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**The Roger Schofield Local Population Studies Research Fund**

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This issue of LPS includes three articles which are very different from each other indeed, in terms of subject matter, methodology and chronology.

Christine Jones’ article on ethnicity and health from the 1991 census and health service records is particularly welcome, as we are offered relatively few articles on twentieth-century topics, and even fewer on the late twentieth century. It was not until 1991 that a question on ethnicity was asked for the first time in a British census, and this study uses anonymised data from the 1991 census together with anonymised data collected by the physiotherapy service of a National Health Service Trust in a multi-ethnic area to explore how far the service was available to, and meeting the needs of, the local population. The area concerned is Parkside Trust, a Community Trust which, at the time the study was undertaken, comprised the whole of the London Borough of Brent and the northern wards of the boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea, and Westminster. The output from the 1991 census is usually presented as a ten-category classification—White, Black-Caribbean, Black-African, Black-Other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other groups-Asian, Other groups-Other—and this is adopted here. Jones finds that take-up relative to the numbers in each ethnic group was skewed, for Bangladeshi children, Chinese adults and Other Asians of all ages were under-represented, while African and Pakistani babies, Pakistani and Black-Other adults and the Bangladeshi elderly were over-represented. She concludes that unless these groups had less need for physiotherapy, which is not suggested anywhere in the literature, the physiotherapists of Parkside were failing to provide an equitably distributed service. It remains possible, of course, that those who were under-represented were accessing treatment from other quarters, and alternative therapists were numerous in the area, while Jones also warns that there may be cultural and religious explanations for these ethnic variations that could not be taken into account in the present study.

Bernard Deacon reconstructs a regional migration system to examine net migration in Cornwall in the nineteenth century. In this paper Deacon adopts the method developed by Andrew Hinde, which combines census data with survival rates calculated from the Annual Reports of the Registrar-General, to study net migration at the local level (A. Hinde, ‘The use of nineteenth-century census data to investigate local migration’, LPS 73 (2004), 8–28), but extends it by applying it to a scale larger than the parish, and across the four decades in which it can be used. Thus he provides an investigation of the level of, and variations in, net migration in Cornwall between 1851 and 1891 at Registrar’s District level. Deacon finds that the difference in the propensity to migrate between districts was less than might be expected, given the de-industrialisation Cornwall suffered from the 1860s. Migration was high (and sometimes highest) in farming as well as in mining districts. Rates of net out-migration of Cornish natives ran at a high level in this period, although the
proportions discovered were no higher than those found by Hinde for the 1850s in his small rural areas, while standing below those for central Shropshire. However, this difference may to a large degree be due to the larger size of the areas studied—Registration Districts as opposed to parishes—which might obscure much short-distance circulatory movement. At Registration District level, however, it is not immediately obvious that Cornwall was one of the major emigration regions of the British Isles in this period. The pattern of net native migration in Cornwall confirms the role of young men in net migration flows, and Deacon finds significant variations by gender, especially in the mining west of Cornwall. The study also reveals that differences in the propensity to migrate within Cornwall were greater for women than for men, reflecting differential job opportunities, while female net migration by age also varied between districts.

Pam Fisher’s article provides important insights into a subject that has received only limited historical attention to date: the operation of coroners’ inquests in Victorian England and Wales. While J.D.J. Havard drew attention to the actions taken in this period by the magistrates of several counties to restrict the number of inquests held on fatal accidents and sudden natural deaths, he did not explore local and regional variations. This article aims to provide a broad overview of the nature and extent of such restrictions, together with details of the sources from which county-specific information may be obtained. Fisher concludes that the lack of any statutory definition of when an inquest should be held made them particularly vulnerable when financial pressures urged economies. The motivations of magistrates may have been mixed, and might also reflect a desire to assert local autonomy against pressures exerted by the Registrar General’s office for true causes of death to be ascertained for central statistical analysis, requiring more autopsies and perhaps even more inquests. An element of resolution was achieved in 1860 through a new Coroners Act, which provided the coroners with a fixed salary, and ended the ability of magistrates to question the propriety of individual inquests, but considerable variation in practice remained, largely as a result of the different instructions given to police forces. Throughout the period, therefore, fatal accidents might not lead to an inquest, and it is possible that a number of murders were not discovered, either because the coroner was not notified of the death, or because he refused to act through concern that he would not be paid for his time and travel if a verdict of natural death was returned. Conversely, if an inquest was held and suspicions proved unfounded, it is possible that coroners might have encouraged juries to return open verdicts to reduce the possibility that the coroner’s fee would be refused. Statistics from these sources, therefore, need to be interpreted with care, but particularly those from the 1840s and 1850s, when the magistrates’ power over the coroners was at its peak, and when local policies were particularly fluid.

Other items included in this issue are our two new features, ‘Electronic resources for local population studies’, and ‘Sources and methods’. I am particularly pleased to publish Matthew Woollard’s introduction to Histpop Online, which is a profoundly important new electronic resource for the local popula-
tion historian. Goose and Hinde complete their two-part article on 'Estimating local population sizes at fixed points in time' with a more detailed examination of individual sources for the pre-census era. 'News from the Universities' describes the various courses available and research projects underway at the University of Hertfordshire, while our book review section goes from strength to strength thanks to the efforts of our book review editor, Chris Galley.

The Roger Schofield Local Population Studies Research Fund

We drew attention to the generosity of Roger Schofield in endowing this fund in the editorial to LPS 75. Thanks to the efforts of Tom Nutt, supported by the LPS Editorial Board, we have now finalised the details of the new fund, for which an advertisement is included in this issue (see p. 135).

Networks, economic and social integration and cultural transfer in early modern northern Europe (NESICT)

In June 2006 Prof. Dr Dagmar Freist of the University of Oldenburg, Germany, convened a conference on the theme of regional integration and cultural transfer in early modern northern Europe, attended and addressed by delegates from Germany, the Netherlands, France, Sweden, Denmark and England. Its central theoretical focus was upon new approaches to the question of cultural transfer emerging in recent research, focussing on cultural exchange as a continuous process involving mutual influence and accommodation, requiring an understanding of the various processes by which that might be achieved, and the variety of outcomes that might result.

The aim was to address the question of how we actually analyse the dynamics of cultural transfer provoked by migration, as well as by the import of luxury goods and new economic techniques, and how we measure their impact on society, using the dynamic notion of cultural transfer as a process rather than a succession of discrete events. Within this theoretical framework, the conference aimed to promote process-oriented research on cultural transfer, extending existing theoretical and methodological models and combining them with qualitative and quantitative network research, emphasising processes of transculturization within early modern northern Europe.

The conference was a huge success, providing a rich diet of papers on economic, social and cultural themes within this theoretical framework, and provoking a great deal of discussion and enthusiasm for further collaborative work. The hospitality provided by the University of Oldenburg was first class, as was the organisational skill displayed by Dagmar Freist and her postgraduate helpers, which contributed in no small measure to the overall success of the meeting. The conference produced two outcomes. The first was a proposal for a collection of essays based upon the presentations given at the conference, which is currently under consideration by Macmillan Press, with the provisional title *The entanglement of a region: networks and cultural transfer in northwestern Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries* (ed. Dagmar Freist). The second outcome was a determination to meet again, which was achieved in March this
year, again in Oldenburg. This again proved to be a highly stimulating and enjoyable event, the culmination of which was the proposal to form an umbrella consortium, ‘Networks, economic and social integration and cultural transfer in early modern northern Europe’ (NESICT), within which to pursue topics of mutual interest, to exchange ideas and to collaborate, and to make research grant applications to national and transnational funding bodies. In due course NESICT will develop its own website, and will be inviting interested parties to affiliate to it. It is also intended to continue to hold conferences or workshops on this theme, and we are hoping to be able to find funding to hold the next meeting in England, possibly in spring 2008. Anyone interested in participating in NESICT should contact Prof. Dr Dagmar Freist (dagmar.freist@uni-oldenburg.de) or Nigel Goose (n.goose@herts.ac.uk).

The Victorian Marriage Register Project

This is the first in a series of ‘mini-projects’ to be set up by the Family and Community History Research Society (FACHRS). Volunteers are invited to help undertake a survey of the extent to which people in Victorian England married outside of their parish or residence. This is clearly crucial information if we are to rely upon it to indicate marital endogamy or exogamy as, for example, Keith Snell has done (see his *Parish and belonging, Community, identity and welfare in England and Wales 1700–1950* (Cambridge, 2006), 162–206, reviewed below). The idea is to compile details of marriages occurring in particular districts within one month of the date on which a census was taken, and then to trace the bride and groom back to their location on census night in order to determine whether or not the information in the marriage registers is correct. The project is being led by Paul Newton Taylor, and prospective volunteers are invited to contact him at paulnt@hotmail.com or 110 Loose Road, Maidstone, Kent ME15 7UB.

LPSS conferences

We enjoyed another very successful spring conference at the University of Hertfordshire’s St Albans campus on 21 April, a report of which is printed below. As previously advertised, we will also be running an autumn/winter conference this year, which will be held at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, on Saturday 20 October, on the theme of ‘Agricultural labour and agrarian society, 1700–1970’. The conference programme will be advertised in the next LPSS Newsletter. In the meantime, please address any enquiries to the conference organisers, Andy Gritt and Eilidh Garrett (e-mail: ajgritt1@uclan.ac.uk and eilidh.garrett@btinternet.com).

LPSS publication projects

*Working women in industrial England: regional and local perspectives*

It is with great pleasure, and relief, that I can now announce the publication of this long-awaited volume. We have priced it at £14.95, which for a book of 402 pages plus eight full colour plates represents pretty good value by today’s standards. Full details, and an order form, are enclosed.
Details of our proposed volumes on Agricultural labour and agrarian society in England and Wales, 1700–1970 and The New Poor Law and English society 1834–1908: local and regional perspectives, were presented in LPS 77. The editors of the two volumes are discussing their precise content and possible contributors. The latest thinking on the agricultural labour volume is that it might be reformulated to comprise overviews of the current state of research on particular topics written by the editors, followed by a selection of detailed local case studies arising from recent research. Potential authors, for either volume, are invited to contact the editors via the LPS General Office at the address given on p. 2.

Editorial matters

My thanks go as usual to Ken and Margaret Smith for typesetting this issue.

Nigel Goose
April 2007
THE NEW POOR LAW 1834–1908: REGIONAL AND LOCAL PERSPECTIVES

The seventh annual spring conference of the Local Population Studies Society was held at the Faculty of Law, University of Hertfordshire, in St Albans, on Saturday 21 April 2007.

Andrew Hinde, of the University of Southampton, gave the first lecture, on ‘The management of pauperism in southern England in the mid-nineteenth century’. During the early nineteenth century, the number of people claiming relief under the old parish-based Poor Law increased, and the system was also being used to subsidise low wages, raising the poor rates. The New Poor Law of 1834 was designed to stop wage subsidisation, and reduce costs, by enforcing a distinction between two types of poor relief. Outdoor relief was to be paid, in their homes, to those genuinely unable to work. Others, the so-called ‘able-bodied’ poor, were to be offered only indoor relief, that is, in workhouses. These were designed to dissuade the ‘able-bodied’ poor from applying for relief, by offering living conditions worse than those for persons on the lowest wages living in the community. Andrew then examined how the tensions arising from the New Poor Law were resolved at local level, using examples from the Basingstoke and Winchester Poor Law Unions in Hampshire between 1834 and the 1860s, and in particular drew our attention to those who did not claim relief, either indoor or outdoor, as a means to understand how the system operated in practice.

Five strands of current research were considered, starting with the structure of workhouse populations. Among single old people, more men were housed than women. Single mothers used the workhouse as a short stay lying-in hospital. However, able-bodied men and their families had, apparently, either been successfully deterred from applying for relief, or had found some way of securing outdoor relief despite the intentions of the new law. The second strand discussed ‘the agency of the poor’. Many of the poor knew that relief in the workhouse was much more expensive than outdoor relief, and were prepared to use this knowledge to try to persuade the local Poor Law authorities to be more flexible than the law would allow. Thirdly, the implementation of the law has been seen to produce tensions between central control and local practice, which were most acute in the impoverished rural areas of the south of England where pauperism was most entrenched. Many Boards of Guardians there contained a majority of farmers, who had been the main beneficiaries of wage subsidisation. However, in the Basingstoke and Winchester unions, the Guardians seem to have been content to seek
clarification from the centre while trying to make the best local arrangements for all, including themselves. A fourth concern has been the effect of the new principle that settlement should be taken as the parish of birth, which has been presumed to have discouraged migration. However, the loss of outdoor relief tended to devalue settlement for young single men, who may have chosen to migrate in search of work as the only alternative to the workhouse. Married men with families were in theory in a similar position, but in practice were encouraged to remain. Until 1865 parishes still managed their own affairs within the union, allowing close local manipulation of the labour market. The fifth strand is the presentation of the New Poor Law as an intervention into an unchanging economy. There were other forces for change, such as the arrival of the railways, largely built by the young single labourers who were newly excluded from outdoor relief. The New Poor Law may be regarded as a management exercise at local level between Boards of Guardians, employers and the poor themselves.

Discussion after the lecture pointed out that the response to the New Poor Law in northern regions was more hostile, perhaps because parish affairs were more efficiently managed there. It may be that where a system already worked, changing it would raise rather than lower the parish poor rates, giving an incentive for the central authorities to allow local practices to continue.

Panel One then focused on local experiences of relief. Nigel Goose, of the University of Hertfordshire, spoke first about ‘Age, gender and locality: using the annual poor law reports to investigate social and spatial variables of poverty’. Central level sources for the New Poor Law can be more accessible than bulky local records, but have often been ignored by historians, partly because they have been deemed difficult to analyse. In consequence, much national research has used summary reports, which do not offer local breakdowns. Nigel demonstrated how this data might be interpreted through a case study of Hertfordshire between 1850–1852 and 1900–1902, for which the data from 18 annual reports had been selectively analysed for gender, locality and age. He showed that more women than men were recorded among adults relieved, and among those on outdoor relief alone, the results proving to be similar to national ratios. However, indoor relief went predominantly to men, and at almost double the national ratio. Among the able bodied, women received more outdoor relief, rising to four times as many women as men by 1900. Among those who were not able, and therefore deemed to be mainly elderly, women again received more outdoor relief, but almost three times as many men as women received indoor relief in 1870–1872. This male bias also applied nationally, although it was less pronounced. Elderly women may have been more useful in the home, and easier to class as dependent by poor law officers. Men, especially the elderly, suffered particular distress in winter in arable agricultural counties such as Hertfordshire. Data is available for all counties, and for some years at least also for specific poor law unions, and hence the national level data has much to offer the local or regional historian of the New Poor Law.
Eileen Bowlt of Birkbeck College, University of London, then presented a study of the deaths of four paupers in the Uxbridge union in 1844–1845. The inquests, conducted by Thomas Wakley, were reported in *The Times*, edited by John Walter. Both these men strongly opposed the New Poor Law, especially the restriction of outdoor relief. William Terry’s ‘death from starvation’ was attributed to the power of the relieving officer to overrule the union’s medical officers, and the long distances the poor had to walk to find the relieving officer at all. William Haynes was said to have committed suicide ‘through dread of a union workhouse’, and especially the fear of being separated from his wife in their old age. The two other deaths were of a baby, John Murrell, and his father, William Murrell. In a case of ‘dreadful cruelty’, the child had been carted without protection between Eton and Uxbridge workhouses when very ill. William Murrell was injured while trying to work in a weakened condition, from which he contracted tetanus, but his death was also partly attributed to the distance and time involved in getting help. The cases also illustrate the importance of perceptions of the law, William Murrell’s wife being unaware that the regulations had been amended, and William Haynes fearing a separation, which the Guardians in fact rarely enforced. John Murrell’s death demonstrates the callousness of some workhouse officers. Nevertheless, the Uxbridge Guardians believed the New Poor Law to be ‘incomparably superior’ to the old system.

Christine Seal, of the University of Leicester, then described selected research on ‘Poor relief in mid-Victorian Belper and Cheltenham’, in Derbyshire and Gloucestershire respectively. Belper was in an industrial region, whereas Cheltenham was an affluent spa town with an agricultural hinterland. Taking data from the 1851 and 1861 censuses, and the admission and discharge registers for 1844 and 1858, the workhouse populations in both unions were analysed by age, sex, status, occupation and place of birth. The two unions were compared to local studies of Winchester, Basingstoke and Huddersfield, and a regional study of Hertfordshire, in an attempt to establish whether, in these respects, they were typical of other parts of England and Wales. Men were generally seen to predominate among those over 60, and women with children among the able-bodied aged 15–59, but other age patterns were more variable. Among those under 15, there were twice as many boys in Belper workhouse as in Cheltenham. Occupations reflected the different local economies, although numbers of domestic servants declined in both. Seasonal unemployment at the end of winter was a feature of agricultural work, but in Cheltenham this was reduced by employment offered by the social ‘season’. Belper union tried to discourage frequent re-admissions, and refused to offer assisted emigration. Cheltenham union was less well defended against those who took advantage of the rules, but did offer assisted emigration. Local and regional opportunities, as well as policies, therefore, produced variations in the composition of workhouse populations.

Following a sumptuous buffet lunch, the afternoon got off to an excellent start with the second lecture of the day. Tom Nutt, Research Fellow at Magdalene College, Cambridge and LPS Board member, presented his paper ‘Bastardy and
the New Poor Law’. This offered a comparative analysis of illegitimacy under the Old (pro-natalist) and New (anti-natalist) Poor Law, with a particular focus upon the locus of responsibility between mothers, fathers and the state for the care and maintenance of illegitimate children. Under the New Poor Law, Tom explained, unmarried mothers were expected to be solely responsible for the care of illegitimate children, whereas the Old Poor Law gave mothers and fathers joint responsibility, with mothers expected to be primary carers and fathers financially responsible.

The affiliation system (the legal mechanism for enforcing paternal responsibility) under the Old Poor Law had resulted in a dole paid to the mother with the cost recouped from the father by the courts. If the father was found to be unwilling or unable to pay, the cost was borne by the parish rates. The emphasis, however, was on paternal responsibility: fathers were identified in court and the man had to disprove paternity. For the Poor Law Commissioners of 1834, this was a fiscally and morally corrupt system and Tom described how the 1834 Commission considered the old system as an actual inducement to bastardy. Their objective was to diminish and eradicate illegitimacy and to realign the locus of responsibility by making mothers entirely responsible for the care of their illegitimate children. They proposed to abolish the bastardy clauses of the poor law, with the aim of ultimately eradicating illegitimacy through the ‘providential’ imposition of maternal responsibility. There was large resistance to the Poor Law Amendment Bill in parliament, however, so the bastardy clauses were not abolished. The right to affiliation was retained, but with strings attached and parishes had to apply ‘diligent enquiry’ to establish paternity. Thus Tom argued, by limiting the ability of the state, and of mothers, to enforce paternal responsibility, the law, as both practice and discourse, operated to inculcate a stigma of illegitimacy, by narrowing the welfare options of unmarried mothers and portraying them as blameworthy architects of their own situation.

Tom identified a radical drop in affiliation orders with the introduction of the New Poor Law from an estimated 40 per cent under the old system, to only 18 per cent under the New Poor Law. Under the new system, corroborative evidence proving paternity was needed. This was not only hard to find, but going to court was potentially difficult and traumatic for the mother. Costs, too, were increased when cases were switched to the Quarter rather than Petty sessions until 1839 when affiliation procedures were once more heard in magistrates’ courts. Other restrictions continued, however, and unmarried mothers were faced with acute obstacles in obtaining affiliation orders. Evidence proving paternity was still required and remained hard to establish. Moreover, an unmarried mother had to give evidence to the Board of Guardians first and convince them the case was worth taking to court, making this doubly difficult and distressing since the testimony involved was often deeply demeaning and personal.

By 1844, however, the Poor Law Commissioners had to concede defeat in the face of public opposition. In what might be considered something of a u-turn,
another set of recommendations to reform the bastardy clauses was proposed. Unmarried mothers were given the right to apply for affiliation orders independent of the parish. There was a shift back to paternal responsibility, but away from state enforcement. The need for corroborative evidence of paternity, however, was retained. Tom highlighted local and regional variations, with the North far more likely to pursue affiliation orders than the South.

In conclusion, then, Tom’s argument was that in the early years of the New Poor Law responsibility was shifted away from fathers and the state towards maternal responsibility as a way of eradicating illegitimacy. This achieved some success—levels of illegitimacy began to fall after mid century—but this ideological approach of the Commissioners was also resisted because, Tom suggested, paternity matters.

The second panel session focussed on vagrancy. Dick Hunter from the Family and Community History Research Society presented his paper ‘Researching the nineteenth-century vagrant experience’. Using a variety of sources, Dick examined the survival strategies employed by vagrants and the nature of the vagrant experience. A regional approach enabled him to assess varied attitudes towards vagrants, from the view that they were tramping from place to place looking for work to the idea that they were mere ‘idle profligates’. A number of groups might make up the vagrant community, including professional tramps/beggars, workers in search of employment, disabled soldiers and casual workers unable/unwilling to sustain full-time employment. Clearly, overlap and movement existed between casual workers and vagrants. Dick argued that Raphael Samuel’s use of a seasonal framework, relating occupation and accommodation to mobility, enables the emergence of a textured account, principally defined by vagrants themselves, and by investigators such as Mayhew. By comparison, reliance by historians on poor law records permit only a partial understanding, given that many vagrants had little contact with Boards of Guardians and made intermittent or no use of the casual wards of the workhouse. There is, however, some evidence among poor law records such as petitions, complaints and testimony collected by medical officers, which indicate that many vagrants found the resources to retain a sense of personal identity within the workhouse system. Moreover, other evidence supports the view that rather than a passive, downtrodden group of people, they maintained a degree of assertiveness and agency. Dick mentioned Andrew Doyle’s innovative use of graffiti written on workhouse walls (messages left for other vagrants to pick up, comments about the conditions in particular workhouses), which suggests not only a certain degree of literacy, but also a degree of assertiveness that questions the perceived passivity of these people.

The second speaker in this session was Jacquie Fillmore from the Bedfordshire Local History Association who, while taking a local perspective, extended the subject to that of gender in her interesting paper ‘Adult female vagrancy in the Bedford Union 1881–1891’. This period followed the government’s directive to the Poor Law Commissioners to reduce numbers of vagrants entering workhouses at the time. Jacquie’s research not only adds to the discourse on the
New Poor Law from a local perspective, but also to debates about women as ‘hidden from history’. While adult women never represented more than ten per cent of the nomadic population of England and Wales, it is still possible to find out a fair amount of information about them from sources such as the Admission and Discharge Registers for Casuals that Jacquie used in her research. These registers enabled Jacquie to build up a profile of the women visiting Bedford workhouse casual wards between 1881 and 1891, including their ages, occupations, and whether they travelled alone or with other family members. She was able to ascertain where the women had come from, where they were going, and the length of their stay in the workhouse, as well as the work they had to undertake there and the conditions they endured which, she argued, were particularly harsh for female vagrants. There were, for example, no facilities for bathing or for washing clothes and vagrant women often found themselves prey to unsavoury advances by male porters or gatekeepers. Space here does not allow a detailed account of these findings, but the most representative age range was 30-49, with many women travelling alone, but there were also lone women travelling with their children and Jacquie has assumed these included single mothers, widows and deserted wives. The majority of women vagrants admitted to the workhouse came from Bedfordshire or surrounding counties, with one or two notable exceptions. Many made multiple visits to the workhouse or travelled around the workhouses in Bedford or nearby, substantiating the Poor Law Commissioners’ view that workhouses were an easy day’s tramp away from each other. By far the largest occupational group was that of charwomen, closely followed by fieldworkers, but there were also numbers of needlewomen and laundresses. Most were given the arduous and difficult task of picking oakum in the workhouse.

Following questions to the two panel speakers from the floor, Nigel Goose thanked all the day’s speakers and appreciation was shown in the usual way. The day had proved not only extremely interesting, but informative and varied and most surely contributed to debates about the New Poor Law for all concerned. It was particularly nice to see so many students at such a useful event.

We would like to extend our thanks to the administrative and support staff at the St Albans Campus of the University of Hertfordshire who helped to stage the event, particularly Sue Luckhurst and Mandy Skeggs, as well as to note the generous financial support of the Economic History Society.

Janet Hudson  
*LPS Editorial Board*  
Vanessa Ann Chambers  
*CCBH, Institute of Historical Research*
ETHNICITY AND HEALTH: A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE
RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION ON ETHNICITY IN THE 1991 CENSUS
AND HEALTH SERVICE RECORDS

Christine E Jones

Christine Jones worked for over 30 years as a physiotherapist in the National Health Service (NHS). The research on which this article is based was undertaken while she was a student at the London School of Economics, preparing a dissertation for a Masters Degree in Demography. She has since obtained a PhD in History at the University of Essex and works as a research assistant in the UK Data Archive.

Introduction

Following the rapid increase of migration into England and Wales after the Second World War, there was a desire for more detailed information on the origins of the people enumerated than could be obtained by the birthplace question alone, which had been included in every census since 1851. Questions on previous addresses of the individual and on the birthplaces of their parents were introduced in an attempt to gain the information indirectly. A question on ethnicity was piloted for the 1981 census but abandoned following objections. It was not until the 1991 census that a question on ethnicity was asked for the first time in a British census.1

In December 1984 the editorial in LPS 33 commented on the proposal to include a question on ethnic origin in the 1991 census, describing it as an ‘interesting extension of the census’.2 The initial results of the 1991 enumeration began to be published in 1993.3 However, there have been no articles in LPS making use of this new data source. The probable reason for this is that most nineteenth-century census-based local population studies have relied heavily on the technique of nominal record linkage and the 1991 census enumeration, in common with all previous enumerations, is subject to the ‘100 year rule’ to preserve anonymity. Just because nominal information is not available, it does not mean that a local population cannot be studied, or studied demographically. While local population historians make considerable use of the census enumerators’ books and published census reports for research on nineteenth-century communities, the possibilities presented by more recent census material are much more rarely explored. This article demonstrates how twentieth-century data can be used to study a local community. It uses anonymised data from the 1991 census together with anonymised data collected by the physiotherapy service of an NHS Trust in a multi-ethnic area to explore how far the service was available to and meeting the needs of the local population. The output from the 1991 census is usually
presented as a ten-category classification: White, Black-Caribbean, Black-African, Black-Other, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese, Other groups-Asian, Other groups-Other. It is these ten categories that will be used in this study.

Health inequalities and ethnic monitoring

In 1977 a working group was appointed under the chairmanship of Sir Douglas Black to ‘assemble available information about the differences in health status among the social classes and about factors which might contribute to these’. It was further to ‘analyse this material in order to identify possible causal relationships … and to assess the implications for policy’. In 1980 the working group published what became known as the Black Report. It is notable that less than two of its 213 pages mention race or ethnicity. Sadly, the magnitude of inequalities within the health service is still a cause for concern. Twenty years later another work on health inequalities found it necessary to devote two chapters, 35 of its 221 pages, to ethnicity.

There are many references in the medical literature to the issues of equity and equality in the areas of clinical need, perceived need, demand, access to and utilisation of aspects of health care by minority ethnic populations. Evandrou et al defined an equitably distributed service as one in which only variables that measure a respondent’s need for the service provide a significant explanation of whether the respondent receives the service. Yet few writers on health and ethnicity have mentioned physiotherapy in this context. Far more typical was the approach of Patel who, in a chapter on black elders’ care—a subject on which physiotherapy might be expected to make a significant contribution—made no mention of the profession, while citing contacts with General Practitioners (GPs), district nurses, health visitors, chiropodists, dentists, opticians, social workers and even alternative practitioners. McCalman entitled her report on the needs of the elderly and their carers within the Afro-Caribbean, South Asian, Vietnamese/Chinese communities ‘The Forgotten People’. It would be an equally appropriate title for the physiotherapists, as she finds that only a minority knew of the existence of physiotherapy, although a majority might have benefited from it.

In the period 1988–1997 the monthly journal of the Chartered Society of Physiotherapy printed only four articles of relevance. Burnard described the development of a community physiotherapy service for adults in Brent in 1985 and it is remarkable for the total omission of any mention of ethnic groups, despite the fact that there had been substantial Caribbean and Indian populations in Brent since the late 1950s and the less visible European Jewish and Irish populations since the 1940s. Moreover, it was published four years after a highly critical report by Brent Community Health Council, entitled ‘Black People and the Health Service’, and one year after the Greater London Association for Disabled People’s study ‘Disability and Ethnic Minorities’, which made extensive use of evidence from Brent. To be fair to Burnard, neither of these reports made any mention of physiotherapy. In 1992 French reviewed the literature and took a critical look at the provision of health and
social services for people from ethnic minorities, highlighting areas of progress
and suggesting how the situation might be improved. Jaggi and Bithell
described a questionnaire survey of physiotherapists employed by two health
authorities undertaken to assess their contact and general knowledge with
regard to Bangladeshi patients. The findings indicated that contact with
Bangladeshi people increased awareness of their culture and customs but this
did not result in fewer problems in their physiotherapy management.
Communication was found to be the greatest problem, and more qualified
interpreters together with cultural awareness training were suggested
solutions. Stewart outlined the case for physiotherapy management of the
sequelae of Sickle Cell disorders and raised serious concerns about the lack of
awareness of physiotherapists regarding these conditions. Bhat would
welcome such belated concern, having been scathing of the disproportionate
amount of research directed to genetic defects affecting predominantly the
white ethnic groups, such as cystic fibrosis.

During the 1980s pressure was growing on public bodies to demonstrate that
they were equally accessible to all sections of the community. Among the
recommendations of Cox and Bostock was that ‘as part of the exercise of
assessing the quality of service, an area of high minority ethnic population
should be selected and that NHS personnel with appropriate experience
should study the relevance of the service being provided to the needs of the
local minority ethnic community’. 

Parkside Health NHS Trust

Parkside Health NHS Trust (hereafter referred to simply as Parkside) was a
Community Trust situated in such an area. It disappeared in a subsequent
reorganisation, but in 1995 comprised the whole of the London Borough of
Brent and the northern wards of the boroughs of Kensington and Chelsea and
of Westminster. Table 1 shows the population of Great Britain and the
population of Parkside in 1991 by ethnic group as numbers and percentages.

Unlike local government boundaries, trust boundaries are ‘semi-permeable’.
Where a person lives determines to which local government authority they pay
their council tax and who is responsible for collecting their refuse, and
providing other services. Where a person lives does not completely control
with which GP they register. Traditionally GPs had the freedom to refer their
patients to the consultant of their choice. This freedom became somewhat
constrained by the system of contracts between purchasers and the providers,
but no single trust held the monopoly of all the contracts in their area. Thus a
patient living in the area of Parkside and registered with a GP in Parkside
might be referred to hospitals outside the area according to the specialist
service they required.

Parkside prided itself on a sensitive response to ethnic issues such as dietary
provision, spiritual observance, care of the dying, deceased and bereaved, sign-
posting and information leaflets, a bi-lingual speech therapy service and a
Patients were asked voluntarily to supply the information and had the right to decline to answer the question. Access to medical records, both original hard copies and computerised records, is subject to strict limitations concerning what information can be released and to whom. Detailed information on an individual’s ethnic group is confidential, and its availability is restricted to those involved in the direct care of the patient. It was Parkside’s policy that the aggregated information was collated, analysed and subsequently fed into the planning process.

**Referrals to the physiotherapy service**

Referrals to the physiotherapy service in Parkside were analysed for a period of 12 months, from 1 October 1995 to 30 September 1996, to see whether the ethnic mix of the patients reflected that of the population as a whole. A 12-month period was chosen to provide a sufficiently large data set for analysis and to avoid any effects of seasonality. If one or more ethnic groups were under-represented in relation to the others this might indicate problems of access to the service. The hypothesis, therefore, was that there is no statistical difference in the distribution of the ethnic groups between those patients referred to the physiotherapy service in Parkside and the population of Parkside as a whole. Ideally one would have wanted figures for the current population of Parkside, broken down by sex, age and ethnic group, with which to compare the referrals to Parkside’s physiotherapy service. Unfortunately these did not exist. In the absence of ideal figures for a base population the practice used throughout Parkside of taking the 1991 census figures was adopted, despite the fact that these were more than five years out of date. For the purposes of this study a programme (Uniquery) was written which would print out by Master Patient Index (MPI) the number of all patients registered

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**Table 1  The population of Great Britain and the population of Parkside in 1991 by ethnic group**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Great Britain</th>
<th></th>
<th>Parkside</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>No.</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>51,810,555</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td>271,192</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>493,339</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>33,599</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>206,110</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>15,683</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>219,091</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>8,071</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>840,255</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>45,112</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>476,555</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>8,473</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>162,835</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4,513</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>156,938</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>5,373</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>521,166</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>30,311</td>
<td>7.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54,888,844</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>422,327</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Census 1991, Ethnic Group and Country of Birth, Volume 2 of 2, Table A
Parkside information provided by the Office for National Statistics [ONS] in the form of 1991 Census Small Area Statistics (Crown Copyright).
by all the teams of the Parkside physiotherapy service during the 12-month period. This was designed to include the ethnic code, sex, date of birth, team code and source of referral, but to omit names and addresses.

Table 2 compares the physiotherapy referrals with the residents of Parkside at the time of the 1991 census by ethnic group. It will be noted that certain ethnic groups appear to be over-represented: White, Black Other, Indian, Pakistani, Other Other; and the following groups under-represented: Black Caribbean, Black African, Bangladeshi, Chinese and Other Asian. However, the situation is far more complex than this, as the following analysis shows.

