about the administrative history of the earlier Lay Subsidy Rolls – thanks to J.F. Willard’s great study, published sixty years ago – than about their potential as sources for demographic and economic history.

Two basic questions

When I undertook my comparative study of part of rural Gloucestershire, I hoped to find answers to two very basic questions, namely (1) who were the taxpayers?, and (2) what proportion of the population did they form? Earlier attempts had been made to find answers to these questions using tax rolls and local records from parts of other counties, but some of the methods used are open to question. The most detailed attempt to identify taxpayers was made by Edward Britton in his study of Ramsey Abbey’s Manor of Broughton, Huntingdonshire. Britton analysed the contents of the manorial court rolls, and then compared the names found there with those which appeared in the Huntingdonshire Lay Subsidy Rolls of 1327 and 1332. He believed that he had traced 52 of the 58 Broughton taxpayers of those years in the court rolls, and concluded that most of them came from the wealthiest stratum of the peasantry. Some less well-off Broughton peasants did pay, but their numbers were very limited. Members of the ruling class, nobles and gentry, were also liable to pay the taxes, but no laymen of this kind lived or had property in Broughton.

If these results were correct and could be applied to the country as a whole, then the great innovation of this period was to introduce a tax system which tapped the wealth of the rich peasants. Most of their poorer neighbours would seem to have been left outside the system, at least until local management of the tax burden was introduced in 1334 - when we cannot tell who paid and who did not - and perhaps until the Poll Tax of 1377, when nearly all adults were required to pay.

This was pioneering work of considerable importance, but the division of the peasantry which Britton used was of questionable value. It is probably best to divide peasants into three groups on the basis of their involvement in the markets for agricultural produce and for labour. ‘Rich peasants’ may be defined as those with plenty of land who were regularly producing corn and other goods for sale in the market place and regularly employing wage labour. ‘Middle peasants’ may be defined as those who were not regularly engaged in such activities, but who were basically self-sufficient with enough land to support their families. ‘Poor peasants’ may be defined as those with very little
land who regularly bought food and regularly worked for wages. These definitions owe much to work done on the late-nineteenth century Russian peasantry with which the names of V.I. Lenin and I.A. Hourwich are most readily associated. It should, perhaps, be stated that the validity of this approach was accepted by nearly all shades of political opinion.

Historians of medieval England have no records of how much produce rich peasants sent to market nor of how often poor peasants worked as day labourers, but they are usually able to divide the peasantry into three groups on the basis of how much land people held. Unfortunately, the Broughton court rolls have little to say about landholding, and Britton classified peasant families according to how many manor-court jury seats and local offices their members held and the lengths of time for which they seemed to have lived in the area. While there was a general tendency in the medieval village for rich peasants to have more influence than others, this approach is not satisfactory. There is always the risk that less well-off peasants who played a large part in local affairs might be put down as rich, while rich peasants who did not hold office or stay long in the village might be mis-classified as poor.

All students of the tax rolls have agreed that only tenants paid tax, but their estimates of what proportions of them paid are also open to question because of the methods used. Britton calculated that 40 per cent of Broughton tenants had paid, but the true total numbers of both taxpayers and tenants in the manor remain unclear. As we have seen, he reckoned that the 1327 and 1332 rolls together named 58 taxpayers, but J.A. Raftis and M.P. Hogan published those lists independently and suggested that there were a total of 65 taxpayers. Britton estimated the number of tenants from the numbers of surnames appearing in the court rolls, but Z. Razi took him (and other historians) to task for this faulty method which ignores the complicated behaviour of medieval surnames.

Other attempts have been made to calculate the proportions of tenants who paid these taxes, without analysing them in detail. Edwin DeWindt worked out that 44 per cent of tenants on Ramsey Abbey’s Manor of Holywell-cum-Needingworth (also in Huntingdonshire) had paid the 1327 and 1332 taxes, but he also tried to calculate numbers of tenants from numbers of surnames. Barbara Harvey compared sections of the 1332 Lincolnshire Lay Subsidy Roll with parts of the Prior of Spalding’s detailed surveys of his estates to argue that only c.26 per cent of Spalding householders and c.35 per cent of Pinchbeck ones paid tax. She assumed that the numbers of householders ‘had not changed significantly’ in the period between the surveys and the tax roll, but, as they are separated by 45 years of what may have been the most dramatic period of medieval demographic history before the advent of the great Black Death of 1348-1349, this seems rather a big assumption to make and the value of such figures must be questioned. Christopher Dyer’s method invites the same criticism, for he compared the 1327 Worcestershire Lay Subsidy Roll’s sections for the Bishop of Worcester’s manors of Alvechurch, Hampton, Hanbury and Hartlebury with the Bishop’s own surveys of 1299, again in the hope that the
numbers of tenants would not have changed much in the intervening years. His conclusion was that 41 per cent of tenants had paid tax.

My comparative study of the Thornbury taxpayers

I aimed to address the questions of who the taxpayers were and of what proportion of the tenant population they formed by making a comparative study of those on the Earl of Gloucester’s Manor of Thornbury in southern Gloucestershire. Some readers of this journal will be aware that I have made a study of this estate in the early fourteenth century. It has the best surviving collection of medieval records in that county, and by pure chance these begin in the year 1327, so that direct comparisons can be made with the Lay Subsidy Roll. None of the manorial surveys which survive provide a detailed and comprehensive list of local tenants, but there is an excellent series of manorial court rolls which are strongly concerned with landholding. They record many deaths of tenants and the transfers of land which followed these, and, in addition, c.650 other land transfers over a period of about twenty years. The approximate number of tenants was worked out and their names were recovered by following the histories of individual tenements in these records.

As noted at the start of this paper, the tax roll listed the names of 126 Thornbury taxpayers. I set out to follow these up in the manorial records, and found that no fewer than 109 of the 126 complete names could be traced there along with the surnames of a further 10 taxpayers.

This exercise produced some surprises. The taxpayers included the lord of the manor and plenty of rich peasants, as expected, but no fewer than 20 per cent of them were middle peasants and 27 per cent were poor ones. Also, the proportion of local tenants who paid tax was much higher than previous estimates from other estates, at c.63 per cent.

A sceptical reader might suggest that the proportion of tenants listed as taxpayers at Thornbury was higher than that at Broughton simply because substantial numbers of middle and poor peasants were taxed on one manor and not on the other. But is it likely that the Gloucestershire taxmen had discovered that there was money to be got out of such people while the Huntingdonshire ones had not? And, as mentioned earlier, the true social make-up of the Broughton taxpayers and the proportion of local tenants which they formed remain unclear.

Low tax and no tax

In fact, the detailed comparison revealed a complicated situation at Thornbury. Local taxpayers were drawn from all three peasant groups, but within each group there were many members who were not paying tax. These people could be identified clearly in the manorial records. Those who were poor peasants might have been exempt on the grounds that their movables were worth very little, but could this really have got sizeable numbers of rich and middle peasants out of paying?
Some readers may believe that this was simply the result of bribery and evasion, but I came to suspect that something more interesting was going on, and that the very low level of local tax assessments provided the key to it. Cases in the court rolls show that local people were well-equipped with livestock, and leave little doubt that corn production for the market was one of the rich peasants’ major activities. We might have expected them to pay substantial sums in tax. But in this year, when taxpayers were supposed to contribute a full one-twentieth of the value of their goods, only six Thornbury peasants paid 3s or more, and half of all the local taxpayers paid less than 12d!

Nor were such figures unusual at the time. By 1327, at least, taxpayers in the rest of Gloucestershire and in other counties were paying similar amounts. But it must be stressed that the peasants were not always let off lightly. Their tax assessments must have been far higher in the early 1290s, and J.R. Maddicott believes that the heaviest period of medieval taxation came in the late 1330s, by which time the record of individual payments was no longer made. At times the Lay Subsidies placed a great burden upon the peasantry. We must ask how that burden was distributed. And we must bear in mind that the payments which look very small would not have been insignificant in poor peasants’ terms.

To return to Thornbury, we must ask how it was that many local taxpayers came to pay suspiciously small sums. Only the lord of the manor’s movables can be valued with much claim to accuracy, because many of them are listed and valued in the 1327-1328 manorial account roll. His livestock and the corn which he had for sale must have been worth more than £50. As the 1327 tax was set at one-twentieth of the value of each person’s movables, he should have paid more than 50s to the Exchequer. But he was actually assessed to pay only 20s 2½d, and there is nothing in the account roll to suggest that his officials had bribed the taxmen.

Local rich peasants’ assessments were ridiculously small. Their average payment of 1s 9½d indicated a mean taxable wealth of twenty times that sum, i.e. of 36s. The manorial records provide many local prices, and that 36s would represent (say) two oxen and a good cow, allowing nothing for the value of their other livestock nor of the corn which they would have had for sale. Other peasants’ assessments were also certainly on the low side. Middle peasants had a mean tax assessment of 10½d, indicating mean taxable wealth of 17s 6d. That sum would represent (say) one ox and a farm horse. The poor peasants’ mean assessment of 10d would indicate mean taxable wealth of 16s 8d, representing (say) a horse and a dozen sheep.

It is not possible to show just how the subtaxers arrived at such low valuations. Most likely they were using the combination of conventional valuation, low valuation and the ignoring of some possessions which other taxmen are known to have employed elsewhere in this period. A rare set of detailed assessments from the West Riding shows that Yorkshire taxmen had not valued each taxpayer’s animals separately, as they should have done, but had gone round the dales counting most of the oxen as worth a standard 4s or 5s, most of the sheep as worth a standard 6d, and so on. They saved themselves a great deal
of work by employing these conventional values. And, as those figures indicate, the conventional values were also low values which kept down their neighbours' tax bills.

No evidence has been found that these practices were ever authorised in England, but when a Lay Subsidy was collected in Gwynedd in 1292-3 the Exchequer actually issued a list of conventional values for the taxmen to use.34 The rare surviving sets of detailed local assessments also sometimes show that very few of the inhabitants of a place paid any tax on corn for sale or on young animals, which suggests that substantial quantities of movables were simply being ignored.

The under-assessment of Thornbury taxpayers' goods suggests how the taxmen may have decided who would not be required to pay. Parliament had set 10s as the minimum value of goods to be taxed, and anyone worth less was to be let off. We may imagine the taxmen visiting the house and barn of a peasant who was less well-equipped than his neighbours or whose harvest had been less successful, and proceeding to value his taxable goods at conventional values, at low values, while also ignoring the existence of some of his things. If this process valued many of his neighbours' goods at only 15s or 20s (which we know was the case), might it not value his at less than 10s, making him exempt from paying any tax?

The question of rich peasants' taxable goods poses the strongest objection to this argument. One or two individual rich peasants may have suffered murrain among their animals or disaster to their crops, so that their goods really were worth very little.35 But there are a substantial number of rich peasants who appear in the court rolls but who cannot be traced in the tax roll. Why had they not paid?36 I suspect that the answer lies in members of the different groups being underassessed to very different degrees.

This is hard to prove properly, yet the figures are very suggestive. As stated above, the payments from taxpayers of each group indicated that the taxable goods of a poor peasant were worth a mean 16s 8d, those of a middle peasant a mean 17s 6d, and those of a rich peasant a mean 36s.37 Cases in the court rolls show that one of the better-off members of the poor peasant group (by 'better-off' I mean one of those who paid tax) might have a horse for draught work and a small flock of sheep. Smaller stock such as poultry and bees rarely appear in such sources and were not, in any case, usually taxed. Such a person would have been very unlikely to own an ox, which was expensive to buy, and would not have grown any corn for sale. His (or her) taxable goods might not have been worth much more than 20s in all honesty, so that an assessment of 16s 8d would represent 80 per cent or more of that value.

Middle peasants usually had oxen and often seem to have owned pairs of them. Whether they would have ploughed with two oxen or joined together with their neighbours to form larger teams is unclear. They sometimes had a horse and a cow, a few sheep and perhaps some pigs, though the numbers of these were always very limited. They would, again, have had smaller stock but probably no corn for sale. Such a person's taxable goods would clearly have
been worth much more than those of a poor peasant neighbour – perhaps nearer to 40s than 20s – so that the mean assessment of 17s 6d might represent only 50 per cent of their true value.

Rich peasants often appear to have owned four oxen or a full ploughteam of six (the local size), together with one or two horses. It was common for them to have one or two cows, but no more as these were kept largely to breed more oxen. Some had flocks of sheep, though the numbers of animals in these were counted in dozens rather than in hundreds, and small herds of swine. They also had smaller stock, but they were marked out from the other groups by the fact that they had corn for sale in the market. Unfortunately it is very difficult to estimate what quantities of the wheat, barley, oats, beans and peas which they grew would have been set aside for sale rather than for consumption by the peasant family and would thus have been taxable, but it is quite reasonable to estimate the value of the average rich peasant taxpayer’s livestock alone at 100s or more. The mean assessment of 36s made by the taxmen represents less than 40 per cent of that value, and an allowance for corn would probably reduce that figure considerably.

In short, it is likely that the taxpayers in each group were being under-assessed, but that they were under-assessed at very different rates. All of the figures above are speculative, and some readers may doubt their value. But, while recognising their limitations, I believe that they are useful in showing that the taxmen did treat different kinds of person in different ways. Rich peasants’ goods were under-assessed to a massive degree (more than those of the lord of the manor!) with the result that they paid very little tax. Readers will not be surprised to learn that the subtaxers, who were all amateurs, were often recruited from the ranks of the rich peasants. This may also explain why some members of that group paid no tax at all. Middle and poor peasants were under-assessed to lesser degrees.

Thus it may be that some members of each group did not pay tax because they were genuinely worse off than other group members, and after the taxmen had under-assessed the values of their goods the results came out as less than the magic figure of 10s. I tried to test this by comparing what the manorial records have to say about the taxpayers and non-payers in each group, but these do not provide lists of peasants’ animals and corn, so the task is difficult and the results are not so clear as one would wish. The rich peasants who paid the 1327 tax do appear to have been better off than the rich peasants who did not, but as one goes down the social scale it becomes progressively more difficult to spot any difference between taxpayers and non-payers.

Conclusion

The earlier Lay Subsidy Rolls – those from the years 1290-1332 – provide us with lists of thousands of names of taxpayers from each county, broken down by the places where their ‘movables’ were and which were, in practice, usually their places of residence.
The question of the demographic potential of these listings is a complicated one, to which a single study of this kind can provide only a partial answer. The Thornbury comparative study confirmed that nearly all of the taxpayers listed for a particular area can be found in the appropriate manorial records. For the first time, it was possible to show accurately just who these taxpayers were, and it was found that while many were rich peasants (as we might have expected) substantial numbers of middle and poor peasants were also paying tax. Results from a single estate must, of course, be treated with proper caution. But it is hard to believe that the Thornbury taxmen were the only ones who had discovered that it was worthwhile raising money from middle and poor peasants, and, in the absence of good evidence to the contrary, we can assume that it was the normal practice for many such people to pay tax. I would suggest that the great innovation of the period 1290-1332 was not merely that the crown had found a way to tap into the wealth of the rich peasants by means of these new and frequent taxes, but that it could tap into the resources of all three peasant groups.

