

# **LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES**

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The LPSS Secretary is Christine Jones, 17a Romford Close, Colchester, Essex CO4 0AP. E-mail: [cejone@btinternet.com](mailto:cejone@btinternet.com)

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## CONTENTS

<b>EDITORIAL</b>		6
The Roger Schofield Local Population Studies Research Fund		7
<i>LPS</i> publication projects		8
LPSS conferences		8
LPSS Website		9
Personnel changes		9
LPSS subscriptions		10
Editorial matters		10
<b>LPSS CONFERENCE REPORTS</b>		
Autumn 2007	Agricultural labourers in England	11
Spring 2008	The local demography of deviance: crime, illegitimacy and prostitution in Britain 1700–2000	15
<b>ARTICLES</b>		
Remco Knooihuizen	<b>Inter-ethnic marriage patterns in late sixteenth-century Shetland</b>	22
Janet Hudson	<b>The incorporation of evidence about local nonconformity into parish population reconstruction</b>	39
Audrey Perkyns	<b>The admission of children to the Milton Union workhouse, Kent, 1835–1885</b>	59
<b>RESEARCH NOTE</b>		
Rebecca Probert and Liam D’Arcy Brown	<b>Catholics and the Clandestine Marriages Act of 1753</b>	78
<b>SOURCES AND METHODS</b>		
Nigel Goose	<b>Measuring illegitimate fertility</b>	83
<b>NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITIES</b>		
University of Glasgow		90

## BOOK REVIEWS

Emily Cockayne	<b>Hubbub. Filth noise and stench in England</b> (reviewed by Chris Galley)	93
M.A. Crowther and Marguerite Dupree	<b>Medical lives in the age of surgical revolution</b> (reviewed by Robert Woods)	94
Christopher Dyer ed.	<b>The self-contained village? The social history of rural communities 1250–1900.</b> (reviewed by Andy Gritt)	95
H.R. French	<b>The middle sort of people in provincial England, 1600–1750</b> (reviewed by Andy Gritt)	98
H.R. French and R.W. Hoyle	<b>The character of English rural society: Earls Colne 1550–1750</b> (reviewed by Nigel Goose)	100
Eilidh Garrett Chris Galley Nicola Shelton and Robert Woods eds	<b>Infant mortality. A continuing social problem</b> (reviewed by Naomi Williams)	104
Nigel Goose ed.	<b>Women’s work in industrial England. Regional and local perspectives</b> (reviewed by Sara Horrell)	107
Mary S. Hartman	<b>The household and the making of history. A subversive view of the Western past</b> (reviewed by Julie Marfany)	110
Colin Heywood	<b>Growing up in France</b> (reviewed by Chris Galley)	111
Andrew Lees and Lynn Hollen Lees	<b>Cities and the making of modern Europe 1750– 1914</b> (reviewed by Jon Stobart)	112
Susan Oosthuizen	<b>Landscapes decoded. The origins and development of Cambridge’s medieval fields</b> (reviewed by Robert Brooks)	114
Peter Razzell	<b>Population and disease: transforming English society, 1550–1850</b> (reviewed by Eilidh Garrett)	116
David E. Shuttleton	<b>Smallpox and the literary imagination 1660–1820</b> (reviewed by Chris Galley)	118

Mark Allen and Tom Beaumont Jones eds	<b>The 1871 Census for Winchester</b> (reviewed by Michael Edgar)	119
Winifred A. Harwood ed.	<b>Southampton Brokage Book, 1447–8,</b> (reviewed by Michael Edgar)	121
Roger Young ed.	<b>Sparsholt 1841–1891. A Hampshire village microhistory</b> (reviewed by Michael Edgar)	122
<b>CORRESPONDENCE</b>		124
<b>LPSS PUBLICATIONS</b>		127

## EDITORIAL

The first article in this issue of *LPS* uses evidence from personal names found in the Shetland Register of Testaments in an attempt to uncover patterns of inter-ethnic marriage in Shetland in the late sixteenth century, shortly after a large Scots immigration had drastically altered the ethnic make-up of its population. Remco Knooihuizen discusses the difficulties that arise in the interpretation of personal names, which inevitably renders the conclusions based upon them highly tentative. Nevertheless, the results suggest that there was a reasonable degree of inter-ethnic marriage, estimated at 25 to 30 per cent of all marriages, in which the Norse and Scots parts of the population engaged equally, although both showed a preference for endogamous marriage. Inter-ethnic marriage appears to have begun amongst first-generation immigrants, and had certainly reached this scale by the second generation. It also seems that, allowing for the differences in gender make-up of both parts of the population, Norse women and men were equally likely to marry Scots partners. These results seem to confirm the theory that Scots immigration to Shetland stimulated the Norn-to-Scots language shift in the islands, through geographical proximity and through inter-marriage.

The second article, by Janet Hudson, builds upon another piece by the same author published recently in *LPS* ('Parish population reconstruction in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire: an experiment using Wrigley and Schofield's correction factors', *LPS* 77 (2006), 24–41). In the present article Hudson turns her attention to the particular problem of incorporating nonconformity into the reconstruction of parish populations, but also widens the sample examined to include eight further parishes in addition to Stonehouse. Having stripped out the Wrigley and Schofield correction factors for nonconformity from her population estimates, she replaces them with new, locally derived, estimates from a return of 1735, and interpolates back to 1640 (when nonconformity should have been minimal) and forward to the 1801 census. These new factors are then tested by comparing them, firstly, with the Compton Census and, secondly, with alternative points developed from nonconformist registration in the parishes of Stroud and Cam, both procedures validating the new estimates. Parish population estimates can thus be produced which, while still partly based upon the correction factors suggested by Wrigley and Schofield, provide greater sensitivity to the local incidence of nonconformity.

The third article is the work of a seasoned contributor to this journal, Audrey Perkyms, and extends her work on the population history of Kent, which has provided *LPS* with three valuable contributions to date 'Birthplace accuracy in the censuses of six Kentish parishes, 1851-1881', *LPS* 47 (1991), 39–55; 'Age checkability and accuracy in the censuses of six Kentish parishes, 1851-1881', *LPS* 50 (1993), 19–38; 'Migration and mobility in six Kentish parishes, 1851-81', *LPS* 63 (1999), 30–70). Her present contribution extends and enriches the series of workhouse studies published recently in *LPS* through a detailed focus upon children in the Milton Union Workhouse, 1835–1885, which served eighteen

Kentish parishes. The major source for identifying children in the workhouse is the series of Admission and Discharge Registers for the period, but evidence from the Annual Reports, General Orders and inspectors' reports of the three successive central Poor Law authorities have also been used, as have the Minutes Books of the Board of Guardians and correspondence between the Milton Union and the central poor law authorities. Children formed roughly one-third of workhouse inmates in Milton, illegitimacy, the loss of one or both parents and desertion forming the main reasons for them to be taken in. Indeed, children were increasingly taken into the workhouse with just one parent, predominantly their mothers, and the large number who were born there suggests that workhouse was used a lying-in hospital for mothers of illegitimate children, who were predominantly first-time mothers. The Milton Board of Guardians began its life imposing strict policies, became more flexible in the 1850s and 1860s where unavoidable unemployment was concerned, but tightened its attitude once again in response to the 'crusade against out-relief' after 1870. At all times, however, consideration of the moral character of claimants was central to its policies. In the long term the Boards' policies allied to changing economic circumstances conspired to reduce the number of able-bodied men in the workhouse, in turn producing the ironic situation that a substantial proportion of its population remained those very children that the 1834 Poor Law Amendment Act had largely ignored.

A 'Research note' is provided by Rebecca Probert and Liam D'Arcy Brown, and examines the impact of the Clandestine Marriages Act (Hardwicke's Act) of 1753 on Catholic ceremonies. Using evidence from 95 couples who married in a Catholic ceremony at the Catholic stronghold of Coughton Court in Warwickshire between 1758 and 1795, they discover that every single one of the couples also went through an Anglican ceremony. But only one-third of these took place in Coughton itself, and their hence detection required careful searching in other parishes nearby, as well as in the electronic database of the International Genealogical Index—an important methodological improvement on previous research. What the findings also show is the importance that was attached both to a legally binding marriage and to religious conscience, the former being satisfied by the Anglican ceremony, the latter by having the Catholic ceremony first in the vast majority of cases. 'Sources and methods' in this issue is provided by Nigel Goose, and introduces two aggregate measures of illegitimate fertility (illegitimacy ratios and illegitimate fertility rates) for the parish register era (1538–1837) and for the period of civil registration (post 1837). 'News from the Universities' in this issue features the University of Glasgow. Thanks to Chris Galley we also have another excellent crop of book reviews, an emerging feature of which appears to be the ability of our reviewers to write at considerable length. We are grateful to all those who have taken the trouble to provide such detailed synopses and appraisals.

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

Thanks to the generosity of Roger Schofield we were able to announce the establishment of this fund in *LPS 78* (2007) (see pages 8, 135). Awards of sums between £75 and £500 towards a range of research costs are available, and

amateur and professional historians, undergraduate and postgraduate students, are all eligible to apply. The fund for the current year is not exhausted, and applications are therefore welcomed. Please write in the first instance to the General Office (address on p. 2).

### **LPS publication projects**

Reviews of *Working women in industrial England: regional and local perspectives* are now beginning to appear in academic journals, and the collection is eliciting a favourable response (see, inter alia, reviews in *History*, 93 (2008), 290–1; *Economic History Review*, 61 (2008), 507–8, *Journal of British Studies*, 47 (2008), 448–50, as well as in the current issue of *LPS*, below (p. 107). We have just shipped 100 copies to the United States to be marketed by the Independent Publishers Group via the University of Hertfordshire Press. Copies are still available for £14.95 plus £2 p. and p. (£3 overseas) from the General Office, or via the Local Population History Book Club at a discounted price (addresses on p. 2 above: e-mail preferred at the General Office).

There is nothing further to report on 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*. Potential authors, for either volume, are invited to contact the editors via the LPSS General Office at the address given on p. 2. Preliminary discussions have also taken place on a new project, to produce an up-to-date volume focussing upon parochial registration and the use of parish registers in local population studies.

### **LPSS conferences**

The conference on 'Agricultural labourers in England', took place as planned at the University of Central Lancashire, Preston, on 27 October 2007, forming a joint event with the University's Institute of Local and Family History. Featuring six distinguished speakers in this field, it attracted over 70 delegates. A report is printed below (p. 11). It remains to be seen, however, whether or not we will be able regularly to run an autumn conference, a key feature of which was its location in the north of England. At present there are no plans to do so this year, but offers to host and organise such an event are welcome.

The spring conference was held as usual at the Law Faculty of the University of Hertfordshire in St Albans on the theme 'The local demography of deviance: crime, prostitution and illegitimacy in Britain 1700–2000'. It was again a successful and enjoyable event, and a full report can be found below (p. 15). We have recently heard that the University's Law Faculty is to be relocated to the De Havilland Campus at Hatfield, so the future of this particular venue, which has proved so amenable for the past eight years, is uncertain. Given the time it usually takes to put such plans into action, however, we are fairly confident that we will be able to return to St Albans in spring 2009, and the provisional date for this meeting is Saturday 18 April. The theme for the event is yet to be decided, and all suggestions are welcome.



### **LPSS web site**

For those of you who have not yet found it, the LPSS web site is at <http://www.localpopulationstudies.org.uk/> It includes an archive of the entire journal from its inception in 1968 to 1998, covering the first 60 issues. Contents of subsequent numbers are also given. Information about the Society, how to contact us, how to submit an article to the journal, journal conventions and Society conferences can also be found there. Some recent problems with our service provider have made it impossible to update the conference page, but this will soon be rectified. We welcome the creation of more links with other local history societies and similar organisations.

### **Personnel changes**

After many years of invaluable service to the journal and Society Vanessa Chambers, having completed her doctorate at the University of London, is moving on to take up a Research Fellowship at the University of Exeter, working on the impact of bombing in Britain, Germany, France and Italy in World War Two. I would like to express my personal thanks to her for her help, support and friendship over the years, as well as to thank her on behalf of the journal and the society. We all wish her well in her future career. Her place as LPSS administrator has been taken by Nick Hawkes, an undergraduate student at the University of Hertfordshire, who we welcome to the team. His contact details remain those of the General Office, given at the foot of page two.

Another sad loss is the resignation from both the *LPS* Board and the LPSS Committee of Eilidh Garrett, our current society Honorary Secretary. Eilidh joined the journal's Editorial Board ten years ago, but she has been active in the Society since her election to the Committee in April 1993. She has been a regular speaker at Society conferences, and helped to organise events at Sheffield in 1995 and Ambleside in 1996, the latter event providing the foundation for the collection of essays that eventually emerged in 2007 as *Women's work in industrial England*. She also acted in an advisory capacity to the organiser of the Cambridge conference in 1997. As she joined the *LPS* Editorial Board in 1998, her contribution to the Society and its activities, in one form or another, has been virtually seamless. In 2005 she was elected Honorary Secretary, and helped the Society through the difficult process of merger which, *inter alia*, featured seemingly endless correspondence with the Charity Commissioners. Eilidh has been among the leading lights of English (and Scottish!) historical demography for many years, and has worked tirelessly to support the Society and its journal. I am sure I speak for the whole Society in saying that she will be sadly missed, but also that we wish her well in all her future endeavours.

Andy Gritt has also indicated his intention to stand down as the Society's Treasurer. Andy has also helped to manage the Society's funds through the very difficult process of merger between the two charities *LPS* and LPSS, each of which formerly had its own treasurer and accounts. We are very grateful to

Andy for helping us to negotiate this merger, and for his hard work during the past few years. I am pleased to say that Andy will remain a member of the *LPS* Editorial Board, and an Ordinary Member of the LPSS Committee.

On a more positive note, I am delighted to be able to announce that Christine Jones will be taking Eilidh's place as Honorary Secretary to the Society, while Alys Levene has accepted an invitation to join the *LPS* Editorial Board. I am also delighted that Mary Cook has agreed to take over as Society Treasurer, while Gillian Chiverton has offered to join the LPSS Committee as an Ordinary Member. We will include some biographical information about these new officers in the next LPSS newsletter. Any member wishing to become more actively involved in the Society can contact the Society's Chairman, Colin Pooley (c.pooley@lancaster.ac.uk), the Honorary Secretary, Christine Jones (cejone@btinternet.com), or Nigel Goose at the General Office (lps@herts.ac.uk).

#### **LPSS subscriptions**

At the Annual General Meeting held on 19<sup>th</sup> April it was agreed that the annual subscription to the Society should be increased, to reflect rising costs in producing the journal and newsletter, in running the Society's various committees and in staffing the General Office. The new rates will be: individual £18 (student £10); individual overseas £21; institutional £30. The new rates will take effect in 2009. While this represents a substantial increase, it is the first since 2003, and is thus necessary to restore the financial viability of the journal after six years of rising costs but static income. I hope the membership will agree that this still represents very good value for money for two issues each of the journal and newsletter. We hope that this increase will also obviate the need for any further increase in the near future. The key to the long term viability of our activities is the recruitment of new members, so if you know anyone who might be interested in joining the Society do please encourage them to do so.

#### **Editorial matters**

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

Nigel Goose  
April 2008

## LPSS AUTUMN CONFERENCE REPORT, 2007

### AGRICULTURAL LABOURERS IN ENGLAND

The first in what we hope will be a new series of autumn conferences took place in the Darwin Building at the University of Central Lancashire on 27 October 2007 on the theme of agricultural labour. A joint conference with the University's Institute of Local and Family History, it was organised by Andy Gritt of LPSS and the University of Central Lancashire with assistance from Eilidh Garrett. The lecture theatre in Darwin was well filled as there were 72 attendees.

The conference consisted of six talks, ranging in period from *circa* 1650 to 1930. In the first talk, Andy Gritt explained why the study of agricultural labourers was important. Thus we learned that not only did agricultural labourers feed the population, but they also produced the agricultural surpluses that were necessary to provide for a large urban population, which was an essential prerequisite of industrialisation in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Andy then showed that agriculture declined from being the largest economic sector in 1851. The decline the numbers of labourers was partly due to technological innovation but this was of minor significance until after the Second World War. More important was the geographic and economic migration of 'surplus' (and underemployed) labourers. Andy finished his paper with a call to local and family historians to undertake longitudinal research on agricultural labourers and farm servants, and to publish individual and collective life histories of this important social group.

In the second talk of the day John Broad, from London Metropolitan University, looked at 'The great estate, estate villages and the labourer's house 1650 to 1930'. During the talk John treated us to a slide show of many cottages built by estate owners for their labourers. He showed us how practices differed geographically across England and went on to discuss why estate owners built houses for their workers. In particular John argued that this reflected, particularly in southern England, low incomes, the need for a disciplined core workforce and the absence of other new housing provision. He also looked at prevailing views of morality, which argued that labourers' houses should be built with three bedrooms: one for the married couple, one for their sons and one for their daughters. Even so most labourers' cottages appear to have been built with only two bedrooms as financial considerations held sway over moral concerns. Finally, he pointed out that even though many estate owners provided their workers with good quality housing, rural poverty was widespread and most labourers lived in only poor quality accommodation.

Peter Park gave the third talk, *'It's Grim Up North'*, based on his masters degree research into the Poor Law Commission's migration scheme from East Anglia and other southern counties to Northern England. The scheme ran from early 1835 to mid-1837. We learnt that the main impetus behind the scheme lay, on the one hand, in unemployment, low wages and high poor rates in the south and, on the other hand, in apparent labour shortages in the textile industries of the north. The main demand in the north was for child, rather than adult (especially adult male) labour, and preference was given to large families. A contemporary, somewhat speculative, estimate suggested that some 90,000 people would be absorbed into Lancashire and north Cheshire as a result of the expansion in the use of steam power in the cotton industry. The scheme fell into disuse with the trade depression of the late 1830s, but not before some 5,000 people had been removed from the south and east to the textile manufacturing districts of Lancashire, the West Riding, Cheshire and Derbyshire, with a similar number of friends and relatives following them independently. Despite opportunities to return to the south with the onset of the depression, 70 per cent of the families involved were satisfied that their quality of life was better and elected to stay in the north.

After a break for an appetising buffet lunch, accompanied by lively discussion of the morning's papers, we were treated to a presentation which was very easy on the eye. Ian Waites, from Lincoln School of Art and Design, discussed 'The labour of art and the art of labour' by considering Peter De Wint's pictures of agricultural labourers in Lincolnshire, from the early years of the eighteenth century. This meant that his audience were treated to a series of beautiful paintings and sketches for analysis. De Wint's work offers realistic representations of rural labourers and is a clear contrast to the more familiar romanticised representations of his contemporaries. Most of De Wint's 'sketches' depicted his subjects at rest, an unusual device, which made the pictures feel more intimate. However, Ian pointed out that artists very often used their works to make political points and, while the details of dress and situation provided by painters such as De Wint can offer fascinating historical insight, the 'wider picture' should always be considered.

The following paper switched the focus from Lincolnshire to Lancashire. Malcolm Smith, from the University of Durham, looked at Irish participation in the agricultural workforce of England and Wales using the computerised 1881 census returns held at the UK Data Archive. There were fewer than 500 Irish born *farmers* staying in England and Wales in the spring of 1881, but as many as half of them were reported to be visitors, lodgers or workhouse inmates rather than the heads of actual farming households. Agricultural labourers, as opposed to farmers, were identified as those with the occupation code '103' in the 1881 census files, and odds ratios were used to detect where the Irish were over- or under-represented in particular regions or occupations. Irish agricultural labourers were concentrated in Lancashire and the West Riding of Yorkshire, but were under-represented in the predominantly agricultural counties of the south, where conditions had been so hard for agricultural labourers in the earlier years of the nineteenth century. Malcolm went on to

demonstrate that understanding the position of Irish migrants in the wider economy of particular counties was important to their contribution to agriculture. In certain regions, those of Irish origin were evidently prevented from entering some industrial pursuits—such as lead mining or coal mining—whereas they were welcome in others—such as iron work. In all it would appear that Irish migrants were more likely to take up jobs in agriculture when such jobs formed a smaller proportion of the total workforce.

The final paper of the afternoon was something of a *tour de force*. Steve Caunce, from the University of Central Lancashire, explored the notion that the institution of ‘farm service’ was an antiquated practice. He forcefully argued that this was not in fact the case, but that service became a particularly ‘northern’ phenomenon in the nineteenth century, suited to the type of farms and agriculture to be found in the ‘north’, where agricultural labour was often in short supply. England had two traditions of employment law. Agricultural labourers operated under the first—entering ‘employment’ and selling their labour on a short term basis for a prompt, if not generous, remuneration. Farm servants in contrast contracted their labour for a period of time, usually a year or six months. The contract was binding, and the servant would only be paid on completion of the contract, but the contract was also binding on the farmer who had an obligation to feed and house his servants, and to look after them should they fall ill. Farmers would extract a great deal of work from their servants, but contemporaries remarked that Northern farm servants could be ‘obscenely well fed’, in contrast to southern agricultural labourers who were often on the verge of malnutrition. Despite these contracts, farm servants had greater independence than agricultural labourers as, at the end of their contract, they were free to move on, and could negotiate higher wages if they gained experience and skill. Steve provided fascinating insight into the web of ‘hiring fairs’ across the North of England which enabled the contract system to operate efficiently. Farm service, Steve reiterated, was not a sign of backward farmers or a peasant economy, just an alternative, ‘northern’ way of making the most of the resources available.

The six papers examined ‘agricultural labourers’ from a variety of perspectives, which provided much food for thought. One recurring theme of the conference was the difference between the lives of agricultural labourers in the North and the South, some audience members remarked on their feeling of ‘culture shock’ as their perceptions of ‘rural life’ had met considerable challenges. It would be a fascinating experiment to repeat the conference in a ‘southern’ venue to see whether the audience reported the same reaction. It would appear there is still a great deal to be learnt about the regional differences in the lives, experiences and histories of those working in agriculture across the centuries. Indeed, several speakers stressed the need to spread awareness of these issues, and for further research to be carried out.

Andy Gritt deserves a hearty vote of thanks for pulling together such an interesting and thought-provoking set of papers, despite the several setbacks he encountered while organising the event. Thanks are also due to Susan

Bailey who oversaw the administration, and to Liz Edwards and Kate Findlater who made sure things ran smoothly on the day. The Society is also grateful to Peter Franklin and Terry Shaw for providing a book stall. Catering was first-class; the only small criticism to be heard being that 'doggy bags' would have been welcome to allow participants to consume the leftovers on their journey home.

David Alan Gatley  
*Staffordshire University*

Eilidh Garrett  
*LPSS Honorary Secretary*

## LPSS SPRING CONFERENCE REPORT, 2008

### THE LOCAL DEMOGRAPHY OF DEVIANCE: CRIME, ILLEGITIMACY AND PROSTITUTION IN BRITAIN 1700–2000

The eighth annual spring conference of the Local Population Studies Society was held at the Law Faculty, University of Hertfordshire, in St Albans on Saturday 19 April 2008, and was attended by 65 delegates, including ten free student places funded by a grant from the Economic History Society.

The conference began with a session on prostitution which had a particularly Kentish flavour. The first presentation, by Catherine Lee of the Open University, focused on prostitution in the port, dockyard and garrison towns of Kent in the middle decades of the nineteenth century. In opening her talk with the life-story of a woman called Sarah Darge, Catherine reminded us of the personal and often pathetic stories that can often be lost in aggregate statistical analysis. Sarah's life was one which spiralled downwards: born into a poor family, she appears to have drifted into prostitution as a means of survival; she appears in the police records thanks to a series of arrests for drunkenness and violence, and in the poor law records due to her stays in the workhouse. Her early death seems a fittingly tragic end to a wasted life. However, Catherine's presentation did much to challenge this perspective. While many prostitutes were from broken homes (with either or both parents having died early) and often from poor working-class backgrounds, they were by no means exclusively drawn from the destitute poor. For some women, prostitution was clearly a transitional stage; for others it was part of a strategy for long-term survival; for all, it was a means of making ends meet in a local economy which afforded few opportunities for women to earn decent wages.

There was a distinct geography to prostitution in Kent and within its towns—at least in terms of how it appears in the official records of police and the medical records created through the implementation of the Contagious Diseases Act. There were, of course, prostitutes in all towns, but Chatham stands out, having well over 300 prostitutes during this period. Within towns, there were 'hotspots' where arrests were most common. Sometimes these were in the poorer districts, but in Gravesend there was a strong cluster on the High Street—a thoroughfare which also contained the police station and magistrate's court. After being arrested, women were charged with drunkenness or disorderly behaviour, or more specifically for soliciting (prostitution itself, of course, was not a criminal offence). The sentences that they received varied accordingly: fines were the usual punishment for drunkenness, but soliciting was punished with a custodial sentence (generally 14 days) with hard labour.

Catherine's talk concluded with a reiteration of the central themes: that women became prostitutes because of the chronic economic circumstances in which they found themselves, and that, for most women, involvement in prostitution seems to have been accompanied by a declining socio-economic status: it rarely offered an escape from poverty. And yet, there was nothing inevitable about this process. Indeed, Catherine finished by stressing the importance of human agency, as exemplified by the story of Sarah Darge's younger sister, Clara. From the same family background, she went into service, married, moved to the London suburbs and rose to respectability.

Prostitution in nineteenth-century Kent was also the focus of the second paper, given by Adrian Ager of Oxford Brooks University. Adrian began his talk more generally, drawing two broad contexts for his study of prostitution in the Medway towns. The first centred on methodological and conceptual concerns, including the ways in which historians (such as Judith Walkowitz) have theorised the socio-economic rationale for prostitution and the problems caused by having to rely upon discontinuous data sources when trying to chart change over time. The second context was the local economy of the Medway, particularly that of Chatham. In relating the story of growing dockyard, military and later industrial development, Adrian stressed the creation of overwhelmingly male employment—a bias reflected in the gender profile of the population which was roughly three-fifths male in the mid nineteenth century. Women, he argued, found it difficult to find secure and decently paid jobs, a point which echoed arguments in the first paper and which apparently led many women to become dependent upon poor relief, with over 80 percent of those receiving indoor and outdoor relief being women. In Chatham, Adrian argued, there was therefore a significant number of young, single and underemployed women, precisely the group that Walkowitz has argued were most likely to fall into prostitution. This goes some way to explaining the relatively large number of prostitutes in the town.

Drawing on the records created by the enforcement of the Contagious Diseases Act, the paper then went on to recreate something of the age profile of Chatham's prostitutes. However, as Adrian himself acknowledged, this only sketches for us the overall structure of the prostitution trade; more detailed analysis is needed of the actual behaviour and treatment of prostitutes. For this, he drew upon the orders of the justices and police evidence to briefly explore the kind of offences for which prostitutes were arrested, echoing Catherine Lee's earlier observation that much attention was focused on drunkenness and, to a lesser extent, indecent behaviour. Adrian finished by suggesting that much more work is needed to trace the lives of individual women, using record linkage techniques to track them across a range of different sources.

From prostitution, attention switched to illegitimacy. The second panel was opened by Nigel Goose, who sought to address the question of how 'saucy' the straw plait and hat trades made the poor of Hertfordshire in the second half of the nineteenth century. After briefly setting the scene by outlining



changing Victorian perspectives on women and wives (highlighting the notion of separate spheres and growing moral concerns over women's work), Nigel illustrated the often colourful ways in which straw plaiting was seen by contemporaries as injurious to individual and collective morality. Submissions made to Parliamentary and Royal Commissions formed a chorus of disapproval: straw plaiting brought young people together in unsupervised environments, and drew their attention away from learning practical home-making skills. It therefore bred immorality and ignorance of domestic economy (so that the poor were not even suitable for domestic service!) and ultimately to high levels of illegitimacy.

Having sketched this damning picture, the second half of Nigel's presentation attempted to determine whether there was any evidence for the accusations being made by local worthies. For this, two things were necessary. The first was to distinguish those parts of Hertfordshire where straw-plaiting was strong (the west and north of the county) from those where it was less developed (the east). The second was far more complex and hinged on the need to be able to map illegitimacy *rates* rather than simply ratios. The latter merely give us the number of illegitimate births as a proportion of all births, whilst the former tell us about the number of illegitimate births in relation to the population 'at risk'—that is single women of child-bearing age. They therefore give a truer picture of the level of illegitimacy amongst the local population. Indeed, only illegitimacy rates, Nigel argued, can really tell us how 'saucy' the poor were made by their employment in straw-plaiting. Calculating these depended upon drawing data on age, gender and marital rates from the census enumerators' books—an exercise that itself relied on a lengthy process of transcription and digitisation. The data thus generated reveal that illegitimacy rates varied comparatively little across the county. Moreover, illegitimacy in Hertfordshire was not notably high in the national context. In short, it appears that straw-plaiting did not make the poor saucy, at least to the extent that they produced illegitimate offspring. Indeed, looking at longer-term changes in illegitimacy rates across the county suggests that broader socio-economic factors were far more influential than local crafts.

A rather different perspective on illegitimacy was offered by Tom Nutt in his paper on the prosecution of unmarried mothers as 'lewd women' in early nineteenth-century Essex. Tom took two related forms of evidence to explore his theme: changes in legislation and the activity of the courts. The wording of late sixteenth-century legislation suggests that there was a growing perception that unmarried women were becoming more of a burden on the parish. It sought to make parents economically responsible for their children and thus discourage lewd behaviour. Attitudes appear to have hardened, and an early-seventeenth-century act sought more actively to punish 'lewd women' by committing them to houses of correction. The pendulum then seems to have swung back the other way, with eighteenth-century legislation placing emphasis on economic aspects, by promoting so-called affiliation orders which sought to identify the father and make him responsible for the maintenance of both mother and child. However, prosecution for lewdness was still possible—

an option which was restated in legislation in the early nineteenth century. Overall, then, the picture sketched out is one where economic considerations came to the fore, pushing moral concerns to the background; but there remained considerable scope for tensions to emerge between different parties.

These tensions formed the focus of the second part of Tom's paper, with much attention centring on the attitudes and activities of the parish as they brought illegitimacy cases to the courts. By the early nineteenth century, most parishes appear to have been more concerned with putting the financial burden of child maintenance on to the shoulders of individuals than in pursuing any moral crusade against unmarried women. Prosecutions for lewdness appear to have been largely restricted to cases where no father could be identified or where the court wanted to make an example of the woman—perhaps because she was seen as a 'repeat offender' but also, on occasions it seems, because of her behaviour or attitude in court. Indeed, the wording of the legislation made the issue of 'chargeability' central to many cases since, in theory at least, a woman could only be prosecuted for lewdness if the parish became chargeable. Parishes were thus forced into making decisions between financial expediency and moral exemplification. In concluding his paper, Tom noted the double-standards operated by the law and by many courts—seeking to punish women but not men—but he also highlighted the fact that women were active agents in these processes. Many of them knew their rights and used the legislation and the courts to secure the support they needed.

Once again, lunch was both substantial and very tasty and a glass of wine (or two) accompanied much genial conversation. The bookstall was very well supplied and it was difficult to choose from the good selection and good value books on offer. The afternoon session comprised a panel on the subject of crime, with a distinct West Country flavour with speakers from Plymouth University, Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society, and Exeter University.

The first speaker of the session was Jackie Bryon (University of Plymouth) with a paper entitled 'Crime, conflict and vested interest: petty sessions in Torquay, 1841–1850'. Jackie explained that the research was based on findings from a wider study of quarter session records 1840–1860, along with local newspapers, which had proved to be a valuable supplementary source. Torquay was unique in this period in that in an attempt to improve the area and make it crime-free, a Local Improvement Act (known locally as the 'Lighting and Walking Act') had been established with Improvement Commissioners elected by ratepayers. They had the power to influence Torquay's development in this period and consisted of many local influential tradesmen such as local banker and solicitor, William Kitson—a major influence in creating the Act. This local Act accounted for over 50 per cent of convictions for minor crimes in the period. Another local dignitary, Charles Kilby, Surveyor of Highways, brought many of these cases possibly as a warning to poor outsiders and to discourage them from coming into the area. Those convicted were usually male, although occasionally women were also convicted and the Act covered such areas as abusive language, infringement of licensing laws (often selling alcohol during

divine service), and vagrancy. With regard to vagrancy, convictions were not significant until 1849 when between January-March there were twelve vagrancy convictions (nine men and three women).

New slaughterhouse facilities were established under the Torquay Market Company from 1849, but were resisted by local butchers who refused to use the facilities. Convictions show the level of resistance to the new facilities and regulations. Matthew Churchward, who had by 1851 a substantial business and large household, was convicted several times under the local Act: in 1843 for leaving a dung cart at the back of his premises, then again in 1846 for leaving carts in the public way and again in 1849 for using defective weights and measures. Jackie suggested that he was selected as a target to provide an example and warning to others. In concluding her interesting and well-researched paper, Jackie confirmed that conflict and vested interest had been embedded in the local government of Torquay and that the local Act and commissioners were heavily influential on how the town grew and developed.

The second speaker of the afternoon was Jan Settington from Somerset Archaeological and Natural History Society with her fascinating paper entitled, 'The long-suffering male: men on the receiving end of mental abuse and domestic violence in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries in Somerset and Devon'. This research is part of a wider exploration into male rape, although this was not the focus of the paper at the conference. The paper explored and exploded the myth that men were always the offenders in domestic violence and that women were invariably victims in the period. Jan's research has found that in fact men too were the victims of domestic violence, but generally these were unreported. Sources to substantiate reports of violence by women against men are extremely difficult to locate with the tendency to report cases of violence by men against women making the majority of reports. However, some post-trial reports do record violence against men and help substantiate abuse, but many others were likely to be unreported. It was suggested that many men suffered and endured domestic violence in silence as the likely result of this becoming public knowledge was public humiliation with the man being considered weak or a cuckold. The likely outcome of this ridicule could be subjection to 'skimmington' or 'rough music' by neighbours. Figures from the twentieth century reveal that violence towards men by women is much more normal than has previously been believed and it was suggested that these figures from 1996 might reflect the level of violence from earlier periods too.

In one particularly interesting case study, that of John and Betsy Allen, the husband John had apparently endured years of cruelty, violence and infidelity by his wife Betsy, until he could endure no more and murdered his wife and attempted to commit suicide, though this attempt failed. Indeed, this research suggests that suicide might be the final result of men experiencing violence at the hands of their wife or womenfolk. For some, death was the preferred solution. More work needs to be done to identify the extent of this sort of domestic violence, but the research so far suggests that the cases already identified are just the tip of the iceberg in an under-explored and often

neglected area of the history of crime in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

The final speaker in what had been both a fascinating and extremely enjoyable day was Vanessa Chambers from the University of Exeter with her paper, 'Making a fortune: Blackpool fortune tellers in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century'. Fortune-tellers had been a familiar sight on Blackpool's south shore until the early part of the century when a spate of prosecutions under section four of the Vagrancy Act (1824) had ensued. It was suggested that this was an attempt to frighten them away from the land they had squatted on for many years to allow it to be developed into the much more profitable Pleasure Beach. Fortune-tellers, mediums, astrologers and the like were always acting outside the law until 1951 and many were prosecuted either under the aforementioned Act or under the older Witchcraft Act (1735). It was suggested that often the magistrates had good reason for these prosecutions since the unsettling and even dangerous effects of fortune-tellers could be widespread. Servant girls, for example, might be duped into stealing from their mistresses in order to pay for their forecasts and even severe cases of wilful neglect of children had been ascribed to the mother spending all her time and money to pay for the services of a fortune-teller.

Using prosecution details of cases reported in *The Times* during the first half of the twentieth century it has been possible to build up a database of these prosecutions and to discover much information about the people who set themselves up in the business of fortune-telling which otherwise is very difficult to discover. These prosecutions reports can be augmented by other sources to reveal useful details about the sex, age, location, type of services offered, court tried at and sentencing of fortune-tellers, spiritualists and astrologers. Furthermore, information can be gleaned about the class and type of person who sought such services. Analysis of these prosecutions has shown that during wartime—especially the First World War—some people resorted to such services as a prop to help them through days of anxiety and uncertainty. Fortune-tellers burgeoned during the war: many fortune-tellers made considerable livings from their businesses and were able to adapt to social changes, such as growing commercialism and consumerism.

Prosecution reports originated from all over the country, but 60 per cent were from London or Middlesex and a further 17 per cent from seaside towns such as Blackpool, Margate, Brighton and Yarmouth. While women made up the majority of fortune-tellers prosecuted (72 per cent), a significant number of men were also practitioners and were prosecuted, thus dispelling the myth that such practices were only the activity of women for women. Men too plied these trades, and men also made up a proportion of fortune-teller's customers, especially during wartime.