The overall sex distribution of the patients (including those whose ethnic origin was unknown) was 2,331 males to 3,619 females. It is normal for a larger number of females than males to be referred to a physiotherapy service. Sex ratios are usually expressed as the number of males per 100 females. In this case the overall sex ratio is 64.4. Any ethnic group of patients whose sex ratio deviates substantially from this, unless their sex ratio in the community as a whole also deviates, could be suspected of having limited access to physiotherapy. Table 3 presents the sex ratios of the patients in each ethnic group compared with those of the resident population. Before considering the sex distribution of the patients it is worth noting that the sex ratio of the resident population supports the view that Black Caribbean and Black Other males may have been under-enumerated in the 1991 census. It also shows that among the more recent immigrants, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, the sex ratio had not yet reached parity. Turning to the sex ratios of the patients, Black African, Bangladeshi and Other Asian women appear to be under-represented

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Physiotherapy referrals</th>
<th>% of assigned ethnicity</th>
<th>Residents of Parkside</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>2,741</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>271,192</td>
<td>64.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>33,599</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>15,683</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>8,071</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>8.7</td>
<td>45,112</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>8,473</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>4,513</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>5,373</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>14,007</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>16,304</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total assigned ethnicity</td>
<td>4,189</td>
<td>70.4</td>
<td>422,327</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing data</td>
<td>1,761</td>
<td>29.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>5,950</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Parkside CIS and author’s calculations
ONS 1991 Census Small Area Statistics (Crown Copyright).
among the patients when compared with the resident population, as do Chinese men.

The pattern of physiotherapy referrals does not match the age distribution of the population as a whole, a disproportionate number of referrals being for members of the older age groups. Equally the ethnic groups are not distributed evenly across the age range. Migrants are typically young adult males. Once settled in this country they are joined by wives and children, further children are born in this country and elderly dependants may get permission to join them. The more recently the ethnic group arrived in this country the younger they are likely to be, such as the Bangladeshi community. However, among the Black Caribbean and Indian communities there are increasing numbers of elderly. Whereas among school children in parts of Brent it is the white ethnic group who are the minority, among the elderly the white ethnic group is relatively larger than in the population as a whole. Table 4 presents the population of Parkside by age group and ethnic group. To analyse the ethnic representativeness of the physiotherapy referrals further it is necessary to carry out an indirect standardisation for age. Table 5 shows the actual referrals by ethnic group and age band. Where the actual referrals for an age band were zero they have been combined with the referrals for the adjacent age band to give a numerator for calculating the ratio for Table 6. The figures for the corresponding expected referrals were combined to give the denominator.

The standardised referral ratio in a given age-group for an ethnic category is equal to the actual number of referrals experienced by that ethnic category divided by the number that would have been expected if that ethnic group had had the same age-specific referral ratio as the population as a whole. In other words, if $j$ represents an ethnic category, $P$ represents the total number of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Sex Ratio</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>1,010</td>
<td>1,731</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>91.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>69.1</td>
<td>85.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>113.5</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>90.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>70.5</td>
<td>99.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>86.9</td>
<td>110.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>137.5</td>
<td>104.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>92.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>122.2</td>
<td>94.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>89.4</td>
<td>105.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total of assigned ethnicity</td>
<td>1,642</td>
<td>2,547</td>
<td>64.5</td>
<td>92.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: Parkside CIS and author's calculations
Table 4  1991 Census Small Area Statistics for Parkside for ethnic group by age group [C]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>0–4 yrs</th>
<th>5–15 yrs</th>
<th>16–29 yrs</th>
<th>30 yrs to pension age</th>
<th>Pension age</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>12,503</td>
<td>22,643</td>
<td>70,224</td>
<td>110,165</td>
<td>55,657</td>
<td>271,192</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>2,379</td>
<td>4,877</td>
<td>8,637</td>
<td>14,447</td>
<td>3,259</td>
<td>33,599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>2,755</td>
<td>5,491</td>
<td>5,485</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>15,683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>1,344</td>
<td>2,267</td>
<td>2,813</td>
<td>1,469</td>
<td>176</td>
<td>8,071</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>3,764</td>
<td>8,544</td>
<td>9,938</td>
<td>19,989</td>
<td>2,877</td>
<td>45,112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>914</td>
<td>1,913</td>
<td>2,163</td>
<td>3,234</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>8,473</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>572</td>
<td>1,363</td>
<td>1,089</td>
<td>1,399</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>4,513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>595</td>
<td>1,874</td>
<td>2,411</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>5,373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>1,068</td>
<td>1,842</td>
<td>3,800</td>
<td>6,903</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>14,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other</td>
<td>2,026</td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>4,432</td>
<td>5,585</td>
<td>700</td>
<td>14,007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total [R]</td>
<td>26,462</td>
<td>50,360</td>
<td>110,461</td>
<td>171,087</td>
<td>63,957</td>
<td>422,327</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ONS 1991 Census Small Area Statistics (Crown Copyright).

Table 5  Actual referrals by ethnic group and age band [E]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>0–4 yrs</th>
<th>5–15 yrs</th>
<th>16–29 yrs</th>
<th>30 yrs to pension age</th>
<th>Pension age</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>864</td>
<td>1,581</td>
<td>2,741</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>520</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total [P]</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>409</td>
<td>1,710</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>4,189</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Parkside CIS

referrals in the age group (Table 5), R represents the number of people in the age group enumerated in the 1991 census as residents of Parkside (Table 4), Cj is the number of people enumerated in the 1991 census in ethnic category j, and Ej is the number of referrals in ethnic category j, then the standardised referral ratio is calculated as follows:

\[
\text{Standardised referral ratio in age group} = \frac{\text{actual referrals}}{\text{expected referrals}} = \frac{E_j}{C_j (P/R)}
\]
Table 6  Standardised referral ratios [E/C(P/R)]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic group</th>
<th>0–4 yrs</th>
<th>5–15 yrs</th>
<th>16–29 yrs</th>
<th>30 yrs to pension age</th>
<th>Pension age</th>
<th>0–15 yrs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caribbean</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black African</td>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black Other</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pakistani</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>0.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Asian</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Other</td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>2.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source:  Author’s calculations

If there were no statistical difference in the distribution of the ethnic groups between those patients referred to the physiotherapy service in Parkside and the population of Parkside as a whole each standardised referral ratio would be close to unity. Clearly, from Table 6, this is not the case for Caribbean children aged 5–15, African babies and children, African pensioners, all Black Other age groups, Indian adults aged over 30, all Pakistani age groups, all but the 16–29 year old Bangladeshi age groups, all the Chinese age groups, all the Other Asian age groups and all but the 16–29 year old Other Other age groups. Deviation from unity is the rule rather than the exception for all ethnic groups except the White and the Caribbean. Bangladeshi children, Chinese adults and all Other Asians are grossly under-represented. African and Pakistani babies, Pakistani and Black Other adults, and Bangladeshi elderly, are grossly over-represented. However, it should be remembered that the figures for both actual and expected referrals for some age and ethnic groups are very small and that there are 1,761 patients for whom the ethnic origin is unknown. This shows the distortion that may occur from incomplete recording of ethnic monitoring. Alternatively, changes in the population since 1991 could account for those groups with very high Standardised Referral Ratios. It is possible that larger numbers of African and Pakistani babies than of other ethnic groups were now living in Parkside. It may be that Black Other adults were under-enumerated in 1991 and the level of referrals actually reflects the true number in the population. There may have been in-migration by Pakistani adults and Bangladeshi elderly. This shows the difficulty of working with data that are five years out of date.

Conclusion

Initial aggregative analysis showed less than 3 per cent difference between the ethnic distribution of the patients and the population of Parkside (Table 2). However, on disaggregating by sex and by age it was found that there was a significant mis-match between patients and population. The groups that
appeared to be under-represented were Bangladeshi children, Chinese adults and Other Asians of all ages. The groups that were over-represented were African and Pakistani babies, Pakistani and Black Other adults and the Bangladeshi elderly. Chinese males, African, Bangladeshi and Other Asian females were particularly under-represented. Unless these groups have less need for physiotherapy, which is not suggested anywhere in the literature, the physiotherapists of Parkside were failing to provide an equitably distributed service.

As the analysis progressed to further levels of disaggregation the problems of missing data became more apparent. 1995–1996 was the wrong time to be carrying out such a study as the population base from the 1991 census was five years out of date. It seems likely that there had been considerable change in the ethnic and age structure of the population in the intervening period and this may have been the reason why some groups appear to be over-represented. The difficulty of accounting for all the residents of Parkside was further complicated by the presence within the geographic area of physiotherapy services administered by other trusts. Nor should it be assumed that NHS Trusts hold the monopoly of physiotherapy services. No attempt was made in this study to discover the ethnic mix of patients attending private hospitals or individual private physiotherapists. This could distort the referral patterns to the NHS. While physiotherapists may be the major providers of physical therapy for neurological and respiratory conditions, they compete with osteopaths and chiropractors to provide a service for musculo-skeletal conditions. It may be that other manual therapists are preferred by members of minority ethnic populations as well as sections of the white majority. Opinions in the literature vary as to how much minority ethnic groups use alternative practitioners. What is not in doubt is the availability of alternative medicine within Parkside: over 45 outlets were identified from the local Yellow Pages.

Throughout this study the emphasis was on ethnicity as defined in the 1991 census. However, Clark and Bhat claimed that for many Muslims their Muslim identity based on faith is greater than any ethnic identity. Work based on ethnicity may ignore vital cultural aspects. No attempt was made to analyse the patients by religion, partly because it was known that there were even greater problems with missing data in this field, but also because there was no standard against which to measure the findings. The religious question in the 2001 census provides such a standard, and studies could now be undertaken into access to services by religion. It is hoped that this article will provide a stimulus to other local population historians to use material from the late twentieth-century censuses, particularly the Samples of Anonymised Records, to study the more recent demographic history of local communities.

NOTES


10. J. McCalman, The forgotten people (Kings Fund Centre, 1990). A search of the catalogues of the Kings Fund Library and Information Service in 1997 revealed very few references to access to physiotherapy services by minority ethnic populations.

11. A further search in December 2005 produced only three more articles on ethnicity in six years.


18. Brent had the highest proportion of ethnic minority residents of any local authority in England and Wales. For details see 1991 Census ethnic groups in Brent (Brent, 1994); The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea: ethnic origin and country of birth (London, no date); City of Westminster 1991 Census ward profiles (London, 1993).

19. GRIP (Group of Reliable Interpreters from Parkside) was developed so that people could communicate in the language with which they felt most comfortable. By 1995 it offered over 40 languages and extended beyond Parkside, covering a large part of north-west London. Other organisations used GRIP’s services extensively.

20. If the ethnic origin of all patients registered with a GP had been recorded and passed to the health authority, it would, in theory, have been possible to obtain the sex, age and ethnic origin of the base population. Enquiries to Brent and Harrow Health Authority drew the response from their medical demographer that only a few practices were collecting data on the ethnic group of their patients and the information was not readily available.

21. This illustrates the assertion that Black Caribbean and Black Other males were under-enumerated in the 1991 census. It also shows that among the more recent immigrants, Pakistanis and Bangladeshis, the sex ratio had not yet reached parity.


23. There was anecdotal evidence from health visitors of in-migration by Somali and Kurdish refugees to support this; that is, Black African and Other Asian respectively.

24. It was recommended in the report to Parkside that plans be made for the replication of this study by other services to coincide with the 2001 census.

25. Central Middlesex Hospital is located in an area of Brent where over 20 per cent of the residents are Caribbean. Northwick Park Hospital is located in an area where over 20 per cent are Indian.
These residents may go in preference to their local hospital for physiotherapy rather than to Willesden or Wembley respectively, which are administered by Parkside.


27. These included acupuncture, aromatherapy, fitness centres, health clubs, health foods, herbalists, homeopathy, hypnotherapy, massage and reflexology.

28. C. Clark and A. Bhatt, Muslim health profile (Brent and Harrow Health Agency, 1996).
RECONSTRUCTING A REGIONAL MIGRATION SYSTEM:
NET MIGRATION IN CORNWALL

Bernard Deacon

Bernard Deacon is a senior lecturer at the University of Exeter's Institute of Cornish Studies based at Penryn in Cornwall. He is currently working on migration from Cornish communities in the nineteenth century.

Introduction

Historians of migration in Britain have now begun to echo the orthodoxy of economic historians, replacing the idea of revolutionary transformation with that of gradual cumulative change. It is now proposed that no major discontinuity in migration patterns accompanied modernisation, at least until the twentieth century. Pooley and Turnbull claim that atypicality in migration history has been over-emphasised, partly as a result of historians concentrating on the better recorded and more visible long-distance moves and in consequence ignoring the ubiquitous, short-distance, ‘circulatory’ migration of past times. For example, they suggest that patterns of age selectivity from 1750 to 1930 were ‘quite stable over time’ and that ‘long-term changes in the relationship between migration and the life course’ were ‘relatively small’. More controversially, they claim that the experience of men and women was ‘very similar’, challenging the consensus of a host of studies based on the census enumerators books (CEBs) that support Ravenstein’s migration ‘law’ that females were more migratory than males, but that men were more likely to emigrate, a conclusion often extended to longer distance moves more generally.

Most surprisingly, Pooley and Turnbull’s data led them to conclude that there was ‘no evidence of any differences in the propensity to migrate by region or settlement size’. Yet, just as the economic historians’ orthodoxy is often questioned by historians who uncover greater change at the regional level, this conclusion contrasts starkly with some regional studies. For example, Baines cites the experience of other European countries, which implies the existence of marked differences in regional emigration rates. Indeed, he went on in the same work to demonstrate large differences in both internal and external net migration flows (within and beyond England and Wales) at the county level.

Such contrasting conclusions are explained partly by differences in the way migration is defined, partly by the different methods employed, and partly by contrasts in focus: Pooley and Turnbull focus on gross migration in order to understand individual lives and Baines on net migration to understand
population structure. Pooley and Turnbull brought together the genealogical researches of family historians across Britain relating to 16,091 life histories, producing an impressive dataset from which to draw aggregate conclusions. Their method built on a move towards nominal record linkage evident among historians of local and regional migration seeking to escape the restrictions imposed by studies of the CEBs. These latter have provided information on broad migration flows and enabled the testing of hypotheses about the selectivity of migration. But it is difficult to tell from one set of census records when an individual actually made their move. As the availability of the nineteenth-century CEBs was gradually rolled out and as computerised techniques began to be applied to them, historians began to link individuals and families across censuses to measure rates of movement or persistence. However, the nature of the source meant that it was easier to trace in-migration to a discrete place than out-migration, and less laborious to undertake such studies on localities and small areas.

Studies of gross migration based on the foundation stone of the CEBs coexist with and complement studies of net migration flows based on the published censuses, used in combination with the *Annual Reports of the Registrar-General for Births, Deaths and Marriages*. Friedlander and Roshier supplied estimates of net migration at Registration District (RD) level while Baines developed a method to calculate the net numbers of people born in any county of England and Wales who migrated either to other counties, or overseas, in the later nineteenth-century. This was based on the birthplace tables in the published censuses of 1861–1901, with the addition of the mortality and fertility data in the Registrar General’s *Decennial Supplements*. The method rests critically on estimating lifetime migrants’ death rates and the number of non-native deaths. Local studies of migration have been unable to use this approach to calculate net migration flows because the birthplace data in the published censuses do not report places of birth for areas smaller than counties. Although these could be derived from the CEBs, the absence of decadal birth and death statistics for parishes then inhibits such approaches for small areas. Nonetheless, Perkyns has compared Baines’ approach with a total family reconstitution study she conducted for six parishes in Kent, on which basis she challenged the assumptions of the age distributions of in-migrants made by Baines.

Recently, Andrew Hinde has proposed an intriguing method of using the published census in conjunction with CEB data to calculate age-specific net migration to and from small areas, and applied it to four contrasting groups of parishes in Norfolk, Shropshire, Derbyshire and Yorkshire in the 1850s. On the basis of this, he concluded that ‘female migration by age in the mid-nineteenth century was fairly similar across rural England’ except where there were specific occupational opportunities for women. Patterns of male migration were, in contrast, much more variable. His work also bore out the expected link between migration and age, reinforcing those CEB studies that had tended to confirm Ravenstein’s fifth law of migration—that migrants were more likely to be young adults. Hinde found that rates of net out-migration of natives peaked in the 15–24 age group, mirroring Pooley and Turnbull’s
findings that people were more likely to move in their early twenties in the
nineteenth-century and reinforcing the conclusion of Baines that ‘age is the
only universally valid migration differential’. Nonetheless, Hinde found that
this peak was less clear for women than for men, suggesting a possible
difference in age of migration between the sexes.

Hinde’s method allows for an age-sensitive analysis of net migration flows,
contained within an aggregate approach that potentially has a more general
application over and above local studies. It also bridges the methodological
gap that has existed between aggregate studies based on counties and CEB
studies that focus on localities. This paper adopts his method but extends it by
applying it to a scale larger than the parish and community, and across the
whole four decades in which it can be used. The aim is to investigate the
differences in net migration across a county at RD level. This work is part of a
broader project that sets out to reconstruct a regional migration system, one of
the themes of the research agenda for European migration history proposed by
Jackson and Moch. Another of the problems of migration history that Jackson
and Moch identified is that of selectivity, and the intention here is to focus on
the age and sex composition of migration flows, investigating whether the
conclusions reached by Pooley and Turnbull, Hinde and others can be applied
to Cornwall and its registration districts. The first section of the paper describes
the methods and sources used to calculate net migration rates. It then provides
some brief background relating to the area of study before analysing the
outlines of the migration system revealed by the net migration statistics.

The calculation of net migration

Hinde’s approach basically involves two stages. The first estimates age-specific
death rates and the probability of surviving within any given ten-year age
group to the beginning of the next age group. In order to do this we require the
age breakdowns of the population of the area under study at the beginning and
the end of each ten-year period in order to calculate the mean of these two
figures, together with the age-specific mortality for the intervening period,
with each set of data broken down by sex. These statistics were conveniently
published in the Registrar-General’s Decennial Supplements for the 1850s, 1860s
and 1880s. The Supplement for the decade 1871–80 unfortunately does not
disaggregate men and women, but the sex breakdown of deaths can be
relatively easily recovered from the Registrar General’s annual reports for this
decade. With these data the age-specific death rates and probability of
survival can be calculated with the aid of a spreadsheet, as in Table 1. In this
way survival probabilities were obtained for Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly as
a whole, and then for the 14 RDs within this area.

Having captured the survival probabilities for each ten-year age group, the
second stage entails working out the net migration of natives and non-natives.
This requires the age breakdown of natives and non-natives at the census dates
and the number of deaths by age and births for the intervening period.
Unfortunately, the numbers of age-specific deaths are not available for areas
smaller than RDs, or births for areas smaller than registration sub-districts.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Mean pop. 1871–81</th>
<th>Deaths 1871–80</th>
<th>ASDR</th>
<th>Probability of dying</th>
<th>Men alive per 1000 born</th>
<th>Men alive assuming 1000 births</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Estimated number of men alive</th>
<th>Survival probability</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>0–4</td>
<td>1513</td>
<td>985</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>0–9</td>
<td>=G2*G3</td>
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<td>=G6*(G7/2)</td>
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<td>=I9/8</td>
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<td>=I11/10</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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Table 1  Spreadsheet formulae used to calculate male survival probabilities in Falmouth RD, 1871–81
Therefore, Hinde had to apply the birth and death rates of the RD to his smaller study areas, which consisted of groups of neighbouring parishes. As he states in his paper, this is a reasonable method if the RD is relatively homogeneous, and his four study areas were all in consequence located in rural RDs. However, homogeneity is likely to be the case for only a minority of RDs. In Cornwall every district combined one or more market towns with rural areas and the rural areas themselves were occupationally diverse, producing the likelihood of differing death rates within these areas, perhaps particularly between agricultural and mining parishes (see Figure 1). For this reason Hinde’s method was applied only at the level of the RD, where the numbers of both births and deaths by age were known. This difference of scale should result in the discovery of lower levels of net migration in this study, as it will not capture short-distance moves within RDs, and thus a higher proportion of moves will not count as ‘migration’.

A second problem is that the published census does not distinguish between natives and non-natives (or in-migrants) by age. These data have to be derived from the CEBs. This is one strong reason for confining Hinde’s method to parishes or groups of parishes, where extricating the all-important age distribution of natives and non-natives is a feasible proposition. Once we extend the method to larger areas the time required to extract these data becomes prohibitive. However, the lack of published data distinguishing between those native to the RD and those who were born elsewhere presents no problem in the Cornish case. The CEBs from all the nineteenth-century censuses from 1841 to 1891 have been entered into an Access database by the
Cornwall Family History Society. Using this, it was possible to extract the numbers who were native and non-native in each age group in each RD, and furthermore to exclude those enumerated under ‘shipping’ and thus restrict the analysis to the normally resident. With the population broken down by age for 1851 it was then a relatively simple matter to apply the survival probabilities for each age group for the 1850s to obtain an expected population for 1861. Subtracting the expected population from the actual population for 1861 then gives us the net migration for natives and non-natives in each ten-year age group (see Table 2).

The study area

The western part of Cornwall was the core of one of Britain’s early eighteenth-century industrial regions. The growth of heavily capitalised copper mining added to the region’s long experience of tin streaming and mining. By the 1780s mining “formed the basis of one of the most advanced engineering centres in the world … a complex industrial society exhibiting early development of banking and risk-sharing”. The Cornish industrial region then played a key role in the development of the steam engine in the first 40 years of the nineteenth century, its interlocking networks of investors encouraging the growth of a dynamic and open culture of innovation among its working engineers. In these years the boundaries of the mining region also expanded, spreading first to mid-Cornwall and then to encompass newly discovered copper and lead reserves in the east.

In 1851 the occupations of men and boys of 14 years and over, by which time the vast majority were in the labour force, reflected the dominant role of mining in the regional economy. The other two key occupational groups represented in Table 3 are those engaged in agricultural and maritime activities, sectors that offer the clearest geographical contrasts within Cornwall on this spatial scale. As can be seen from this table, miners and quarrymen were in the majority in Redruth RD in the west and were the largest occupational group in the districts of Penzance, Helston and St Austell. Truro, Liskeard and Camelford RDs were the other districts with a significant presence of miners and quarrymen. In St Austell about 10 per cent were employed in the clay works while in Camelford most were slate quarry workers rather than miners. The mines were also important employers of women as surface labourers. William Borlase, the Cornish antiquarian, was complaining as early as 1736 about the difficulty of obtaining servants because of competition from the mines. Only in Stratton and St Germans, at the far north-east and south-east peripheries of Cornwall, and in the Isles of Scilly, was mining insignificant. Meanwhile, farming was a large employer right across Cornwall, although only employing more than half the adult men in Stratton and Launceston in the north. Proportions working in agriculture were generally lower in west Cornwall. A third important sector in some areas included mariners, fisherman, shipbuilders and others who gained their living directly or indirectly from the sea. As might be expected, maritime activities employed the highest proportion in the Scilly Isles, but they were also significant in St Germans and Falmouth. The CEBs might underestimate the
Table 2  Excel formulae used to calculate male net migration in Falmouth RD, 1871–1881

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<td>=H4-F4</td>
</tr>
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<td>=H5-F5</td>
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</tr>
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<td>663</td>
<td>561</td>
<td>0.8928</td>
<td>=B5*D5</td>
<td>=C<em>5</em>D5</td>
<td>=G6-E6</td>
<td>=H6-F6</td>
<td>=I6+J6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>40–49</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>0.9417</td>
<td>=B6*D6</td>
<td>=C<em>6</em>D6</td>
<td>=G7-E7</td>
<td>=H7-F7</td>
<td>=I7+J7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>50–59</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>342</td>
<td>0.7355</td>
<td>=B7*D7</td>
<td>=C<em>7</em>D7</td>
<td>=G8-E8</td>
<td>=H8-F8</td>
<td>=I8+J8</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>60–69</td>
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<td>275</td>
<td>0.5570</td>
<td>=B8*D8</td>
<td>=C<em>8</em>D8</td>
<td>=G9-E9</td>
<td>=H9-F9</td>
<td>=I9+J9</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>70–79</td>
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<td>138</td>
<td>0.3943</td>
<td>=B9*D9</td>
<td>=C<em>9</em>D9</td>
<td>=G10-E10</td>
<td>=H10-F10</td>
<td>=I10+J10</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>80–89</td>
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<td>34</td>
<td>0.0406</td>
<td>=B10*D10</td>
<td>=C<em>10</em>D10</td>
<td>=G11-E11</td>
<td>=H11-F11</td>
<td>=I11+J11</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>90–99</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>=G12-E12</td>
<td>=H12-F12</td>
<td>=I12+J12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * births 1871–1880
numbers employed in maritime activity as they could have missed some of those men who were absent at sea at the time of the census. However, there is little evidence that fishermen are under-enumerated, as the CEBs for fishing ports such as St Ives, Newlyn and Mevagissey do not betray higher than normal female proportions in the 20–39 age groups. Mariners and sailors, however, will be under-enumerated. Some attempt was made to compensate for this in Table 3 by adding in the number of women enumerated as wives of seamen or mariners, although this will still not include single mariners. The maritime sector was therefore more important than Table 3 indicates.

John Marshall has suggested that, when choosing a region to study, it is ‘no small disadvantage to select an area that is half or two-thirds bounded by the sea’. More than two-thirds of Cornwall borders the sea and, as well as producing employment, for centuries the sea offered a highway out of Cornwall. In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century, easy sea communications combined with Cornwall’s role as a reservoir of mining skills to produce an early migration of its miners to new mining fields in South America as well as to Wales and Ireland. Such contacts established long-distance migration chains that expanded rapidly in the 1840s, something reflected in the demographic history of Cornwall (see Figure 2). Before 1841 its population rose in parallel with that of England and Wales. But in the 1840s and 1850s this growth abruptly decelerated to around 4 per cent per decade compared with 12 per cent in England and Wales. The census population

Table 3 Male occupations in Cornwall, 1851

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RD</th>
<th>Percentage of occupied males aged 14 and over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>East Cornwall</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stratton</td>
<td>61.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camelford</td>
<td>47.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Launceston</td>
<td>53.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Germans</td>
<td>43.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liskeard</td>
<td>39.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bodmin</td>
<td>43.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Columb</td>
<td>44.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>St Austell</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>West Cornwall</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Truro</td>
<td>25.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Falmouth</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helston</td>
<td>33.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redruth</td>
<td>14.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penzance</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scilly</td>
<td>32.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census enumerators’ books, 1851 (CFHS database)
Figure 2  Indexed population change, Cornwall and England & Wales, 1801–1891 (1801=100)

Sources: Account of population and number of houses, according to the Census 1841, BPP 1841 II, 5–6; Tables of population and houses, census 1851, BPP 1851 XLIII, 2–3; Census of population England and Wales 1861: Population tables volume 1, BPP 1862 XIII; Census of England and Wales 1871 Volume 1, BPP 1872 LXVI, xi; Census of England and Wales 1881 Volume 1, BPP 1882 LXVIII, vi; Census of England and Wales 1891 Volume 1, BPP 1893–94 CIV, viii.

peaked in 1861 at around 370,000, although the real peak probably occurred in 1865–6, after which a crash in copper prices produced a depression in that industry to leave a population in 1871 a few thousand below that of 1861. A short-lived boom in the early 1870s was followed by a catastrophic period for mining, and the 1870s were marked by a large population decline of almost 9 per cent, implying large-scale out-migration. Despite the ability of its farmers to avoid the worst effects of the import of cheap grain, continuing de-industrialisation meant that the population of Cornwall in the 1880s still fell by 2.5 per cent.24

At the RD level the picture was more variable. During the 1850s mines in the Liskeard RD were still drawing in labour and generating a strong population growth rate of 15 per cent, although this was a figure only half that of the booming 1840s in this district, when most of the copper and lead mines had been opened. But some RDs were already seeing an absolute decline at mid-century. Population loss was concentrated in those districts more dependent on agriculture, where a general mid-century rural depopulation was beginning to
bite. Population fell in Stratton, Camelford, St Columb and Bodmin in the 1850s. However, the biggest loss—of almost 8 per cent—was in Camelford RD, where problems in agriculture were combined with difficulties in the slate industry. In the 1860s, the farming districts (with Camelford) showed small population rises, with the exception of Stratton RD, the population of which shrank in every decade from 1851 to 1891. Instead, population declines began to appear in the mining RDs, with St Austell, Helston and Redruth all losing more than 5 per cent of their inhabitants. In the crisis decade of the 1870s population decline became generalised. The biggest losses—of 13–17 per cent—occurred in Liskeard, Truro, Helston and Redruth, reflecting the almost complete collapse of copper mining. There were just two exceptions: non-mining Falmouth, where population increased in every decade but the 1880s, and the Isles of Scilly. In the 1880s numbers continued to fall in most RDs, with the exceptions of St Germans, St Austell, where the growth of clay extraction began to have an impact, and Redruth, where tin mining had become concentrated on the aptly named ‘central mining district’. But how was this overall demographic pattern reflected in age-specific migration?

**Age and sex-specific migration in Cornwall**

Table 4 shows the native and non-native net migration for each decade for all age groups in Cornwall. Net out-migration of the native population rose in absolute terms over the three decades from the 1850s to the 1870s for both men and women and then fell back in the 1880s. The figures given here for absolute net native out-migration can be compared with those calculated by Baines. While the trends both over time and by gender are identical, the net migration figures produced by the method used here are consistently lower than those indicated by Baines. The degree of difference between the two results also varies. The estimates fall short of those of Baines by around 16 per cent in the 1860s, just 4 per cent in the 1870s and a more considerable 23 per cent in the 1880s. However, Baines has conveniently provided a worked example for male net migration from Cornwall in the 1860s. The difference between his calculation there and that in this paper is lower, at around 11 per cent. Differences in the total population figures account for some of this difference, this study having excluded shipping and one or two parishes along the border with Devon included in non-Cornish RDs. The survival probabilities obtained here also provide higher death rates than those assumed by Baines and this, plus differences between the age structure of non-natives as derived from the CEBs and Baines’ assumptions about age distributions of migrants, might explain more of the difference. However, at present the reasons for this discrepancy are not entirely clear.

Nonetheless, it is clear that by the 1880s native net out-migration was lower than had been the case in the 1850s. This was compensated for by smaller flows of inward non-native migration and also by a falling birth rate, as the female age structure became increasingly skewed away from the child-bearing age groups by years of steady out-migration. While the overall pattern was similar for men and women, female native net out-migration proportions were consistently

---

37
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Approx. age of migration</th>
<th>1851–1860</th>
<th>1861–1870</th>
<th>1871–1880</th>
<th>1881–1890</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net NM</td>
<td>MP*</td>
<td>Net NNM</td>
<td>Net NM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5–5</td>
<td>-3,969</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>+2,354</td>
<td>-4,659</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-0.04</td>
<td>+868</td>
<td>-3,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-0.32</td>
<td>+851</td>
<td>-14,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-0.26</td>
<td>+421</td>
<td>-5,951</td>
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<td>-1,122</td>
<td>-0.07</td>
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<td>45–54</td>
<td>-510</td>
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<td>-489</td>
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<tr>
<td>55–64</td>
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<td>-0.00</td>
<td>+81</td>
<td>-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65–74</td>
<td>-177</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>+10</td>
<td>-170</td>
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<tr>
<td>75–84</td>
<td>-326</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-48</td>
<td>-313</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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<tr>
<td>Female</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5–5</td>
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<td>+931</td>
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<tr>
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<td>55–64</td>
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<td>-0.01</td>
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<td>75–84</td>
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<td>-0.09</td>
<td>-60</td>
<td>-420</td>
</tr>
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<td>Total</td>
<td>-17,683</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>+4,142</td>
<td>-23,682</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
lower than those for men, running at approximately two-thirds of the male level. These findings would appear to conflict with Ravenstein’s ‘law’ that females were more migratory ‘within the kingdom of their birth’, although lower net migration rates may well mask a higher gross migration among women. The exception to the pattern was the 1870s when the net female migration proportion reached a level of 80 per cent of that of the male migration proportion. The 1870s, the decade of highest absolute population loss, also stands out from the rest when we consider net migration by age group.

Taking men first, the outstanding feature of the migration pattern was the heavy outflow of those aged 20–29 at the end of the relevant decade, or aged around 15–24 when they had moved. This group accounted for nearly half (45 per cent and 48 per cent) of net out-migrants in the 1850s and 1860s. If we add those who migrated at age 25–34 we can conclude that at mid-century over two-thirds (69 per cent and 68 per cent) of the net flows of men out of Cornwall were individuals aged about 15–34, bearing out Ravenstein’s law that most migrants were young adults. However, the 1870s again disrupted this pattern. In that decade net out-migration of the younger and older age groups increased, and young men accounted for only 60 per cent of net male native migrants. Nevertheless, the preponderance of the 15–34 age group was more than restored in the 1880s, when 77 per cent of net out-migration occurred in this age band. Indeed, in the 1880s net in-migration of natives seems to have occurred in the older age groups, a possible indicator of the increasing movement of single, young individuals and their higher rates of return migration, a pattern that may have been becoming more general in the later nineteenth century.