The proportion of Thornbury tenants who paid tax was much higher than the figures which have been produced for other estates in Huntingdonshire, Lincolnshire and Worcestershire. The shortcomings in the methodologies of these earlier studies may be serious, yet it may be questioned whether they are severe enough to explain away the enormous differences in results between (say) Thornbury and the Prior of Spalding’s estates. The proportion of Thornbury tenants paying tax probably was substantially higher, reflecting the prosperity of this area. Because of this, it must be concluded that we cannot use the numbers of taxpayers listed in these tax rolls as a basis for estimating or comparing the sizes of local populations, except within very wide limits.

The picture of who paid tax and who did not is complicated and difficult to resolve without detailed local assessments of the kind which rarely survive. The low payments demanded at Thornbury (and elsewhere) leave no real doubt that there was under-assessment on a massive scale. Although they include a speculative element, the figures which I have given make it very likely that members of the different peasant economic groups were being under-assessed to very different degrees. And, although proof is difficult, it may be that this was the means by which substantial numbers of rich and middle peasants were able to avoid paying any tax at all. It is very hard to believe that the Exchequer did not know what was going on, and I have suggested elsewhere that it may have regarded the lost revenue as a price worth paying in return for the speedy collection of the Lay Subsidies and the lack of violent opposition to them.45

NOTES

4. Just what made a town into a taxation borough remains obscure, see J.F. Willard, 'Taxation boroughs and parliamentary boroughs, 1294-1336', in J.G. Edwards et al., eds Historical essays in honour of James Tait, (Manchester, 1933), 417-35. It is now recognised that the traditional definition of ancient demesne as land held by the crown when Edward the Confessor died was not always adhered to: M.A. Barg, 'The villeins of the "ancient demesne"', in L. de Rosa ed. Studi in Memoria di Federigo Melis, (Rome, 1978), i, 213-37.

5. Sir T. Phillippes, Gloucestershire subsidy roll, 1 Edward III. A.D. 1327, (Middle Hill Press, n.d.). I used the copy in Gloucester Central Library, and would like again to express my thanks to the library's staff for making me a photocopy of the complete book.


10. Events on Merton College's manor of Cuxham, Oxfordshire, where the manorial account rolls record payments made by the reeve in connection with the taxmen's visits, are often cited as clear proof of corruption, but some at least of these may have been legitimate contributions towards the taxmen's expenses, a matter about which we still know little. P.D.A. Harvey, A medieval Oxfordshire village. Cuxham 1240 to 1400, (Oxford, 1965), 104-9.


19. J.A. Raftis and M.P. Hogan, Early Huntingdonshire lay subsidy rolls, (Toronto, 1976), 23 Table III, 69-70, 95-4. Readers may like to compare their transcripts of the lists.


25. Staffordshire Record Office (SRO), D641/1/4C/1(iii), D641/1/4C/2.

26. The Lay Subsidy Roll divided Thornbury Manor into eight sections, namely Hope and Buckover, Kingston, Morton, Woolford's Mill, Oldbury on Severn with the Marsh, Cowhill, Falfield, and Sibland and Oldland. The list headed 'Thornbury' covers the borough and so its names were not included, except for that of the lord of the manor which appeared at its head.

27. 121 Thornbury peasants paid tax, the other taxpayers being the lord and four gentry, and I estimate the number of tenants at c.190-195.

28. Reflected in the figures in Franklin, 'Heriots and deaths', 72 Table 1.

30. For details see Franklin, *Taxpayers of medieval Gloucestershire*, 17-18, Table 4.
31. See note 10 above.
32. Good oxen were worth a mark (13s 4d), cows from 6s 8d to 10s, horses only a few shillings, sheep and pigs about 1s; a quarter of wheat was worth 4s or 5s, barley 3s or 4s, oats 2s to 2s 8d, beans and peas 2s to 3s.
33. W. Brown ed. *Yorkshire lay subsidy being a ninth collected in 25 Edward I (1297)*, *Yorkshire Archaeological Society Record Series*, 16 (1894), xxiv-xxvii. Corn was valued in the same way.
35. Thornbury manorial records suggest that a good recovery had been made from the effects of the Great Famine which had begun in 1315 (see I. Kershaw, ‘The great famine and agrarian crisis in England 1315-1322’, *Past and Present*, 59 (1973), 3-50). It would be dangerous to connect low 1327 tax payments in any county with the Famine.
36. It could always be argued that particular people had not been taxed at Thornbury in 1327 because they were in-migrants who arrived after that date. I have recognised a group of 19 rich peasants who did not pay tax. A slightly higher proportion of them than of the rich peasants who paid taxes appeared in the defective extent of the manor which was made for the crown in 1322 (26 per cent as against 22 per cent). The surviving manorial court rolls begin in October 1328 and these non-payers were only a little slower in appearing in those records than were the payers. At the end of two years, 89 per cent of the non-payers and 90 per cent of the taxpayers had appeared.
37. The lord of the manor’s goods should have been worth £20 4s 2d, as he paid 20s 2.5d tax on them.
38. Taxpayers were assessed on the amount of corn they had had at the previous Michaelmas, i.e. when the harvest was in and barns were at their fullest.
39. Say 4 oxen at 13s 4d; 1 cow at 6s 8d; 1 horse at 5s; 30 sheep at 1s; 10 swine at 1s; total 105s.
40. Fuller results of this project will be found in Franklin, *Taxpayers of medieval Gloucestershire*. 
DISTRIBUTION AND PERSISTENCE OF SURNAMES IN A YORKSHIRE DALE, 1500-1750

Maurice Turner

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Introduction

The current debate on the topic of 'cultural provinces'\(^1\) raises the question of whether, in some areas, they were not composed of a myriad of mini-cultures. A powerful image that comes to mind in this connection is the much-quoted story of the Elizabethan Sir Christopher Metcalfe, of Nappa Hall in upper Wensleydale, who rode to York Assizes accompanied by 300 mounted followers of his name or kin. It is not necessary to accept the story in its entirety to wonder how it was possible for such a legend to arise. A generation or two earlier, though Metcalfe was by far the most common surname among those mustered by Sir James Metcalfe on Middleham Moor in 1535, they numbered only 12 individuals.\(^2\) Do we write off the story as hopelessly exaggerated, or is it possible that the Metcalfes had prospered mightily in the circumstances of the mid-sixteenth century?

This was a time when certain surnames proliferated and came to dominate particular parts of the dales, and in most cases those names are still present – though in much smaller numbers than formerly. The trend was certainly not confined to Wensleydale, and the present work is centred on nearby Nidderdale, but the crucial question is how it came about that so many people in regions of sparse population bore the same name and saw kinship as the linch-pin of their society. Intuitively, it may seem inevitable, given the restriction of narrow valleys bounded by mountains to ensure insularity and consequent inbreeding, but was this really the explanation? The assumption should at least be tested since relationships noted in wills and probate inventories suggest that social contacts across the watershed were more frequent than we might expect. This article reports the research conducted by a joint WEA – Leeds University extra-mural evening class held in Nidderdale, where the early modern population was even more thin on the ground than in Wensleydale, and was mainly dispersed. The class was concerned with the period 1500-1750 throughout Nidderdale and the adjacent Washburn valley.

Even a limited acquaintance with Tudor and Stuart sources for Nidderdale makes it clear that, in certain parts of the dale, some surnames were extremely common. Near the dale head one could not escape the Baynes and the Horners, just as the adjoining dale head of the Washburn was the province of the Gills. In central Nidderdale the Hardcastles – still commemorated by the former
Quaker settlement of Hardcastle Garth – held sway, but where the dales gave way to the lowlands there was a much greater range of surnames, none of them being outstandingly prevalent. Insistent questions come to mind. Was this a temporary phenomenon or a traditional state of affairs? How many of these surnames (if any) arose in the dale and when did others arrive? Why did the pattern eventually disappear? There are questions of methodology too; such as the best sources to use, and how best to calculate the prevalence of surnames.

Some of the names, notably Beckwith, Clint, Farnell, Hardisty, and Thackwray, appear in the local Poll Tax return for 1379, and may well have originated in the dale. Others, such as Askwith, Craven, Kettlewell and Coverdale, clearly did not, since they refer to places some distance away. Although the names which later became dominant were by no means all present in the late fourteenth century (when most surnames had become hereditary), there was no sudden influx at any particular time. It is likely that generally-applicable names like Gill or Grange, Smith or Waite, came into widespread use after originating in a number of different ways. There were certainly no outstandingly common names among the taxpayers of 1379, so the objective was to show how and when dominance was achieved by particular surnames.

**Lay Subsidy of 1546**

The earliest comprehensive lists of tenants do not appear locally until the sixteenth century. A rental of 1526 for Knaresborough Forest (which included a large part of lower Nidderdale) revealed six branches of the Skaife family in the small township of Birstwith, and six branches of the Beckwiths in Killinghall. For Nidderdale as a whole though, there is no single source until the Lay Subsidy of 1546. Even then, it listed only the better-off, taxpayers being very thin on the ground in the upper reaches of the dale.

It is, nevertheless, the most complete list available for this period, and has the advantage of revealing the surnames present when monastic estates in the upper dale were being broken up – an event which might have been expected to make it easier for new settlers to get a foothold. As it happens the whole of Nidderdale, together with nearly all the Washburn valley, was held by just a handful of landlords until 1540. The crown lands of Knaresborough Forest occupied much of the southern and western part of the dale, but since monastic property in the Forest was confined to a few properties in Hampsthwaite, belonging to Saint Robert’s priory at Knaresborough, the Dissolution made only a minimal impact here. There was a rather larger effect in Bishop Thornton and Bishopside north of the river, which were held by the Archbishop of York as part of his Lordship of Ripon until its confiscation in 1647, since it included some monastic farms. The biggest change of ownership though, was of estates in the upper dale, held by Fountains and Byland abbeys until the Dissolution.

The names of taxpayers in the Lay Subsidy of 1546, when listed by townships (see Figure 1), show no particular pattern on comparing one group of surnames with the rest. Moreover, if townships are collected together into lordships there is no perceptible tendency for particular surnames to be confined by manorial boundaries. But there is a trend towards different groups of surnames emerging
in each parish, even when the lordships extended over several parishes or, 
more surprisingly, when a parish was divided between two lordships. The term 
'parish' is being used here in a very general sense, for most northern parishes 
were very large and groups of surnames tended to be associated with each 
chapel-of-ease, both in this preliminary study and later. Each such constituent 
parochial chapelry typically contained several townships. A link between 
surnames and places of worship suggests, perhaps, that important social 
contacts were made in this way, though it will emerge that other factors came 
into it as well.

Pateley chapelry (in Ripon parish), for example, had a common pool of 
surnames even though two of its townships had been in monastic hands and a 
third had been part of the Archbishop of York’s estates. The surnames Collyer, 
Gill, Hardcastle and Smith between them accounted for 40 per cent of all 
taxpayers here, yet these names were virtually unrepresented in the adjoining 
chapelry of Middlemoor (in the parish of Kirkby Malzeard), where the Bayne 
family alone comprised 30 per cent of taxpayers. A strong hint relative to the 
early association of surnames with chapels-of-ease appears in the fact that, 
when Middlemoor chapel was built in 1484, the names of the founders were 
given as Ralph Bayne, John Bayne, Miles Bayne and Ralph Bayne junior, ‘with 
the rest of the inhabitants of the Vale of Middlemoor’. Parochial solidarity is 
shown in 1608, too, in a Star Chamber complaint of incitement to riot. It was 
made in Kirkby Malzeard parish church, resulting in 400 parishioners 
destroying a recent enclosure of 220 acres at Skelding. Even allowing for much 
exaggeration, a high proportion of parishioners was evidently involved.⁶

Parish registers

Conclusions drawn on the basis of the Lay Subsidy of 1546, though necessary 
to demonstrate the situation at an early date, are open to the objection that they 
feature only relatively prosperous families. To establish more firmly the 
connection between families sharing a limited group of surnames and their 
chapelries, for the whole community rather than taxpayers alone, it is necessary 
to use parish registers. In this area, that means delaying a full analysis until the 
seventeenth century. Watson, in his study of surname distribution in 
Cambridgeshire parishes, contrasted the absence of unusually common 
surnames there with the situation in the parish of Colne, Lancashire.⁷ He 
showed that, in the latter case, the ten most common surnames comprised no 
less than 34 per cent of the whole, one surname alone contributing 9.9 per cent. 
His analysis was based on an index of entries in the published parish register 
for Colne, 1599-1653, but because baptisms, burials and marriages were all 
included, it was impossible to distinguish between single people and heads of 
families.

Since only two of the parish registers used had been published, and the rest 
had to be transcribed, it appeared to be little extra work to count family heads 
(defined here as those men or women having children baptized or buried 
within a period of ten years). Though clearly incomplete, the numbers will be 
comparable, and have the advantage of excluding those single adults appearing 
in the burial register who, in this area, were quite often casual industrial
Table 1  Changing proportion of family heads with the ten most common early seventeenth century surnames, over the next century

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parish</th>
<th>Early 17th century</th>
<th>Mid to late-17th c.</th>
<th>Early 18th century</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hampsthwaite parish (%)</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>24.0</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family heads (n)</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>202</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ripley parish (%)</td>
<td>26.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family heads (n)</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pateley chapelry (%)</td>
<td>23.0</td>
<td>16.0</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family heads (n)</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>352</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  F. Collins ed., Hampsthwaite parish register. YPRS. Volume 13 (1902) and Pateley and Ripley parish registers (untranscribed), North Yorkshire County Record Office, nos.567-9 and 791.

workers. Like the in-servants and farm labourers found in such numbers in lowland England, they were likely to be the most mobile element of the population. When family heads were counted for Hampsthwaite, Ripley, and Pateley during three well-spaced decades between 1615 and 1745, it turned out that the ten most common surnames comprised at least 20 per cent of all names in each chapelry until after 1700, except in fast-growing Pateley. Pateley chapelry acquired a group of new surnames in the late seventeenth century, largely as a result of an increase in lead mining activity on Greenhow Hill. Miners were attracted from other areas, such as Derbyshire, bringing with them unfamiliar names – many of which disappeared again c.1730 when the mines became less profitable. Table 1 certainly under-estimates the effect of this temporary boom, since many mining families must have attended the flourishing Presbyterian church on Greenhow Hill, and some failed to have their children baptized in the Church of England.

No doubt this happened in other parts of the dale as well, but here the growth of rural industry did not attract incomers. On the contrary, the dual economy encouraged the employment and subsequent settlement of children from poorer local families. Production of textiles, linen in particular, had grown rapidly as flax became available from the Baltic, via Hull, and local markets began to deal in linen cloth on an increasing scale. The frequency with which looms were mentioned in probate inventories escalated in lower Nidderdale, and weaver-testators not uncommonly bequeathed a loom to each of several sons. There can be no doubt that this aided the importance of long-established families until after 1700, when the lower dale became more open to outside influences. In Hampsthwaite parish, the dominance of the major families declined fairly rapidly after this date, but they held out much longer in Ripley, as Table 1 shows.