The conference broke for refreshments and continued discussion after everyone had congratulated Nigel Goose on what had proved to be a very well-organised, interesting and informative conference. In turn, appreciation was shown to the Law Faculty staff (particularly Sue Luckhurst) to the catering

staff (Mandy Skeggs and her team) and to the security officer of unknown identity, whose most important contribution (among many) was to locate the switch for the central heating.

Jon Stobart  
*University of Northampton*

Vanessa Chambers  
*University of Exeter*

## INTER-ETHNIC MARRIAGE PATTERNS IN LATE SIXTEENTH-CENTURY SHETLAND

**Remco Knooihuizen**

Remco Knooihuizen is a postgraduate student in Linguistics and English Language at the University of Edinburgh, focusing on the sociolinguistics of minority languages in Early Modern Europe. As such he has a keen interest in the (population) history of this period, which can be extremely relevant to linguistic developments

### **Introduction**

This article uses evidence from personal names in an attempt to uncover patterns of inter-ethnic marriage in Shetland in the late sixteenth century, shortly after a large Scots immigration had drastically altered the ethnic makeup of its population. In the debate about the death of the Norn language in Shetland (a Scandinavian language similar to Norwegian and Faroese) and its replacement by Scots (a West Germanic language that shares its roots with English), it has previously been argued that a drastic change in the ethno-demographic makeup of the islands was an important contributing factor to the language shift. In the sixteenth century, large numbers of Scots migrated to Shetland mostly from the Lowland Scottish areas of Angus, Fife, and Lothian. In a relatively short span of time, the Scottish population in the islands rose from negligible numbers to approximately a third of the population.<sup>1</sup> Their numbers and the high status of the incomers' language (the latter inferred from the late nineteenth century onwards and not confirmed by sixteenth-century evidence) could alone be considered enough reason for a language shift. However, it can be helpful to look at other aspects of the demographic change as well.<sup>2</sup>

One of these aspects is exogamy: that is, the rates of intermarriage between members of the different ethnic groups. Exogamy is often mentioned as a mechanism of language shift. Children from an inter-ethnic marriage are often (but not always) brought up proficient in the 'target language', the language of the socially dominant group, rather than in the 'abandoned language' of the socially subordinate group. This paper investigates to what extent the Scots incomers and the original Norse population of Shetland intermarried shortly after the main period of immigration.<sup>3</sup>

### **The history of Shetland up to the sixteenth century**

The Shetland Islands are an archipelago situated in the North Atlantic to the north-east of the Scottish mainland. Previously a dependency of the Norwe-

gian and later Dano-Norwegian kings, the islands came under Scottish rule in 1469. The current author's interest lies primarily in Shetland's linguistic history, and it is from this angle that the current study is approached.

Norwegian emigrants settled in the Shetland Islands in the eighth and ninth centuries, and it has been argued that they entirely displaced the original, probably Celtic, population of the islands. Shetland was administered as part of the Earldom of Orkney until the late twelfth century, when it became a direct dependency of the Norwegian crown. In 1469, the Dano-Norwegian King Christian I pawned Shetland to the Scottish crown as part of the dowry he had agreed to pay for his daughter Margrethe's marriage to King James III.

Scottish influence on the Orkney Islands, geographically close to Shetland but nearer to the Scottish mainland, had started in the thirteenth century, and the Earls of Orkney had been of Scottish descent since 1236. The Sinclairs, earls from 1379 onwards, tried to make their mark in Shetland as well. Still, it is generally believed that Scottish influence in Shetland, apart from administrative and ecclesiastical links, was minimal until after the islands were pledged to Scotland, and 'while there were Scots in Shetland in 1469, they were few and far between'.<sup>4</sup>

There is limited evidence of any significant Scottish migration before 1500, but the names in the court book—a summary of proceedings at the local law court—a century later (1602–1604) suggest Scottish descent for about a third of the population. An earlier document from 1577, a complaint signed by 760 Shetlanders, shows a significant proportion of Scottish names as well.<sup>5</sup>

Donaldson lists three incentives for permanent or semi-permanent migration from Scotland to Shetland.<sup>6</sup> The first was a desire for land, perhaps most easily obtainable after former churchlands became available following the Reformation in 1560, but no less prominent a reason for migration before then. The second reason was trade, the third a more general work-migration. This included not only clergy and administrative personnel, but also other craftsmen.

The professional make-up of the immigrants and their geographical spread across Shetland—witness the documents mentioned above and in the following section—would suggest native Shetlanders and Scots immigrants were very likely to interact on a daily basis. This interaction could have resulted in frequent intermarriage between the two groups.

### **Society, language, and history: the field of (historical) sociolinguistics**

For the first century or so after the birth of linguistics as a modern scientific discipline in the nineteenth century, the linguists' focus was predominantly structural. Historical linguistics, which is concerned with how language changes over time, formulated generalisations of linguistic change in the form of 'laws'. Crucially, these changes were seen as operating and being motivated from *within* the language system.

It was not until the 1950s that a new sub-discipline in linguistics emerged—sociolinguistics—which considered, language in the context of its use. The focus of sociolinguistics lies *outside* the structural language system, in the link between language and society—or perhaps, to be more precise, the link between *variation* in language and *variation* in society. The earliest sociolinguistic work was concerned with language use in bilingual communities, and looked at what language, or language variety, members of these communities used in different situations ('domains') and for what purposes.<sup>7</sup> This early work had a very qualitative character, but it was not long before quantitative methods were applied to linguistic variation as well. This research paradigm, pioneered by William Labov in the 1960s,<sup>8</sup> seeks a statistically significant correlation between a linguistic variable—say, the pronunciation of 't' as a glottal stop in words like *butter*—and social categories such as class, gender, age, educational background, ethnicity, and so on.

Both the qualitative and quantitative sociolinguistic research paradigms revealed much about how language variation patterns within a community; moreover, they showed how these patterns changed over time—either by a study over a longer period, or by correlating variation with speaker age. It was now possible to see how linguistic change spreads through a community.

Because historical linguistics is primarily interested in language change over time, these findings led to interesting new opportunities in that field as well, and from the 1980s sociolinguistic methods have been applied to historical language situations. This new field of historical sociolinguistics includes both diachronic studies, charting a language change through time, and synchronic studies, looking at variation at a specific point in historical time, and applies both qualitative and quantitative methods. Because the surviving information on linguistic and social variation in historical situations is unlikely to be as fine-grained and easily obtainable as similar information in contemporary situations (the 'bad data' problem), historical sociolinguistics draws on generalisations from contemporary sociolinguistics, invoking the Uniformitarian Principle. This principle states that social variation in language was present in historical situations as much as in present varieties, and that linguistic changes spread through the community in similar ways as they do now.

#### *Sociolinguistic approaches to language shift*

From the early years of the discipline, people have been working on minority language groups within a mostly qualitative sociolinguistic framework. Minority language groups who are undergoing a language shift (that is, groups that are giving up their own heritage language in favour of another language, typically a more dominant language in the wider community) are of particular interest—partly in order to understand the process in which the heritage language cedes domain after domain to the dominant language, and partly in order to chart the social processes leading a community to give up their own language. This knowledge about the social causes of language shift can then be used to combat the shift, and strive for language maintenance.<sup>9</sup>



Language shift happens in a bilingual community, where there is an imbalance in the distribution of languages across different domains. Typically, the heritage language is used in more private contexts, while the dominant language of the wider community is preferred in more public and prestigious contexts. Because it is necessary for the minority language speakers to also speak the dominant language, bilingualism spreads through this community. Social pressures cause speakers to assign more and more domains to the dominant language instead of the heritage language, and at a given point, parents decide to teach their children the heritage language no longer, but to bring them up in the dominant language instead. This point, when the heritage language ceases to be the first language that children in the community learn, is called the Primary Language Shift.<sup>10</sup>

The decision not to transmit the heritage language to the children in the community is due to a complex of social factors. There is usually a weighing up of cultural factors,—which favour language maintenance,—against utilitarian factors—which favour language shift. It may well be economically sensible to shift to the dominant language and integrate into the wider community, but it will be at the expense of some cultural identity. Exactly when the utilitarian factors start outweighing the cultural factors may vary from one situation to another.<sup>11</sup>

Contemporary studies have shown various factors to be influential in tipping this balance to the side of language shift. These include participation in the same educational system as the majority-language group, in the same religious institutions, in the same army—in short, increasing integrative socialisation with the majority-language group. Another example of such socialisation is inter-ethnic marriage or exogamy.<sup>12</sup> Various studies of language shift in historical situations have suggested that same factors played a role there too. The current study of exogamy in late sixteenth-century Shetland can give diachronic evidence, supporting the idea that this type of socialisation can play a role in language shift.

### **Previous work on exogamy**

There have been occasional studies over the past decades detailing the relative origins of spouses married in specific parishes.<sup>13</sup> These have generally focused on 'marriage distance' or 'marriage horizon', which is defined as the distance between the parishes of residence of bride and groom at the time of marriage, as indicated in parish marriage registers.

Millard applied statistical methods—chi-square tests and regression analyses, among others—to his data to find significant migration links between urban and urban parishes, and rural and rural parishes. He also found that the geographical direction of migration was not a relevant factor in 'local' migration, but for migration from further away, major transport routes were a significant factor. Hunter applied similar methods to find a preference for marrying in certain periods of the year, in particular around Michaelmas. Outside England, data from marriage registers has been used, for example for

the area around Lille in Northern France, where Lemerrier and Rosental's study showed migration between parishes within larger clusters, but not between clusters of parishes, indicating perhaps a stronger preference for migration within the 'local' field than Millard found.

In an attempt to find how accurate an indicator of migration marriage registers are, Pain and Smith used not parish of residence, as shown in marriage registers, but cross-referenced data from marriage registers with information about parishes of *origin*, which appears in baptismal records. They found that marriage registers underestimate personal mobility, as people tended to marry after taking up residence outside their birth parish. In a follow-up study, Bellingham found that this was especially the case for periods of rapidly increasing population in a parish.

The present study differs from this previous work in several respects. Where the exogamy in the above studies was spatially defined, we are interested in ethnicity-based intermarriage here. Migration is obviously relevant, as that is how the multi-ethnic society of sixteenth-century Shetland came about, but our interests here are rather in the interactions of the two groups once *in situ*, and not in the origins or directions of the migration. As we will see below, the available data would not have allowed the latter to be observed. Finally, information about people's ethnicity is not explicitly mentioned in the data, but has to be inferred from people's names.<sup>14</sup>

## Methods

There are very few sources available for Shetland population statistics. Lists of names can be derived from a 1577 complaint (more on which below) and from surviving courtbooks from 1602–04 and 1612–29. However, as these contain predominantly male names and no significant information about marriage, the source that is best suited for the present study is the Index to the Register of Testaments, a list of names of people whose wills were executed in the early seventeenth century. Such lists are available for various parts of Scotland, including Shetland, and contain both female names and the necessary information about marriage, cross-referencing between entries for husbands and wives (see Table 1). Data from the Register will be used here to undertake a quantitative analysis of marriage patterns.<sup>15</sup>

The Index to the Register of Testaments lists the name of the deceased and the date on which the deceased's will was executed. It contains approximately 1,050 entries. Of these, some 300 pertain to women; the other 750 are men. Where women are listed, the name of their husband—whether they be married or widowed—appears in the entry as appropriate. This is the case for 270 women, and only a small minority are not listed as having been married. Similar information is not systematically available for men; information about marriage is only available if a male entry is cross-referenced to a woman's testament. About 250 men are only mentioned in the Register as the husband of a deceased woman.

**Table 1 Excerpt from the Shetland Register of Testaments**

<b>Wischart</b> , Andrew, in Melbie in Sandness par. of Waiss	28 July 1613
" Helen, spouse to James Christopherson in Midsetter in the Isle of Papa	31 July 1630
" John, in Skarversetter in Waiss. <i>See Mansdochter</i> Nans.	
" Nicoll, in Brinzetter	13 July 1648
" Peter, in Estabuster in the Isle of Papay par. of Waiss	24 July 1613
<b>Work</b> , George, in Clet in Quhailsay. <i>See Cull</i> Katherine	
" John, in Scallowaybanks par. of Tingwall	28 Oct. 1628
<b>Wright</b> , Agnes, spouse to William Forsyth in Scallowaybanks	27 Sept. 1648
<b>Young</b> , Ola, in Uphous par. of Papa	16 Sept. 1635

It is not certain how representative this sample of marriages is. The Register covers the years 1611 to 1650, but there appear to be considerable gaps. It also shows a heavy bias towards the northern islands and parishes, in particular Unst, and it is unlikely this reflects major centres of population in the North. Conversely, the parish of Tingwall, which includes Scalloway, at the time the administrative centre of the islands, is only represented by ten marriages. Only two marriages are listed for the island of Foula; only two married women dying in the space of 40 years on an island thought to have up to 200 inhabitants around 1720 seems very meagre indeed.<sup>16</sup>

As the Register shows people who had made wills, it also shows a bias towards this particular group of people. According to Scottish law at the time, '[n]o persone may have ane air bot he who is aither ane prelat, burges, or in fie undenueded.'<sup>17</sup> Also excluded from making wills were the insane, the dumb and deaf, and minors. There were also restrictions on married women making wills.<sup>18</sup> How much these rules were adhered to is another question which unfortunately the limited data available cannot answer.

There is generally some delay between a person's death and the execution of their testament. The average delay appears to have been between one and one and a half years, but in individual cases could be up to eight years or even longer.<sup>19</sup> The dates in the Register are therefore only a reasonable estimate of a person's date of death. If we follow Donaldson's assumption that the bulk of the Scottish immigration to Shetland took place in the latter half of the sixteenth century, the recorded deaths are possibly those of some original immigrants, but most will be of the first generation after the Scottish immigration.

Because of its date, the Register of Testaments is very well suited to a survey of inter-ethnic marriage patterns shortly after the Scottish immigration. There are

doubts about the list's representativeness of early seventeenth-century Shetland population in general, but despite these it is believed that it is still possible to discover general trends.

#### *Defining ethnicity*

The ethnicity of the people in the Register was determined on the basis of their names. This follows a previous use of the Register as onomastic, or name-based, evidence by Donaldson. He used data from the Register, as well as from one of the surviving court books (1602–04), to estimate 'the racial composition of the people of Shetland as it was in the early seventeenth century'. We need, of course, to be very cautious when using onomastic evidence as a clue to ethnicity or 'linguistic allegiance'. There is nothing to stop a name from being borrowed and used in another ethnolinguistic context, obscuring any clear ties between language, ethnicity and names. In the case of Shetland, this has indeed been observed: there was a steady decline of typically Norse names in favour of Scots names in the sixteenth century.<sup>20</sup>

But even if we ignore the unreliable nature of onomastic evidence in itself, we still need to deal with some other problems this evidence poses. These were identified by Donaldson. Firstly, the surnames only show paternal descent. A Scottish name only indicates a Scottish father, and it is possible that all the person's other ancestors were Norse, and vice versa. Donaldson argues that occurrences both ways will even each other out. For the period so shortly after the Scots immigration, this is likely to be a reasonable assumption.

#### *What is Norse, what is Scots in Shetland personal names?*

Another problem Donaldson addressed, although without giving a conclusive solution, is that it is not always clear whether a name is Scots or Norse. The guidelines set up by Norwegian place-name scholar Berit Sandnes for deciding whether place-names in Orkney were of Norse or Scots origin may be of use in this respect.<sup>21</sup>

- 'Probably Norse' are names with remaining Norse morphology [*that is, word elements*], or names with a Norse generic.
- 'Probably Scots' are names where all elements are Scots (including local borrowings from Norse), or names with a Scots generic.
- 'Uncertain' are names where all elements can be either Norse or Scots.

In the case of uncertain names, there may be circumstantial evidence to suggest Norse or Scots origins, such as a very early or late date of first occurrence. Translating from place-names to personal names, 'generics' correspond to people's surnames; first names are what Sandnes would call 'specifiers'. If it is possible to determine which elements are Norse, and which are Scots, we should be able to make at least an educated guess of the person's ethnicity.

A factor that complicates this, however, is the language of the Shetland

records. They were written down in Scots, and it is possible that some of the Norse names were Scotticised in the process. Sandnes gives examples of people using a Scots version of their name in Scots-language documents, and a Norse version in Norse-language documents—a not uncommon event; witness for example the attested Danicisation of Faroese names in Danish-language records from the Faroe Islands.<sup>22</sup> Donaldson mentions particularly the Shetland Norn form of *Sigurdsson*, which may appear in the records as *Shewartson*, *Stewartson*, or even just *Stewart*—the name of one of the most famous (and infamous) Scottish families in Shetland history: Robert and Patrick Stewart, 1st and 2nd Earls of Orkney (including Shetland) are well known for their brutal reign in the islands.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Norse and Scots names in Shetland: first names*

The most extensive study of personal names in Shetland is presented in a recent article by Tom Schmidt. The starting point for Schmidt's research is the already mentioned document from 1577, a complaint against misrule by the laird, Laurence Bruce of Cuthmalindie, signed by a large number of 'commons and inhabitants' of Shetland. (As these were all men, judging from Schmidt's article, this document is not suitable for the study of marriage patterns at the time.) Schmidt focuses on both first names and surnames. He divides the first names in the complaint letter into three categories: Norse names, such as *Olav* or *Magnus*, accounting for 30 per cent of the people named, international names like *John* or *Peter* (55 per cent), and British names such as *Robert* or *Bruce* (15 per cent).<sup>24</sup> He gives complete lists of the names he considers to belong to each of these three categories.

Schmidt's lists are a very useful starting point, especially in combination with the list of Norse names from Shetland by Hermann Pálsson. There is, however, some room for criticism. Firstly, some names seem to be placed in the wrong category. Schmidt treats *Hucheon* as a form of Norse *Håkon*. It is possible that Scots scribes scotticised *Håkon* to *Hucheon* in some cases, but it is also a diminutive of the British name *Hugh*. Schmidt also fails to recognise *Myches* (classed as an international name) and *Machis* (as British) as possible forms of the international name *Matthew* (or *Matthias*).<sup>25</sup> Secondly, the names *William*, *Henry* and *Richard* are listed as British, although Schmidt admits related forms (*Vilhelm*, *Hendrik* and *Rikard*) occur in Norway, especially in Western Norway, which was the area with which Shetland had the most intensive contacts. In this light, a classification as international names would perhaps have been more suited.

In his discussion of international names, including the three mentioned directly above, Schmidt focuses more on etymology, and on the question of whether names are historically demonstrably related, than on the forms themselves. However, it is clear that although, for example, *John* and *Hans* are related forms, they stem from different linguistic traditions. For some, but not all, of the international names, the form may give another clue to ethnicity. Local preferences for certain international names can also be distinguished, for instance the name *Erasmus* (the patron saint of the Hanseatic League) can be

expected to have been more popular in Hansa-influenced Scandinavia than in Lowland Scotland.

The Norse form of an international name may have been different from the Scots form, but as writers were working within a Scots tradition, we must be aware of a certain amount of scotticisation. (Adaptation of names will always have been a scotticisation of a Norse name; the inverse process is possible but very unlikely.) It therefore seems safe to say that if a name occurs in a Norse form, it is likely to reflect Norse ethnicity, but international names in a Scots form cannot be taken as conclusive evidence about ethnicity because of the possible scotticisation.

*Norse and Scots names in Shetland: surnames*

Schmidt distinguishes three types of surnames in his data: patronymics, which are names based on the first name of the person's father, by-names, which can indicate a person's characteristics or profession, and habitation names, which stem from the name of the place a person lives. All of these can be 'true' or 'fixed'. For 'true' names, the system is still productive, and the surname actually indicates a person's father's name, their characteristics or their place of residence. If the names are 'fixed', they have been passed unchanged from generation to generation and their meaning need no longer necessarily apply to the name-bearer.

As the Register of Testaments includes people's place of residence, we can see that none of the habitation names in the data seem to be true. This is all the more interesting since Schmidt did find true habitation names in his 1577 data. The habitation names may give a clue to the bearer's ethnicity, as it is clear where the place is that the person is named after. There is a small number of habitation names based on Shetland place-names: *Kirkhouse*, *Gott*, and *Inkster*. These may point to Shetland (Norse) origins. Alternatively, these people may have been Scots immigrants who named themselves after their newly acquired land: after all, landownership was an important incentive for migration. Orcadian place names, such as *Halcro* and *Linklater*, pose an additional problem in that Orkney is thought to have been far more Scotticised than Shetland at the time, although Norn was still being spoken there too. These Orcadians' 'linguistic allegiance' is very difficult to determine.

The second type of surnames, by-names, occurs in Schmidt's 1577 data, but only very rarely in combination with a Scandinavian given name. As the data in neither Schmidt's data nor the Register of Testaments give a clue to whether the by-names are true or fixed (and likely to be Norse or Scots, respectively), it seems wisest to count them as Scots, following the strong Scots bias in this type of names that Schmidt has observed.

Patronymics, finally, are thought to have no longer been used in Lowland Scotland and Orkney by the late sixteenth century. Donaldson, however, notices the possibility of incomers conforming to local practices and giving their children true patronymic surnames rather than fixed ones. True

patronymics were still the standard in Shetland at the time; indeed, the last Shetlander with a true patronymic did not die until the 1920s.

On the whole it seems relatively safe to classify at least the patronymics ending in *-dokter* as true, and therefore as Norse, although some reservations to this assumption are discussed below. Those ending in *-son*, however, pose another problem in that many Scots surnames were originally patronymics too. In these cases we can follow Sandnes' method and look at the specifiers, the fathers' first names. It is highly likely that *Manson*, *Magnusson* (from *Magnus*), and *Ola(v)son* (from *Ola(v)*) are of Norse origin, and given the clear Shetland bias for the international name *Erasmus*, *Erasmusson* is also very likely to point at Norse ethnicity. Other names are less clearly Norse, and further evidence is needed.

#### *Surname Profiler*

A useful tool for providing this further evidence is the 'Surname Profiler' on the 'Spatial Literacy' website, a web-based search facility into the distribution of surnames in Great Britain. The data are based on a recent research project at University College London. The profiler only shows the relative frequency of a name compared to other areas in Great Britain, and the oldest available data is as recent as from 1881, three centuries after the oldest people in the Register. Nonetheless, the 1881 data on this website may suggest some further classification of names, as follows.<sup>26</sup>

- The names *Laurenson* and *Walterson* are highly frequent in Shetland, but very infrequent elsewhere in Britain. This is interesting as Schmidt has *Walter* as a purely British name, and *Laurence* as an international name (but with high frequency also in Western Norway). Independent Scots-based patronymic formation is conceivable, but as the names hardly occur outside Shetland, this would rather suggest a local formation, with both *Laurenson* and *Walterson* suggesting Norse ethnicity.
- The name *Nicolson* occurs with high frequency only in Shetland and in the Highlands and Western Isles. The name *Nicolson* we find in the Highlands is an anglicised version of *MacNeacail*, and although members of this family migrated to Shetland, via Lowland Scotland, this was not before the late seventeenth century; the *Nicolsons* in the Register of Testaments are therefore most likely to be of Norse ethnicity.<sup>27</sup>
- The names *Simonson* and *Thomason* are interesting in that these forms are very particular for Shetland only, at least in a Scottish context.<sup>28</sup> The shorter forms *Simpson* and *Thomson* (including spelling variants) are found throughout Scotland, including Shetland. English patronymics in general seem to prefer formation with a shorter form of the father's name. It seems reasonable to suggest that the long forms are Norse formations; the short forms are inconclusive.

### *Initial observations*

Some of the names in the Register caused a problem for this survey as they did not conform to expected patterns. These were primarily Norse first names with a Scots surname, such as *Ingagarth Sinclair* (of Kirkabister, Yell), or *Sinevo Fraser* (of Clivocast, Unst). The Sinclairs had been trying to make their mark in Shetland since acquiring the Earldom of Orkney in 1379 and will have been among the earliest immigrants. The Frasers, too, migrated to Shetland at an early stage.<sup>29</sup> These names seem to point to inter-ethnic marriage among the earliest immigrants.

Another interesting set of names is *Agnes Bothwelsdochter* (Quoyfirth, Northmavine), *John Bothwelson* (Brough, Yell) and *Bothwell Erasmusson* (Hamnavoe, Unst). These appear to be true patronymics, but the first element is unmistakably Scots. This could be an example of Shetlanders borrowing Scots names, as mentioned by Sandnes. However, *Bothwell* is a surname based on a Lanarkshire place-name, not a first name. It is unlikely that patronymics would be formed from what would have been understood as a surname. It is possible the name *Bothwell* was understood as a first name because it appears parallel to Norse first names such as *Thorwald*. An alternative explanation for *Bothwelsdochter*, and similar true patronymics with an unmistakably British specifier, is that incomers conformed to local naming practices. However, given the attested sixteenth-century decline in Norse names in favour of Scots names mentioned earlier, the former explanation is perhaps likely to apply to more cases than the latter.

### **Results and discussion**

Allowing for considerable leniency and educated guesswork in the allocation of ethnicity to names, it was still necessary to exclude about one-fifth of the marriages in the Register from the research, as the names of either or both of the spouses were ambiguous. This left 216 marriages, which were then divided into three groups: mono-ethnic Scots, mono-ethnic Norse, and inter-ethnic marriages. The distribution of these marriages is shown in Table 2. Included in the table is the distribution one would expect if all the men and women from the sample married regardless of ethnicity.<sup>30</sup>

#### *Rates of inter-ethnic marriage*

The analysis shows that mixed marriages account for approximately a third of the sample. So shortly after the initial immigration, this suggests that the two ethnic groups were well integrated pretty much from the start, although a random distribution would see significantly more inter-ethnic and fewer mono-ethnic marriages. Of course, we need to keep in mind that the sample is not necessarily representative of Shetland as a whole.

The results differ from parish to parish quite strongly. Looking only at the five best-represented parishes (to stay on the statistically safe side), there is a clear difference between Dunrossness in the South, and Northmavine, Unst, Yell and Fetlar in the North of Shetland. Dunrossness was a major centre for Scottish



**Table 2 Inter-ethnic marriage patterns in late-sixteenth century Shetland**

Parish	<i>n</i>	N-N	N-S	S-N	Mixed	S-S
<i>Northern Shetland</i>						
Unst	50	20	9	13	22	8
Northmavine	24	12	2	7	9	3
Fetlar	18	8	5	4	9	1
Yell	17	7	0	6	6	4
	109	47 (43%)	16	30	46 (42%)	16 (15%)
<i>Mid-Shetland</i>						
Nesting & Lunnasting	12	6	3	0	3	3
Delting	11	8	1	0	1	2
Sandsting & Aithsting	11	8	1	0	1	2
Walls & Sandnes	10	2	0	3	3	5
Whiteness & Weisdale	7	2	1	1	2	3
Whalsay	6	1	1	2	3	2
Papa Stour	4	1	1	0	1	2
Foula	2	0	0	2	2	0
	63	28 (44%)	9	9	18 (29%)	17 (27%)
<i>Southern Shetland</i>						
Dunrossness	17	2	1	0	1	14
Tingwall	10	1	1	3	4	5
Bressay, Burra and Quarff	6	1	0	2	2	3
Lerwick	1	0	0	0	0	1
	34	4 (12%)	2	5	7 (21%)	23 (67%)
Unspecified	10	2	2	2	4	4
Total	216	81 (37%)	29	46	75 (35%)	60 (28%)
Expected	216	65 (30%)	45	62	107 (50%)	44 (20%)

**Note:** The letters N (Norse) and S (Scots) refer to the ethnicity of the spouses, with the husband's ethnicity named first.

immigration, while Scots were less numerous in the North. For the Northern parishes, the patterns of inter-ethnic marriage do not differ significantly from what we can expect if people married irrespective of ethnicity ( $p=0.1755$ , where values of  $p<0.05$  are considered significant). There are significant deviations from expected patterns for Mid- ( $p<0.0001$ ) and Southern Shetland ( $p<0.0140$ ), and for Shetland as a whole ( $p<0.0001$ ).

#### *Marriage preferences by ethnicity*

These significant deviations in areas where Scots were more numerous, and where Scots marriage partners therefore were more readily available, could suggest that Scots had a preference for marriage partners of their own ethnicity, possibly for reasons of status. However, mono-ethnic Norse marriages are also more numerous than in a random distribution.

**Table 3 Preference for marriage partners by ethnicity**

	<i>n</i>	Scots partner	Norse partner
Scots	195	120 (62%)	75 (32%)
Norse	237	75 (38%)	162 (68%)

Table 3 shows the Shetlanders' marriage preferences by ethnicity. Of the Scots, 38 per cent entered into an exogamous marriage, while 32 per cent of the Norse did so. The ethnic make-up of the population would predict that the percentages should be 55 per cent for the Scots and 45 per cent for the Norse. Both groups engaged in exogamous marriage 0.7 times as often as can be expected; in other words, they were both equally averse to exogamous marriage. This preference for endogamous marriage is statistically highly significant ( $p < 0.0001$  for both groups).

#### *Marriage preferences by gender*

Another issue that needs to be addressed is a possible gender division in the choice of marriage partners by ethnicity. From Table 2 we can conclude that of the mixed marriages, a substantially larger portion involved a Scottish man and a Norse woman. This is interesting in light of theories of women being more inclined to strive towards social upward mobility, and in particular of women playing a leading role in language shift and language change towards a standard or prestige variety.<sup>31</sup>

However, as the proportion between Norse-Scots and Scots-Norse marriages in the data is not significantly different ( $p = 0.54$ ) from what we would expect (Table 4), it is more likely to be a result of a possible imbalance in the gender make-up of the Scots population of Shetland at the time. Donaldson writes about 'a certain number of Scots [who] came to Shetland for a time for one reason or another but returned to Scotland'.<sup>32</sup> These Scots that came to Shetland with the intention of work rather than settlement are perhaps more likely to have been male than female, and a surplus of Scots males means that women would be more likely than men to marry a Scots partner.

The aversion to inter-ethnic marriage by the Norse population and the absence of a clear leading role for Norse women in inter-ethnic marriage could suggest that the high status modern historians tend to assign to the Scots immigrants was not perceived as such by Shetlanders around 1600.

#### *Generational differences*

The data not only show clear geographical differences, but also generational differences. In Table 5, the data are separated by the decade in which the married woman died. In light of the available data, this is the closest we can get to showing generational differences. The data set is spread over time and space in similar ways, so each period in the generational data covers an equally wide range of parishes.

**Table 4 Gender division in ethnically mixed marriages**

	<i>n</i>	Norse husband Scots wife	Scots husband Norse wife
Actual	75	29 (39%)	46 (61%)
Expected	107	45 (42%)	62 (58%)

**Table 5 Development of marriage patterns 1611–50**

Decade	<i>n</i>	Norse	Mixed	Scots
1611–20	67	37 (55%)	21 (31%)	9 (13%)
1621–30	70	26 (37%)	24 (34%)	20 (29%)
1631–40	33	12 (36%)	10 (30%)	11 (33%)
1641–50	46	6 (13%)	20 (43%)	20 (43%)
Total	216	81 (37%)	75 (35%)	60 (28%)

The data show that over time the proportion of mono-ethnic Norse marriages dropped spectacularly, and there was a similarly spectacular percentage rise in mono-ethnic Scots marriages. The rate of inter-ethnic marriage, interestingly, stayed more or less the same. There are several possible explanations for this. Firstly, as inter-ethnic marriage involved predominantly Scots men, the next generation would turn up in the records with a Scots surname and be very likely to be counted as Scots according to the method used. This theory may account for a rise in Scots marriages and a decline in Norse ones, but it does not explain why the amount of mixed marriages should stay the same. Another reason for the rise in mono-ethnic Scots marriages—as well as a rise in the percentage of the population in the data set that are Scottish from 29 per cent in the 1610s to 66 per cent in the 1640s—is that immigration may have continued into the seventeenth century. Finally, as the seventeenth century progressed, there may have been a growing rift of ‘possession’ along ethnic lines. That is to say, the class of people with enough possessions to make a testament may have been increasingly Scotticised. This would mean that the population in the data would be Scotticised as well.

### Conclusion

Using the early seventeenth-century Shetland Register of Testaments as onomastic evidence for patterns of inter-ethnic marriage between the original Norse population and Scots immigrants is a highly tentative affair due to the expected unrepresentativeness of the data and substantial difficulties in assigning ethnicities to names. Despite this, certain tendencies may still be observed.

The proportion of inter-ethnic marriages calculated from the data is 35 per cent. However, as the data is likely to have excluded mostly mono-ethnic Norse marriages, it is probable that the actual rate is likely to have been in the range of 25 to 30 per cent. This is a lower rate than might be expected from a

random distribution of marriage partners, but nonetheless a substantial proportion. Marriage patterns varied across the islands, with the South, in particular the parish of Dunrossness, the only area to show primarily mono-ethnic Scots marriages. As this was the area with the densest Scots population, this is unsurprising.

The data show that Scots were slightly more likely to marry someone from the other group than the Norse, but that both groups married within their own ethnic group more than can be expected from a random distribution. Taking into account the relative sizes of the groups, both appear to have had an equal aversion to inter-ethnic marriage.

In both the Scots and the Norse groups, women were more likely than men to marry a Scots partner. This is probably due to a surplus of men in the Scots population. The difference is not significant enough to confirm patterns of women leading upward social mobility and language shifts, but is reason to question the belief that higher status was assigned to Scots in the islands around 1600.

The later part of the data shows more mono-ethnic Scots marriages and fewer mono-ethnic Norse ones than the data from earlier decades, while the rate of intermarriage remains fairly similar throughout the period. There are several possible explanations for this, but none of them is conclusive. Inter-ethnic marriage occurred on this scale at least from the time of second-generation immigrants onwards and, judging from a number of 'hybrid' names, already from the time of the first-generation immigrants.

Finally, these data seem to confirm the theory that the Scots immigration to Shetland was a contributing factor to the language shift, not only through geographical proximity and daily interaction outside the home, but also through widespread intermarrying of both ethnic groups, bringing daily interactions in the Scots language inside the homes of Shetland.

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### NOTES

1. G. Donaldson, 'The Scots settlement in Shetland', in D.J. Withrington ed., *Shetland and the outside world 1469-1969* (Oxford, 1983), 8-19. On the role of immigration in the language shift, see R. Knooihuizen, 'The Norn-to-Scots language shift in Shetland: another look at sociohistorical evidence', *Northern Studies*, 39 (2005), 105-17.
2. K. MacKinnon, 'Migration, family and education in Gaelic policy perspective' (2006), available from <http://www.arts.ed.ac.uk/celtic/poileasaidh/migration-family-education-Holyrood.pdf> (accessed February 2007).
3. C.B. Paulston, 'Social factors in language maintenance and language shift', in J.A. Fishman ed., *The Fergusonian impact: in honor of Charles A. Ferguson on the occasion of his 65th birthday* (Berlin,

- 1986), 2, 493–511. Some more detailed studies exploring the role of exogamy in language shift are G. Stevens, 'Nativity, intermarriage, and mother-tongue shift', *American Sociological Review*, 50 (1985), 74–83; V. de Klerk, 'The cross-marriage language dilemma: his language or hers?', *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 4 (2001), 197–216; and K.K.Y. Cheng, 'Language shift and language maintenance in mixed marriages: a case study of a Malaysian-Chinese family', *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, 161 (2003), 81–90.
4. Donaldson, 'Scots settlement', 10.
  5. The study of names in the court book appears in Donaldson, 'Scots settlement'; that of names in the 1577 document in T. Schmidt, 'Torwald of Hoverstad and Williame Makriche: the complexity of the names of the "Commownis and Inhabitantis of Yetland" in 1577', in P. Gammeltoft and B. Jørgensen eds, *Names through the looking glass: Festschrift in honour of Gillian Fellows-Jensen* (Copenhagen, 2006), 254–74.
  6. Donaldson, 'Scots settlement', 11–12.
  7. Fundamental publications in this research paradigm are U. Weinreich, W. Labov and M.I. Herzog, 'Empirical foundations for a theory of language change', in W.P. Lehmann and Y. Malkiel eds, *Directions for historical linguistics: a symposium* (Austin, 1968), 95–188; and with reference to multilingual societies, C.A. Ferguson, 'Diglossia', *Word*, 15 (1959), 325–40. J.A. Fishman's work on language use in the Yiddish community in the United States is another important contribution: for example, 'The sociology of language: an interdisciplinary social science approach to language in society', in Fishman ed., *Advances in the sociology of language* (Den Haag, 1972), 1, 217–380.
  8. W. Labov, 'The social stratification of English in New York City' (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1966).
  9. See for example J.A. Fishman, *Reversing language shift: theoretical and empirical foundations of assistance to threatened languages* (Clevedon, 1991). Language maintenance is an issue both because of a language's cultural value in society and because of the added value of language diversity for linguistics: see, for example, D. Crystal, *Language death* (Cambridge, 2000).
  10. This version of events is the essentials of a model of language shift and death published in H.J. Sasse, 'Theory of language death', in M. Brenzinger ed., *Language death: factual and theoretical explorations with special reference to East Africa* (Berlin/New York, 1992), 7–30. It is based on previous research on language shift and death in Scottish Gaelic and the Albanian dialects of Greece, but has since been shown to apply to Manx Gaelic as well: G. Broderick, *Language death in the Isle of Man: an investigation into the decline and extinction of Manx Gaelic as a community language* (Tübingen, 1999). This suggests the model may be more widely applicable.
  11. M. Ehala, 'An evaluation matrix for ethnolinguistic vitality', to appear in *Proceedings of the 10th International Conference of Minority Languages*, Trieste 2005, available from <http://www.tu.ee/fil/ehala/pdf/EthnolinguisticvitalityTrst.pdf>; A. de Swaan, 'Endangered languages, sociolinguistics, and linguistic sentimentalism', *European Review*, 12 (2004), 567–80.
  12. Paulston, 'Social factors', 498–9.
  13. J. Millard, 'A new approach to the study of marriage horizons', *Local Population Studies*, 28 (1982), 10–31; A. Hunter, 'Marriage horizons and seasonality: a comparison', *Local Population Studies*, 35 (1985), 38–42; C. Lemerrier and P.A. Rosental, '"Pays" ruraux et découpage de l'espace: les réseaux migratoires dans la région lilloise au milieu du XIXe siècle', *Population* (French edition), 55 (2000), 691–726; A.J. Pain and M.T. Smith, 'Do marriage horizons accurately measure migration? A test case from Stanhope parish, County Durham', *Local Population Studies*, 33 (1984), 44–8; R.A. Bellingham, 'The use of marriage horizons to measure migration: some conclusions from a study of Pocklington, East Yorkshire in the late eighteenth century', *Local Population Studies*, 44 (1990), 52–5.
  14. M. Poulain and M. Foulon ('L'immigration flamande en Wallonie: évaluation à l'aide d'un indicateur anthroponymique', *Belgisch Tijdschrift voor Nieuwste Geschiedenis = Revue belge d'histoire contemporaine*, 12 (1981), 205–44) showed that such onomastic evidence can be a reliable indicator of migration, although their study was restricted to a very salient marker of Dutch-language origin, that is surnames starting with the preposition *van*.
  15. *The court book of Shetland, 1602–1604*, ed. by G. Donaldson (Edinburgh, 1954); *The court book of Orkney and Shetland, 1612–1613*, ed. by R.S. Barclay (Edinburgh, 1962); *The court book of Orkney and Shetland, 1614–1615*, ed. by R.S. Barclay (Edinburgh, 1967); *Court book of Shetland, 1615–1629*, ed.