The age distribution of women migrants, however, betrays a significant difference. In this case the 15–24 age group accounted for a lower proportion of total net native out-migration than it did for men, at just over a quarter in the first three decades under scrutiny. Net out-migration in the 25–34 age group remained at a relatively high volume in the 1850s and 1860s but together these age groups only accounted for around 56–57 per cent of female native net out-migration—much lower than the male proportion. This suggests that young women were more likely to make short-distance moves within the RD, and in addition they were less likely to move overseas. As for men, the 1870s altered this pattern, with a drop to 50 per cent of net female migrants in the 15–34 age group in that decade but then a rise to 63 per cent in the 1880s when net out-migration for native women again became more concentrated on young adults.
Net migration at Registration District level

Was there a difference across space, at the RD level, within Cornwall? Table 5 shows the overall net native out-migration for the 14 RDs for each decade. At this level net migration proportions were higher in the agricultural east than in the mining west in the 1850s for both genders, implying a greater degree of circulatory movement out of the less densely populated eastern RDs. But in the 1860s and 1870s this pattern becomes less clear for men, although persisting for women. In those decades the mining districts of St Austell, Truro, Liskeard and Redruth had some of the highest native out-migrant rates. As we might expect from the migration picture at the Cornwall level, for most RDs the 1870s was the decade in which native out-migration peaked, for both men and women. The exceptions were St Austell RD, where clay production offered an alternative to the shrinking mining sector, and the Scillies, which moved in a different rhythm to mainland Cornwall. However, the more agricultural north-east of Cornwall exhibited some of the highest net native out-migration rates and retained this distinction into the 1880s.

The application of Pearson’s product moment correlation coefficient to these data, as in Table 6, shows that there was a relationship between net native migration and the economic structure at the Registration District level, but that
this was not stable and displayed changes over the 40 years under observation. If we focus on correlations significant at the 95 per cent confidence level, in the 1850s there was a distinct negative correlation between mining and net out-migration for women. Conversely, there was a significant positive correlation for both sexes between outward movement and agricultural districts, reflecting a greater net migration from these areas. In the 1860s and 1870s the correlations weakened. Indeed, the correlation between mining districts and net migration had reversed by the 1870s to become positive rather than negative, a possible indication of the troubles of this decade in the mining districts, although these correlations are not significant at the 95 per cent confidence level. By the 1880s the correlations had strengthened again and had reverted to the patterns of the 1850s, with the strongest and the most significant correlation remaining that between the out-migration of women and agricultural districts.

Turning to the age distribution of native net migrants at RD level (Table 7), in all districts and decades the 15–24 age group dominated the out-migration of men. In the 1870s net migration, as a proportion of the numbers in this age group present in 1871, was over 50 per cent in the mining districts of Redruth, Truro and Liskeard, indicating a gross migration of well over a half. But net out-migration of young men was also high in the agricultural east. There was somewhat greater variability in the migration propensity of men aged 25–34. In this age group the proportion of net migrants could vary considerably, for example in the 1870s from a low of 0.19 in Bodmin to 0.43 in Redruth. However, by the 1880s the standard deviation of migration proportions of this age group had become smaller (0.04 with a mean net native migration proportion of -0.24). More variability was experienced in the migration proportions of the very youngest age groups. Thus, in the 1850s the net migration proportion of those boys moving at about 5–14 years of age was over -0.20 in the eastern farming districts of Stratton and St Germans and the mixed district of Camel-ford. But in this same decade it was only -0.05 in the western mining RDs of Helston and Redruth, a pattern replicated in the migration proportions of girls. This can be explained partly by the continuation of farm service at a young age in the eastern districts but could also be a function of greater family migration in the east, involving the involuntary movement of children.

### Table 6 Correlation coefficients (Pearson’s product moment) of net native out migration and occupation, Cornish RDs, 1850s–1880s

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th>Females</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Net native out migration and proportion employed in mining</td>
<td>Net native out migration and proportion employed in agriculture</td>
<td>Net native out migration and proportion employed in mining</td>
<td>Net native out migration and proportion employed in agriculture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851–60</td>
<td>-0.5284</td>
<td>+0.6505</td>
<td>-0.6249</td>
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<tr>
<td>1861–70</td>
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<td>-0.2370</td>
<td>+0.5373</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1871–80</td>
<td>+0.3390</td>
<td>+0.0543</td>
<td>+0.0522</td>
<td>+0.3930</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881–90</td>
<td>-0.2887</td>
<td>+0.6331</td>
<td>-0.6470</td>
<td>+0.8337</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The correlations significant at the 95% confidence level are in bold type.
The age pattern of female net native out-migration suggests an interesting distinction between east and west. As Figure 3 illustrates, for men there was little difference between east and west Cornwall in net migration by age group, but for women there was. East of Truro RD, in the 1850s the highest level of female net out-migration occurred in the 15–24 age group, the same as for men although at a lower level. Net out-migration then remained high in the 25–34 age group. However, in west Cornwall the proportion of net out-migrants in the 15–24 age group was significantly lower and female net out-migration actually peaked in the 25–34 age band. This is evidence for the greater job opportunities that young women were offered as surface workers in the mining industry in the west, together with the presence there of the larger Cornish towns of Truro, Falmouth, Camborne and Penzance, all of which attracted young women from the surrounding countryside and inhibited their tendency to leave. Furthermore, the greater distance from the nearest large town—Plymouth—meant that the alternative option of moving to a city was less attractive than it may have been in east Cornwall. Significantly, by the 1880s this difference in female migration proportions was restricted only to Redruth and Penzance RDs, the two districts that maintained a sizeable mining sector into that decade. Perhaps this pattern was related to emigration, as men made the move to mining fields overseas and, on deciding to stay, their

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 7</th>
<th>Mean net native migration proportions and standard deviations, Cornish RDs, 1850s–1880s</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Approximate age of migration</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851–60</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1881–90</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851–60</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1861–70</td>
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<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
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<tr>
<td>1871–80</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1881–90</td>
<td>mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: See Table 4

The age pattern of female net native out-migration suggests an interesting distinction between east and west. As Figure 3 illustrates, for men there was little difference between east and west Cornwall in net migration by age group, but for women there was. East of Truro RD, in the 1850s the highest level of female net out-migration occurred in the 15–24 age group, the same as for men although at a lower level. Net out-migration then remained high in the 25–34 age group. However, in west Cornwall the proportion of net out-migrants in the 15–24 age group was significantly lower and female net out-migration actually peaked in the 25–34 age band. This is evidence for the greater job opportunities that young women were offered as surface workers in the mining industry in the west, together with the presence there of the larger Cornish towns of Truro, Falmouth, Camborne and Penzance, all of which attracted young women from the surrounding countryside and inhibited their tendency to leave. Furthermore, the greater distance from the nearest large town—Plymouth—meant that the alternative option of moving to a city was less attractive than it may have been in east Cornwall. Significantly, by the 1880s this difference in female migration proportions was restricted only to Redruth and Penzance RDs, the two districts that maintained a sizeable mining sector into that decade. Perhaps this pattern was related to emigration, as men made the move to mining fields overseas and, on deciding to stay, their
Figure 3  Net native migration between 1851 and 1860 as a proportion of the 1851 population: east Cornwall and west Cornwall, by age group

a) Men

b) Women
earnings financed the later moves of wives and dependents, a phenomenon that is reported in the qualitative literature.29

Conclusions

At RD level the difference in the propensity to migrate across the districts was perhaps less obvious than might be expected, given the traumatic de-industrialisation Cornwall suffered from the 1860s. Migration proportions were high in farming as well as in mining districts and, indeed, the former showed some of the very highest levels of net out-migration. Rates of net out-migration of Cornish natives ran at a high level in this period, although no higher than the proportions discovered by Hinde for the 1850s in his small rural areas, while lower than central Shropshire. However, this difference may to a large degree be due to the larger size of the areas studied—Registration Districts as opposed to parishes—which increases the amount of short-distance circulatory movement that is not counted as ‘migration’. But, at this level of analysis, it is not immediately obvious that Cornwall was one of the major emigration regions of the British Isles in this period.30 Of course, we cannot know what rates of gross migration these net figures hide. It is possible that the net outflows were only a small proportion of gross migration, especially of the age groups older than 25, when return migration would have been gathering pace.31 And similar rates of migration might coexist with very different migration streams to widely separate destinations.

The pattern of net native migration in Cornwall confirms the role of young men in net migration flows. It also supports Hinde’s contention that migration varied by gender, rather than Pooley and Turnbull’s conclusion that there was little gender variation, and shows marked differences in the age of net migration, especially in the mining west of Cornwall. But, in contrast to Hinde’s conclusion that female migration was likely to be similar across space in Victorian England, this study finds that differences in the propensity to migrate within Cornwall were greater for women than for men, reflecting differential job opportunities.32 Moreover, female net migration by age showed more variation across the RDs, the peak of net migration occurring later for women in the mining districts of west Cornwall. Furthermore, for men as well as women, there were also significant variations in the net-migration of those who were older and younger than the 15–24 age group, both across RDs and over time.33 It would appear that this is where changing socio-economic variables impacted most strongly on migration at this level, something shown by the greater change in the net-migration of these age groups in the crisis decade of the 1870s. But it is quite possible that there was much more variation at a lower level of analysis, either at the sub-district or parish level. The next stage in this research will be to apply this method to that level but, because of the errors that might be introduced by the application of RD mortality and survival rates to smaller areas, this will also need to include longitudinal research and nominal record linkage.
NOTES

3. Pooley and Turnbull, Migration and mobility, 208.
5. Pooley and Turnbull, Migration and mobility, 326.
6. For the regional perspective on the industrial revolution see P. Hudson ed., Regions and industries: a perspective on the industrial revolution in Britain (Cambridge, 1989), 5–38.
13. Pooley and Turnbull, Migration and Mobility, 207; Baines, Migration in a mature economy, 100.
15. Registrar General’s supplement to twenty-fifth annual report, BPP 1865 XIII, 216–25; Registrar General’s supplement to fifty-fifth annual report: supplement, BPP 1875 XVIII, 220–29; Registrar General’s supplement to fifty-fifth annual report, Part 1, BPP 1895 XXIII, 386–99; Registrar General’s Annual Reports, BPP, 1873–1882. These were obtained from the online database of Parliamentary Papers at http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk/home. The Decennial Supplements are also available from the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex (http://data-archive.ac.uk).
16. In cell G13 of Table 1 it is assumed that an 85 year old lives an average of 3.33 more years, following the suggested length of time given in Hindle, ‘Use of nineteenth century census data’, 23.
17. This was recognised by contemporaries and triggered a flurry of local studies of occupational mortality. For an example see R.Q. Couch, ‘A statistical investigation into the mortality of the miners in the district of St Just in Penwith’, Report of the Royal Cornwall Polytechnic Society, 25 (1857), 1–40.
18. This database was made available as the result of a partnership with the Cornwall Family History Society. The Society has established a rigorous checking process for the transcription and the proportion of errors in the database is extremely low.
25. The age groups are as used in Hinde, ‘The use of nineteenth century census data’, 20. They are ‘estimates of the approximate age of migration’.
28. Migration proportions were obtained by dividing the number of net migrants by the population of that age group at the previous census.
29. For example Payton, *The Cornish overseas*, 297.
31. Baines, *Migration in a mature economy*, 158–59 discusses the high rate of Cornish emigration and speculates how far it was determined by features unique to Cornwall.
32. Pooley and Turnbull, *Migration and Mobility*, 325 found that the net difference between the migration streams of their dataset was very small in relation to gross flows. See also R. Lawton, ‘Population changes in England and Wales in the later nineteenth century’, *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 44 (1968), 55–75.
33. The standard deviation for the female net native migration proportions across RDs is consistently higher than that for male proportions.
Pam Fisher

Pam Fisher is currently a postgraduate student at the University of Leicester. She is just finalising her PhD thesis, ‘The politics of sudden death: the office and role of the coroner in England and Wales, circa 1726-1926’, from which this article arises.

Introduction

Coroners’ records and newspaper reports of inquests are essential sources for local studies of homicide, suicide or fatal accidents, but in some parts of the country violent deaths that occurred in the 1840s and 1850s may be significantly under-recorded in this material. Historian and barrister J.D.J. Havard drew attention to the actions taken in this period by the magistrates of several counties in order to reduce the number of inquests held on fatal accidents and sudden natural deaths. His interest lay in the ease with which homicides could be concealed, and his emphasis was on those counties where the tightest restrictions were imposed. However, as magistrates had substantial freedom in managing county administration, there were widespread variations between counties, which Havard did not explore. In some counties, the actions of the magistrates led to a dramatic reduction in the number of inquests that were held, but in others the coroners continued to exercise their discretion without hindrance, or within loosely constructed local guidelines. An understanding of the nature and extent to which a particular county was affected is relevant to any analysis of the records of violent deaths in a local population. It can also lead the historian to additional records created to help the magistrates implement their chosen strategy or monitor their coroners’ activities, and these may provide useful supplementary information. This article aims to provide a broad overview of the nature and extent of the restrictions, together with details of the sources where county-specific information may be obtained.

Coroners, magistrates and the cost of inquests

The office of coroner was established in England in 1194, probably for fiscal reasons, to ensure that the Crown received any money due on the death of a subject, rather than as a means to identify homicides. Each coroner operated within a defined territory, either a county or part of a county, or a borough or liberty that had received royal approval to appoint a coroner of its own. They had considerable discretion, as the circumstances in which an inquest should be
taken were ill-defined by the law, as will be discussed below. An act of 1751
provided coroners with a small mileage allowance plus a fee of £1 from the
county purse for every inquest ‘duly taken’ in a place that contributed to the
county rates. The magistrates controlled county expenditure and, as the words
‘duly taken’ were not defined within the statute, they were free to interpret this
phrase as they wished, effectively giving them the ability to control the
activities of the coroners through the refusal of fees. From 1836 the magistrates
of those reformed boroughs with coroners of their own were able to exercise
the same control through a similar clause within the Municipal Corporations
Act, although they seem to have operated with a far lighter touch.

Initially, the county magistrates appear to have shown little interest in the
nature of the inquests taken. However, county expenditure rose substantially
from the late eighteenth century and by the 1830s the county rate had become a
heavy burden, particularly upon the agricultural sector, which also had to meet
high poor rates and the tithe. To try to achieve economies, some county
benches established small committees to examine and approve all expenditure,
and a Parliamentary Select Committee of 1834 recommended that this practice
was adopted in all counties. In many counties these committees were therefore
fairly new in 1837, when the cost of inquests falling upon the county rate rose
sharply in consequence of new legislation. Before 1837, the only inquest
expenses the county ratepayers had to meet were the cost of the coroners’ fees
and mileage, with other expenses falling upon either the friends and family of
the deceased or the parishes where the inquests were held. In 1836 the Medical
Witnesses Act introduced a statutory payment of one guinea (£1 1s.) for
medical practitioners giving evidence at inquests, or two guineas if the coroner
had ordered a post-mortem examination. The Inquest Expenses Act of 1837
transferred these fees to the county rates, together with the other incidental
expenses, and also increased the coroner’s personal fee for each inquest by one-
third to £1 6s. 8d. Each county bench of magistrates was empowered to draw
up a schedule of the nature and level of the incidental costs that would be met
from the rates. These differed slightly from one county to another, but most
offered payments to the parish constable, to witnesses and jurors and for the
hire of a room. Consequently, the cost of each inquest to the county ratepayer
rose sharply. In Dorset, for example, the average cost to the ratepayer of each
inquest rose by 188 per cent between 1836 and 1839, from £1 5s. 4d. to £3 12s.
7d. In Middlesex the magistrates refused to provide a fee to inquest jurors,
but still the increase in the cost of each inquest was significant, rising between
the same dates by 146 per cent, from £1 2s. 5d. to £2 15s. 2d.

There is little information about how county magistrates determined the level
of incidental expenses that would be paid. However, it appears that the
payment agreed by some counties to a parish officer for fetching the coroner,
identifying and summoning witnesses and jurors and attending the inquest,
was well in excess of the amount previously paid for these duties. This
provided parish officers with an incentive to notify the coroner of as many
deaths as possible if the circumstances suggested that an inquest might follow.
In the Middlesex parish of St Marylebone, for example, the board of directors
### Table 1  Verdicts returned at inquests in England and Wales, 1856

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verdict</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Accidental death</td>
<td>9,716</td>
<td>43.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural death</td>
<td>7,102</td>
<td>32.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open verdict</td>
<td>3,607</td>
<td>16.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide and self-murder</td>
<td>1,314</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manslaughter and justifiable homicide</td>
<td>277</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Murder</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>22,221</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Judicial statistics of England and Wales, for 1856, British Parliamentary Papers (1857, session 2), [2246].xxxv.1.

and guardians of the parish complained at a meeting in October 1839 that until 1837 the parish had provided the beadle with 1s. for notifying the coroner of a death, but under the new schedule he would receive 7s. 6d. from the county.13 Another Middlesex parish, which unfortunately is not named, was said to have paid its constable a salary of £80 before 1837, but reduced this to £52 10s. when the new fees took effect, making him reliant on reporting deaths to restore his income to its previous level.14 Additionally, the Registration Act of 1836 required all deaths to be notified to a local registrar, who could report any suspicions to the coroners, and this might also have resulted in additional inquests being held.15 Therefore, as well as the additional cost of each inquest that now fell on the county rates, in many counties the number of inquests held also increased.16 In Dorset the county paid for 112 inquests in 1836, but 172 in 1839, and in Middlesex the number rose over the same period from 1,300 to 1,743.17 The combined effect of the additional inquests and the new higher costs of each one meant that in many counties the total sum paid from the county rate for inquests more than trebled, a level of increase that could not fail to attract the attention of the recently-formed finance committees.

### Inquests ‘duly taken’

It would be reasonable to assume that most of the additional deaths that were being reported to coroners from 1837 were entirely natural.18 The circumstances under which an inquest was held varied from coroner to coroner, depending on the nature of the deaths notified to him and his personal interpretation of the law.19 In 1856, the first year that verdicts were collated nationally, almost one-third of all the inquests held in England and Wales returned verdicts of natural death (see Table 1). However, the higher burden that inquest costs placed on the county rate from 1837 resulted in the magistrates of some counties questioning whether coroners had any authority to take an inquest if a death had been natural. Contemporary legal texts reproduced what was then believed to be a statute of Edward I, De Officio Coronatoris, which required a coroner to ‘go to the places where any be slain, or suddenly dead, or wounded’ and inquire ‘of them that be drowned, or suddenly dead’.20 Some coroners argued that this obliged them to hold an inquest on receiving
notification of any sudden death. Others argued that without hearing evidence under oath it was impossible to conclude whether or not there had been any foul play.

The magistrates of some counties countered these arguments by pointing to legal cases of 1809 and 1842. The first of these concerned an inquest taken by one of the Kent county coroners in 1808. Upon the coroner’s arrival in Wye to hold an inquest, the jurors told him that a second inquest was required, as a man named John Sutton had gone into a shop that morning, had complained of a pain in his hip, sat down on a chair, and suddenly died. Rather than return home to await notification of the second death from the parish authorities, after holding the first inquest the coroner immediately re-swear the jury and held an inquest upon Sutton, which returned a verdict of death by ‘visitation of God’, the traditional terminology for a natural death. On submitting his claim for fees and mileage to the next county quarter sessions, the magistrates disallowed the fee for this inquest, claiming that it had not been ‘duly taken’. The coroner appealed to the court of King’s Bench. Although the judges of the King’s Bench did not suggest that he was guilty of any intentional improper practice, they refused his claim, seeing no reason to interfere with the decision made by the county magistrates, who appeared to have acted in good faith. In reaching his judgement, Lord Chief Justice Ellenborough observed that, ‘there were many instances of coroners having exercised their office in the most vexatious and oppressive manner, by obtruding themselves into private families to their great annoyance and discomfort, without any pretence of the deceased having died otherwise than a natural death, which was highly illegal’. The second case was heard by the Queen’s Bench in 1842, when the Great Western Railway Company challenged the verdict reached at an inquest following a railway accident in Berkshire. They claimed that the Reading borough coroner had no jurisdiction to hold an inquest on a man who had died within the borough, as the fatal accident had occurred beyond the borough boundary. In delivering judgement Lord Denman stated that a coroner must inquire where an accident had happened before summoning a jury and, ‘if the verdict be visitation of God, nothing more is done, for in truth it appears that there was no occasion for an inquest’. Taken together, these two cases suggested to the magistrates that coroners had no mandate to hold inquests when a death had been natural.

Norfolk was one of the first counties where local guidelines were introduced in an attempt to reduce the number of inquests held. The magistrates had received a series of petitions in 1843 from boards of guardians seeking a reduction in the administrative costs of the county, and in particular the cost of the county police. In response the justices established a committee to investigate all the heads of expenditure, which reported that ‘many unnecessary inquests have been held; and that number has been much increased in consequence of their having been held upon the application of parish constables acting on their own opinion only’. The quarter sessions resolved that in future, before a parish constable informed the coroner of a death, he was to obtain a certificate from a magistrate, or from the minister, churchwardens or overseers of the parish that they considered an inquest was necessary. A copy
of this resolution was sent to each parish and printed in the county newspapers, and the coroners were instructed to send the certificates to the magistrates each quarter when claiming their fees. Lacking the necessary forms and probably fearing his fees would be refused, the coroner initially declined to hold inquests into the deaths of eight-month old Elizabeth Pestle and her grandfather Jonathan Balls in April 1846, despite rumours that this was a murder and suicide. Finally, after several requests, inquests were held and poison was found in both exhumed bodies. A further eight exhumations of other family members followed, with clear evidence of poison found in five of these bodies. The foreman at the inquests commented that ‘we all naturally wish to keep down the county expenses, but not at a sacrifice of human life’. Although Balls committed suicide rather than face trial, the scale of his crimes caused the case to be mentioned in parliament, where the Home Secretary saw one cause as ‘the infrequency of coroners’ inquests throughout the country’, and stated that any member of the public had the right to call for an inquest to be held if they harboured suspicions about any death. He continued by advising the House that one of the Devon coroners had refused to hold an inquest because the magistrates had resolved not to pay fees whenever a verdict of natural death was returned. The Devon magistrates were taking a more authoritarian line than their counterparts in Norfolk. In 1846, they had declined to pay coroner Adoniah Vallack his fee for an inquest on the death of a man who had been found dead on a common, despite the open verdict reached, presumably because it also stated that the body bore no marks of violence. Probably as a direct result, later that year Vallack refused to hold an inquest into the death of an illegitimate baby, whose mother had just left the workhouse to seek a position in service. The child had been quite well early in the morning, but was dead by noon, and it was suspected that the death had not been natural. The resolution of the bench resulted in a sharp reduction in the cost of inquests, from £1,689 in 1844 to £877 in 1846. One local newspaper pointed out that the administration of ‘subtle poisons’ could not be detected if inquests were not held, and added that the coroners should be allowed to exercise unfettered discretion, for they were professional men whose reputations would render ‘flagrant jobbing too costly’. Carmarthenshire was probably the first county where the magistrates imposed restrictions on inquests into fatal accidents. In 1847 the Carmarthenshire magistrates disallowed the fees claimed by a coroner for two inquests, one held on a labourer who had died from tetanus after losing his fingers in a chaff-cutter, and the other on a child whose clothes had caught fire while she was alone in a room. The child’s sibling had died six months earlier from a fatal scalding without an inquest being held, and the second similar death in such a short period had aroused local concerns. The magistrates claimed that these inquests had not been ‘duly taken’, as they were ‘unnecessary’. Their motive was probably financial, for the county was then in the throes of a depression, with farm profits much reduced, wage cuts in the local ironworks, and job reductions across the south Wales coalfield. The coroner appealed to the Queen’s Bench, who supported the magistrates in their refusal of the fees and...
mileage. In recording his judgement Lord Denman opined that “‘due taking’ implies not only care and diligence in the taking, but the taking under such circumstances as make it proper that it should be taken’. He thought that the county magistrates were best placed to decide whether or not an inquest had been ‘duely taken’, as they could question the coroner in person, and saw no reason to interfere with their decision. It was a landmark case, for the decision effectively confirmed that county magistrates had full discretion over the circumstances in which an inquest could be held, and that they could apply that discretion with the benefit of hindsight—a luxury that was not available to the coroner.

The Middlesex committee of 1850–1851

The Middlesex magistrates had launched an investigation into the nature, number and cost of inquests in that county in 1839, and concluded that some of them had been ‘unnecessary’. No firm guidelines were issued, but a close ongoing watch was maintained over the coroners’ bills. Following the Carmarthenshire decision, the magistrates submitted a test case to counsel for opinion, and were advised that they were justified to refuse fees for any inquest where there was no suspicion of any criminal act or omission. In the light of that opinion, in October 1850 the magistrates appointed a committee to consider all aspects of the office, including ‘whether it would be for the benefit of the county that any and what different arrangements should be made for the performance of the duties now devolving upon the coroners.’ Its recommendations were bold and controversial. In cases of murder or manslaughter they thought an examination before the coroner was ‘indefensible’, as the evidence would also be heard by the magistrates and placed before a grand jury. In respect of sudden deaths and deaths by misadventure, the committee believed that ‘if there are no grounds for imputing criminality … the coroners are not justified in charging the county with expenses’. That would leave the coroners with little mandate, but there was no agreement over whether the office should be retained. On receipt of these recommendations the Middlesex court of quarter sessions resolved that fees would not be paid in future for any inquests where there was no suspicion that the death had been caused by any criminal act or omission. They also resolved to send a copy of the report to the Home Secretary, to the Solicitor and Attorney General and to every quarter sessions in England and Wales, seeking comments from the justices of those sessions.

The report appears to have received a mixed reception. It is probably no coincidence that over the next few years the magistrates of Kent, Lancashire, Warwickshire and the West Riding passed resolutions aimed at restricting inquests to cases where there was suspicion of some ‘criminal act or omission’ or ‘culpable neglect’. However, in Wiltshire, although the magistrates disallowed five fees in 1851, in 1858 they stated that ‘the very essence of the inquiry’ would be destroyed if payment was confined to cases ‘palpably open to suspicion’. Only the Devon magistrates appear to have given the Middlesex bench their whole-hearted support. They appointed a committee to consider the Middlesex report, and that committee reported to quarter sessions their belief that in the case of many accidents no suspicions arose, and that therefore
the payment of a fee to the coroner was ‘improper.’41 Neither did they see any need for the coroner’s involvement in cases of murder, believing such cases could be more efficiently handled by the magistrates. The quarter sessions unanimously approved a resolution that it was the opinion of the court ‘that the same jurisdiction which the coroners possess may be transferred to the justices of the county, and the office of coroner be discontinued’, although that could not be achieved without legislation.42

Strategies and tactics

A number of different methods were employed in those counties where the magistrates sought to reduce the number of inquests being held. Some tried to reduce the number of notifications the coroner received and to monitor all inquests by insisting that the coroner could only hold an inquest on receipt of a form signed by a parish official. Precise instructions were provided: in Kent, the form had to be signed by a minister, churchwarden or overseer, in Bedfordshire by a magistrate, minister, guardian or overseer, and in Norfolk the 1844 resolution was further tightened in 1858 by restricting the signatories to a magistrate, minister or guardian.43 The wording on these forms differed from county to county, but could deter notifications: in both Warwickshire and Glamorgan the signatory was required to declare ‘what criminal act or culpable neglect is suspected’, and the coroners complained that few people were prepared to make such an allegation.44 Alongside any local instructions to coroners about the circumstances in which inquests should not be held, or
sometimes even without such guidelines, a number of county benches imposed financial sanctions on those coroners who took inquests which the magistrates considered to have been unnecessary. Two parliamentary returns list the number of inquests held and the number of fees disallowed between 1843 and 1859. The returns are incomplete, but record 211,514 inquests held between 1843 and 1856, with 907 of those having fees refused. The pattern changes from 1857, but until then the majority of counties disallowed very few, if any, fees (see Figure 1). In that period only four counties are recorded as refusing more than 50 fees: Middlesex (311), Staffordshire (280), Devon (78) and Glamorgan (70).

Between 1857 and 1859 the number of fees disallowed by county magistrates increased dramatically (see Figure 2). This appears to be a reaction to a case taken to the Queen’s Bench in 1857 by a Gloucestershire coroner seeking redress for two inquest fees struck from his bill. Once again, the judges’ decision favoured the magistrates. Following the Middlesex example, the chairman of the Gloucestershire sessions immediately wrote a pamphlet setting out the outcome of the case and his understanding of the law, and sent a copy to every county. The case seems to have found particular resonance with the magistrates of the West Riding and County Durham where, between 1857 and 1859, fees were disallowed on 378 and 207 inquests respectively, which represented 16 per cent and 14 per cent of all the inquests their coroners held, although no fees had been disallowed in the previous seven years. Five other counties also refused more than 10 per cent of the inquest fees claimed in this period (see Table 2). The importance of this action lies not so much in the absolute numbers refused, but in the effect that this had on the activities of the coroners. In the West Riding, for example, the coroners apparently voluntarily reduced the number of inquests they held, from 1,236 in 1856 to 777 in 1857,

Figure 2 Number of inquest fees disallowed in England and Wales, 1850–1859


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number Disallowed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1851</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1852</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1853</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
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<td>1854</td>
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<td>1856</td>
<td>60</td>
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<td>1857</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1858</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1859</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

54
when the first 97 fees were declined.\textsuperscript{50} Many coroners avoided holding inquests in cases where it was not certain that they would be paid, resenting the inference that they were trying to claim payments to which they were not entitled, and fearing that this could damage their personal and professional reputations.\textsuperscript{51}

The formation of county-wide police forces provided an opportunity to revise the county schedules of expenses. In the late 1850s a number of counties, including Kent and Monmouthshire, resolved that payment would no longer be made to parish officials for advising the coroner of a death.\textsuperscript{52} In Derbyshire, Somerset and Suffolk the county also ceased to pay parish constables for summoning jurors or attending inquests, handing these responsibilities to the salaried police, which ended any incentive to notify deaths.\textsuperscript{53} In some counties the chief constables provided their force with instructions about the circumstances in which the coroner should be advised of a death, and the level of approval the policeman first had to obtain.\textsuperscript{54} Instructions to a permanent salaried police force could be enforced far more easily than instructions to parish officials, and coroners could not hold inquests if they were unaware that a death had occurred. In Rutland and Lincolnshire police constables were told to advise of all violent, accidental or sudden deaths,\textsuperscript{55} but in Oxfordshire, Lancashire, Staffordshire, and the West and North Ridings, the coroner was only to be advised when the police considered there were reasonable grounds to suspect that a death was violent or unnatural.\textsuperscript{56} In Dorset, the constable could only contact the coroner upon the specific approval of his superintend-\textsuperscript{57} The ability of magistrates, through chief constables, to define the circumstances in which the police should advise a coroner of a death had the potential to reduce inquests more than any measure, other than by a painstaking line-by-line examination of the coroners’ accounts.

Many of these forms, introduced in the mid-1850s either for use within the parish or by the police, continued to be employed throughout the nineteenth century and still survive in quarter sessions papers, among county treasurers’ bills, or among the records of the police forces.\textsuperscript{58} They can provide a wealth of

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Inquests held 1843-56</th>
<th>Fees disallowed 1843-56</th>
<th>% fees disallowed 1843-56</th>
<th>Inquests held 1857-59</th>
<th>Fees disallowed 1857-59</th>
<th>% fees disallowed 1857-59</th>
<th>Total fees disallowed 1843-59</th>
<th>% fees disallowed 1843-1859</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>West Riding</td>
<td>8,747</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>2,335</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>3.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Durham</td>
<td>6,394</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>1,439</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>14.4</td>
<td>207</td>
<td>2.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gloucestershire</td>
<td>6,337</td>
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<td>710</td>
<td>78</td>
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<td>93</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffordshire</td>
<td>5,329</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>2,316</td>
<td>246</td>
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<td>603</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textbf{Table 2 Counties that refused to pay more than 50 inquest fees, 1843–1859}

Source: \textit{Return of number of inquests in England and Wales, September 1849–59, British Parliamentary Papers (1860), (237).}vii.313. (Figures are not available for Cheshire or Carmarthenshire.)
information about the deceased and the circumstances surrounding the death, including details that might not be readily apparent from other sources, and are therefore a valuable resource for local population historians. Each county’s forms differed, but many include the age of the deceased, the nature and duration of any illness, the names of witnesses, details of any suspicions held or any allegations of negligence, and sometimes such details as the time of

Figure 3  Number of inquests for every 1,000 deaths registered, 1 January–31 March 1858

death, whether the deceased was a pauper and, in the case of children, whether they were legitimate and whether their lives had been insured.59

The national picture

The varying appetite among county magistrates to restrict the number of inquests, the range of different strategies in use and the individual views of coroners on how their office should be performed, combine to present a complex national picture. For most counties statistics exist in parliamentary returns for the number of inquests held each year from 1843 to 1859, and for the number of fees that were disallowed between these dates.60 A further return of 1860 gives details of orders and regulations made by the magistrates of each county since 1850 concerning the holding of inquests, and of instructions issued by chief constables to their forces about the notification of deaths to coroners.61 From 1856 the annual judicial statistics presented to parliament provide details of the number of inquests held in each county, and usefully provide a classification by age, gender and verdict. These various official returns present a mosaic that is not easy to interpret, but it is clear that there were some fairly substantial variations between the practices of different counties. In 22 counties the number of inquests held in 1859 was lower than the figure seen in 1843,62 and in a further five counties the rate of increase was lower than the increase in population between 1841 and 1861.63

Unfortunately, figures for the numbers of deaths were only collected for registration districts, which often straddle county boundaries, and hence also the jurisdictional boundaries of both magistrates and coroners. Additionally, although under the Registration Act of 1836 the coroner was the informant in all cases where an inquest was held, the extensive tables in the annual reports of the Registrar-General do not provide details of the number of inquests held in each registration district until 1870, other than for a single quarter in 1858. However, the 1858 table (which does not provide verdicts) allows a comparison to be made between registration districts of the proportion of deaths that resulted in an inquest, in a period when the refusal of inquest fees was at its peak. With the figures being for just a single quarter, they may be affected by seasonal variations, or a single large accident; additionally, in the less populous registration districts the small number of recorded deaths in one quarter can make the proportion of inquests to deaths sensitive to a single inquest. That said, if the proportion is mapped and the boundaries of the administrative counties are then superimposed, besides inevitable variations arising from social and economic factors and the personal practices of individual coroners, sharp distinctions appear along county boundaries (see Figure 3). It is clear that different practices were applied, for example, between Derbyshire and the West Riding, and between Dorset and Wiltshire, and these can best be accounted for by the different attitudes of the county magistrates.