The formerly monastic upper dale, which had even more persistent surnames, unfortunately has no surviving register until 1700. But probate sources suggest that the key to the persistence and abundance of certain surnames in particular locations lay in opportunities for sons (rather than daughters) to settle in the area where they grew up. Though the upper dale was too remote from markets
for the dual economy to operate, there was ample land, and the inheritance custom (nominally primogeniture) was easily circumvented. Other opportunities arose on account of the Dissolution of the Monasteries which, surprisingly, attracted very few incomers, but the opportunities were not confined to those parts of the dale which had been in monastic hands. It seems that a climate of change was fostered and spread rapidly, not only there but also in the Archbishop of York's estates and in Knaresborough Forest. The Forest experienced particularly extensive encroachment by cottagers on its vast unenclosed commons. Yet, as in the upper dale, there is very little evidence of incomers settling there, for it has been shown that most encroachment was intended to provide for members of existing families, whether younger sons, widows, spinsters, or retired family heads.¹³

**Hearth Tax returns**

For these reasons, each part of the dale had its own group of surnames during the period 1550-1700. Confirmation of the fact is obtainable from the names given in the Hearth Tax return for Lady Day 1672, though it is not an ideal source on several counts.¹⁴ Family reconstitution for the five townships which comprised Hampsthwaite parish showed that as many as 35 per cent of adult males resident at that time failed to appear in the return, either as taxpayers or as exemptions. Many of the missing individuals do appear, however, as landless cottagers (or cottage-encroachers) on lists of those fined for illegal encroachment on the commons in April 1671.¹⁵ Though not liable for the tax, they were omitted from all surviving local returns (that is, those of 1664, 1666, and 1672) in spite of a specific order that they should be listed.¹⁶ The recording of some landlords' names rather than those of the occupiers, together with shared occupancy, may be responsible for the omission of the remainder. Fortunately cottagers' surnames were often the same as those of their tax-paying neighbours, so that the value of the tax return as a source of surnames becomes less dubious.

As it happens, a transcript of the return for Claro Wapentake (of which Nidderdale formed part) has recently been made from the copy at the Public Record Office.¹⁷ It does suffer from the disadvantage that it is a contemporary copy from a local return now at Wakefield, by a scribe who was not conversant with local names. As a result he made errors, as well as omissions, which had to be corrected before analysis was begun. Fortunately, family reconstitutions provided a check-list of names which made it clear the local copy was both accurate and more complete. On account of the large number of names available from the Hearth Tax return, it is permissible to use an established statistical technique for examining the data.¹⁸ It involves matching the surnames from each parish with its neighbours, and calculating a so-called 'coefficient of relationship by isonymy' Ri, expressing the degree of sharing of surnames. For Nidderdale, where parishes were much too large to be useful units, our chosen source made use of their constituent townships, a total of 24 being taken into consideration. Their locations are shown in Figure 1.

The first finding was a confirmation that the highest values of the coefficient Ri came from pairs of townships which shared a chapel-of-ease, while much lower
Table 2  Representative values of the coefficient Ri, expressing the degree of sharing of surnames between townships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adjoining townships within a chapelry</th>
<th>Ri per 100,000</th>
<th>Adjoining townships across chapelry boundaries</th>
<th>Ri per 100,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fountains Earth and Stonebeck Up</td>
<td>1180</td>
<td>Fountains Earth and Bishopside</td>
<td>515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bewerley and Bishopside</td>
<td>690</td>
<td>Bewerley and Stonebeck Down</td>
<td>477</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birstwith and Fellisciffe</td>
<td>884</td>
<td>Birstwith and Clint</td>
<td>360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampsthwaite and Birstwith</td>
<td>852</td>
<td>Hampsthwaite and Ripley</td>
<td>417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Killinghall and Ripley</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>Killinghall and Pannal</td>
<td>195</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwood and Fewston</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>Norwood and Pannal</td>
<td>185</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: As defined by Souden and Lasker, Ri is a coefficient of relationship by isonymy. Isonymy means ‘having the same surname’, so that Ri is a measure of the frequency with which surnames are repeated in different places – in this case the lists of Hearth taxpayers, by townships.


values characterized adjoining townships which crossed such boundaries, as shown in Table 2. What this means in practice is that fairly small groups of names were found to be associated with each chapelry, Fountains Earth having more than twice as many surnames shared with Stonebeck Up as with Bishopside, for example. This tendency persisted even to the extent of distinguishing chapelry from chapelry within a parish. In Thornthwaite chapelry (part of Hampsthwaite parish) the surnames were quite distinct, not only from adjoining townships in Pateley chapelry, but even from the rest of its own parish. To take an extreme instance, one third of the seventeenth century taxpayers in Thruscross chapelry were named Gill, yet the name does not even feature among the four most common in adjoining Fewston parish, of which Thruscross formed part. Perversely, we find Thornthwaite and Thruscross sharing surnames across the intervening watershed – but they had a lot in common including, in the seventeenth century, a shared curate.

Further down the dale, Ripley parish, which never had a chapel-of-ease, contained a quite different group of names from those of Hampsthwaite parish on one side, or Pannal parish on the other. The presence of the river could possibly have been a factor here. So far from Nidderdale being a cultural whole, it seems there were no more shared surnames from place to place along the dale than there were across its watershed, in keeping with the pattern of
Notes: The area shown as ‘Brimham’ on the map became the parish of Hartwith in 1750. It was not officially a parish in 1672, and to call it Hartwith would be misleading. But it was recommended for parochial status in 1647, communion being held and children baptised there throughout the later seventeenth century. It therefore functioned as a chapel in 1672, as it had before the Reformation, and for the purpose of this map its old title has been reinstated.
medieval roads. Relationships across watersheds, facilitated by such roads, have been demonstrated for Wharfedale, by Maltby, on the evidence of marriage partners rather than surnames.19

Dominant surnames

Figure 2 shows, in addition to chapelry boundaries differentiating the surname groups, the dominant names appearing in each as a percentage of all taxpayer’s surnames, where the mean number of names was 124 per chapelry (ranging from 50 in Bishop Thornton to 231 in Pateley). The highest proportion is found, unsurprisingly, at the remote dale heads of Throntwaite beck, the Washburn, and the Nidd. It would be easy to dismiss the outstanding numbers of Horners and Cravens, Holmes and Gills, as due to isolation and consequent inbreeding, but the evidence proves otherwise. For the bequests made by dale-head folk in their wills show that their marriage partners had often come over the watershed from Wharfedale or Coverdale – as did farm servants. It is quite remarkable that there was so little contact (in terms of shared surnames at least) with adjoining chapelries down the dale, but it is worth noting that even early turnpike roads avoided this valley bottom.

Two families look like the exceptions required to prove the rule. The Hardcastles formed 17 per cent of taxpayers in Brimham ‘chapel’ but also 8 per cent of those in the adjoining chapelry of Pateley, while the Waites formed 14 per cent and 7 per cent of Thornthwaite and Hampsthwaite respectively. In fact both families were exceptionally localized, being confined to a few hamlets near the chapelry boundaries. Family reconstitution shows no less than eleven branches of the Waites in Padside, Menwith, Swarcliffe and Felliscliffe in the 1670s, within an area of perhaps ten square kilometres, while the Hardcastles were confined almost exclusively to just two hamlets.

Hardcastle Garth, in Hartwith, speaks for itself, and comprised five taxpayers of that name living in close proximity, while a further four paying branches of the family were either at Dacre or at Dacre Banks. Neither of these hamlets was more than three kilometres from Hardcastle Garth and the chapelry boundary separating them was of no significance, because most of the Hardcastles had transferred by this time to the Quaker faith. It could therefore be argued that their tendency to live unusually close to their kin was a direct result of religious persecution. The presence of former Quaker burial grounds associated with each settlement is a pointer in this direction. But this explanation is flatly contradicted by the Waites, who seem always to have adhered to the Church of England, yet whose horizons were almost as limited within the period we are examining as those of the Hardcastles. The apparent dispersion of Hardcastles and Waites across chapelry boundaries in 1672 is therefore an anomaly which serves to strengthen, if anything, the general rule that family names were limited until c.1700 to small areas of the dale.

The other aspect of shared surnames revealed by the map is that, though certain small groups of surnames dominated the more remote chapelries, those nearer the mouth of the dale – while still differing in their surnames from neighbouring chapelries – had none that was outstandingly common. This is
quite evident in Bishop Thornton, in Pannal, and in Ripley. The only surname relating to as many as 6 per cent of taxpayers in Ripley parish, for example, was Reynold(s) or its alternative form Reynard. At first sight this contradicts the evidence in Table 1 that Ripley maintained the level of its ten most common surnames longer than other places in the dale. In fact, though, the two sources relate to rather different groups in the community: a difference much more evident in Ripley than elsewhere.

Diverse experiences

What is highlighted in Ripley parish is the differing experience of two status groups. The first consisted of long-established families bearing the most common surnames, headed by the Ingilbys of Ripley castle, a county family with extensive estates. Together they were able to maintain their little group of surnames at the level of 20 per cent of all surnames until long after 1700. But it was the other 80 per cent which dominated the lists of Hearth Taxpayers, and in Ripley this group was much more diverse in respect of its surnames than comparable groups in other parts of the dale. No doubt this was partly due to the Ingilbys themselves, who inadvertently introduced many new surnames, whether employees or farm tenants. A secondary factor was Ripley’s situation at the crossing of major north-south and east-west roads, which not only made it easier for new blood to be introduced, but also encouraged youngsters to leave the district. This encouragement was exceptionally strong during the civil war, for the period 1641-1660 witnessed a fall of more than 10 per cent in parish population.

Neither of these factors was present in the adjoining parish of Hampsthwaite, where the population rose due to natural growth during the same period, and yielded five different surnames in competition in 1672 (as shown in Figure 2), none of which became outstandingly prominent. Their proportions were small compared to the chapelries of the upper dale, and were kept that way by a high degree of short-range mobility. Nevertheless, nearly 60 per cent of all Hampsthwaite surnames present during the period 1621-1635 were still there during 1651-1665, compared to the much lower level (just over 40 per cent) which survived over the same period in Ripley parish.\(^{20}\) Hampsthwaite parish register does feature some new surnames from outside the parish but they were usually transient, appearing among the marriages when bridegrooms from elsewhere married local girls, who then settled in the husband’s home parishes and raised families there.

It is now possible to conclude that, apart from Bishop Thornton, Pannal, and Ripley, the explanation for both the high proportion of certain surnames in the upper dales, and the moderate levels lower down, seems to stem from circumstances which allowed new settlement by sons other than the eldest in places where there was land to spare. This has been shown to give rise to family groups within chapelries, becoming more pronounced as time went by from 1546 to 1672, but there are hints, too, of even higher concentrations in certain hamlets. Nor were they confined to the Hardcastles and the Waites, for while the Horners formed 28 per cent of taxpayers in Middlemoor chapelry as a whole, there was a tightly-knit group of 12 Horner families on the former
Byland granges near the source of the Nidd. The Horners, in fact, took over from the Bainens on many of these farms between 1546 and 1672.

The former Byland estates seem to have nurtured such families more successfully than did the Fountains granges. Tenants of Bylands Earth claimed to hold by Tenant Right, where inheritance had been almost guaranteed on favourable terms (and sub-division of farms was clearly permitted) in exchange for a customary duty of defending the Scottish border. Tenants of Fountains Earth, however, on account of the close control exerted by the nearby abbey and because monastic stock was still kept there, suffered some erosion of Tenant Right. As a result, there was a general move towards leasehold tenancies (incomplete by the time of the Dissolution), which sometimes allowed subdivision, but especially forbade subletting. The Fountains lodges therefore tended to remain large, and were worked with the assistance of unmarried youngsters who rarely had the opportunity of acquiring farms of their own in the upper dale – in contrast to the situation in Bylands Earth.

After the Dissolution of the Monasteries the new landlords, who were agreed on the need for more tenants to enhance their rents, differed in their approach to this end. Former Byland estates were strictly controlled by a resident lord of the manor, whereas the Fountains lands were developed in piecemeal fashion, but both methods allowed population density to increase by 1672 to more than twice the level present before 1540. The consequence in terms of surnames was that the successors of Byland tenants were able to establish their names ever more firmly, while those on former Fountains estates were more likely to change or disappear.

Conclusions

Further research would of course be necessary to determine the reasons for the occurrence of dominant surnames in other areas of the Yorkshire Dales. Clearly, a surplus of land and favourable tenurial conditions often played a part (as did the availability of by-employment in some places), in ensuring that several sons from a single family could settle in the locality where they grew up. Kinship ties within each chapelry were therefore as likely to be economic as social in origin. The period of dominance by established families reached a peak after the Dissolution (though never confined to former monastic lands). It continued for as long as conditions were favourable but suffered a severe setback after the Restoration, when family size declined and the national population growth rate fell to zero. Under these circumstances as many as 40 per cent of fathers had no son to succeed them, and their surnames disappeared. There were local differences nevertheless, dominant surnames persisting longest in the upper dale, but even there they came to an end by the mid-eighteenth century.

As to the assumed insularity of the dale heads, it now appears that even watersheds as high as those of Nidderdale (averaging 600 metres in its upper reaches) proved no barrier to the people who lived there – however daunting they may have seemed to strangers. The dale head communities, having little contact with the lower dales, may have joined with each other to form a different kind of ‘frontier zone’ to that envisaged in recent work at Leicester,
united, rather than divided, by difficulties of access. They maintained contact (using the network of routes across the watersheds), with families in distant parts, with whom they intermarried, yet the same group of relatively well-to-do families which existed in 1546 was still there in 1672 (and even later). The fortunes of individual family names inevitably waxed and waned, Baines declining in numbers as Horners prospered, for example. But the key to the overall influence of such families lay not in marriages within the dale, but in the union of their sons with the daughters of families of similar status elsewhere. Their subsequent settlement near the husband’s birthplace could almost be taken for granted.

NOTES

5. Knaresborough Court Rolls for 1526, Public Record Office (hereafter PRO), London, DL30/490/18, also Lay Subsidy of 1545/6 for Claro Wapentake, West Riding, PRO, E179/207/191.
16. Schürer and Arkell, Surveying the people, 45.
20. F. Collins ed., Hampsthwaite parish register, Yorkshire Parish Records Society, volume 13 (1902) and Ripley parish register (untranscribed), North Yorkshire County Record office, no.791.
Socio-economic change in Burley-in-Wharfedale

Burley-in-Wharfedale is located on the south side of the river Wharfe some twelve miles north-west of Leeds and ten north of Bradford in the old county of Yorkshire. It was until the mid-nineteenth century part of the parish of Otley from whose centre it is two miles distant. The old township of Burley essentially covered two villages, Burley itself in the bottom of the valley and Burley Woodhead, three-quarters of a mile to the south on the side of Rombalds Moor. Both, until the eighteenth century, were farming villages, with sheep and cattle pasturing in valley meadows and on the moor, and some arable crops on the lower lands, in small farms. Towards the end of that century what had been a domestic textile economy began to be subject to small scale capital investment in mills, using water power for scribbling and spinning. Small mills were involved in woollen and cotton processing in Burley Woodhead, and in the lower and larger village, cotton mills were established alongside a goit taking water from the Wharfe, in the last decade of the century.