- by G. Donaldson (Lerwick, 1991); *Commisariat Record of Orkney and Shetland: Register of Testaments*, ed. by F.J. Grant (Edinburgh, 1904).
16. Foula population data from P. Razzell, *The conquest of smallpox: the impact of inoculation on smallpox mortality in eighteenth-century Britain* (Sussex, 1997), 118.
  17. J.A. Clyde ed., *Hope's Major Practicks 1608–1633* (Edinburgh, 1937), 1, 285–335 describes the regulations pertaining to wills and succession. This particular stipulation is on p. 312: 'No person may have an heir but he who is either a prelate, burgess, or in fee undenuded', that is, someone who holds something in fee—lands, right, heritage or office—but who has not resigned it.
  18. Clyde ed., *Hope's Major Practicks*, 285-6: 'Ane womane being frie, and not subject to no man, may make ane testament, bot, if she be under the pouer of her husband, she may not dispoun upon any goods without his consent.' As in only 10 per cent of cases does the wording suggest that the husband died before the wife, we may conclude that husbands typically did consent to their wives making their own wills.
  19. This statistic is obtained by cross-referencing the date for the execution of the wills of Shetland clergymen with information about their deaths in H. Scott ed., *Fasti ecclesiae scoticanae: the succession of ministers in the Church of Scotland from the Reformation*, 7 (Edinburgh, 1928). The delay of eight years was in the case of Euphane Cranstane, wife of Nicol Whyte, minister of Dunrossness. There is no evidence that women's testaments were only executed after their husbands' death, as Whyte was known to have been alive eight years after Cranstane's testament was executed.
  20. The term 'linguistic allegiance' is from B. Sandnes, 'Personnavn i kontakt i de skandinaviske vikingtidskoloniene', *Studia Anthroponymica Scandinavica*, 22 (2004), 43–58, on p. 45. On Shetland naming practices, see also Hermann Pálsson, 'Norse personal names in early Shetland', in H. Cheape ed., *Tools and traditions: studies in European ethnology presented to Alexander Fenton* (Edinburgh, 1993), 247–55.
  21. B. Sandnes, *Fra Starafjall til Starling Hill: dannelse og utvikling av norrøne stedsnavn på Orknøyene* (Trondheim, 2003); 'What is Norse, what is Scots in Orkney place-names?', in P. Gammeltoft, C. Hough and D. Waugh eds, *Cultural contacts in the North Atlantic region: the evidence of names* (Lerwick, 2005), 173–80.
  22. Sandnes, 'Personnavn i kontakt i de skandinaviske vikingtidskoloniene', 46–7.
  23. On the Danicisation of Faroese names, see J.H.W. Poulsen, *Mál í mæti: greinasavn eftir Jóhan Hendrik W. Poulsen útgivið í sambandi við sjeiti ára føðingardag hansara 20. juni 2004* (Tórshavn, 2004), 135.
  24. The term 'British' here could be argued to be an anachronism, and some may prefer to describe this as 'English' and 'Scottish' instead. However, it is difficult to tell whether the British names are English or Scottish due to England and Scotland's shared and intertwined (linguistic) histories. For the purposes of this study, it is less important to distinguish between English and Scots names than it is to oppose Anglo-type names against Scandinavian type names.
  25. G.F. Black, *The surnames of Scotland: their origin, meaning, and history* (New York, 1946).
  26. Available at <http://www.spatial-literacy.org/UCLnames/default.aspx> (accessed September 2006–January 2007).
  27. W.D.H. Sellar and A. Maclean, *The Highland clan MacNeacail MacNicol: a history of the Nicolsons of Scorrybreac* (Watnish, 1999), 28.
  28. Outside Shetland, Thomason also occurs in Lancashire, and Simonson in County Durham. However, it is unlikely that a large-scale migration from Northern England to Shetland took place in this period, and the English occurrences are ignored for the sake of this argument.
  29. Donaldson, 'Scots settlement', 10.
  30. An alternative analysis with a stricter method of assigning ethnicity to names left only 151 marriages, or roughly half of the data, as opposed to the current four-fifths. Because there is not much data and the data may not be representative to begin with, it was considered preferable to use the method that left a larger part of the data intact, rather than feign a greater accuracy of results that will only ever be tentative.
  31. This is known in sociolinguistics as the 'sex prestige pattern': see, for example, R.A. Hudson, *Sociolinguistics* (Cambridge, 1996), 195–9.
  32. Donaldson, 'Scots settlement', 13.

## THE INCORPORATION OF EVIDENCE ABOUT LOCAL NONCONFORMITY INTO PARISH POPULATION RECONSTRUCTION

Janet Hudson

Janet Hudson is a former archivist active in local historical research. In 1998 she completed a PhD in social history at the University of Bristol. This article is a sequel to an article she published in *Local Population Studies*, 77 (2006).

### Introduction

Local contemporary sources for England providing continuous population data are elusive before the national census begins in 1801. One approach to this problem has produced a model, developed for the parish of Stonehouse, Gloucestershire, for making population estimates from Anglican parish registers, using Wrigley and Schofield's correction factors.<sup>1</sup> This model may be outlined as follows.

1. Take the baptism and burial totals from the parish registers for each calendar year, and test them for deficiency using a simplified form of Wrigley and Schofield's test.<sup>2</sup>
2. Adjust these using three factors, as supplied by Wrigley and Schofield, for nonconformity, late baptism and 'other causes' to produce estimated annual parish birth and death totals.<sup>3</sup>
3. Divide the annual total of births by the national crude birth rate and the annual total of deaths by the national crude death rate to estimate the population totals needed to generate each annual number of births and deaths. This provides two estimated population totals for each year, the one from births usually being the higher.
4. Smooth these two series of population totals using an 11-point moving average.
5. Select the larger of these two population averages for each year, and regard it as the solution to the demographic accounting equation for the previous year, producing a 'population base series'.
6. Smooth the population base series using a 51-point moving average, with appropriate reductions in the number of points at each end of the series.<sup>4</sup> The result may be called the *long average*.
7. Analyse other sources to construct independent estimates of the parish population during the period of the long average. These sources will include

the early population censuses of 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831, Hearth Tax returns, diocesan surveys, and other records, and may vary from parish to parish. The census population totals should be augmented using factors developed by Wrigley and Schofield, to compensate for unlisted infants and those serving in the armed forces.<sup>5</sup> Comparative work indicates that such independent estimates should only be considered if they lie within a range between 0.8 and 1.2 times the long average.

8. Construct a final parish population estimate, as a trend within the range of variation by first accepting the augmented census totals for the 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 censuses as definitive. Then, for other years with an independent estimate, take the mean of that estimate and the long average to produce a series of point estimates of the population at given reference years. Finally, calculate estimates for the intervening years by linear interpolation between consecutive reference points which are less than 21 years apart or, if the gap between consecutive reference points is 21 years or more, by connecting the reference points by interpolation to the long average 11 years into the gap.
9. The long average in the Stonehouse model appears to be able to absorb short-term variations in registration data, and to overcome divergence between Wrigley and Schofield's national factors and rates and the true (but unknown) local ones. Unusually rich local sources show this model to be robust in Stonehouse, a parish with comprehensive registration and low levels of nonconformity before 1800. This article will investigate whether the Stonehouse model can be applied in other parishes, particularly those containing nonconformist congregations which kept their own registers.

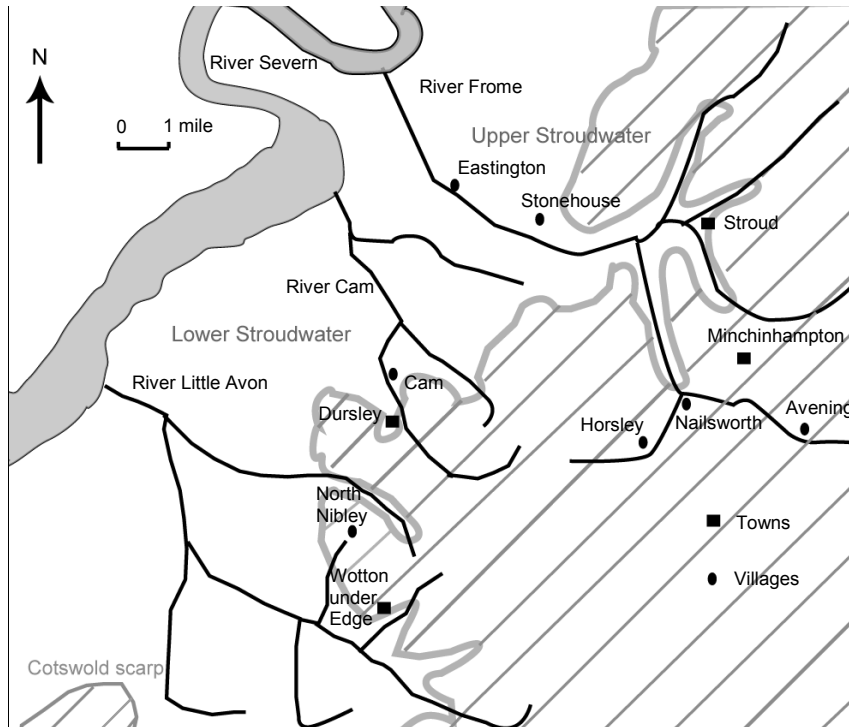
#### **The sample of parishes**

This investigation will be carried out in eight other local parishes, a total of nine including Stonehouse, all within the cloth-producing region of Gloucestershire (Figure 1).<sup>6</sup> The cloth industry operated before 1800 on a 'putting-out' system. Water-powered mills were used to prepare the wool and to finish the cloth, but weavers and other cloth workers were not bound to them, often working at home. The nine test parishes all depended on cloth, combined with mixed agriculture. Stonehouse, Eastington and Stroud are in the valley of the river Frome, known as Upper Stroudwater. Cam, North Nibley and Wotton under Edge (or Wotton) are in the Lower Stroudwater area, drained by the rivers Cam and Little Avon. Avening, Horsley and Minchinhampton surround the Nailsworth stream. Each of these three groups includes a market town. Minchinhampton and Wotton are on high ground, and were service centres for the surrounding cloth industry. Stroud, on the Frome, became a local capital for the clothing villages. All three are towns within large parishes, which also contain several hamlets. Avening, Horsley and Minchinhampton had seen the village of Nailsworth develop where their boundaries met in the valley, but its population was shared between the three parishes.<sup>7</sup>

These eight parishes are among the 404 parishes selected by Wrigley and Schofield as the basis for their national population reconstruction, indicating



Figure 1 Location map for selected places in the Stroudwater clothing district



Source: R. Perry, *The woollen industry in Gloucestershire to 1914*, (Shrewsbury, 2003), 67.

that that the registers had passed scrutiny and should produce viable data.<sup>8</sup> The Stonehouse model requires data for calendar years up to 1842, whereas the data for the 404 parishes stops at 1837, so the baptism and burial series for all eight parishes have been extended from the original registers. The registration for the parishes of Amberley and Brimscombe, formed out of the large parish of Minchinhampton in 1836 and 1841 respectively, has been added back into the Minchinhampton event totals up to 1842. Nailsworth was given its own ecclesiastical identity as a chapelry of Avening in 1794, although its population was shared between the parishes of Avening, Horsley and Minchinhampton until it became a parish in 1895. In order to maintain consistent parish data, the totals from the Nailsworth chapel registers have been reapportioned between the three parishes. Unfortunately the parishes of residence are not often given in the chapel registers until after 1813, but the residential proportions found between 1813 and 1842 have been applied to the totals from 1794 to 1812. The Eastington and Avening register series begin in 1558, Minchinhampton in 1561, Cam in 1569, Wotton in 1571 and Stroud in 1625. Horsley offers a good series only from 1652. However, there are baptism records for Horsley covering the period 1594–1641 which have been gathered for use later in this study.<sup>9</sup>

### Sources of independent population estimates

The Gloucestershire sources used in Stonehouse can provide population data for the additional eight parishes.<sup>10</sup> These are: the ecclesiastical surveys and censuses of 1563, 1603, 1650, 1676, 1680, 1735 and 1743, a Muster Roll for 1608, the Hearth Tax return for Michaelmas 1672, and two county histories, by Atkyns and Rudder, published in 1712 and 1779 respectively.<sup>11</sup> A few parish tithe and rate lists survive, but the only additional demographic source found, apart from the published census reports for 1801–1831, is a full return for the 1811 census in Horsley.<sup>12</sup> The Bishop of Gloucester's diocesan surveys of 1735 and 1743 give two kinds of demographic information for each parish, population totals, and numbers of Protestant nonconformists. A few Roman Catholics are also noted, but they were obliged to conform. The population totals given for the nine parishes are almost all round figures and are of doubtful accuracy. The 1735 figure is repeated in 1743, and in later versions dated 1750 and 1752, in all the parishes except Cam, where no figure at all is given in 1735, and Stonehouse, where a correction is made in 1743. The figures for 1750 and 1752 may have been repetitions without revision in the years leading up to the Bishop's death in 1752. Only the population totals for 1735 will be used in this investigation, except for the parishes of Cam and Stonehouse where the 1743 figure will be used. The incidence of nil returns suggests that the two kinds of information were probably compiled separately, numbers of nonconformists being closely observed and more frequently updated.<sup>13</sup>

The Stonehouse model calls for the augmented census totals from 1801 to 1831 to be accepted as reference points. These are straightforward for five of these eight parishes. Up to 1811, the census describes the ecclesiastical parishes of Avening, Horsley and Minchinhampton. However, in 1821 a separate total is given for Nailsworth, which is 'mostly in the parish of Avening, but extends into the parishes of Horsley and Minchinhampton', and in 1831 Nailsworth is said to be included, without differentiation, in the total for Avening, its ecclesiastical parent.<sup>14</sup> It is therefore difficult to arrive at accurate census totals for the historical parishes of Avening, Horsley and Minchinhampton in 1821 and 1831. A local study has attempted to disaggregate the populations of Nailsworth-in-Avening and Nailsworth-in-Horsley in these years by applying statistical methods to data from the 1841 and 1851 censuses.<sup>15</sup> However, this does not allow for any Nailsworth population in outlying parts of Minchinhampton.

As a first stage in assessing whether the Stonehouse model could be applied elsewhere, the available augmented census totals, for 1801–1831, are compared to their respective long averages (Table 1). The published census totals are also given. Under the Stonehouse model, all the augmented census totals should lie within a range between 0.8 and 1.2 times their respective long averages (the 'range of variation'). Eighty per cent of them (24 out of 30) do so, but there are five above the range (Avening and Horsley in both 1801 and 1811, and North Nibley in 1831), and one below (Eastington in 1801). These discrepancies between the augmented census totals and the long averages can partly be

**Table 1 Relationships between augmented census totals and long averages, 1801–1831**

Date and source	Avening	Cam	Eastington	Horsley	Minchinhampton	North Nibley	Stonehouse	Stroud	Wotton
PC 1801	1,507	1,285	988	2,971	3,419	1,211	1,412	5,422	3,393
AC 1801	1,575	1,343	1,032	3,104	3,573	1,265	1,475	5,665	3,545
PA 1801	1,140	1,275	1,300	1,884	3,566	1,243	1,372	5,624	3,777
R 1801	1.38	1.05	0.79	1.65	1.00	1.02	1.08	1.01	0.94
PC 1811	1,602	1,501	1,223	2,925	3,246	1,290	1,711	5,321	3,800
AC 1811	1,668	1,563	1,274	3,046	3,380	1,343	1,782	5,541	3,957
PA 1811	1,379	1,541	1,565	2,085	3,742	1,289	1,672	6,302	4,269
R 1811	1.21	1.01	0.81	1.46	0.90	1.04	1.07	0.88	0.93
PC 1821		1,885	1,681			1,553	2,126	7,097	5,004
AC 1821		1,936	1,726			1,595	2,183	7,289	5,129
PA 1821		1,881	1,881			1,356	1,985	7,109	4,985
R 1821		1.03	0.92			1.18	1.10	1.03	1.03
PC 1831		2,071	1,770			1,562	2,469	8,607	5,482
AC 1831		2,120	1,812			1,599	2,527	8,809	5,610
PA 1831		2,157	2,117			1,271	2,474	7,509	5,137
R 1831		0.98	0.86			1.26	1.02	1.17	1.09

**Notes:** PC - published census; AC - augmented census; PA long average from parish registration; R - ratio of augmented census to long average.

**Sources:** J. Hudson, 'Parish population reconstruction in Stonehouse, Gloucestershire: an experiment using Wrigley and Schofield's correction factors', *Local Population Studies*, 77 (2006), 37–8; Census of England and Wales, 1801, 1831, *County of Gloucester*, BPP 1801-2 VI [9], 114, 115, 122, 125; BPP 1812 XI [316], 108, 109, 116, 119; BPP 1822 XV [502], 104, 105, 112, 114; BPP 1833 XXXVI [149] 200-201, 214-215, 220-221, all available on-line at [www.histpop.org](http://www.histpop.org).

attributed to local factors which are greater than the long average can absorb. The consistently negative results in Eastington imply that the model is adding too much to the population represented in the parish registers. Conversely, in Horsley and Avening there appears to be a shortfall. Both these parishes contained nonconformist churches with active registration. It is true that there were also such churches in Cam, Stroud and Wotton, where the census is within the range of variation in 1801 and 1811. However, it seems likely that the main cause of the significant positive discrepancies seen in Horsley and Avening could be nonconformist registration, which will have diminished the source data in the Anglican registers. The model does apparently need to be more locally sensitive.

#### Nonconformist records as demographic sources

Nonconformists were not legally permitted to withdraw from the Church of England before 1689, but many did so during the Civil War and Restoration periods.<sup>16</sup> The Quakers developed their own registration from about 1640

onwards.<sup>17</sup> Under the Toleration Act of 1689, it became possible for Protestant nonconformists to establish their own places of worship, subject to Anglican supervision.<sup>18</sup> There were several meeting houses and chapels before 1800 in the eight parishes studied in this article, not including the later Methodist movement which did not separate from the Church of England until 1795.<sup>19</sup> Nonconformist congregations keeping their own registers were established in the Nailsworth settlement in Avening and Horsley, the towns of Stroud and Wotton, and in Cam, but among these the survival of records from before 1800 is patchy. In Avening, Forest Green Presbyterian chapel replaced open-air meetings in 1688, but its registers only exist for births and baptisms from 1776 onwards, apart from four birth dates for adult baptism candidates extending back to 1732.<sup>20</sup> Shortwood Baptist chapel, in Horsley, opened in 1715, but only has birth registers beginning in 1792, and a birth index begun in 1765, which between them provide two or three retrospective entries per year back to 1749. There are also registers of members and church minutes from 1732 onwards, and a short history compiled in 1820.<sup>21</sup> Registration survives for Quakers in Nailsworth from 1649 onwards, a meeting house was built by 1680, and the regional quarterly meeting was also held there.<sup>22</sup> In Stroud, there was a Presbyterian minister in 1690, and the Old Meeting Chapel was built between 1705 and 1711. There are baptism registers for 1712–29, and 1749–1837, and burial registers for 1720–29, and 1753–1837. A history written by the minister in 1826 gives membership information.<sup>23</sup> Wotton had a Presbyterian meeting house from 1701, joined in 1783 by the Tabernacle, and a Baptist chapel from 1717, but no registers for either group survive earlier than 1767.<sup>24</sup> The Presbyterian meeting in Cam was founded in 1664, and there are baptism registers from the opening of the chapel in 1702 until 1739, and for the period 1776–1836.<sup>25</sup>

Nonconformist registration is impaired, as a demographic source, because these meetings were centres for dissent over wide areas. Those attending cross over parish boundaries, and their home parishes may not always be indicated. The registers are also less likely than parish registers to have been preserved as a continuous series. Many were gathered into the General Register Office in 1840, and others have been deposited in local record offices, but the earliest tend to have been lost. Many series consist only of baptisms or births, as not all chapels had their own burial grounds. It is not always clear whether burial registers existed but are missing, or whether burials were taking place in the parish churchyard. At Cam, for example, there are no surviving early burial registers, and the first minister was buried in the nearby parish churchyard in 1740, yet Rudder suggests that by 1779 there were a few burials at the meeting house.<sup>26</sup> He is unable to estimate the population of Horsley, owing to the nonconformist burial activity there.<sup>27</sup> Church records may give totals for congregations, but these may include Anglican sympathisers who attended both establishments.<sup>28</sup>

Where a series exists and is fully kept, Presbyterian registers are the most straightforward. The church carried out infant baptism and sometimes recorded dates of birth. Some ministers did record home locations, for example

in Cam a third to a half of the baptisms were of children from that parish. However, at Stroud, home locations are only given between 1761 and 1778. At Forest Green chapel, Avening, the home parish is hardly recorded before 1785. A note sent by the minister with the Forest Green registers, when they were submitted in 1838 to the government commissioners, observes that 'many births and baptisms have never been entered, others but partially. It has always been difficult to obtain from many persons the date of the birth as at a public baptism they frequently present children without the previous knowledge of the Minister and depart before he can ascertain the requisite particulars. This has arisen partly from Dissenters viewing baptism simply as a Religious Ordinance and partly from the apprehended inutility of Dissenters Registers'.<sup>29</sup> This last remark refers to the legal uses of registration.

Baptists only admitted those as members who were baptised at a minimum age of 16 on an adult profession of faith, and only they were recorded in the register of members. Baptists also kept registers of the births of members and their families, often recorded retrospectively in a group at the time that the adult became a member. These births might have happened in different parishes, and perhaps before an affiliation to the Baptists had developed. At Shortwood Chapel, Horsley, a third of births dated before 1790 are given with no locations, or simply described as being 'of Nailsworth', making redistribution by date and place difficult. Alternatively, all these births could be counted in the year of registration, relying on the model to distribute them. In 1795 there were 121 retrospective baptisms in the first complete year of registration at Nailsworth Anglican chapel, of which an estimated 36 were from Horsley, nine times the annual average of three or four thereafter. When this peak is distributed, by the process of building the long average, it adds the population equivalent of 0.9 births per year in Horsley between 1774 and 1813, tapering away at either end. However, the lack of information on location prevents such a redistribution of most Baptist registration.

Thus Baptist church records do not offer accessible demographic data. At Shortwood, the register of members is cumulative, and dates of death are not always recorded. Exclusions for misbehaviour and 'losses' do not mean that people have left their homes: for example the membership register for 1805 mentions a member who 'though excluded, constantly attended'.<sup>30</sup> Members are individuals, who may or may not represent a household, and their residence is not always given. In 1735, the diocesan survey counts 343 Baptists in the three parishes of Horsley, Avening and Minchinhampton, the main sources of the Shortwood congregation, but the membership register stands at 65. In 1800 the register of members shows a running total of 561, of whom 195 had died, and 33 had definitely left home, leaving a total of 333. However, if 61 exclusions, who may or may not still be resident, are subtracted, the membership total varies between 231 and 272, depending on whether or not the 41 on whom there is no information are included. The church records report 251 members in 1799, and 270 in 1800, but a history written in 1820 says that there were 241 members in 1799, 'scattered through a number of parishes'.<sup>31</sup>

The Quakers who registered at the Nailsworth quarterly meeting would travel long distances to attend, as evidenced by some registrations for people from Cirencester. The birth registrations are of infants, but do not always give a home parish until after 1776, by which time numbers had dwindled to one a year until 1807. It might be assumed that registrations with no residence specified belong to Horsley, were it not that some certificates do give Horsley, or just Nailsworth, as a home. Members are therefore difficult to place from registration alone.

### **Strategies for using nonconformist sources**

Data from nonconformist registers could be incorporated into the Stonehouse model, but Wrigley and Schofield's nonconformity factor should first be taken out, to avoid duplication. The resulting reduced long average would represent the data from the Anglican parish registers, converted into population totals, and will therefore be termed the 'registration series'. In the rare event of a continuous series of nonconformist registers being available which record infant baptisms or births, locate burials, and give residence details, the data can be included at the appropriate stages of building the registration series. This would then function as a full long average, provided that the nonconformist registers were comprehensive in respect of nonconformity in that parish, apart from a few people who might visit meeting houses elsewhere and be allowed for by the range of variation. However, most nonconformist registers will not form series which are comprehensive enough to adopt this first strategy. A second option is to develop additional estimates of the nonconformist part of the population from periods of good registration, usually of baptisms or births. It would be unusual to be able to compare birth and death series, or to form moving long averages, from these records. However moving 'short averages', over a minimum of five years, could be formed, and used to augment the registration series at intervals. A final parish estimate would be completed using these interval points. If the nonconformist records cannot even provide regular 'short averages', a third option is to prepare a parish estimate from the original Stonehouse model. This can then be compared with such points as can be formed by adding occasional estimates from the nonconformist registers to a registration series. These isolated points might be difficult to include in the parish estimate, but they might indicate a direction of travel within the range of variation.

Which one of these strategies is adopted will depend on the quality and quantity of the nonconformist records surviving in a particular parish. When comparing parishes, though, it would be helpful to have a general method of estimating nonconformity relative to Anglican registration which could be applied in all parishes, while any available nonconformist data could be used as a cross check in the relevant individual parishes. Such a method is developed in the next section of this paper.

### **New correction factors to assess local nonconformity**

The registration series provides the foundation for the general method. The national nonconformity factors, designed to apply to baptisms and burials, are

**Table 2 Relationships between augmented census population totals and the registration series, 1801**

Parish	Augmented census	Registration series	Ratio of augmented census to registration series
Avening	1,575	1,089	1.45
Cam	1,343	1,217	1.10
Eastington	1,032	1,239	0.83
Horsley	3,104	1,805	1.72
Minchinhampton	3,573	3,422	1.04
North Nibley	1,265	1,187	1.07
Stonehouse	1,475	1,314	1.12
Stroud	5,665	5,366	1.06
Wotton	3,545	3,687	0.96

**Sources:** See Table 1 and text.

replaced by new local correction factors, applied to the registration series at a later stage of the model. The final parish estimate should describe local nonconformity, but is still based on Anglican registration.

The augmented census for 1801, already established as a fixed reference point, may be adopted as one end point for this revision. The other may be set at 1640, when Wrigley and Schofield introduce their nonconformity factors. This is not to suggest that there were no nonconformists before 1640, but only that their existence is unlikely to have had any impact on registration. The ratios of the augmented census for 1801 to the registration series for 1801, in all nine parishes, are shown in Table 2. The population in 1640 is regarded as having a ratio of 1.0 to the registers.

Estimates of nonconformity between 1640 and 1801 are most likely to be supplied by the Church of England. The population totals given in the Gloucester diocesan survey of 1735 are suspect, but the number of Protestant nonconformists was probably more carefully calculated. Among these nine parishes, the nonconformity figures for 1735 were revised in 1743 in Avening, Cam, Horsley and Wotton, and those not changed will probably have remained valid. All the 1743 figures are repeated in 1750 and 1752 but, as with the population totals, these will not be used. The totals are mainly of individuals, although families are counted in Horsley and Wotton, computed by the Bishop as five people each. In Wotton in 1735 the survey lists 350 Presbyterians and 50 Baptists, in total 400 individuals. In 1743 there are 80 Presbyterians and 10 Baptists, apparently a severe decline. However, evidence in the 'Baptist Church Book' for Wotton indicates that the 1743 figure for Baptists refers to families. This would represent the same 50 individuals as in 1735, and if the same relationship can be assumed to apply for the Presbyterians, they had increased from 350 in 1735 to 400 by 1743.<sup>32</sup>

The ratios are next found between the Anglican population plus the nonconformists, given in the diocesan surveys of 1735 and 1743, and the registration series. In Stroud in 1735, for example, the registration series estimates 4,005

**Table 3 Validation of new correction factor for 1676 from Compton census**

Parish	Ratio of Compton Census total to conformist total	New correction factor	Ratio of Compton Census ratio to new correction factor
Avening	1.029	1.015	1.01
Cam	1.004	1.117	0.90
Eastington	1.019	1.000	1.02
Minchinhampton	1.043	1.017	1.03
North Nibley	1.002	1.007	1.00
Stonehouse	1.013	1.002	1.01
Stroud	1.001	1.009	0.99
Wotton	1.008	1.053	0.96
Mean			0.99

**Sources:** See text.

people, and the diocesan survey 100 nonconformists. The ratio of 4,105 to 4,005, rounded to two decimal places, is 1.02. The ratios found for 1735 and 1801 are used to set a first mean ratio of 1735/1801 at 1768, then interpolated approximate mean ratios at 1752 (representing 1751–52), and 1785 (representing 1784–85), then further interpolated mean ratios at 1760, 1776 and 1793. If the ratio in 1640 is taken to be 1.0, similar mean ratios may be derived from 1735, first for 1688, then for 1664 and 1712, then for 1652, 1676, 1720 and 1724. The new correction factors for Gloucestershire are therefore positioned at 1640, 1652, 1664, 1676, 1688, 1700, 1712, 1724, 1735, 1743, 1752, 1760, 1768, 1776, 1785, 1793 and 1801. The whole series could be derived from only three points, in 1640, 1735 and 1801, if the diocesan nonconformity figures for 1743 were not used. These are arbitrary constructions, but they could represent the trend of hidden nonconformity before the Toleration Act of 1689, and its development afterwards.

#### **Validation of new nonconformity correction factors**

These new factors may be tested by comparing them, firstly, with the Compton census and, secondly, with alternative points developed from nonconformist registration in Stroud and Cam. The Compton Census of 1676 is believed, in Gloucestershire, to describe the number of nonconformists in a parish in relation to the conformist congregation, usually among men and women over 16. The ratio of the total of both groups to the total of conformists alone might therefore indicate the proportion of nonconformists in the whole population.<sup>33</sup> Compton returns are available for all the parishes in this study except Horsley, and comparisons between their nonconformity ratios, and the new correction factors for 1676, are shown in Table 3. It will be seen that difference between them in seven of the eight parishes is small, supporting the validity of the new factors. The exception is Cam, which had the earliest meeting house in the set, founded in 1664. The new factor may be picking up more nonconformity here than is revealed in the returns to Compton. This may also be the explanation for the negative ratios in Stroud and Wotton, which had active early Presbyterian chapels.



**Table 4 Validation of new correction factors using nonconformist registers**

Parish	Date	Population derived from nonconformist registers	Date	Population based on new correction factor	Ratio of population from nonconformist registers to population based on new correction factor
Cam	1712	1,082	1712	922	1.17
Cam	1735	1,133	1735	1,050	1.08
Cam	1777	1,027	1776	1,021	1.01
Cam	1782	1,034	1785	1,078	0.96
Stroud	1768	4,218	1768	4,221	1.00
Stroud	1775	4,289	1776	4,349	0.99
Mean					1.03

**Sources:** See text.

The second test uses the third of the original strategies for using nonconformist sources to compare the two population totals for a given date built by augmenting the registration series, firstly with a new correction factor, and secondly with an alternative point from nonconformist registration. In this set of nine parishes, only Stroud and Cam provide suitable nonconformist registers. The best achievable alternative points are compared, in Table 4, to the populations estimated using the new correction factors. All the populations derived using parish-specific nonconformist registration data are within the range of variation of the relevant new correction factor population, with a mean ratio between the two populations of 1.03. These tests indicate that the new correction factors are useful measures of nonconformity.

#### **Application of new correction factors to construct parish estimates**

New correction factors are next constructed for the years between 1640 and 1801 in all nine parishes. They are compared in Table 5 with Wrigley and Schofield's nonconformity factors for baptisms, as it is usually the baptisms which generate the registration series.<sup>34</sup> Six of these parishes have mean new correction factors of between 0.95 and 1.04, not far removed from Wrigley and Schofield's mean of 1.02. Stroud also has a close set of new correction factor ratios, in spite of its early and registering Presbyterian chapel. This concurs with the church history of 1826, which records that the level of membership fell after 1726, and was not restored until 1800.<sup>35</sup> The negative ratios seen mainly in Eastington, but also in Wotton, will be discussed later. The two sets of factors are close in Stonehouse, where the original model would suffice. However, if it were to be followed in Avening and Horsley, where the two sets diverge, the requirement to link the 1801 augmented census total to the long average of 1791 would manufacture a spuriously steep population rise. Under the general model outlined in this paper, the new correction factors are applied to the registration series to create population totals which, when connected by interpolation to each other, form the 'nonconformity series'. This could stand alone as a parish estimate, being identical to the registration series before 1640, and carrying the usual range of variation. In most parishes, however, it may

**Table 5** New correction factor ratios compared with Wrigley and Schofield's nonconformity factors

Date	Avening	Cam	Eastington	Horsley	Minchinhampton	North Nibley	Stonehouse	Stroud	Wotton	WS
1652	1.00	1.04	1.00	1.06	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.02	1.003
1664	1.01	1.08	1.00	1.11	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.01	1.04	1.006
1676	1.01	1.12	1.00	1.17	1.02	1.01	1.00	1.01	1.05	1.009
1688	1.02	1.16	1.00	1.23	1.02	1.01	1.00	1.01	1.07	1.012
1700	1.02	1.20	1.00	1.28	1.03	1.01	1.00	1.02	1.09	1.013
1712	1.03	1.23	1.00	1.34	1.03	1.01	1.00	1.02	1.11	1.015
1724	1.03	1.27	1.00	1.40	1.04	1.02	1.01	1.02	1.12	1.016
1735	1.04	1.31	1.00	1.45	1.05	1.02	1.01	1.02	1.14	1.016
1743	1.10	1.36	1.00	1.42	1.04	1.02	1.01	1.02	1.16	1.018
1752	1.14	1.26	0.96	1.52	1.05	1.03	1.04	1.03	1.10	1.020
1760	1.19	1.23	0.94	1.55	1.05	1.04	1.05	1.04	1.07	1.022
1768	1.24	1.21	0.92	1.59	1.04	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.05	1.023
1776	1.29	1.18	0.90	1.62	1.04	1.05	1.08	1.04	1.03	1.023
1785	1.34	1.16	0.87	1.65	1.04	1.05	1.09	1.05	1.01	1.032
1793	1.39	1.13	0.85	1.69	1.04	1.06	1.11	1.05	0.98	1.038
1801	1.45	1.10	0.83	1.72	1.04	1.07	1.12	1.06	0.96	1.045
Min.	1.00	1.04	0.83	1.06	1.01	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.96	1.00
Max.	1.45	1.36	1.00	1.72	1.05	1.07	1.12	1.06	1.16	1.05
Mean	1.14	1.19	0.95	1.42	1.03	1.03	1.04	1.03	1.06	1.02

**Note:** WS - Wrigley and Schofield nonconformity factor for baptisms.

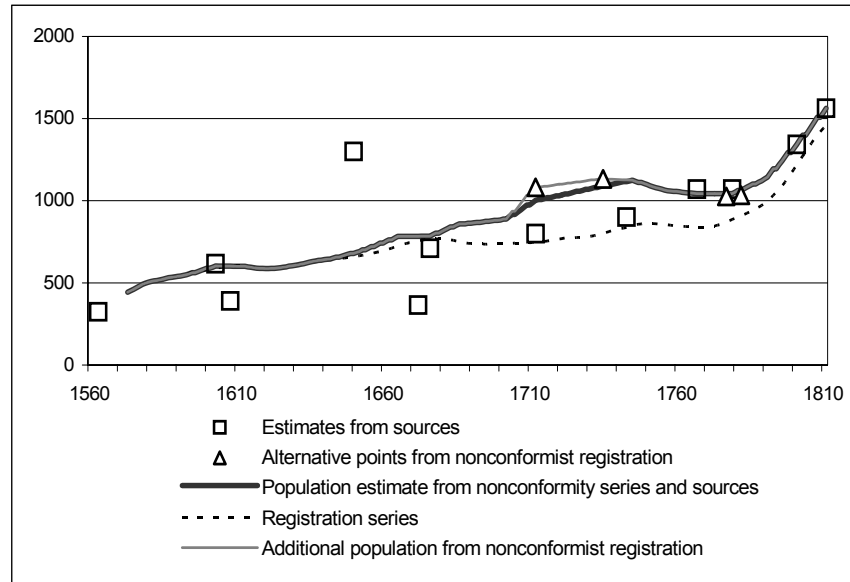
**Sources:** See text.

next be adjusted against independent sources within the range of variation.<sup>36</sup>

A widening of ratios in the nonconformity series in the mid eighteenth century is seen in Table 5 in Wotton, Minchinhampton, and very markedly in Cam. Table 2 shows that none of these parishes have 1801 augmented census totals which are out of the range of variation of their registration series, but the nonconformity series identifies additional population in each, which would not have been fully revealed by the original model. The situation in Cam is shown in Figure 2. Alternative points derived from nonconformist registers verify this additional population, and increase its possible extent. A range of variation from 0.8 to 1.2 times a parish estimate based on the nonconformity series would contain the additional population (see Table 4) even if the nonconformist registers were not available to identify it. As these sources are available, however, they are built into the final parish estimate.