The judicial statistics for 1858 show that 32 per cent of inquests held in England and Wales returned a verdict of natural death.64 A comparison of
these with the size of the population (from the 1861 census) removes the distorting effect of any major accidents within one county. Nationally, there were 3.1 natural death verdicts for every 10,000 of the population. However, the figures for individual counties range from 8.16 in Buckinghamshire to none in Pembrokeshire. The counties with the highest proportions are mostly in a band stretching south and west from Lincolnshire to Somerset. The lowest proportions were generally along the remainder of the south

Source: Judicial statistics of England and Wales, for 1858, British Parliamentary Papers (1859, session 1), [2508].xxvi.339.
coast, parts of Wales and the border counties and in the north (see Figure 4). The judicial statistics do not provide individual figures for the Ridings. Otherwise the map broadly echoes that in Figure 3, with the possible exceptions of Cumberland, Brecon and Radnorshire, where the Registrar-General’s report reveals high levels of ‘violent’ deaths compared to the number of inquests held.65

Conclusion

Coroners were not the only county officials affected by the nascent debate about the range and nature of services that should be financed from the rates. However, the lack of any statutory definition of when an inquest should be held made them particularly vulnerable when financial pressures urged economies. The motivations of the magistrates may also have been mixed. For some, as well as financial issues, there may have been a desire to assert local autonomy against pressures exerted through the Registration Act and by the Registrar General’s office for true causes of death to be ascertained for central statistical analysis. That would require more autopsies and perhaps even more inquests, which would have increased county administrative costs yet further, with little immediate tangible benefit.66 With some magistrates in Devon and Middlesex suggesting the abolition of the role, coroners courted public support for their office. They claimed that its value lay in the prevention of crime, through the knowledge that an inquest would follow every unexplained death.67 This benefit was impossible to quantify, but cases of ‘secret poisoning’ concerned as well as interested the public. Additionally, if the police were the only body permitted to notify the coroner of a death, then investigations might not be held on deaths in custody.68 A supportive editorial in The Times stressed that it was inappropriate for magistrates to control inquests, as the justices had responsibilities for prisons and workhouses, where many deaths occurred.69

An element of resolution was achieved in 1860 through a new Coroners Act, which provided the coroners with a fixed salary, and ended the ability of the magistrates to question the propriety of individual inquests each quarter.70 However, considerable variations in practice remained, largely as a result of the different instructions given to police forces.71

The intensity of views and the different approaches taken by county magistrates over this period demonstrate the importance to local studies of violent deaths of an understanding of the nature and impact of restrictions imposed on coroners. Inquests could be suppressed by a variety of strategies and tactics. Fatal accidents, whether in the workplace or elsewhere, might not lead to an inquest, and it is possible that a number of murders were not discovered, either because the coroner was not notified of the death, or because he refused to act through concern that he would not be paid for his time and travel if a verdict of natural death was returned. Conversely, if an inquest was held and suspicions proved unfounded, it is possible that coroners might have encouraged juries to return open verdicts to reduce the possibility that the coroner’s fee would be refused.72 Whenever an inquest was held, the death certificate and the Registrar-General’s records record the verdict of the jury.73 Statistics
from any period need to be interpreted with care, but particularly those of the
1840s and 1850s, when the magistrates’ power over the coroners was at its
peak, and when local policies were evolving and could change from one year
to the next.

NOTES

1. J.D.J. Havard, The detection of secret homicide: a study of the medico-legal system of investigation of

2. R.F. Hunnisett, The medieval coroner (Cambridge, 1961), 1–3. There were no coroners in Scotland,
which had a different legal system.

3. A parliamentary return of 1832 identified 143 county coroners and 62 franchise jurisdictions with
coroners: Return of appointment of coroners in England and Wales, British Parliamentary Papers
(hereafter BPP) 1831–2, (703), xliiv, 105. From 1836 the only boroughs that could have their own
coroners were those reformed boroughs with quarter sessions (79 in 1838) plus the 24 boroughs
that had coroners in 1835 and had been excluded from the provisions of the Municipal
Corporations Act: 5 & 6 William IV, c. 76; Municipal boroughs and cities with a commission of peace,
court of quarter sessions, and recorder appointed, BPP 1837–8, (339), xiv, 365; Report of the royal
commission on municipal corporations, BPP 1835, (116), xxiii, 1.


5. A parliamentary return identified only a single fee refused by a borough in the decade to
September 1859: Return of number of inquests in England and Wales, September 1849–59, BPP 1860,
(257), ivi, 313 (hereafter Return of Inquests, 1849–59).

6. Select committee of House of Lords on county rates, BPP 1835, (206), xiv, 3; Select committee on highway
and county rates, BPP 1834, (542), xiv, 7–8.

7. Select committee on county rates, 11–12.


9. Inquest Expenses Act: 1 Victoria, c. 68. This Act was necessary as in 1836 the Poor Law
Commission had ruled that the expenses of inquests could not be met from local poor rates: The
National Archives (hereafter TNA), HO 84/1 (1836); MH 1/5 (1836 part 1, folio 437); MH 10/7
(1834–37, folio 6).

10. Details of the schedules in force in 1840 for individual counties can be found in Return of number
of coroners in England and Wales, 1835–9, BPP 1840, (209), xli, 105.

11. Dorset Record Office, QFA2 vol. IV.

12. Report of the special committee appointed at Michaelmas sessions 1850 as to the duties and remuneration
of the coroners and resolutions of the committee (London, 1851), 9–11.


14. TNA, HO 84/1 (1840); letter from Baker, 34.

15. Registration Act: 6 & 7 William IV, c. 86.

16. Coronor William Baker suggested that the increasing number of inquests in Middlesex was also
partly due to the increasing population, additional visitors to the capital, the fees available to
medical and other witnesses and the vigilance of the police: TNA, HO 84/1 (1840): letter from
Baker, 30–36.

17. Dorset Record Office, QFA2 vol. IV; Report of the special committee, 9–11.

18. For example, in 1853 the Gloucestershire coroners took 198 more inquests than they had in 1835,
and there were 182 more verdicts of natural death or death by visitation of God: Return of orders
and regulations by magistrates in England or Wales relating to costs and expenses of holding coroners'
inquests, 1850–9, BPP 1860, (241), ivi, 331, 388 (hereafter Return of orders).

19. In 1839 it was recorded that inquests were held ‘in nearly all violent deaths; and in some sudden
deaths, or deaths which appear to the coroner to require investigation’: Appendix to the third
annual report of the Registrar General, 1839–40 (London, 1841), 15. Although a parliamentary select
committee of 1880 concluded that it would be ‘very desirable’ for the law to define the
circumstances in which an inquest should be taken, this was not achieved until 1887: Select
committee on office of coroner, BPP 1860, (193), xxv, 257, 259; Coroners Act 1887: 50 & 51 Victoria, c.
71.
20. For example, R. Burn, *The justice of the peace and parish officer continued to the present time by William Woodfall*, 20th edn. (London, 1805), 1, 564. This ‘Act’ was repealed by the Coroners Act of 1887, but Pollock and Maitland concluded that the statute had never existed, and its ‘clauses’ were merely declaratory of the common law: F. Pollock and F.W. Maitland, *The history of English law before the time of Edward I* (Cambridge, 1895), 641n.


22. Select committee on office of coroner, p. 275.

23. R. v. Kent (Justices), *English reports*, 103, 992–3. The system of criminal law was dependent upon unpaid lay magistrates and, provided they were believed to have acted in good faith, higher courts would not usually interfere with the exercise of their discretionary powers: D. Hay, ‘Dread of the crown office: the English magistracy and king’s bench, 1740–1800’, in N. Landau ed., *Law, crime and English society, 1660–1830* (Cambridge, 2002), 19–21.


25. Norfolk Record Office, C/S4/9, fol. 97. In their deliberations, the committee referred to the decisions of the Queen’s Bench: *The Norfolk Chronicle and Norwich Gazette* (18 Jul. 1844), 1.


27. *Norfolk Chronicle* (16 May 1846), 2; (23 May 1846), 2; (30 May 1846), 2; (6 Jun. 1846), 2; (13 Jun 1846), 3; (20 Jun 1846), 2.

28. *Norfolk Chronicle* (20 Jun 1846), 2. Six of these deaths took place before the resolution of July 1844.


30. TNA, HO45/1390.


32. *Western Times* (19.5.1845), 2. In this period most coroners relied on income from a professional practice alongside their coroner’s duties. Of 132 county coroners holding office in 1849, 83 can be positively identified on either the 1841 or 1851 census, with 79 of these recording their occupation as solicitor, attorney, doctor or surgeon: Return of number of inquests held by coroners in counties, cities and boroughs in England and Wales, 1843–49; BPP 1851, (148), xliii, 403 (hereafter Return of inquests, 1843–9); census enumerators’ books (consulted 1–30 June 2006 on www.ancestry.co.uk).


35. R. v. Carmarthenshire (Justices).


38. Report of the special committee, 15, 18, 35.

39. Report of the special committee, 53. County benches would occasionally communicate with each other over matters relating to expenditure: D. Eastwood, *Government and community in the English provinces, 1700–1870* (Basingstoke, 1997), 108. It is possible the Middlesex bench were seeking the support of other counties in the hope of obtaining a parliamentary bill to define the coroner’s duties.


41. Return of orders, 341.

42. Return of orders, 342.

43. Return of orders, 397, 333, 423.

44. Warwickshire Record Office, QSS/8/1, letter dated 1.1.1859; Royal commission to inquire into the costs of prosecutions and expense of coroners’ inquests, BPP 1859, session 2, [2575], xiii, 124–5.


46. The Staffordshire figure is understated, as the county did not submit a return for 1843–49, and county records show that in April 1848 alone the magistrates disallowed 104 fees and held over another 51 claims for further information: Staffordshire Record Office, Q/ACf/2/1.

47. In this case the judges of the Queen’s Bench would not overturn the decision of the magistrates in respect of the basic £1 fee, but ruled that the county had to pay the additional 6s. 8d. due to the coroner for each inquest under the Inquest Expenses Act of 1837 as that Act did not make payment contingent upon an inquest being ‘duly taken’: R. v. Justices of Gloucestershire, *English reports*, 119, 1445–9.
48. P.B. Purnell, *On the allowance or disallowance by the court of quarter sessions or any adjournment thereof of fees to the coroners of their county for inquests taken* (Gloucester, 1857): copy in Nottinghamshire Archives, DDH 169/93.


52. *Return of orders, 398–9, 421.*


54. Magistrates rarely issued direct instructions to the police: C. Emsley, *The English police: a political and social history*, 2nd edn (Harlow, 1996), 85–8. However, it is possible that they were closely involved in drawing up guidelines about the reporting of sudden deaths because of the cost implications.

55. *Return of orders, 414 & 435.*


58. See, for example, Warwickshire Record Office, Q/S/8; Staffordshire R.O., Q/Apr/7.

59. For examples of the forms issued by individual counties, see *Return of orders, 346, 354, 394, 413, 422, 425, 441–2, 448–9, 451, 453, 464–5, & 467–8.*

60. *Return of inquests, 1843–9; Return of Inquests, 1849–59.*

61. *Return of orders.*


63. Cornwall, Durham, Leicestershire, Cardiganshire and Denbighshire.

64. *Judicial statistics of England and Wales, for 1858*, BPP 1859, session 1, [2508], xxvi, 339.


66. Autopsies were urged in the *Seventh annual report of the Registrar General* (London, 1846), 261. The Registration Act (s. 25) required the cause of every death to be registered, and when an inquest was held the jury was required to ‘inquire of the particulars herein required to be registered’.

67. *Royal commission on prosecutions, 115.*

68. *Royal commission on prosecutions, 169.*


71. See, for example, the judicial statistics for 1868, which show that the proportion of natural death verdicts to all inquests ranged from none in Cardiganshire to 59 per cent in Berkshire: *Judicial statistics of England and Wales*, for 1868, BPP 1868–9, [4196], iviii, 513.

72. A decline in the number of open verdicts recorded in the judicial statistics between 1858 and 1868 almost exactly corresponds to the increase in verdicts of natural death: *Judicial statistics of England and Wales*, for 1858, BPP 1859, session 1, [2508], xxvi, 339; *Judicial statistics of England and Wales*, for 1868, BPP 1868–9, [4196], iviii, 513.

73. Registration Act (s. 25).
Matthew Woollard

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Introduction

The histpop website (http://www.histpop.org) provides free online access to over 185,000 pages of published reports relating to Britain’s population. The main contents of the website are reproductions of almost all the published census returns and the Registrar-General’s reports for England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland up until the Second World War, but there is a wealth of other material accompanying these reproductions. This includes over 6,000 pages of archival material from The National Archives (TNA), the complete texts of all relevant parliamentary legislation, a variety of contextual essays relating to the collection of population information across the period, a number of downloadable tables of statistical information extracted from the census and Registrar-General’s reports, plus all the other content and functionality one would expect to find on a website of this nature.

The website is called histpop and is the main output of the Online Historical Population Reports Project. The project is run as part of AHDS History within the UK Data Archive at the University of Essex, and has been directed by the author of this article. The project was funded as part of the first Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC) Digitisation Programme. The project started work in early 2004 and completed at the end of March 2007, though the site continues to be maintained, and hopefully more content will be added over time, enhancing this vital resource for historical demographers and local population historians. The project is predicated on the fact that the various population reports published by the Registrar-Generals and their predecessors are not as widely available as they should be, given their short print runs and their increasing fragility. We agree with David Caradog Jones’ 1949 statement that ‘the student is recommended to examine the various census volumes for himself’, but we can no longer agree that his follow up comment, ‘They should be available in the central Reference Library of any large town’, remains valid, especially for some of the older volumes.
It is also worth noting that many students of local population studies have only used the reports in a cursory fashion, generally to extract information about a place of interest. While the statistical information within both the census reports and the various reports of the Registrar-Generals is important, there is also a wealth of mainly untapped qualitative information within these documents.

The reports, to a large extent, reflect the thinking and ideologies of their time. Occasionally, some more quirky passages have been discovered in the reports: William Farr, for example, seems almost obsessed about ensuring that scalding water should be kept out of reach of children, returning to the subject on a number of occasions.3 Prevailing ‘official’ views on alcohol consumption are also aired frequently. Farr quotes the coroner of Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the subject of sudden deaths of children who were ‘suffocated in bed by the parents, very frequently either one or both of them, going to bed in a state of intoxication’, and appended the comment that, ‘Here is another evil to be referred to the evil effect of excessive drinking’.4 This ‘trivia’ is to be compared with the considerable written evidence on a large number of other subjects which may not have received the attention they deserve in the scholarly literature: subjects such as disabilities, housing, administrative geography and working conditions, among others. The Irish and Scottish census reports also deserve greater notice, and not just by scholars interested in those areas. The necessity of the different Register Offices working in tandem throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries means that much interesting discussion of the practices of the English Registrar-General is found in the Irish and Scottish census reports.

Contents of the site in more detail

Census reports

The website contains all printed material submitted to the British parliament relating to the census up to and including the 1931 census. This means that not only are census reports included, but other ancillary documents relating to the census-taking process, such as the evidence and report of the 1890 Treasury Committee inquiring on the census, and the Report of the Committee for the Bill for the 1831 census, both of which are seminal texts for the development of census administration.5 All of these reports are digitised in full. This means that not only are the pages of each report captured in a digital form, but all the texts have been OCRd.6 Unlike some other ‘digital library’ projects, considerable effort has been made to ensure that each volume is easily navigable through the use of electronic ‘tables of contents’ (see Fig 1).

In order to create a basic list of the various materials which were available, and to ensure precision in referencing, we have had recourse to a fair quantity of reference materials which have been created over the years. Most of these are listed in the following footnote, but it is worth noting that small errors—sometimes of omission, sometimes of commission—have slipped into these reference works, and without a comprehensive library of these works it was a struggle at the beginning of the project to get to grips with the limitations of

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some of these resources. Another problem faced at the beginning of the project was to unravel the different reference numbers for parliamentary papers and other government publications: the relationships between physical volumes, logical volumes, parliamentary paper references and command numbers can sometimes stretch the limits of credulity. For example, each ‘county’ volume for the 1911 Census of Scotland was published separately but with sequential page numbering across all 37 volumes and had the same command number (Cd.6097) but was shared across two volumes of parliamentary papers (BPP 1912–13 CXIX and BPP 1912–13 CXX). The production of a complete list of materials took a considerable amount of time, and we hope to publish separately a bibliography of parliamentary papers relating to population.

The coverage of census reports in the histpop website is comprehensive in relationship to its terms of reference. All English, Welsh and Scottish census reports published before 1951 are included. In essence this means that the last complete censuses included is the 1931 round, even though the *General Report* for the 1931 census was not published until 1950. For Ireland, all published reports relating to the censuses are included, covering censuses from 1813 to 1911. There was no census in Ireland in 1921, and the first census of the Republic of Ireland was taken in 1926. For various reasons we could not include the relevant reports in histpop, but we did include the reports from the separate censuses taken in Northern Ireland in 1926 and 1937. For good measure, we have also included a number of other volumes presented to parliament including returns of expenses, the British Empire census report for 1901, the returns of the census of London of 1896, and the rather remarkable letter from the Registrar-General apologising to the people of Wales for suggesting that they had ‘fraudulently’ filled in their schedules in order to inflate the number of Welsh speakers.

*Registrar-General’s reports*

The selection criteria for the reports of the Registrar-Generals were slightly different. All the Annual and Decennial reports of the Registrar-General (of England) published until 1920 have been included, as have all ordinary and detailed reports of the Registrar-General of Scotland for the same period. So what is missing? All reports of the Irish Registrar-General, and all weekly and quarterly reports of the British Registrars-General have been excluded. The additional number of pages would not have been great but the issue of size, along with the question of finding copies which were suitable for scanning, caused us to ignore these volumes for the time being. The cut-off date of 1920 was selected to bring coverage up to the beginning of the change of name and format of the reports in 1921. As this was a suitable cut-off point for England and Wales, it was assumed that this might be similarly so for Scotland.

As with the census reports, a number of additional related publications are also included on the site. Most importantly, both editions of the *Annual Reports of the Registrar-General (ARRG)* for the period 1837–1854 have been included. During this period two versions of these reports were published, the ‘Sessional (or
Parliamentary) Paper’ series and ‘Registrar-General’s’, which had considerable differences in terms of content. Furthermore, not only have the decennial supplements been included, but also other ad hoc reports, including the reports on cholera and influenza published in 1868 and 1920 respectively.

In all, the number of pages of reports reproduced in this section of the website totals 186,005. Each page image was scanned at a high resolution, and ‘cleaned’. The cleaning involved despeckling and straightening. After this process was undertaken for each volume, all the pages were OCRd to enable searching on the site. Clean OCR, with a very high accuracy rate, was produced for each page which only contained text, whereas a lower rate of accuracy was allowed for tabular information. This means that there will be times when a word appears on the printed page, but cannot be found by searching on the web site.

Material from the National Archives

This third section of digitised images comprises 6,244 pages of material from The National Archives. One member of the project team spent the best part of six months at TNA selecting and scanning material from the collections of the Registrar-General. These 6,244 pages are a very small proportion of the total archival material available at TNA relating to the census, but we are confident that they are a reasonably representative selection of the complete archive. However, examples of some key documents, like Census Enumerators’ Books (CEBs)—for all available years—have been scanned, as have as many instructional guides as possible. The CEBs are scanned in full colour, and it might come as a surprise to those who are used to viewing microfilmed images that the 1851 enumerators’ books were printed on blue paper, and that the tickers who abstracted data from the CEBs used different coloured pencils for their work. Examples of original householders’ schedules, where they survive, have also been included, highlighting the differences between the schedules and the CEBs.

Possibly of more interest to LPS readers are the various occupational dictionaries known as Instructions to the clerks employed in classifying the occupations and ages of the people: the three unpublished lists for the 1871, 1881 and 1901 census have been added to the site. Other instructions, forms and maps used in taking the census in England and Wales, in 1841 and from 1861 to 1921, have also been incorporated. For example, there are instructions issued to local officers regarding their duties in taking the census; specimens of census schedules distributed to households, institutions and vessels in England, Wales and the Channel Islands; examples of enumerator’s memorandum books, in which enumerators recorded their progress in delivering and collecting census schedules in their enumeration district; and forms for the division of registrars’ sub-districts into enumeration districts. There are also many examples of General Register Office correspondence with various governmental and non-governmental bodies in the preparation of the census, for example regarding census legislation; the preparation of, and questions to be included in, the census schedules; the co-ordination of census activities between England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland; the adjustment of enumeration district boundaries, and the appointment of staff; and the tabulation and publication of results.
Finally there are also around 1,500 maps used at the time of various censuses, showing registrars’ districts and sub-districts, and containing manuscript additions recording changes to the administrative geography.

The material included is a small selection of that available. Much of it will be new to users of the census, and much of it helps shed light on the manner in which the statistics were created. Most researchers will find evidence in this collection to assist them in interpreting the quantitative data, understanding
why certain practices took place, and generally learning about the construction of statistics from the middle of the nineteenth century through to the middle of the twentieth century.

**Essays**

Under this heading can be found a collection of specially commissioned essays which provide contextual detail for the other resources within the site. These essays, ranging in length from 1,500 to 2,000 words, have been written by Dr Edward Higgs and myself. They provide background information and are designed to lead students and researchers through the different types of material available on the site. Some are reasonably didactic, like the essay entitled *Constructing a parish population history*; some are descriptive, like the *Introduction to administrative units of England and Wales*; while others again are analytic, like Higgs’ *The development of population statistics*. At the time of writing there are 108 of these essays on the site, and the project has been especially commended by researchers for providing this contextual information, which helps both experienced and less experienced population researchers to get a firm grip on the material published in the reports.

**Legislation**

The final section, *Legislation*, contains the complete texts of all parliamentary legislation relating to the collection of population statistics between 1801 and 1937. For copyright reasons we did not create reproductions of the Acts of Parliament, but the full texts of 59 pieces of legislation have been provided on the site. Some may consider the Acts of Parliament to be rather dry, but the complete collection of legislation shows clearly how the registration and census processes evolved. The detail of these acts often provides insights into the administrative procedures for the censuses and registration which cannot be found at the National Archives. This legislation is essential reading for anyone who wishes to fully understand the collection of population statistics in the British Isles. Further research could be carried out to examine the debates relating to the legislation as it went through parliament. Hopefully, some of this legislation will spur people to examine the development of British demographic statistics into the twentieth century.

**How it all works**

In writing this article, I have assumed that most *LPS* readers are not really interested in the technical details of the website. However, it is important to note that since the project was funded by the JISC, which promotes standards in information technology, some mention of the technical side of the project must be made. What really needs to be explained is that the website is only the visible front-end of an online repository which contains over one million images, a vast quantity of associated metadata and a highly complex database.14 Metadata is needed for users of the site to find what they want, but it is also vital for the long-term preservation of the material. Best practice in
digitisation, good metadata and plans to sustain the site will all help to ensure that the material is available for use well into the future.

The website makes use of the latest open source software technologies and uses open standards for the presentation of the available resources. No client-side Java scripting is used and the only restriction on use is that users’ web browsers must be XHTML 1.x compliant, which means that most potential users will find that the site looks and functions identically whatever browser they choose to use. The whole of the back-end of the system is designed to make the user experience as simple as possible, but the highly complex nature of some of the material has meant that some functionality is perhaps a little more opaque than it could be. With a website of this complexity users may have to persevere a little in order to find what they want, but the time saved and the facility with which most material can be found will prove worthwhile to most users.

Navigation through the site

Every effort has been made to ensure that the site is as usable and intuitive as possible. This has meant that we have paid special attention to the navigation bar which is on the left hand side of the screen when viewed. In layman’s terms, we expect most users to want to browse the volumes rather than to search them, though the option of searching is also available.

To take a simple example, let us assume I wanted to find the population of the parish of Northolt in 1871. From the navigation bar on the left hand side of the browse page, I would click on the small arrow to the left of the word census, then expand 1871, click on England, and choose the relevant volume (Registration Counties). After this I would see a complete table of contents for that volume and scroll down to Division 4: Middlesex. The table of contents shows that Table 4 contains the population of parishes. Then I would click on the relevant link on the far right hand side. The population of each of the parishes in the Registration District of Uxbridge are found on the first page. From entering the site to finding that statistic takes six clicks of the mouse! This, of course, is with knowledge of the site and an understanding of the general arrangement of the different volumes, but from entering the site to any page of original report should take no more than ten clicks. I could also have found this page in slightly fewer clicks by searching for Northolt in the simple search. Searching will prove more valuable for searching texts rather than tables. Both searching and browsing can be refined to access the data by date and/or by geography.

Generally speaking the results of browsing and searching facilities are presented in two stages. First a table of contents is displayed which lists the volume and section titles from which users can select the page they wish to view. Having made that selection, the selected page is displayed as an image together with information about where the page is positioned in the volume from which it has been extracted. By means of this information users can navigate to adjacent pages or to other sections in the same original volume.
Other general facilities include image zooming, rotation and download (in both high resolution TIF and PNG formats) and the ability to download a selection of tables in spreadsheet (.xls) format, and—most pertinently for academic use—the correct citation for each original report is given. Many of the footnotes in this short article have simply been cut and pasted from the website.

Considerable effort has been put into ensuring that the browse function is as flexible as possible: new ‘contents’ pages have been designed to reflect the overall structure of each volume of material and, through the use of metadata, every single document in the system is linked by subject material to other documents. This ‘Associated Content’ feature maximises flexibility in browsing and allows users to move easily from one document to another, while also providing a link of interest to those who are less familiar with the contents of the reports.

The website was officially launched in mid-January 2007. Duncan Macniven, the Registrar-General for Scotland, formally launched the site, and presentations were given by a number of specially invited researchers, including Eddy Higgs, Colin Pooley, Anne Hardy, Andrew Hinde, Paul Ell, Tony Franklin and myself. For the OHPR team, the day was the successful culmination of three years hard work, and it was very satisfying to receive such a good response to the site.

The real impact of a resource can partially be found in the web statistics, and I can report these for the first 51 days of 2007. In this period we had just over 9,500 unique visitors, looking at a little under half a million pages. In the 21 days of February 2007 which have elapsed at the time of writing, over 20 per cent of ‘visits’ to the site have been for longer than five minutes. We are hugely encouraged by these numbers, and hope that through careful marketing we will encourage greater use. To this end, I would like to offer a histpop mug to the first five readers of LPS who email info@histpop.org the occupations of the women who died through being struck by lightning on 18 August 1876.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the work of the OHPR team, Tony Franklin, Hervé L’Hours, Victoria Holmes, Anja Nieth, Juergen Neuhoff, Steve Warin and Ole Wiedenmann, for their work on the project and for their assistance in the writing of this article.

NOTES

1. For further details of the JISC Digitisation Programme see: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/index.cfm?name=digitisation_projects (available 13 February 2007).
3. See, for example, Nineteenth annual report of the registrar-general (1856), BPP 1857–58, XXIII (2431) 200–1 and Twenty-fourth annual report of the registrar-general (1861), BPP 1863, XIV (3124), 227–9.
4. Thirty-seventh Annual report of the registrar-general (1874) BPP 1876, XVIII [C.1581], 224.
5. Treasury Committee to inquire into questions connected with taking of census report. Minutes of evidence, appendices BPP 1890, LVIII [C.6071]; Committee on Bill for taking Account of the population of Great
6. OCR or Optical Character Recognition is the application of a software tool to convert images containing text into machine-readable texts.


8. Return of expense for census of GB, 1841 and 1851, BPP 1854, XXXIX (442); Return of expense for census of England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland, 1871, BPP 1875, XLII (377).

9. Census of the British Empire, 1901. *Report with summary and detailed tables for the several colonies, &c., area, houses and population; also population classified by ages, condition as to marriage, occupations, birthplaces, religions, degrees of education, and infirmities*, BPP 1905, CII [Cd.2660].


11. Letter of Registrar General relative to complain against certain remarks in census report of 1891 as regards inhabitants of Wales, speaking Welsh only, BPP 1894, LXIX (331), 1.


13. The curious may have noted a mismatch with the number of images mentioned earlier. For each digital reproduction of a paper original there are six digital versions on the site. Five are small, compressed PNG files which can easily be displayed across the internet; the other is a copy of the master image which is usually much larger. These TIFF images are on average about 2 MB each, though the largest file which can be downloaded by a user of the site is in the region of 103 MB.

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SOURCES AND METHODS

This item considers a range of sources and methods commonly used in local population history. These vary in sophistication and complexity, but are intended to be of benefit to the broad LPS readership, and are accompanied by worked examples. Items are written by experienced population history practitioners, and will usually address both the possibilities and the pitfalls of the respective sources and methods under discussion. The members of the LPS Board are happy to enter into correspondence on this item, which should be addressed in the first instance to the LPS General Office.

ESTIMATING LOCAL POPULATION SIZES AT FIXED POINTS IN TIME:

PART II—SPECIFIC SOURCES

Nigel Goose and Andrew Hinde

Introduction

The first part of this two-part item on estimating local population sizes considered general issues. In this section we examine a range of specific sources, giving advice on their content and coverage, examples of how they can be used to estimate population totals, some guidance about the major pitfalls to be avoided with each, and a short bibliography of works giving either further details of the source, or good examples of their use. The main focus will be on the pre-censal period, as there are many excellent works dealing with the use of the census reports for the decennial censuses from 1801 onwards and the census enumerators’ books, which for most places are available for censuses from 1841 onwards. We shall, however, briefly discuss the isolated surviving census returns for the first four censuses. The discussion is divided into sections corresponding roughly to the period between the Norman Conquest and 1500, the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, the late seventeenth century, and the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

The medieval period

The most widely available sources for this period are Domesday Book (1086) and the Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381. These two sources possess the twin advantages that they survive for a large proportion of local communities, and they are relatively straightforward to use. Manorial court rolls are also widely
available, and they have been used to chart population totals over time, but the effort required is prodigious. It is more difficult to persuade other sources to produce credible population totals, and their survival is patchy.

_Domesday Book, 1086_

Although the reason for the Domesday inquest, the results of which are compiled in the _Domesday Book_, remains open to speculation, it clearly was not intended to be a head count of the population. Nevertheless, it does provide a useful basis for estimating local populations at an early date for 13,418 English settlements. Unfortunately there are no returns for the counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Northumberland, Durham and parts of Lancashire, while all towns—London included—are omitted.

In order to compute a population total from a Domesday entry, it is first necessary to locate the entry which refers to the place in which one is interested. This is not always easy, as many counties contain several Domesday entries with the same place name. Many edited county editions of _Domesday Book_ include tables which ‘map’ Domesday entries on to modern parishes, but even with these it can sometimes be almost impossible to work out exactly which place is being referred to in a particular Domesday entry.

Assuming this problem has been overcome, the next stage is to look through the entry or entries relating to the relevant community and total the number of individuals mentioned therein. Domesday records distinct categories of people: tenants-in-chief, sub-tenants, peasants (who might be described as ‘freemen’, ‘sokemen’, ‘villeins’, ‘bordars’ or ‘cottars’) and _servi_ or slaves. These categories need to be treated in different ways. Tenants-in-chief or sub-tenants (usually identifiable by the descriptions ‘land of X’ or ‘Y holds Z’, where X and Y are people and Z is a place) may not have lived in the place in question and, if so, should not be counted as part of their population. If they are counted, then a multiplier should be applied which is equal to the size of their family. The Domesday entry relating to the various category of peasant actually refers to ‘peasant households’. Therefore the number recorded should be multiplied by a quantity equal to the average size of the peasant household. Unfortunately, there is disagreement about the likely household size at this date, and historians have used multipliers as low as 3.5 and as high as 5.0. Direct evidence from Lincolnshire suggests a figure towards the top end of this range (4.5–5.0), while consideration of what is known about contemporary fertility and mortality also points to a similar multiplier. Slaves present a different problem, in that it is not known whether reference to a ‘slave’ means one single slave or a ‘slave household’. Therefore two estimates of the population should be made, one counting slaves as individuals and one counting them as heads of household. Finally, there is disagreement about the extent of undercounting. Omissions from the lists may have been as low as 5 per cent, or as high as 20 per cent. A mid-range formula would assume an omission rate of 10 per cent.

Thus, consider an entry in which there was one sub-tenant, 20 villeins, 10 bordars and 2 slaves. A low estimate for the Domesday population might be
obtained by assuming an average household size of 4.0, that slaves were recorded as individuals, that the sub-tenant was non-resident, and that omissions were 5 per cent. This gives:
\[(20 + 10) \times 4.0\] = 120 persons in the households of villeins and bordars + 2 slaves = 122 persons recorded x (100/95) for 5 per cent omissions = 128.

A high estimate might use an average household size of 5.0, and assume that slaves were recorded as heads of household, that the sub-tenant was resident and that omissions were 20 per cent. This gives:
\[(20 + 10) \times 5.0\] = 150 persons in the households of villeins and bordars + (2 x 5.0) slaves = 160 persons recorded + (1 x 5.0) for the sub-tenant = 165 persons recorded x (100/80) for 20 per cent omissions = 206.