The technological shift from domestic to mill production was accompanied by social change in the nineteenth century as the recruitment of labour for the mills cut down the status of the local cottage textile crafts, and created a new labouring class of mill operatives. Further, at the level of master, it introduced a new stratum of mill-owners and took away the status of landowners and farmers as the sole employers of labour. By 1841 already a major differentiation between Woodhead and the lower village was created. The former, probably because of its hilly position and poor communications, never took off as an industrial village, whereas the other quickly grew with the relative success of its cotton mill. The one stagnated and the other began to experience the effects of industrialisation. The building of new mills in the lower village, after William Fison and William Edward Forster took over and turned to the spinning of worsted yarns and the manufacture of worsted goods, was accompanied by population growth. Burley-in-Wharfedale became more urbanised and under the influence of the new owners some aspects of self-government through the creation of a local board of health followed. As can be seen from Table 1, the largest inter-censal rise in population occurred between 1851 and 1861. It is also interesting to note that the predominance of females over males lasts throughout the period, and while many reasons can be
Table 1  Population totals, male and female, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1841</th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1891</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Males</td>
<td>590</td>
<td>667</td>
<td>858</td>
<td>924</td>
<td>1025</td>
<td>1116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Females</td>
<td>791</td>
<td>823</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>1190</td>
<td>1228</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1381</td>
<td>1490</td>
<td>1761</td>
<td>1951</td>
<td>2215</td>
<td>2344</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: The Census Enumerators’ Books for the two enumeration districts covering Burley-in-Wharfedale, from 1841 to 1891.3

adduced for this, the strongest we assume is the availability of employment for women in the local mills.3

Using the Census Enumerators’ Books for the study of social change

Analysing the data in the Census Enumerators’ Books for Burley between 1841 and 18914 we find a predominantly immigrant population, with a declining proportion of locals (born in Burley) and near locals (those from contiguous parishes or within five miles of Burley). The migrants were however predominantly Yorkshire born, many coming from lead-mining districts to the north, and from other textile towns in West Yorkshire. An increasing proportion came from the south and west Midlands, and among these were six families from Wellington in Somerset, a textile town in the south-west of England.5

The number of studies of local population and social change using a series of Census reports is growing.6 Wrigley and Schofield, and Anderson, have summarised the changes in demography and the social implications of population change in the centuries up to and including the great burst of industrialization and economic development.7 They point to population growth as being the chief characteristic of population change. The population of England doubled between 1750 and 1850 (and doubled again between 1850 and 1950) so causing immense strains on social institutions.8 Chiefly this meant the movement to and growing concentration of people in areas of expanding trade and industry, but with no immediately large decline in rural areas, except in Scotland. It was the burgeoning of towns that was most marked, and of course it was there that problems of health and disease led to calls for Public Health measures. It was not until later in the nineteenth century that fairly stable industrial communities came to be established. Burley seems to fit with this general trend.

Social stratification and social mobility

Few local population studies have, however, attempted to discuss the changing social structure of nineteenth century communities in terms of their social class composition. In twentieth century sociological analyses the study of social stratification is often accompanied by social mobility studies.9 In such surveys,
after questioning large numbers of living representative individuals, usually men, about their social class of origin and their experiences of social class membership themselves, researchers have shown that classes have not been significantly eroded. There has, however, been much flow between classes and the size of classes has changed relative to each other.\textsuperscript{10} This tends to refute both the hypotheses of early theorists and popular myths such as that embodied in the American 'rags to riches' dream, that modern industrial societies would experience large scale upward social mobility. Was the situation any different in the nineteenth century?

It is not easy to carry out such studies retrospectively after the death of individuals, except through painstaking and unrepresentative studies of personal biographies. Some limited light, however, can be shed on nineteenth century social mobility by reference to the Census Enumerators' Books over a period such as 1841 to 1891, by taking note of the occupations of individuals who are present, in each of the census years. A study of this kind was carried out in the United States by Stephan Thernstrom.\textsuperscript{11} It has been criticised for drawing conclusions from relatively small numbers of cases, but claimed to show that the 'American Dream' did not correspond to the reality of experience in nineteenth century Newburyport, Massachusetts.

A major problem which arises is that individuals do not necessarily stay in the same locality from one census to the next. Thernstrom found that only 32 per cent of the 1850 population of male workers was present a decade later. It is difficult to pursue individuals who are geographically mobile to find out in which Book they will occur in the next Census.\textsuperscript{12} In focussing on a village community we can easily follow the lives of those who remain in it during a succession of Censuses. Again of course they may not be representative of those who do not stay, but they seem to more representative of the population than a study relying on personal biographies, which by their nature are much more likely to be of the more wealthy educated members of nineteenth century communities. It is difficult, too, to trace women through the Census Enumerators' Books, unless they remain single, or have an unmarried sister living with them after marriage, providing a clue to their previous surname.\textsuperscript{13} Death, too, was much more likely to cut short lives, so that the numbers of subjects for analysis will be reduced.

For our purposes in both our analysis of changing social structure and social mobility, we have assumed social classes to be composed of households having common economic status. Further we assume that the status of the household is best indicated by the occupational status of the head of household, using other information such as size of house and composition of the household, to add clarity to distinctions made between heads of households. We have found 57 heads of households, out of 500 in Burley in 1891, who can be traced back from 1891 to either 1851 or 1841. The results of this investigation in terms of origins and destinations are discussed later. First we must examine the changing class structure.

The most obvious problem for the analysis of change in the class structure is to devise an adequate method of presenting social classes using the data from
Census Enumerators' Books, without the discussion and the justification of the method becoming the whole work. Further there are difficult problems in allocating heads of households to class categories using the occupational data which is given in the Census Enumerators' Books. One of the most recent papers to address these issues points to the value of comparing the occupational data given in the Census Enumerators' Books with information available in local Trade Directories. Using such comparative material, D. and J. Mills argue that distinctions can be made between people listed say as joiners or dress-makers, as on the one hand masters/mistresses and on the other, journeymen or women. This distinction between employers and employees enables allocation to different social classes, the employers obviously being likely to enjoy a higher social status than the employees. In fact the Mills allocate such craftspeople employers to Class II of the Armstrong modified Registrar General Social Classification, labelling them 'intermediate, including employers of at least one hand', whilst the rest are allocated to Class III, who are manual and non-manual skilled employees. Not using some such basis for classification would tend to over-populate Class III, since until 1891, when employment status was categorised, the information given in the Census Enumerators' Books is about their occupation as craftspeople or traders.

For our purposes, however, in attempting to provide an overview of social change in a local industrial community, the categories used in such classifications tend to miss important groups of household heads. Many studies, including some of the most recent sociological discussions about the measurement of social class, start by offering a wide variety of categories, and collapse them into a smaller set that more nearly equates with taken-for-granted, everyday class groupings. The Registrar General's classes are now based in a much revised set of occupational classifications, which are first grouped into socio-economic groups and then finally into social classes. In the five main social class categories, used as the basis for discussion in Mills' article, farmers are not put into a separate grouping and there is no reference to heads of households who have no occupation recorded, because of retirement, widowhood or unemployment. The argument for sticking with a modified Registrar General set of categories is that a classification of local populations which is comparable with that of other localities is then possible. If, however, significant groups are missing or submerged within other classes, the comparison becomes meaningless.

Occupation and status groups

What we have done, noting many of the difficulties which the Mills outline, is to devise a class schema which seems meaningful in the context of an industrializing village in the nineteenth century. After all, such localities were very numerous and the schema can be used by others wishing to compare localities using data derived form the same sources. Initially we devised a thirteen-fold classification in what we thought was a rough order of status:

1. Landowners and gentry living in the large houses.
2. The professions such as clergy, lawyers and doctors.
3. Farmers.
4. Manufacturers, managers of large concerns and merchants.
5. Teachers, clerks and other white collar employees.
6. Artisans employing other workers, supervisors of employees.
7. Shopkeepers, other traders and agents of trading companies.
8. Textile operatives, at all levels of skill.
9. Other industrial manual employees, apprentices and labourers.
10. Farm labourers.
11. Domestic Servants, indoor and outdoor.
12. Miscellaneous employees such as toll-keepers and soldiers.
13. Not employed, including women at home, the unemployed and retired.

We used trade directories to help make distinctions between master craftsmen and journeymen, allocating the latter to category nine. This was also useful in distinguishing between shopkeepers and shopworkers. We found too that overlookers (shop-floor supervisors) in the mills sometimes enter the later Trade Directories and we have therefore distinguished them from all other textile operatives and put them into category six. There is support for this in the words of one of the mill-owners, W.E. Forster, in evidence, 'he gave to a parliamentary enquiry into conditions in the textile industry in 1856.' He was asked to comment on industrial relations in his own mill in an enquiry into the causes of strikes and ways of avoiding them. Overlookers were seen as quite crucial intermediaries between masters and workpeople. There had been no strikes in his mills during ten years of being a master in the industry in Yorkshire, he said, and he attributed this to the masters being on hand to listen to grievances and dispel misunderstandings. He instructed his workers 'not to receive anything they hear from the overlookers as decisive', but 'to come to the masters'. He also noted that there were two sides to industrial disputes, masters and employees, and that while overlookers were in the latter, nevertheless they could not be seen as mere employees. 'The elite of our workpeople are overlookers' and in the eyes of the rest 'are supposed to be quite as much on our side as we are ourselves'. Clearly overlookers could be in quite a difficult position and sometimes they operated independently for 'there is a certain amount of power that you cannot take from the overlooker'. There was a hierarchy, of course, among the overlookers, but we can glean little information about that either from the Census Enumerators' Books or the Trade Directories. It seems fair therefore to treat them all as intermediate between the category of masters and managers, and the operatives. In this respect they seem to have similar status to artisans and shopkeepers running small businesses in the village.

There is always some difficulty in deciding how to categorise heads of household for whom no occupation is stated, or who are labelled 'annuitants'. Knowledge of the architecture of the village allowed us to make distinctions between such heads of household. As a general rule, members of our top status group did not live in the small cottages. Further, trade directories often list the 'private residents' and these usually have a different status from the head of household in a small cottage who may have 'independent means' or be an 'annuitant'. Information drawn from the household members either in the same census, or in a previous one, can also clarify the category. If we can be
### Table 2  Occupational status of heads of household, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status Group*</th>
<th>1841</th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1891</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Landed</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Prof's</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Farmers</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>6.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Manuf's</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Teach's</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Craft etc</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>12.3</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Shop</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.8</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Textile</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>18.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>23.7</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Other manual</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>14.9</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Farm lab.</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Servants</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>3.9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Misc.</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Not emp.</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>12.9</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>10.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total**      | 228  | 100  | 295  | 100  | 366  | 100  | 403  | 100  | 475  | 100  | 500  | 100  |

**Notes:**

1. Landowners etc: includes those of independent means living in large houses.
2. Professionals: clergy, lawyers, medical practitioners.
3. Farmers: includes all listed as farmers as their principal occupation.
4. Manufacturers: includes managers of large concerns and merchants.
5. Teachers, Clerks: Teachers, clerical workers and civil servants.
6. Craft/Supervisors: All master artisans listed in Directories and supervisors in mills.
7. Shopkeepers: includes all listed in Directories as local traders and agents.
8. Textile workers: All grades of skilled and semi-skilled operatives.
10. Farm Labourers: sometimes merely listed as labourers.
11. Domestic Servants: includes all indoor and outdoor workers.
12. Miscellaneous: includes all employees not otherwise classifiable.
13. Not Employed: includes the unemployed, women at home and the retired.

**Source:** Census Enumerators' Books for Burley-in-Wharfedale, 1841 to 1891 and Trade Directories for 1841, 1861, 1871, 1881, 1889 and 1893.

certain that such a household head is not a member of the landowners and gentry group, he or she goes into category six or seven (if there is evidence of some connection by marriage or family with crafts or trades) or thirteen (if not).

Our decision to separate textile operatives from other industrial workers was based in the fact that there were so many of the former in the mill village. We recognised that in status terms both of our categories eight and nine contain a number of skill and income differences. Their conditions of employment varied as between piece workers and day-wage employees, and between permanent day-wage employees and more casual day-wage workers. During the nineteenth century it seems probable that textile operatives were somewhat more secure financially than other manual workers in Burley and thus perhaps
can be accorded a somewhat higher status than the rest. What characterises them all, however, is that they are employees with nothing but their labour to sell. In that respect they are not greatly different from farm labourers, domestic servants and the small number of other employees like toll-keepers and soldiers. The size of each of these occupation and status groups is shown in Table 2.

**The social classes of Burley-in-Wharfedale**

The class schema was designed to be appropriate for nineteenth century communities. It involved collapsing our thirteen occupational status groups into what, on several grounds, can be seen as five social classes.

Together, the landowners and gentry along with the clergy and other professionals, created a significant upper crust which held sway in the village and town institutions. In a growing industrial community the manufacturers and their managers replaced the farmers as the third element in the dominant class. This was often a contested relationship. In Burley in the 1850s the foundation and maintenance of a viable Board of Health to improve public health and initiate clean water supply and other services, were the cause of quite bitter encounters between the manufacturers and the large local farmers. Thus we have preferred in collapsing our occupational and status categories to assemble status groups one, two and four as our dominant class. We have called it the **upper class**, though it straddles class boundaries which elsewhere, say in metropolitan England, would have been much more clearly marked.

**Farmers** large and small remaining in an industrializing village community tended to have an economy and culture quite distinct from other groups, focussed on a seasonal round, often on a different dialect and on social relationships created in a market town (Otley in the case of Burley). We have preferred therefore to keep them as a separate class in our analysis.

Placing local artisans and traders, clerical workers, elementary teachers and overlookers into a separate class does seem to have some viability, particularly as an **intermediate** class, remembering the kind of contradictory relations experienced by Forster's overlookers. Indeed this is the character of all of these occupational groups, on the one hand serving the needs of the upper class, often employed by their grace and favour, but at the same time exercising power and control over members of the working class whom they employed, taught or supervised.

The majority of heads of household do not fall into the above classes. All those who merely sell their labour whether it be 'skilled' or not and are employed in mills, shops, in transport and trade, on farms or in domestic service can perhaps be seen as a lower class, both in terms of income and wealth and in terms of power and influence in the community. They have conventionally been called the manual **working** class, and though this hides a number of differences we have retained this usage for the purpose of analysing social change.
Table 3  Recipients of doles by social class, 1841 to 1881

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Census</th>
<th>All recipients n</th>
<th>Working class recipients total</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Not employed recipients Total</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1841</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>223</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Dole Book, 1744 to 1923, St Mary B.V., Burley-in-Wharfledale.
Notes: Entries in the Dole Book were compared with those in the Census Enumerators' Books for 1841 to 1881.

All those heads of household who are not-employed, retired or unemployed, many of whom were widows, we have assigned to the not employed class. As we have said earlier, they are likely to form the poorest class in the village. Even if they have no power and influence themselves, they constitute an object of charity or of social policy, whenever times or seasons are hard and the ideology of dominant groups encourages charity in their direction. We have examined the distribution of local charities, in the records of the parish church. There is no indication how recipients of doles were chosen but apart from 1841 and 1861 the members of the notemployed class were more likely to receive doles than members of the working class (see Table 3). In those years farm labourers and wool-combers (some of the lowest paid workers, and the latter a dying trade) were at least as likely as the not-employed to receive them.

We have thus created a five-fold class schema for Burley-in-Wharfledale in the nineteenth century, and we have collapsed the data collected in Table 2 into the schema. The result is shown in Table 4.