The general model can balance itself. In Eastington, the nonconformity series appears to be consistently too high. All the sources before 1779 produce population estimates which lie below the series, except for the Compton Census in 1676, for which the ratio is 1.05. Part of the cause may be the manorial division of the parish between Eastington and Alkerton, seen in the double muster roll of 1608, which gave rise to separate parochial organisations.<sup>37</sup> The 1603 diocesan survey, at a ratio of 0.47, may only describe Eastington, any return for Alkerton having been omitted. The ecclesiastical sources for 1650

**Figure 2 Parish population estimate and nonconformity in Cam**



**Source:** See text.

and 1680 give minimum rounded estimates of families. The Hearth Tax of 1672 gives low estimates in all the study parishes, and Atkyns in 1712 in almost all. The rounded diocesan survey estimate in 1735 is quite close at 0.87 times the population given by the nonconformity series. The source series is therefore perhaps less anomalous as it might appear. However, the negative new correction factors after 1750 in Table 5, and the negative census ratio in Table 2, are notable. It seems that in Eastington, and to some extent in Wotton, the use of national factors and rates may have produced an over-estimate in the registration series, especially after 1750. The model responds by generating negative factors, which counteract this effect. As a result, Rudder's estimate in 1779, which on this occasion seems to be reliably derived from the parish registers, is at a ratio of 1.01 to the nonconformity series.<sup>38</sup>

**Parish estimates: interaction of general model and sources**

The process of completing parish estimates can evaluate other source anomalies. In Horsley, the Hearth Tax return of 1672 is damaged at the start, but there appear to be line spaces for about 95 tax payers. If these are counted as households they suggest a population of 428, at a ratio of 0.81 to the nonconformity series of 530. This is unusually high in this group of parishes, and unexpected from a source which rarely represents a high proportion of the whole population.<sup>39</sup> Horsley is known to have been very nonconformist in the

**Table 6 Population shortfall in the Hearth Tax returns, 1672**

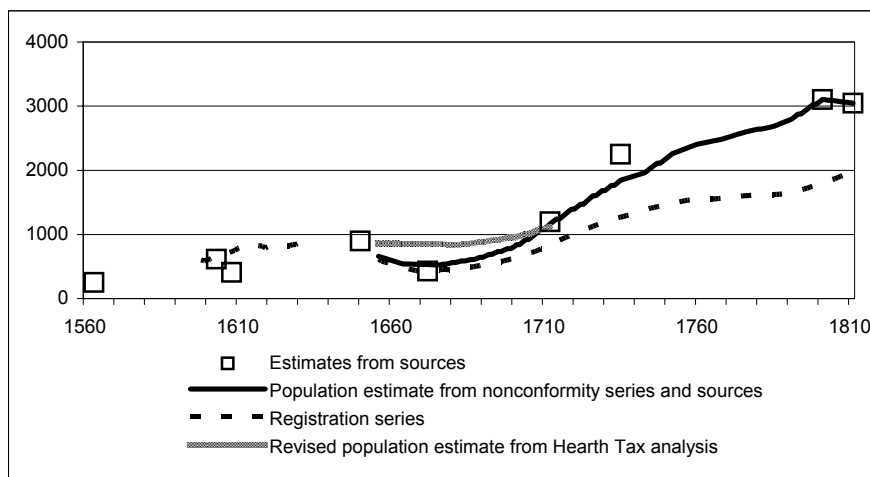
Parish	Hearth Tax payers	Hearth Tax population (Hearth Tax payers x 4.5)	Parish estimate for 1672	Ratio of Hearth Tax population to parish estimate
<i>Rural parishes</i>				
Avening	55	248	547	0.45
Cam	81	365	783	0.47
Eastington	54	243	546	0.45
North Nibley	117	527	1,109	0.47
Stonehouse	65	293	524	0.56
Mean				0.48
<i>Parishes containing towns</i>				
Minchinhampton	130	585	1,779	0.33
Stroud	190	855	2,341	0.37
Wotton	128	576	2,619	0.22
Mean				0.30

**Source:** See text.

later seventeenth century, and this is probably the reason why it is one of only nine parishes in the diocese without a return to the Compton Census.<sup>40</sup> The registers need correction for deficiency in the 1670s. The problem is compounded because continuous registration only begins in 1652, so that the annual averages used to build the registration series shorten and become more variable before 1676. The nonconformity series, started in 1656, suggests that the population fell after that date, and did not recover until the early years of the eighteenth century. However, the Hearth Tax evidence raises the possibility that this apparent fall may be due to unusually high levels of under-registration. The Hearth Tax returns for 1672 do not always list exemptions, but they do provide the number of tax payers in all the other eight parishes. Estimates of the taxed population for each parish are set out in Table 6, together with their respective parish estimates for 1672, and the likely shortfall assessed.

In the parishes containing the three market towns, Hearth Tax payers amount to an average of about one third of the population estimate, but in the more rural parishes the average is about a half. Therefore, in order to reach an approximate position in Horsley, the population estimate from the 95 Hearth Tax payers, 428, is doubled, providing a new estimate of 856 in 1672, at a ratio of 1.62 to the nonconformity series of 530. The ratio for 1712, at the end of the deficient period, is taken as 1.0. Mean ratios of 1.15, 1.31 and 1.46 are then applied to the nonconformity series for 1702, 1692 and 1682. A mean ratio of 1.31, the midpoint between 1.0 in 1640 and 1.62 in 1672, may be applied to population total of 658 in 1656, when the nonconformity series starts. This produces a new population estimate for 1656 of 860, with a range of variation

Figure 3 Parish population estimate for Horsley



Source: See text.

which contains the estimate of 900 from the diocesan survey of 1650. The new 1656 point is compatible with short averages produced from the baptism registers for 1594–1641, as is the Bishop’s Census of 1603. A revised nonconformity series between 1656 and 1712 is then calculated from interpolated values between these ratio points, and will form part of the parish estimate, as shown in Figure 3. In Horsley, the model has identified, and provided compensation for, a period of parish registration which falls below even the detected levels of deficiency, emphasising Wrigley and Schofield’s warnings about register reliability.<sup>41</sup>

The general model can also be used to assess imprecise sources. In Cam, as shown in Figure 2, the diocesan survey population total of 900 for 1743 is well below the nonconformity series for that year. However, the diocesan total is within the range of variation of the registration series, whereas in all the other parishes except Eastington, the diocesan round figure estimates are much higher even than the nonconformity series. It would seem likely that the diocesan total is a round estimate of conformists only, represented by the Anglican registration, and is therefore not used in the model as an independent population estimate. In Minchinhampton and Stroud the Compton Census of 1676 gives totals of conformists, which are of doubtful accuracy because they are rounded, and which produce results below 0.8 times the population in the nonconformity series. The figure for Stroud is only two thirds of the parish estimate, and possibly refers to the town part only. In North Nibley, Atkyns’s rounded estimate of 1,000 in 1712 is close to the lower limit of the range of variation of the nonconformity series, but, in the context of the general trend, is best regarded as lying outside it. A similar argument applies to his estimate for Cam of 800, which is within the lower range of the nonconformity series, but

below it in relation to the evidence from the nonconformist registers. Rudder gives rounded figures in 1779 which are repeats of the 1735 diocesan survey totals in Minchinhampton, North Nibley and Wotton, and which are well above the nonconformity series at both dates. Even when not rounded, his figures can refer back 20 years or more. However, the model supports his observation that in Stroud the population had not changed greatly since 1756.<sup>42</sup>

### Comparisons between parish estimates

The completed parish estimates and overall growth ratios, 1660–1801, are compared in Figures 4a-4c.

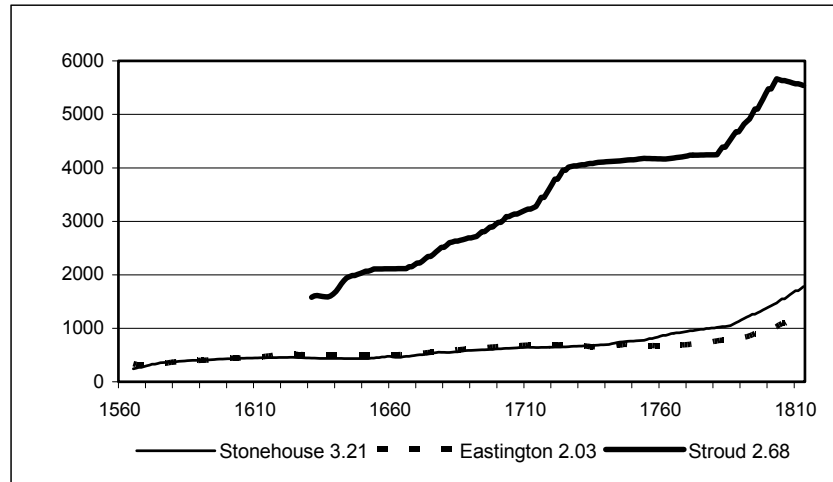
Some general observations can be made from these comparisons. The market towns probably saw faster growth than the countryside before 1660, but they do not show the highest relative population growth in 1660–1801 either within in each group, or overall. The highest growth ratios after 1660 are found in Horsley, Stonehouse and Avening, followed by Stroud, the fastest growing of the towns. This may reflect the nature of the cloth industry, based in the countryside and linked to water-powered mills. The Frome and Nailsworth valleys benefited from improving infrastructure, including the Stroudwater canal, opened in 1779. The lower Stroudwater parishes of Cam, North Nibley and Wotton have the lowest set of growth ratios, and all three of these parishes show a tendency for the population to fall after about 1750 before rising again. This is not seen in the other two groups, and may indicate that the periodic depressions in the cloth industry had more impact in this locality.<sup>43</sup> All nine parishes show some degree of population growth after 1780, as is also seen in the national model developed by Wrigley and Schofield. Horsley, Avening and Stroud suffered a decline in population between 1801 and 1811. The 1811 parish census return for Horsley concludes with a note that 'the deficiency in ten years may be well attributed to a great number of Males having inlisted in the Army and Militia, and to a decay in the Cloth Manufactory which has occasioned many families to emigrate to other parishes'.<sup>44</sup>

### Conclusion

The parish population reconstruction model developed for Stonehouse uses all three of the national correction factors developed by Wrigley and Schofield. It can produce valid results in a parish where nonconformity has not significantly diminished the comprehensiveness of Anglican registration before 1800. However, when applied to other parishes, it is seen to require adjustment to incorporate the effects of active nonconformist registration. Where useable nonconformist records exist, the additional data could be added directly, but it is not often possible to identify nonconformist data on a parish basis. The Stonehouse model is therefore adjusted as follows.

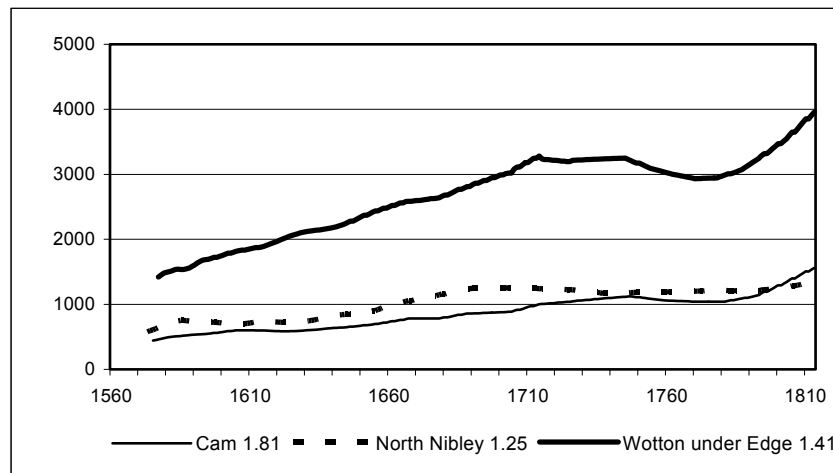
1. Prepare the parish data (original stages 1–6), but omit Wrigley and Schofield's correction factor for nonconformity. A reduced long average is produced which might be called the *registration series*.

**Figure 4a Upper Stroudwater growth patterns 1560–1811, with growth ratios 1660–1801**



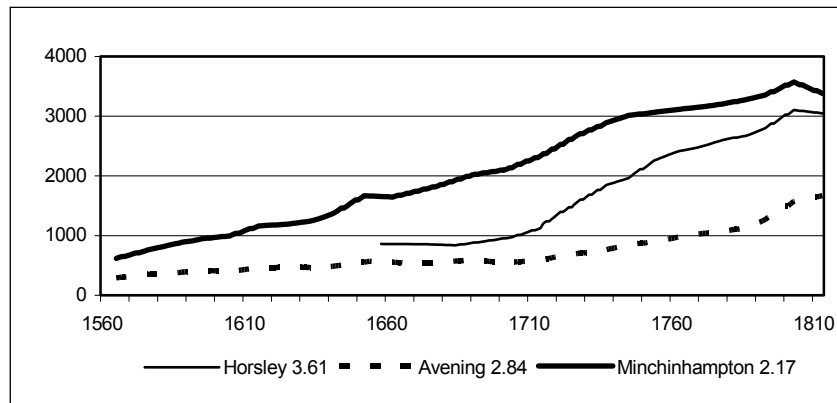
**Note:** The numbers in the legends are the growth ratio  
**Source:** See text.

**Figure 4b Lower Stroudwater growth patterns 1560–1811, with growth ratios 1660–1801**



**Note:** The numbers in the legends are the growth ratio  
**Source:** See text.

Figure 4c Nailsworth area growth patterns 1560-1811, with growth ratios 1660–1801



**Note:** The numbers in the legends are the growth ratio

**Source:** See text.

2. Take the ratio between the registration series and the augmented 1801 census, and a ratio of 1.0 in 1640 as end points. Find at least one intervening ratio from contemporary estimates of nonconformity. Create a series of ratios by interpolation, and apply them to the registration series to construct the *nonconformity series*.
3. Analyse other sources to construct independent estimates of the parish population, provided that those sources indicate populations within a range between 0.8 and 1.2 times the nonconformity series.
4. Construct a final parish population estimate following the methods outline in stage 8 of the original model, but using the new nonconformity series.

If this approach is applied in all parishes, population hidden in nonconformist registers may be revealed, as in Cam. Where comparative work on sources shows the underlying registration series to be deficient, as in Horsley, compensatory ratios can be developed from the general model to revise the nonconformity series. The registration series and the new correction factors together can describe a parish where nonconformity significantly affects parish registration, and can also provide a valid population estimate when independent sources are not available. This approach is still founded on Wrigley and Schofield's work, but adjusts it further. The general model is more locally sensitive, and therefore more widely applicable, than the original Stonehouse model. Comparison of the trends seen in the parish estimates it produces could suggest further investigations into local historical demography.



## Acknowledgements

Valuable comments and advice by Dr Andrew Hinde and other members of the *Local Population Studies* Editorial Board, are gratefully acknowledged.

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## THE ADMISSION OF CHILDREN TO THE MILTON UNION WORKHOUSE, KENT, 1835–1885

Audrey Perkyns

Audrey Perkyns is a retired teacher, formerly of Rainham in Kent but now living in Northumberland. She has been a regular contributor to *LPS* over the years, and retains an active interest in nineteenth-century Kentish demographic and social history.

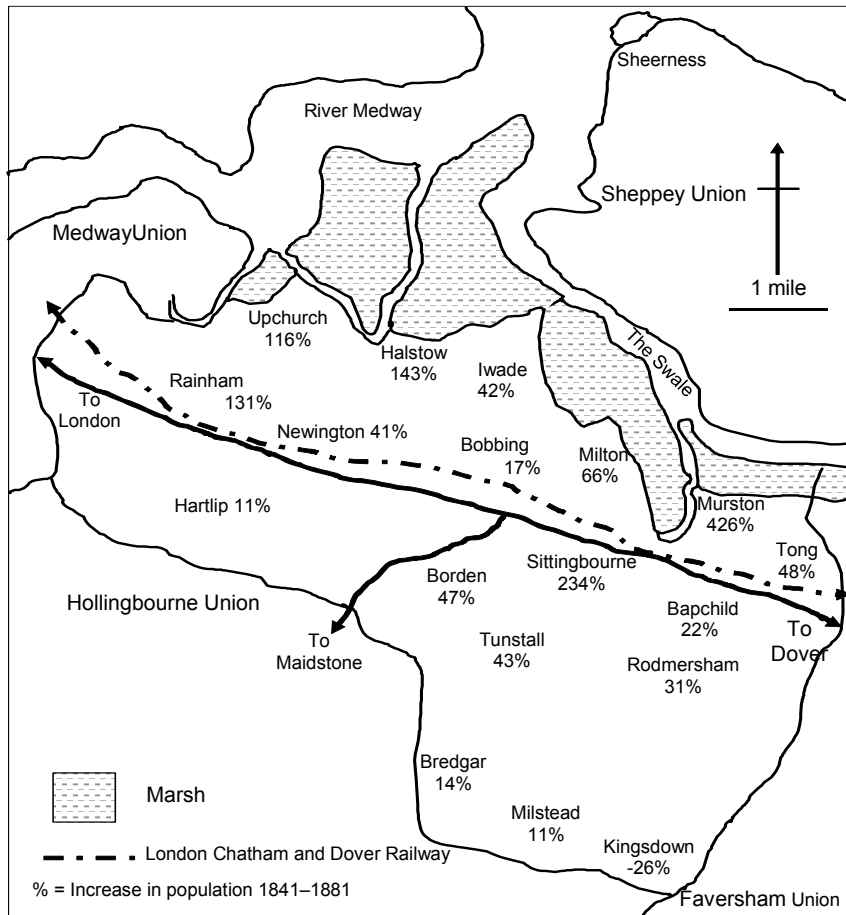
### Introduction

A number of recent articles in *Local Population Studies* have analysed the demographic profile of workhouse occupants for particular localities in the later nineteenth century, but none have focused specifically upon children.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this article is to analyse the circumstances in which children were admitted to the workhouse of the Milton Poor Law Union, in the context of national laws and attitudes for the half-century after the passage of the Poor Law Amendment Act in 1834. This Act was preoccupied with two matters: the establishment of a new administrative system of poor relief based on unions of parishes and a central authority, and the elimination of outdoor relief to able-bodied men, who were to be offered as alternatives either self-sufficiency or a workhouse where their condition would be 'less eligible' than that of the lowliest man living independently. The Act recognised the existence of children at only three points: it changed the laws on parish apprenticeships and on illegitimacy; and it stated that relief to children should be regarded as relief to their fathers (or mothers if widowed).<sup>2</sup> But if the application of the principle of less eligibility to able-bodied fathers reflected the belief that able-bodied men seeking relief were morally culpable, it was obviously absurd to blame children for their situation. Nevertheless, as we will see, they entered the workhouse in considerable numbers. While policy makers wanted to separate them from the infection of pauperism, through education and a policy of segregation in workhouses, in practice this proved difficult to achieve, and the general mixed workhouse quickly became the norm.

### The Milton Union

The Milton Union was a very small one, of 18 parishes, and a very early one, coming into existence on 25 March 1835. The Board of Guardians held their first meeting three days later, most of them full of enthusiasm for the New Poor Law and confident that the end of pauperism would follow shortly. They came largely from among the minor landowners of their parishes (the area had no large-scale resident landowners), plus the occasional businessman from the more urbanised area round Milton itself.

Figure 1 Milton Poor Law Union



In 1835 the economy of the union was almost entirely agricultural, plus fishing and shipping interests in the northern areas near the rivers. Communication both by river and road (the Dover road ran through the area) had always ensured that this was less of a rural backwater than some other agricultural areas, and the Kentish system of landholding, with a free market in land, had favoured entrepreneurial activities. Fertile soil in the northern half had encouraged production, especially of wheat, fruit and hops. The southern part of the union was less fertile.

During the half-century after 1835 a dramatic change occurred in the economy and demography of the area. The population of the union increased by 103 per

cent between 1841 and 1881. The rapid growth of London created a huge demand both for horticultural produce and, more especially, for the building materials, both bricks and cement, which the brick earth and blue clay of the area near the river could supply. The remarkable population increases in Upchurch and Murston, for example, are entirely due to these industries.<sup>3</sup> Transport also developed, with a big increase in barge and boat building. The railway arrived late (1859) but it revolutionised the carriage of passengers, mail and perishable goods. The newly industrialised areas generally remained as villages. The only urbanised area was at the east end of the union. Milton, the ancient capital of the hundred which became the union, was particularly important for its coastal trade and fishing, but remained unplanned and insanitary. Nearby Sittingbourne was much more go-ahead in adopting changes in government and sanitation.<sup>4</sup> The southern part of the union remained an agricultural backwater and did not see a similar increase in population. This evolving economic climate was to create difficulties for the Milton guardians as it made the area more vulnerable to periodic recessions, and in the winters of 1869 and 1870 they requested permission to adopt an Outdoor Labour Test Order rather than insisting on the workhouse test for the large numbers suddenly thrown out of work.<sup>5</sup>

In Milton the original plan to use old workhouses for different categories of pauper soon gave way to the cheaper alternative of a general mixed workhouse. The building, like others designed by Sir Francis Head, was constantly criticised in later decades for its failure to allow for the effective separation of different categories of inmates and for various building defects. Its site also came in for later criticism, particularly for its proximity to the marshes. In 1872, the Medical Officer wrote a damning indictment of the site: 'cholera and smallpox select it as their habitat ... fever, ague and malaria are always present'. He particularly pointed to the toll this took on the staff: two masters had died, and other officers had had to resign because of sickness or to take leave for convalescence. Among the inmates, the young and the old suffered particularly. But epidemics were becoming fewer and the incidence of malaria was declining with the gradual draining of the marshes. The Medical Officer reluctantly accepted the minor alterations recommended, but the water supply remained unsatisfactory until an analysis of samples in 1881 led to a decision to contract with the public authority to supply water from the mains.<sup>6</sup>

### **Sources and methodology**

The major source for identifying children in the workhouse is the series of Admission and Discharge Registers for the period 1835-85.<sup>7</sup> Although the quality of these is variable, the records were generally kept efficiently and legibly, especially after 1842. The earliest records contain the most detailed information. Later the detail varies, capriciously. Sometimes an admission has no corresponding discharge, or vice versa. Ages (or birth years) were usually recorded in the 1830s and after 1870, sometimes in the 1840s and 1860s but very rarely in the 1850s. Parishes were not given between 1848 and 1867. Marital status and reasons for admission are not often given after the early

years, but can often be inferred from other information. The computer files finally compiled for this exercise have eliminated all duplicate entries (as far as these can be ascertained); have ascribed page numbers to the books for ease of reference; have identified each individual with a unique number; have linked admission and discharge records for individuals; and have attempted to ascribe a family number to each appropriate group. The earlier total reconstitution of families in the five western parishes of the union has provided additional information about some inmates.<sup>8</sup> Official categories for gender and age group changed over the years, but have been standardised for these files, children being defined as those under 16. Additional fields have been created for familial status and size of family group, and the number of days between admission and discharge and the decade of first admission.<sup>9</sup>

The other main sources require less explanation. The Annual Reports, General Orders and inspectors' reports of the three successive central Poor Law authorities have been used both for statistical information and as a standard by which to judge policies and practices. The Minutes Books of the Board of Guardians, meticulously kept, have provided information supplementary to the Registers about individuals, as well as indications of policy. Finally, the correspondence between the Milton Union and the central authority, though unfortunately lost for 1842-67 and 1878-80, has proved invaluable in fleshing out the bare bones of the minutes. Particularly interesting are the letters sent by individuals and sometimes the debates in rough notes between members of the central authority, which explain how they arrived at their ultimate response.

#### **Age profile of the workhouse population**

Table 1 presents a breakdown of the Milton Union workhouse population by age for each quinquennium. The first panel of the table shows that of the 20,098 workhouse admissions between 1835 and 1885, 6,388 were of children—an average of 128 each year. Starting in the period 1845-50, the number of admissions of children declined considerably, as indeed it did for the workhouse population as a whole, stabilising after 1850 around short-term fluctuations. Across the years 1835-85 children made up almost 32 per cent of admissions, and although their proportional significance fell back slightly from the 42 per cent found in the first quinquennium they formed close to, or slightly in excess of, 30 per cent in every five year period.

The second panel of Table 1 includes first admissions only, and thus reflects the number of discrete individuals in each age category who entered the workhouse during the various quinquennia. The number of children is now roughly halved, falling to an average of 61 per annum, but their proportional significance is increased, to nearly 38 per cent of the total, reflecting the fact that more multiple admissions occurred among the adult population than among children. The only significant change in age structure shown in Table 1 came in the 1870s and early 1880s, when the elderly started to form a far higher proportion of admissions, though even then the proportion who were children was largely maintained.

**Table 1 Age profile of Milton Union workhouse admissions, 1835-85**

All Admissions									
Number					Percentage				
Year	<16	16-59	>59	Total	Year	<16	16-59	>59	Total
1835-40	1,085	1,123	405	2,613	1835-40	41.5	43.0	15.5	100.0
1840-45	1,247	2,405	506	4,158	1840-45	30.0	57.8	12.2	100.0
1845-50	642	1,033	338	2,013	1845-50	31.9	51.3	16.8	100.0
1850-55	480	634	246	1,360	1850-55	35.3	46.6	18.1	100.0
1855-60	517	855	227	1,599	1855-60	32.3	53.5	14.2	100.0
1860-65	415	759	261	1,435	1860-65	28.9	52.9	18.2	100.0
1865-70	590	1,267	324	2,181	1865-70	27.1	58.1	14.9	100.0
1870-75	461	699	274	1,434	1870-75	32.1	48.7	19.1	100.0
1875-80	411	643	380	1,434	1875-80	28.7	44.8	26.5	100.0
1880-85	540	716	615	1,871	1880-85	28.9	38.3	32.9	100.0
Total	6,388	10,134	3,576	20,098	Total	31.8	50.4	17.8	100.0

First admissions									
Number					Percentage				
Year	<16	16-59	>59	Total	Year	<16	16-59	>59	Total
1835-40	472	423	132	1,027	1835-40	46.0	41.2	12.9	100.0
1840-45	278	332	83	693	1840-45	40.1	47.9	12.0	100.0
1845-50	288	320	90	698	1845-50	41.3	45.8	12.9	100.0
1850-55	266	285	92	643	1850-55	41.4	44.3	14.3	100.0
1855-60	321	409	75	805	1855-60	39.9	50.8	9.3	100.0
1860-65	234	344	66	644	1860-65	36.3	53.4	10.2	100.0
1865-70	344	647	107	1,098	1865-70	31.3	58.9	9.7	100.0
1870-75	262	358	111	731	1870-75	35.8	49.0	15.2	100.0
1875-80	247	387	127	761	1875-80	32.5	50.9	16.7	100.0
1880-85	356	439	217	1,012	1880-85	35.2	43.4	21.4	100.0
Total	3,068	3,944	1,100	8,112	Total	37.8	48.6	13.6	100.0

**Source:** Milton Union Admissions and Discharges Registers

**Note:** First admissions counts individuals rather than admissions, and hence excludes all return visits.

### Familial status and reasons for admission of children

A national survey by the Poor Law Board dated 15 March 1849 classified children in workhouses into a multiplicity of categories, and a simplified version of this classification has been used in Table 2. While illegitimacy dominated among those aged under six, the most common reason for the presence of all over the age of six was the death of both parents. The figure for Kent is not significantly different from that for England and Wales; the figures for Milton are given in this table, but numbers are too small to be significant. These data nonetheless indicate the major reasons why children were admitted: illegitimacy, the loss of one or both parents and desertion (usually by the father). All those with two parents present are included within the 'other' class.

Familial status on admission can be divided into five categories: with both parents, with mother, father, siblings or alone. The numbers in each category

**Table 2 Classification of children in workhouses, 15 March 1849 (%)**

Place and age group	Illegitimate	Widowed parent	Orphan	Deserted	Other	Total	Nos.
Kent <3	45.3	7.5	2.0	9.7	35.5	100.0	453
Kent 3–6	24.4	16.2	16.9	12.6	29.9	100.0	722
Kent >6	11.6	19.4	30.2	14.7	24.2	100.0	1,978
Milton <3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	100.0	6
Milton 3–6	17.6	35.3	23.5	0.0	23.5	100.0	17
Milton >6	6.3	25.0	54.2	4.2	10.4	100.0	48
E & W <3	56.2	6.2	3.4	12.0	22.3	100.0	8,078
E & W 3–6	29.2	14.6	14.0	18.6	23.6	100.0	12,823
E & W >6	15.5	18.8	28.2	17.2	20.4	100.0	35,422

**Source:** British Parliamentary Papers 1849, Vol. XLVII, Accounts and Papers, 11.

**Table 3 All child admissions: familial status by quinquennia (%)**

	1835– 1840	1840– 1845	1845– 1850	1850– 1855	1855– 1860	1860– 1865	1865– 1870	1870– 1875	1875– 1880	1880– 1885	No.
Both parents	25.25	37.69	34.11	23.96	20.12	9.88	18.31	15.40	13.14	9.26	1,506
Mother	39.54	43.14	28.35	43.96	48.74	48.19	48.98	51.41	58.64	45.74	2,826
Father	2.58	6.17	13.24	4.38	5.42	8.67	5.59	8.03	2.92	7.78	399
Siblings	14.10	5.05	12.93	8.13	9.86	10.12	8.14	12.36	12.17	20.37	696
Alone	18.53	7.94	11.37	19.58	15.86	23.13	18.98	12.80	13.14	16.85	961
Total	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00	
No.	1,085	1,247	642	480	517	415	590	461	411	540	6,388
%	16.98	19.52	10.05	7.51	8.09	6.50	9.24	7.22	6.43	8.45	100.00

**Source:** Milton Union Admissions and Discharges Register.

can be seen in Table 3: most were with mothers, fewest with fathers. The numbers confirm Goose's findings that far more single-parent families were admitted than families with two parents.<sup>10</sup> After 1850 the number admitted with both parents declined significantly, from approximately one-third of all child admissions in the first 15 years of the life of the workhouse to approximately one-sixth in the last 15 years covered by this study.

There are three possible reasons for this decline: multiple admissions, economic circumstances and union policy. The impact of multiple admissions is demonstrated by the data for adults of working age (16–59) shown in Table 1. The number of admissions of adults was particularly high in the first three quinquennia, and the much lower figures for first admissions indicate that a greater tendency to return took place in these years. Table 4 shows that the reason for admission of the vast majority of two parent families was unemployment. Definitive figures are impossible to ascertain because reasons for admission were rarely given in the later decades, but even if all those for



**Table 4 Reasons for admission of children to the Milton Union workhouse, 1835-1885 (%)**

	With both parents	With mother	With father	With siblings or alone	Total
Accident/illness	22.4	10.3	34.1	10.9	14.8
Mother pregnant	2.1	12.0	0.0	0.0	5.8
Deserted	0.1	15.7	0.0	16.6	11.4
Family reasons	5.7	25.9	13.7	26.7	20.7
Destitute	13.8	26.3	17.2	27.8	23.2
Removed	1.2	2.2	1.9	1.5	1.8
Unemployed	54.2	4.7	29.2	3.2	17.2
Returned	0.1	0.3	0.9	8.5	2.4
Miscellaneous	0.1	0.7	0.0	3.8	1.3
No reason given	0.2	1.9	3.0	1.1	1.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No.	1,538	3,005	431	1,746	6,720

**Notes:** Family reasons include children of single parents (illegitimate or orphans), some from dysfunctional families, and children of new stepfathers.  
Returned includes returns from service, from being boarded out in epidemics, from leave, from hospital or asylum, from removal to settlement, from gaol and from absconding.  
Miscellaneous includes transfers to a new age classification or a new parish, those in by order of board/magistrates/master/police/overseer, those sent in for bad conduct, those found wandering or absconding from boarding school, and those in just for a meal.

**Source:** Milton Union Admissions and Discharges Register

whom the reason for admission is unknown in the later period are assumed to be due to unemployment, the proportion drops from 74 per cent in the period 1835–51 to 9 per cent in the 1870s. From the 1850s the demographic and economic vitality of the area increased employment opportunities, despite temporary setbacks in the harsh winters of 1869 and 1870. The fall in numbers of children entering the workhouse with both parents must be related to this. But policy may have played a part too. The determination of the guardians to implement the policy of prohibiting out-relief to able-bodied males meant, in the early years of the New Poor Law, a choice between starvation and the workhouse.<sup>11</sup> Although in 1869 and 1870 the guardians applied for an Outdoor Labour Test Order, tough policies were soon resumed with the enthusiastic adoption of the ‘crusade’ against outdoor relief in the 1870s.<sup>12</sup> It is impossible to quantify the relative importance of policy and economic factors, but it seems likely that the generally strict imposition of the workhouse test was successful in encouraging men to be self-reliant, at the same time as employment opportunities were generally improving.

Some families, in various combinations of their membership, were repeatedly in and out of the workhouse. Their numbers declined over the period, from 112 in 1835–41 to 5 in 1881–5. The father is usually categorised as unemployed on first entry, but is often later shown to have been disabled in some way. Two examples of the circumstances in which children came in with both parents will illustrate these phenomena. The Sattin family first entered in January 1840

**Table 5 Milton Union workhouse children by age and sex: all admissions, 1835-85 (%)**

Age group	All children: proportion of age groups					Total
	Under 2	Boys 2-9	Girls 2-9	Boys 10-15	Girls 10-15	
	20.5	22.8	22.8	17.9	15.9	100.0
All children: proportion of familial category						
With both parents	21.3	28.9	29.7	15.4	19.3	23.6
With mother	75.1	41.5	45.4	26.6	26.7	44.2
With father	0.5	8.0	5.1	11.1	7.4	6.2
With siblings	0.7	13.2	12.2	14.4	15.0	10.9
Alone	2.5	8.5	7.7	32.5	31.6	15.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No.	1,311	1,459	1,459	1,146	1,013	6,388

**Source:** Milton Union Admissions and Discharges Register

with four children, father unwell. They frequently returned, the father usually unemployed, though later described as lame or partially disabled. Altogether seven siblings appear; the mother died in 1841 and the siblings were often in thereafter, with the father, with each other or alone. Together this family clocked up 11,674 days in the workhouse over 41 years. The Anderson family, known from family reconstitution, had 12 children, of whom five died in infancy and both parents died in their forties; when the whole family first came into the workhouse on Christmas Eve 1839 the youngest was a baby and age at burial shows that he must have been born as recently as October. The fact that the youngest sibling was often a small baby in families who came in with both parents suggests that its arrival might have been the last straw, possibly by depriving the family of some of the mother's contribution to their income, which would have been especially hard in the winter months.