**The Lay Subsidies**

Lay subsidies were taxes raised from time to time on moveable items. Early examples date from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (for example that in London in 1292) but they survive most widely from the first half of the fourteenth century, and especially 1332-33 under Edward III. Before 1332 the tax was a varying proportion of the value of moveable property, but in 1332 it was fixed at either one tenth or one fifteenth (indeed, the tax is sometimes known as ‘fifteenths and tenths’). Certain items were exempt from the tax, and those whose moveable items, taken together, were valued at less than a minimum threshold were not required to pay. The surviving returns typically detail the names of those who paid the tax, together with either the amounts that they paid, or the total values of the goods on which they were assessed. The returns are arranged place by place.4

To use the lay subsidy to estimate population totals requires at least three adjustments of the raw number of persons listed in the returns. First, those who owned moveable items whose value was below the minimum threshold must be added. Second, a correction for those who were omitted in error from the returns might be made. Applying these two corrections produces a list of ‘owners of moveable items’. Most of the people on this list would probably have been heads of household, and therefore an inflation factor for the average household size must be applied to produce an estimated population total. However, it is not certain that everyone listed in the lay subsidy returns was a
head of household. There are individuals described as ‘son of A’ who might have been living in the same household as A.

Lay subsidies are not confined to the medieval period: several survive for the sixteenth and even early seventeenth centuries, but most of those of interest to the population historian are concentrated in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. A useful general reference is R.E. Glasscock, The Lay Subsidy of 1334 (London, 1975). Several county or regional studies are also available. An important recent discussion, which argues that urban wealth was under-recorded in the lay subsidies after 1294—and which might also have implications for estimates of urban population sizes—is P. Nightingale, ‘The lay subsidies and the distribution of wealth in medieval England, 1275–1334’, Economic History Review, 57 (2004), 1–29.

Other taxation lists

For certain towns and villages other taxation or rental lists for the medieval period survive. One example is the 1416–17 Tarrage Rolls for the city of Winchester. Tarrage was a ‘ground rent paid to the King’, and therefore analysis of the tarrage returns can reveal the number of dwellings in the city.

Manorial records

Manors were legal and administrative units over which a single lord had control. They have left a voluminous documentary legacy, of which several elements can be made to furnish estimates of population totals. The manorial court dealt with a wide range of legal and administrative activities, so wide in fact that it was very difficult for a man living in a manor for more than a year or two to avoid encountering the court, and being mentioned by name in its records. By examining these records, often called manorial court rolls, dividing time up into three or five year periods, and noting the number of different named men mentioned in the records within each period, it is possible to estimate the trend in the male population of a manor. There is some controversy over the extent to which poorer males escaped making an appearance in the court rolls. Even if a proportion of males did not appear in the records, however, provided that this proportion is roughly constant over time, estimates of the population trend should still be reliable. Other manorial records which have been employed by historians to chart population totals include views of Frankpledge, by which men were divided into groups the members of which were mutually answerable for one another’s conduct, and jointly liable for damages caused by any one of them. Finally, the manorial records also provide extents (values of land, labour services and rents) and customals (lists of tenants, sometimes written custumals) which might also provide indirect evidence about population numbers.

Two major studies of demographic change which have used manorial records are Z. Razi, Life, marriage and death in a medieval parish: economy and demography in Halesowen 1270–1400 (Cambridge, 1980); and L.R. Poos, A rural society after the Black Death: Essex 1350–1525 (Cambridge, 1991). There are several analyses of individual communities available: an example is D. Postles, ‘Demographic
The Poll Taxes of 1377, 1379 and 1381

The Poll Tax of 1377 was levied at the rate of one groat (about 1½ p) per head on all males and females aged 14 years or over, apart from the beneficed clergy (who paid a separate tax) and ‘mendicant friars’, who were exempt completely. The 1377 tax was collected on a county and borough basis by local collectors who went from house and street to street collecting the money. The surviving records relate to the receipts given by county collectors to the local collectors, and the enrolment of the collectors’ reports at the central office.

To use the 1377 returns to estimate the population of any local area, assumptions have to be made about the proportion of the population aged under 14 years and the proportion who evaded paying the tax completely. Richard Smith has used demographic models to estimate the proportion aged under 14 years at between 32 and 45 per cent, a range which neatly encompasses the previous estimates of J.C. Russell and M.M. Postan. The extent of evasion is difficult to determine: existing estimates range from 2.5 per cent to 25 per cent. There is little or no evidence to support any particular figure within this range, though the justification which Russell produced for the lower figure seems flawed. It is probably best to make two estimates of a local population total, one using a ‘low’ evasion rate (perhaps 5 per cent) and the other a ‘high’ evasion rate (perhaps 25 per cent).

Consider an example. The number of Poll Tax payers in England’s smallest county of Rutland in 1377 was 5,994. Assuming 5 per cent evasion and that one third of the population was aged under 14 years produces a ‘low’ estimate of the total population of

\[
\frac{5,994 \times 100}{95} \times \frac{3}{2} = 6,309 \times 3/2 = 9,464
\]

Assuming 25 per cent evasion and that 45 per cent of the population was aged under 14 years produces a ‘high’ estimate of the population of Rutland as

\[
\frac{5,994 \times 100}{75} \times \frac{100}{55} = 7,992 \times 100/55 = 14,531
\]

The true figure probably lies somewhere between these two extremes.

In 1379 and 1381 two more Poll Taxes were levied. These used a sliding scale so that the rich paid more than the poor, but the scale slid only upwards, so that the minimum payment was set at one groat and the average payment was two groats in 1379 and three groats in 1381. Possibly because of the increased severity of these taxes, public resistance to paying was greater than it had been in 1377, with a consequent impact on evasion rates. Therefore these taxes are less useful than that of 1377 for estimating the population. The detailed listings surviving for some localities which give the amounts paid by each resident, however, give a fascinating insight into the social structure.

The Poll Taxes form the latest comprehensive source of data about local population sizes in the medieval period. Though there are isolated sources relating to the fifteenth century, none cover a large proportion of the country.

**The sixteenth and seventeenth centuries**

During the period from 1500 until the advent of the first census of population in 1801, there are a range of sources which might be used to derive population totals for local areas. None of these (save, perhaps, the Marriage Duty ‘censuses’ of the late-seventeenth century and certain listings of inhabitants) was designed to enumerate the total population, and so the questions of devising appropriate multipliers to convert the recorded numbers of persons into estimates of the total population still pertain.

**Exchequer Lay Subsidies, 1524–1525 and 1543–1545**

The Exchequer Lay Subsidies were discussed in some detail in Part I of this article. There is controversy over how to treat them, and particularly as to whether they include only taxable males aged 16 and over, or represent households. The difference in population totals that can be produced using methods of conversion based upon these respective interpretations was demonstrated in Part I, but for convenience will be repeated here.

Take a community of 100 taxpayers, assume they represent heads of households, and adopt a household multiplier of 4.75

\[100 \times 4.75 = 475\]

Take a community of 100 taxpayers, assume they represent males aged 16 and over, that 37.5 per cent of the population were aged under 16, and that there was an equal number of males and females

\[100 \times (100/62.5) = 160\]
\[160 \times 2 = 320\]

In each case an estimate should also be made for those who evaded taxation, or who fell below the minimum threshold, and a commonly adopted estimate (which is really little more than a guess) is 30 per cent. This would give:

\[475 \times (10/7) = 679\]
\[320 \times (10/7) = 457\]

The lower estimate, therefore, is only about two-thirds of the higher one. There
are some grounds, however, for believing that the assumption of an exemption rate as high as 30 per cent might be excessive, for only those assessed at under £1 per annum in goods or wages were exempt, and it is unlikely that many would have earned so little in a year at a time when northern labourers were earning 4d per day.\textsuperscript{18} A comparison between the 1524–1525 lay subsidies and 1522 muster returns for a sample of rural areas in five counties indicated an exemption rate as low as 6 per cent, although the rate in towns may have been higher.\textsuperscript{19} Furthermore, the most thorough assessment of the lay subsidies of this period concludes that ‘the crown in the early Tudor period was spectacularly successful in securing the due payment of money accruing by way of parliamentary taxation’.\textsuperscript{20}

The issue of whether these lists represent males over 16, or heads of household, remains. In his work on early modern towns, Nigel Goose favours the former option, and hence lower population estimates. He has argued that there is no reason to believe that assessors perverted the stated intentions of the tax to assess all males aged 16 and over, that identification of some taxpayers in these lists as ‘servant’ makes it very unlikely they were all heads of household, and that comparison of an estimate made upon this basis for the town of Colchester with a further estimate from a list of ‘inhabitants swearing fealty’ to the crown in 1534 supports this interpretation.\textsuperscript{21} Alan Dyer, however, disagrees with this interpretation, and presents the strongest argument for treating the returns as lists of households: A. Dyer, ‘ “Urban decline” in England, 1377–1525’, in T.R. Slater ed., \textit{Towns in decline AD 100–1600} (Aldershot, 2000), 266–88. Other useful references are J. Sheail, \textit{The regional distribution of wealth in England as indicated in the 1524/5 lay subsidy returns} (ed. R.W. Hoyle) 2 vols, List and Index Society, special series, \textit{28} and \textit{29} (Kew, 1998) and R. Schofield, \textit{Taxation under the early Tudors 1485–1547} (Oxford, 2004).

\textbf{Muster returns}

These sources are usually lists of males eligible for military service. Once considered of considerable potential for establishing population sizes, they appear to have fallen out of favour, particularly now it has been appreciated that—like the Exchequer Lay Subsidies—only the earliest returns were carefully compiled. In theory muster returns should list all able-bodied men between the ages of 16 and 60 years. If all men within this age range were able-bodied, the reported number could be converted to a population total by making allowance for those aged under 16 and over 60 years, and doubling the total to include women. Assuming 35 per cent were aged under 16 years and 8 per cent aged over 60 years, for example, a list of 100 able-bodied men would be adjusted as follows:

\[100 \times 1.75 \text{ (i.e. } 100 \text{ divided by } 57, \text{ assuming } 43 \text{ per cent under } 16 \text{ and over } 60 \text{)} \times 2 = 350.\]

Unfortunately, we do not know how many men between these ages were deemed \textit{not} to be able-bodied, and some extant lists produce suspiciously low population totals when converted in this way. The most useful Muster Rolls are probably those for the 1520s, which can be used in combination with the
Exchequer Lay Subsidy to provide estimates of the population at a point on the boundary between the Middle Ages and the early modern period.

The chantry certificates, 1546–1548

Chantry certificates can sometimes be found in local record offices, but the commissioners’ surveys, which date from 1546 and 1548, are held in The National Archives, class E301. The chantry certificates were supposed to provide details of the number of ‘houseling people’ in those parishes which had one or more chantries at the time of the Dissolution, and this term is generally taken to mean communicants of the Church of England (the verb ‘to housel’ meaning ‘to partake of communion’). The conversion of the numbers in these lists to population totals, therefore, depends upon establishing the age of first communion, and it is here that uncertainty arises. It was once assumed that the age of first communion was 14, as it was to become later, but the medieval tradition was that participation in spiritual life could begin as young as seven years, and only later—once the Reformation has taken fuller hold—was the age formally raised to 12. It is likely, therefore, that in the conservative religious climate of Henry VIII’s reign the age was closer to seven than to 14. If, for the sake of argument, we assume that it was ten, and further assume (on the basis of the age structure estimates produced by Wrigley and Schofield) that 25 per cent of the population was under 10, then conversion of these lists to population totals is straightforward. In the case of a list of 100 ‘houseling people’,

\[100 \times \left(\frac{100}{75}\right) = 133\]

However, many of the lists are suspiciously rounded, suggesting that they were little more than rough estimates: Hoskins, for example, uses the example of Plymouth, where a figure of precisely 2,000 is given. Coverage is also extremely patchy, and for some counties at particular dates the figures are simply not recorded, such as the county of Kent in 1546. Some of these lists have been printed by local record societies, for example: J.E. Brown ed., Chantry certificates for Hertfordshire (Hertford, 1909); E. Green ed., The survey and rental of the chantries, colleges, free chapels, guilds, fraternities, lamps, lights and obits in the County of Somerset, Somerset Record Society, 2 (1888); C.W. Foster and A. Hamilton-Thompson, ‘The chantry certificates for Lincoln and Lincolnshire’, Reports and Proceedings of the Associated Architectural Societies, 36 (1922), 183–294, 37 (1925), 18–106, 247–75.

The Ecclesiastical Censuses of 1563 and 1603

The first of these surveys is sometimes described as the ‘Bishops’ Census’, the latter as the ‘communicant returns’, and both are diocesan population returns, the former listing households, the latter communicants (often divided between communicants, recusants and nonconformists). They have long been used by historians attempting to estimate local, regional and national populations. As noted in Part I of this article, coverage is limited to 12 of the 26 dioceses in 1563, and 16 in 1603, while many local returns suffer from rounding in a similar fashion to the chantry certificates, and hence each must be taken on its own merits.
communicants in 1603) they are not strictly comparable, and hence different methods must be used to convert each return to population totals. The 1563 return should be the most straightforward, as it would appear that all we need is a suitable household size multiplier. But, as Dyer and Palliser have recently noted, ‘no scholarly consensus has yet been achieved on this aspect of the returns’. As we note below in our discussion of the Hearth Taxes, not all historians accepts that the ‘conventional’ figure for mean household size of 4.75, suggested long ago by Peter Laslett, is acceptable, while economic depression or the local impact of poverty and plague could easily reduce this average. But the problem goes deeper than this, for comparison made for the town of Cambridge and county of Hertfordshire between population totals calculated from the 1563 census and baptism totals counted from parish registers suggests that, even if a high mean household multiplier is adopted, the baptism rates that can be established for many parishes are implausible, leading to the conclusion that the 1563 return must undercount the population. In response to this, Dyer and Palliser have suggested that the apparent discrepancy between parish register data and population totals which can be established from the 1563 returns may be the product of exceptional demographic circumstances prevailing in the early 1560s, themselves a product of the well-known mortality crisis of 1556–60, a hypothesis that can only be validated once ongoing research is completed. Wisely they warn against the use of ‘too prescriptive a formula’ to convert the figures provided by the 1563 return to population totals, and we too would advise caution. At the very least, the adoption of a range of possible household multipliers makes sense, perhaps 4.5, 4.75 and 5.0 to give plausible (but not definitive) parameters. But the possibility that these lists under-enumerate the population remains, and a correction factor of the order of 25 per cent has been suggested by Goose. Taking the mid-range household multiplier, therefore, two calculations are possible for a community of 100 households:

\[
100 \times 4.75 = 475
\]

and

\[
100 \times 4.75 \times 100/75 = 633
\]

Comparison between the population totals that can be established from these returns using a range of multipliers, and average baptism figures from extant contemporary parish registers, remains a good means of testing their accuracy.

The 1603 return of communicants poses the same problem as the chantry certificates in terms of the need to establish age of first communion, but by this date suggested ages range more narrowly between 14 and 16. This would lead us to assume that approximately 35 per cent of the population were omitted on grounds of age. Conversion of local returns to population totals, therefore, should again involve just a simple sum. Unfortunately, however, there is much clearer evidence of undercounting in the 1603 return, which has been highlighted by comparing the national population estimate made by Wrigley and Schofield with the total that can be established from the ecclesiastical census: the shortfall is as high as 23 per cent. As Dyer and Palliser argue, the ‘assumption that the established church was ever able to secure regular...
church attendance from every parishioner is a very naïve one’, while the exigencies of travel, illness and error may also have taken their toll on the figures. Hence they tentatively suggest that the total number of communicants given for any parish should be increased by at least 35 per cent, and possibly as much as 45–50 per cent, before conversion to produce a population size. For a community of 100 communicants, therefore, taking the range for omission of 35–50 per cent, we have two possible calculations:

\[ 100 + (100 \times \frac{35}{100}) \times \frac{100}{65} = 208 \] (undercount 35 per cent and 35 per cent underage)

and

\[ 100 + (100 \times \frac{50}{100}) \times \frac{100}{65} = 231 \] (undercount 50 per cent and 35 per cent underage)


*The Protestation Returns 1641–1642*

The Protestation returns were intended to record a full list of all male inhabitants aged 18 years and over in each parish. As such, it is easy to use them to estimate a population total by allowing for the estimated proportion of the population under the age of 18 years, and doubling to allow for women. So, for example, if 100 persons were recorded, the calculation is as follows:

\[ 100 \times 1.66 \text{ (i.e. 100 divided by 60, assuming 40 per cent under 18)} \times 2 = 332. \]

This procedure corresponds closely to that suggested by Whiteman and Russell of adopting a multiplier between 3.0 and 3.5. Whiteman’s examination of over 400 parishes in 14 counties leads her to conclude that the returns should be taken seriously as, in effect, a census of men aged 18 years and over, although she also notes that individual returns can vary considerably in quality, and not all local officials were assiduous in chasing ‘refusers’ or other absenteees, while in some parishes women are included, and in others temporary residents or visitors too.

The late seventeenth century

The Hearth Taxes

Hearth Tax returns survive for the periods 1662–66 and 1669–1674. They were described in Part I of this article, and so will not be described again in detail here.37

The tax applied to households and not to houses, so in theory it should be relatively easy to establish a population total by applying a suitable household size multiplier. But, as always with such sources, this should not be done uncritically.38 The extant lists vary in terms of their coverage, with those for the same locality in different years often being of different levels of completeness. It is particularly important to use a return that includes those exempt from taxation as well as those taxable: urban evidence suggests the proportion of the population exempt could be as high as two-thirds, so a list of the taxable population might give little clue to actual population size.39 As paupers did not generally feature even among the exempt in these returns, an allowance might be made for these too. And, of course, the problem of selecting a suitable household multiplier still remains. The figure of 4.75 has often been used, based upon the average for 100 pre-industrial communities calculated long ago by Peter Laslett, but Tom Arkell has more recently suggested a lower figure.40

A great deal of work has been based on the Hearth Tax returns, quite a lot of which concerns their use to estimate local population totals. For a description of the tax see T. Arkell, ‘Printed instructions for administering the Hearth Tax’, in K. Schürer and T. Arkell eds, Surveying the people: the interpretation and use of document sources for the study of population in the later seventeenth century (Oxford, 1992), 38–64. Recent studies which discuss the use of the returns to analyse local population sizes include N. Evans, ‘The Hearth Tax returns as a source for population size and the incidence of poverty in Suffolk during the reign of Charles II’, Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology (& History), 40 (2004), 455–9; and T. Arkell, ‘Identifying regional variations from the Hearth Tax’, Local Historian, 33 (2003), 148-74. Evans is rather sceptical of the reliability of estimates of population size made using the Hearth Tax on the grounds that the poor were generally excluded (because they were exempt), which reinforces the point made earlier that returns which do not list those exempt from taxation should not be used to make inferences about the total population size. Even when lists of those exempt are available, a further adjustment (of perhaps 5 per cent) might be made to allow for paupers, who did not require a formal certificate of exemption.

The Hearth Tax returns for some counties have been transcribed and published.41 This makes using them for research much easier but, of course, does not make them any more accurate!

The Compton Census 1676

The Compton census records communicants of the Church of England, ‘papists’ (or Roman Catholics) and nonconformists on a parish by parish basis. Most commonly it lists males aged 16 or over (the age of first communion in the seventeenth century), but the lists occasionally include females, and sometimes
children too. The three religious categories can be added to produce a total upon which to base an estimate of population size, but the multiplier adopted will depend upon which age and sex groups are included. Anne Whiteman’s definitive edition of the census (A. Whiteman ed., Compton Census of 1676: a critical edition, BARSEH, new series, 10 (Oxford, 1986)) provides what she calls ‘conjectural interpretation’ of the probable coverage of the Compton Census for the various parishes for which it survives, by comparing the totals given in particular ecclesiastical administrative areas with the Protestation Returns of 1641–1642 and the Hearth Taxes (both discussed above). She suggests that where men and women are included, a multiplier of 1.5 is appropriate (that is, assuming children under 16 to constitute 33 per cent of the population). If only men are included, then the multiplier should be 3.0 (that is, double to allow for women, plus 33 per cent for children under 16). Before attempting to calculate local population totals, therefore, it is essential to consult Anne Whiteman’s book.


Marriage Duty lists

The Marriage Duty Act of 1695 imposed a tax on vital events (births, marriages and burials), and also required annual payments by bachelors aged over 25 years and childless widowers. To assist with the administration of the tax, it was expedient for parishes to compile lists of their inhabitants and the resulting documents are, perhaps, the nearest attempts at a complete census of population that we possess for the period before 1801. The Act proved complex and difficult to administer, and was abandoned in 1706. Nevertheless, for the 11-year period for which it was in force, some parts of the country are blessed with extremely useful census-type lists. Unfortunately, however, their survival is very patchy. A particularly good set survives for London, and another excellent example comes from the parish of St John in Southampton. A recent comparative study in Wiltshire concluded that the Marriage Duty ‘census’ may be more complete than the Compton Census. On the other hand, doubts have been raised as to the accuracy of the base population figures derivable from the ‘censuses’ and the haphazard and confused state of some extant returns noted.

Other early modern sources

In addition to the sources listed above, there are some other possible sources which local population historians might consider. The sources described in this section, overall, are less useful than the ones identified so far either because they are more difficult to work with, or because they only survive for a limited number of places. Examples of the first category are the Poll Taxes of the seventeenth century, which can be complex to use and interpret. The Bishops’ Visitations of the eighteenth century consist of a series of questions asked of parish priests within each diocese, which often included requests for estimates
of parish population totals, as well as the number of nonconformists and ‘papists’. Clearly some of the numbers provided by incumbents may be little more than informed guesses, but they do provide estimates for a period (the eighteenth century) during which few alternative sources are available, and they can be cross-checked against the figures from the later seventeenth century sources and the 1801 census.45

In the second category are the listings of inhabitants, or informal ‘censuses’, of particular places which were conducted for a variety of purposes at different times, normally by interested residents, incumbent clergymen or local officials such as the overseers of the poor. These, of course, were the sources used by Peter Laslett and his colleagues in their analysis of the structure of the English household in the past.46 A collection of these lists has been created at the Cambridge Group for the History of Population and Social Structure, but there are many others, which have recently been listed and catalogued by Jeremy Gibson and Mervyn Medlycott.27 The level of detail given in these lists varies, but the vast majority will be able to furnish an estimated total population. When carrying out research on a particular place, therefore, it is therefore always worth checking to see if any of the surviving lists relates to that locality.

Sources from the early census era

From 1801, the decennial censuses provide population totals for each parish in the country, and the situation of the population historian is thereby made considerably easier. For the first four censuses of 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 the original census returns do not survive systematically, and for most places reliance must be placed on the census reports. The latter have recently been made available in electronic format through the Online Historical Population Reports Project. This provides online access to all the census reports for England and Wales and Scotland from 1801 to 1931, and renders them searchable by place name. A particularly useful set of reports relates to the census of 1851, which list the population of each place in the five previous censuses.48

For some places, the original returns from the early censuses do survive, and they can sometimes provide details of the age and sex composition of the population, as well as occupational information. Details of these can be found in R. Wall and M. Woollard, ‘Pre-1841 population census schedules and lists’, Local Population Studies, 74 (2005), 84–93. From 1841 until 1901, the census enumerators’ books are available for every parish in the country and provide base populations for whatever sub-section of the population of a locality interests the historian.

NOTES


5. Two examples are A.D. Mills ed., The Dorset Lay Subsidy roll of 1332, Dorset Record Society, 4 (Dorchester, 1332); and A.M. Erskine ed., The Devonshire Lay Subsidy of 1332, Devon and Cornwall Record Society publications, new series, 14 (Exeter, 1969).


13. The lower figure is Russell’s, the higher is Postan’s (see Russell, British medieval population, 124–30; Postan, Medieval economy and society, 32–3).


16. See, for example, that surviving for the village of Brockley-cum-Rede in Suffolk, transcribed and printed in E. Powell, The rising in East Anglia in 1381 (Cambridge, 1896), 69–70.


22. See, for example, Wrigley and Schofield, Population history, 568.


33. This is to prefer the age structure calculations of Wrigley and Schofield for this quinquennium to those suggested by Gregory King for the later seventeenth century, and hence we differ from the conclusion reached in Dyer and Palliser, *Diocesan population returns*, lxx, where 35–40 per cent is suggested.


45. The Bishop’s Visitation returns for Hampshire in 1725, 1764–1765 and 1788 have been published in W.R. Ward ed., *Parson and parish in eighteenth-century Hampshire: replies to Bishop’s visitations*, Hampshire Record Series, 13 (Winchester, 1995).

46. Laslett and Wall, *Household and family in past time. A list of the ones used for the analyses reported in this volume is given in Laslett, ‘Mean household size’, 130–1.

NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITIES

University of Hertfordshire

The History Group, situated in the School of Humanities at the University of Hertfordshire, comprises ten full-time members of staff, many of whom have research and teaching interests in the broad field of social history, even if only one would claim expertise in historical demography. The School, of course, is also home to Local Population Studies, and provides office space for its administrative assistant, Vanessa Chambers, while for the past seven years the spring conference has been held in the University’s Faculty of Law premises in St Albans.

The Humanities undergraduate programme is modular, with full credit accumulation and transfer capacity, and hence is particularly suitable to part-time students: a high proportion of students are mature returners. Eight modules are taken by full-time students in each of the three years of an honours BA. In year one only four modules are available in historical studies, so all students must take at least two subjects, but in years two and three students can concentrate wholly on history, taking the full eight modules in the subject. For those wishing to follow a multi-disciplinary programme, however, a wide range of subjects are available which can be studied in a variety of combinations. Many of the history undergraduate courses have a strong social and local history content. Of particular interest to readers of this journal will be our ‘core’ year two course History Writing Workshop, which introduces students to the practical skills involved in historical research, a level two course on Eighteenth-Century Towns, as well as the level three courses Community History: Nineteenth-Century Regional and Local History in Theory and Practice, and Landscape History. Further details can be found on the University’s web-site at http://perseus.herts.ac.uk/

Our taught masters programme has recently been revalidated, and is now called History: Communities and Cultures 1660-2000. The MA in History at the University of Hertfordshire contributes to the recent explosion of interest in regional and cultural history, with an emphasis on London. No other university offers an MA programme that explores the history of London in the modern period, and its impact on neighbouring rural and provincial communities such as those in Hertfordshire. The MA highlights key social and cultural developments in the formation of contemporary society, and how they influenced and changed the lives and lifestyles of people. For more information contact the MA History leader, Dr Tony Shaw: a.t.shaw@herts.ac.uk.

On the research front, eight of the ten staff have interests in the broad social history field. Nigel Goose, Professor of Social and Economic History and Director of the Centre for Regional and Local History, joined the LPS Editorial Board in 1996 and has been the journal’s editor since 1999. In 1989 he established the Centre for Regional and Local History at Hertfordshire. Initially dedicated to digitising Hertfordshire census data, it has provided a springboard for a range
of research and publication activities. Two books have appeared that provide detailed analysis of the 1851 census for substantial areas in south-west Hertfordshire (Population, economy and family structure in Hertfordshire in 1851: vol. 1 the Berkhamsted region and vol. 2 St Albans and its region (Hatfield, 1996, 2000)), while more recent work has taken a more thematic approach, and has used a wider range of demographic sources, to produce articles on subjects such as poverty and old age, illegitimacy and farm service: ‘Poverty, old age and gender in nineteenth-century England: the case of Hertfordshire’, Continuity & Change, 20, (2005); ‘How saucy did it make the poor? The straw plait and hat trades, illegitimate fertility and the family in nineteenth-century Hertfordshire’, History, 91, no. 303 (2006); ‘Farm service, seasonal unemployment and casual labour in mid-nineteenth-century England’, Agricultural History Review, 54, part II (2006). The Hertfordshire census data has also provided the basis for detailed work on the straw plait and hat trades, which underpins Nigel’s interest in female labour, and hence his involvement with the recently published LPS supplement Women’s work in industrial England: regional and local perspectives (Hatfield, 2007). A further article entitled ‘Cottage industry, migration and marriage in nineteenth-century England’ will appear in the Economic History Review later this year.

Nigel’s earlier work focused upon the economy, society and demography of early modern England (particularly its provincial towns), and he continues to work in this area. His long-standing interest in the history of Colchester is reflected in the recent publication of ‘The rise and decline of philanthropy in early modern Colchester: the unacceptable face of mercantilism?’, Social History, 31 (2006). Colchester, of course, possessed a thriving Dutch community in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and it is this that has led to more general interest in the history of early modern immigration, and underpinned the publication of N. Goose and L. Luu eds, Immigrants in Tudor and early Stuart England (Brighton, 2005). Nigel is currently preparing a monograph on the subject for Manchester University Press, as well as an edited collection of documents for Sussex Academic Press. His interest in this area has also resulted in involvement with the European umbrella consortium dedicated to the exploration of ‘Networks, economic and social integration and cultural transfer in early modern northern Europe’, which is described in the editorial to this issue of LPS. Previously advertised also in LPS editorials is the Almshouse Project, which is being conducted in conjunction with the Family & Community History Research Society, and is exploring demographic, social and administrative aspects of almshouses between c. 1300 and 1900. For further information, our most recent newsletter or offers of assistance, please contact the project coordinator, Anne Langley, at anne.langley1@btinternet.com.

Finally, the University of Hertfordshire Press has become increasingly active as an outlet for regional and local history. The first major series, dedicated to the publication of high quality academic work in this field, most usually based on PhD theses, is Studies in Regional and Local History, four volumes of which are now available A second series, a joint venture with the Centre for English Local History at the University of Leicester, is Explorations in Local and Regional History, which publishes mid-length (40-60,000 word) books, often breaking
new ground. The first two volumes in this series have appeared recently. The University Press has also collaborated with the Centre for Regional and Local History to produce a CD-Rom of the 1851 census of Hertfordshire. Full details of these, and related, publications can be found at http://perseus.herts.ac.uk/uhinfo/university-of-hertfordshire-press/history/introduction_to_history.cfm.

The University of Hertfordshire in collaboration with the University of Sheffield and the Open University is also home to two major research projects focussed on the creation and analysis of digitised historical source material related to the history of London in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The first of these is ‘The Central Criminal Court Online’ funded by the AHRC through its Resource Enhancement Scheme. This project is digitising the full corpus of printed accounts of trials held at the Old Bailey between 1834 and 1913. These are made up of some 70,000,000 words of text, and record the details of everything said in court during 100,000 trials. It follows on from, and will be integrated with, the award winning ‘Old Bailey Online’ (www.oldbaileyonline.org), and is under the direction of Professor Tim Hitchcock at Hertfordshire, Professor Robert Shoemaker at Sheffield, and Professor Clive Emsley at the Open University. The full text has now been transcribed and elements of the content tagged in XML using a newly developed automated tagging system created at the Humanities Research Institute in Sheffield. Nine research assistants are currently going through the text, adding further XML tagging prior to posting on the internet. This resource should be publicly available in the Spring of 2008. The project will also result in an international conference, a collection of essays and a monograph authored by Professor Clive Emsley.

The second project, ‘Plebeian Lives and the Making of Modern London, 1690–1800’ was funded with a major grant from the ESRC. This project, under the leadership of Professor Tim Hitchcock at Hertfordshire and Professor Robert Shoemaker at Sheffield, is digitising manuscript material relating to the administration of social welfare and criminal justice in eighteenth-century London. The project is transcribing, using a ‘double-entry re-keying’ process, the full corpus of eight discreet archives, including the records of St Thomas’s Hospital, Bridewell, the Carpenters’ Company, the parish records of St Clements Dane, St Botolph Aldgate and St Dionis Backchurch. It is also digitising the full run of manuscript sessions papers for Westminster, Middlesex and the City London, and all extant coroners’ inquests, 1690–1800. This will make it possible for the first time to reconstruct how ‘ordinary’ Londoners interacted with various government and charitable institutions in the course of their daily lives. By examining how individual Londoners participated in and manipulated these agencies for their own ends, this project will demonstrate how end users contributed to the development of these institutions. More generally, it will assess the role of plebeians in the evolution of social practices in the modern metropolis. The digitised sources will be posted on the internet with a sophisticated search engine, which will facilitate searches of this database together with existing related digital and internet resources (including the Old Bailey Proceedings Online). Individual biographies will be prepared of the
most fully documented individuals, and statistical analysis will be conducted investigating the relationships between different patterns of behaviour (such as applications for poor relief and prosecutions for crime). Project outcomes will also include journal articles, a project conference, and a monograph co-authored by Tim Hitchcock and Robert Shoemaker. As of the spring of 2007 the manuscripts have been almost entirely scanned, and are currently being re-keyed through the Higher Education Digitisation Service at the University of Hertfordshire. The first five thousand pages of re-keyed text were received in February of 2007. Ten researchers are currently employed inserted XML tags and metadata in the text, in preparation for posting; and we expect to provide public access to this material by the spring of 2009. The project manager responsible for both ‘Plebian Lives’ and the ‘Central Criminal Court’ is Dr Sharon Howard, who is located at the Humanities Research Institute at the University of Sheffield.

In order to make these bodies of material more readily available to a wider audience, the Universities of Hertfordshire and Sheffield are also engaged in creating a new history-specific search engine. Funded by a major grant from the AHRC’s ICT programme, the Armadillo Project, under the leadership of Professor Mark Greengrass and Professor Fabio Ciravegna at Sheffield and Professor Tim Hitchcock at Hertfordshire, is creating an ontological search facility for the semantic web. Using technologies developed by the Natural Language Processing Group at Sheffield, the project will allow the whole body of resources available on the internet to be searched in a more intelligent way. This project is due to be completed in the Autumn of 2007.