Comparing Tables 2 and 4, we can see that the changes in the upper class come about as a consequence of the increase in the proportion of professionals and business owners and managers within the class. The increase in the number of landowners and gentry in 1891 is probably a reflection of the tendency of rich business owners to sell their enterprise and invest in comfortable rural surroundings not too far from the source of their wealth. The growth in the number of professionals and managers is an interesting indication of the fact that the growth of what recent sociologists have come to call the service class began in the nineteenth century. A number of business owners and managers came to live in Burley as the railways developed and allowed relatively easy commuting into Leeds and Bradford. There was by 1881 a small number of substantial houses built out the main village and near to the railway station which was opened in 1865.

The proportional decline in the class of farmers is, as Anderson indicated for most of Britain in the nineteenth century, not a result of an overall decline in the number of farmers, but in the salience of the primary agricultural sector.
Table 4  Social class of heads of households, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>1841</th>
<th>1851</th>
<th>1861</th>
<th>1871</th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1891</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>5.26</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>2.46</td>
<td>5.46</td>
<td>5.89</td>
<td>8.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>6.58</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>18.86</td>
<td>18.31</td>
<td>20.22</td>
<td>23.57</td>
<td>24.42</td>
<td>25.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>52.19</td>
<td>60.00</td>
<td>60.21</td>
<td>55.33</td>
<td>54.74</td>
<td>52.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>17.11</td>
<td>12.88</td>
<td>10.38</td>
<td>12.50</td>
<td>12.42</td>
<td>11.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total per cent</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heads of household</td>
<td>228</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>403</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes:
These classes are composed from the occupational status groups shown in Table 2. 
Upper includes persons of independent means living in large houses or with servants, professionals like clergy and lawyers, and manufacturers, managers of large concerns and merchants, and consists of status groups 1, 2 and 4.
Farmers include all cited by the enumerator as a farmer, and consists of status group 3.
Intermediate includes all teachers, clerks, traders and artisans running their own businesses and supervisors in the mill, and consists of status groups 5, 6 and 7.
Working includes all industrial operatives, labourers, transport and domestic workers, and consists of status groups 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12.
Not employed includes all women at home, unemployed and retired, and consists of status group 13.
Source: Census Enumerators' Books and Trade Directories (see Table 2).

compared to the secondary manufacturing sector of the economy. They remained an influential class throughout that time even if they lost some of their power.

The growth both absolutely and proportionally of the intermediate class is a particular indication of the changing social structure of the second half of the nineteenth century. It marks a growth of relative affluence in that a greater number of people were seeking the services of artisans and traders. There was also a growth in the employment of people in public services, such as education, communications and local government. These trends were felt widely in Britain as well as locally here in Burley. It was into this class that most social mobility could occur from working class backgrounds, as we shall note. The development of all these services and trades in Burley was also a response to the initiatives of the paternalistic mill-owners.28

As far as the working class is concerned, the changes here are a consequence of the growth of manufacturing, especially textiles, which was marked in the period from 1841 to 1861. They were a result of the decline in the importance of farming, which along with some changes in technology meant an absolute decline in number of farm labourers (Table 2). The growth of size and relative affluence of the upper class meant an increase in demand for domestic servants, whose numbers grew between 1841 and 1891 (Table 2). In proportional terms, the working class remained throughout the largest class, but its salience was slightly reduced as the intermediate class grew.
The not employed class remains throughout at least a tenth of the whole. Though largely composed of widows at home, who for reasons of age, ill-health or domestic responsibilities could not find employment, this class also indicates the changes in general employment opportunities available in the village. Though there is some doubt about the information given in the Census Enumerators’ Books, the class is apparently at its smallest absolutely and proportionally at the height of the industrial development of the village, from 1851 to 861. The increase in later census years relates both to growing unemployment from 1871 to 1881 and to the number of retired people who lived longer as public health measures and relative affluence grew. There was no general provision for pensions at this time and, therefore, much dependence on families, savings and charity. In this respect it is interesting to note that the census year in which this class was proportionally least, 1861, was the year in which charitable disbursements to members of the class were least (Table 3).

Social mobility

As we have indicated, we found 57 heads of households in 1891 (49 men and 8 women) who had been present in the Burley census enumeration records from at least 1851, and in 21 cases from 1841. This is of course a small population and it is hazardous to draw any firm conclusions. Our method has been to examine the occupational status of each of these heads of household in all the censuses prior to 1891, including the time before they became heads of households. The whole set does not occur in every record up to 1891. For instance, 5 are missing from the 1871 books, but recur in the later ones. For all but 14 of the 57 persons we also were able to discover the last occupation or status of a parent, and thus to have an indication of the class of origin of most of them. Their average age in 1891 was just over 59 years, so that we have in many cases a record of virtually complete ‘careers’.

We used a similar set of occupational status categories for classifying each of our subjects. Some of our subjects were in infancy or childhood when they first appeared in the census. Our analysis is based however on the occupational status groups. We have shown first of all for the men and then the men and women together (Tables 5 and 6) an indication of their class of origin (parents’ last known class) and of their final class or destination (based on their last known occupational status). This is an attempt to show inter-generational mobility and we refer to a sub-set of 35 men and 8 women, for whom we have parental information. Secondly, we have examined intra-generational mobility, by assembling the data on first, mid-life and last known occupational status. Tables 7 and 8 showing data for the whole set of 49 men and 8 women illustrate this. We have in Tables 5 and 7 shown data for the men only, but since there are so few women for whom we have complete data we have not constructed women-only tables. Instead we have put the men and women together to create a larger set and therefore provide more meaningful comparisons. The data for women alone can easily be inferred by contrasting the tables.

It would be possible to carry out much more detailed analysis for origins and
Table 5  Origins and destinations of men, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>Parents' own class</th>
<th></th>
<th>Sons' own last known class</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>34.29</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>37.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>42.86</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>51.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data from Census Enumerators' Books, 1841 to 1891.

Table 6  Origins and destinations of men and women, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>Parents' own class</th>
<th></th>
<th>Persons' last known class</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.98</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.65</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32.56</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>32.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>41.86</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>48.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13.95</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6.98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data from Census Enumerators' Books 1841 to 1891.

destinations, but for our purposes we have simply categorised the parents into social classes and then those of our subjects in terms of their last known occupational status. Tables 5 and 6 show the results of this origins and destinations analysis.

If we compare the class division shown in Tables 5 and 6, with that shown in Table 4, it would appear that the sample of known long-term Burley inhabitants is not completely representative. The intermediate class is somewhat larger than would have been expected and the working class correspondingly smaller. Nevertheless it is not greatly unrepresentative in percentage terms. We assume too that there is a tendency for local craftspeople and traders, if successful, to stay longer than others, since their livelihood depends on work in and for the village community.

Comparison of the two columns in Tables 5 and 6 reveals that the predominant structural tendency for the 35 men and 8 women is to remain within their class of origin. From the data used to construct the tables, we know, for instance,
that of the sons of the 15 parents in the working class 12 remained working class, and 3 rose to the intermediate class. There was more variation in the destinations of the sons of 12 intermediate class parents. Eight remained in the same class, one became upper class, one, a farmer, one working class and the other was not employed. All of the men with parents not employed, however, became working class. If the women experienced mobility it was downwards. We must remember that we are dealing with only small numbers, but the general outcome (Table 6) seems to be an increase in the upper class, a decline among farmers and a growth among the working class and a decline in those not employed, while the intermediate class remains much the same size. As twentieth century studies have shown, there is a certain amount of flow between classes and a change in the relative size of classes, but there is a strong tendency for people to remain within their class of origin.

When we turn to look at Tables 7 and 8, we have a good indication of the changes which have taken place within a generation, though again for only a small number, even though it is slightly enlarged by the inclusion of those cases where no information about parental occupation could be found.

These tables confirm the tendencies already perceived in the previous discussion, but show also within one generation some detail about 'career mobility'. It was more likely for transitions from one class to another to take place earlier in a working life than later. Class mobility was an experience related to age as much as to class background, it seems. Young men (Table 7) would expect to be in employment of low status at first, but to achieve higher status within ten years or so. The chances of mobility, simply looking at the increases in the proportions within classes shown in this table, were 24 per cent between first job and mid-life, and only 4 per cent between mid-life and last job.29 When we assess the chances for men and women together (Table 8) they are reduced to 23 per cent between first job and mid-life, and to nil between mid-life and last job. Again this confirms the fact that mobility chances for women in any class were less than those of men.

Conclusion

This is a first attempt to look at the question of social mobility in the nineteenth century industrial village using census enumeration data. Much more work needs to be done and more general analyses are required covering more communities, before it would be reasonable to make definite conclusions. What our work suggests is, not surprisingly, that there was little inter-generational class mobility and not much intra-generational class mobility for those who remained in the village community.

We have examined the Census Enumerators' Books for Burley-in-Wharfedale between 1841 and 1891 and have made some assessments of the effects of the industrialization process on the lives of its heads of households. Using a schema for allocating them into social classes, we have shown that social and economic trends operating more widely in Britain also had their counterparts in this community. The class of farmers became less salient and the working class grew with the development of textile manufacturing. The latter class itself fell
Table 7  Intra-class mobility of men, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>First job</th>
<th></th>
<th>Mid-life job</th>
<th></th>
<th>Last known job</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<td>Upper</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18.37</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>38.78</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>79.59</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>55.10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>46.94</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
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<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data from Census Enumerators’ Books, 1841 to 1891.

Table 8  Intra-class mobility of men and women, 1841 to 1891

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social class</th>
<th>First job</th>
<th></th>
<th>Mid-life job</th>
<th></th>
<th>Last known job</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper</td>
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<tr>
<td>Farmers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Intermediate</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>17.54</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>35.09</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>40.35</td>
</tr>
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<td>Working</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>77.19</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>56.14</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45.61</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not employed</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data from Census Enumerators’ Books, 1841 to 1891.

back in proportion as later trends, such as the development of a service class and an increase in an intermediate class of artisans, supervisors, traders and white collar workers, began to be felt. We have shown too that what some have recently called an ‘underclass’, a class generally marked by the state of not being employed, was also present throughout. It consisted of households with heads who were widowed, unemployed or retired, and who were in some state of dependency on others. Throughout a dominant class remained in a powerful minority able to a great extent to control the life chances of the majority, and it enlarged as Burley became the residence of business owners, managers and merchants from nearby West Yorkshire towns.

The small study of social mobility within the village perhaps confirms a view that while some chances of upward mobility did exist, mainly from the working class into the intermediate class and from the not employed into the working class, on the whole classes remained relatively closed. The evidence suggests too that the opportunities for women were even fewer than those for men.
NOTES

1. This study, based in an analysis of the Census Enumerators’ reports, 1841 to 1891, is an edited version of an earlier paper and the authors wish to thank the members of the Editorial Board for their help and advice.

2. The population data have been extracted from the Census Enumerators’ Books for Burley Township in the Otley Registration Sub-district for Wharfedale. The reference numbers for these at the Public Record Office are: for 1841, HO/107/1287; 1851, HO/107/2884; 1861, RG/9/3213; 1871, RG/10/4302; 1881, RG/11/4336; and 1891, RG/12/3527. Throughout this time three enumeration districts covered the Township. In 1851, for instance, these were numbered 6a, 6b and 6c, and in 1891, 3, 4 and 5. The third district in each case covered the upper village, Burley Woodhead. Our data in all the tables is drawn only from the two Burley-in-Wharfedale enumeration districts, that is, for instance, 6a and 6b in 1851 and 3 and 4 in 1891.

3. It is difficult to test the assumption about the work being the main attraction for women without knowing their motivation. From examination of the Census Enumerators’ Books we know that of women over 15 years of age who were employed, 80 per cent were in textiles in 1851, and this had declined to about 50 per cent in 1881. We also noted that married women tended not to be employed in the mills (less than 10 per cent of the female workforce in the mills in each census year except 1861), so that there was a continuing demand for unmarried women there. We found many women lodgers, too. The predominance of women in the population forms an interesting contrast with West Yorkshire coal mining villages where men were found in greater numbers in the nineteenth century. Male lodgers were a predominant household characteristic and younger women went away to find employment. See, D. Warwick and G. Littlejohn, Coal, capital, and culture: a sociological analysis of mining communities in West Yorkshire, (London, 1992), especially Chapter 3.


5. These seem to have followed typical migratory patterns outlined in the studies reported in N. Redclift and E. Mingione, Beyond unemployment, household, gender and subsistence, (Oxford, 1985). There were few Irish migrants or from other overseas countries. Among overseas migrants were the young Arnolds, children of William Arnold, and grandchildren of Thomas Arnold of Rugby. They were brought from India and lived in Burley with the Forsters. W.E. Forster’s wife, Jane, was a daughter of Thomas Arnold and therefore the children’s aunt. They were adopted after the death of their parents in India. One of them later became a managing director of the worsted mill in Burley. See M. and D. Warwick, Eminent Victorians: the Forsters of Burley in Wharfedale, (Burley-in-Wharfedale, 1994).


8. Anderson’s discussion is much enhanced by his research into a sample of 1851 Census Enumerators’ Books for the whole of Britain.

9. Social mobility studies tend to assess how far social and economic change has created a more fluid society. Following the classic theorising of Karl Marx, Ferdinand Toennies, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, and the more recent discussion of Talcott Parsons and Kingsley Davis, studies have tended to consider how far industrialization has eroded traditional class barriers and created a more open society. Numerous accounts of this field of study exist but for one of the most well used see R. Bendix and S.M. Lipset, Class, status and power, social stratification in the comparative perspective, 2nd edn (London, 1967).


12. J.G. Sanchez (in private correspondence) of the University of Humberside is attempting to overcome this problem by drawing a set of males present in 1891 from the Census Enumerators’ Books for Grimsby in Lincolnshire, and using their place of birth as the indicator, tracing them back to the appropriate Census Enumerators’ Book for earlier censuses. For the sake of limiting the set to manageable proportions he has restricted it to those born within Lincolnshire. This method of ‘traceback’ has its own limitations with regard to representativeness. He has excluded women as Thernstrom did. Nevertheless he has constructed a large set of males and is
conducting a social mobility analysis for Grimsby and Lincolnshire between 1841 and 1891.

13. In the 1891 Enumerators’ books for Burley, there are 17 widows who are heads of households and who were born in Burley. It may have been possible to use local marriage registers to discover their original family names and gain access to a wider body of data about them. This is a task to be undertaken in further analysis.

14. S.R.S. Szreter, ‘The genesis of the Registrar General’s social classification of occupations’, The British Journal of Sociology, 35 (1984), 522-546, points to many pitfalls and conflicts which have occurred, and still do occur, in assuming that the Registrar General’s classification, the most widely used method, is any more than a ‘Crude inequality index’. He advocates a ‘more adaptable instrument’, but does not propose one for use with nineteenth century data.


17. It may be argued of course that we are overlooking significant groups by using data only on heads of households. There were, for instance, very few female heads of households in comparison with males and we may be judged as committing therefor a serious error of omission. We have included those women who were heads of households and have classified them according to our schema. In doing this we are maintaining our starting assumption that social classes are fundamentally sets of households, whose status is best indicated by the occupational status of the head. Szreter, ‘The Registrar General’s social classification of occupations’, 540, would advocate a far more radical solution, and require a whole re-theorizing of social class. We have attempted to do that for an industrial village in the nineteenth century.

18. Our schema emerged in 1984 after discussion with a local history class containing members who attempted to assess the meaning of class and class difference to nineteenth century villagers, using their own family background and experience and their knowledge derived both from living in and studying the locality of Burley-in-Wharfedale.