A large family was no justification for out-relief. In April 1838 the Poor Law Commissioners, in reply to a query from the Milton guardians, wrote, 'In the case of large families the Commissioners are sensible that pressure and occasional hardship must be felt, while the children are growing up to an age when they can support themselves, but this seems inevitable for a time, although it will find a corrective, if left to itself, by inducing greater providence and skill. If, however, the union authorities step in and authorise relief in such cases, those virtues will inevitably be undermined'.<sup>13</sup>

The age categories of children by sex can be seen in Table 5. Over the 50 years there is exactly the same number of boys and girls aged 2-9, but there are slightly more boys than girls aged 10-15, possibly because it was easier to find employment for girls of this age group, especially in the earlier years, as is shown by Tufnell's 1869 report on education.<sup>14</sup> Unsurprisingly, over 97 per cent of very small children are admitted with a parent, usually the mother. Otherwise there is a remarkable similarity in familial status across all age categories.

### Single parent families and unaccompanied children

The declining proportions of two-parent families was mirrored by the increased proportions of children with mothers, or unaccompanied. In this respect there was no change in the circumstances forcing them into the workhouse, the main reasons being given as 'family reasons' and 'destitution', these descriptions indicating illegitimacy and/or the loss of one or both parents. Most of the children born in the workhouse were illegitimate. The numbers of births are remarkably consistent over the five decades, averaging 66. Over 70 per cent of these children never returned to the workhouse, and over 70 per cent stayed in for less than one month after birth, including 45 who died there. The pattern is similar for the admission of their mothers: 74 per cent were admitted only once or twice before the birth, and 60 per cent only once or twice ever. For many who came in twice before the birth, the first occasion seems to have been when the discovery of pregnancy might have resulted in unemployment.

The marital status of 28 per cent of mothers giving birth is unrecorded. Of the total of 329 births, only 8 per cent were to married women (of whom nearly half were deserted) and 4 per cent to widows. Midwifery services were available to deserving outdoor paupers, but single women and widows with illegitimate children were offered only the workhouse. There were a few women who were frequently in and out and had more than one child born in the workhouse, but they were in a minority. Over the half century, ten had two illegitimate children born in the workhouse, two had three and only one had four. In addition two married women each gave birth to three children there, and three to two children. It would appear, therefore, that the workhouse was used a lying-in hospital for mothers of illegitimate children, but their number was dominated by first-time mothers, not multiple bastard-bearers.

The marital status of 50 per cent of mothers admitted with children was not recorded but in over half of these cases it is possible to infer that status from other evidence. Of the mothers admitted with children, including those born in the workhouse, 33 per cent were single, 25 per cent married and 19 per cent widowed; the status of 23 per cent remains unknown.

Under regulations issued subsequent to the 1834 Act it was accepted that widows should receive out-relief for the first six months of their widowhood, or longer if they had dependent children and were unable to work. Those who had an illegitimate child or were considered disreputable were offered the workhouse.<sup>15</sup> In February 1841 parish officials and inhabitants were prepared to swear an affidavit that widow Clackett was receiving suspicious visits from 'an individual', and that the children were left unclean when she went out nursing; the guardians decided that the children would benefit if the family were removed to the workhouse and voted in favour of removing their out-relief.<sup>16</sup> Tougher policies were encouraged after 1870: out-relief was to be refused to widows with only one child, and widows with more than one child should be offered the workhouse for some of their children. The Annual Report

of the Local Government Board in 1874 justified this attitude by publishing anecdotal evidence of fraud.<sup>17</sup>

While the problems of widows occupy a good deal of space in the Annual Reports of the central authority, the plight of widowers is ignored. In six Hertfordshire workhouses 9 out of 25 widowed inmates heading families in 1851 were male.<sup>18</sup> Of the 102 fathers who entered the Milton workhouse with children, 36 are known to have been widowers and another 20 probably were (they appear to have sole care of their children)—a total of at least 55 per cent. The unsympathetic attitude of the Poor Law Commissioners to the plight of large families is demonstrated by their response to a plea from the Milton guardians to be allowed to pay out-relief to John Hughes. His wife had just died in childbed, and he had eight children aged from two weeks to 13 years. He earned 12s. per week, the eldest boy earned 3s., and the eldest girl 1s. 6d. The Commissioners would not sanction the 2s. 6d. out-relief that the guardians wanted to give because it constituted relief to an able-bodied male. They suggested that the guardians might, without reference to the Commissioners, order any one of the widows to whom they were giving out-relief, without exacting any work in return, to housekeep for him. Since these children did not appear in the workhouse registers, it is probable that this solution was adopted.

Deserted children were more likely to be admitted with mothers than unaccompanied. In total 443 individual children were deserted, belonging to 184 families. The admission of 248 were with mothers, 149 with siblings, 63 alone and one with a grandfather. Of these 443 children 225 were also admitted when not deserted, on 330 occasions: 63 with both parents, 136 with mothers, 24 with fathers, 45 with siblings and 62 alone.

Deserted wives with children were in an analogous situation to widows, with two exceptions: first the assumption was made from the start that their claim to out-relief would be fraudulent (again the central authority reports furnish anecdotal but not statistical evidence); secondly their legal position was different. A married woman was not liable to maintain her children during her husband's lifetime, and consequently she was not subject to the workhouse test if deserted, nor to prosecution if she deserted her children. If she required relief for her children, the guardians could compel those children who were above the age of nurture to enter the workhouse, with or without her, but children below the age of nurture could not be separated from their mother so had to be given out-relief if she refused the workhouse.<sup>19</sup> A feeling developed that deserted wives should not be in a more beneficial position than widows. Legislation in 1844 and 1868 moved towards this, and allowed guardians to recover maintenance costs instead of sending husbands to prison.<sup>20</sup>

The guardians regularly proceeded to prosecution for desertion. The minutes contain records of an intention to prosecute in the case of 68 families involving 174 children. It was not only fathers who were held responsible: stepfathers were charged for their wives' illegitimate children, grandfathers when their daughters deserted their children, employers when a child suffered an accident at work. A letter from the guardians to the Commissioners in 1838 had no doubt about James Hart's responsibility for his wife's illegitimate children, nor

that he was unable to meet them, but needed guidance on whether the mother's parish or his should bear the costs: the reply was 'his'.<sup>21</sup> As the Poor Law system developed, co-operation increased among unions. John Rickwood, who had deserted his family, was advertised in the *Unions Gazette*, with a £1 reward and reasonable expenses for his apprehension. The police traced James Fletcher to Nottingham and then to Liverpool and had instituted enquiries about expenses when the family ceased to be chargeable and the case was dropped. When fathers were in the forces the War Office was approached for attachment of pay. As far as illegitimate children were concerned the law was preoccupied with financial considerations, not with the welfare of mother or child.<sup>22</sup> In practice there was rarely any alternative to the workhouse for them, unless families could house them.

The desertion of a child by a single parent often seems to have been the last resort of desperation. The big problem was how to work and to bring up children at the same time, especially for women whose wages were often inadequate. The attitude of the guardians was ambivalent. Relief in aid of wages was the ultimate taboo; it was seen as leading to a general depression of wages. On the other hand it seemed unreasonable for ratepayers to meet the maintenance costs in the workhouse of a woman who was willing to work. In 1854 they arranged for Mary Pepper to work as a servant for the Medical Officer, who would transfer 3s. a week from her wages for the maintenance of her illegitimate daughter in the workhouse.<sup>23</sup> Proceedings were begun against Ellen Spearman for unlawfully deserting her illegitimate child, but these were suspended as a result of an arrangement with her employer, a victualler of Sittingbourne, to pay 1s. a week out of her wages of 3s. for the upkeep of her daughter. When this was reported to the Poor Law Board they sanctioned it for one month only.<sup>24</sup> Both Lees and Thane show that desertion was often caused by husbands looking for work.<sup>25</sup> The Milton guardians always distinguished between the deserving and undeserving. In 1849 they asked permission to give out-relief for two weeks to the wife and children of William Pateman, an able-bodied man suddenly unemployed as a consequence of a large employer closing down; he was of good character and had gone away to seek work. Unfortunately the reply is among the lost correspondence.<sup>26</sup>

The central authority was rarely sympathetic to pleas for leniency, though guardians could often wear them down with repeated correspondence. Jane Luckhurst gave birth to an illegitimate daughter in the workhouse in September 1869. In October she was engaged as a wet nurse in Brixton. By November she was no longer required in this capacity but her employer wanted to keep her on as a nursemaid. However, the reduced wages would prevent her from finding the 5s. a week she needed for her daughter to be looked after. She asked the board of guardians to take her daughter into the workhouse and offered to pay 1s. a week 'so that I may be able to regain my character and keep in respectable service'. Her mistress was willing to answer questions about her conduct. The guardians consulted the Poor Law Board, who responded that they could detect no special circumstances in this case. A mother who could not maintain her illegitimate child without aid must go into the workhouse; if the child was destitute as a result of the mother's inability to

support it they were bound to relieve it and should consider proceedings against the mother. The guardians were, however, eventually able to persuade the Board that the case came within the exceptions of the General Prohibition Order.<sup>27</sup>

On other occasions the guardians were totally unsympathetic to the plight of a single-parent family, especially in cases of desertion, and they showed no mercy to anyone who had the effrontery to complain about them in public or to the central authority, even if vicariously through a sympathetic patron. The doom-laden tale of the Floyds is worthy of Thomas Hardy. Elizabeth Floyd was a prosperous grocer's daughter who was deserted by her husband and struggled for years to bring up their seven children. The accidental drowning of the eldest boy just as he became old enough to start supporting the family, the suicide of the husband in the United States when his attempt at bigamy was revealed and the blockage in a case in Chancery of a legacy from her brother finally defeated her. She begged the guardians for out-relief for her children to tide her over; they offered the workhouse. An angry rejection of this offer was followed by the deliberate desertion of the four youngest children in an inn in Milton. She was prosecuted and imprisoned. The details of her story are known from the correspondence of her eldest daughter's employer, a naval captain, with the Poor Law Commissioners, who replied that they had no power to intervene in individual cases, but nevertheless asked the guardians for their observations. The guardians were unrepentant. The minutes show them in touch with the British consul in America to claim maintenance costs from the husband's estate.<sup>28</sup>

Many of the unaccompanied children, whether admitted as siblings or alone, were orphans. Of the 1,007 unaccompanied children, 438 (43 per cent) were certainly or probably orphans. The experience of suddenly finding themselves in the workhouse immediately after the death of parents must have been traumatic. The reconstitution of families in five parishes makes it possible to trace the history of some of these cases. Four Anderson children, aged ten, eight, five and about nine months, had witnessed their father's death in April 1856 and their mother's in May, and were admitted to the workhouse the day after her funeral. They were not, however, unfamiliar with the idea of the workhouse: three of their mother's Williamson siblings had been in the workhouse as sick adults. There must have been many other such family connections, which the registers cannot reveal.

Assistant Commissioners and Inspectors, commenting in the Annual Reports of the central authority, make much of the distinction between orphans (or the long deserted), who were separated from the evil influence of their parents, and those who were frequently in and out with parents. The first chaplain of the workhouse comments similarly in 1839 in support of his plea for District Schools: 'I am myself convinced, from the observations I have frequently made, that . . . the cruelty to the children consists, not in taking them away from their parents, but in allowing them to have any intercourse with them'.<sup>29</sup>

Eleven per cent of all unaccompanied admissions were caused by illness or accident. Most are simply described as sick or ill without specification.

Accidents are mostly fractures, burns and injuries to feet and hands, one child being injured in a gun explosion. A small number were chronically sick or disabled, usually described as 'lame' or 'crippled' or 'bad legs'. Only four children were described as mentally ill, usually as 'imbeciles'; one with epilepsy was sent to the asylum. The acute and infectious or contagious diseases specified include ague (malaria), typhoid (fever), cholera, itch (scabies), smallpox, scarlet fever, and measles.

From the 1870s, as concern for public health developed, the incidence of infectious disease was more likely to send children, including non-paupers, into the workhouse. The new infectious hospital built in the 1870s was of little use for controlling the spread of infection without full co-operation in detecting and notifying disease. The local sanitary authorities in the union were able to persuade all doctors but one to notify them of infections and to get cases quickly transferred to the isolation hospital, with effective results.<sup>30</sup> The one who refused, who practised in the Rainham and Upchurch areas, was probably motivated by the stigma still attached to any building associated with the workhouse. Infection spread quickly in his area among non-paupers. Mr Ray, the Medical Officer of Health for the Milton RSA (who was also the workhouse Medical Officer) found 200 cases of scarlet fever in Dr Penfold's area in 1876, which could have been prevented. His report for 1876 shows the circumstances which took children into the workhouse hospital elsewhere in the union.

I have just returned from a spectacle, which ought to be impossible in any civilized country . . . In the house of one Edward Hart . . . a death has occurred from scarlet fever; the body, four days a corpse, and still unburied, was, as expressed by a neighbour, already turning black from the virulence of the disease; a child running about the house . . . was full out with the rash, which symptomises the malady. Other children who had not had the disorder, were freely mixing with the infected child. The mother and father of the youngster, full as they must be of the morbid poison, were going about their respective avocations, and were not to be seen. . . This is simply monstrous . . . In both Sittingbourne and Milton the carrying out of the measures as to the immediate removal of infectious cases has resulted in the immediate cessation of the disease.<sup>31</sup>

From 1875 the Milton guardians were begging the Local Government Board to promote legislation making the notification of infectious and contagious disease compulsory, but they insisted that the time was not yet ripe; Parliament would not be willing to coerce private practitioners. By the 1880s some large towns had bye-laws to this effect and notification became compulsory in London in 1889.<sup>32</sup>

Families facing sickness had a double problem: first how to pay for medical attention and secondly how to cope if the breadwinner or the mother was ill. The first of these does not belong properly to the subject of this article, though anyone accepting medical relief was pauperised. The Annual Reports of the central authority recognised the uneasiness which many local boards felt about

severity towards the sick but combined this with lectures on the need for such severity to encourage self-help and avoid demoralisation. The Chiel family were admitted to the workhouse in November 1846, the father being ill, but the parents, together with the two youngest children, were discharged after a month, having been granted out-relief, so they were obviously regarded as deserving; the other three children were taken out one by one as circumstances permitted. Policy became tougher after 1870. The Annual Report of 1872 insists that relief to a husband to care for children while his wife is in hospital should be considered relief in aid of wages if he could not afford to pay for it.<sup>33</sup> The minutes of the Milton board give details of a debate about the Gambell family as to whether they should charge him 6s. or 12s. a week to keep his wife (who had consumption) and three children in the workhouse. The vote was 9:8 in favour of 12s., but as the family do not appear in the admission registers they must have decided to manage by other means.<sup>34</sup>

Some children admitted were returning to take the place of a sibling allowed to leave. It has already been seen that there were circumstances in which parts of families could be left in the workhouse, often with arrangements for payment for their maintenance. In the case of the Chiel family mentioned above, the child who was taken out earliest returned when a sibling left. There are several instances of siblings sharing the unenviable duty of accepting incarceration in the workhouse so that others could leave. Single mothers who came in during an emergency, either sickness or imminent confinement, who had no choice but to bring their children with them, were often able to get a relation, most commonly an aunt or grandmother, to take the children out. Generally, relations seem to have been more willing to take girls than boys. William Goodwin, almost certainly a widower, had to take his three children in with him when he was ill in October 1866. He was sent to hospital in February 1867, an aunt took his daughter out in November, but the two boys had to stay in until their father could take them out with him in May. Many taken out by relations in such circumstances were soon back: they were granted only a temporary respite, though families seem to have done their best to help. Some children came in late to join parents and siblings already in, both the young who must have been cared for by friends or relations and also the eldest, who seem sometimes to have tried to avoid the fate of the rest of the family but eventually had to succumb.

#### **Illegitimacy and deaths of parents in the five reconstituted parishes**

The data from the reconstituted families in the five western parishes can throw some light on the situation of families with illegitimate children and those who lost parent(s).

A total of 303 illegitimate children can be identified from registers, censuses and/or workhouse records as belonging to the five parishes and born between 1820 and 1881. Table 6 shows their situation at their next appearance in one of these records. Over 50 per cent had died or disappeared. Of those surviving as residents, 38 per cent were stepchildren after their mother had married and 32 per cent were with their mother's parents, half of these without their mothers



**Table 6 Illegitimate children born 1820-81 in five reconstituted parishes: situation at next recorded appearance**

	All		Survivors	
	No.	%	No.	%
Dead	62	20.5		
Child and mother disappeared	88	29.0		
Child disappeared, mother not	13	4.3		
With mother's parents, mother away	23	7.6	23	16.4
With mother's parents, mother married	2	0.7	2	1.4
Stepchild in mother's new household	53	17.5	53	37.9
With mother and mother's parents	22	7.3	22	15.7
In employment	1	0.3	1	0.7
In census, relationship not known	2	0.7	2	1.4
Married with own family	9	3.0	9	6.4
With relation other than grandparent	3	1.0	3	2.1
With mother elsewhere	8	2.6	8	5.7
Male head of household with illegitimate child(ren)	12	4.0	12	8.6
In workhouse	3	1.0	3	2.1
Not known	2	0.7	2	1.4
Total	303	100.0	140	100.0

**Note:** The five parishes are Hartlip, Lower Halstow, Newington, Rainham and Upchurch.

**Table 7 Situation at next census of children born 1820-81 in five reconstituted parishes who were <16 when parent(s) died (%)**

	All at next census				Still under 16 at next census			
	Second parent died				Second parent died			
	Father d.	Mother d.	Father d.	Mother d.	Father d.	Mother d.	Father d.	Mother d.
Alone or lodging	0.7	1.2	1.6	3.6	0.5	0.3	4.0	0.0
Dead	5.0	8.4	4.8	12.7	6.1	10.9	12.0	20.7
Disappeared	32.0	30.5	46.0	25.5	22.3	22.3	24.0	10.3
Stepchild	13.3	12.1	3.2	3.6	17.5	16.0	8.0	6.9
Married	1.5	2.2	3.2	5.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
With parent	33.6	29.9	0.0	0.0	43.0	37.3	0.0	0.0
With relation	5.1	8.1	19.0	20.0	3.9	6.1	16.0	17.2
In service	5.7	5.0	9.5	7.3	2.3	3.0	8.0	3.4
Workhouse	3.1	2.7	12.7	21.8	4.5	4.1	28.0	41.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No.	684	596	63	55	440	394	25	29

**Note:** The five parishes are Hartlip, Lower Halstow, Newington, Rainham and Upchurch.

being present. Seventy-four (24 per cent) were ever in the workhouse: of these 54 per cent were born there and 46 per cent entered with their mothers. Thirty-five per cent never returned after their birth, 14 returned frequently and 17, including these, were in for a long time. Of the mothers, three were widows who did not enter the workhouse until they had an illegitimate child, and 13 had themselves been in the workhouse as children for a long period.

A total of 1,280 children were identified who were born between 1820 and 1881 and who lost one or both parents while they were under 16. Table 7 shows that approximately 37 per cent had died or disappeared before the next census after the death. Of resident survivors the majority were living with the surviving parent (53 per cent with mothers and 49 per cent with fathers). Far more orphans were likely to be in the workhouse when the mother was the second parent to die, and this is balanced by the greater numbers who disappeared after the father's death, presumably because they had relatives away from the area. Far more male than female children were with relatives, and more females were at work, especially of those still under 16. Similar numbers of those with relatives are with grandparents, siblings and other relatives. More went into the workhouse immediately after the death of the mother than of the father, but far more were in the workhouse later after the death of the father, with or without their mothers.

The main problems for single-parent families with female heads was income, while for male heads it was housekeeping. In 36 of the 241 families where the father had died, the mother had remarried and the children appear as stepchildren. In the 85 households headed by widows and with resident children, 42 had children at work, 48 had mothers at work and two had lodgers; only seven had no visible means of support. Only the 1851 census mentions 'parish' relief, and 12 widowed mothers with children are listed as receiving it, but the full numbers are not necessarily recorded. Eighteen of these widowed households were probably quite well-off, often with the widow continuing her late husband's trade, mostly farmers, but in one case a widow was running a family building business, with one elder son as a bricklayer. In many cases where children under 16 suffered the loss of a parent they were the youngest of several siblings and the elder ones were working. There is a good deal of evidence of family solidarity in these circumstances.

The same applies to widowers' children. Of the 72 households headed by a widower and including children under 16 when their mother died, 11 have a daughter named as housekeeper (ages ranging from 12 to 26) and 23 more have a daughter probably acting in this capacity but not named as such (ages 10 to 24). Fifteen employ housekeepers, eight have a relation as housekeeper, and seven are a discrete unit either lodging or in a multiple occupation house. Only four have no discernible arrangements for housekeeping. There were several cases where widows acted as housekeepers to widowers, thus solving both problems. Whether or not this was at the behest of the guardians is not known, but a number of illegitimate children resulted from these permanent partnerships. The disaster of widowhood and orphan status did not necessarily lead to the workhouse.

### **Conclusion**

Children thus constituted a substantial proportion of workhouse inmates in the Milton Union throughout the first 50 years of the New Poor Law. Illegitimacy, the loss of one or both parents and desertion were the main reasons for them to

be taken in. The number found there with both parents declined considerably across the period, partly as a result of improved economic circumstances and partly due to the policy of the Milton guardians. Repeated reliance upon the workhouse among particular families also fell considerably. Increasingly, therefore, children were taken in to the workhouse with just one parent, predominantly their mothers, and the large number who were born there suggests that workhouse was used a lying-in hospital for mothers of illegitimate children, who were predominantly first-time mothers. Deserted families comprising a mother and one or more children were also found in the workhouse in substantial numbers, although the Milton guardians did pursue deserted fathers with some vigour. Approaching half of those children who entered the workhouse unaccompanied were orphans. Infectious illness was an increasing reason for children to be brought to the workhouse, but the board of guardians was not necessarily sympathetic to the plight of sick parents, any more than they were to those burdened with large families. In such circumstances there are many examples that testify to the support provided by other family members, and this is further underlined in the five parishes where it was possible to track children across time, for parental support for illegitimate or deserted children was supplemented by help from the wider family, particularly grandparents.

The policy of the Milton guardians over the period reflects that of the central poor law authority. Milton was always a very strict union, banning out-relief so enthusiastically at first that riots were provoked (and crushed) and the chairman, Sir Matthew Tilden, subsequently conspired with the Poor Law Commissioners to pack the bench with JPs more sympathetic towards the new law, since the *ex officio* JP on the board was too soft. He confidently expected the imminent elimination of pauperism, but as this seemed to be indefinitely postponed the board settled down into comparative complacency, dealing with problems more pragmatically. They were startled out of this by the influx in the 1860s of a large alien population whom they did not know and by the sort of trade depression that had resulted in the adoption of a policy of total prohibition of out-relief in the industrial areas of the north. In these circumstances the proportion of the poor rate spent on out-relief increased significantly in the late 1860s. The 'crusade' of the 1870s was just what was needed to put them back on their customary track, and they embraced it with enthusiasm. Karel Williams lists Milton as one of the seven rural parishes keenest to restrict out-relief.<sup>35</sup>

The most consistent aspect of their policy was with regard to the moral character of claimants. After the initial period of extreme severity, they were prepared to try to claim support in special cases for mothers of illegitimate children or able-bodied fathers suddenly made unemployed through no fault of their own if they knew them to be deserving and unlucky, but widows who had illegitimate children or were reputed not to be respectable or who squandered their late husbands' meagre savings were offered only the workhouse. In their dealings with the central authority they were outwardly deferential, but also stubborn, and during the two periods of the imposition of an Outdoor Labour Test Order they showed themselves to be experts in the

tactics of evasion, as they resisted the suggestions of the central authority to convert the chapel to provide extra workhouse accommodation until the crisis was over. They were also consistently hostile to anyone who complained over their heads to the central authority. Their policy never purported to be inhuman, but it was always defended as beneficial to the 'lower orders', and intended to restore and promote self-respect.

They were also very careful with the ratepayers' money and uttered homilies about the poor who were little better off than claimants but nevertheless paying rates. Lees suggested that rural unions paid 1s. to 2s. a week per person for out-relief. The occasional references to out-relief in the Milton minutes suggest that payments were about the middle of this range. For instance in the crises of 1870 and 1872 they paid on a scale ranging from 7s. 6d. for parents with one child to 12s. for those with six.<sup>36</sup>

Their policies and the changing economic situation combined to reduce the numbers of able-bodied men applying for relief, and this inevitably affected their children, but the situation of groups other than able-bodied men did not change significantly and their continuing problems continued to bring them into the workhouse in considerable numbers. But the irony can be seen in this union, as in others, that the very people whom the new law was intended for were no longer numerically dominant in the workhouse by the end of the period. Instead, it was full of the people whom the 1834 Act had ignored.

### Acknowledgement

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### NOTES

1. A. Hinde and F. Turnbull, 'The populations of two Hampshire workhouses. 1851–1861', *Local Population Studies*, 61 (1998), 38–53; N. Goose, 'Workhouse populations in the mid-nineteenth century: the case of Hertfordshire', *Local Population Studies*, 62 (1999), 52–69; D.G. Jackson, 'Kent workhouse populations in 1881: a study based on the census enumerators' books', *Local Population Studies*, 69 (2002), 51–66; D.G. Jackson, 'The Medway Union workhouse, 1876–1881: a study based on admission and discharge registers and the census enumerators' books', *Local Population Studies*, 75 (2005), 51–66.
2. For the terms and implementation of the Act see D. Englander, *Poverty and poor law reform in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain, 1834–1914* (London, 1998), 9–30; A. Kidd, *State, society and the poor in nineteenth-century England* (Basingstoke, 1999), 24–45; L. Hollen Lees, *The solidarities of strangers. The English poor laws and the people, 1700–1948* (Cambridge, 1998), 115–229; K.D.M. Snell, "'A cruel kindness': parish out-door relief and the new poor law", in K.D.M. Snell, *Parish and belonging: community, identity and welfare in England and Wales 1700–1950* (Cambridge, 2006), 207–338.
3. Between the censuses of 1851 and 1881 the proportion of males over 20 engaged in agriculture fell from 44 per cent to 30 per cent, while the proportion in industry rose from 25 per cent to 36 per cent.
4. E. Hasted, *The history and topographical survey of the county of Kent* (Rochester, 1798), VI, 164. Correspondence from the Local Government Board in 1871 asked if anything had yet been done about 'the unwholesome conditions' an earlier inspection had found in Milton: The National Archives (hereafter TNA), MH 12/5282.
5. This modifies the opinion of J.M. Preston, *Industrial Medway* (Rochester, 1977), 92, that because

many brickmakers had a supplementary occupation there was little in the way of recession before the 1890s.

6. Centre for Kentish Studies (hereafter CKS), Minutes of the Board of Guardians, G/Mi Am, Book VI, 489–90, Book XIV, 629–32; TNA, MH 12/5285.
7. CKS, G/Mi WIA, Books 1–18.
8. For the methodology of the reconstitution of families in these parishes see A. Perkyms, 'Migration and mobility: six Kentish parishes 1851–1881', *Local Population Studies*, **63** (1999), 36–9. The five parishes in the Milton Union were Hartlip, Lower Halstow, Newington, Rainham and Upchurch.
9. The decades are defined by Lady Day in each census year, since this allows for better comparison with the census returns and other material.
10. Goose, 'Workhouse populations', 58, 62.
11. For a discussion of the workhouse alternative being accepted see M. MacKinnon, 'English poor law policy and the crusade against outrelief', *Journal of Economic History*, **47** (1987), 603–25; Lees, *Solidarities*, 150–1.
12. For the 'crusade against out-relief' see Englander, *Poverty and poor law reform*, 22–4; Kidd, *State, society and the poor*, 48–52.
13. TNA, MH 12/5280.
14. Poor Law Board, *21<sup>st</sup> Annual Report*, British Parliamentary Papers (hereafter BPP) 1869, **XXVIII**, 16–18.
15. S. and B. Webb, *English poor law policy* (London, 1910), 37; Poor Law Commission, *7<sup>th</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1841, **XL**, 63; Lees, *Solidarities*, 142; Hinde and Turnbull, 'Hampshire workhouses', 38; Snell, *Parish and belonging*, 236–7.
16. CKS, G/Mi Am, Book II, 204.
17. Local Government Board, *1<sup>st</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1872, **XXVIII**, 67; *3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1874, **XXV**, 171.
18. Goose, 'Workhouse populations', 58.
19. Poor Law Commission, *7<sup>th</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1841, **XI**, 10–11.
20. Poor Law Commission, *11<sup>th</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1845, **XXVII**, 12–13; Poor Law Board, *21<sup>st</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1869, **XXVIII**, 14.
21. TNA, MH 12/5280.
22. A. Digby, *Pauper palaces* (London, 1978), 153–4; Poor Law Commission, *11<sup>th</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1845, **XXVII**, 4–5; Poor Law Board, *21<sup>st</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1869, **XXVIII**, 14.
23. CKS, G/Mi AM, Book XIX, 70.
24. CKS, G/Mi AM, Book XXXII, 122–35.
25. Lees, *Solidarities*, 215–16; P. Thane, 'Women and the poor law in Victorian and Edwardian England', *History Workshop Journal*, **6** (1978), 33.
26. CKS, G/Mi Am, Book IV, 464.
27. TNA, MH 12/5281.
28. CKS, G/Mi Am, Book III, 590, Book IV, 693; TNA, MH 12/5280.
29. TNA, MH 12/5280. Two examples among many from the annual reports are: Poor Law Board, *20<sup>th</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1868, **XXXIII**, 134; Local Government Board, *2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1873, **XXIX**, 103.
30. These were the Milton Rural Sanitary Authority, the Milton Urban Sanitary Authority and the Sittingbourne Urban Sanitary Authority.
31. TNA, MH 12/5284.
32. A. Wohl, *Endangered lives: public health in Victorian Britain* (London, 1983), 136–7.
33. Local Government Board, *1<sup>st</sup> Annual Report*, BPP 1872, **XXVIII**, 99.
34. CKS, G/Mi Am, Book XLIII, 329.
35. K. Williams, *From pauperism to poverty* (London, 1981), 105.
36. CKS, G/Mi Am, Book XI, 60, 238.

## RESEARCH NOTE

### CATHOLICS AND THE CLANDESTINE MARRIAGES ACT OF 1753

**Rebecca Probert and Liam D'Arcy Brown**

Rebecca Probert is a Senior Lecturer in Law at the University of Warwick. She specialises in family law and is currently writing a book on the law of marriage in the eighteenth century. Liam D'Arcy Brown is her husband and chief research assistant.

#### **Introduction**

In 1753 the Clandestine Marriages Act was passed, putting the formalities required for a valid marriage on a statutory footing for the first time.<sup>1</sup> Only Jews, Quakers, and members of the Royal Family were exempted from the requirement that marriage should be celebrated according to the rites of the Church of England.<sup>2</sup> The marriage ceremonies of Catholics and other Protestant dissenters had no legal status.

There has been much debate as to the extent to which the Act was a radical break with the past, and to how far couples married according to the forms it prescribed.<sup>3</sup> Rather less attention has been paid to the effect of the Act on those who might have had religious objections to marriage according to the Anglican form, although some commentators have speculated that non-observance was widespread, without providing any supporting evidence.<sup>4</sup> Certainly, there is no evidence that Protestant dissenters married according to their own religious rites after 1754: when dissenting congregations submitted their registers to the commission set up to examine non-parochial registers in the nineteenth century, only one was found to continue beyond 1754, and this was simply a register of marriages that had taken place elsewhere.<sup>5</sup> Catholic congregations, by contrast, refused to submit their registers to the commission. A number of Catholic marriage registers relating to the second half of the eighteenth century have been published, while others lie in county record offices. But is the existence of such registers evidence of non-compliance with the 1753 Act?

The key question is not whether Catholic couples went through an invalid Catholic ceremony of marriage, but whether they also submitted to the legally binding Anglican rites. At first sight the very idea might appear unlikely, on the grounds that it would be incompatible with one's status as a Catholic to attend the religious services of the Church of England. But such an approach

had papal sanction. Benedict XIV had considered the question of whether Catholics in Protestant countries should submit to legislation requiring them to be married by a minister of the established church, and had held that 'it was quite legitimate for Catholics to obey the civil law in this matter'.<sup>6</sup>

But what happened in practice? There have been some studies on the extent of compliance among Catholics. One carried out by Williams suggested that a number of Catholics in Wardour, Wiltshire, married solely according to their own religious rites.<sup>7</sup> Similarly, Rowlands, having examined the register of Catholic marriages at Brindle in Lancashire, concluded that 'most of the Catholics of Brindle in the heart of Catholic Lancashire regarded Hardwicke's Marriage Act as something to be ignored'.<sup>8</sup> However, as explained below, the methodology adopted in these studies was not unproblematic. The findings set out in this paper provide a very different perspective on the extent of compliance, and show why other studies have been less successful in tracing the Anglican marriages of Catholic couples. The evidence illustrates not only the importance that was attached to a legally binding marriage but also the way in which couples accommodated the demands of the law with their religious faith.

### **The test group**

The test group consisted of 95 couples who married in a Catholic ceremony at the Catholic stronghold of Coughton Court in Warwickshire between 1758 and 1795.<sup>9</sup> Coughton, one of the seats of the Throckmorton family, has been described as 'one of the earliest recusant houses in the country', and from an early date operated as a place to celebrate mass.<sup>10</sup> On a tour of the house, the authors were shown the saloon where the 'mass chest' was kept in the eighteenth century, as well as the priest-hole that facilitated a quick disappearance if necessary. The Coughton marriage register was chosen for study because of the level of detail it provided (including information about the parties' parishes of residence in most cases, and often whether both parties were Catholic or not), and because other Catholic registers in the Warwickshire archives recorded only a few marriages.<sup>11</sup>

### **The hypothesis of compliance tested**

The main research finding can be simply stated. Every single one of the 95 couples who went through a Catholic ceremony at Coughton also went through an Anglican ceremony. But how and when they married throws an interesting light on this picture of universal compliance.

Thirty-one couples had married in the contiguous Anglican parish church of Coughton with Sambourne. Following up the other parishes of residence specified in the register of Catholic marriages enabled a further 51 Anglican marriages to be traced in 12 different parishes.<sup>12</sup> The final 13 were traced using the electronic database of the International Genealogical Index: in six cases it was clear that the parties had married in a parish other than that stated in the

Catholic register, while in the remaining five the absence of details for one or both parties made it impossible to ascertain whether the parties had married in a parish where one of them was resident or not. It should be noted that those six marriages that took place in an Anglican parish where neither party was resident would still have been valid: the 1753 Act directed, rather than mandated, that a marriage should take place in a parish in which one or both of the parties resided, with the result that once a marriage had been celebrated it could not be invalidated on the ground that the parties had not resided in the place where the banns had been published or the marriage solemnised.<sup>13</sup>

As one would expect, in most cases the Anglican ceremony took place in a parish not too far distant from Coughton. Measuring the distances from Coughton Court to the relevant parish church establishes that 70 couples travelled five kilometres or less from the Catholic chapel to the Anglican church where they were legally wed. For a further 19 couples the distance was between 6 and 15 kilometres. The remaining six had travelled some distance: one couple from Bromsgrove, 17 kilometres away; one from Aston juxta Birmingham and three from Birmingham St Martin, both 27 kilometres distant; and the last from Winchcomb in Gloucestershire, some 34 kilometres away.

This pattern explains why other researchers may have underestimated the extent of compliance. The inferences of Williams and Rowlands were based on the absence of entries in the registers of only one parish. But, as the above discussion showed, less than one-third of the couples who went through a Catholic ceremony at Coughton married in the Anglican church of that parish. Had our researches ended with the parish register for Coughton, a very different picture of compliance would have emerged.

Significantly, however, these couples complied with the law on their own terms. In only 5 cases out of 92 did the Anglican ceremony precede the Catholic rite.<sup>14</sup> In 46 cases the Catholic ceremony took place a day or more before the Anglican. In the final 41 cases, the two ceremonies were held on the same day. While it is impossible to determine which came first in this third group, it would seem likely that the Catholic ceremony preceded the Anglican in the same proportion of roughly 9:1. The favoured option was for the Catholic ceremony to take place on a Sunday (presumably when the couple attended mass) and for the Anglican marriage to take place the day after.