Dr Sarah Lloyd has recently completed a project examining various charitable initiatives in England c.1680–1820, and specifically the role of imagination in shaping agendas, approaches and outcomes. It suggested that eighteenth-century criticism of ‘visionary’ plans recognised what historians have often missed: the complex circulation of pleasure, anticipation and risk in attempts to address poverty; the imaginative power of schemes to draw their authors and supporters into a social reorganisation that both appealed to and went beyond economic logic and political expediency; and the channels through which religious feeling intermingled with social objectives. Social policy therefore
combined systematic reasoning with compelling imaginative commitments. In the second half of the century, for example, commentators developed the idea of the cottage as a remedy for poverty and a sign of the condition of the poor (‘Cottage Conversations: poverty and manly independence in eighteenth-century England’, *Past & Present*, 184 (2004)). Fund-raising strategies and sociable practices channelled emotion and projected hopes (‘Pleasing spectacles and elegant dinners: conviviality, benevolence and charity anniversaries in eighteenth-century London’, *Journal of British Studies*, 41 (2002)). Overall, the project argues for the importance of investigating the outer limits of eighteenth-century social thought and activity as a means of shedding new light on more familiar histories of ideas, lived experience and the micro-politics of poor relief. A second, very different project focuses on eighteenth-century adultery trial publications as a genre of literature which engaged in distinctive ways with matters of public interest. This is a collaborative study with Gillian Russell of the Australian National University and has been funded by the Australian Research Council (see Sarah Lloyd, ‘Amour in the Shrubbery: reading the detail of English adultery trial publications of the 1780s’, *Eighteenth-century Studies*, 39 (2006)). And finally, a project on the social histories of tickets and tokens is planned. This will dovetail with John Styles’ and Tim Hitchcock’s research on Material London.

Dr Alan Thomson is well known to Hertfordshire historians for his work on the seventeenth century in general, and the Civil Wars in particular. A book of transcribed primary sources, largely from the National Archives SP 28 series, entitled *The impact of the Civil War 1642–7 on Hertfordshire*, is to be published this autumn by the Hertfordshire Record Society. It identifies a large number of individuals and their roles in local government or in local military forces. There are lists of those in the Watford Volunteers, the officers in the local militia in receipt of pay and numerous collectors and assessors of local taxes, as well as those local inhabitants paying a variety of taxes from the weekly assessments to the fifth and twentieth part. Also included will be a number of biographies of local people of a variety of ranks who have not yet made the *Dictionary of National Biography*. It should prove a useful source for local historians as well as those interested in the impact of war on the local population in general, particularly the burdens suffered by ordinary people when soldiers took free quarter, often for months at a time.

Dr Owen Davies is Reader in Social History. He works on the history of witchcraft, magic, popular medicine and popular mentalities in the early modern and modern periods, and has conducted national surveys and regional and micro studies on these themes. His most recent book, *Murder, magic, madness: the Victorian trials of Dove and the Wizard* (Harlow, 2005), required the detailed reconstruction of the family life of a respected Methodist family and its relationship with a working-class Leeds cunning-man, set against the background of social developments in urbanising Leeds during the first half of the nineteenth century. Recent ethnographic and census research on nineteenth-century female healers, such as herbalists, bonesetters and cunning-women, has just been published in Nigel Goose ed., *Women’s work in industrial England*. Having
recently finished a book on the social history of ghosts, Owen is now concentrating on a history of magic books and also on a major three-year, AHRC-funded research project, led by Professor Matthew Cragoe, which will examine the long-term social impact of parliamentary enclosure in the county, focusing on how communities responded culturally to changes in their physical environment over time.

Professor Matthew Cragoe has published widely on British agrarian society and politics in the nineteenth century, with a particular interest in the history of Wales. His latest project, introduced in the last paragraph, is entitled ‘Changing landscapes, changing environments: enclosure and culture in Northamptonshire, 1700–1900’ (Matthew Cragoe, Owen Davies, Ian Waites; with English Heritage and the John Clare Trust). Enclosure played a crucial role in the evolution of the English landscape. During the intense period of ‘parliamentary’ enclosure between 1750 and 1836, over 5,000 Acts of Parliament were passed, permitting the enclosure of open fields, commons and ‘waste’. While scholars have focused on the consequences of this severe rationalisation of the landscape for agricultural productivity, land-holding structures and, most emotively, the economic well-being of the poor, little work has been undertaken on its long-term cultural impact. This three-year project, funded under the AHRC's Landscape & Environment initiative, seeks to supply that deficiency. Focusing on a series of themes across the period 1700–1900, including the great estates, organised religion, popular custom and belief, and changing aesthetic perceptions of the countryside, the project aims to develop a new perspective on the social history of enclosure.

Professor Jonathan Morris is currently director of a project entitled 'The Cappuccino Conquests: The Transnational History of Italian Coffee' which forms part of the ESRC/AHRC Cultures of Consumption programme. This project studies the spread of espresso-based drinks such as cappuccino from their Italian origins to their current global prominence. The first 'espresso' coffee machines date from the turn of the century, but the key revolution came in 1948 when Achille Gaggia began manufacturing commercial catering machines that made coffee under high pressure creating a beverage which could not be reproduced at home. The project considers the impact of this in Italy, notably in terms of the development of a 'drinking out' culture; the ways in which the Italian coffee industry exported espresso drinks; the role of the Anglo-Italian community in introducing these beverages to Britain; the 1950s coffee bar fad; the creation of an American culture of speciality coffee consumption in the 1980s; the introduction of this into the UK in the mid-1990s; and the subsequent coffee shop explosion. It analyses the reasons for Italian coffee's increasing popularity, the variations in cultures of consumption across different markets, and the extent that these drinks are still seen as 'Italian' despite their appropriation by American multi-national coffee chains, thus contributing to debates about identity and 'globalisation'. Evidence is drawn from published and archival records, company documentation, contemporary newspapers and journals, market research, cultural products, plus visual and material sources. Particular emphasis is placed on the use of oral history. For further details on the project please visit www.cappuccinoconquests.org.uk.
Last but by no means least, Professor John Styles is currently preparing a book for Yale University Press entitled *The Dress of the People: Everyday Fashion in Eighteenth-Century England*. It argues that studies of consumption in eighteenth-century England have under-estimated the importance of the labouring poor as innovative consumers. In the sphere of clothing humble men and women were often beneficiaries, and not just victims, of the distinctive commercial society that emerged in the period. The book uses the records of criminal trials for clothes theft along with the descriptions of clothing in newspaper advertisements for fugitives to map broad changes in everyday clothing. The spread of colourful outer garments made from the new, cheap cotton fabrics is one of the most striking innovations for plebeian consumers, along with a range of relatively expensive new clothing accessories, from silk hats to the cheaper silver watches, which were stylish and indeed fashionable in ways that drew on elite modes. It is important to stress, however, that cotton’s appeal lay principally in its capacity to make a show. The claims of an earlier generation of historical demographers that wearing cotton undergarments led to reductions in mortality from the third quarter of the eighteenth century are shown to be mistaken. Durable linens continued to dominate the making of undergarments until the 1820s.

The book does not ignore the many labouring people who had little choice but to wear old, patched, or ragged garments. It emphasises that the capacity to obtain clothing fluctuated across the life cycle, demonstrating that relatively small shifts in disposable income could produce dramatic transformations in material culture. Unmarried young adults often had enough money to spare to allow them to splash out on items that can justifiably be termed petty luxuries, while adults with young children had little option but to make do with what they already had, or what they might be given as charity or by the parish. Parish vestries were usually unwilling to provide anything but the most basic clothing in cheap, coarse materials.

Nevertheless, the evidence of clothing suggests that plebeian consumers were materially more ambitious than historians have been inclined to admit. Many were able, at certain stages of their lives, to realise those ambitions. Yet it would be wrong to assume their objective was simply to emulate the lifestyles of the rich. Their displays of sartorial finery continued to be rooted in the emphatically plebeian world of popular custom—of fairs and holidays, of parish feasts and harvest homes. In the sphere of clothing, at least, custom and consumption were allies as often as they were enemies. *The Dress of the People* will be published in November 2007. Readers of *LPS* might also be interested in J. Styles and A. Vickery eds, *Gender, taste and material culture in Britain and North America, 1700–1830* (New Haven and London, 2006).

Nigel Goose
*Professor of Social and Economic History*
*University of Hertfordshire*

With its focus on the people of Liverpool and the social, economic and political developments of the emerging town, this is not a conventional town history. Indeed, the authors set themselves an ambitious brief in seeking to ‘develop an understanding of the town’s growth by illuminating the dynamics of its population, economic structure, social networks and political establishment’. The extent to which this book achieves these aims is debatable, and this is not the final word on the subject. Nevertheless, it is clear that its shortcomings are mainly due to the complexity of the task and the inadequacies of the source material rather than the failings of the authors. Indeed, the authors are to be commended for their tenacious multi-source nominal record linkage which is executed on a remarkable scale. As anybody who has attempted this type of research will know, this methodological approach is a considerable challenge.

In the context of Liverpool, whose population grew from c. 1,000 in 1650 to c. 20,000 by 1750, to even embark on such research might be considered foolhardy. It is for future historians to develop some of the themes of this book, but chapters on the emergence of the early modern port, demography, occupational structure, inheritance strategies, government and politics, as well as detailed appendices on sources and methods, provide material of considerable interest to readers of this journal.

There are a few areas where I would take issue with the approach of the authors and where the limitations of this book are not entirely caused by the limitations of source material. The first page of the introduction states that, ‘The gulf between rich and poor was not great among townsmen, though the local grandees, the Earl of Derby, Lord Molyneux and the Moore family, might have been perceived as living in another dimension’. However, despite the prominence of these families, especially up to the 1690s, the considerable archives of the two former families, both held at Lancashire Record Office, were not consulted. Indeed, few sources outside of the Liverpool Record Office were considered worthy of investigation. One further issue that pervades the entire book is its broader context, characterised by the ill-conceived opening chapter ‘The Emergence of an Early Modern Port’. Liverpool was anything but an early modern port and the frequent comparisons with Hull, Newcastle, Bristol and London, while helping to emphasise the rapid emergence of Liverpool as a major port, fail to take full account of the role of Chester in Liverpool’s early development. Moreover, comparison with other Atlantic ports—such as Lancaster, Whitehaven or Glasgow—each of which has a growing literature, would have provided a rather different context. It is also difficult to understand why other recent work such as Lawton and Lee’s Population and society in western European port cities, c.1650–1939 (Liverpool
University Press, 2002) is not mentioned. It is also unfortunate that the authors have been let down by very poor reproduction of maps and graphs, which render some of them of little or no use.

Nevertheless, readers of this journal are perhaps most interested in the chapters on demography, occupational structure and inheritance patterns. In this respect the book is well worth reading, if only for a detailed insight into the methodological difficulties of reconstructing a rapidly growing and highly mobile population. Indeed, if the ‘reconstitutable minority’ is a problem in small rural parishes of the period, Liverpool substantially magnifies the issue. Population mobility, the truncation caused by the short time period under study, and a large nonconformist element frustrate the reconstitution, resulting in ‘extremely fragmentary’ family histories. Indeed, ‘almost two-thirds [of women] raised children in the parish but were neither born nor buried there’ (p. 60). The authors are well aware of the methodological difficulties, and frequently remind the reader that these problems exist, and the reconstituted sample represents a small, though variable, percentage of the population. Moreover, the sample size is not always revealed, leaving the reader uncertain over the robustness of the results. This is especially the case with the large, though under-represented group of mariners and seafarers.

Perhaps ironically, it is the methodological difficulties of reconstituting the population and the partial results this research reveals which leads to the greatest strength of this book. Some of the statistics are striking: 96 per cent of marriage partners after 1717 could not be traced in the baptism registers. The available data show that mariners formed 20–30 per cent of the workforce and infant mortality amongst their children was 278/1000 in the first half of the eighteenth century. This was clearly an urban community facing considerable challenges on a scale not felt in most urban settings until a century later. It was a community almost entirely made up of recent in-migrants from the rural hinterland, individuals who maintained strong links with their place of origin, indicated by the strength of kinship networks reflected in wills. Female wills in particular demonstrated strong lateral ties, and there is considerable evidence to show that women formed an important component of the economic structure of the developing port.

The rapid development of trade also resulted in political changes which distinguishes Liverpool from more established ports in the same period. Power was seized from the ancient landed elite in the 1690s and it was the merchant class that pressed for parochial status and the development of the dock in this period. The merchant class possessed the economic power and the motivation to govern the town and the borough council provided the legal and administrative infrastructure to impose their will on the town’s inhabitants.

While this book is not the final word on the subject, it provides material which will inspire further research on Liverpool and other port communities. Moreover, as much of the source material has been deposited with the UK Data Archive the authors have facilitated this further research. With the current emphasis on slavery and the navy in much maritime history this book is to be
welcomed for seeking to understand the development, not of a port economy, but of the social impact of rapid growth. Focusing on the lives and deaths of mariners and merchants, their economic well-being, testamentary behaviour and the character of local government adds a new dimension to our knowledge of port communities in this period. It is all the more regrettable that Michael Power, who devoted much of his life to the study of early modern Liverpool, did not live to see the book published.

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This is an interesting and rewarding book, but not one likely to attract much attention from the readers of LPS, and so I shall be brief. The editors have assembled the documentary remains of a second rank, early seventeenth-century figure, Thomas Viscount Savage (d. 1636) with a scattering of materials relating to his widow. Savage was of an established Cheshire family, but married into the Suffolk Darcy family and, by a twist of fate, came to inherit their estates. He thus became the possessor of two major houses, Rocksavage in Cheshire, which has now all but disappeared, and Melford Hall in Suffolk, now in the possession of the National Trust and, in the fashion of the times, he maintained a London residence on Tower Hill. Savage was a courtier, a gentleman of the privy chamber to James I, but also a seasoned administrator, and a Catholic to boot. His career at court is explored in a substantial introduction to the volume. But what really interests the editors are the inventories of the houses made on his death. There is, in this collection, much more on furnishings than estates or estate management even though Long Melford has a splendid survey with map of 1613 by Samuel Pierce. The quality of publication is exceptionally fine with colour plates. This, one assumes, is what a National Trust shop can do for you!

The introduction is essentially a biographical account of Savage and his widow, Elizabeth (d. 1651), followed by treatments of Melford Hall and Rocksavage. There then follow some eighty-odd documents, many drawn from the records remaining at Chester which were unknown to Suffolk historians until recently. As there is no single archive of Savage’s papers, the documents are drawn from a wide variety of sources: they are also slightly tangential to the man who never appears as a person, but as a landowner and administrator. This material is published in extenso, probably too much so, although I did wonder why notes on indentures made in 1704 had been preferred to the full texts of the Close Rolls in Doc. 74: perhaps the editors did not realise that the texts could be found there. Indeed, one wonders what else might have been found in a trawl of the Close Rolls. The volume continues after Savage’s death with papers describing the Civil War misfortunes of his widow. The first appendix deals with Melford Hall in 1636, a second supplies biographical notes on the people named in the text. Savage, is, so far as is possible, rescued and, if
it were possible for the dead to show gratitude, he would surely acknowledge
that he has been well served by his editors, who have done something to
redeem the loss of his papers while also demonstrating the impossibility of
seeing him as a rounded figure.

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James Collett-White, How Bedfordshire voted, 1685–1735. The evidence of the poll
books, Volume 1 1685–1715 (The Boydell Press, 2006). Publications of the Bed-
fordshire Historical Record Society 85. xxvii+278pp. ISBN 0–85155–071–1. £25
(h/b).

In the world before the secret ballot, poll books recorded how voters cast their
votes in parliamentary elections, often along with other information such as
their occupation and place of abode. As such, they are among the most intrigu-
ing (and yet surprisingly under-used) sources for historians working on Britain
in the late-seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Only a handful of
political historians—notably John Phillips, Frank O’Gorman and John Vin-
cent—have really risen to the challenge presented by what are cumulatively
huge data series of voting patterns, and have attempted to map these on to
loyalties of religion, party, community or patronage. The statistical nature of
poll books presents a potential resource for demographic or social historians
conducting large-scale studies of social structure or working patterns, although
they are generally passed over in favour of more conventionally ‘social’
sources. Family historians, too, have much to gain from poll books, presenting
as they do an invaluable record of enfranchised male household heads in the
what the author calls the ‘bottomless pit’ between the 1671 Hearth Tax returns
and the 1841 census. This new volume is therefore aimed at a variety of schol-
ars and enthusiasts, and has a great deal to offer to all of them.

James Collett-White is an archivist at Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and
Records Service, and his knowledge of—and passion for—this material is clear.
This volume represents the first of two reproducing the poll books for Bedfor-
dshire county and Bedford borough in the period 1685–1735. Each constituency
returned two members to parliament and whereas the county had the standard
‘forty-shilling freeholder’ franchise, restricting the vote to the propertied, the
variety of qualifications in the borough resulted in a large and fairly socially-
ineclusive electorate. Poll books were only produced when elections were
contested, but Bedfordshire went to the polls with reasonable frequency in this
period and this volume reproduces the surviving poll books for 1685 (county),
1695 (county), 1705 (borough and county) and 1715 (county). Apart from
photographs of some sample pages, these are re-presented in modern tables
rather than as facsimiles. In a way this is a shame, because marginal marks and
comments on poll books can be fascinating, particularly if they were scribbled
by an election agent in the heat of a contest: there is no indication of whether
this material was annotated in this way (which may of course indicate that it
was not). On the other hand, having a modern edition does make them much
more user-friendly, as some of these very early examples are manuscripts

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rather than the printed poll books that later became the norm, and Collett-White has helpfully done a certain amount of judicious editorial tidying up.

Political historians will be very grateful for his efforts, but they may also have some reservations. In these days of archive digitisation initiatives, it is perhaps surprising that this essentially statistical material should be produced in book form, rather than as an electronic resource amenable to psephological number-crunching. The tables at the back of the book break down the results by hundred and parish, but it would have been interesting to see statistical analyses of occupation or party allegiance, for example, especially as voters’ choices can be traced over a series of elections. Much of the interest for me lay not in the poll books themselves but in the material that accompanies them here, such as portraits, addresses, broadsides and the inventories of expenditure. One such ledger for 1695 includes an entry of £2 13s 6d ‘For a hogshead of Ale and a pound of Tobacco, given to the Rable after the proclamation’ (p. 46), giving a hint of the colourful nature of the electoral festivities. This also comes across in Collett-White’s detailed narratives of the local political events that preface the collections of sources. These are well done, although specialist political historians may elect to skip over his rather more simplistic surveys of the national political scene.

Family historians interested in the region, on the other hand, are very well catered for here. It is a truism that history books are only as good as their indexes, and that is particularly true of this book. We are given indexes of places and personal names, and the author has taken account of spelling variations in the latter: this ensures, for example, that the nine different spellings of ‘Chalkey’ are helpfully given a single entry. Grouping by surname also enables the genealogist to trace members of the same family. Hopefully this book will help to highlight the usefulness of poll books—alongside sources such as militia lists—for family historians who dare to venture back beyond the Victorian period. It has been produced with considerable care and, although it has been aimed at two niche audiences who inevitably have rather different requirements, it deserves their appreciation.

Matthew McCormack  
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Hera Cook has written a bold and ambitious book in which she offers a reappraisal of the reproductive and sexual history of English women between c.1800 and the introduction of the oral contraceptive pill. It is also a book with a palpable sense of both optimism and pessimism, for Cook’s celebration of the emancipating effect of the contraceptive pill is starkly juxtaposed against her description of the reproductive burden carried by women of previous eras. The book’s ambition lies in its attempt to mesh reproductive and demographic history with the history of sexuality and, in both cases, to foreground sex and the experience of women.
It is refreshing to see a history of sexuality that takes as its starting point historical demography. At the heart of Cook’s thesis is the late-nineteenth century decline in fertility. In particular, Cook is concerned with the gross reproduction rate (GRR), which is seen here as a measure of the intensity of a woman’s reproductive career (technically, it records the number of daughters born per woman). The GRR peaked in the second decade of the nineteenth century, and did not fall significantly until the 1870s, when it dropped from close to three daughters born per woman to less than one by the 1930s. The underlying argument is that this rise and subsequent decline in family size had an enormous impact upon women’s lives. As readers of LPS will know, early-modern England had operated a low-fertility regime in which family size had been kept in check by late marriage. The eighteenth century’s industrial and agricultural revolutions, however, broke this system asunder, leaving women in the nineteenth century experiencing an unprecedented physical toll in terms of their ‘reproductive labour’. This, we are told, can be compared to coal mining, in terms of the physical strain and the risk of mortality (pp. 29–30). What concerns Cook, then, are the implications that this unprecedented reproductive activity had for women’s sexuality. As she suggests, ‘pregnancy has had enormous consequences because babies entailed physical and economic costs. Often women could not afford to enjoy sex. The risk made it too expensive a pleasure’ (p. 12).

Risk is a key theme in the book. The nineteenth century was a pre-contraceptive age for working-class women, hence pregnancy was an ever-present possibility. But without effective contraception, what explains the dramatic decline in family size of the late century? As Simon Szreter’s work has shown, the decline in family size was probably a function of abstinence from sexual intercourse, or at least, lower coital frequency. The novelty of Cook’s approach is to posit a connection between abstinence and women’s sexuality. According to Cook, the period witnessed a ‘repudiation of physical sexual desire’ on the part of ‘many, if not most women’ (p. 62). The book claims to identify a ‘trajectory from the mid- to late-nineteenth century’ of women’s ‘increasing anxiety and diminishing sexual pleasure’ (p. 106). Abstinence and low rates of coitus can thus be seen not only as an individual strategy for avoiding pregnancy, but also as contributing to, and compounding, negative and repressive discourses of sex among the working class. A culture of abstinence became firmly embedded, engendering anxiety and negativity towards all matters sexual. This internalised sexual repression kept fertility rates low until well into the twentieth century.

Cook then turns to show how women’s sexuality was gradually unlocked and reconstructed across the twentieth century. Change was slow, of course, and marked by ‘ignorance, silence and gendered sexual cultures’ (p. 165). Here historians of twentieth-century sexuality will be on more familiar territory, with references to figures such as Stopes, Freud, Kinsey and Lawrence, and the burgeoning sex manual literature. It is the 1960s that is the key decade for Cook, however. The advent of the pill in 1961 brought about a ‘transformation of sexual mores’ (p. 295), and its effect in terms of sexual behaviour represents
the culmination of Cook’s ‘long sexual revolution’. As Cook explains, ‘the link between economics, sexual intercourse, child bearing and marriage ... had been central to the management of sexuality in England for centuries. This world has been turned upside down’ (p. 318). Wisely, Cook’s celebration of this new liberation is not unqualified. A revolution in human relationships has ‘not occurred’ (p. 340), and gendered inequities ensure that sexual relations are not equal. But the novelty and strength of Cook’s argument is to place the breaking of the link between sex and reproduction into a long historical perspective. If one accepts that reproductive labour was as onerous for women as Cook suggests, and that its consequence in the late nineteenth century was women’s withdrawal from the sexual sphere and the repudiation of pleasure, then any technological contraceptive advance that affords women choice in their sexual and reproductive behaviour should indeed be celebrated.

By putting the sex back into the history of sexuality, as well as reminding historical demographers that birth, as a reproductive event, begins with a sexual one, Cook sheds important new light on the history of sexual behaviour. This book will no doubt attract detractors, as well as supporters. Cook is critical of the Foucauldian focus upon discourses, and elite and institutional discourses at that (pp. 90-2). She also attacks those feminist and other critics of the pill who have argued that this technology makes women the subject of male demands or represents a new form of sexual regulation (pp. 1, 296). Overall, however, the book deserves applause, not least for its novel focus upon women and sex.

By adopting the long view, Cook reminds us just how revolutionary the introduction of effective contraception was. LPS readers may be sceptical of some of the overarching claims, especially when articulated in such a forthright fashion, but as a stimulus to thought, this book may be essential bed-time reading.

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This is not an academic book, and to subject it to an academic review would be unfair. The author, John Drury, declares from the outset that his intention was ‘to produce a work that will give some interest to every reader’ and not ‘to produce the definitive A–Z work on Essex workhouses’ (p. v). To some extent, Drury has succeeded in this aim: I could not help but turn straight to the section on Chelmsford in order to read of the union workhouse, which is now St John’s Hospital, and where I was born. This is just the kind of contemporary connexion with the past that makes the study of history exciting.

Despite this, I cannot help but feel that this book represents a missed opportunity. To expect a definitive history would indeed have been a tall order. But in writing a popular or accessible book, one need not dispense entirely with scholarly conventions. For example, Drury cites only one book in his bibliogra-
phy—Norman Longmate’s *The workhouse* (Pimlico, 2003)—when a fuller list of references would have helped those readers who wished to pursue the subject further. Similarly, the book contains no references to the classmark of the documents being cited, when such an inclusion might have helped the novice student of Essex local history make their first foray into the archives.

More disappointing, however, is Drury’s tendency to summarise the contents of the documents, rather than to quote them directly. For example, we are told that in 1853, the Halstead workhouse master was ‘found to be drunk and disorderly in the town…and was dismissed’ (p.159). It would have been fascinating to have seen—by direct quotation—how this incident was represented in the minutes. There is no reason why such excerpts could not have been fully contextualised by annotation or by an accompanying commentary. Instead, I was left confused as to what exactly was a quotation, and what was not.

The success of Tom Sokoll’s *Essex pauper letters* (Oxford University Press, 2001) demonstrates how original documents can be enjoyed as stand-alone items and without interference from an author or editor. This is not to say that Drury should have matched Sokoll’s masterly scholarly standards, for this is a very different book. Yet while *Essex workhouses* contains many interesting vignettes and anecdotes, a different method of presentation might have done justice to the intrinsic value of the documents, as well as serving to introduce, and guide, readers to the wealth of material held in Essex and other local authority record offices.

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The principal strength of this book is the impressive scope of its research. In exploring the ‘varied circumstances, meanings, and experiences of lone motherhood in eighteenth-century London’ (p. 3), Tanya Evans has marshalled thousands of Foundling Hospital petitions; bastardy and settlement examinations; ballads and chapbooks; and entries from the admissions registers and minute books of lying-in hospitals. The chapters deal with aspects of plebeian life; attitudes towards courtship and marriage; the Foundling Hospital and the ‘philanthropic imagination’; the mothers petitioning for the admission of their child to the Hospital; and a similar analysis of the mothers using London’s lying-in hospitals and charities. The focus of the book is fixed clearly upon the ‘material lives of around two thousand women who produced legitimate and illegitimate offspring’ (p. 3), and Evans goes some way to bringing to life the makeshift economy of lone motherhood in the eighteenth-century metropolis. The book is generously peppered with first-hand accounts of poor, lone mothers, illustrating an enormous diversity of experience. These mini-biographies are a pleasure to read, and if pauper narratives are the new
‘history from below’, this book makes an important contribution to this innovative and expanding field.

Evans sets out to challenge the received wisdom that, historically, lone mothers formed either a deviant sub-society (following Peter Laslett’s infamous ‘bastardy prone sub-society’) or else were the passive, seduced victims of predatory males (implicit in the work of Randolf Trumbach, for example). Readers of *Unfortunate objects* will be left in little doubt that this is a false dichotomy, for London’s lone mothers were drawn inevitably from the heterogeneous mass of the plebeian population. Evans is correct to highlight the dearth of social or cultural historical research on unmarried and lone motherhood, and this book succeeds in beginning to rectify the imbalance. However, in the process Evans is in danger of conflating all quantitative history with that which represents unmarried mothers as deviant. There is very little discussion of the historical-demographic literature on illegitimacy, even though much of it is quite germane to the subject of the book. There is no mention, for example, of E. A. Wrigley’s 1981 contention that ‘in some periods of English history, it was a common experience for a woman to bear a first child who was either illegitimate or conceived several months before marriage … at times this was probably the predominant mode of entry into maternity’. Rates of illegitimacy rose steadily across the long eighteenth century, such that by 1800 approximately one in four first births was outside wedlock. This suggests that social attitudes towards unmarried motherhood may have been tolerant or indulgent; an implication that has clear relevance to the argument of this book. It is also disappointing that Evans does not engage more substantially with the fact that London, from the early-modern period to the nineteenth century, consistently recorded lower rates of illegitimacy than provincial and rural areas. It would be interesting to consider whether this really was a function of deficient registration, as Evans suggests (p. 2), or rather a directly-related feature of London’s highly migratory plebeian culture.

That said, this book adds a considerable layer of lived experience on to the existing historiography of metropolitan illegitimacy and poverty. The thrust of the argument is that poor mothers captured the philanthropic imagination of the eighteenth century. This is most clearly manifest in the foundation of so many institutions dedicated to infant and maternal health, such as the London Foundling Hospital (which opened its doors in 1741) and lying-in hospitals and charities such as the General Lying-In Hospital (founded in 1752) and the Royal Maternal Charity (founded in 1757). These institutions were not only enormously fashionable amongst eighteenth-century polite society, but also were considered (at first, at least) to be meeting the natalist demands of an expanding imperial nation. Evans usefully describes the rise and fall of these institutions, and her discussion is an up-to-date point of reference for those interested in the provision of institutional welfare in eighteenth-century London. However, this book is clearly not an institutional history. Its real value is in its exposition of the lives of individuals. Not only did lone mothers capture the philanthropic imagination of eighteenth-century London, they also captured a wider, and also benevolent, public imagination. Evans deploys a
considerable range of sources to illustrate how lone mothers could be treated with toleration, humanity and compassion by their neighbours, employers, friends and family. Far from being moral outcasts, London’s lone mothers were perceived as ‘unfortunate objects’, deserving of sympathy, charity and assistance. This was manifest most obviously in the bricks and mortar of institutions, but also in the petitions and references written by, or on behalf of, lone mothers. These documentary sources illustrate the circumstances of individual women’s ‘misfortune’, and also implicitly detail the social networks available and the paths by which women navigated their poverty. We learn, for example, that petitioners to the Foundling Hospital usually made reference to ‘at least one friend who had helped them’ (p. 175), although the fact that an application for institutional assistance was being made presumably indicates that such forms of self-help were largely inadequate.

The book is highly evocative in its descriptions of the plebeian morass of eighteenth-century London. Women could find themselves alone with children as a result of illegitimate pregnancy, the death of husbands, abandonment or enforced separation (perhaps as a consequence of military recruitment). The welfare needs of such women were inevitably similar. This blurring of boundaries between different social groups emerges clearly from the sources, and is illustrated, for example, in the fact that it was economic necessity or ‘misfortune’, rather than moral eligibility, that formed the basis of the admissions procedure to the Foundling Hospital (pp. 107–25). This is an interesting argument, and confirms Alysa Levene’s findings that both legitimate and illegitimate children were admitted to the eighteenth-century Foundling Hospital. However, while poverty was undeniably common to eighteenth-century plebeian Londoners, one can not help wondering whether the sources used by Evans can really tell us the extent to which single, pregnant women, and unmarried mothers, were welcome in the capital’s parishes. Settlement and bastardy examinations may detail the circumstances of the pregnancy, but were designed primarily to establish either the woman’s settlement or the paternity of the child. Such sources tell us little about what happened after the examination took place (especially if it was an examination before birth). As Evans describes, such women were ‘vulnerable’, and of course, many received relief under the parochial affiliation system (pp. 26–7). Others presumably turned to the Foundling Hospital, while others still were formally removed, although Evans suggests this ‘was not a common experience’ (p. 26). It is also plausible, however, that many single, pregnant women chose to leave London in order to give birth in their own parishes of settlement in the provinces, or where they had family or kin support. Since illegitimate children took settlement in their parish of birth, it would have made sense for both mother and child to share settlement. This may well partially explain why London manifested such comparatively low rates of illegitimacy.

The least satisfactory aspect of the book is Evans’ varying reluctance to analyse her sources quantitatively. Given the size of her samples of documentary evidence, this is frustrating. It could be argued that sources such as settlement examinations and Foundling Hospital petitions are difficult to categorise and
quantify, but we are nonetheless told that ‘many’ mothers did this, or ‘most’ mothers did that. ‘Many’ fathers of illegitimate children were, for example, ‘sent to war’ (p. 36). This is a basic form of quantification, but it is frustratingly imprecise. How many is ‘many’? Does ‘most’ mean more than half? There is inconsistency, however, since at times Evans uses statistical evidence to good effect. Chapter five contains all sorts of important details derived from quantitative analysis. We learn, for instance, that only 16 per cent of unmarried mothers applying to the Foundling Hospital admitted feeling shame at the birth of their illegitimate child (p. 113), and that 18 per cent claimed that they had commenced sexual relations with a partner under a (later broken) agreement of marriage (p. 116). It is a shame that this approach could not have been applied more consistently throughout the book.

Where Evans is effective, however, is in illustrating how London’s lone mothers were very much ordinary women. She shows that while some unmarried mothers were condemned as morally reprehensible, others were not. Either way, they were able to adapt and negotiate strategies for survival. Yet it is difficult to agree with her conclusion that ‘poor women, despite being seduced, abandoned, poor and desperate, were not victims—either of men or society’ (p. 205). Victimhood is a difficult, and politically contentious, concept. In her desire to move away from the deviant/victim dichotomy, Evans risks denying the extent to which lone mothers can be seen as victims of circumstances beyond their control. Surely a single woman, who having consented to sex after a promise of marriage, and is then subsequently abandoned by her lover, can be regarded as a victim by some definition? With regards to the Foundling Hospital, it could also be argued that metropolitan, ‘philanthropic’ society offered lone mothers an unenviable choice. In return for welfare assistance (or rather, the opportunity to return to work), these desperate women had to abandon their children to the care of an institution. As Evans describes, there is no evidence of a lack of maternal love (pp. 139–43). While these ordinary women and mothers were certainly not passive actors, it is hard not to conclude that, by some definition, they were indeed victims of both men and society.