19. Though our schema is devised for classifying heads of households and though, almost by definition, apprentices will not be heads of households, it is necessary to include them in the schema, since in analyzing social mobility we will need to know what previous occupational status a head of household had before becoming a head. We have assumed that apprentices had a generally low status, even though they may have reached that of master craftsman or supervisor later.


21. Fison and Forster had formed a partnership in textile manufacturing in Bradford in the mid-1840s and moved it to Burley-in-Wharfedale in 1850, probably under the influence of Fison’s father-in-law who had been an owner of the cotton mills in Burley until 1849. See Warwick, Eminent Victorians, 18.

22. There must always remain some doubt, of course, since they may have been retired farmers or tradespersons who offered to buy the Directory.

23. Many nineteenth century novelists as well as historians and social demographers attest to this fact. Mrs Humphrey Ward, whose novel, Robert Ellsmere (first published in 1888, reprinted Oxford, 1987) was famous at the turn of the nineteenth century, is not alone in confirming the view that a determined clergyman could often be more influential than others in this upper crust in forming the character of a community. She is worth mentioning because she was a niece of the Forsters, on the Arnold side, and knew Burley well.

24. It would seem unwise to refer to them as ‘middle’ class, because that term in conventional use covers in the twentieth century a far wider set of occupations and life-styles. As a term for nineteenth century use it can hardly refer to such a set of small employers, self-employed and employed professionals. It does come close in some respects to the ‘petit bourgeoisie’, but again that does not capture that sense of contradictory location of being an intermediate social class in our terms. The term ‘intermediate’ is used in contemporary class analysis by J.H. Goldthorpe in his analysis of social structure and social mobility. See Goldthorpe, Social mobility, 40-42.

25. The members of this Intermediate class typically occupied what a recent neo-Marxist analyst of class relations in contemporary societies, Eric Olin Wright, has called ‘contradictory class locations’. See for instance, E.O. Wright, Class, crisis and the state, (London, 1978), 61-83.

26. These are contained in the Parish Dole Book, 1744 to 1923, which is among the registers kept by the church. St Mary the Blessed Virgin, Burley-in-Wharfedale.

27. See Goldthorpe, Social mobility, 40-46.


29. This rough calculation of chances is based in adding together the number of entries at a higher
class level less those at a lower level in the second column than in the first, and then the same in the third compared with the second, and dividing this by the total number of entries in each column.

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SOME FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF THE PLAGUE IN EYAM, 1665/6

Philip Race

Philip Race is a graduate of the University of Liverpool

Of the many stories of plague epidemics striking England between the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, that of the village of Eyam is perhaps the best-known, with much written of the unique events occurring in this small Derbyshire village. This essay aims to establish some of the facts behind the colourful story that has built up over the years, to consider the varying viewpoints that have emerged concerning the existing evidence, and hopefully to contribute to the debate.

It may be of use to say something first of the story of the parish, situated in Derbyshire between Buxton and Sheffield, which at the time consisted of three townships; Foolow, Woodlands, and the larger village of Eyam. The most famous incident in their history was a severe outbreak of the plague in 1665/6, which in itself would not have been enough to ensure the remembrance of the case, but the action taken in response was. After seeing that the epidemic was limited to the parish, the rector Mompesson, a previous incumbent Stanley, and the villagers, made the unprecedented move of establishing an effective cordon sanitaire around themselves to prevent the catastrophic spread of the disease. In doing so they made the apparent sacrifice of resigning themselves to death to save others. While the actual motives and reasoning of the inhabitants remain unclear, it now seems, with the benefit of modern medical science, that their actions contributed to an epidemic of almost unrivalled severity for the village of Eyam.

Such a famous example of the plague has received a great amount of literary attention. However the problems of trying to study in detail the happenings in a small village over three centuries ago are soon apparent; the truth has 'inevitably become encrusted by a rare mixture of fact and fiction as the mass of secondary works of all kinds has steadily increased over the years'. Much of this is due to the complete summarization of the known evidence by William Wood in 1842, whose work has been accepted by almost all since as the foundation for all further comment. Whilst greatly publicising the story, Wood did historians a disservice by discouraging all critical analysis until recently. Living in Eyam, he relied greatly on the oral tradition, and many of his stories may well be apocryphal; they certainly utilise a highly florid, romantic language intended to extol the virtues of the villagers and practically to canonize the rector Mompesson. However, there have been developments since. G.R. Batho was one of the first to attempt what he called 'a scholarly reappraisal', although his main accomplishment was to raise questions and issues rather than to resolve them. The most complete analytical study,
particularly of a parish register, was produced in 1977 by Leslie Bradley, offering a re-interpretation of many of the accepted stories of Eyam.\(^5\)

This present paper attempts to progress from Bradley’s work, utilising theoretical concepts that have emerged since 1977, and in particular using a copy of the original historical source, the parish register of the church of St Lawrence in Eyam, now made available for the first time. Almost complete from August 1630 onwards, it provides an excellent insight as it was fully maintained throughout the plague period. It also includes numbered indications of all the victims who died of the disease, marked by a later rector, Joseph Hunt, who copied the entire register towards the end of the seventeenth century.\(^6\)

**The origin of the Eyam plague**

As with much of the detail of the epidemic, the manner of arrival in the village is unproven. Wood’s view is again the generally accepted one, with his account of a box containing cloth being sent from London to a tailor in Eyam. It may also have contained plague-carrying fleas which attacked George Vicars as he unpacked the cloth, apparently immediately striking him with sickness, growing steadily worse until death on the third day, 6 September 1665. But there are problems with this, discussed by both Batho and Bradley. The symptoms were clearly those of the bubonic form of the plague, but the first outbreak appears to have been unusually rapid for this type. An alternative put forward by Batho is that the disease was transported via rat fleas from Derby to Eyam during the Wakes on 20 August, in which case the time which elapsed would appear to fit more accurately. However, despite this plausible suggestion, Batho concludes that the traditional explanation is still more probable. Bradley finds it hard to understand why Batho dismisses his own theory, but himself decides that doubt must remain as there is no conclusive evidence of the plague in Derby in 1665. Paul Slack leans towards the original theory as it ‘seems more persuasive than any alternative so far suggested’.\(^7\) But there remain factors that we cannot be sure of; for example, the disease could surely have been carried to the Wakes not only from Derby, but elsewhere in the country. Equally, the theory indicating the box from London is still very possible. Batho, in claiming Wood’s story of instant illness may have been ‘perhaps somewhat over-dramaticised’, makes a very simple but critical point that has been generally ignored.\(^8\) It may well be the case that George Vicars did not actually show symptoms for some period after opening the box, and if we ignore Wood’s tendency to melodrama then it is very possible that bubonic plague may have had time to act.\(^9\) Furthermore, Wood seems likely to have based this story on an account by Richard Mead in 1744, from which it is not possible to state conclusively how long it took the sickness to strike.

**Development of the epidemic**

Moving on from this, accepting that the plague did arrive in Eyam, then we can look at how long it stayed, how it developed, and what effect it had. In following the progress of the disease, the parish register is the source upon which we depend. All accounts agree that the first death was George Vicars,
Table 1  Monthly plague deaths

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Month</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>6</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>December</td>
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<tr>
<td>1666</td>
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<td>February</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


buried 7 September 1665. The last death is less clear though, with various suggestions between 11 October and 1 November 1666. The plague began in early September, hit a peak of burials in October, and receded during the winter. However with the arrival of warmer weather the village saw a reappearance, described in characteristic style by Wood: 'June awoke the deadly monster from his seeming slumber in the preceding months, and with desolating steps he stalked forth from house to house breathing on the trembling inhabitants the vapour of death'. Another peak occurred in July and August before the epidemic ran its course.

A debate has emerged about the endurance of bubonic plague through winter months, one view being that it cannot survive anything but the most mild of seasons. Bradley argues cases both for and against the persistence of the plague in these months in Eyam. The argument in favour is based upon the abnormally high number of deaths during the winter, and the number that were described at the time as being due to the epidemic. The doubt thrown upon this by Bradley depends upon his analysis of the parish register. Counting forty-seven deaths between November and May, he argues that eighteen deaths in seventeen families show no sign of infection being passed on within the family, as would be expected with the plague. But this includes all deaths from all causes, and we can refine this by examining only the deaths marked as being due to the plague by Hunt. Of course we cannot know if those identified as victims of the disease are correct as such; I would argue that the symptoms are very distinctive, and an estimate taken at the time is likely to be more accurate than counting the total deaths. Hence the relevant deaths between November and May were thirty-three, fourteen less than Bradley observed. The notion of so many single deaths in families that were not passed on is also shown to be false. The plague burials in the period concerned are as follows (grouped in families):

Stubbs: 1 Nov, 15 Nov, 19 Nov
Warrington: 29 Nov
Rowland: 5 Nov, 1 Dec, 15 Jan, 14 Feb
Rowe: 14 Dec, 15 Dec, 19 Dec
Wilson: 22 Dec, 28 Jan, 15 Feb, 17 Feb, 18 Feb, 1 Mar
Rowbotham: 9 Dec, 24 Dec, 1 Jan, 1 Jan
Blackwall: 24 Dec, 21 Feb, 22 Mar, 6 Apr, 16 Apr
Alleyne: 6 Apr, 28 Apr
Thorpe: 15 Apr, 2 May, 2 May
Hadfield: 18 Apr
Syddall: 29 Apr
Bradley accepts that the deaths of Rowes, Rowlands and Thorpes look to be due to plague. As for the other families, the burial periods may be sometimes longer than the expected pattern of bubonic plague, but this surely does not rule it out. We do not know many simple factors such as living arrangements, and families may not have stayed permanently under the same roof. The plague would not necessarily wipe out families in one spell, as some members of families often escaped. Unfortunately for those attempting to study it, the plague does not always follow an entirely predictable path.

Returning to the number of single deaths in families identified as questioning the existence of plague, we can see very few appear as plague deaths as marked by Hunt. Of those burials that do not seem to constitute families, the two Alleyn deaths are those of a father and infant, and there is no record of any other direct member of family in the register. The Warrington burial is probably of a widow, but may have been her only daughter, also named Elizabeth; in any case there was no other close family at the time. The bulk of Emmott Syddall’s family had died after the first outbreak the year before, leaving Emmott, her young brother, and her mother, but Emmott’s death came at a time of upheaval and uncertain circumstance as her mother had remarried just days before. Only Samuel Hadfield seems to have left a mother and three siblings unaffected.

All this cannot be taken to prove the plague persisted through the winter, but it does help discount much of the contrary evidence suggested by Bradley. Considering the case of Eyam, alongside examples from elsewhere, it does now seem sensible to conclude that bubonic plague can survive a winter, albeit in a more restrained manner than in the warmer months.

**Severity**

Measuring the severity of the Eyam epidemic is made difficult because of different estimates of population, using either the village of Eyam or the larger parish. Using a calculation of the parish population by Bradley, a mortality rate of anything up to 30 per cent is indicated. The death rate of the actual village was far higher than the parish as a whole, placing it as one of the highest death tolls ever recorded in England.

The calculation of Crisis Mortality Ratios is one way in which the effect of mortality crises on parishes can be assessed and compared. By dividing the number of burials in the twelve highest epidemic months by the average annual number of burials in the parish over the previous decade, it provides a very crude measure of the increase in the crisis year. Although there are limitations to the method, it has the advantage of comparability between parishes. Eyam in 1665/6 had a ratio of epidemic to average burials of 10.2, an extremely high figure when considered next to Slack’s definition of 3.0 as an ‘exceptional crisis’; by comparison, forty-seven parishes of London during the ‘Great Plague’ of the same year had a crisis ratio of 5.9.
Figure 1  Baptisms, burials and marriages in the parish of Eyam 1631-1700

Figure 2  Baptisms, marriages and burials in the parish of Eyam 1631-1700. Five year moving averages

Source:  J.G. & F. Clifford, *Eyam parish register, 1630-1700*, 1644-6 (Figure 1), 1642-6 (Figure 2) not included due to incomplete data.
Table 2  Mean annual number of baptisms, burials and marriages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Baptisms</th>
<th>Burials</th>
<th>Marriages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1631-40</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1641-50</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1651-60</td>
<td>34.1</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1661-70</td>
<td>42.0</td>
<td>50.8</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1671-80</td>
<td>31.0</td>
<td>25.0</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1681-90</td>
<td>28.7</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>4.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1691-00</td>
<td>24.2</td>
<td>25.5</td>
<td>5.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Long-term demographic effect

Determining the long-term effect of a plague such as this is not easy. What we can do, using the parish register, is to examine the changes in the levels of baptisms, burials and marriages over the period before and after the epidemic and look for any evidence of a change (Figures 1 & 2; Table 2). The pattern of baptisms is perhaps the closest to what we would expect to see. There was a steady increase up to, and including, the 1660s with a temporary fall during the actual plague period. However, the demographic effect appears to become increasingly clear after the early 1670s, as the number of baptisms shows a constant decline, due presumably to the lower quantity of adults of childbearing age. By the end of the period the level was at the lowest since the register began, as the effect of the decimation of the children of the parish thirty years earlier, who would now have been producing offspring, became apparent.

The evidence of burials shows no disturbance of the general pattern with the obvious exception of the two plague years. The decades before and after show the number of burials fluctuating within a similar range. Marriages also follow this course, with a clear peak during the plague decade, although in this case the epidemic was not the main cause, and indeed served to suppress unions in 1666. Marriages were higher in the decades following the disease than before, and show little conclusive evidence of being affected by the outbreak.

Bradley calculated the cumulative natural increase in the population of Eyam between 1630 and 1690. Figure 3 here repeats the analysis, extending the data a further ten years to 1700, and using a recent copy of the register, gaining results showing increases rather higher than Bradley. The population had been growing at an increasing rate until the plague epidemic. The deaths in these two years removed much of the increase since 1630, but after the epidemic the population initially recovered very quickly. The trend continued upwards, despite a few small exceptions, although never quite recovering to pre-plague levels. After 1690, when Bradley’s analysis finished, the effect of the falling level of baptisms became apparent, and there was an actual net decline in the population change. It would be of interest to see the data after 1700.
The outcome of all this evidence on the demographic effect is that there was no collapse, despite the extreme mortality of 1665 and 1666. The parish appeared to recover quite quickly in the immediate post-plague years but, over a longer time-span, a very large amount of the natural increase was removed, the levels of baptisms fell, and the parish lost a large proportion of its potential population.
Sex and age incidence

As well as absolute mortality, the demographic effect may vary according to the incidence of deaths on various groups in society. One possibility is a difference between sexes, which could lead to an imbalance and therefore depress population growth. In theory there seems to be no biological reason why one sex should be more susceptible than the other, but differences did occur from parish to parish.\(^\text{18}\) However this is not due to any inherent level of susceptibility; a large proportion of deaths of one sex may be influenced by more or less exposure to risk, but usually is due to the simple factor of a greater number of the population being of that sex. Despite this, English plagues were always thought to afflict men more seriously, and indeed work on the evidence of St Botolph's in London in 1603 seems to indicate this.\(^\text{19}\)

The plague at Eyam showed a surplus of male deaths, with 104 male deaths per 100 female. Too small a difference to be significant, it also needs to be compared to the average level of mortality in a non-plague period; in the previous ten years the ratio was 106 males to 100 females. Colyton in Devon differed in showing a surplus of female deaths (93 male: 100 female) but again this is shown to be irrelevant when compared to the pre-plague levels (93 male: 100 female).