This pattern is perhaps surprising given the number of mixed marriages that took place: almost one-third are known to have involved a Protestant partner. The true proportion may be higher, since the religious status of both parties is not always stated in the register.<sup>15</sup> Over a third of cases definitely involved two Catholics, but in the remaining 30 marriages the status of one or both parties is not specified. One would tend to assume that less weight would be given to religious convictions held by only one spouse. Yet the pattern observed in marriages involving Protestant spouses is virtually the same as that noted above. Of the cases where we can be sure of the relative dates, Catholic couples were marginally more likely to have the Catholic ceremony first (21 out of 36, or 58 per cent), but mixed couples showed no equivalent preference for going



though the Anglican rites first, with only two of them choosing this option. One might speculate that the willingness of a Protestant spouse to marry in the Catholic ceremony first, or indeed at all, might depend on the balance of power within the relationship. There are, however, no obvious differences in practice to support this. There were roughly equal numbers of Protestant husbands and wives: in 13 cases only the wife was Catholic, in 14 cases only the husband. Protestant husbands were just as likely to 'marry' in a Catholic ceremony first as were wives. If the order was dictated by the relationship of the parties, the relevant factors are not apparent from the bare bones of the register.

### Conclusion

The findings in this paper cast light on an important aspect of legal and religious observance among Catholics. It would be erroneous to assume that their willingness to go through an Anglican ceremony raises any doubts about the strength of their faith. After all, many couples today who marry in a religious ceremony of marriage are also required to go through a civil ceremony, and we would not interpret this as evidence of creeping secularism. What the findings do show is the importance that was attached both to a legally binding marriage and to religious conscience: the former was satisfied by the Anglican ceremony, the latter by having the Catholic ceremony first. The Clandestine Marriages Act can be seen as achieving its aim of channelling marriages into a set form, even if it had failed to convince Catholic couples to put the Anglican ceremony first.

Of course, the fact that all those who went through an invalid Catholic ceremony at Coughton also chose to enter into a legally binding marriage by means of an Anglican wedding does not mean that all of their co-religionists would have behaved in the same way. But the case-study of Coughton does show that a survey based on a single parish register, or even on the registers of all the adjacent parishes, will give a seriously misleading impression of the extent of compliance with the Act. It should be acknowledged that luck played a part in the tracing of the 95 marriages examined here: if the Anglican registers had been missing, or incomplete, the result would have been very different. Nevertheless, the evidence presented in this paper suggests that it is necessary to revisit any conclusions of non-compliance based solely on the fact that a number of marriages could not be traced. This study does not only contradict the findings of earlier studies; the changing nature of the technology available for research has undermined the methodology used in those other studies.

### NOTES

1. 26 Geo II c. 33.
2. See ss. 28 and 27 respectively.
3. See, for example, J. Gillis, *For better, for worse: British marriages 1600 to the present* (Oxford, 1985). Contrast R. Probert, 'Chinese whispers and Welsh weddings' *Continuity and Change*, 20 (2005) 211–28.
4. S. Parker, *Informal marriage, cohabitation and the law, 1750–1989* (Basingstoke, 1990), 70; O. Stone, *Family law* (London, 1977), 31.

5. The National Archives, RG 4/3102.
6. J. Bossy, 'Challoner and the Marriage Act', in E. Duffy ed., *Challoner and his church: a Catholic Bishop in Georgian England* (London, 1981), 132.
7. J.A. Williams, *Catholic recusancy in Wiltshire, 1660–1791* (Newport, 1968), 66.
8. M. Rowlands, '1767 – Religious Life', in M. Rowlands ed., *English Catholics of parish and town, 1558–1778* (Catholic Record Society, 1999), 272.
9. Warwickshire Record Office (hereafter WRO), MI 163.
10. M. Hodgetts, 'The godly garret, 1560–1660' in Rowlands ed., *English Catholics*, 40.
11. See, for example, WRO, MI161 (4 marriages before 1836); MI162 (8 marriages before 1836).
12. Alcester (12 marriages); Arrow (11 marriages); Great Alne (8 marriages); Bidford-on-Avon (4 marriages); Feckenham (4 marriages); Exhall and Wixford (3 marriages); Studley (2 marriages); Haselor (2 marriages); Salford Priors (2 marriages); Sperwall (1 marriage); Inkberrow (1 marriage); Bromsgrove (1 marriage).
13. 26 Geo. III c.33 s.10.
14. In three cases there are inconsistencies in the surviving records as to the exact date of one or other of the marriages, and these have not been included.
15. Higher levels of intermarriage have been found in other samples: Gooch, for example, found that in his 1767 sample only half of the 916 marriages involving Catholics in the north-east of England were between Catholics: L. Gooch, "'Chiefly of low rank": The Catholics of north-east England, 1705–1814' in Rowlands ed., *English Catholics*, 250.

## 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. Each item is written by an experienced population history practitioner, and will usually address both the possibilities and the pitfalls of the respective sources and methods under discussion. 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.

## MEASURING ILLEGITIMATE FERTILITY

**Nigel Goose**

In the first article in this series Andrew Hinde described the basic method of calculating birth and death rates, which requires knowledge of the number of vital events (births and deaths) occurring in a particular area and a knowledge of the size of the population 'at risk' of producing those events. The main problem for the parish register era (1538–1837) is not in ascertaining the number of events, for these are recorded in parish registers, even though some historians have questioned their general accuracy and nearly all historians accept that their quality varies, and deteriorates seriously over time.<sup>1</sup> The main problem, at least prior to the introduction of the national census in 1801, is in ascertaining the size of the population at risk. For the civil registration era (post 1837), the number of events is recorded far more regularly and accurately, and the size of the population at risk can be easily ascertained at ten-year intervals from the decennial census, but the geographical units employed are unsuitable for local analysis, the data published in the *Annual Reports of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages* only extending down to registration sub-districts, representing groups of parishes, not individual parishes themselves. Furthermore, nominal information is unavailable, preventing the use of the civil registration data for the purposes of family reconstitution.<sup>2</sup>

Similarly difficulties arise when attempting to calculate illegitimate fertility, but for the parish register era those difficulties are particularly intractable. Parish registers do not regularly record the proportion of baptisms that relate to illegitimate births, and hence for most parishes there is no evidence at all to call upon, at least not before 1812.<sup>3</sup> To establish levels of illegitimacy before the advent of civil registration, therefore, historians have relied upon the relatively small number of registers that do regularly identify illegitimate births. Peter

Laslett's path-breaking work on illegitimacy relied upon the evidence found in just 98 parish registers, one per cent of the 10,000 or so parishes in England and Wales.<sup>4</sup> Even then the full sample of 98 registers only provided usable information from 1660 to 1809: before 1660 the number in the sample steadily declines, to just 50 in the 1570s, while prior to the 1570s Laslett describes the data as providing only 'somewhat unsatisfactory indications'.<sup>5</sup> These parish registers had all been examined by volunteer researchers whose main concern was to collect information on baptisms, marriages and burials for the purposes of aggregate analysis. On checking a sample of this data, Richard Adair reached the conclusion that as many as one-third of illegitimate births had been missed, and thus he set about personal examination of a much larger sample of 250 registers as the basis for his regional analysis of the subject.<sup>6</sup> This still amounts to a small proportion of the total number of parishes, but did provide Adair with a sample large enough to reveal a sharp contrast before the mid seventeenth century between a Highland Zone of relatively high illegitimacy and a Lowland Zone with much lower rates, a contrast that he explained in terms of divergent courtship regimes, possibly allied to greater economic instability. After that date, the two regions coalesced.<sup>7</sup>

Survival of information on illegitimacy is far from the only problem facing the historian of this topic in the parish register era, for even when seemingly reliable information does survive the methods of measurement available to us are crude. Again we confront the problem of the population 'at risk', and in this case the population at risk is not the whole population of a parish, but the number of single women (never married, divorced or widowed) of child-bearing age. As we have no means of knowing their number, population historians have had to fall back on the calculation of a crude 'illegitimacy ratio', consisting of the ratio of illegitimate baptisms to all baptisms, usually expressed as a percentage. Five or ten-year periods are commonly employed to smooth the undue influence of exceptional years. Hence for the mythical parish of Dimchester, we would count all of the illegitimate baptisms recorded in a particular decade, divide this by the total number of baptisms in the same decade, and multiply by 100 to produce a percentage:

$$\frac{18 \text{ (illegitimate baptisms 1621-30)}}{589 \text{ (total baptisms 1621-30)}} \times 100 = 3.06$$

This reveals that Dimchester roughly conforms to the 'national average' for this decade calculated by Adair from a sample of 250 parish registers.<sup>8</sup>

The illegitimacy ratio is, however, a rather crude measure, for it can be influenced by a range of factors other than the number of illegitimate births. As it does not relate the number of illegitimate births to the population 'at risk', it can be affected by the age, sex and marital composition of the population. A population that contains a much higher than usual proportion of single women aged 15-24, for example, will be much more likely to produce a high illegitimate fertility ratio. Furthermore, unless illegitimate and legitimate births move in parallel, changing levels of marital fertility will also affect the ratio of illegitimate births.<sup>9</sup> Historians have comforted themselves by claiming that

such differences are unlikely to subvert broad, regional differences, or by arguing that where both rates and ratios can be calculated the basic trends are similar.<sup>10</sup> For detailed studies at the local level, however, illegitimate fertility rates—which compare the number of illegitimate births to the number of women at risk—are usually preferable to illegitimacy ratios. Of course, one of the criticisms of the illegitimate fertility ratio—that it will be influenced by levels of marital fertility—might also be interpreted as a strength, for the ratio will reveal the proportion of total births that are illegitimate (a subject of obvious interest to the social historian), while the rate will not.<sup>11</sup> It might be advisable, therefore, to calculate both rates and ratios where possible. For the parish register era, however, it will never be possible to calculate illegitimate fertility rates, and hence there is no alternative to reliance upon illegitimate fertility ratios.

The civil registration data published in the *Reports of the Registrar General of Births, Deaths and Marriages*, allied to age and marital structure derived from decennial censuses, allows examination of levels of illegitimacy that avoid these drawbacks.<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately, as the *Reports* only record data for Registrar's Districts and sub-districts, they rarely allow examination of individual parishes, and hence cannot provide the depth of insight made possible by detailed, local studies employing nominal record linkage and parish register reconstitution.<sup>13</sup> They do, however, provide not only a clear measure of levels of illegitimacy in relation to the population 'at risk', but also the opportunity to employ a consistent source to compare and contrast local patterns within and between counties without incurring the opportunity cost that time-consuming nominal record linkage techniques entail.

To date illegitimacy rates have only been systematically calculated at county level for the years 1870–2, 1880–2, 1890–2 and 1900–02, and at Registration District level for 1861.<sup>14</sup> The results of more detailed work on the county of Hertfordshire, designed to determine whether or not the straw plait areas of the county exhibited higher levels of illegitimate fertility than the non-straw areas (as contemporaries frequently suggested), is presented in Table 1.<sup>15</sup> The data takes information on legitimate and illegitimate births from the *Annual Reports of the Registrar General*. To produce the illegitimate fertility ratio, expressed in Table 1 as a percentage, all that was necessary was to divide the number of illegitimate births by the total number of births and multiply by 100 (as explained above). A nine-year average, centred upon the census year 1851, was employed to avoid possible distortion produced by the odd exceptional year. Calculation of the marital fertility rate and illegitimate fertility rate required identification of the population at risk: in the former case married women aged 15–44, in the latter single women (whether never married, divorced or widowed) in the same age group. To calculate the marital fertility rate, which is conventionally expressed as so many per thousand, the average number of legitimate births across the years 1847–55 (again a nine-year average) was divided by the number of married women aged 15–44 identified in the 1851 census, and the result multiplied by 1,000. This is the equation for the sub-district of Baldock:

$$\frac{233.8 \text{ (average no. legitimate births 1847-55)}}{952 \text{ (no. married women age 15-44 in 1851)}} \times 1,000 = 246$$

To calculate the illegitimate fertility rate, also conventionally expressed as so many per thousand, the average number of illegitimate births across the years 1847-55 was divided by the number of unmarried women age 15-44 identified in the 1851 census, and the result multiplied by 1,000. The equation for Baldock reads:

$$\frac{15.6 \text{ (average no. illegitimate births 1847-55)}}{938 \text{ (no. unmarried women age 15-44 in 1851)}} \times 1,000 = 16.6$$

Of course, to produce these calculations at sub-district level requires knowledge of the age and marital structure of these districts, and this is not always readily available in the published census reports. Indeed, this information is only regularly available at the level of the Registration District in the reports, and hence the rates that can be readily calculated relate to broad areas rather than to localities.<sup>16</sup> With regard to Hertfordshire, the calculations in Table 1 were made possible by the prior digitisation of the census enumerators' books for the county, the work of numerous hands over many years.<sup>17</sup>

The data in Table 1 can be used to demonstrate the potential unreliability of the illegitimate fertility ratio compared to the illegitimate fertility rate. For although there is indeed a good *general* correspondence between the ratios and the rates shown in this table (the correlation coefficient between the two series is a fairly strong one, standing at 0.81), close scrutiny of the data highlights problems. In Ware, for example, the ratio stood only slightly higher than the county average, but its illegitimacy rate was the second highest of all the sub-districts. By contrast in the St Albans district the ratio was easily the highest in the county, but the illegitimacy rate, while high, was only the sixth highest of the sub-districts. The explanation for these discrepancies lies in the age, sex and marital structure, and the levels of legitimate fertility, in these two districts. In Ware there was a balanced sex ratio (99 males per 100 females), a low ratio of single/widowed to married women aged 15-44 (87 per 100), and a marital fertility rate a little above the county average. In St Albans the sex ratio was heavily skewed towards women (91 males per 100 females), the ratio of single-widowed to married females ages 15-44 was very high indeed (133), and marital fertility was very low. Together these features served to depress the illegitimacy ratio in Ware, and to exaggerate it in St Albans, creating misleading impressions of the tendency of the 'at risk' populations to produce illegitimate offspring. More generally, examination of the conflated figures for straw and non-straw, and rural and urban, districts at the foot of Table 1, suggests that differences are exaggerated by ratios compared to illegitimate fertility rates. Part of the explanation lies in different levels of marital fertility, particularly the higher level in the rural non-straw districts compared with the rural straw districts, but more significant still is the relative proportions of women aged 15-44 who were single/widowed or married, which were consistently substantially higher than average in the straw and urban regions of the county, and lower in the non-straw and rural regions.<sup>18</sup>

**Table 1 Marital and illegitimate fertility rates, and illegitimate fertility ratios, in Hertfordshire 1847–1855**

Registration district	Registration sub-district	Straw district	Urban/rural	Marital fertility rate	Illegitimate fertility rate	Illegitimate fertility ratio (%)
Ware	Hoddesdon	No	R	229	4.5	2.6
	Stanstead	No	R	282	19.9	6.5
	Ware	No	U	278	26.8	7.8
	Standon	No	R	273	16.7	4.7
Bishop's Stortford	Sawbridgeworth	No	R	252	16.5	5.5
	Stansted	No	R	296	18.3	4.7
	Bishop's Stortford	No	U	282	24.4	9.2
	Braughing	No	R	287	23.1	6.5
Royston	Buntingford	No	R	271	20.0	6.1
	Royston	No	R	281	18.1	5.3
	Melbourn	No	R	280	20.4	5.6
Hitchin	Baldock	Yes	R	246	16.6	6.2
	Hitchin	Yes	U	296	27.8	9.6
Hertford	Watton	No	R	295	18.9	5.3
	Hertford	No	U	230	13.1	6.3
Hatfield	Hatfield	Yes	R	274	21.6	7.7
	Welwyn	No	R	305	14.5	5.4
St Albans	Harpenden	Yes	R	272	21.8	8.0
	St Albans	Yes	U	254	24.3	11.4
Watford	Bushey	No	R	311	12.2	4.4
	Watford	No	U	278	24.2	9.3
	Rickmansworth	No	R	282	25.5	8.5
	Abbots Langley	Yes	R	283	14.6	5.2
Hemel Hempstead	Kings Langley	Yes	R	287	17.2	6.7
	Hemel Hemp.	Yes	U	274	19.7	7.4
	Flamstead	Yes	R	305	26.5	8.1
Berkhamsted	Berkhamsted	Yes	U	283	19.0	8.4
	Tring	Yes	U	268	21.1	7.8
Hertfordshire				274	20.3	7.3
Straw industry districts				274	22.2	8.5
Non-straw districts				274	18.5	6.3
Rural straw districts				270	19.7	7.2
Rural non-straw districts				279	17.4	5.5
Urban districts				271	22.6	8.8
Rural districts				276	18.2	6.0

Much more could be said about illegitimate fertility and its measurement. When employing the aggregate techniques described here for the nineteenth century, the location of workhouses might influence the calculation of illegitimate fertility rates and illegitimacy ratios. There is much evidence that

workhouses tended to be used by the mothers of illegitimate offspring as lying-in hospitals, particularly as such mothers were often denied outdoor poor relief, and this might produce a peculiar concentration of illegitimate births in those sub-districts where workhouses were situated.<sup>19</sup> Consider, for example, the baptisms in the five north Hampshire parishes of Basing, Cliddesden, Ellisfield, Farleigh Wallop and Winslade with Kempshott between 1841 and 1891. The total number of baptisms in each parish, and the illegitimacy ratios, are as follows: Basing 1,706, 16.9 per cent; Cliddesden 404, 7.7 per cent; Ellisfield 368, 4.1 per cent; Farleigh Wallop 153, 7.8 per cent; Winslade with Kempshott 196, 4.6 per cent. The illegitimacy ratio in Basing is more than double that of any of the other parishes, because the parish of Basing contained the workhouse for the Basingstoke Union within which all five parishes were situated.<sup>20</sup> When working with registration districts rather than parishes, however, there should be no such distortion as long as each district used its own Union workhouse, while at sub-district level the degree of distortion will usually be less pronounced than at the level of the parish.<sup>21</sup> Another possibility is that pregnant unmarried women may have returned to their parishes of birth to have their child, whose birth would thus be recorded in a parish where the mother was not ordinarily resident. More detailed analysis of illegitimacy is also possible using nominal record linkage, as employed in family reconstitution, but this is a topic that will be incorporated in a general discussion of record linkage techniques in a future article in this series.

#### NOTES

1. The shortcomings of vital registration and estimates of the correction factors that need to be applied at different periods are discussed at length in E.A. Wrigley and R.S. Schofield, *The population history of England 1541-1871: a reconstruction* (London, 1981), 15-154. For a discordant voice see P. Razzell, 'An evaluation of the reliability of Anglican adult burial registration', *Local Population Studies*, 77 (2006), 42-57.
2. Scotland is an exception in this respect.
3. In 1812 printed forms were introduced, and the proportion of illegitimate baptisms can generally be established by identification of the proportion that do not give the name of the father.
4. P. Laslett, K. Oosterveen and R.M. Smith eds, *Bastardy and its comparative history* (London, 1980), 12-15. This sample was first presented in P. Laslett, *Family life and illicit love in earlier generations* (Cambridge, 1977). The original research on this topic by Laslett and Oosterveen relied upon just 24 parishes for the period 1560-1810: P. Laslett and K. Oosterveen, 'Long-term trends in bastardy in England: a study of illegitimacy figures in the parish registers and in the reports of the Registrar General 1561-1960', *Population Studies*, 27 (1973), 260.
5. Laslett et al. *Bastardy*, 12.
6. R. Adair, *Courtship, illegitimacy and marriage in early modern England* (Manchester, 1996), 48-9.
7. Adair, *Courtship*, 224-7.
8. Adair, *Courtship*, Figure 2.1, 49.
9. E. Shorter, J. Knodel and E. Van De Walle, 'The decline of non-marital fertility in Europe', *Population Studies*, 25 (1971), 379-80; Laslett et al., *Bastardy*, 15; Adair, *Courtship*, 25-6.
10. Adair, *Courtship*, 26-7; Laslett et al, *Bastardy*, 15-16.
11. Take two parishes each with 500 women aged 15-44 and of whom 300 are married and 200 unmarried (and therefore 'at risk'). In parish one there are 90 legitimate births per year and 10 illegitimate; in parish two there are 40 legitimate births and again 10 illegitimate. The illegitimate fertility rates of the two parishes are identical at  $10/200 = 50$  per 1,000. But the ratios are very different: 10 per cent in parish one and 20 per cent in parish two. My thanks to Andrew Hinde for



- pointing this out and providing me with this worked example.
12. The data is not consistently recorded for the late 1830s and early 1840s, however.
  13. Some examples of studies of this kind include: K. Oosterveen and R.M. Smith, 'Bastardy and the family reconstitution of Colyton, Aldenham, Alcester and Hawkshead', in Laslett et al., *Bastardy*, 94-121; S. Stewart, 'Bastardy and the family reconstitution studies of Banbury and Hartland', in Laslett et al., *Bastardy*, 122-40; D. Levine, *Family formation in an age of nascent capitalism* (New York, 1977), ch. 9; B. Reay, *Microhistories. Demography, society and culture in rural England, 1800-1930* (Cambridge, 1996), 179-212; S. King, 'The bastard prone sub-society again: bastards and their fathers and mothers in Lancashire, Wiltshire, and Somerset, 1800-1840', in A. Levene, T. Nutt and S. Williams eds, *Illegitimacy in Britain, 1700-1920* (Basingstoke, 2005), 66-85
  14. Laslett et al., *Bastardy*, 'Introduction'; Woods, *Demography*, Fig. 4.12, insert following p. 96, p. c.
  15. This is discussed more fully in N. Goose, 'How saucy did it make the poor? The straw plait and hat trades, illegitimate fertility and the family in nineteenth-century Hertfordshire', *History*, **91** (2006), 530-56.
  16. For 1851 marital status by age group is only available at county level in the published census report.
  17. Now available on CDRom: N. Goose ed., *The Hertfordshire Census 1851: family history edition* (Hatfield, 2005) – available from the author.
  18. The ratio of single/widowed to married women aged 15-44 in Hertfordshire stood at 105:100. For the straw industry districts it was 113, for non-straw 98; for rural straw districts it was 105, for rural non-straw districts 93; for urban districts 115, for rural districts 97.
  19. See, for instance, A. Perkyms, 'The admission of children to the Milton Union Workhouse, Kent, 1835-85', in this issue (*Local Population Studies*, **80** (2008), p.67).
  20. I am again grateful to Andrew Hinde for supplying this example.
  21. For example, in Table 1 above, St Albans sub-district (where the workhouse was situated) quite properly received and recorded illegitimate births in the workhouse from erstwhile inhabitants of the parishes of St Albans, St Peter, St Michael, St Stephens and the out-hamlets that surrounded the town—population 11,160—while also receiving illegitimate births in the workhouse from erstwhile inhabitants of the parishes of Harpenden, Sandridge, Wheathampstead and Redbourn (the sub-district of Harpenden)—population 6,831. That is, almost two-thirds of the population of the district quite properly fell within the jurisdiction of the sub-district where the workhouse was situated.

## NEWS FROM THE UNIVERSITIES

### University of Glasgow

In the School of Historical Studies, the University of Glasgow has one of the largest concentrations of historians at any university in the United Kingdom. The School comprises the Department of History (in the Faculty of Arts), the Department of Economic and Social History (in the Faculty of Law, Business and Social Sciences) and the Glasgow University Archive Services. There are also six research centres, concerned with Scottish and Celtic studies, medieval and renaissance studies business and medical history, American studies and war studies. Research into population history is also carried out by members of the Department of Archaeology.

Three major research projects, based in three different departments, give an idea of the range of interests of members of the university. Anne Crowther is leading a Wellcome-funded project on *The Scottish way of birth and death: vital statistics, the medical profession and the state 1854–1948*. This investigates the administrative records of birth and death registration in the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), illustrating the differences between the Scottish system of registration and the English, which was established 18 years earlier. In particular, the GROS had more coercive powers than its English counterpart: these were, arguably, necessary at the beginning of its life, given the difficulty of collecting statistics from Scottish parishes compared with English and Welsh poor law unions, but the element of coercion remained stronger in Scottish administration well into the twentieth century, for example in the GROS's responsibilities for National Registration during the world wars. The project investigates the specific concerns of the GROS, the evolving approaches to the collection of vital registration information, and the design and uses of the Scottish census. Key concerns of the project include the problems of determining causes of death in Scotland, the peculiarly Scottish elements of the public health agenda pursued by the GROS, and the relationship between the GROS and medical officers.

Three research fellows have worked on the project: Anne Cameron, Gayle Davis (now at the University of Edinburgh) and Rosemary Elliot. Members of the project team have given 23 seminar and conference papers based on their research, to audiences ranging from the Lesmahagow Parish Historical Association to the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh and the Centre for the Social History of Medicine conference at York University, Canada. The project hosted a one-day symposium in September 2004: *Birth pains and death throes: the creation of vital statistics in Scotland and England*. Publications include

Anne Cameron, 'The establishment of civil registration in Scotland', *Historical Journal*, 50 (2007), 377–95, and Rosemary Elliot, 'An early experiment in national identity cards: the battle over registration in the First World War', *Twentieth Century British History*, 17 (2006), 145–76. Along with a website, the final outcome will be a book, authored by all four researchers, on the history of the GROS. This will provide a Scottish counterpart to Edward Higgs's *Life Death and Statistics*, a history of the General Register Office, published by *Local Population Studies* in 2004.

A large project, funded by an AHRC Major Research Project Grant and led by Dauvit Broun, examines *The paradox of Medieval Scotland: social relationships and identities before the Wars of Independence*. This is run jointly with Kings College London. The project aims to create a free web-based database of all individuals mentioned in Scottish charters between 1095 and 1286, together with a detailed calendar of all Scottish charters from this period, amounting to some 5,000 in all. This resource will enable the research team (Dauvit Broun, Matthew Hammond, Amanda Beam and Roibeard O'Maolalaigh from Glasgow, and John Bradley and David Carpenter from Kings) to carry out a comprehensive study of individuals and their social identities and relationships in this period, and in particular to address issues relating to the emergence of a 'recognisably modern' Scottish identity. A range of interlinking issues explored in the research include the relationships between 'natives' and 'newcomers', the influence of the legal and political framework on social relationships and identities, the ways in which status was identified using personal names and surnames, and the use of languages and dialect. More general methodological questions relating to the use of charters will be examined, and discussed in a web-based publication by the university's Centre for Scottish and Celtic Studies.

The Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) are engaged on a three-year programme of analysis of a large-scale skeletal burial population from the Kirk of St Nicholas Uniting in Aberdeen, which funded recent excavations led by Alison Cameron (from the Aberdeen City Council Archaeological Unit) that recovered the 925 skeletons, dating from the eleventh to the seventeenth centuries. This is the largest secular burial population examined in any Scottish burgh, and the analysis promises much information relating to typical aspects of health and demography of this local medieval population. Paul Duffy is leading this analysis, which is due for publication in 2010/11. He is also working on a PhD entitled 'Skeletal Signatures of Social Trends in the Historic Period in Scotland': this uses the same site as a case study to explore how alternative bio-archaeological methodologies can be used to understand wider social trends from human remains data.<sup>1</sup>

Many other members of staff and research students are working in areas related to the interests of readers of *Local Population Studies*. Samuel Cohn is working on a monograph entitled *Evolutions of plague and thought in sixteenth-century Italy*, which examines how the threat of plague changed physicians' notions about medicine and public health, and writings on plague and

epidemiology. He has recently published an article (with Guido Alfani), 'Households and plague in early modern Italy', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, 38 (2007), 177–205. Also in the area of medical history, in 2007 Anne Crowther and Marguerite Dupree published *Medical lives in the age of surgical revolution*, number 43 in the Cambridge University Press series 'Cambridge Studies in Population, Economy and Society in Past Time'. This book deals with a cohort of 2,000 medical students who matriculated at Glasgow and Edinburgh Universities around 1871, and uses a demographic method to frame the authors' examination of the social origins, education and subsequent careers of members of the cohort. Michael French has examined the family life and living standards of commercial travellers and other white-collar employees, focusing in particular on the impact of war on real earnings. Mark Freeman, in a British Academy-funded project, is examining the 'family and community lives' of older people in York in the 1940s, using newly discovered data from the period. He gave a paper based on this material at the LPSS annual conference in 2005.

The School of Historical Studies has a thriving postgraduate community: the website currently lists 65.<sup>2</sup> Current PhD projects include 'Reaction and response to out-migration in the Scottish Borders 1770–1830' (Melodee Beals); 'Work and employment in Scotland's whisky industry 1823–1939' (Jim Blackley); 'The social background of footballers in the West of Scotland 1860–1914' (Matthew L. McDowell); 'Migrant identities in Revolutionary Paris' (Amy McKnight); "'Once Proud Burghs'", Partick and Govan c. 1850–1925: community and the politics of autonomy, annexation and assimilation' (Michael Pugh); and 'Domiciliary medical care for the poor in Scotland c.1875–1911' (David Sutton). There is also a range of postgraduate taught courses, all one year full-time and two years part-time: MLitt/MSc in History, MSc in Social History, MSc in Contemporary Economic History, MLitt in Medieval Scottish Studies, MLitt in Scottish Studies (with optional Gaelic), MLitt in War Studies, MLitt/MSc in History and Computing, MLitt in American Studies, MLitt in Colonial and Postcolonial Studies, and MLitt in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

Mark Freeman  
Lecturer in Economic and Social History  
Department of Economic and Social History  
*University of Glasgow*

#### NOTES

1. Further information on this and other archaeological research at Glasgow can be obtained from the GUARD website at <http://www.guard.arts.gla.ac.uk/>
2. For full details on the research interests of staff and students in the School, see our website at <http://www.gla.ac.uk/departments/historicalstudies/>

## BOOK REVIEWS

Emily Cockayne, *Hubbub. Filth, noise and stench in England* (Yale University Press, 2007). xiv+ 335pp. ISBN 0300-112149. £25 (h/b).

'This book is about how people were made to feel uncomfortable by other people—their noises, appearance, proximity and odours. It considers physical and emotional reactions to unpleasant things such as poor quality food, smoke, dirt, dust, stench and putrefaction' (p. 1). It is therefore a sort of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century version of *Grumpy Old Men*, even though some of the individuals, who are quoted frequently, are young, middle-aged and even occasionally women. Together with short introductory and concluding chapters, the other chapter headings give clues to the varied themes that are discussed: Ugly, Itchy, Mouldy, Noisy, Grotty, Busy, Dirty and Gloomy. The focus is on the problems of living in an urban environment, with most of the many examples being taken from London, Bath, Oxford and Manchester which cumulatively build up to form four mini case studies.

The first chapter introduces us to the main *Dramatis Personae* (Samuel Pepys, Anthony à Wood, Margaret Cavendish, Robert Hooke, Ned Ward, Dudley Ryder *et al.*) who will be with us throughout the book. In addition to diaries a vast array of source material is presented, ranging from records of legal proceedings to novels to local government minutes. Many less literate characters also appear and together with these disparate sources they entwine to produce a lively and detailed picture of some rather neglected aspects of life in the early modern city.

Given the chance many historians would no doubt relish the opportunity to transport themselves back in time, at least for a short period. While these 'time historians' may wish to learn more about certain aspects of social history, their immediate impressions on arrival would no doubt be overwhelmed by the sights, smells, sounds and feel of the early modern urban environment. It is to these senses that *Hubbub* draws our attention and the great strength of the book is that it brings to life these features of urban living. Thus, in a single chapter, *Itchy*, we learn that most of the population would have had blemished skin, with boils being particularly difficult to deal with. Few would have washed; total immersion was rare, although certain parts of the body may have been cleansed more regularly. Increasingly the wealthy resorted to cosmetics to hide dirt and mask odour with wigs being used to denote rank and profession. Fashion was also used to denote status, although it also reflected an individual's occupation. The second-hand market thrived and many would no doubt have worn ill fitting shoes and clothes. Other problems encountered on a day-to-day basis include: disease, intestinal worms, fleas and bugs, bad teeth, water (and the contents of the occasional chamber pot) cascading from buildings, together with wet and slippery street surfaces. Clearly, any prospective time traveller would be wise visit the chemist to obtain the appropriate immunological protection prior to departure.

Other chapters are replete with similar levels of detail and, while many books that deal with this sort of information end up being no more than a sequence of vignettes and anecdotes, Cockayne's narrative skill ensures that each carefully chosen extract builds up to provide a vivid picture of life in the early modern city. While the book examines the costs of urban living, these must have been outweighed by the benefits. Besides, life in the countryside during this period was by no means without its problems, although, as the author says, that is another book. The time I spent with the various seventeenth and eighteenth century Victor Meldrew's proved entertaining and provided me with fresh or enhanced insights into the early modern environment.

Chris Galley  
*Barnsley College*

M. Anne Crowther and Marguerite Dupree, *Medical lives in the age of surgical revolution* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). xvi+425pp. ISBN 0-521-83548-8. £65 (h/b).

This is a fascinating account of the ways in which social and professional networks were created among students who attended the Edinburgh University or the Glasgow University medical school between 1866 and 1874, just at the time when a revolution in medical practice was being initiated by the work of Joseph Lister on antiseptics. Lister taught at Glasgow in the 1860s and at Edinburgh in the 1870s. The basic idea behind the research was to take roughly a thousand medical students from each of the two universities, thus creating a collective biography for the 1866-1874 cohort by tracing the subsequent medical careers of its members as they specialised and spread out geographically. Since Edinburgh and Glasgow were two of the largest medical schools in Britain and about half of the students were not Scottish, it was anticipated that the tracing exercise would also provide a 'luminous marker' which would help to indicate some of the significant changes in medical practice during a period of forty to fifty years. The adoption of antiseptic measures in surgery and other branches of medicine would, it was assumed, have a particularly important place in that change.

Large cohort studies are usually difficult and time consuming, there are many dropouts and failures, but in this case the linkage routines worked well and a particularly detailed picture of medical careers has been created. One that is especially interesting is the worldwide spread of the doctors concerned and their ability to remain connected because of their common experience as students and their professional roles. However, the authors readily acknowledge that it is far more difficult to assess their impact. This is partly because the training the students received combined old and new methods, and because 'Listerism' changed, was multifaceted and, perhaps most significantly, was in its essential principles not simply a concept due to Joseph Lister.

Readers will mine this study looking for points that relate to their own particular interests. For myself, I found many telling passages, one on page 237 will serve to illustrate an important issue: 'Antiseptic methods in lying-in hospitals after the late-1870s helped to reduce maternal mortality, but only to

the same level as in domestic midwifery'. Since most women were not delivered in hospitals and maternal mortality showed very little sign of substantial decline until the 1940s, it would be tempting to dismiss the influence of Lister and his students in this area of health. But without significant reductions in the risks to in-patients it would not have been possible for the institutions to pioneer advanced maternal care in the late twentieth century. The legacy of Lister's students was to prepare the ground; they did not see the rewards reaped themselves.

This is an important, detailed, impeccably well-researched study; it is ambitious, significant and yet aware of its limitations. It deserves a wide audience for the research methods that it employs as well as its particular empirical findings.

Robert Woods  
*University of Liverpool*

Christopher Dyer ed., *The self-contained village? The social history of rural communities 1250-1900*. Explorations in Local and Regional History, 2 (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2007). xii+148pp. ISBN 1-902806-59-X. £14.99 (p/b).

The blurb on the back of this book asks 'Is there or has there ever been such a thing as the self-contained village?' In each of the seven chapters presented in this book, the answer is, emphatically, no. Indeed, drawing on decades of scholarship and additional original research, this book seeks to dispel the notion that villages were self-contained in terms of population, labour supply, food, goods and culture. The chronological and geographical coverage are broad, and the book provides accessible summaries of important historiographical debates. However, it is aimed at undergraduate students and general readers, and those steeped in the history of rural society will find little new here.

The book is introduced by Christopher Dyer who provides a brief but solid foundation, asking a series of questions that subsequent chapters seek to address. This is a valiant attempt at giving the book coherence and an overall agenda, although some of the contributors stick to this agenda more diligently than others. Much of Dyer's introduction is taken up by a discussion of the definition of 'village'. Dyer reminds us that communities were not necessarily nucleated settlements, that villages may have been subdivided between different manors, and that parishes may have had more than one settlement within their boundaries. This discussion of the lack of geographical consistency between units of administration (manor and parish) and units of settlement (village, hamlet, farmstead) might have been expanded, for here lies one of the challenges facing rural historians, and the apparent lack of awareness of these issues among general readers perhaps helps to perpetuate belief in the idealised preindustrial village. However, the contributors to this book might have taken a little more care over these definitions as, in the absence of any overriding definition of the term 'village', we see subsequent chapters referring to manors, parishes, communities, settlements and farmsteads. This reflects the

nature of the source material on which most of the chapters are based, but it does create further problems. Township and parish are precise terms; village is anything but. This raises the further question of whether this book is about villages or about the relationship of individuals to each other and to various manifestations of local authority. If it is about the former, then further definition of terms, and an acceptance of those terms, ought to have been accepted by the contributors.

