

CORRESPONDENCE

Access to Records

Dear Sir,

With reference to access to the registers at the General Register Office, I would point out that until approximately 1898 registers as well as indexes were open to public inspection (see the evidence of Master Arthur S. Ridsdale to the Royal Commission on Public Records, volume 2, 1914). Presumably they were then closed as a result of their growing bulk and difficulties of arranging access. There is, however, no principle forbidding their opening to the public.

Yours faithfully,

J.M. Farrer,
County Archivist
Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely
County Council

In Search of Nonconformity

Dear Sir,

I am a member of a group engaged in Family Reconstitution. In this kind of parish register analysis it would seem to be important, for a number of reasons, to identify the extent of nonconformity in this and other nearby parishes and I am beginning to make such a study of nonconformity in this part of Derbyshire.

So far I have identified the following sources of information:-

The Compton Census Returns of 1676 and certain other ecclesiastical visitation returns for the eighteenth century.

The return made under the act of 1852 of places of public worship which had been certified by the Justices of the Peace from 1688 until 1852.

A list of Non parochial registers in the Public Record Office.

There are of course certain other late sources such as

directions. I should be grateful for suggestions as to what other records of nonconformity are alikely to be available and how they might be used.

Yours faithfully,

Marjorie Thoday

Mortality Pattern

Dear Sirs,

On p. 24 of L.P.S. No. 6 Mr. Bradley says, "The one analysis which might have been possible - the distinction between the diseases of childhood and those of later life - is frustrated because Parish Registers do not give the age at death". How true!

It occurred to me to wonder whether any kind of pattern on these lines would emerge if one used F.R.F. information alongside the Parish Registers. This is not the place to explain how the information or inferences on the F.R.Fs were arrived at. Readers will have to take my word for it that they were subjected to all the usual tests and precautions. In many cases it is impossible to arrive at an exact age, but relatively easy to distinguish between children and adults. So here, for what it's worth, are the burial entries for the decade 1721-30 for the parish of Burton Joyce.

Burton Joyce Mortality 1721-30

Month	Child	Adult	Unknown	Total
Jan.	4	4	-	8
Feb.	2	7	3	12
Mar.	2	7	1	10
April	2	3	1	6
May	1	2	-	3
June	6	3	-	9
July	9	3	3	15
Aug.	3	3	1	7
Sept.	2	6	-	8
Oct.	2	6	-	8
Nov.	3	6	-	9
Dec.	5	5	-	10
TOTAL	41	55	9	105

Does it show any significant pattern? How does it compare
with other parishes?

Yours truly,

Margaret Massey,
14 St. Helen's Grove,
Burton Joyce, Nottingham

Under Registration

Dear Sir,

I learnt, by chance recently, what I ought to have realised by common-sense, that the death of a person who has donated his or her body for medical purposes goes unrecorded in burial registers. Clearly this can only refer to a very few individual cases, especially in earlier periods, but it is yet one more category of omissions which the local historian ought to bear in mind. Or can he safely ignore it?

Yours truly,

A. Rogers,

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