The evidence of the incidence of mortality on different age-groups is more substantial. Bradley's study of Eyam revealed that the proportion of total mortality falling on the 5-19 age group during the plague period was three times that of previous years. Compensating for this, the proportion of dead was lower for those under five years, and much lower for those in their first year. The share of mortality taken up by adults was similar to pre-plague times.\(^\text{20}\)

The pattern found in Eyam was expected, and agreed with other studies. However Roger Schofield uses another method of calculation, measuring the level of mortality for specific age-groups before and during the epidemic, instead of comparing the proportions of mortality taken up by each group; in effect looking at rates rather than numbers. Examining Colyton, Eyam and St Botolph's he found a different pattern, suggesting that epidemic mortality was less serious amongst older children than amongst those younger, and that infants suffered very much more than other age-groups.\(^\text{21}\) Slack also endorsed this reversal, and argued that the death rate was highest for the infant group, with the lower proportional numbers of infant deaths in plague periods being due to the lower overall numbers of infants in the population.\(^\text{22}\)

Studies of the relationship between age and plague mortality tend to look at deaths and age at burial. But with infant mortality it is also possible to examine births, and the annual number of deaths per 1,000 baptisms, and in this way gain a rough estimate of the effect of plague on the rate of mortality for the most susceptible group. Admittedly the results from this will be liable to error. Relying on the parish register, the number of baptisms is only an indicator of the number of actual births, and infant deaths may have occurred before baptism took place.
Table 3  Infant mortality rates (per 1,000 baptisms)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Rate</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1655-64</td>
<td>147</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1665</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>278</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1666</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>455</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>375</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1667</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>Jan-Jun</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Jul-Dec</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1668-77</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep'65-Aug'66</td>
<td>500</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


From Table 3, the infant mortality rate in Eyam during the peak year of the epidemic was nearly three times the average for the previous decade. The rate in this year stands out; 278 out of 1,000 died in 1660, possibly due to a mild epidemic of some sort, or maybe just demonstrating the unreliability of figures over small samples and using imperfect registers; but the infant mortality during the plague period reached an unprecedented high. During the peak twelve months, 50 per cent of all children baptised died within a year, an extremely high proportion. The six-monthly periods show the relationship between the rates and the plague more clearly, although as results are looked at in more depth, the more likely are distortions due to inconsistencies. Given this, the rates show the likelihood of death increased in the months prior to the outbreak in September 1665, and then peaked for the central six months. Also clear is a lag after the epidemic had disappeared in October 1666; the effect on the condition of the inhabitants and the village must have been severe as all six of those who died as infants after baptism in the first half of 1667 did so within the first month.

Conclusion

The evidence presented and discussed in this essay shows the difficulties that emerge when trying to resolve issues concerning occurrences in past centuries. However, despite severe limitations, we can obtain some picture of the effect of such an epidemic. We continue to accumulate evidence concerning such aspects as the winter survival of the disease, and the varying incidence on groups in society. Looking specifically at Eyam, estimates show overall mortality was very high, and Bradley is correct in comparing the rate with that of severe urban epidemics.²³ Despite this, there was no serious demographic collapse, although the consequences of such severe mortality were significant in the following decades. The lasting impression left by the reconstruction of the experience of Eyam, added to the tragic human stories passed down the years, remains that of the supreme devastation an epidemic such as this could cause.
NOTES

1. The author thanks Chris Galley, Department of Geography, University of Liverpool, for guidance and assistance.
3. W. Wood, The history and antiquities of Eyam, (London, 1865). For example: The immortal victors of Thermopylae and Marathon, who fought so bravely in liberty's holy cause, have no greater, no stronger, claim to the admiration of succeeding generations, than the humble villagers of Eyam in the year 1666. Their magnanimous self-sacrifice...is unrivalled in the annals of the world', 56-7.
9. Bradley, 'The most famous of all English plagues', 64, describes how Wood, in later editions of his book, became much less specific about many details of the affliction of Vicars; from describing the story as 'fact' in 1842 to 'according to traditional accounts' in 1903. In addition, it has been suggested that the box of clothes arrived earlier, towards the end of August, in J.G. Clifford, Eyam plague 1665-1666, (Eyam, 1993), 5.
17. Bradley, 'The most famous of all English plagues'. This refers to the cumulative total of the annual difference between baptisms and burials, offering an indication of population change, although not accounting for change through migration.
20. Bradley, 'The most famous of all English plagues', 73.
23. Bradley, 'The most famous of all English plagues', 79.

65
RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

FURTHER ANALYSIS OF THE VICTIMS OF PLAGUE IN COLYTON
1645-46

Pamela Sharpe

The victims of plague in a mid-seventeenth century epidemic in the town of Colyton have already been scrutinised by Roger Schofield and the results set out in a Local Population Studies publication, The plague revisited. I have recently completed a ‘total reconstitution’ of the parish of Colyton by linking other documentary material to the original reconstitution based on parish records. The aim was to assign occupational or wealth indicators to each family reconstitution form. From the resulting index it was possible to determine the social status and other details of the unfortunate victims of plague, and therefore extend Schofield’s observation that the majority of those who died were family groups while many other families were untouched by the disease.

The exact time of the plague is easy to determine as the burial register states ‘here ye plague began’ in November 1645 and ‘here ye plague ended’ in December 1646. The disaster came soon after the civil war which had already wreaked considerable chaos in the town, a battleground between the Royalists stationed at Axminster and the Parliamentary garrison from Lyme. The ruination of one Colyton sergemaker, John Hewes, by looting troops, is well chronicled in the records. Before the plague started, Colyton was experiencing a high death rate, and the mortality patterns indicate that a typhus epidemic preceded the plague outbreak.

A fifth of Colyton’s population died in the plague. Analysis of the victims by linking them to the total reconstitution shows that all the families in the parish who were recorded as being involved with the wool trade had members who died of plague. That clothworkers were particularly vulnerable to catch plague is also suggested by the study of the disease at Eyam as well as other textile centres. The cloth was seen as a seat of infection and the disease spread with the interaction of producing and marketing of wool. In Colyton there is a clear pattern. The plague started amongst wool workers and within the second and third month spread to the wider craft community. Only in later months did the disease attack all sectors of the population.

It is noticeable that the agricultural population was far less affected than the ‘industrial’ and consequently, sickness remained fairly confined to the town area of the parish. A breakdown of the victims socio-economic status is made according to families in the following table where the socio-economic standing of plague victims was compared with the status distribution of all FRFs on the
Table 1  Status of plague victims Colyton

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status</th>
<th>1600-49 FRFs n</th>
<th>Plague families</th>
<th>% affected by plague</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gentry</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>20.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crafts</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(not wool)</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>42.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(wool)</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>46.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Labourer</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1600-49 cohort. In 147 cases the families could be given a status of ‘class’ attribution.

This table indicates that relatively few plague victims were from the gentry class, whereas a roughly similar proportion of plague victims were labourers and poor as in the population as a whole. The craft sector was the most seriously affected group as 43 per cent of families contained in this cohort had plague victims.

Wool manufacture had been a major industry in medieval Colyton, but it seems that its importance diminished over time. Sixteenth century records, which detail fulling mills in the town, indicated that there was a highly capitalised finishing sector in the parish.\textsuperscript{5} By the second half of the seventeenth century there still seems to have been a small but thriving wool sector which survived the onslaught of both civil war and plague. Just fifteen years after the plague ended the feoffee’s recorded that there was still enough wool making in Colyton for it to create a public nuisance, as they agreed at a meeting ‘that no person or persons whatsoever shall after this present day put, dry or hang any wool on the Lyddes (leads) of the church’.\textsuperscript{6} The evidence that wool making in Colyton survived as an industry despite the extermination of most of the wool making families casts some doubt on the belief of David Levine that Colyton was by-passed by the technology of the new draperies in the early seventeenth century and left as an economic backwater.\textsuperscript{7}

Many questions remain unanswered however, for the scanty records of textile industry in the early modern period raise more issues than they answer. The plague death pattern brought out here suggests that, as has been assumed, much of the wool making in this period took place in family craft shops. Yet some of the records for Colyton suggest that other people also made wool. The dyeing and finishing operations employed expensive capital and waged (mostly male) labour. Employment in the wool industry was also a feature of early poor relief policies. Wool spinning took place in a spinstry which seems likely to have just employed women, not families. It may have been due to the existence of this sector, employing the textile making proletariat, that wool manufacture was sustained in Colyton after the mid-seventeenth century upheaval.
3. W.H. Hamilton Rogers, West country stories and sketches: biographical and historical, (1894), 70.
4. L. Bradley, 'The most famous of all English plagues: a detailed analysis of the plague at Eyam 1665-6', in The plague revisited, 63-94.
5. For instance, the Feoffees charter 22/10 of 1546 mentions that there were six fulling mills along the River Coly. The few extant seventeenth century inventories all show evidence of wool making and storage, for example the inventory of William Hill 2 June 1627, copy in Colyton library.
6. R.G.C. White, The history of the feoffees of Colyton 1546-1946, (1951), 12. There is evidence of a new fulling mill being built in Colyton in the second half of the seventeenth century in a lease book for the manor of Yardbury, Cornwall Record Office PE/29/1B. S.D. Chapman ed., The Devon cloth industry in the eighteenth century: Sun Fire Office inventories of merchants' and manufacturers' property 1726-1770, (Devon and Cornwall Record Society, 1978) indicates that there was still wool making in Colyton in the eighteenth century.

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RECENT PUBLICATIONS

Notes on articles compiled by Terry Gwynne

Jeremy Boulton

As a Special Feature contribution to Rediscovering London Jeremy Boulton examines the incidence of clandestine marriage in Restoration London, surveying the possible explanations which have been offered and opting for a more convincing explanation based upon wealthier landowners' predilection for private weddings which was emulated by those lower down the social scale.

Richard Britnell

This is an account of the catastrophic impact of the Black Death upon English towns (noting, for example, that two-thirds of the taxable population of Canterbury disappeared from the record after the plague and in Rochester about half of Rochester Priory's tenants died) whether or not some had already contracted before 1348.

S.R. Duncan, Susan Scott and C.J. Duncan

Despite some intimidating mathematical theory of infectious epidemics and accompanying equations this is likely to be an article of relevance and use to LPS readers with an interest in infectious disease, and mortality in general.

Paul S. Ell and T.R. Slater

This article illustrates the variety of measures of denominational strength and weakness that can be mapped. The range of variables describing differences in religious practice includes percentage share measures (expressing a denomination's share of sittings, attendances and places of worship as a percentage of the total provided by all denominations in a Registration District). Each measure is illustrated by a map.

Eilidh Garrett and Alice Reid
'Satanic mills, pleasant lands: spatial variation in women's work, fertility and infant mortality as viewed from the 1911 census', Historical Research, 67 163, (June 1994), 156-77.

Based upon work at the ESRC Research Centre for the History of Population and Social Structure on anonymized individual census returns, the authors
consider some of the findings of the Registrar General’s 1923 report in the context of the topic of the Demographic Transition. The conclusion based upon the 1911 fertility census is that it was where one lived that most strongly influenced the survival of children, rather than family position in the social hierarchy. Industrial areas were more harmful to infant and child health than urban areas in general. Class, nevertheless, exerted a strong influence on where a family was likely to be living and therefore on their survival chances.

Eilidh Garrett and Andrew Wear

This is a short introductory article to a special number of Continuity and Change devoted to infant and child mortality. The whole number is therefore likely to be of interest to LPS readers.

Nigel Goose

This is a discussion of the potential for the application of basic aggregative techniques to parish register data, the rigorous analysis of tax returns and the use of sources such as wills in studies of urban populations in the pre-industrial period. The article offers a very helpful survey of work on pre-industrial urban demography, especially in a lengthy footnote 4 to page 274.

S. Halliday
‘Social mobility, demographic change and the landed elite of County Durham 1610-1819: an open or shut case?’, Northern History, 30 (1994), 49-63.

Although the main focus is upon a local landed elite in terms of upward and downward mobility there is sufficient general demographic interest in terms of an incomer-outgoer analysis to attract LPS readers with interests in migration.

John Hatcher

The author provides a useful survey of the significant role attributed to the Black Death, or not as the case may be, from Seebohm’s 1865 view of it as ‘a great social revolution’, including Postan’s contributions in the 1930s, up to Campbell in 1991. Recent estimates of death rates are outlined in a useful bibliographical footnote (footnote 16 to page 9). The main thrust of the article is, however, directed to the standard of living of labourers and smallholders as revealed by data on prices and wages.

Bridget Hill
‘Rural-urban migration of women and their employment in towns’, Rural History, 5 2, (October 1994), 185-94.
Noting the considerable work done on rural-urban migration patterns from the mid-nineteenth century onwards the author undertakes a wider study of female rural-urban migration since the early eighteenth century. The conclusions are that female migrants were mainly young and single. Many on reaching the town entered domestic service. Such female migration was partly the result of a decline in rural industries which created widespread female unemployment or under-employment. Often seasonal or life-cycle migration was carefully planned and part of a family strategy of survival.


The ‘rural idyll’ model of the nineteenth-century village is subjected to demographic investigation through analysis of the population of three Hampshire villages during the second half of the nineteenth century. In the study two issues of current debate are addressed: the model of ‘open’ and ‘close’ villages, and the operation of the New Poor Law especially with regard to the question of settlement. Census enumerators’ books are the source of much data. The conclusion is that the populations of these Hampshire villages were not isolated; rather, they were highly dynamic with a continuous flow of people in and out.

*Journal of British Studies, 33* 4, (October 1994).

Although there is little of specific demographic material included, *LPS* readers may find of interest, in the context of a number of medieval articles in recent issues of *LPS* (eg *LPS, 51* and *52*) and the debate on communities in local history (*LPS, 51*), this special volume of the *Journal of British Studies* which is devoted to community in later medieval England.


The author provides a general account of feet of fines which includes some demographic features such as place-names and surnames.


In a complex article in a special number of *Continuity and Change* devoted to proto-industrialization the authors offer a resumé of work over the last fifteen years. For *LPS* readers the most interesting section is likely to be that on the demographic aspects of proto-industrialization, pp.219-26, which considers marriage behaviour and the proto-industrial household.

Michael Mascuch ‘Social mobility and middling self-identity: the ethos of British autobiographers,

Whilst not a demographic study in the conventional sense, this article offers some insights into the personal pre-occupations of 'middling-rank' individuals which suggest less interest in inter-generational mobility than in intra-generational mobility ie mutability in the individual life-cycle. The sources are a random sample of 135 printed autobiographical documents, 1600-1750, ie about 30 per cent of surviving texts.

G. Mooney

The published Quarterly Returns of the registrar general enable the author to reconstruct seasonal infant mortality rates in London, 1870-1914. A regular peak in infant mortality during the third quarter of each year is revealed. Reports on Infant and Child Mortality by the Chief Medical Officer to the Local Government Board provide further information.

John S. Moore

The author uses visitation records and ecclesiastical censuses for Kent to examine the discrepancy between Fisher's 20 per cent, his own 16 per cent and Wrigley and Schofield's 5.5 per cent population decrease following the great influenza epidemic of 1557-1559. (See note on an article on this issue by the same author in LPS, 52, p.60). There is critical analysis of the Canterbury visitations as a demographic source which indicates a high degree of reliability, and suggests that the 1563 ecclesiastical census for other dioceses should be defended against any general accusation of unreliability.