This definition is not simply a linguistic or semantic issue, but it is one that is fundamental to the (mis)understanding of English rural society. As Dyer rightly points out, the idealised English village is very much a south-Midlands model: elsewhere, settlement patterns, land use, social relations and social structure were very different, and although the book achieves good chronological and geographical coverage, the two are not combined in any single article. Hence, in the chapters in the medieval and early modern periods by Dyer, Whittle and Hindle, East Anglia and the south Midlands loom large; French's article on mobility and lineage is based on Essex and Dorset; Whyte focuses on Cumbria and Brown on Staffordshire. The intensive study of village communities is only really possible at local level, but this scattergun approach does not make this a national survey, and nor does the text develop these regional differences.

Dyer's opening chapter seeks to answer the question 'Were late-medieval villages self-contained' and provides a useful introduction to, and summary of, a large volume of work. This will be of immense value to the readership. In sections on landholding, migration and economy and culture he argues emphatically and convincingly that 'at no time can late medieval villages be considered "self-contained"' (p. 27).

Whittle's chapter on population mobility in Norfolk c.1460–1600 reports on her detailed analysis of manorial records and church court depositions to look at population turnover, longevity, inheritance and migration. The results of her analysis of Consistory Court Records and land transactions recorded in manor courts reveal important differences between the two sources, with the landholders demonstrating greater stability than church court deponents. Nevertheless, Whittle is able to demonstrate considerable population turnover, but also points to variations across space and time. The population of the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries was more stable than earlier and later periods, and the active land market in Norfolk resulted in greater population turnover here than elsewhere. Moreover, the church court depositions indicate that the peak age of mobility was between 15 and 30, and the relative stability of the older age groups, especially among landholders, is a reflection of the acquisition of land during this earlier, more mobile, life-cycle stage.

Hindle's chapter on destitution, liminality and belonging c.1590–1660 takes us firmly into the period where the parish was the dominant and most immediate form of local government. He provides a detailed explanation of the evolution of the law regarding settlement and removal, providing an insight into a central and provincial administrative regime coming to terms with this legal



framework. Within this framework Hindle provides a series of individual case histories that illustrate 'the limited range of human sympathy at play in the politics of settlement' (p. 58). Hindle's focus is on a particular social class—the poor—and the general conclusions regarding the existence or otherwise of the self-contained village are perhaps not immediately apparent. However, despite the fact that this self-contained village had never existed, the very foundation of the Poor Law—that the poor 'belonged' to a parish—presupposes that for most people the parish to which they so belonged was beyond doubt, and that each and every parish had the available resources to support them. If parishes were not self-contained in other ways, in terms of the legal framework and operation of this nascent welfare system English parishes were supposed to be self-contained when it came to the support of their own poor. Nevertheless, as this chapter shows, mobility amongst the poor, and not only amongst vagrants, shows that this was not always the case, and such individuals could find themselves unwelcome, symbolically taking their shelter in the church porch—the threshold of the parish and the next world.

French's chapter on mobility and lineage 1600–1750 employs Richard Gough's *History of Myddle* as a starting point for research into dynastic families, persistence rates and parochial office holding. French demonstrates that parish populations were subject to different rates of persistence, with parochial office holders being less mobile than the poor and ordinary rate payers. He suggests that the 'stayers' that form part of the narrative of the self-contained village are disproportionately represented both in Gough's *Myddle* and also in the sources on which much research is based.

Whyte's chapter on Cumbrian villages c. 1750–1850 stresses that local conditions here make it essential that the region should be judged in its own terms, and that dominant southern perspectives can lead to misleading conclusions. This is undeniable, but unfortunately this chapter does not really develop our understanding of this region. It is based very largely on secondary sources, and finishes with a call for further research. As a synthesis of the existing literature this is an adequate account, with brief sections on Cumbrian rural society in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a brief analysis of the 1787 Westmorland census, discussion of the impact of enclosure, and the mid-nineteenth century shift to livestock rearing. However, each of these sections is very brief, and there is little here that is not readily available elsewhere.

As the first six chapters have firmly established that the self-contained village did not exist, the final chapter, seeking to address the extent to which the self-contained village was eradicated by the rise of industrial society, might seem superfluous. But this chapter is anything but a chronological afterthought, and its strengths compensate for the weaknesses elsewhere in the discussion of the modern period. Indeed Brown provides a wide-ranging discussion assessing the development of industrial village communities. It is a valuable contribution both to this book and to the wider literature.

This book is without doubt a welcome addition to the literature. Each of the authors has published widely on the themes they address, so in this respect

there is little that is genuinely new in terms of original research. However, the collation of these essays into a single publication provides ready access to a considerable body of scholarship that will provide an invaluable summary to students and amateur historians, and one that will hopefully encourage further work on English village communities in the last millennium.

Andy Gritt  
*University of Central Lancashire*

Henry French, *The middle sort of people in provincial England, 1600–1750* (Oxford University Press, 2007). xii+305pp. ISBN 978–1–10–9296385. £55 (h/b).

Quite simply, this is a book of outstanding scholarship. It represents the culmination of almost 20 years' research conducted in national and county archives, involving detailed reconstructive work in three contrasting and almost entirely unconnected regions: the cloth-producing parishes of the Essex-Suffolk border, a group of parishes in central Lancashire, and a section of western Dorset from the Somerset border to Lyme Regis. The literature on the 'middle sort' has developed apace during the gestation period of this book due to a wide and diverse range of studies, not least of which is Henry French's research output. French is acutely aware of the historiographical traditions and this firm grounding gives the book clear purpose. The aim of this comparative study is expressed as an exploration of the nature and bases of middling social identity in rural England. In this respect, the book is written to a challenging agenda, but is one that seeks to explore and explain the identity of a complex social group. In taking on this challenge, French has not only responded to historiographical developments of recent years, but he has shifted the territory. Indeed, the book will undoubtedly become standard reading for all students of early modern England.

The introduction focuses on the historiographical traditions within which this book ought to be read, in particular by discussing the shifting definitions of the 'middle sort'. This literature is not always easy, and some theories are rather more convincing than others. However, French brings not only his considerable intellectual ability to bear on this debate, but also common sense, wit, and a rare clarity of thought and expression. The lack of a consistent definition of the middle sort within the available literature is in part due to the fact that this social group is characterised by a variety of different attributes which may not be constant over space and time. Furthermore, the 'paucity of evidence of an overt, shared identity or common social perceptions' (p. 25) makes the historian's task of identifying and defining the middle sort more difficult than it might otherwise be. Indeed, this inevitably leads us into debates over whether or not a social group needs to identify with itself before it can be said to exist. Nevertheless, despite the definitional problems, and the absence of a wider middling identity, the parish provided the environment within which the social position of the middle sort became manifest. Indeed, it was the parish that made middling status consequential, largely due to the administrative requirements of parochial office which provided the opportunity to fulfil the functions of their social class. Consequently, the parish, rather than the

wider regions, provides the focus of the research that comprises the remainder of this book.

The rest of the book is divided into four lengthy chapters. Chapter one provides a detailed analysis of the socio-economic structures of these three disparate regions. From this emerges a clear picture of these areas, free of the stereotypes through which they are often misrepresented. French demonstrates a clear understanding of the relationship between agriculture, urban society, industry, tenurial systems, the nature of local markets and an understanding of how these factors impacted upon those who experienced them. It is argued that the industrial economy of East Anglia produced a social structure that was more stratified than central Lancashire or west Dorset, both of which were largely indistinguishable from the wider agricultural zone in which they were located. Moreover, even within the towns of Dorset and Lancashire, few individuals emerged that enjoyed the same level of economic dominance as the East Anglian clothiers.

Chapter two investigates 'Parish office and the formation of social identity'. Rate paying was, of course, the minimum requirement for entry into the middling sort, but those regarded as ancient 'inhabitants' were afforded additional status within the social hierarchy. The ancient inhabitants were recognised to be the natural rulers of the parish: they were entitled to be represented within the parish institutions, to deliberate over parochial affairs, and to pay the cost of implementing the results of such deliberations. It was these individuals that formed the core of the middle sort, as demonstrated by the detailed analysis of office holding and rate-paying histories. French finds remarkable consistency between his three areas of study, which, whilst not proving the existence of a shared social identity across the regions, does indicate a similarity of experience.

Chapter three assesses wealth at death through an analysis of probate inventories. French draws conclusions that contrast with previous studies of urban society in the period after 1660. Whilst such studies have confidently identified conspicuous consumption amongst a burgeoning middle class, French finds no such clearly defined group in rural parishes. Indeed, he suggests that 'In village society, outside the south-east in particular, it is very difficult to discern the glimmers of a socially specific "bourgeois" pattern of domesticity, sociability, and competition in the "material culture" espoused by their propertied inhabitants' (p. 198). This is not to say that the middle sort did not enjoy greater material prosperity than those of lower social status, but only those described as the chief inhabitants in other contexts occupied fashionably-furnished houses with rooms that were designated clearly defined social functions. Not surprisingly, there were disparities of wealth between the three regions, and generally the East Anglian sample shows greater material wealth and the earlier adoption of 'fashionable' items. However, in the poorer North West, French argues occupancy of an adequately furnished household may still represent achievement and aspiration. When considered in the context of the socio-economic background, this argument is difficult to contest.

Chapter three also discusses the notion of gentility, and how some of the wealthiest ancient inhabitants employed material culture as an expression of their aspirations to gentility. In terms of class formation this is an important aspect of French's argument, for as well as being a sign of social status, gentility was a universal notion that fostered identity and belonging to a disparate social group beyond the confines of the parish boundary. This theme is developed in chapter four, largely through a succession of individual case studies from the study areas, demonstrating how the rhetoric of gentility was utilised by those with social aspirations seeking status and identity on a wider platform. Indeed, French is at pains to explain that gentility was not adopted by the middle sort to provide unity, nor were notions of gentility adopted simply for the purposes of emulation, but for those in the upper echelons of 'ancient inhabitants', gentility enabled them to 'realize their ambitions for social autonomy and personal authority' (p. 258). Although some evidence from elsewhere is presented, not least of which is the detailed reconstruction of the aspiring Pennine family, the Barcrofts, the individual case studies are almost entirely drawn from East Anglia. Given what has been said in previous chapters about the nature of the economy and relative wealth levels, not to mention the greater connectedness of East Anglia to London society, this argument is not as convincing as it might otherwise be. Certainly, the function of genteel aspirations within the middle sort need to be demonstrated on a much wider geographical basis, and reasons for potential regional variations need to be explored. Nevertheless, French makes it clear from the outset that this is one of the elements of his analysis that is likely to be disputed in the light of further research.

Overall this book is a considerable achievement. It is eloquently written throughout, conceptually impressive, based on complex, detailed and sustained research, yet despite French's command of his subject, he also writes with modesty and remains aware of the limitations of his work. Some of its findings may be contested, but this book will make a major contribution to our understanding of early modern society for years to come, and it deserves to be read widely.

Andy Gritt  
*University of Central Lancashire*

H.R. French and R.W. Hoyle, *The character of English rural society: Earls Colne, 1550–1750* (Manchester University Press, 2007). 309pp+xxv. ISBN–0–7190–5108–1. £60 (h/b).

This book is largely based upon the materials collected by Alan Macfarlane and his assistants in their attempt to provide the first comprehensive historical reconstruction of an English community, the process of which was described in *Reconstructing historical communities* (Cambridge, 1977). I was at Cambridge as a postgraduate student while the project was in train, and recall snatched conversations in Wolfson College bar with Charles Jardine, then Macfarlane's research assistant with a specific information technology brief. Those conversations made me wonder if this vast, yet microscopic, enterprise would ever be

completed, and my scepticism grew as I became increasingly familiar with the difficulties involved in nominal record linkage in an early modern context. Macfarlane never wrote the 'big book' on Earls Colne, though some of the ideas that flowed from the material emerged in his stimulating *The origins of English individualism* (Oxford, 1978). Fortunately, the source material was carefully preserved, first on microfiche and more recently online (<http://linux02.lib.cam.ac.uk/earlscolne//contents.htm>), and now two leading early modern historians have given it the attention it deserves, to produce a book that shows both the possibilities and the limitations of the microhistorical approach.

Despite the richness of the Earls Colne archive, there are few probate inventories, no manorial records of debt and credit, no seventeenth-century parish or poor law documentation and no detailed estate records after 1640. These lacunae prevent detailed analysis of agricultural change, poverty and social relations and material culture (among other possible topics). Some important issues, such as the economic role of women, are far from fully explored and—of even greater pertinence to the readership of this journal—there is no historical demography. Instead the authors have decided to concentrate upon those subjects that are their particular intellectual concerns: for Richard Hoyle this means the operation of land markets and the exercise of power in rural society, and for Henry French the political and social profile of the 'middling sort' in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It is the first of these that looms largest in the present volume.

Chapter one sets the scene, providing a telling critique of the 'Brenner thesis', insofar as it posits aggressive seigneurial cupidity and copyholders' vulnerability. This is followed by a far more positive—though not uncritical—appraisal of Macfarlane's view of the lack of a 'classical' peasantry in England, the early appearance of a land market, medieval/early modern continuity and an emerging discontinuity between England and its European neighbours. These theories are overlaid upon a third historiographical thesis: the rise of large estates and the disappearance of the small landowner. This thesis is largely accepted, but the role of agrarian class relations is subordinated to the workings of impersonal economic forces that affected tenants and landlords alike. In the century of low prices after 1650, the inability of small farmers to scratch a decent living was exacerbated, it is argued, by the emergence of a 'non-peasant' mentality with greater aspirations to consume—a thesis that requires far more fleshing out than is provided here. But essentially it was market forces that led to a 'Great Transformation', and in the long run small farms did indeed disappear, not because of exploitative landlords, but because they did not pay. The rest of the book uses Earls Cole as a case study to examine these developments.

Chapter two provides a profile of Earls Colne, which grew from perhaps 430 souls in the early sixteenth century to 1,000 by 1610, falling back to 900 in the 1670s. It incorporated textile producers and a service sector as well as mixed farming, biased towards arable, with the added bonus of cash crops of hay and hops. Between the late sixteenth and early eighteenth centuries the village's

involvement in the cloth industry appears to have declined, although as only occasional references to clothiers or weavers appear in the record this may at all times have been largely limited to female spinning. The apparent inclusion of female spinners in the occupational tabulation (Table 2.1, p. 60) is perhaps misleading, as is the later description of Earls Colne's textile sector as 'prominent' (p. 76). The Henrician subsidies suggest that wealth was less concentrated in a few hands than has often been found elsewhere, and that even fairly humble copyholders may have possessed wealth above the parish average. The Hearth Taxes of the 1670s reveal proportions exempt similar to other Essex cloth towns, though as Earls Colne does not appear to have been heavily involved in cloth production, and few female spinsters would have headed the households listed in the Hearth Tax, the point of this comparison is unclear. The tax also suggests that there was a 'substantial' number of 'middling households' and reveals that copyholders *tended* to be wealthier than sub-tenants. By the mid eighteenth century the rate lists suggest that the former division between owners and tenants had broken down, and show a stratified social structure within which even some of the larger farmers were now tenants.

Chapter three charts the emergence after 1592 of a resident, and puritan, gentry family (the Harlakendens), the litigation they suffered, their marriage alliances with the local gentry, and the fragmentation of the estate and its subsequent disposal. Chapter four focuses upon the Harlakenden estate itself, noting how the family fortunes were largely dependent upon farms on the demesnes rather than copyhold lands, and the lack of investment after the first generation despite personal involvement in estate management. Although the Harlakendens did attempt to raise rents, they benefited from the fact that copyhold fines had already risen substantially before they arrived in the village. Still, as landlords they were never oppressive and sought to accommodate the demands of their tenants to secure their cooperation. So while entry fines did indeed rise rapidly between the mid sixteenth century and the 1630s (possibly by 20 or 30 times), they still stood at reasonable levels in relation to the value of the land. With respect to Earls Colne, therefore, Eric Kerridge was essentially correct: copyholders lived out their lives 'without so much as a whisper of a hint of the least threat to their security of tenure' (*Agrarian problems in the sixteenth century and after*, London 1969, p. 83). Furthermore, the Harlakendens, it is concluded, 'were never masters of the parish. Their survival depended on tenants who could exploit their estates for them, and who had to be nursed through difficult years, and on copyhold tenants who were willing to pay fines at reasonable rates' (p. 142). This is exemplified in chapter five, where a dispute over timber rights testifies to the power of the tenantry, and intervention of the lord to protect infants and true heirs reveals the paternalism that was periodically displayed. As puritans the Harlakendens also sought moral reformation, but if they had any success in this respect it is not reflected in prosecutions under the by-laws. In the longer term the Earls Colne manor courts followed the pattern that has been found elsewhere, as declining institutions concerned with a diminishing range of business.

The remainder of the book focuses mainly upon the land market. Quantifying landholding is highly problematic, as court rolls reveal only local copyhold land, not freehold land nor copyhold held elsewhere, and say nothing about other, increasingly important, forms of wealth. In this regard one is reminded of J.H. Hexter's devastating critique of Richard Tawney's attempt to make claims for a 'rise of the gentry' on the basis of counts of manors in six and one-third English counties: a substantial number of these gentry, he pointed out, also held manors in the remaining thirty-three and two-thirds counties, for 'seventeenth century English landlords did not conform their holdings to the statistical convenience of twentieth-century economic historians' (*Reappraisals in history*, London 1961, p. 125). Nevertheless, detailed analysis reveals an active land market in which land purchase was common, though twice as much land was conveyed by inheritance as by sale. Some land stayed in a family for generations, other parcels were frequently sold. Various measures of turnover are calculated, one of which shows that 85 per cent of land was retained by the same family after ten years, with slightly greater retention 1650-1750 compared to the early seventeenth century. To about 1650 the manor witnessed a growth in the number of tenants, thereafter numbers fell back. Mean holding size by 1750, at 14.1 acres, remained very small, with 32 of the 78 copyholders holding less than an acre. Some 25 or so held larger plots of 15 acres plus, and their history is analysed in more detail to reveal both centrifugal and centripetal forces at work, keeping the number of larger copyholds relatively static over time. Land provided a livelihood and a place to live, but could also be seen as an investment, and these opposing attitudes to land coexisted. But while no-one appeared with ambitions to buy up the village, the determination to use land to provide for family members effectively counteracted any individualistic tendencies, and hence, as the authors note, the 'history of Earls Colne is ... the history of what did not happen' (p. 242).

By the eighteenth century land ownership and possession had become increasingly dislocated, and perhaps the most fascinating chapter in the book is that dealing with subtenancy. It has been long known that subtenancy has the power to subvert the evidence of the court rolls, but for Earls Colne in the second quarter of the eighteenth century, unusually, it can be quantified. Of all landholders, 45 per cent were outright owners or copyholders, and 45 per cent were subtenants. If we take into account the fact that the demesnes lands were leased, owner-occupation becomes the exception rather than the rule, and the notion of a 'peasantry' in the classical mould is an anachronism by this date. Ownership was now less important than acreage, and those with the greatest acreage, and deepest roots in the parish, comprised the elite who dominated the vestry, while more occasional vestry attenders and lowlier officers were drawn from a wider social group. That said, demonstrable wealth provided ready ingress to the charmed circle.

This is therefore a complex study, and at times the detailed analysis required of the source material makes it heavy going. It is also a little fragmented, with limited integration of the economic and social context provided in chapter two with the remainder of the book. Some topics—including religion, the

reformation of manners and the cloth industry—are discussed in all too cursory a fashion. Others—notably the nature of the land market—are considered at great length. But this is what the authors promised in their introductory chapter, and it makes more sense to praise them for what they have done than to take them to task for what they have not. This is not a comprehensive microhistory of Earls Colne, but it was never intended to be. What it does provide is new insight into the nature of tenancies, inheritance practices, land transactions and the various ways in which land was employed, as well as into the changing manner in which the parish was governed. The attitudes that these features reflect, of course, have often to be inferred, and—despite the inclusion in chapters seven and eight of biographical case studies of a small number of the larger landholders—it is disappointingly rare to hear the voice of the more humble individuals, even from an archive as rich as this one. Naggng problems remain, posed by the limited jurisdiction of the manorial court, the fact that our knowledge of individuals' landholdings stops at the manor boundaries, and the absence of information on subtenancies for much of the period. The book does, however, represent a very significant addition to the literature, and will be required reading for any serious student of English rural society in the early modern period.

Nigel Goose  
*University of Hertfordshire*

Eilidh Garrett, Chris Galley, Nicola Shelton and Robert Woods eds, *Infant mortality. A continuing social problem* (Ashgate, 2006). xvii+293pp. ISBN 0-7546-4593-2. £55 (h/b).

Sir George Newman was an eminent figure in the field of public health in Edwardian England—Chief Medical Officer at the new Ministry of Health in 1919, having served previously as Chief Medical Officer to the Board of Education and also Medical Officer of Health to the Borough of Finsbury. Of his published work he is probably best known for *Infant mortality: a social problem* (1906); a commentary on the causes of high infant mortality at the turn of the century and a synthesis of wide-ranging evidence, accompanied by a series of proposals for remedial action. This current volume of eleven specially commissioned essays is a tribute to Newman: it marks the centenary of the original publication of this important work, aims to bring it to the attention of a modern audience and inspire further research.

The book is neatly organised into three sections, the first of which deals with the context within which Newman wrote *Infant mortality*. His book coincided with wider debates in Edwardian society about 'national efficiency' and 'physical deterioration'; the damaging cost to the nation's well-being of a population thought to be in a poor state of general health coupled with falling birth rates. The appalling loss of 120,000 infants each year, many to 'preventable' causes, constituted a conspicuous blemish on the reputation and standing of a highly urbanised, industrialised country. As the opening chapters in the first section of this volume show, Newman had a particular agenda to promote and was careful in his selection of evidence. However, his work was



also characteristic of the general shift at this time, away from a broadly environmental/sanitary model of preventive medicine towards explanations focussed on the individual—with health education and notions of personal responsibility for health at the core of this shift in thinking. This was important. For Newman, the essence of the problem was ‘poor motherhood’, which manifested itself most directly in the way babies were fed and was widely thought to be a principal reason for the high infant diarrhoeal mortality rates. And if motherhood was carried out badly, the state—or more accurately local government—could and should intervene. Careful reading of Newman’s *Infant mortality* shows his arguments were never this simplistic, of course. Robert Woods (in chapter three) steers us through the wealth of Newman’s evidence and carefully unpicks the arguments. Newman may be criticised for failing to give sufficient weight to the effects of deprivation and poverty on infant mortality but where Newman stood apart from his contemporaries, Woods suggests, was by directing his audience to the importance of the ante-natal environment. In this way, he was also presenting valuable evidence to support an emerging infant and maternal welfare movement.

In the second part of this volume some of Newman’s themes are explored further. Here we have a clear demonstration of the breadth of current research interest in this topic. What follows are seven diverse chapters which examine aspects of ‘the infant mortality problem’ from different perspectives. Richard Smith and Jim Oeppen provide a rich and wide-ranging discussion of infant mortality in early-modern England, and this is a welcome counter-balance to a book perhaps understandably skewed towards the nineteenth century and later. Just as Newman drew attention to the different components of infant mortality within the first year of life, Smith and Oeppen emphasise the central importance of distinguishing between endogenous mortality on the one hand (congenital diseases, birth defects, early infancy) and exogenous mortality (external causes, later infancy) on the other, for understanding both the spatial and longer-term variability of infant mortality. Referring to the estimates of Wrigley (*et. al*), Landers, Finlay and many others, and presenting new evidence (including some new estimates based on Hollingsworth’s peerage data), they consider these components of infant mortality alongside stillbirth rates and maternal mortality and present a compelling case in which the role of disease environments—both exposure to infection and disease immunity—are emphasised. These features, they argue, can only be interpreted fully within the context of simultaneous changes in the wider epidemiological regime of northern and north-western Europe, of which England was a part.

The remaining essays in this section are essentially local studies focussed on patterns of infant mortality in Victorian and Edwardian England. Many reveal the promise of rich pickings to be gained from exploiting local, often unpublished, sources. Eilidh Garrett’s chapter on urban-rural differences in Scotland is one of the best examples. This meticulous analysis of infant death certificates sheds as much light on the provision of medical care in these communities as it does on variations in patterns of infant mortality, and also examines deficiencies in the registration of death process itself. That over three quarters of

infants on the remote rural Isle of Skye died without being medically certified (and possibly being seen by a doctor at all), points to a community deprived of even the most basic medical care. She rightly warns us against accepting cause of death materials at face value, especially where infant deaths are concerned, but suggests that analyses by season and age at death within the first year may be instructive. While urban-rural differentials in infant mortality, as we might expect, generally favoured the rural Skye babies there were striking exceptions within the second week of life, which she suggests have their origin in the highly localised customs of treating the umbilical cords of newborns, which may have offered a route for infection to take hold (p. 146).

The remaining chapters in this section are equally engaging. Graham Mooney and Andrea Tanner skilfully integrate demographic and qualitative evidence to show how infant mortality in the London Borough of Kensington came to be defined as a 'social problem', arguing that 'environment and society in the early twentieth century continued to be linked in a way that sought to mesh deprived living conditions with a corrupt moral environment that begat social problems' (p. 170). Just five streets had infant mortality rates above 400 per 1000, which was sufficient to keep overall rates in the Borough high. Regarded as equally important though, in the conceptualisation of the problem, was thought to be the large number of mothers working as laundresses in the area. This well-written chapter explores in some depth the close links and contradictions between a local economy, structured around female labour, high infant mortality, and local politics, where ratepayers were unwilling to fund municipal initiatives to help working mothers, even though they were central to this economy which was serving the needs of the wealthier inhabitants of the district. Consequently, the various voluntary initiatives which emerged to bridge this gap such as crèches were, significantly, aimed specifically at 'the respectable working-class mother'.

While many of the London crèches refused to admit illegitimate babies at this time (p. 186), Alice Reid's chapter on the records of the Derbyshire Health Visitors shows municipal initiatives, on the other hand, were extremely successful in targeting vulnerable infants. The mothers of illegitimate babies were among those prioritised for an early visit, alongside twins, and those in mining districts. Her work points to an important supportive role fulfilled by health visiting—particularly if done in the days immediately following delivery—by providing mothers with encouragement to persevere with breastfeeding. This, of course, was one of their principal aims, together with 'carrying sanitation into the home' (p. 192) and, where necessary, giving advice about safe methods of artificial feeding.

These examples serve to illustrate the diversity of current research represented in this volume. It is also clear that new sources are starting to emerge. Sam Sneddon employs the under-used Registrar-General's Quarterly Returns to build up a detailed picture of urban-rural differentials (based on registration sub-districts) for the Lincolnshire Fens—an area notorious for female agricultural gang labour, high infant mortality, early weaning and the supposedly

widespread practice of dosing infants with opiates. Finally, there are two chapters, one by Tricia James and the other by Eric Hall and Michael Drake, which exploit the vaccination birth and death registers to explore spatial and social inequalities in infant mortality. The full potential of these sources is only just emerging. Tricia James looks at the domestic-based shoemaking families of Northamptonshire, while Eric Hall and Michael Drake investigate late nineteenth-century Ipswich, focussing in particular on infant diarrhoea, to which Newman attributed a special significance to in his analysis.

The modern challenges presented by infant mortality today are dealt with in the last three chapters which comprise the third section of this volume. They emphasise the striking gains in infant health achieved since Newman's time, but also reveal the persistence of inequalities in the twenty-first century linked to deprivation and poverty. Overall, these eleven chapters, together with the introduction and conclusion, form a worthwhile and fitting tribute to Sir George Newman and his book *Infant mortality: a social problem*. They skilfully highlight various aspects of his work and, as the editors point out in their introduction, 'while we may now know far more about certain aspects of infant health than we did 100 years ago, the core of Newman's thesis remains unchallenged and *Infant mortality* is a key text that can still be read with profit' (p. 5). While many themes in this collection will be familiar to researchers working in this field, it will appeal to a wide number of disciplines and certain chapters especially will provide a valuable resource for undergraduate students. It also shows particularly well how existing sources are being re-examined and how new sources, previously overlooked or undiscovered, are now coming into play. But this book will also appeal to a wider audience because the fundamental issues, though in a different guise, are still present in society.

Naomi Williams  
*University of Sheffield*

Nigel Goose ed., *Women's work in industrial England. Regional and local perspectives* (Local Population Studies, 2007). 402 pp+xiv. ISBN 0-9541621-1-0. £14.95 (p/b).

This volume is a useful collection of many important pieces on women's work in industrial England which aims not just to document what is known about women's work in this period, but also to emphasise the diverse and localised nature of this experience. Around half the chapters have been previously published as articles in *LPS* or other journals, most of the remainder originated in a conference held in 1996.

Goose (chapter one) starts the book by providing an excellent summary of the existing research on women's work in the industrial and pre-industrial periods. He highlights the controversies that remain and the regionally different stories that emerge. He notes the sparsity of information available prior to the 1841 census and the potentially biased nature of the data that does exist. He also outlines the debate surrounding the usefulness of the census data for documenting women's and children's work. Many of the chapters in this volume speak to this theme.

Shaw Taylor (chapter two) uses the 1851 census (broken down into 576 registration districts and covering 196 occupational categories) to describe the geography of female employment in England by means of colourful, intricate 'spatial concentration' maps. He finds the census to accurately record those *regularly* employed and shows the large variation in female participation by region: 17 per cent in a Durham coalfield compared with 78 per cent in a hat making region in Bedfordshire. This regional picture is reiterated by Goose (chapter five who shows the importance of the straw plait and hat making trades in supplying employment for married women in mid nineteenth-century Hertfordshire. Anderson (chapter eight) provides a spirited defence of the 1851 census for recording married women's employment in factories in Preston, although he acknowledges that it under-records the employment of wives of tradesmen, whose occupations were only given relative to their husband's economic activity (such as a butcher's wife), and allows that ambiguities surround the recording of domestic servants. Higgs (chapter eleven) takes up the issue of domestic servants and analyses the census for Rochdale from 1851 to 1871. Domestic servants were defined either by occupation or by their relationship to the head of household in which they lived and Higgs queries how this was interpreted by the census clerks. He concludes that maybe half a million women were wrongly classified in the reports. Anderson (chapter twelve) is more optimistic. His analysis of the England and Wales National sample from the 1851 census suggests that 81 per cent of those classed with service occupations had service relationships asserted. Davies (chapter ten) identifies another mis-recorded group: female healers who, despite supplying the majority of non-institutional medical provision in the period, were largely absent from the 1851 census records.

Most of the chapters focus on post-1851 industrial England (as the title states) rather than its genesis in the Industrial Revolution. Only a few chapters are devoted to this transition and the consequent changes to women's work. Sharpe (chapter three) considers the female labour market on the capitalist farms of the east and Midlands from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries. Based on a detailed recounting and collation of existing evidence she argues that there was little change in the sexual division of agricultural labour over time, women's work was always limited on the large arable farms of the south east, but she notes trends in female participation ranged from declining in some areas to static or rising in others. The overall picture is one of considerable regional diversity in women's jobs and women's experience of agricultural change. Verdon (chapter four) reiterates this localised picture for women's agricultural work in nineteenth-century Sussex. In the Weald, where farm service persisted and hop work was available, women continued to be employed, but elsewhere in Sussex decline was evident. Saito (chapter nine) makes comparisons between local censuses in the late eighteenth century and the census enumerators' books for 1851 in the spinning and lacemaking village of Cardington, Bedfordshire and agricultural Corfe Castle, Dorset. Married women's participation rates were high and showed only slight decline in Cardington whereas they were very low and shrank further in Corfe Castle. Regional difference in experience is again highlighted.

A number of chapters pick up the theme of local employment opportunities influencing women's participation but they also point up other factors such as local customs and family structure. For instance, Dupree (chapter seven) uses the censuses from 1861 to 1881 to look at women's work in the Staffordshire potteries. She observes that the usual tradition in coalmining and iron-working areas of low female participation seems to be overridden for these families in this area by coexistence with pottery working families where female participation was commonplace before marriage. She identifies a community effect operating. Dupree also highlights the importance of having alternative carers in the home if married women with young children were to work, a point endorsed by Anderson (chapter eight). Jones (chapter fourteen) looks at the work done by never married women using the 1881 census. While experience varied by region, never married women were considerably more likely to be domestic servants and live-in farm servants than married women. They were also more likely to migrate. Both geographical and marital perspectives are needed. Marriage too has an influence on women's decisions to enter business (Nenadic, chapter thirteen). In Edinburgh society in the 1870s entrepreneurship was unattractive to the 'new' woman. Opportunities for women to enter business were concentrated in traditional areas and these tended to preclude marriage, involve living in all female households and place these women on the social margins.

Two chapters bring the book into the twentieth century. McKay (chapter seven) uses the census reports for Lancashire from 1851, 1861 and 1911 to ascertain whether there was a steep decline in the employment of married women over the period. Although some decline is apparent between 1861 and 1911, this is because of the growth of population and the failure of women's jobs to keep up, rather than evidence of a decline in the number of jobs available. Through detailed analysis of 13 registration districts over the period 1891 to 1921 Garrett (chapter fifteen) highlights the problems of comparability between censuses on the basis of the published tables, with 1911 and 1921 showing a particular discontinuity. The registration district data again show a decline in participation rates but also illustrate the shift in women's jobs from service work and textile manufacture to white collar and clerical positions.

Despite the validation of the census, particularly use of the enumerators' books, to give a reasonable picture of women's work in the formal economy in the industrial period, all authors agree that much of married women's work is omitted. For instance, the casual and makeshift that, although financially of small significance across all households, was crucial to the survival of some. The census also omitted the workings of the household economy and, as Garrett and Higgs both point out, was born of male views of the separate spheres of work and home and so does not represent an ideal tool with which to identify or analyse most of women's labour. However, some interesting insights are still provided. For instance, Anderson (chapter twelve) queries what was meant by the return 'housekeeper' in the census and argues that, in Lancashire at least, this was often a description of a woman who, despite being a relative, was genuinely opting to provide an economic service to the

household in order to enable the married woman to work, and therefore it constituted a 'proper' job choice. Examination of the individual returns also allows another, typically female activity, to be uncovered, the provision of services to lodgers. Anderson (chapter eight) shows the ubiquitousness of taking in lodgers and importance of this as a source of income in Preston in 1851. Goose's (chapter five) households in mid nineteenth-century Hertfordshire also frequently took in lodgers, particularly female boarders in areas where women's employment was high. If keeping boarders is taken as a full-time occupation then Garrett (chapter fifteen) estimates that an additional 10 per cent of wives could be viewed as having paid employment at the turn of the century.

Overall, the volume provides an excellent compendium of the research on women's work in the industrial period and illustrates the untapped potential of the census material to develop our knowledge. The occupational and regionally specific stories so far told are both revealing and fascinating and should encourage further work with this material.

Sara Horrell  
*University of Cambridge*

Mary S. Hartman, *The household and the making of history. A subversive view of the Western past* (Cambridge University Press, 2004). xi+297pp. ISBN 0-521-82972-0. £45 (h/b); 0-521-53669-3. £16.99 (p/b).

This is a bold and ambitious work. Mary Hartman seeks to place the household and women's role within it in the foreground of western European history from at least the medieval period onwards. In a lively account, ranging from More's *Utopia* to cross-dressing in Jacobean London and from China to Morocco, she tries to offer a fresh perspective on gender relations and how these and other aspects of history have been conditioned by household arrangements. Central to the work is Hajnal's north-west European marriage pattern. Hartman points out that scholars have tended to focus more on the nuclearity of households that resulted from such a marriage pattern, rather than on the crucial variable of late marriage for women. It is this tendency to postpone marriage for women that Hartman views as the key to the distinctive path taken by western Europe over the course of history.

Hartman speculates, following Bartlett, that late marriage for women derived from the desire of families to retain the labour of daughters for longer during the early medieval European expansion. (A far simpler explanation may be that the relatively low levels of mortality that seem to have characterised north-west Europe over time may have made the Malthusian preventative check more of a necessity here than elsewhere.) Once in place, this marriage pattern resulted in more equitable partnerships between husbands and wives, with women commanding more authority within the household. Hartman discusses at length moments when the early modern household was in crisis, in one instance as a result of heresy (Montaillou), in another instance as a result of witchcraft (Salem). She attributes both to male anxieties: in the first case about a Catholic church that threatened the livelihood of households by promoting

dowries and possibly by preventing sex-selective infanticide and in the second case, anxieties about increased economic dependence upon women. In later chapters, Hartman explores how the more equitable partnerships within late-marrying households explain continued male angst over gender identity throughout the early modern and modern periods. Hartman boldly attributes the Reformation, the English Civil War and industrialisation to this late marriage pattern, arguing that it gradually fostered within households a habit of questioning authority and a need to plan for the future that sowed the seeds for activism on a broader political, social and economic scale.