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Demographers of the contemporary world spend a great deal of time (and ink) debating the factors which promote fertility decline. There are many areas of disagreement, notably about the relative importance of economic modernisation and cultural change. Yet on several questions there is an orthodox view which is rarely challenged. First, reliable information about, and access to, modern contraception, distributed by family planning programmes, is a prerequisite of any sustained fertility decline. Without this, even if the desire to control fertility is very strong, people will only be able to use so-called
‘traditional’ methods, which are too ineffective to permit the reduction of fertility to levels approaching replacement. Second, contraception is mainly women’s business. Until recently, family planning programmes were aimed at women, and men were viewed as a hindrance to effective delivery because of their perceived hostility to small families. This has changed during the last ten years or so, and something called ‘male involvement’ is now a buzz-phrase. Support for this, however, has rather been dragged out of demographers by the need to promote condoms as part of the fight against HIV/AIDS and, all too often, ‘male involvement’ tends to mean little more than persuading men to support their wives’ use of female birth control appliances. Meanwhile, it is still almost universally agreed that improving the status of women, and their autonomy within households, is a necessary precondition of sustained fertility decline. Third—though these days this is often implicit in the literature—the decline of fertility is seen as involving a transition from an unplanned family to a planned family. The wilder mechanistic excesses of the ‘family limitation’ model, in which couples carried on reproducing naturally until they had reached their desired family size and then used some (effective) means of contraception to ‘switch off’ their fertility, have been abandoned. But the idea that the transition requires fertility to be a matter of ‘conscious choice’, so that couples make deliberate decisions about the number and timing of their children, is still very prevalent.

Demographic historians (particularly those coming from a social scientific background) used to think like this, too. Perhaps some still do. However, the facts have started to get in the way. Fertility in England and Wales dropped below replacement level during the 1930s at a time when few couples were using modern contraception. Therefore a population relying on ‘traditional’ methods was capable of achieving very low levels of fertility. In Fertility, class and gender in Britain, 1860–1940 (Cambridge University Press, 1996), Simon Szreter, relying largely on an analysis of aggregate data from the 1911 census, backed up with other written materials, argued that abstinence (or infrequent sexual relations) was an important contributor to this. In this book Fisher adopts a different approach to the conundrum of how low fertility was achieved in the era before the contraceptive pill. She (assisted by colleagues) has conducted almost 200 in-depth interviews with people who married and were having their children in the mid-twentieth century. The respondents were engaged in conversation about their sex lives, their family building strategies, the contraceptive methods they used, and their relationships with their spouses. Both men and women were interviewed, and married couples were interviewed together. The respondents came from Blackburn, Hertfordshire, Oxford and south Wales—a good mix of urban and rural locations, including both a textile area and a coal mining area, in which the decline of fertility occurred, respectively, relatively early and rather late, and in which the economic position of women was quite different.

The book is divided into five chapters. The first theme Fisher addresses is knowledge about sex and birth control. The interviews revealed that women in particular were remarkably ignorant about birth control. This was not just
because communication and the provision of information was ineffective (though it was, and the information women obtained was often fragmentary and incoherent), or because women were denied access to it, but also because women chose ignorance themselves, preferring to allow their husbands to acquire the relevant knowledge.

The second chapter deals with family planning in a strategic sense. Readers of this journal will probably recall that it was the French demographer Louis Henry who first distinguished between ‘natural’ and ‘controlled’ fertility by stating that when fertility was controlled the behaviour of a couple was affected by the number of children they already had because of ‘stopping behaviour’. Alas for Henry’s model, many of Fisher’s respondents did not have clear fertility plans, as exemplified by another Henry (born in 1915 in South Wales) who, though claiming to want a small family, ‘never really planned’ (p. 106). As he and his wife said, ‘we just took things as we went ... both of us never really planned anything’ (p. 107).

How did such couples achieve small families? The third and fourth chapters provide the answer. The most popular method of birth control was withdrawal. The advantages of withdrawal over the available alternatives were clear and manifest to most of Fisher’s respondents. It did not interfere with the spontaneity of sexual relations (unlike condoms, caps and pessaries); it was always available and did not necessitate inconvenient and embarrassing visits to clinics or pharmacies; and it was a male method at a time and in a culture where men were supposed to take the lead in the couple’s practice of birth control. Of course it was not as effective as some of the alternatives, but Fisher’s respondents suggested that this was not perceived as a problem. Couples practising withdrawal were effectively reducing their fecundity not to zero, but to a level at which their likely completed family size was close to the (small) number they wanted. Demographers’ models of decision making about family planning are misconceived. They see birth control as being about switching fecundity on and off with efficient contraceptives, whereas couples in mid-twentieth century England and Wales were ‘turning fecundity down’. Of course there were couples who did use condoms, and a minority of women found caps and pessaries suited them, but for most couples withdrawal was the method of choice. Abstinence was seen as unreasonably demanding, especially for husbands, and tended only to be used in an emergency when the need to avoid pregnancy was very pressing (for example in the case of an unacceptable risk to the mother’s health).

Since withdrawal and condoms were the two main methods of contraception available, the direct involvement of husbands in the use of birth control was essential, as Fisher shows in her final chapter. Her evidence, though, shows that, above and beyond the purely practical role played of necessity by men, mid-twentieth century wives ‘actively welcomed their husbands’ dominance over decision-making, as it relieved them from the burdens of a role that would have forced them to play an unwanted proactive sexual role within marriage’ (p. 236). So the husbands’ taking the lead suited both husbands and wives—and among the husbands it suited both the ‘new men’, who shared
domestic duties and treated their wives as equals, and the more traditional
dominant husbands, as it was of a piece with their taking the primary role in
important decisions within the household.

Where does Fisher’s evidence leave the conventional orthodoxy about the
fertility transition? It challenges almost every major tenet of the received
wisdom. It seems that in England and Wales modern appliance methods and
reliable information about birth control were not necessary in order for fertility
to be reduced to a level below replacement level. Traditional methods, prac-
tised reasonably consistently, did the trick. Fertility control was not women’s
business, quite the opposite. Men were not just ‘involved’, they were the
driving force, and their role bore no obvious relationship to the state of power
relations within the couple. Finally, to the extent that fertility control involved
family planning, it was a vague and inarticulate form of planning—family
planning for an analogue age, not a digital one.

I am sure that this book will be read and enjoyed by historians and sociologists,
for it is beautifully written and enlivened by the excellent use of quotations
from the interviews. I hope that it will also be read by demographers, though
whether they will all enjoy it remains to be seen, for it mounts a formidable
challenge to existing accounts of the fertility decline.

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This book is a valuable contribution to our understanding of the place of never-
marr ied women in English life in the period from a little before 1600 to a little
after 1750. It covers a narrower period and geography than Olwen Hufton’s
The prospect before her: a history of women in Western Europe (Harper Collins,
1995), but focuses solely on single women. It also concentrates on an earlier
period than Bridget Hill’s Women alone: spinsters in England 1660–1850 (Yale
University Press, 2001) and contains a larger proportion of original research
than that work. Readers will recall the article by Froide on singlewomen in
Southampton which was published in LPS 68 and may also have read her
contributions to Judith Bennett and Amy Froide, Singlewomen in the European
past (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999) and to Lynn Botelho and Pat
Thane, Women and ageing in British society since 1500 (Longman, 2001).

This new book expounds Froide’s theory that ‘marital status shaped in pro-
found ways the life experiences of early modern women’ (p. 1). Her research
shows that at least one third of urban women were single in the early modern
era. It studies singlewomen both as individuals and in relation to their families.
It challenges the centrality of the nuclear family by exploring the significance
of kinship, friendship and neighbourhood. It also reveals the economic and
civic contributions of singlewomen as traders, property holders, moneylenders
and philanthropists. It traces the changing attitudes towards singlewomen, and
of singlewomen themselves, from the late Middle Ages to the dawn of the industrial era.

Froide’s evidence comes mainly from Southampton, Bristol, Oxford and York, with some supplementary material from Norwich, Ludlow and Colchester. She makes extensive use of probate, charity, town court, poor relief, tax and property records. She also makes sensitive use of the writings of women themselves, not merely their wills, but also diaries, correspondence, poetry and prose. She ventures to tackle the thorny problem of why so many women did not marry and the issue of choice.

The book is well structured, in six substantive chapters plus an introduction and epilogue. There are clear summaries of the arguments of each chapter and, when necessary, of sections within chapters. There are ample footnotes. The bibliography lists more than two pages of manuscript sources and five pages of printed primary sources, followed by more than twelve pages of secondary works. The index lists people, places and concepts. There are three clear tables but no figures or illustrations, except for the reproduction of a Hogarth engraving on the dust jacket, which is referred to in the text of chapter seven (p. 185). The price of the hardback edition may mean that it is purchased mainly by libraries, which will be a pity as library copies rarely retain their dust jackets.

Froide recognises the need for further original archival work on singlewomen in rural areas and in London. She suggests there is also more work required on the sexuality of never-married women and the role of religion in their lives. She appeals for a comparison of male and female singlehood, observing that never-married men were also marginalised in a patriarchal society and that the gendered nature of marital status merits study in and of itself.

I would recommend this book, not merely to anyone with an interest in women’s history, early modern history and urban history, but also to those interested in the study of the conjugal family and of kinship, patriarchal society and citizenship, the construction of identity and the origins of the modern self, and to all who need to know the background from which Victorian society emerged. Froide’s approach may also be useful to readers embarking on a study of other marginalised groups in any period.

Christine Jones
University of Essex


Cormac Ó Gráda, Ireland’s leading economic historian, has produced a number of influential publications that have discussed the Great Famine of 1846–52, most notably The great Irish famine (Macmillan, 1989) which gave a short, straightforward account of the famine and Black ‘47 and beyond: the great Irish famine in history, economy, and memory (Princeton University Press, 1999) which,
by adopting an interdisciplinary approach, provided fresh insights into the tragedy. Ó Gráda’s work is always both stimulating and thought provoking and consequently any new publication by this author is to be welcomed. Here, then, is an edited volume of ten previously published pieces (five of which are co-authored) together with a short introduction and three new essays on ‘Bankrupt landlords and the Irish famine’, ‘The market for potatoes in Dublin in the 1840s’ and ‘The New York Irish in the 1850s’. All the chapters prove to be rewarding reading.

For those wanting an introduction to this topic an obvious place to start would be to read *The great Irish famine*. By contrast, this volume consists of a series of research papers that examine, often in considerable detail, the latest research findings on various aspects of the famine. Chapter 1 provides a short narrative of the famine and reveals why it proved to be such a watershed in Ireland’s history. Chapter 2, on Ireland’s pre-famine economy, concludes that, while the Irish were poor, income per capita was growing and ‘the tragic ending to this period in Irish history should not mislead us into believing that the Irish economy was steering inexorably towards a Malthusian disaster before the famine’ (p. 46). Similar insights are liberally scattered throughout the book. Thus, Chapter 3 argues persuasively against the myth that the famine was responsible for the ruin of many Irish landlords; instead, ‘the famine’s true role was that of catalyst: getting rid of landlords who were doomed in any case’.

Chapters 4 and 5 attempt to estimate of levels of famine mortality and to discern the causes of death of the victims, two facts that would appear to be crucial to any discussion of the famine. However, both are difficult to determine and have been neglected by many who have written on the subject. Ó Gráda shows that, as with most twentieth century famines, the vast majority of deaths were due to infectious diseases rather than starvation. Such themes are also developed in Chapter 10, which places the Irish famine into a wider comparative perspective. A number of interesting parallels are revealed between both historical and modern famines, but there were also some significant differences, perhaps most significantly the long drawn out nature of the Irish famine. This chapter also contains many ideas for further research.

Three chapters are concerned with the mass emigration that resulted from famine. Much of this migration was a consequence of the United States’ open door policy and Ireland then being part of the United Kingdom. Chapter 7 examines regional emigration rates, mortality aboard New York bound ships, the relationship between death rates and emigration and the permanent impact of famine emigration. While this emigration can be considered as one of the great tragedies of Irish history, it also ‘played an important part in increasing the living standards of those who stayed behind’ (p. 142). The other two chapters examine the impact that Irish immigrants made in New York. They, not surprisingly, reveal that life for the Irish immigrant was often much more mundane than is often assumed; most were hard working and eager to better themselves and many opened bank accounts.

The last three chapters are concerned with how the famine is remembered, and famine historiography. Ó Gráda discusses the notion of ‘collective memory’
and provides many interesting examples, but he is always careful to critically analyse the relevant source material and concludes that a large part of what has been ‘remembered’ is either ‘artefact or myth’ (p. 218). Chapter 12, ‘Making famine history in Ireland in the 1940s and 1950s’, charts the rather troubled genesis of the first major, government sponsored, study of the famine: R. Edwards, R. Dudley and T. Williams (eds) The great famine: studies in Irish history 1845–52 (Browne & Nolan, 1956). The final chapter examines the commemorations of the famine in 1995 which ‘jumped the gun, however, because there was no famine in 1845’ (p. 251), although it did spark much research into the famine.

Ireland’s great famine is well worth seeking out. Ó Gráda’s work is always refreshingly free from the political prejudices that mar much that has been written on this topic. For those who are acquainted with a basic understanding of the great Irish famine, this volume will prove rewarding reading. It provides many insights into how famine could occur in what was then part of the world’s richest country and is a welcome addition to the burgeoning historiography of this sad period in Ireland’s history.

Chris Galley
Barnsley College


This Durham volume is the fourth series of Hearth Tax returns published by the British Record Society, under the auspices of Professor Margaret Spufford’s 1995 plan for a comprehensive county-by-county publication of the tax. Each succeeding volume has added depth to our understanding of the possibilities of the Hearth Tax as a comparative measure of wealth, because the data has been mapped with ever more clarity, and analysed in ever more depth in the scholarly introductions. Based on the Lady Day 1666 return, supplemented by exemption certificates 1671–1674, this volume is animated by its striking colour maps, particularly Map 9, which depicts County Durham as a uniform sea of red, indicating that in almost all parishes more than 70 per cent of households were assessed on one hearth only. By contrast, only 86 households in the county had more than 10 hearths (compared to 589 in Kent in 1664).

As Dr Green’s lucid and detailed introduction emphasises, though, while the one-hearth house was ubiquitous in the county, there were subtle regional variations. The fertile Tyne & Wear valleys, the industrial north and the eastern port and colliery towns contained pockets of 2–5 hearth households. Similarly, wealthier householders gravitated to within a 10-mile radius of the centre of the Palatinate, Durham itself. The analyses also emphasise the concentrations of population in the industrial Tyneside parishes, along the Wear, and to the south, in richer agricultural settlements along the Tees. Unsurprisingly, the maps also demonstrate how exemption rates were highest (at over 55 per cent of all households) along the Tyne and Wear.
These analyses employ the tax effectively as a broad, and fairly approximate, measure of relative prosperity or disadvantage. The great strength of the Hearth Tax, and of this project, is its utility as a comparative national measure of this advantage or disadvantage, and (in fact) as the last such measure before the Land Tax of 1798. The potential weaknesses of the Hearth Tax as a measure of wealth, population, poverty or even of the actual numbers of hearths possessed by householders, are very well known, and do not require repetition in LPS. In aggregate, some local deficiencies in recording or collection can be smoothed out, while the systemic administrative weaknesses and methodological problems in correlating hearths to something as nebulous as ‘wealth’, mean that findings have to remain indicative rather than utterly conclusive. Once these points are accepted, the merit of these county volumes remains undimmed. We may not know precisely how much poorer Durham was than Kent, but the differing distribution of assessment and exemption categories between these two counties indicates that the former was undoubtedly poorer than the latter, and suggests points of departure for future research.

That is history writ large. For those interested primary in particular settlements or particular families, this volume will also be of considerable value. Although, as the editors make clear, the problem of relating assessment to township, and township to parish, is worthy of a volume in its own right, these 1666 assessments provide the most comprehensive population listings for many of these parishes in the seventeenth century, where other parish tax lists are often rare. This value is increased up by an extensive personal name index, which will make navigation of the listings much easier for those interested primarily in genealogical research. However, one also wonders whether this impressive collective endeavour in research, transcription, checking, mapping and indexing would be of even greater use to the widest possible audience if it was made available (and searchable) electronically, either online or on disk. Electronic access would also make this data more susceptible to future quantitative analyses, particularly large-scale, cross-country comparisons.

This volume represents an impressive collective achievement. The colour maps add significantly to the conclusions and the impact of this volume, while the listings are the product of careful preparation and verification. While such a work cannot surmount the limitations of the Hearth Tax as a source, nevertheless it provides an impressive and important indicator of relative prosperity or disadvantage for a region and a period where alternative sources are scarce. It will therefore be of considerable interest and utility to researchers whose interests extend beneath or beyond the county of Durham itself.

Henry French
University of Exeter


This is a fascinating book on many levels and will surely become compulsory reading for anyone studying famines, whatever their era or region of interest.
Dr Hionidou’s text manages to convey the complex causes of food shortage, to demonstrate that in the course of a ‘food crisis’ true famine may not take an equal grip across time, space or society, and to indicate that a famine’s legacy may last well beyond the day when food once again becomes plentiful.

Like the Netherlands, which also suffered famine, and France, Greece was an occupied country for much of the Second World War, playing reluctant host to German, Italian and Bulgarian troops from 1941 to 1944. The harvest in 1941 was poor, but the requisitioning of food stocks, the appropriation of means of transport, and the restriction on the movement of both food and people by the occupying forces meant that supplies could not be distributed according to need. The situation was exacerbated by the blockade imposed by the Allies on Greece as ‘enemy territory’. As a result, markets within Greece collapsed and ‘monetary chaos’ ensued (p. 44). Although the winter of 1941–2 saw Greece in the grip of a true famine, with extreme levels of mortality, Hionidou argues that throughout the period of occupation the country suffered a food crisis. When the liberating forces arrived they found a population ‘sickly from long want’ (p. 48).

The story Hionidou tells is a complicated one, with many interlocking strands. These are each dealt with in a series of chapters. The roles of ‘central government and administration’, ‘requisitioning’, the ‘economy and markets’, ‘welfare and relief’ and ‘population movement’ in the creation, propagation and alleviation of the crisis are all discussed in detail. More demographic aspects are then examined, considering the effects not only on death rates but also on rates of conception and fertility, in both the short and long term. A chapter on the causes of famine mortality concludes that, despite contrary findings in many other settings, mortality in the Greek famine was primarily down to malnutrition and starvation, not to disease. The food crisis struck across the social spectrum, although the chronology of mortality differed from group to group and some, such as farmers, appear to have come through relatively unscathed. During the initial famine, Hionidou argues, it was those who had seen their livelihoods undermined by the occupation who were decimated, but by the end of the occupation even well-to-do groups such as civil servants were suffering malnutrition and elevated rates of death. In a final chapter the longer term impact of the famine is discussed, and shown to have repercussions for Greek society, politics and the national psyche.

As well as being extremely well written, this book has the great strength that it uses a variety of disciplinary perspectives and methodologies to investigate the central theme. As well as archival sources and demographic records, Dr Hionidou has used oral history to great effect, allowing survivors to describe their experiences in their own words, and offering new interpretations of the ‘official’ records of events. For example, the personal accounts suggest that contemporary records of agricultural production probably underestimated the true yields by a considerable margin.

As in many historical studies, survival of Greek data from the early 1940s has been patchy. In response to this Dr Hionidou has resorted to concentrating on
events unfolding in just three locations: the islands of Syros, Mykanos and Hios. However, this allows her to compare and contrast the, sometimes very different, ways in which events unfolded in three local settings, and illustrates the complexities of the famine in a way which would have been unobtainable had a national, or even a regional study been undertaken. It is a local population study of the highest order.

The book raises many interesting questions, and challenges several orthodoxies. Those wishing to delve more deeply into issues raised are given a wealth of references to explore. Many of them are, inevitably, in Greek, and this serves to highlight the fact that in *Famine and death in occupied Greece* an English-speaking audience are being presented with a fascinating insight into an episode of modern Greek history which may well have implications for our understanding of famines more generally, especially those emerging from situations of conflict.

Eilidh Garrett


This new volume from Cambridge University Press is clearly aimed at the undergraduate market, although it is accessible to the interested general reader. It attempts to provide a comprehensive introduction to the social history of this period and includes contributions from some of the most eminent scholars in the field. The book is organised around five longer chapters around which a series of shorter, more specialised, contributions are grouped. After the introduction (‘Social structure and economic change in late medieval England’ by S. H. Rigby) on the historiographical background and the debate about demography, the main chapters cover the social hierarchy (‘An age of deference’ by Peter Cross), urban experience (‘Town life’ by Richard Britnell), life in the countryside (‘The land’ by Bruce M. S. Campbell), religion (‘Religious belief’ by Eamon Duffy) and other forms of social identity (‘Identities’ by Miri Rubin).

In order to understand how this works it is useful to look at the example of the chapter on religious belief by Eamon Duffy and then the other relevant chapters. Eamon Duffy is a highly regarded historian in this area, most well known for *The stripping of the altars* (Yale University Press, 1992), his magisterial account of popular religious experience in late-medieval England. His chapter in this book covers some of the same ground, and those who are familiar with the earlier work will find many of the same points covered. This chapter provides a good introduction to the practice of religion in pre-Reformation England and will hopefully encourage readers to look at other literature on the subject, having a well chosen selection of further reading. Duffy’s chapter does cover a wider range than *Stripping of the Altars*; for example he includes a more detailed account of Lollardy, although this is unlikely to please those who have criticised Duffy for pro-Catholic bias as he concludes that the Wyciffite Sermon
Cycle is a ‘chilling and dispiriting body of material’ and that ‘it is hard to imagine this sour diet satisfying anyone’s religious hunger for long’ (p. 328), a verdict almost designed to cause outrage amongst Lollardophiles.

The next chapter is ‘A magic universe’ by Valerie I. J. Flint, author of *The rise of magic in early medieval Europe* (Oxford University Press, 1991). This is a short and clear account of the different ways in which magic was understood in the late-medieval period and its complex interaction with more orthodox spirituality. This is followed by Janet Burton’s exploration of the idea of renunciation which looks at the development of this concept in the lives of monks, nuns, hermits and anchorites. Charles Phythian-Adams then addresses the rituals of late-medieval society, examining how they reflected the relationship between different social groupings within society and how they contained both Christian and pre-Christian elements.

Together these chapters provide a fascinating introduction to some of the most interesting developments in historical understanding in this area. By the nature of this volume they cannot be comprehensive, and if they leave the reader wanting to investigate further the clear reading lists for each chapter will be of great help. The task that the editors have taken on in producing this volume is extremely difficult and that they have succeeded as well as they have is a real achievement.

Graham Mustin
*Barnsley College*


We are told that more children are born to unmarried than to married parents in Britain today. We are also told that the children of single mothers are destined to be disadvantaged among their peers in terms of physical and mental health, education and earnings because of the greater likelihood of household poverty for such families. Such bald statements demand a more nuanced approach, whether they are made about modern times or past centuries. This is exactly what this book provides. It raises many more questions than it answers and demands that illegitimacy in history be contextualised beyond the narrow considerations of parental socio-economic status.

The editors aim to show something of the impact of illegitimacy upon the everyday lives of ordinary men, women and children. The ten chapters making up the book range over a set of problems associated with bastard-bearing, from the meaning of failure in courtship, the contribution of economic hardship and migration, and the impact of illegitimacy on the survival and health of the child, to the differences between women who bore one illegitimate child and those who bore several to different fathers. Samantha Williams’ chapter suggests a change in the Foundling Hospital’s admission rules ushered in a cultural attitude change bearing on these two groups of women, while two chapters consider the identity of the fathers of such children. The studies are
based on a variety of British regions, rural and urban, from western Ireland to Essex and from London to Skye. The sources include ballads and chap books, Foundling Hospital records, sworn bastardy statements, vestry correspondence and census statistics. Along the way some established theories about the subject are questioned and some new theories aired.

For instance, Steven King takes a look at the familiar idea of the ‘bastardy-prone sub society’ using sources, including overseer correspondence, from three English counties in the early nineteenth century. His sources reveal ‘complex experiential bastardy networks’ within and between families. The Lancashire overseer letters he uses show several women having multiple ‘brushes’ with illegitimacy and several overseers unhappily discovering ‘hot spots’ of illegitimacy on their patch. King’s sources reveal the fragility of the lives of young adults in early nineteenth-century industrial settings to the extent that it does not always make sense to link illegitimacy with courtship patterns. One factor that King does not discuss is the potential link between multiple bastard-bearing and female prostitution.

Kennedy and Gray’s chapter, on the implications of the Irish workhouse for the unmarried mother, questions Tim Hitchcock’s claim that poor women could make use of the (pre-Union) workhouse when other strategies failed. They find that in mid-nineteenth-century Ireland attitudes had moved on to the extent that ‘unmarried mothers faced religious, family and community hostility’, as well as a punitive welfare system. Two papers by Levene and Reid discover the penalty suffered by the illegitimate baby in terms of higher mortality.

A great strength of this attractive book is the way the contributors present their primary sources, some of which are not often used in the context of bastardy studies. Thomas Nutt’s use of petty session records to discuss illegitimate paternity is of great interest. These sworn statements were used where a father refused to accept his responsibility to maintain his child, and Nutt’s evidence suggests the mothers had more power in the sessions than has previously been thought, the onus being placed on the man to disprove the accusation. Blaikie et al.’s chapter comparing two Scottish settings, which uses census data to consider how migration may have been implicated in bastard-bearing, raises far more questions than it can answer, thanks to the simplicity of the source. Reid’s paper uses Medical Officer of Health data to enquire into the health of illegitimate babies—a much fuller source than the census—but she has to fall back on stigmatisation as an explanation for these babies’ poorer survival rate.

The book touches on many subjects that must be associated with bastard-bearing such as economics, sexual conduct, gender, power, poverty and social stigma. Bastardy was a fact of life in almost any community, and understanding how it differed in the experience of individuals and why is a fascinating undertaking on which this book sheds much light.

Jane Pearson
University of Essex
In recent years, regions have come back on to the agenda of economic, social and cultural historians. They are conventionally seen as the product of spatially-bounded industrial development which, in turn, produced social and cultural as well as economic characteristics peculiar to that particular setting. In this reading of North-East England as a maritime-industrial region, Graeme Milne chooses to focus on the ‘practical’ issues of settlement, economies, transport and governance, arguing that the cultural aspects of the region are dealt with elsewhere. He uses the opening chapter to set up the North East as a case study—indeed, the acme—of regional development. However, there is only limited engagement with what is now a vast literature on the nature of regions and processes of regional formation (see, for example, J. Allen, D. Massey and A. Cochrane, *Rethinking the region* (Routledge, 1998)), a fuller exploration of which might have encouraged a rather different—and more fully conceptualised—approach to the task. This reflects Milne’s concern to focus on ‘everyday’ workspaces, and his attempt to marry regional and maritime history. These concerns emphasise the fragmentation (rather than the integration) of the regional space and foreground the problems of identifying what were always mutable internal and external boundaries to the region. The result is a very different kind of regional history: one which questions the ‘reality’ of the region *qua* a region.

What, then, does Milne tell us about the North East as a maritime region? The opening empirical chapter explores the ways in which the region was drawn together through its interest in coal, less as a raw material and more as a traded commodity. Even here, though, the trade of particular towns, and on each river within the region, was specialised; each occupying a different niche in the coal and shipping trade. Of particular interest to *LPS* readers will be the focus here on the mobility of people—workers, merchants, industrialists—and the ways in which these movements (as much as the traffic in coal) linked the region to the outside world. In the following chapter, the importance of coal as an integrating feature of the regional economy is again highlighted. In other regions, coal is often seen as central to the processes of regional formation, as it drew together and focused production into particular locations linked by intensively used transport corridors. In the North East, many of these processes appear to have been in train, but the impact was muted, firstly by the way in which heavy coal-using industry was very localised, and secondly by important sub-divisions within the coal trade as different grades of coal were used for different purposes and/or sent to very different markets. Contemporaries were quick to note the complementarity of these local specialisms. And yet, Milne argues, they remained a series of fragmented localities, rather than a single economic unit, not least because the ports that sat at the heart of these industrial districts were ‘Janus-faced, looking outward to the wider maritime forelands [as well as] back into their hinterlands’ (p. 51).
It is the maritime character of the region and its towns that dominates the remainder of the book. In Chapter 4, attention is focused on the ways in which the maritime landscape was constantly changing—the subject of physical and organisational improvements through which individual ports sought to maintain their competitive position. Direct competition was limited by local specialisation, but so too was wider collaboration: local interests were not easily tied to region-wide (or even river-wide) initiatives, especially along the Tyne where Newcastle’s long-standing hegemony was beginning to be challenged. Much the same was true of the conurbations which grew up along the major rivers. Individually, these were often split between a port area and the town itself; collectively, they were fragmented by the jurisdictional boundaries of local government and by local civic pride. Much as in the Potteries, these divisions were deep-rooted and persistent, notwithstanding the mobility of the workforce moving within and between the growing port towns, and the wider business networks through which the economy was articulated.

These business networks are the focus of the final two chapters. Ship-owning was a relatively easy trade to enter, requiring far less capital investment than the coal or iron industries by the later nineteenth century. However, the risks remained high and success was heavily dependent upon access to information. This concentrated ownership into major centres (notably Newcastle) and helps to explain the localism of investment in shipping, although it was far more persistent in some places (notably Sunderland) than it was in others (for example, West Hartlepool). Local knowledge and reputation were clearly important in structuring the relationship between ship-owning and ship-building, ties between which were personified in the inter-connecting directorships of different firms. And, whilst particular expertise and the need to establish de facto consortia helped to foster wider business links, Milne questions the positive spin that is generally placed on business networking activities. Certainly, large-scale agglomerations were exceptional as a business structure in the region.

Overall, Milne offers a fascinating insight into this dynamic and specialised region. He combines secondary and primary sources to good effect in an analysis that is rich in empirical detail and alive with real concerns and real people. This is the real strength and attraction of this book, the conceptualisation of the region being much less fully developed. Indeed, whilst this is billed as an attempt to marry regional and maritime history, it is clear that Milne’s interest lies primarily in the latter: we have just half a dozen pages on the coal industry (as opposed to the coal trade), even less on the chemical industry, and only slightly more on the railways. Fuller consideration of the region’s industries might not alter the conclusion that this was, in reality, an area marked by profound localism, but it would be interesting to see how their distribution and integration cut across the port-focused geography drawn here. That said, it is refreshing to have a sceptical eye cast over the claims for regional industrialisation.

Jon Stobart
University of Northampton

Part of Ashgate’s Variorum Collected Studies Series, this volume gives the author the opportunity to collate a number of pieces centred, in this case, on medieval and early modern urban history. We thus have ten articles that have appeared elsewhere and are reproduced photographically with their original pagination, two new ones—‘Towns and village formation in medieval England’ and ‘Towns and the crown in England: the counties and the county towns’—and a new introduction that provides a context for the subsequent contributions. Short postscripts that discuss recent publications are added to some of the chapters.

David Palliser’s credentials as an urban historian are well known. Beginning with a series of articles and a monograph on *Tudor York* (Oxford University Press, 1979), he then sought to examine the city’s earlier history and to compare it with other cities both in the early modern and medieval periods. These interests eventually led him to edit and contribute towards Volume 1 of the *Cambridge urban history of Britain* (Cambridge University Press, 2000), the most detailed and up-to-date survey of the subject yet to appear.

Apart from the obvious benefits of having all these articles bound together, the value of the volume must be judged by whether or not it holds together as a unified entity. Indeed, unlike many edited volumes, most of the articles are clearly focused on the given theme, and reading or re-reading them has been both enjoyable and illuminating. Taken from their original contexts, all the articles remain highly readable and together they form an interesting collection on the development of pre-modern towns.

The newly written introduction, ‘The origins and growth of English towns’, provides a useful short overview of the topic and shows how the subsequent articles fit into current research on urban history. This is followed by two chapters on local communities, the new one on town and village formation and ‘The English parish in perspective’. This last chapter examines the role of the parish in everyday life and while interesting in itself seems less relevant to the themes of the book than the other chapters.

The rest of the chapters are subdivided into a further four topics: archaeology and topography; towns and power; late medieval society and urban decline? Contributions range from a discussion of how archaeology can provide insights into medieval history, to town defences, and to the relationship between towns and the English State. The highlight of the volume is ‘Civic mentality and the environment in Tudor York’. Originally planned as a chapter in *Tudor York*, this eventually appeared in *Northern History, 18* (1982) and it still provides a vivid, wide-ranging account of aspects of everyday life in an early modern city. Time has not diminished its impact and here it appears alongside what is effectively its companion piece, ‘Urban society’, which was first published in R. Horrox (ed.), *Fifteenth-century attitudes: perceptions of society in late medieval England* (Cambridge University Press, 1994). Both chapters provide
stimulating reading. This section also includes two useful chapters that deal with migration: Chapter 11 on immigration to York and Chapter 8, 'The role of minorities and immigrants in English medieval towns'.

The final section reproduces Palliser’s two contributions to the once flourishing debate about whether or not cities suffered from a substantial crisis during the early modern period. By the early 1990s this debate appeared to have run its course with the wide variety of urban experience having been acknowledged. It is therefore perhaps surprising that both chapters are still accessible, even for those not interested in the original debate, and they still provide many insights into urban change in the early modern period. Overall then, this collection is well worth seeking out for anyone, specialist and non-specialist alike, with an interest in pre-modern urban history.