John S. Moore

An immediate response by Moore to Zell's note in the same volume of the Economic History Review, emphasising that his calculation was 15.9 per cent rather than Fisher's 20 per cent, and providing a general riposte to Zell's note regarding the use of probate evidence.

Margaret Pelling

What the author describes as the often-ignored 'in-between' age group is the focus of this article, ie dependent infants and young adults. This means for the most part a study of apprenticeship and the apprentice in sickness and in health. Surviving documents in the form of interrogatories offer opportunities to investigate the social environment, the conditions of work and the health
experience of urban apprentices.

Colin G. Pooley and Shani d’Cruze

This is an article based upon the analysis of a written family history which provides information on the movement of some 39 members of a family living in the north-west of England between 1748-1836. An evaluation of the source material is undertaken and a number of individual case studies are presented. Migration patterns revealed are set within the context of migration in early industrial Britain.

David Postles

Loughborough is examined within the context of a general urban decline in the late middle ages and is not found to have suffered any substantial decline, perhaps because of its specialization of production and position as a centre of exchange.

Barry Reay

Using family reconstitution techniques the author examines patterns of marital fertility in three Kent parishes 1800-1880. He focuses upon age at marriage, age-specific marital fertility, levels of marital fertility and evidence of family limitation. The argument is for an earlier start to the transition and the recognition of a less homogeneous experience.

Steven Ruggles

Although, for obvious reasons, this article is concerned with American family patterns, it, nevertheless, may be of considerable interest to LPS readers for its survey of what the author calls ‘revisionist’ studies of historical family structures since the 1950s, ie work combating the theory that there is a transition from extended to nuclear family structure. The author sets out to re-examine the revisionist arguments. During the course of this re-examination he offers connoisseurs of footnote-information the fact that Peter Laslett’s publications on the history of the family have been cited some 3,000 times in journal articles alone; the footnotes generally provide a detailed bibliography of work on family structure. The author’s conclusion is that not a nuclear but a stem family pattern (one child ordinarily remaining in the parental household after reaching adulthood) predominated in nineteenth-century America; this stem family pattern disappeared in twentieth-century America as a consequence of shifting family values.
Jona Schellekens

The author examines the extent to which Laslett’s ‘courtship hypothesis’ (ie that the process of courtship took a long time during which copulation might well take place, whilst failed courtships would not lead to marriage), and Lord Hardwick’s Clandestine Marriage Act of 1753 (requiring public celebration of marriage in church and subsequent entry in the parish register) account for a more than doubling of illegitimate fertility in England between 1750-1800. His results suggest that there may be no universal explanation for such a rise in illegitimate fertility.

Pamela Sharpe

This article examines the circumstances of marital breakdown and seeks some explanations for re-marriage by individuals who were still married. Much of the evidence comes from court and poor law records for the county of Essex.

Pamela Sharpe

Pamela Sharpe examines the ‘push’ factors (ie economic decline and technological change in the woollen industry, diminishing agricultural work) which caused women to move to the town, thereby providing cheap labour for the process of re-industrialization which was characterised by new types of industry including ‘sweated’ trades such as silk, clothing and shoe industries.

Michael Sigsworth and Michael Worboys

The authors argue that the working class reactions to sanitary reform were not characterised by apathy, ignorance or hostility; but were varied and guided often by a local understanding of urban disease ecology and the economic determinants of health and disease.

Joan Unwin
‘Local History group research projects in adult continuing education’, *The Local Historian*, 24 1, (February 1994), 28-36.

Since many LPS readers’ early projects emanated from group research often in adult evening classes in the spirit recalled in the editorial in LPS 52 this may be a timely reminder of the continuing significance and enjoyable nature of such activities within the wider field of local history.
Roger Wells

The author provides a useful survey of documentary sources generated by the operation of the Settlement Laws, in particular Settlement Certificates. The still unresolved debate between Snell and Landau (see notes on articles in *LPS*, 50, p.68 and 69) is introduced, but the author focuses upon economic factors, social security features and parish poor-law policies.

Naomi Williams

This is an examination of the implementation of the Vaccination Acts which looks at the pattern of coverage among infants over time. The last major smallpox epidemic in 1871-72 is seen as a real test of vaccination policy and reveals that smallpox mortality was substantially lower than in other European countries without obligatory vaccination. The failure to implement re-vaccination is blamed for the slightly higher mortality rates of adults.

Michael Zell

The author provides a note on the debate initiated by Moore’s supposed reassertion of Fisher’s claim that as much as one fifth of England’s population died between 1556-1560, thus challenging Wrigley and Schofield’s calculation that the national population decline was of the order of 5 or 6 per cent. He concludes by indicating two possibilities in terms of evidence which might constructively be brought to bear upon the debate: an analysis of all surviving registers which begin before the Marian crisis; the use of non-parish register data such as ecclesiastical counts of numbers of households, communicants, etc. Contributions to this ongoing and frequently acrimonious debate are noted passim in *LPS*, 52 and elsewhere in these notes.

Notes on recently published books by Dennis Mills and Kevin Schürer

A. J. Camp

From the title one might expect a text confined to what the historical geographer would call migration sources, such as the enumerators’ books, apprenticeship records, lists of freemen and settlement certificates, which more or less systematically state that persons living in place X were born in places A, B, C, etc. True, such sources do appear, though the treatment of the
enumerators’ books is slight, relative to their importance.

However, the bulk of the booklet describes several score of what most readers of LPS would not categorise as migration sources, although they might help to establish the whereabouts of individuals at particular dates. When this information is collated with other sources, the researcher will be able to deduce migration. Thus, for example, the entry in an enumerators’ book for an ancestor who described himself as a medical man could be compared with the same person’s entries in Medical Directories and Medical Lists.

So this short book is essentially an annotated check list of sources where one might think of looking for an ancestor who was on the move, provided, of course, there was some reason to suppose that he (usually he) might be found. Thus many of the sources are peculiar to occupations and professions, but there is a wide range of other types, such as wills, newspapers, poor law records, landownership, coats of arms, and so on. The notes give indications as to the nature and dates of the sources, often where they can be found, and, where available, references to specialist publications.

Only one mistake was found (p.21) — the Framework Knitters’ Company did not have authority throughout England and Wales. The majority of stockingers evaded control through living in the East Midlands beyond the reach of a London livery company. And only one obvious omission — the land tax assessments (but these are the subject of a Gibson guide, published by the Federation of Family History Societies).

The concluding summary (pp.57-60) would possibly have more impact as an introduction, yet despite this the book will nonetheless help many researchers very effectively. (DM)

C. R. Chapman


This guide has been compiled primarily as a finding aid for family historians and genealogists and in many ways complements the Federation of Family History Societies guide compiled by Jeremy Gibson and Mervyn Medlycott and published in 1992 (see LPS 48 p.75 for a review of this earlier publication). Unlike the Federation’s publication this guide concentrates its efforts on a relatively detailed description of the background and situation which lead to the censuses or listings mentioned being produced. As such it will provide a useful addition to those studying and researching local populations, as well as to genealogists. Although this fourth edition is a revised version of earlier editions, the first being published in 1990, it still looks slightly dated at times. For example, one cannot help noticing the lack of any reference to the 1992 LPS supplement Surveying the People and the many works on this subject cited within it. (KS)
Bernard Elliott


This is the Wigston Magna in Leicestershire made well known by the work of Bill Hoskins when the study of the census enumerators’ books was only in its infancy. The booklet joins others by the same author on Oadby and on Wigston in 1881, and follows a similar descriptive style and pattern, intended for the lay reader. Nevertheless, the more serious student will find a great deal of value. The population of Wigston rose by 63 per cent between 1871 and 1881, and by the same amount between 1881 and 1891.

During the eighties there was actually an increase in workers on the land, yet the place was no longer the semi-agricultural village of Hoskins’ book, but an industrial suburb of Leicester, with increasing employment in the boot and shoe trade and elastic web manufacture, the new and extensive railway sidings, a new biscuit factory and a foundry. There were 714 people employed in the old established hosiery trade, a proportionate decline on earlier times, as the total population of Wigston was 7,013 in 1891.

Significantly, despite the large decadal rise, there had been little expansion in the numbers employed in shops, pubs and local crafts. Can we assume that Leicester was stealing their trade? But not surprisingly there had been a big increase in building workers, and the youthful nature of the age profile caused a steady demand for new school places and teachers.

The text carries a large amount of detailed information on the various trades, with explanations of some of the more obscure occupational terms and the booklet is illustrated by a number of pleasant, clear photographs, making it good value at the modest price. *(DM)*

Ruth Finnegar (series editor)

**Studying Family and Community History: 19th and 20th centuries.**

Volume 1, *From family tree to family history*, ed. R. Finnegar and M. Drake, xi+196pp., £11.95 (p/b), £35 (h/b). ISBN 0 521 46577 X.


Given that these volumes have been prepared to accompany the Open University course DA301 they will already be familiar to many readers to LFS. If they are not already familiar they should become so! One should start by stating that given the length of review notices in this journal one simply cannot do full justice to the four volumes of this series, which in total cover some 1,000
pages of text. Consequently, this review will attempt to do little more than alert readers of the context, scope and importance of these four volumes. A few words, however, should also be said about format. In many aspects the volumes resemble their cousins, the standard OU coursebook, although the more compact size is much easier to house on book selves. The nature of the format is hardly surprising given the fact that these are OU course books – their publication in collaboration with CUP simply indicating that both parties see a potential for sales beyond those signed-up for the DA301 course, a judgement that would appear to be most sound. Given this, the ‘OU style’ very much remains: questions are posed throughout the various sections, with answers supplied at the end of the volume, and notes of definition or clarification are scattered here and there. For the point of view of the student engaged in distance learning this may be a useful devise, may be also for teachers too, yet others may find that this format breaks up the text rather too much and through discontinuity in certain places makes the text hard to read. It would be a shame if the format acted as a distraction to the many good things to be found in the body of the text.

The volumes, like DA301 itself, are aimed in part at those who through the study of their own family trees wish to move beyond the searching of genealogical links and to place the information they have collected on their ancestors within the context of the societies, and more especially the communities in which they lived. This is handled in the progressive fashion that is best summarised by the titles of the first three volumes. Volume one concentrates on research on individual families or genealogies and how this relates to broader demographic patterns as well as information on family and household structures. The case study provided on the families living in Katherine Buildings in the East End of London, a housing block erected in 1884-5 to rehouse those displaced through slum clearance is particularly interesting, however, the fact that the classification of family types used in this section counters that recommended in an earlier section may confuse some readers new to the subject matter.

The second volume is much more concerned with settlement and place, and especially the ways in which settlements interact with those surrounding them. Emphasising the geographical aspects of such relationships, the connectivity between communities and the people within them is explored. As one might expect given this approach, this volume also includes a lot of information on the study of migration, both internal and external, and very rewardingly, from a family perspective. The third volume takes up several of the themes posed by the second but places the emphasis far more on the relationship within rather than between communities. Patterns of occupation, politics and religion are all closely examined, and readers of LPS should especially benefit from the section a social mobility, a subject seldom discussed within the this journal.

The final volume sits apart somewhat from the others, concentrating, as it’s title suggests on an examination of sources and techniques. Although not specifically orientated to demographic concerns, again LPS readers are likely to get much out of this. As well as the predictable section on census and registration data, the volume produces a number of very interesting sections on less used sources.
and techniques, such as maps, photographs, oral evidence, letters and diaries.

In conclusion one can only recommend that all students, teachers and other practitioners of local population studies examine these volumes closely. (KS)

T. V. H. Fitzhugh

Despite its obvious target audience this Dictionary has much to offer the local historian and those interested in the study of local populations in the past. This is hardly surprising given the fact that the book’s author, Terrick Fitzhugh, was interested in the study of genealogy in its widest context, and indeed, was a founder member of the Amateur Historian, later, of course, to change its name to The Local Historian.

The book is not designed to be read from cover to cover, at least not in sequential order. It is intentionally a work of reference with numerous sections on sources, repositories, research aids and so on arranged alphabetically, mostly in short sections. Key cross-references are given, yet generally this facility is unfortunately rather under-used.

With a large number of useful entries on weights, measures, obsolete terminology, common latin phrases, handwriting and calendars the Dictionary would make a welcome companion to many researchers in archives and record offices, irrespective of the fact that genealogy might not be their central interest. At times the information on sources must be treated with care, for example, both the entry on Poll Tax (p.230) and that relating to the Marriage Duty Act (p.211) are inaccurate and misleading. However, generally the information given appears concise and clear.

Lastly, it is worth noting that LPS gets its own entry, however, the fact that the contact address given is that of the LPSS Secretary means that the information is unfortunately already out of date. Equally, the Dictionary wrongly implies that the LPS journal is published by the Society – an all too common misunderstanding. (KS)

Donald Woodward

Although not demographic in character, this work in part arises from the questions raised by Wrigley and Schofield’s Population History of England, in particular the need to obtain greater information and a better understanding of the course of prices, wages and living standards in pre-industrial England. In order to examine his chosen theme the author has mustered an impressive volume and array of source material plundered from town and city minute books, account books, treasurers’ accounts, company and gild accounts and
books, wills and inventories, as well as a few parish registers for good measure. One initial observation is that given the geographical coverage from which the sources are drawn, being taken from towns and cities north of an imaginary line running from Chester to Lincoln, the book provides at important contribution on activity in the north of the country and as such goes some way to redress the geographical imbalance of studies undertaken to date on this topic. The evidence presented in this work indicates that as far as northern towns in this period were concerned most enterprises in the building trades were and remained small with most master craftsmen not acting as full wage-earners put rather as petty entrepreneurs, supplying the labour of apprentices and journeymen working under then in addition to their own labour. Some gained extra profit through the supply of raw materials, others did not. This usually depended on the size of the contract in question and the nature of the contractor. This pattern differed from that of labourers who invariably supplied their labour only, with many moving in and out of the labour market over the course of a single year according to the competing pressures of supply and demand. In terms of what might be seen as fringe benefits to employment or supplements to wage-labour drink was often allocated to labourers and increasingly so during the seventeenth century. The provision of 'food, however, appears to be relatively uncommon, except perhaps in the case of those working some distance away from home. It would appear that the relatively high real wages of the later fifteenth century enabled workers to work a relatively short number of days throughout the year, with frequent breaks between periods of work, a situation which was in part facilitated by the high number of 'holy days'. A change from this situation can be seen with the lowering of real wages in the early sixteenth century which brought about a need to work longer in order to maintain living standards. Likewise this can be seen to have worked in tandem with the Protestant reduction in the number of observed holy days, yet it is questionable to what extent the need for longer periods of employment and the opportunity for such employment were matched. Although the availability of source materials, particularly for price information, do not make comparisons between the 'north' and the 'south' easy, the evidence from this study is suggestive of a general deterioration in real wages in the north during both the sixteenth century and the early seventeenth century with 'little doubt that life became more difficult for wage-earners in Tudor and early Stuart times’ (p.215).

As the author indicates, much work especially in relation to compiling comparable price series to those available for London and southern England, still needs to be done, but this work is still to be very much welcomed in broadening our knowledge of the structure and operation of the labour market in northern towns. (KS).
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