While placing the household centre stage in such a universal fashion is to be welcomed, it will be evident that there is much here that is problematic. Hartman's account rests on an unquestioning characterisation of early marrying societies as polar opposites of late marrying societies, whereas the differences are more likely to have been of degree rather than kind. Thus we have sweeping statements such as 'Women doing men's work, in fact, set late-marriage societies apart' (p. 130) or that mother-daughter ties were 'weakened if not broken by early-marriage structures' (p. 142). The only examples of early marrying societies provided are present-day ones, such as China, and much of the argument thus rests rather awkwardly on a comparison of Salem with Montaigne, characterised as 'mixed' rather than 'early marrying'. At times, Hartman falls into the trap of which she accuses others, of focusing on the nuclearity of western households, thus assuming that kin were always readily available in early-marrying households and rarely available in late-marrying ones. The key issue, however, is the lack of evidence for her main claim, namely, that women who married late enjoyed more equitable partnerships within the household than women who married early. There may be some truth in this intriguing suggestion, but as yet we lack the evidence for the inner workings of households, and Hartman does not provide any. Moreover, the argument is less 'subversive' than is claimed: Hartman ignores much recent work by economic historians, notably Jan de Vries' 'industrious revolution', that has long focused on the household and women as key to understanding the origins of industrialisation. Overall, Hartman's rallying cry to interpret history 'with the women and the households left in' will be welcome, but will hardly strike many historians as new.

Julie Marfany  
*University of Cambridge*

Colin Heywood, *Growing up in France* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). xi+313pp. ISBN 0-521-86869-0. £50 (h/b).

This book seeks to answer the question, how did French people write about their childhood and youth during the period 1760-1930? It is concerned with first-hand accounts of growing up, based mainly on sources such as letters, diaries, childhood reminiscences and autobiographies. On the surface it may appear that there would not be much here to appeal to many *LPS* readers. However, this is far from the case. Heywood provides an extensive account of growing up and while the self-selecting source material is bound to be biased,

it nevertheless illustrates how attitudes to child rearing and childcare changed between the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

The book is divided into three sections. The first deals with sources and cultural constructions of growing up, childhood and adolescence. The second with relationships between children and their families, especially mothers and fathers. The final section is concerned with moving towards adulthood, mainly with respect to education, work and eventually the establishment of individual adult identities. In describing the process of growing up Heywood also considers a diverse range of topics including baptism, wet nursing, illness, the demographic context, leisure time, first sexual experiences, political activity and marriage. Clearly, then, there is much of relevance for anyone with research interests in aspects of childhood during this period. Heywood writes in a clear, flowing style and while the nature of the source material may necessarily mean that a limited view is presented, overall this account of the process of growing up during a period of considerable change has much to offer.

Chris Galley  
*Barnsley College*

Andrew Lees and Lynn Hollen Lees, *Cities and the making of modern Europe, 1750-1914* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). 314pp. ISBN 978-0-521-83936-5 £40 (h/b); 978-0-521-154822-9 £14.99 (p/b).

This book surveys the changing nature of European cities during a period of unprecedented growth stretching from the mid eighteenth to the early twentieth century. The authors place this development in the context of social, political and imperial history, arguing that cities were a key part of wider historical processes. Significantly, though, neither Europe nor the long nineteenth century is seen as monolithic. While the focus is primarily on Britain, France and Germany (these three dominated urban development during this period, containing 29 of the 48 European cities with populations over 250,000 in 1911), the authors explore the urban experience in places as diverse as Barcelona, Budapest and Bombay, and highlight differences as well as similarities. Equally, they distinguish the period up to about 1850 from that which followed, characterising the former as 'an era of disruption' and the latter 'an era of reconstruction'. Overall, the narrative is optimistic. The Lees firmly eschew the notion of a 'happy ending' and acknowledge the profound inequalities of urban life, but they argue that nineteenth-century urbanisation contributed 'to the prosperity and the wellbeing of the Europeans who experienced it' (p. 7).

The first chapter sketches the outlines of urban Europe in 1750. Attention focuses on traditional themes such as the built environment, urban functions (although here little mention is made of manufacturing), social groups and urban regulation. Perhaps surprising is the lack of concerted attention paid to the urban cultural life which was undergoing profound change and growing importance in many European countries.

The second chapter explores the link between industrialisation and urbanisation, highlighting the impact of migration on urban growth across Europe and in European settlements in colonial territories, especially the under-urbanised



societies of north America, and touches briefly on the idea of urban network and ways in which these communicated and focused growth stimuli. It finishes with the familiar story of the social problems that became increasingly manifest in large industrial cities—what the authors call the ‘nasty results of rapid growth’ (p. 59): environmental degradation, disease, poverty, crime and societal disintegration.

One result of these intensifying problems was a groundswell of urban protest. However, the authors are careful to avoid any simple or unitary explanation for such protest, highlighting instead the fact that the character of the protestors and their grievances varied considerably from place to place and across the course of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries—a period during which protests grew considerably in both their scale and their violence. Alongside the economic grievances of the urban poor were the political ambitions of the middle classes. Crucial to the mobilisation of both groups was a growing awareness amongst city-dwellers that their problems and grievances were shared with others: this was collective and increasingly mass action.

The specifically urban response to these protests—that of ‘improvement’—is the focus of the following chapter. The Lees rightly argue that some measures were designed to address legitimate grievances while others aimed at cementing or re-imposing the power of the urban or national elite. On the one hand, then, we see church-building initiatives, designed to reawaken religious faith; the mushrooming of philanthropic organisations which sought to ease suffering and engender social harmony, and attempts to improve public health, mainly through programmes of environmental improvement and new instruments of local governance such as boards of health. On the other hand, there were attempts to introduce or ‘modernise’ police forces, and the city was opened up as grand avenues were driven through previously closed neighbourhoods, most famously in Haussmann’s Paris.

In contrast to the turmoil that marked the early nineteenth century, culminating in Europe-wide protests in the 1840s, the second half of the nineteenth century is portrayed as a period of relative calm when the lives of most urban dwellers began to improve. Chapter five summarises the wide-ranging challenges posed by large cities during this period. Quite apart from growth rates that took 24 European cities above the 500,000 mark by 1910, there were the ‘orgies of creative destruction [which] substituted new for old’ (p. 137), not least as modern infrastructure was laid out across the city space. Older problems of pollution, poverty and disease remained potent forces, and they were joined by heightened anxieties over crime and political activism amongst the poor.

These problems were addressed, the Lees argue, through a combination of philanthropic voluntarism and, increasingly, active intervention by public authorities. Local government grew in size and influence, though not necessarily in terms of its popular mandate, since the electorate in many cities remained relatively narrow. Their attention focused, as in earlier periods, on improving the urban environment through often grandiose building programmes, but also on planning the city, both physically and socially, and on what we might now term welfare work.

Of course, these men were quick to celebrate their achievements and reinforce their legitimacy in the bricks and mortar of grand town halls and other public buildings. The latter included museums, libraries and art galleries which formed both a celebration of middle-class cultural supremacy and an attempt to spread bourgeois values to the masses—the idea being that the arts would ‘help to “ennoble” the lives of ordinary people’ (p. 220). Their success is debatable since many ordinary citizens preferred rather different amusements, although here the authors are perhaps too ready to see a sharp divide between polite and popular culture. More interesting, in many ways, is the identification of *avant gardes* as an alternative to established elite culture.

Finally, the authors turn to the link between European urbanisation and the wider world, although here they ignore the importance of port cities in favour of a discussion of imperial and colonial cities. The former are seen as engaging ever more elaborate celebrations of imperial strength and imperial heroes, often through the building of monumental structures. The latter are portrayed as products of European building programmes and reflecting European ideals and structures of governance. They were linked to the imperial heartland through capital, trade and an army of administrators.

In all this, the authors do not present new research; nor are there profoundly new arguments to be found here. There are gaps, of course: the emphasis on larger cities is understandable in such a survey, but more could have been said about the smaller towns and cities which formed most people’s experience of urban life in the long nineteenth century. Moreover, surprisingly little is said about migration, either local or international, or about intra-urban geographies of work, leisure and residence. And it is unfortunate that consideration of the wider world context is largely restricted to the final chapter, whereas it might usefully have been incorporated into the broader analysis. That said, this book offers a comprehensive overview of the social and political challenges and opportunities created by large cities, and provides an excellent context into which more detailed local analyses might be placed and through which they might be assessed against broader European patterns and experiences.

Jon Stobart  
*University of Northampton*

Susan Oosthuizen, *Landscapes decoded. The origins and development of Cambridge’s medieval fields*. Explorations in Local and Regional History, 1 (University of Hertfordshire Press, 2006). xiv+176pp. ISBN 1–902806–58–1. £14.99 (p/b).

The important problem addressed in this monograph is the determination of the processes whereby the landscape of prehistoric and Roman Britain was transformed into the common fields of medieval England. The book addresses the problem in the context of an area that lies within the Central Province. The argument follows the extent of the re-use of landscape structures (boundaries, banks, roads and selions, for example) in successive phases of agricultural and social development.

The Bourn Valley lies a few miles west of Cambridge. The Bourn Brook runs approximately west to east, joining the River Cam about three miles south of

Cambridge. The landscapes of the valley decoded by Susan Oosthuizen are primarily those of twelve neighbouring parishes. They can be described loosely as linear and running in a north-south direction either side of the brook. These parishes were some of the last in England to be enclosed by Act of Parliament. In early autumn the brook is unassuming, yet it has much to contribute to furthering an understanding of a central problem—unravelling the landscape history of agriculture.

The geography and early history of the Bourn Valley is described. The evidence of place-names and Domesday records are used to provide a broad picture of the land use of the valley in the later Anglo-Saxon period. This is extended into the medieval period, with reference to the further development of common fields, greens and settlement.

To discover and understand the early field boundaries that may underlie the medieval landscape, linear features appearing in the landscape are analysed in two chapters of the book. The sources used to identify these features include maps (and for most of the parishes these are available from pre-enclosure date), aerial photographs, documentary sources such as terriers, and extensive fieldwork. The alignments are grouped into those that lie across the valley and those lying along the valley. Numerous, long, cross-valley alignments are determined, subsequently enhanced using reconstructive techniques to establish those that prove more robust. The resulting 'linears' are completed with the addition of short interpolations where justified. All these linears are mapped and described. It is argued that these linears subdivide the area into some form of prehistoric division, a form of 'socially determined land division', rather than being associated with transhumance or communication.

The most notable result of the work is the identification of long linear features in the parishes of Toft, Comberton, Barton and Grantchester, on the valley slopes to the north of the brook. These alignments run east to west in a direction following the general course of the brook. Substantial partial fragments of these features, again described in detail, are constructed from a variety of elements, including headlands, pre-enclosure roads, footpaths, and property boundaries. These fragments are completed again by 'infilling' with some conjectural, shorter sections. The result is a landscape demonstrating up to seven alignments. These alignments run for up to 5.7 miles.

There are four characteristics of these alignments that distinguish them from other long linears that have been identified elsewhere in the Central Province: they cross not only parish boundaries but in one example it is a hundred boundary that is crossed; they are much longer, exceeding by seven or eight times the length of the longest furlongs discovered; they are wide at up to 50 metres; and they run along contours of the valley. These broad features are referred to as 'commons'. Collectively, they appear to be associated with a single, large, royal estate centred on the parish of Haslingfield.

Both the length and orientation of these alignments and their relationship to other features of the landscape lead to a case being made for the probable date

of introduction of this system. Initially, determined as post-Roman yet preceding the introduction of parish boundaries, the date of this proto-common field is argued as falling within the period 700 and 870. This is proposed because it coincides with a period of comparative political and economic stability, necessary for the collective organization required for its introduction. It is further argued that the origin of the proto-common field may be a consequence of a shift from pastoral to arable farming in the Anglo-Saxon period. A tentative model for the further development of this system through to the medieval landscape is constructed. The model can provide insight into the nucleation of settlement and the structure of society in which the landscape developed in the valley.

This is a closely argued study of the land use of the Bourn Valley. The goal of mapping the transitional landscape of the phases of agricultural is ambitious. However, the methodology is fully described and the establishment of the linear alignments of the valley appears to be based on firm construction. The association of the alignments running along the valley with a proto-common field gives rise to the important conclusion that patterns of agriculture exhibit continuity, successive phases re-using older boundaries. The author claims this result to be unique for an area within the Central Province.

The monograph is a careful, thorough and diligent study of a Cambridge landscape. It contains much that is new and thought-provoking. The implications of the results of the study for settlement and organisation here are well reasoned. It is cultivation and land tenure that has changed rather than field patterns. However, in the absence of supporting evidence from other work, it is perhaps inevitable that much of the argument is conjectural and it is acknowledged by the author that the conclusion 'is a long way from conclusive proof'. It nevertheless invites and encourages exploration of similar examples that might support the conclusions drawn here.

Robert Brooks  
WEA

Peter Razzell, *Population and disease: transforming English society, 1550–1850* (Caliban Books, 2007). xviii+337pp. ISBN 978–1–850066–47–7. £45 (h/b).

This collection of ten essays forms a thought-provoking and challenging book. Although not an introductory text, it would be a useful inclusion on a reading list for students of demographic, economic or social history as it offers alternative theories, interpretations and modes of analysis of English population growth over the three centuries considered to those outlined in many 'standard' texts. It also advocates, and contains numerous suggestions for, further research which might be carried out by those with an interest in local population history and who might wish to contribute to various aspects of the debate.

The book takes as its overall theme the argument that the role of mortality decline in English population growth has been down-played by recent research, and sets out to redress this imbalance. Material is drawn from a very

diverse range of parishes and populations and the author, encouraging further research, stresses at several points that some of the work is preliminary, provisional, a pilot study, or reliant on sampling. The chapters are divided into four sections covering 'Methodology', 'The Structure of Demographic Change', 'Causal Factors in Mortality Decline' and 'The Consequences of Population Change'. Space precludes a full review of each of the ten chapters which take as their subjects the under-registration of both infant and child (chapter one) and adult mortality (chapter two), a review of *English population history from family reconstitution* (chapter three), the relative roles of poverty versus disease in British mortality (chapter four), the relationship between mortality and nuptiality patterns (chapter five), the parts played by changing personal, domestic and public hygiene in bringing down mortality rates (chapter six), smallpox (chapter seven), the risks of a wealthy, over-indulgent lifestyle (chapter eight), the interaction between demography and the economy over the course of the industrial revolution (chapter nine) and a more general look at the relationship between development and population growth, extending the discussion to include twentieth-century developing countries (chapter ten). A final, brief conclusion reprises the main points to be drawn from the body of the volume and highlights where these run counter to more 'orthodox' interpretations and where historical relationships between demography, economy and society may merit reconsideration.

Six of the ten chapters have previously been published: four as journal articles—two of which appeared in *Local Population Studies* (LPS 64 (2000) and 77 (2006))—one as a contribution in a previous collection and one as the introduction to a new edition of *The conquest of smallpox*, a previous book by the author. It may be this provenance which results in mild frustration for the reader as points are often made by reference to other texts without greater detail or fuller explanation being provided in the current text, leaving one wishing for a pile of the relevant volumes immediately to hand. Given that the author is largely engaging in a debate with those he is citing, readers may well benefit from (re-)reading the original texts for themselves in order that they may form their own opinions and assessments of the points made on both sides.

The volume offers a great deal of food for thought, but not all of it is easily digested. The early chapters in particular are peppered with facts and figures, many of the latter presented in tables which are, on occasion, difficult to follow. In both chapters four and five, for example, tables are presented with infant and child mortality shown 'per 1000', with a further column giving a figure for 'IMR+CMR per 1000'. IMR is usually calculated 'per 1000 births' and the CMR 'per 1000 children aged 1-4'. The two can only be combined if the CMR is also calculated 'per 1000 births'. The contents of some of the tables suggest that this was not how the CMR was calculated, and therefore the meaning of the measures depicted loses impact. With a little additional explanation this could have been avoided. In addition a considerable amount of detail, which might be expected to appear in notes attached to the tables, appears in footnotes at the bottom of the each page, which has a certain stylistic neatness but does not aid interpretation of the tables.

Rather than seeing nuptiality and fertility as the main engines of English historic population growth, Razzell argues that 'demographic patterns during the period 1550–1850 were shaped by mortality patterns and disease environments'. Such a challenge can make an unsettling read, but is sometimes very productive as individuals feel inspired to delve deeper into various aspects of the alternative interpretation offered, either to reassure themselves that their original views were indeed valid, or in an attempt to put the fresh ideas on an increasingly sure footing. If Razzell's volume of essays is such a catalyst then, whatever the outcomes of the ensuing research, it can be judged a success, and our understanding of demographic history will be the richer for it

Eilidh Garrett

David E. Shuttleton, *Smallpox and the literary imagination 1660–1820* (Cambridge University Press, 2007). xiii+265pp. ISBN 978–0–521–87209–6. £48 (h/b).

The history and demographic impact of smallpox are well known. During the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries most people were exposed to this fearsome disease which often left its victims scarred for life and sometimes even blind. Smallpox also became the first major disease to be treated successfully by medical intervention, firstly by inoculation and then at the beginning of the nineteenth century by the safer method of cowpox vaccination. Its eradication in 1977 proved to be a milestone in medical history. So is there anything left to be said about smallpox? After reading this book the answer is a resounding yes. Shuttleton's concern is not about the demographic impact of smallpox, although this is mentioned; rather this book represents the first substantial, critical study of the literary representation of this disease and its victims between the Restoration and the introduction of vaccination. It therefore opens an interesting and exciting window on the social and cultural impact of this unique disease.

For readers of *LPS*, *Smallpox and the literary imagination* will provide many examples of how individual lives were affected by smallpox and, while literary theory is discussed throughout, it is mostly accessible. Overall the book gives a rounded assessment of the cultural impact of this disease. It opens by considering notions of how disease was spread, viewed through the lens of contemporary literature. We are then introduced to two smallpox autobiographies—the curious tale of Frances Flood, who was 'taken by smallpox in the street' and the personal account of smallpox survivor William Thompson. Both examples are very interesting. Chapter three discusses smallpox elegies. These mainly concern adult deaths, although James Woodhouse's 'Elegy on a Favourite Child Who Died of the Smallpox' speaks for itself. Also included is a moving discussion of the avoidable death of Prince Lee Boo. This twenty year-old native prince sailed to England from the Pelew Islands in the Western Pacific, but died from smallpox only five months after landing.

Chapters four and five are concerned with disfigurement, both from the point of view of women and more unusually men. Here Lady Mary Wortley Montague's poem, 'After the Smallpox' is examined, along with many others, in a discussion of how the disease could profoundly affect individuals.

Montague was of course the well-connected beauty who contracted smallpox and then went on to play a crucial role in the introduction of inoculation into court circles. The after effects of smallpox were aptly summed up by William Congreve in *The Old Batchelour* (1693), 'Bellmour: ... thou art as unmannerly and as unwelcome to a woman as a Looking-glass after the Smallpox' (p. 117). By contrast, while smallpox was the enemy of female beauty, in a man it was often considered to be character forming. Alexander Brome even jokingly suggested that his friend's scarred face could be used, 'To grate your ginger, or your nutmegs' (p. 140). Not every complication of smallpox resulted in such superficial disfigurement, however. Blindness often followed, and moving accounts of the lives of the mathematician Nicholas Sanderson and Thomas Blacklock are also included.

The final section deals with inoculation and vaccination. Here we find commendations of Montague as a pioneer of inoculation and a discussion of wider inoculation poetry. Vaccination also spawned a wide range of literature with plays such as the anonymous *The Cow Doctor; a Comedy* (1810) equating opposition to vaccination with Jacobin demagoguery and Jenner's discovery with the fight against Napoleon. Jenner also wrote pastoral poetry which reflected his close observation of nature that ultimately led him to investigate cowpox. Poetry such as Bloomfield's autobiographical *Good Tidings or News from the Farm* (1804), extracts of which were recited at the Royal Jennerian Society in London, was used to promote the practice of vaccination both in England and abroad. Most of this was new to me, and Shuttleton's juxtaposing of such texts against medical treatises allows a unique insight to be given into the way Jenner's discovery was viewed by his contemporaries. The book ends with a short appendix about Georgian smallpox portraiture.

*Smallpox and the literary imagination* provides fascinating reading and, while all the quoted examples were written by a small educated elite, it adds much to our knowledge of the social and political impact of this disease. I certainly gained much from reading this book and it deserves a wide readership. I recommend it to anyone with an interest in the history of disease in the early modern period.

Chris Galley  
*Barnsley College*

The following three titles are the initial offerings in a new range of CD-based publications from the Centre for Wessex History and Archaeology at the University of Winchester. They are available from Wessex Historical Databases, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Winchester, Winchester, Hants SO22 4NR. The aim of the series is to present high quality historical data, expertly edited, for subjects relating to the region of Wessex. All three CDs were viewed on a PC running MS Windows XP Home Edition.

Mark Allen and Tom Beaumont Jones eds, *The 1871 Census for Winchester*. Wessex Historical Databases (University of Winchester, 2006). ISBN 09553778-1-1 £11.75 (CD ROM).

This is a transcription of the 1871 census enumerators' books for Winchester, the county town of Hampshire, which had a population of more than 17,000 inhabitants at this time. The CD contains four slightly different versions of the dataset, all derived from the same relational database. Version 1 is in a static pdf format, suitable for viewing and printing. The initial six pages of each enumeration book are reproduced, including a scan of the original page iii for each book. Crossings out and additions made in other hands have been reproduced verbatim. Tick marks that occasionally appear in the disability column are also reproduced. Any editorial comments have been added in italics between curly brackets ({}). The only data added are a House Identification Digit (HID) and Personal Identification Digit (PID), which are reproduced in red at the start of each entry. At the end of the reproduced data, indexes of persons (by surname), birthplaces, streets and house names have been provided.

Versions 2, 3 and 4 do not contain the preliminary material. Version 2 is a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet that can be re-sorted and queried, or exported into a database program if desired. It retains notations indicating all crossings out and later additions, as does version 3, which is provided for those who do not use Excel, and is a tab-delimited format (text file) that can be imported into virtually all spreadsheet and database programs. The fourth version is identical to version 2 except that the notation referring to crossings out and additions has been removed (this version is included in both Excel and text formats). These three versions contain an additional fourteen columns of information that is either presented differently or supplementary to the CEBs. This enriched material includes a comprehensive occupational classification and standardised country, county and (where possible) places of birth.

Transcribing the CEBs for a city the size of Winchester in 1871 is an impressive achievement. Equally impressive, however, is the quality of the text accompanying this transcription, which deftly highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the nineteenth-century censuses as a source. The introduction provides a brief description of Winchester in the nineteenth century before moving on to discuss the processes behind the taking of the 1871 census, both at a national and local level, including information about the enumeration districts and the local enumerators. Discussion then turns to the format of the CEBs and a detailed explanation of the differences between the four versions of the transcription provided on the CD. The editorial conventions that have been used are then described in detail, on a column by column basis. Some preliminary analysis of the data has been undertaken and is presented in the final section. The areas addressed are population and sex ratios, the age structure of Winchester, marital condition, the city's occupational structure, and the birthplaces of its inhabitants. A full bibliography is also included.

This is a high quality transcription of the CEBs for a substantial county town, matched with an excellent editorial commentary. It provides a large body of easily accessible data that can be analysed and/or compared with existing work. This publication should have a broad appeal for anyone using nineteenth-century censuses, whether for family history or for academic



analysis. I would not hesitate to recommend it to anyone considering undertaking a similar transcription exercise.

Michael Edgar  
*University of Southampton*

Winifred A. Harwood ed., *Southampton Brokage Book, 1447-8*. Wessex Historical Databases (University of Winchester, 2006). ISBN 09553778-0-3 £11.75 (CD ROM).

The Southampton brokage books offer a rare insight into the late medieval inland trade of the City of Southampton and the people involved in it. Although England's foreign trade has been recorded since the customs system was established in 1272, relatively little is known about inland trade prior to the nineteenth century. Thirty-eight brokage books have survived for various years between 1430 and 1540. Written mainly in Latin, they contain details of three separate tolls that were levied against all trade leaving Southampton through the Bargate—brokage, local custom, and pontage. Brokage was a fee levied for arranging the hauling of goods from the city and varied according to the distance to be travelled. Local custom was a charge levied on the goods of all merchants, alien and denizen, except for those merchants who were free of custom in the city. Pontage was a one penny fee payable on all vehicles entering or leaving the city via Bargate.

This CD publication is a preliminary contribution from the Overland Trade Project 1430-1540 at the University of Winchester, which is entering all the data from the brokage books into a relational database that is also linked to a GIS mapping program. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to retain the form of the original brokage books. As with many historical sources, editorial adjustments have been necessary in order to organise the data in a way that is suitable for analysis by computer. The CD makes available the database tables containing all the data from the 1447-8 brokage book, translated and transcribed into modern English, in the form of six separate Microsoft Excel spreadsheets. Text format versions of these files are also included on the CD for those who use programs other than Excel, or operating systems other than MS Windows. Carts and horses passing through Bargate carried loads consisting of one commodity or more, for one or more owners. For analytical purposes each load is referred to as a batch. Each batch, therefore, can relate to one commodity or more, carried in one or more carts, by one or more carters to a single destination, for one or more owners. Each entry in the six tables has a batch ID which identifies which batch (or load) that entry is derived from.

Table 1 holds the following information: the names of the carters, the number of carts entering or leaving the city, the destination of the cart, and the amount of brokage, custom and pontage paid. It also includes data about whether a carter was using his own cart and when custom had been paid at sea. Table 2 provides the names of individual carters who are described as 'groups of carriers' in Table 1. Table 3 lists all the goods brought into Southampton. Table 4 is concerned with goods that were shipped out of Southampton, including the quantities carried, the recipients/owners of the goods and where the

owners were from. Table 5 lists commodities on which custom was paid and which may have left the city, but are not recorded as having done so. Table 6 holds the amount paid for market stalls and the name of the person who made the payment. Each spreadsheet can be sorted and analysed individually. In addition, as all the tables contain a column identifying the batch ID, related entries in other tables can easily be identified. Inclusion of the batch ID will also allow the tables to be imported into a relational database system and linked together for analysis. One minor criticism is that coordinates for the place names listed in the tables are not included. These would have been useful for those with access to a GIS program who might wish to map the data.

The documentation accompanying the data is concise but comprehensive. Two versions are included—one in HTML format for viewing in a web browser, and a static PDF version. It takes in a brief summary of Southampton's role as a trading centre and the background to the brokage books. A couple of scanned images from the original 1447-8 brokage book are also included. The system of batch ID descriptors used to identify and tie together related entries among the six individual spreadsheets is clearly described, reinforced by a worked example of how it may be used. The conventions utilised during the transcription of the original text are also clearly and precisely laid out. It concludes with some brief examples of the sorts of analysis that can be applied to the data.

Although this CD publication is likely to be of limited interest to the general *LPS* readership, it does offer a fascinating glimpse into the late medieval inland trade of England. It will, however, be of particular interest to economic historians of the period and to historians of Southampton and its hinterland.

Michael Edgar  
*University of Southampton*

Roger Young ed., *Sparsholt 1841–1891. A Hampshire village microhistory*. Wessex Historical Databases (University of Winchester, 2006). ISBN 09553778–2–X £11.75 (CD ROM).

This CD publication sets out to provide a model for establishing what is termed the 'microhistory' of small rural villages in the second half of the nineteenth century. Microhistory is defined as describing the results of a historical research approach aimed at examining in depth the dynamics of a community. This approach is based largely on the census enumerators' books (CEBs) 1841–1901, in conjunction with other sources, and has been applied to the village of Sparsholt in Hampshire. Sparsholt is a small rural village situated approximately three miles north-west of Winchester, whose population averaged around 400 during the second half of the nineteenth century.

There are eleven tables included on the CD as Excel spreadsheets. Text format copies are also provided for those who do not use Excel. The tables comprise the seven sets of CEB data for Sparsholt covering the period 1841-1901, a blank table based on the 1851 census to be used as a model data entry form in other village histories, and three tables that are derived from two manor surveys of the parish dated 1842 and 1851. Supplementary data on household composition and size, occupational classification, social class and migration behaviour

have been added to the CEB tables. The manor surveys link the ownership of all the properties in Sparsholt to the tithe map references in Sparsholt's tithe map and apportionment.

The longitudinal analysis of four major themes over the period 1841–1901, using the CEBs in conjunction with other sources, are identified as being especially germane to a village's microhistory. These are demographics (in conjunction with parish registers), occupations, household sizes and structures and migration. No results from Sparsholt are given, however, just brief guidance notes about particular variables within each category. It is also suggested that the CEBs can be used to repopulate an enumerated community onto a contemporaneous map—that is, to locate discrete households into individual houses—to provide a spatial historical perspective of the community at a given time. Brief guidelines about how to approach a house repopulation exercise and the sources required are given, along with a summary of how the methodology worked in Sparsholt using the 1851 CEBs. In the event, the CEBs were relatively ineffectual in this regard and although 83 out of 84 households were eventually linked to a particular house, success was very much based on the existence of a good range of complementary sources at the manorial, estate and parish levels.

All things considered, I think I regard this publication as a good idea that does not quite fulfil its potential. It lacks, I feel, a little depth. Some results from the analysis of the Sparsholt CEBs would have been a useful addition, as would a slightly deeper discussion of the methodologies proposed. The house repopulation is interesting and would probably attract the attention of, for example, local history groups. Overall, however, I feel that it may fall short of its stated aim of stimulating comparable village studies elsewhere.

Michael Edgar  
*University of Southampton*

## CORRESPONDENCE

Letters intended for publication in *Local Population Studies* should be sent to Nigel Goose, *LPS* General Office, School of Humanities, University of Hertfordshire, College Lane, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 9AB.

Readers are reminded that the *LPS* Editorial Board is always prepared to offer advice on subjects within the scope of *Local Population Studies*, so if you think we might be able to help please do not hesitate to write to us. We will also, on request, forward correspondence on specific items to authors.

### **Non-compliance to civil registration**

Dear Sir,

It is possible that prosecutions for non-compliance to civil registration may be more common than Mills, Wheeler and Woollard would have us to believe. ('Some comparative perspectives on two early-Victorian registrars of births and deaths in rural Lincolnshire in the context of national legislation', *LPS* 79, 2007, 8-22).

The following is taken from *The Manchester Times and Lancashire and Cheshire Examiners*, Saturday 11 November 1837 (3,d):

Petty Session, Friday, November 8th 1837

Opposition to the New Registration Acts – James Barlow, a labouring man residing in Gigg, near Bury, appeared to a summons charging him with refusing to comply with the registration acts. It appeared that on the 15<sup>th</sup> August last Joseph Barker, the registrar of births and deaths for Bury south, called at the defendant's house for the necessary information required for registering the birth of the defendant's child, when he refused to give it. Mr Harper, the superintendent registrar, appeared for the prosecution, and stated that he was obliged to bring the present case before the magistrates, because he met with so much opposition in putting the registration acts in operation; he had brought the present case to show to the public that they could be compelled to give the required information to the registrars, but he did not wish to press for a conviction. – Mr George Whitehead appeared for the defence; and after some lengthy arguments it was agreed that the present case should stand over for a week when some more of the same nature would be brought forward.

After one week the defendant agreed to give information as required by the Act, and was ordered to pay the costs of the proceedings.

This was not the only case to be brought before the court. At the Salford Hundred Quarter Sessions on 10<sup>th</sup> January 1838, John Chadwick, farmer of Birtle was fined 40s. for having, on 23<sup>rd</sup> August 1837, refused to give information of the birth of his child. Objections to the Registration Acts seems to have run in

the family, as on 23<sup>rd</sup> October 1838 John Chadwick (father of the above named John) was fined £3 for having refused to give the required particulars for registering the death of Leah Chadwick.

Unless there was something peculiar about the residents of the Bury Registration District then it would seem there would have been other cases of prosecution of non-compliance with the registration Acts just waiting to be discovered.

Yours sincerely,  
Tony Foster  
142 Cotswold Crescent  
Bury  
BL8 1QP  
0161 764 2821  
ga.foster@btopenworld.com

### Reply

Dear Sir,

We are not surprised that instances of non-compliance with the 1836 Registration Act should have occurred in addition to those we cited in note 11 of our article. Especially in the early years of registration, the authorities were anxious to make the process as complete as possible and to have cases reported in local newspapers to discourage non-compliance. For example, there is the case of the Reverend Robert Taylor, who did not register the death of one William Pinkey and was summonsed to the Leeds Magistrates Court as early as September 1837. The *Leeds Mercury*, 16 September 1837, page 7 columns 2-5, notes that this was the first case in the country relating to the non-compliance of a clergyman.

The 1836 Act required parents of children or occupiers of houses to inform the registrar of deaths and births within specified periods of time. Section XLI states that: 'every person who shall wilfully make or cause to be made, for the purpose of being inserted in any Register of Birth, Death or Marriage, any false statement touching any of the particulars herein required to be known and registered, shall be subject to the same Pains and Penalties as if he were guilty of Perjury'. The next section also refers to penalties, but only to those that would be paid by clergy and registrars failing in their duties of registration. Our reading of Section XLI is that this should not have been applied to non-registration, rather for providing false information, which is technically different. Thus, non-registration by the ordinary citizen was not covered.

Nevertheless, there *were* prosecutions of parents (etc.) following the introduction of registration, so it would be interesting to have details of other cases, even if the number never makes it possible to assess the level of under-registration, either nationally or locally. Particular attention might be paid to the type of punishment meted out. Was it a fine, as in Tony Foster's cases, or a brief period of imprisonment, as in the 1838 case reported in *LPS*, 38, 57-82. Although the latter was simply a refusal to give information, there is a suspicion that section XLI had been applied, as though the defendant had perjured herself.

Section 39 of the 1874 Act put an end to any doubts there might have been about penalties for refusal of information and established a maximum fine of 40 shillings for each offence. The relative rarity of prosecutions under this Act is known for 1890 and later years. The Registrar General brought 19 prosecutions in 1890. Ten of these related to unspecified false statements as to the legitimacy of a child; three cases were where women stated they were married when they were not; one neglecting to register a birth after notice to do so; two false certificates of death by unregistered practitioners; one false certificate of death (stillbirth) by a registered practitioner; one forged certificate of death; and one child buried as stillborn without a certificate stating that. The source for this information is the *Fifty-Third Annual Report of the Registrar General*, p.xviii. As the largest number of prosecutions in 1890 related to births, of which there were 11 out of a total of approximately 870,000 birth events, we would argue that prosecution was relatively rare.

Readers wishing to look up the wording of the Acts mentioned can do so online at [www.histpop.org](http://www.histpop.org) : click 'browse', click 'legislation', and work down the chronological order. A peep at the Census Act of 1840 (for the 1841 census) suggests that the General Register Office might have decided to 'shut the stable door before another horse bolted', as section XX laid down specific penalties for refusing information to enumerators.

Yours sincerely,  
Dennis Mills, Rob Wheeler and Matthew Woollard  
[d.r.mills@virgin.net](mailto:d.r.mills@virgin.net)

## LOCAL POPULATION STUDIES SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS

The following is a list of Local Population Studies Society books still in print, with discounted prices (\*) for a number of titles. Orders can be placed by post or e-mail to the General Office address given on p. 2.

N. Goose ed., <i>Women's work in industrial England. Regional and local perspectives</i> (2007)	£14.95
E. Higgs, <i>Life, death and statistics. Civil registration and the work of the General Register Office, 1836–1952</i> (2004)	£12.50
D.R. Mills, <i>Rural community history from trade directories</i> (2001) (†)	£3.00*
T. Arkell, N. Evans, and N. Goose (eds), <i>When death do us part. Understanding and interpreting the probate records of early modern England</i> (2000)	£14.50
R. Schofield, <i>Parish register aggregated analyses: the Population history of England database and introductory guide</i> (1998) (includes CD Rom of the CAMPOP 404 parish register sample)	£6.50
D. Mills and K. Schürer, <i>Local communities in the Victorian Census Enumerators' Books</i> (1996)	£10.00*
J. Etherington, <i>The bonfire societies of Lewes, 1800–1913</i> (1996) (†)	£1.50*
K. Schürer and T. Arkell eds, <i>Surveying the people. The interpretation and use of document sources for the study of population in the later seventeenth century</i> (1992)	£8.00*
L. Bradley, <i>A glossary for local population studies</i> (1978) (†)	£2.00
P. Slack et al., <i>The plague reconsidered</i> (1977) (†)	£3.00*

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