Chris Galley
Barnsley College


This collection of 18 essays is inspired by the pioneering work of Charles Webster and so it is divided into two principal sections, reflecting Webster’s research on early modern science, medicine and religion, and the modern history of the post-war NHS. The book also contains a most useful (and impressive) appendix of select publications of Webster, 1963–2002. Whilst the majority of essays are on England, there are two chapters dealing with Scotland, two for Italy, one for France, and another for New Zealand; although the editors regret not being able to include chapters on the Netherlands or Scandinavia. Following the division of Webster’s research interests into two thematically-related, but chronologically distinct, sections, the essays in this edited volume fall within the two periods of c.1550–c.1800 and 1945 until the late 1970s, with rather more space devoted to the former (12 chapters) than the latter (six chapters). The earlier period covers the Reformation in Western Europe, through the Scientific Revolution to the Enlightenment; the later covers the establishment of the British Welfare State until the first wave of widespread reforms in the 1970s. The contributors all owe some debt to Webster, either as previous students, as colleagues past and present, or in a wider intellectual sense. The editors, Pelling and Mandelbrote, argue that the essential affinities between the two periods (other than Webster) were the impulse to investigate and improve the health and well-being of the bulk of the population.

The editors make a good case for histories of medicine and science being histories of political and social change, and such ideas are explored in detail in most of the chapters. The first half of the book owes a heavy debt to Webster’s seminal The great instauration: science, medicine and reform 1626–1660 (Duckworth, 1975). This is Webster’s best known and hugely influential monograph. The latter section of the volume draws on Webster’s later writings on the NHS in
particular. There are two principal approaches taken to these varied subjects, across both sections of the book: biography and institutional history. Many of the chapters present biographies of influential ‘doctors’ (in the widest sense, covering all types of medical practitioners in the early modern period to MD’s in the modern), plus activists, (local and parliamentary) politicians, civil servants. Other, even more prominent, individuals also loom large, including Bacon, Paracelsus, Hartlib, More, Forman, Lilly, Petty. Institutional histories are presented, in particular on the NHS, but also on the Bristol Corporation of the Poor.

The principal strength of this volume lies in the study of a huge array of subjects taken by its contributors to research of the history of health, medicine and science, with a particular emphasis upon reform. The first section features discussions on magic, disease and healing (Kassell, Crocker, Mandelbrote); Paracelsianism (Clericuzio), and even the role of music in Paracelsian thought (Gouk); masculinity and office holding for physicians (Pelling); the role of Oxford, Cambridge and the Royal Society in medicine and medical reform (Mandelbrote, Villani, Feingold); the Bristol Corporation of the Poor (Barry); racial science in Scotland (Kidd); the language of science (Hotson, Corsi). The second section, commencing at the turn of the twentieth century, contains studies of mother and infant welfare services in New Zealand and Britain (Bryder); two hospital boards (Stewart, Welshman); the colonial context of international nursing recruitment (Rafferty); the mid-1970s reform of the medical profession and nursing (Lewis); and, finally, the establishment and influence of ASH (Action on Smoking and Health) (Berridge). I particularly liked the last, learning that the link between smoking and lung cancer was established in Nazi Germany.

For a book of this length, none of the chapters are overly long. Some are heavily laden with jargon and are largely inaccessible to the newcomer, while others read extremely well. It seems inevitable that each half of this book will attract a different audience; but, I agree with the editors that, taken together, both halves usefully inform the other on continuities and contrasts, and provide crucial context to any over-arching view of the medical profession and medical reform over the last five centuries.

Samantha Williams
University of Cambridge


In the main, this volume is a reprint of the 1939 edition of Pender’s edition of the ‘census of 1659’. Pender’s introduction, the transcription, the appendices, and the indices of places and names are all reproduced directly from the original edition. However, William J. Smyth’s new 60-page introduction makes the earlier reprint published by the Clearfield Publishing Company of Baltimore in 1997 superfluous and renders many of Pender’s earlier conclusions about the transcribed documents redundant.
Smyth carefully examines the manuscript evidence and the scholarly literature published since Pender’s edition and concludes that the document edited by Pender should more rightfully be called an abstract of adults in Ireland. The abstract was partially based on poll tax returns, but also on additional information from other sources, and was created by Sir William Petty, not as part of his Down Survey but, Smyth conjectures, ‘for his own policy-driven and publishing concerns’. However, like many of Petty’s projects they remained incomplete. Smyth carefully navigates through parts of Petty’s correspondence and by placing disparate documents in an orderly chronological sequence brings new interpretations to Petty’s words. Reconsideration of the manuscript material allows him to provide a new, and perfectly plausible, interpretation of the construction of these abstracts which had so puzzled its earlier editor. Smyth argues that the ‘central date’ for these abstracts is not 1659 but 1660. Firmly concluding that this abstract was based on poll tax returns allows Smyth to suggest that total populations for many areas can be estimated using a multiplier of between 2.8 and 3.0, proportions which are confirmed using the original poll tax records.

The introduction covers themes relating to the provenance, strengths and weaknesses, manner of interpretation, and potential for use of these abstracts. Furthermore, it firmly positions the ‘survey’ within Petty’s work in Ireland. These discussions answer, or at least go a considerable way to answering, some of the important questions relating to why certain information was tabulated in these abstracts. For example, Smyth suggests that Petty wanted to capture the ratio of Irish to English and Scots as it ‘bore ... on the safety of the British population’. However, the explanation for the collection of information on titulados (a term used here to denote land proprietors) is limited, and its precise purpose remains uncertain.

The returns are incomplete: the counties of Cavan, Galway, Mayo, Tyrone and Wicklow are missing and there are no returns for four baronies in Cork and nine baronies in Meath. Furthermore, there are differential levels of completeness in many of the other counties. Smyth is clear that ‘national’ analyses are only possible with corrections, assumptions and interpolations and that further investigation should be carried out from the townland level upwards.

Matthew Woollard
UK Data Archive
University of Essex


Despite remarkable development during the twentieth century of the means of transport and its mass availability, it is the contention of this study that ‘everyday’ or commonplace mobility has not increased as might be predicted, whether by car or by public transport; hence the question mark of the title. This sort of mobility has been neglected, and the authors hope that the book has useful pointers for planners battling with the difficulties of urban pollution and
gridlocked roads. For readers of LPS, however, the sub-title is a warning; they will be less interested in the length of daily journeys to school, to work or for leisure activities like the cinema and eating out, than in mobility away from parents, family and birthplace. Although there are some interesting comments on and insights into residential mobility—for example that the ability to commute has changed the need for residential mobility—they are very much en passant, as Chapter 1 makes clear.

Like a good lecture, each chapter starts with an overview of the material and ends with conclusions, which tends to build up a sense of repetition. Chapters 2 and 3 consider the intellectual landscape, and what is known about twentieth century ‘everyday’ mobility. Chapter 4 points to the National Travel Survey, which in several respects this study confirms (pp. 42, 113 for example). Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 consider work, leisure and children’s play and entertainment, sport, shopping and holidays. In drawing the conclusions together, Chapter 9 considers the ways in which mobility is affected by family circumstances. A lively chapter deals with some changes in civic transport policies, notably in the adoption, abandonment and renewal of trams in Glasgow and Manchester. Finally the overall results are again summarised.

The phraseology of the book is sociological rather than commonplace: ‘discourses of mobility’ include the concept of ‘action space’, the area through which people move on a regular basis, and ‘movement as a performance’, by which people make statements about themselves and acquire status. Seven factors (summed up on p. 8 as ‘six factors’) link mobility and ‘identity’ (the individual): age, gender, socio-economic group, transport technology, urban structure and transport networks. The ‘life course’ is a basic determinant of mobility.

Much of the research which underlies the book was carried out through oral interviews in 1996, with analysis of an impressive 1,834 individual life histories collected from all over the country and 90 in-depth interviews in three sample areas: London, Glasgow, and Manchester/Salford (p. 40). This sample had a ‘substantial bias towards those in higher socio-economic groups’: 3.6 per cent of the workforce in the 1971 census were categorised as ‘professional’ but 41 per cent of those in the sample. A further 156 interviews were carried out in Manchester/Salford and Lancaster/Morecambe (p. 42) with people who had lived all their lives in those areas, and was more balanced in respect of socio-economic status. The four areas offered variations in geographical and historical structure. For example, the River Lune limits mobility between Morecambe and Lancaster, whereas early decentralisation in Manchester increased it. The framework was predominately urban. Interview data provided some information on all periods from 1890 to the present day, and supplemented the National Travel Surveys and Censuses of 1921, 1951 and from 1961 onwards, which ignore journeys on foot and within the area of a local authority.

As with all oral history, a great deal of time has been devoted to collecting, transcribing and analysing the interviews and much space is devoted to quotations. The apparently unedited flow of words, which is not very fluent and consequently not easy to read, could with advantage have been discreetly
edited. The analysis is presented partly through these individual accounts, revealing the natural fascination of the infinite small variations they show, and partly in many tables of simple statistics. Here the percentage rules. More summary statistics would aid the reader, rather than the very large number of sub-divided tables. The practice of the authors is to describe in their own words what both tables and quotations show, leading to an impression of much repetition. Would it be unfair to comment that the outstanding conclusion, that overall mobility is governed by a great variety of minor details of life, which is reiterated many times, is a rather non-theoretical confirmation of common sense?

There are many points of interest throughout the book for those interested in social trends. Table 2.1 shows that in 1950 there were nearly 2 million private cars, and in 2002 there were 24½ million but more than a quarter of households did not have access to a car or a van. An interesting statistic in Table 2.2 (p. 22) is that in 1975/6 29 per cent of women had a driving licence and 69 per cent of men, while by 2002 this difference had been considerably reduced, rising to 61 per cent for women and 81 per cent for men. Gender in all age groups and periods was a significant variable in everyday mobility patterns (p. 60).

The overall conclusion that everyday mobility has changed less than might be expected is influenced by the examination of children’s journeys to school, to play and to see friends in Manchester/Salford and Lancaster/Morecambe. (It should be noted that Forster’s Education Act of 1870 (p. 83) did not make education compulsory, but merely ensured that there were schools available to all; compulsion followed six years later.) Not surprisingly, many of these journeys to school were on foot, and despite the impression that the school run creates a large amount of traffic, it is less significant than it appears to those attempting to drive at those times of day (Chapter 5). According to national data, three quarters of children walked to school in 1975/6 and rather less than half in 1999/2001, but the numbers travelling by bus had increased correspondingly, not those travelling by car. Three themes are identified in children’s accounts of their journeys to school, though only two appear to be described: the amount of traffic on the road to school, and the linking up with friends on the walk. There are a number of instances of this kind, suggesting that the three editors did not always coordinate and check their text sufficiently.

Variability of individual circumstances is emphasised in Chapter 6, which shows a definite increase in the distances of journeys to work (pp. 113–14), and does not sit with the overall conclusion that ‘the degree of stability in everyday mobility is more significant and surprising than the changes that have occurred’ (p. 224). In 1890–9 nearly a third of those interviewed walked to work; in 1990–8 a mere 8 per cent. It is suggested that the frequency of walking to work has been ignored in twentieth-century policy debates. Public transport carried 37 per cent of the respondents in the earlier decade and 32 per cent in the later, although the means of travel changed, with trams becoming insignificant but buses and trains correspondingly used more (based on Table 6.3). The motor car has replaced walking and cycling (p. 127). Variability of individual
circumstances is again emphasised in the chapter considering the significance of the ‘life course’. Here age, as well as gender and family circumstances, was found to be important: the patterns of mobility established when young tend to persist into old age (p. 193).

In conclusion, the authors say ‘we stress stability over change’ (p. 224). While this seems questionable, the other conclusion, that ‘underlying structures and constraints’ are very stable, is undoubtedly true, and reflects the basic facts of human nature. All in all A mobile century? is full of insights and interesting facts, but does not in the end present a coherent account justifying the question mark of the title.

Anthea Jones
Shipton under Wychwood


This collection of 14 papers on names and naming patterns is concerned mostly with Christian names, but pays some attention to family names. Over half of the essays have appeared in print before, between 1978 and 1993, including Peter Franklin’s paper on 749 Gloucestershire names recorded in manorial extents, subsidy rolls and manorial court rolls, which appeared in the pages of this journal in 1986. The lack of bibliographical references after 1996 suggests a long gestation period for this volume. Unfortunately, this means that no account has been taken of the substantial new work of Peter McClure and George Redmonds, the two leading scholars in this field.

There is nevertheless much of interest here. Cecily Clark’s introductory essay (first published in 1987) makes the point that a study of naming reveals more about the cultural activities of a community at large than about those of any particular individual. This may be taken as the theme of the book, with an emphasis on regional variation. The best essays, to this reviewer’s mind, are those such as Franklin’s which are based on a systematic exploration of names taken from particular sources. These include some unexpected lists, such as the Domesday Jurors (C. P. Lewis) and English ordinations, 1350–1540 (Virginia Davis). Two essays by John Insley and Dave Postles concentrate on naming traditions in the north of England. The most detailed statistical essay is the lengthy one by Heather Jones on historic name communities in Wales. She argues that, despite the inadequacies of most records, sufficient data is available from various sources for the quarter century around 1300 to observe an overall pattern, at least for a limited group of locations. She concludes that a statistical approach suggests that anecdotal impressions of trends and practices should be treated with caution. Older works such as those of E. G. Withycombe need to be discarded.

David Hey
University of Sheffield

This book is about attachment to place, more specifically attachment to the parish, and despite the dates given in the title it concentrates largely upon Victorian England. It is not a book about the impact of the centralisation of government on local communities, although the trend towards centralisation inevitably forms the backdrop to the study, but it tries to look from the bottom up, to focus upon subjective feelings of attachment to locality, what underpinned them and how they manifested themselves. Its central thesis is that attachment to the parish persisted far longer than is often allowed in the extant literature, that the parish continued to show vitality in social, cultural and religious terms through to at least the 1870s and 1880s, and even that a case can be made for an ‘invigorated localism’ (p. 4) in the mid-nineteenth century. This central theme is discussed through a series of seven free-standing but interconnected chapters, three of which have recently been published in historical journals, prefaced and followed by an introduction and a short conclusion. The evidence deployed is rich and varied, ranging from folklore to gravestone inscriptions to statistical analysis of parish registers and poor law reports, and hence combines the qualitative with the quantitative. The approach is that of the social science historian, convinced that it is indeed possible to reconstruct a history from below on the basis of empirical evidence. The commitment to the pursuit of historical knowledge as a means better to understand the options available in the present is laid out with refreshing clarity, and the book exudes enthusiasm throughout its 504 pages of text.

Parish and belonging, as one might expect of a book written by Keith Snell, is extremely stimulating. The overall thesis is a challenging one, but it is a remarkably difficult thesis to nail: subjective feelings of belonging can rarely be directly ascertained, and inevitably need to be approached indirectly. The various approaches adopted in this book are diverse, some are more convincing than others, while each chapter raises questions as well as offering conclusions.

In Chapter 3, ‘Settlement, parochial belonging and entitlement’, Snell is on very secure ground, having a long-standing familiarity with issues of settlement that is second to none. He re-emphasises the importance of the concept of belonging to welfare entitlement during the long period that the settlement laws were operative, demonstrates how parish officers and the poor themselves would try to manipulate the system, but above all shows how complex its implications for residence and belonging were. Settlement could be transferred from one place to another; non-resident settlement was fundamental to the system; before 1795 some residents who lacked a settlement could be issued with a certificate to prevent removal until they were actually (rather than potentially) chargeable; prior to the introduction of irremovability in 1846 trade recessions could result in a tide of returnees from their parish of residence to their parish of settlement; migration could be discouraged where parish officers feared adding to the burden of their poor rate, or encouraged
when the poor, secure in their settlement, felt safe to move on. If we add to this the notion of a core group in local society—those with a strong physical, administrative or moral stake in the parish—then parish society was in reality a highly complex entity, formed by various groups with rather different claims, or notions, of belonging. Snell’s hypothetical reconstruction of this complexity, taking account of the impact of economic growth, the decline of pauperism and the impact of the introduction of irremovability and removal of yearly service as a head of settlement in 1834, suggests that between the later eighteenth century and circa 1870 the poor became a far smaller proportion of the ‘settled’ population, and that this group was now dominated by an expanded, rate-paying, property-owning and renting middle and lower-middle class. Settlement, however, long remained central to welfare entitlement, some parishes were particularly ruthless in excluding outsiders (particularly in the south where labour markets were overstocked) while urban landlords often strove to prevent their tenants claiming irremovability. The settlement system proved remarkably flexible, out-living the new poor law by two decades, and if it underpinned a culture of selective exclusion its longevity also testifies to the enduring importance of local loyalty and belonging.

Less complex but equally successful is Chapter 7, ‘Three centuries of new parishes’. Here Snell draws our attention to the huge numbers of new or reformed parishes in the nineteenth century, a process that often involved separation of ecclesiastical and civil functions, the incorporation of hitherto extra-parochial areas, as well as innumerable boundary changes, mergers and divisions. The process extended across England, affecting both rural and urban areas, but was a particularly salient feature of rapidly expanding towns and cities, where it went hand in hand with a huge wave of church building. This, Snell concludes, can be taken to indicate the continued vitality of parishes in the nineteenth century, for ‘one does not create 4,000 or so new parishes, and adjust many more, if one does not value them highly’ (p. 440), while new churches were often heavily funded by local subscriptions as well as by central funds. On the other hand, the gradual separation of ecclesiastical and civil authority, the confusion that the redrawing of parish boundaries could create, and the growth of supra-parochial administrative bodies, all served to undermine parish identity in the longer term, but not until the late-nineteenth century.

Chapter 6 argues for the continued vigour of the parish thought a detailed discussion of the continuing, and extensive, responsibilities of overseers of the poor under the new poor law—an office that was not abolished until 1927—whose burdens appear not to have been substantially eased by the creation of new Boards of Guardians in 1834. The fact that, for almost a century after 1834, approximately half a million people were prepared to take on such a time-consuming position is quite astonishing when one recalls that this was a wholly unpaid office, once again testifying to the continuing strength of local community sentiment and responsibility. In Chapter 8 we turn from the frenetic activities of parish officers to the silent testimony of the commemoration of the dead, in an analysis of 16,000 gravestones in 87 burial grounds. The
overall proportion that include reference to place grew substantially in the eighteenth century, and rose a little further across the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, though my own interpretation of Figure 8.2 (p. 474) is that this continued growth was far more clearly an Anglican rather than a nonconformist experience. Furthermore, only some 30–40 per cent of gravestones include a reference to place at the very peak. From the 1880s, however, there was a precipitate decline, which is again taken to indicate the demise of localism following its mid-Victorian persistence, at least among the gravestone-leaving classes.

More controversial, for this reviewer, are Chapter 2, ‘The culture of local xenophobia’, Chapter 4, ‘Rural societies and their marriage patterns’, and Chapter 5, ‘“A cruel kindness”: parish outdoor relief and the new poor law’. Snell’s insistence upon the centrality of a parochial culture of local xenophobia in Chapter 2 seems to me less than convincing. It is very easy to find in the historical record instances of conflict, and even easier to find evidence of insult, parody, caricature and rivalry. It is less easy, however, to document all of those innumerable occasions when people—even people from different parishes—got on rather well, when they worked together (in town and countryside), traded together (did every parish have its own market?), drank and laughed together and inter-married. How typical was the loutish and violent behaviour that is discussed here, and was there a distinction by social class? And was not parochial rivalry crucially cut across by the wider horizons of nonconformist religion, as well as by the intense migratory habits of the English population, even before urbanisation proceeded apace? On marriage, Snell argues for a distinct growth in rural marital endogamy between 1770 and 1840 through analysis of place of residence of brides and grooms in 18,442 marriages in 69 parishes across 8 counties. The problem here is that the data do not fully bear this proposition out, for the figures for marriages which exclude ‘all foreign’ marriages presented in Figure 4.4 appear to suggest an increase in endogamy of a mere 7 per cent across this period, from about 63 to 70 per cent, and part of this would have been a mechanical consequence of increasing parish density. The argument that, regionally, high endogamy appears to be linked to stagnant labour markets, low wages and high poor law dependency is more convincing, although one would like to see further exploration at the local level which also takes into consideration availability of non-agricultural employment. On parish outdoor relief Snell shows to great effect how limited our exploration of the New Poor Law has been to date, and particularly how limited has been our use of the wealth of data contained in the British Parliamentary Papers, despite the extraction and publication of considerable quantities by Karel Williams in From pauperism to poverty (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981). But in the main thrust of the chapter—reassertion of the continuing importance of outdoor relief—Snell is surely attacking a straw man, for no serious historian of the New Poor Law writing in the last 50 or so years has ever questioned that this was indeed the case, even among those whose main focus was upon the workhouse. Furthermore, insufficient attention is paid here to different categories of poor, or to the way in which the New Poor Law was inherently gendered: its was, after all, able-bodied men who were the clear targets of the Poor...
Law Commission of 1832–4. The relative cost of outdoor versus workhouse relief may also be overstated here, as salaries, building and repairs are excluded from the workhouse data, while one cannot ignore the symbolic importance of the workhouse and its (unquantifiable) value as a deterrent. I was also disappointed to see no reference to the recent run of articles on workhouses and their inhabitants published in LPS. I do agree, however, that there is tremendous scope for further analysis of the Poor Law Reports and statistics ‘across regions, unions, and though time, and related in interesting ways to regional, cultural, demographic and economic circumstances’ (p. 306), a task that Snell readily accepts is not his purpose here.

Snell makes no secret of his personal regret at the decline of local communities, his preference for the ‘local, the immediate, the everyday, the face-to-face, the intimately known’ (p. 27), rather than the fluid, open, globalised, de-territorialised, virtual world that he identifies today. In places there are hints of nostalgia here, though nothing which approaches the intense personal distaste for the modern world to be found in the blinkered final chapter of W.G. Hoskins’, The making of the English landscape (Penguin, 1976) (‘down come the tall trees …’ and so on, p. 298). It is somewhat ironic, however, that in this reassertion of the longevity (and importance) of localism these very localities—the vitality of which Snell is so determined to reassert—seem to get a little lost, to become hidden behind broader generalisations that cannot do full justice to their variety and complexity. Nevertheless, this remains a book that is in turn compelling, impressive, informative, questionable and (just occasionally) irritating, and one that no student of Victorian society can afford to ignore.

Nigel Goose
University of Hertfordshire


This collection of essays is authored by the editors and (in order of appearance) Tristram Hooley, Andrew Hann, Christine Wiskin, Barrie Trinder, John Smith, Joyce Ellis, Peter Clark, Leonard Schwarz, Malcolm Wanklyn, Hilde Greefs, Bruno Blonde, and Steve King—alone or in various combinations. The basic motivation is the continuing quest to understand why the English economy took on its distinctive new character after 1750, and specifically what role towns played. The title’s emphasis on regionality is self-explanatory, though the final two contributions locate the experience of this English region in a wider context, first by a thumbnail comparative sketch of Belgian development, and then by a survey of European writing on development issues as it relates to the themes raised in the book.

This significant and interesting geographical area has been rather neglected in history, as in life. The Midlands has never attracted the attention directed at either the North or the Metropolis, and still pursues a course as a very ill-defined region whose main characteristic often seems to be that it lies between
these two in character as well as in geography, and cannot be properly com-
combined with either, or divided between them. The introduction stresses how
hard boundaries are to draw around it and it is difficult, if not impossible, to
argue that it forms or ever formed a unified, self-conscious region even by the
limited standards of Britain. In particular, the north-central massif of the Peak
District, and its surrounding upland fringe, cuts communications between east
and west far more effectively than the Pennine chain does between Lancashire
and Yorkshire.

A restricted and land-locked eight-county version of the region is used here,
which illustrates the problem that in some sense the Midlands can be shaped
by the observer. Thus, Cheshire is officially most often classified as northern,
but is seen by most Lancastrians as midland, and it regularly gets mentioned
here for its connections to the regional economic system. Then even this small
version is heavily subdivided internally. In the west the northern sector,
dominated by ceramics, is different from the metal-bashing Black Country
further south, though both depended on their coal as a basic raw material, and
Birmingham is different again though it too rests on metal trades. Linking
them all to the physically separate textiles and coal of Leicester, Derby and
Nottingham to the east is even harder, and the vast and highly productive
farmland of Lincolnshire is excluded fairly openly as simply being too hard to
integrate. Yet this region could be said to mark the fullest possible develop-
ment of network industrialisation. It collectively produced a large share of the
nation’s food and coal, dominated the light engineering sector, and increas-
ingly monopolised household ceramics and hosiery and lace. Birmingham rose
to the position of second city of England, more populous than either Liverpool
or Manchester; the Black Country and the Potteries became intensively urban-
ised industrial zones without throwing up major urban centres; the east
midland county towns are a unique cluster of industrialisation based on such a
foundation; and other market towns remained essentially that to the present.
Besides the obvious questions about how all this happened, it therefore also
raises issues about what a region really is, and how it is integrated function-
ally. The argument here is that the interconnected urban system plays a large
part in that.

The region achieved what it did with few outbreaks of obvious class conflict or
the signs of great distress that attract historians, and its determinedly unspec-
tacular recipe for very successful industrial production has similarly encour-
aged little deep study and analysis. Yet in the twentieth century it was more
successful than the classic shock regions of the north, especially in maintaining
its core industries, and while those who require a revolution may deplore its
tendency just to get on with life, ordinary people may well feel more attraction
to that approach than to ‘interesting times’. This is therefore a chance to study
development where it is hard to argue that trauma was an essential element
and the editors have endeavoured to deal with most of the obvious themes,
with the exception of agriculture.

The 14 chapters are divided into three sections, dealing first with overviews of
the region, then with case studies of individual towns or of small groups, and
the third attempts to provide a wider context. Transport gets a lot of attention from several perspectives, and one chapter looks at the female experience, but mostly it is concerned with urbanisation and industrial structure. The approach is generally that of an analytical geography, and arguably a brief descriptive section in the introduction, with a geographical map, would help the many people who are not familiar with the intricacies of the region. Like all collections, it lacks the coherence expected of a single-authored study, but compensates by the focus and knowledge displayed in the separate essays. With such internal disparity, it is has a stronger justification for this than many, and grew out of a Leverhulme-funded research project that involved five universities between 1998 and 2001. It is supported by an excellent and comprehensive bibliography which many not concerned directly with the Midlands will find very useful.

No clear answers emerge to fundamental questions, but rather we discover how complex this bundle of issues is, and how that complexity tends to increase as one gets closer to the detail, rather than resolving themselves. There are no obvious patterns that link all development to particular types of towns, or particular types of development to particular types of growth, and that is an essential foundation for breaking away from simplistic searches for a universal causation. However, this could go further, for while the introduction agrees with de Vries that a mature urban system had to exist for ‘entry to the modern industrial world’, the evidence actually shows the contrary, with the chapter on Burslem and West Bromwich explicitly arguing that here industrial success created towns from unpromising origins. Moreover, while King provides an excellent and focussed survey of European literature that might offer theoretical insights into causation, his comment of how detached British history is from it has to be laid alongside the repeated message of the Belgian chapter that, however many superficial similarities there were between this country and the English Midlands, they are more than matched by dissimilarities both at the micro and macro level. The English eighteenth century was different, and surely if any model can encapsulate its experience, it will be derived directly from the English experience, not borrowed from elsewhere. This is especially true given the distinctiveness of its urbanisation, especially outside London.

The largest gap I would identify in this approach is the failure to really discuss what thresholds have to be crossed for a settlement to qualify as a town, and there is sometimes an air of playing up very small hints of urbanness far beyond their real significance, especially in asserting civic consciousness. Linked to that is an inadequate discussion of how we can judge and integrate the consequences of different development paths that led to slight population growth, manufacturing decline and modest prosperity; or else to massive population growth and industrial success, but the development of a large number of poor residents; or many other combinations. Thus, it is a fair and necessary comment that the inhabitants of Lichfield did not suffer by its honing its status as a traditional market town, and replacing manufacturing with services and professions, but it is just as true that had most other towns followed the same path, as in East Anglia, the region as a whole could not have
coped with its population growth and would certainly not have prospered overall. Despite any such qualifications, however, it is a book that deserves to be read for the ideas it stimulates and for the attention it focuses on an unfashionable area that played an essential part in British development. Understanding any one British region requires us to examine the rest as well, or we lose sight of the reality of the choices and alternatives that were built into all regional histories, and this is a major contribution to that process.

Steve Caunce
University of Central Lancashire


Here, freed from pain, secure from misery, lies,
A child, the darling of his parents’ eyes:
A gentler lamb ne’er sported on the plain,
A fairer flower will never bloom again.
Few were the days allotted to his breadth;
Now let him sleep in peace his night of death.

Question: what do Thomas Gray’s poem, Epitaph on a child (above), Thomas Gainsborough’s painting, The painter’s daughters chasing a butterfly, and a graph of maternal mortality and stillbirth rates for England and Wales, 1551–2001 have in common? Answer: they can be all found in Robert Woods’ fascinating new book, Children remembered. By experimenting with a diverse range of sources, Woods engages with and challenges Philippe Ariès’ influential so-called ‘parental indifference hypothesis’, which argues that for large parts of the past a harsh demographic regime caused parents to be largely indifferent to the fate of their children (see also Centuries of childhood (Penguin, 1973) and Lawrence Stone, The family, sex and marriage in England, 1500–1800 (Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1977)). Woods frames his discussion by employing Michel Vovelle’s ‘three level model’ which considers: (1) the risks of dying; (2) the social customs of death (mourning practice and dying); and (3) discussions of death and dying—as a means of understanding how individuals responded to the deaths of their children.

Woods sets the scene by introducing us to Ariès and others who have been influenced by him (Chapters 1 and 2). This is followed by an analysis of national patterns of infant and early childhood mortality in France and England and Wales over la longue durée (Chapter 3, Mortality, childcare and mourning). Chapter 4, Children in pictures and monuments, presents us with a sequence of 20 paintings, mostly of children and illustrated in colour, executed between the 1520s and 1901 which are used to examine how children were represented and what such images can tell us. This is followed by a discussion of how literature can illuminate emotions (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 consists entirely of a series of 69 poems starting with Lady Elizabeth Hoby’s An epicedium by Elizabeth Hoby, their mother, on the death of her two daughters Elizabeth and Anne (1570s)
and finishing with Nina Bogin’s *The stillborn* (1990s). A content analysis of these poems forms the basis of Chapter 7, although the works of authors such as Shakespeare and John Donne are also used to discuss the vocabulary of grief. The final chapter provides a short assessment of this ‘experiment’.

Clearly then, this is an ambitious book. In addition to examining Ariès’ thesis it also reflects on how paintings, poetry and other literary sources can be used to illuminate the everyday lives and emotions of our ancestors. Not surprisingly, given the pedigree of this author, a succinct and erudite account of the demographic background is given which reveals considerable variations in infant and childhood mortality rates in both France and England. This acts as a solid foundation for the subsequent discussion. What follows may prove more controversial, however, since generalising from a highly selective set of source material that is difficult to interpret is bound to be a subjective process. This apparent weakness is undoubtedly the book’s strength since it addresses such issues head on and interesting, important and sometimes profound points are raised on virtually every page. Indeed, the whole book may be considered a ‘meditation’ on the various themes under discussion. You may not agree with some of Woods’ interpretations, but you will certainly be enriched by reading this book.

Woods provides much evidence to show that many parents did indeed love their offspring, despite their often poor chances of survival. In conclusion, he suggests, ‘historical societies were made up of people with varying capacities to be loving parents living in material conditions that militated against the possibility of providing good-quality care’ (p. 212). Each of Woods’ chosen examples, both pictorial and literary, has its own story to tell. For instance, after reading the sequence of poems which were written by women one wonders whether it would have been possible for the ‘parental indifference hypothesis’ to have been proposed by a woman who had personal experience of this phenomenon (also see L. Pollock, *Forgotten children: parent-child relations from 1500–1900* (Cambridge University Press, 1983)).

It is interesting that Woods, our leading population geographer of nineteenth-century England and Wales, has enthusiastically embraced qualitative source analysis. This book demonstrates clearly that in order to understand past societies it is necessary to examine the widest range of source material. Indeed, I would suggest that anyone with an interest in demographic history will find this volume essential reading if they wish to achieve a greater understanding of ‘the world we have lost’.

Chris Galley
*Barnsley College*
is pleased to announce the creation of

THE ROGER SCHOFIELD LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES RESEARCH FUND

Thanks to the generosity of Roger Schofield, the Roger Schofield Local Population Studies Research Fund has been created to provide grants to individual researchers whose work furthers the aims of the journal *LPS* and the Local Population Studies Society. Both promote the historical study of population within local and regional contexts, addressing questions that relate not only to historical demography, but also to wider issues in the social and economic history of Britain and Ireland.

Applications are invited from amateur historians, undergraduate and postgraduate students, and researchers and lecturers in educational institutions. Grants are intended to cover research costs such as travel to archives, conference fees and accommodation, and the costs of archival photocopying and purchase of microfilm. Unfortunately, capital costs (such as computer equipment or books), grants for student fees and maintenance, and subvention for publications, will not be funded.

Subject to annual financial constraints, the Fund Committee will consider applications of between £75 and £500. Applicants should be aware, however, that grants exceeding £250 will be awarded in exceptional cases only. The Fund Committee will assess all applications on merit, in accordance with the aims of *LPS*.

Applications will be assessed twice yearly, in January and June. Completed application forms should be sent with an accompanying CV (no longer than two pages) to the Fund Committee at the *LPS* General Office, to be received no later than the end of December or May. Applicants should also ask a suitable referee (such as a supervisor or archivist) to write a brief letter of support, which should be sent direct to the Fund Committee. Referees are asked to comment on the suitability of the application. Any enquiries concerning these procedures can be sent to the Chair of the Fund Committee, at either of the addresses below.

Requests for application forms and completed forms should be sent to:
The Roger Schofield Fund Committee
LPS General Office
Department of Humanities
University of Hertfordshire
College Lane,
Hatfield, Herts AL10 9AB
Email: lps@herts.ac.uk

General enquiries can be made to:
Dr Thomas Nutt
Magdalene College
Cambridge
CB3 0AG
Email: twn21@cam.ac.uk